

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB of ALASKA, BOX 2037, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA, VOL. 12, NO. 8, AUGUST 1969

AUGUST MEETING Ben Crawford Memorial Park, 3rd and Eagle, Monday, August 11, 8:00 PM. Spend a fascinating evening visiting Nepal! Dave Johnston will show slides of his recent visit to the Himalayas.

CLIMBING AND HIKING SCHEDULE

LOWER TOWER, 6129', Talkeetna Mtns. <u>Saturday</u>, <u>August 9</u> ... fourth and low fifth class rock climb above Snowbird Mine. Ropes of two required. Leader: <u>Chuck McLaughlin</u>, 863-7251.

GLACIER SCHOOL

Theoretical Session, Wednesday evening, August 13, 7:30 PM at the AMU Bat-cave (Student Center). The purpose of this session will be (1) to make and adjust prussik slings needed for the weekend crevasse-rescue practice, (2) to practice prussiking up a rope, (3) to practice simulated pulley and bilgeri rescue techniques in teams of approximately six (accident rope of three, rescue rope of three) so as to eliminate hang-ups on the glacier during the actual practice.

Rescue outline and read it before Wednesday evening. Bring material with which to make up prussiks. Suggested: approx. 25 feet of marine or soft lay \frac{1}{4}" goldline. Also being swami sling, one locking and one regular carabiner, and 10-12 feet of additional tubular mylon sling material sufficient for chest sling. "Community gear" needed: tape knife, and matches.

Matanuska Glacier, Saturday-Sunday, August 16-17....Glacier Travel and Crevasse Rescue Practice ... Needed: overnight gear, ice axe, crampons, prussiks, swami and chest slings, locking and regular carabiner. Plan to dress warmly as crevasses will be cold and wet. Review Crevasse-Rescue Sheets before weekend. Departure will be casual mid-Saturday morning from Sears parking lot. Check with leaders for exact time. LEADERS: Fred Cady, 753-2211 days, Ned Lewis, 279-2282 and others.

Eklutna Glacier, Saturday-Sunday, August 23-24 ... Ice-fall negotiation, step-cutting, cramponing, ice-climbing techniques. Overnight at cabin. LEADERS: Gary Hansen, 272-1145, Ned Lewis, 279-2282 and others.

BENCH LAKE AND "BENCH PEAK," 5575', Chugach Mtns., Saturday-Monday, August 30 thru September 1. See description of this area and first ascent of the peak by the Bludworths in this issue of SCREE. LEADER: To be announced at August meeting.

LYNX PEAK, 6536', Talkeetna Mtns., Sunday, September 7. Spend the day hiking and climbing in Reed Lakes area above Snowbird Mine, with major effort aimed toward Lynx Peak. ("Thirty Hikes" #23) LEADER: To be announced at August meeting.

LOST LAKE AND PEAK 5100'

June 14-15, 1969

Lotte Kramer

On a beautifully warm and sunny weekend, Tony Bockstalter, Wayne Gehnan and I set out to find Lost Lake. We had been warned that the trail and the lake were completely covered with snow, but it seemed worth finding out for ourselves.

The trail starts $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of Seward, taking off on the right-hand side, marked by a small sign. A wide logging road leads for about a mile to a well kept trail which forks after about another mile. The hiking trail goes straight along Lost Creek, the ski-doo trail takes off on the right higher up on the slope, through a low pass in the woods and to open tundra country, always in south-north direction. This ski-doo trail is well marked with signs, ribbons, and paint. After slushing through some miserably wet snow we reached a high ridge above Lost Lake where we camped on a lovely flat and warm scenic tundra spot. Resurrection Bay was to the south, the Seward-Anchorage Highway to the east and the Kenai Mountains all around.

Next morning, bright and early, we set out for Peak 5710'. We crossed the river area at the south end of Lost Lake and headed west for the east ridge of the mountain which was partly free of snow. The going was surprisingly easy and the snow was firm but not icy. We reached the peak, so we thought, after about four hours only to find that the true peak towered behind, with a glacier and a 1000' drop between. As we had no rope we postponed it for another time. We chose the next ridge south as an alternate route down, which would be a better way to climb 5710, as it would avoid going over the top of 5100. After the initial steep descent, we glissaded down to the end of the lake. We had no trouble going back, as we followed the dry ridges, picking up our ski-doo trail in the woods. We looked for, but never did find, the summer hiking trail at this end. It was fun exploring new country, especially with this unusually hot weather.

MT. SPURR 11,070' June 27-29, 1969 Tordvillo Mts., Alaska Range, Second Ascent

Rod Wilson

In September 1960, (SCREE, October 1960) Helga Bading, Eric Barnes, Chuck Metzger, Bob Bailey, Gregg Erickson, and Burt Putcher climbed Mt. Spurr, 80 miles due west of Anchorage in a memorable climb up a ridge from Lake Chakachamna. Paul Crews, Hans Metz, Lowell Thomas, George Wichman, and I chose a route from the north, landing in Lowell's plane at 5000' on a diverticulum of Capps Glacier, about half way between Mt. Torbert and Mt. Spurr which are 10 air miles apart. We placed a camp at 7500' at the top of a snow ridge and the next morning topped out of the steep glacial cirque at 9400' on the snowfields. We had really intended to climb "Chickantna" (10,900'), a dome half way to Spurr, but Spurr looked so inviting in the smoky distance that we skirted under the west side of our original goal and labored across the wide hot snow fields toward Spurr. Skiis and skins were finally abandoned at 10,000'. We kicked steps up the final 1000' of soft steep snow toward the inactive crater, malodorous from surrounding sulfur fumaroles which colored the snow a sickly chartreuse. The Bading-Barnes route from the east was intersected a few hundred feet from the top. Up over the last crevasse, up a steep snow pitch again, and we were on the snowy whale-back summit. Despite long ski schusses back across the snow fields, we didn't have the strength to climb "Chickantna" too. As a matter of fact, to be safe we carried skis down the last 2000' of steep cirque wall arriving at camp near midnight after a 16-hour climb -- a long day for five old men. We came out on the third day.

SHEEP MOUNTAIN "ATTEMPT" 6250'

July 13, 1969

Randy Renner

CLIMBERS: Peter Vlasveld, Lotte Kramer, Brigitte Ressel, Randy Renner (Leader), Ronald M. Nelson and Brent Leines from Minneapolis, Minnesota. Also, Joe Blflsplk from Doglatch.

Shortly after the arrival of Joe Blflsplk at the Sears' parking lot, I noticed a large black cloud hovering over the assembled climbers. It was promptly suggested that we get in the Golden Goose and gallop toward our goal of the day, Sheep Mountain.

The drive to Seward was in the rain and clouds all the way down. I began to wonder if there was a connection between Joe Blflsplk and the cloud that was following us. We arrived at the Snow River bridge and attempted to find our peak; but the big cloud had settled around the mountain, so Lotte suggested that we go on to Seward and "run" up to Race Point (See 30 Hikes - Hike #30) to get limbered and then come back and climb Sheep

Mountain after we got warmed up and the cloud had gone away.

We are all now sure that someone or something is in the wood pile as the big choud has followed us to Seward and is now on top of Mt. Marathon as we prepare to race to the top. Immediately after the calisthenics of exiting from the car and putting on boots and socks (not necessarily in that order), we don our multi-colored packs and race up the trail in our plummet to the summit- half way up the real action begins when a member of the group (her name to forever remain a secret) has to stop several times to dance the "Green Apple Quick Step." She finally caught up with us looking very flushed indeed, the movements of this dance are very fast.

The Face Point was reached in an hour and twenty minutes, and all agreed that those who make the entire race course in an hour or under are deserving of all accolades accorded them, including the remote possibility of mental derangement for those who do it more than once. Just below the summit of Race Point we stopped and watched the flight of a Bald Eagle searching for a thermal to carry him aloft. We all stood, quietly, in respect to a magnificent bird in flight -- until somebody in the group asked, "Is he really bald? What makes him get bald?" I couldn't remember if ignorance is bliss or to be pitied, so I passed on those questions and we struck out to finish our journey.

Although the true summit of Marathon was in the clouds, we still decided to give the ridge that takes off from Race Point a try. We went as far as we could without a rope. The ridge presents many interesting problems of hand holds that melt in your hand -- exceptionally sharp rock- gendarmes- gullys. Since we could not see the remainder of the ridge or if the glacier leads directly to the summit, I cannot recommend which route to take.

We saw several Marmots and stepped in much Marmot sign on the way up and down. On the way down a female Ptarmigan posed for our clicking shutters, and we got to within $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 feet ... sure makes one wonder what a bird like that has for brains and how it stays alive. The scree from Race Point down is not the best, but there are spots that can be great sport when bounding for the bottom. One member of the group took approx-

imately 9 minutes to reach the base.

We tried to talk Joe Blilsplk out of riding back with us because of his possible connection with the cloud that had been with us all day, but he said he wanted to go back to at least Girdwood. On the way back through Moose Pass we stopped to take pictures of the Moose Pass Chapter of the Brothers Motorcycle Club. We talked to a couple of the unwashed ones on their Crotch Rockets, and we were surprised at how much they knew about mountains and climbing. Much to our surprise when they took off the helments it was Harry and Bub . is this a new career? The cloud followed us and rained off and on all the way back to Girdwood where we let Joe out. The sun came out and started to shine as soon as Joe got out of sight. More then a mere coincidence beware if a Joe Blilsplk signs up for future climbs.

All joking aside, I intend to try Sheep Mountain in the latter part of August or early September. Anybody interested in doing the mountain on a "spur of the moment" basis should indicate interest by leaving a phone number with me. The next climb is supposed to be a second ascent (provided the Moose Pass Mountaineering Club doesn't do it). If there is clear weather the climb should be well worth it... I hear the view is something to behold.

BASHFUL PEAK "NON-TRIP" July 4-6, 1969

Nick Parker

The Bashful Peak trip was given up due to horrible weather in the valley. Instead, the climbers spent the weekend bouldering and climbing in Snowbird Mine valley. Steve Hackett, Larry Swanson, Wayne Gaman, and Nick Parker scrambled up Higher Spire from the Reed Lakes and traversed over it and across Aura Glacier to Prospect Pass and came out at the mines above the hut. Our time was also spent on lowland wandering and bouldering. Larry and Wayne climbed Didilkama on Sunday, while Steve and Nick wandered up to the lakes to soak up the sun.

TANAINA AND TIKISHLA PEAKS June 28, 1969

Charles Kibler

On a smoky Saturday, June 28, I followed "30 Hikes" #7 past the trapper's cabin, until that route crosses a new homesteader's road. I followed that road north to near its end, where I then climbed Near Point (3025'). Contouring along Wolverine Peak, I landed at the floor of North Fork Campbell Creek Valley about 2 miles later at a loss of about 400 feet. I hiked up the valley as fas as the end of the mile-long lake near the end of the valley where I came across an old caved-in cabin made of lumber. The island in the lake shown in the Anchorage A-7 quadrangle is a chain of islands on an underwater moraine crossing the lake. One mile of easy climbing to the north took me to the top of Peak 5350, with a view of typical Alaskan scenery mountains, lakes, valleys -- mount ains across Ship Creek loomed up through the smoky haze. The hike west along the ridge to Peak 5350 was also easy down 400 feet and up 300 feet. The hike 3/4 mile northwest further along the ridge, however, was rough with much climbing over steep bare rock. This ridge, between a cirque on the west and a lake on the northwest, is every bit as steep as shown on the Anchorage A-7 quadrangle. One could go around this ridge by decending 800 feet to the cirque and back. Return was made by decending into the high stream valley to the west of Peak 5150, then cutting south across North Fork Campbell Creek, and contouring back up to Near Point. Campbell Creek drops about 500 feet per mile, so the further east the stream is crossed, the less decending and climbing it back is necessary to cross it. This time I tried walking down the ridge toward Basher Road, and after going over a series of bulldozed clearings and plowing through patches of dense forest, alder, and devil's club, came across a ski slope which led out. Unless there is a trail here I don't know of, the way by the trapper's cabin is easier.

"BENCH PEAK" 5575'

July 19, 1969

Harry Bludworth

The Alaska Railroad and the Seward Highway go their separate ways at Portage and don't come together again until they join at Moose Pass. In between them are some 250 to 300 sq. miles and a fair collection of peaks. Last winter it was brought to my and Dub's attention by Bob Spurr that 5575 was the highest point in this area and was unclimbed. The three of us were supposed to attempt it during the winter, but this trip never materialized and in June, Dub, Fred Cady, and I made the first attempt. This was a two-day attempt, however, and because of the then raging Ohio Creek we had to go way out of our way and ran out of time.

From that point on we had our eyes on "Bench Peak" and thought of every possible route to the mountain. Dub and I finally decided to go the same way we had in June, but this time in three days and with a boat ride across Upper Trail lake. On Saturday, the 19th of July at 8:30 AM, Tom Olendorf picked us up and took us across the lake to the beginning of the Johnson Lake Trail.

This is a very easy trail and doesn't gain much elevation to the lake. All but the last mile is obvious and the creek has numerous log crossings. There is a cabin that is very difficult to find. The Forest Service is working on the other end of this trail now and will probably build cabins, etc. This would be a perfect club hike in August.

On the way in we saw three female common goldeneye and four ducklings. At Bench Lake we encountered more goldeneye, turnstones, and lots of golden-crowned sparrows, including a nest with four young.

Luck was with us this trip. Many of the creeks we had stopped at in June were dry and we were beginning to wonder about our possibilities of crossing Ohio Creek down low instead of having to go way upstream as we had planned. At the far end of Bench Lake we followed a small dry creek bed, which had water in it on our first trip, to the big, old creek bed of Ohio Creek. This portion is dry because the Forest Service has diverted Ohio Creek, so as to try and make Bench Lake a clear water lake. Johnson Lake is already this way and affords good fishing. The "Hiway", as we called it, led us to the diverting dam and a beautiful waterfall on Ohio Creek. There is a memorial here for a man who died while working on the project.

As we had thought, the creek only had a third as much water as before and we waded it with ease. A short bushwack around the end of a ridge to our valley, two miles up, and a campsite. Our day ended with a fight against the wind to get the rainfly up.

Didn't sleep well, for the tent flapped noisily all night. Rainy and blowing at 6:00 AM, so we waited till 8:00 AM till we commenced the climb in even worse weather. The first 500 feet were the worst. Loose Chugach rock flying down the slope at every step. Sliding back almost as much as we stepped up. On the ridge, the wind was fierce. Easy ridge running for $l\frac{1}{2}$ miles and a sharp turn to the northwest. The summit is quite roomy and now about 2 feet higher with our cairn. Had some sleet here and stayed for thirty minutes.

The descent went fast, although a bit dangerous on the loose rocky slopes.down low. Back at the tent at 4:00, we lay in the sunny spots we were receiving. Rained again at 6:00PM, so it's everyone inside. Slept well on Sunday. Thought of the Apollo 11 crew and their adventure as compared to ours.

Monday morning began rainy still, but a short way down the valley we turned to behold Bench Peak in full. From then on we had sunny spells and enjoyed every one of them. Ran up a large rock in the creek bed and left a tin-can register there. Stayed high around the ridge, avoiding most of the alders, then dropped down to the "Ohio Valley" to begin the long 12 mile hike still ahead. From our campsite to Moose Pass was 15 miles and we had no boat ride on the way out.

Saw a lone duckling on Johnson Lake and were finally able to find the cabin. Down the trail and $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles of railroad tracks brought us home at 4:30 PM Monday, July 21. We were glad to hear that Apollo 11 was also a success.

MT. WICKERSHAM, Chugach Mts. 7415'

July 5, 1969

Grace Hoeman

In 1960 Mt. Wickersham was named by the late Senator E. L. Bartlett for Judge James Wickersham 1/, maybe one of the few peaks in Alaska justly named after a person. The mountain, interestingly freestanding, has been "one still to do" for quite a while and as our ways brought us occassionally along the Glenn Highway, Vin and I would stop and look at the prospects. We'd agreed on what appeared to us a feasible route. The Bludworth brothers tried the Glacier Creek approach this spring and found it a long bushwack. On their second try avalanche danger prohibited ascent to the summit.

In May, Fred Cady, Harry Bludworth and I selected the Matanuska Glacier route and followed the narrow valley which gives access to the East Face and SE Ridge. We climbed the East Face but avalanches made us capitulate a few feet below the summit and we hurried down the face which was "on the move." An avalanche got at us as we'd packed up, ready to leave and roared down a gully above us (which I had inspected as being emptied of snow before) and through our campsite. We made a successful run for it and watched with awe as the slide played with out belongings, burying part of them. Our crampons (all six of them) obligingly were shoved aside and we retrieved them after the slide had come to rest; however, only one ice axe could be recovered. I led the glacier route back with Hoeman's home-made Alpenstock,

which worked quite well, but I was not going to let my favorite ice axe accumulate any rust.

On July 3, I arrive at the Matanuska River bridge after 10:00 PM and find the gate locked. I sleep till headlights wake me. The man behind the headlights is Kimball, who takes my money and opens the gate. I sleep in the car at the glacier snout. It rains hard during the night and in the morning the weather looks dubious, low clouds, and only after some if's, but's and when's do I gather enough courage to go. Plastic bags put over my boots help me across the messy, muddy glacier snout. An endless terminal moraine dulls my crampons, but then I get on to what looks like the back of an enormous white whale. Easy going from there on and I have leisure to contemplate the philosophy of "fate" and "choice" as I approach the side valley. I have to get off the whale's back and into irregular, broken-up glacier terrain. Mosses abound here and there, heralding the ultimate fate of the Matanuska Glacier. I leave my crampons behind in the lower valley, climb around cliffs and enter the high valley, which is rather unkept looking, boulder-strewn, but many flowers bloom along its side. Particularly beautiful are the deep blue forget-me-nots, which I intend to pick on my way out. Fred's red overboots look like traffic lights and lead me to the avalanche slope. Opposite our previous campsite I find a flat spot between two knolls and put up the tent as rosy finches look on. I collect our belongings which are scattered along the slope: gloves, overboots, ice axes, rope, camera, canteens... Early in the not-so bright morning, I, equally not so bright, work my way up the East Face, which is not difficult, except that the brittle rock slopes out and is covered by small-sized debris. I reach an unstable little summit much earlier than I had anticipated, steal rocks out of the summit tower side to build up the top, on which I dare not stand, place a jar with wrong entry (I call the ascent face N-E, maybe this will work as an invitation for a second ascent). I descend along the S-E Ridge, which is surprisingly easy and scree down to my camp, chasing sheep the other way. I stack the recovered possessions on top of my load, and where there had previously been one ice axe for three, there are now three ice axes for one. Thus I commence the way home. Taking the pack off occasionally to pick flowers is all right, but putting it back on evokes some stark mutterings, which only the rosy finches hear. By evening I am back at Kimball"s homestead, again the plastic bags help me across the mud. A boycott is in progress at the gate, but nobody wishes to drag me into the argument and I soon go on my way. Mt. Wickersham is a worthwhile two-day trip, but one had to keep going, otherwise it easily becomes a three-day affair.

1) TERRIS MOORE: "Mt. McKinley, The Pioneer Climbs," pg. 31 and on.

PEAK 5500'-

July 5, 1969

Harry Bludworth

Peak 5500- is located just south of Lark Mountain between Grant Lake and Falls Creek. Looking from the Moose Pass Townsite, one sees only the 5300' subpeak, which is much more impressive than the summit. The ridge running directly west from this subpeak and appearing from Moose Pass as the right skyline redge seemed inviting to Dub and me, and one afternoon in June we drove Dub's BMW up an old mine road to the edge of the ridge at 4000' to make a recon (mainly of the road). While there, we ran up to around the 5000' level and could see the entire ridge to the 5300' subpeak. The ridge was steep and exposed off both sides, but the going was easy when we came back on July 5th to have a go at it in the rain and wind.

From the 5000' point I mentioned, the ridge drops, then goes up, then drops, then goes up again, and in the last one third of a mile there is a 500' elevation gain. For safety we roped here and belayed each other on short traverses of exposure. The subpeak was a large boulder which we went onto one at a time. Left a cairn and small register just below the boulder.

The true peak was a mile down and up a ridge. We descended 800' to a col between the two and skirted along just above a small hanging glacier. An easy scree

ridge went the remaining 900 vertical feet to the summit and it too was a big boulder. Both of us could get on this one, however. There was somewhat of a pile of rocks on the summit. If it was meant as a cairn, it must have been there long ago. Till someone claims differently, we will call this a first recorded ascent of Peak 5500. Our descent look us down the south ridge, for a complete traverse. Marmots and homo sapiens were the only fauna observed. (You couldn't see far enough to observe anything else.)

BITS AND PIECES

On July 5, junion member Pavid Hunke, along with non-members Ken Martinson, Steve Martinson, and Andy Jenkins attempted to scale Suicide I (5005') via its NW ridge. Problems with rotten rock, exposure, 40 MPH winds, rain, and most important, lack of adequate belay stances caused us to turn around at approximately the 4700' level. Descent caused further difficulties as we had to go down the same way we came up. After a long roped descent we finally reached the lower smow fields and recovered our cool in style glissading down towards McHugh Creek Lake. Four very subdued and thankful climbers reached the car at 7:00 PM and headed out of Rabbit Creek Valley.

On Sunday, July 6, Chuck McLaughlin and Bob Spurr made the first traverse of Pioneer Peak, 6398', ascending its west ridge to the summit and descending the standard N. gully after passing directly over "Counterpoint". The entire traverse, beginning at Goat Creek bridge and ending $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of the old Knik River bridge, took 13 hours including one hour spent on the summit.

Bob Spurr and Ned Lewis are spending a week climbing in the Bugaboos in British Columbia, Canada.

FOR SALE:

One pair Lowa Eiger double boots for winter climbing and ski-touring. Plenty of leather left. \$35.00.

One pair Blizzard epoxi skis, G. S. flex Marker toe and turntable with long thongs.

One Kelty Mountaineer bag. Large size. \$10.00. This stuff will be at the August meeting. See Nick Parker.

HELP!! COLUMN:

- 1) Scree's files are missing copies of the following issues: November 1968, December 1968, January 1969, February 1969, and the Index. If you have extra copies of these issues or are not planning to keep your copies, please send them to Liska Snyder.
- 2) Scree's small, overworked, faithful mailing staff desperately needs HELP!! If you are willing to devote just a few hours, one evening a month to helping, please call Carol DeVoe at 333-5492.

WEDDING BELIS rang in abundance recently for MCA'ers. We were all delighted to learn that our most eligible bachelor, <u>Gary Hansen</u> was married on July 2nd in San Francisco. He and his wife Fanny will make their home in Anchorage. <u>Patrick Dugan</u> and <u>Anna Baziak were married in June in Anchorage</u>. July 26th was the big day for two couples. <u>Chet Zenone</u> married Merrilee Cargill in Colorado Springs and <u>Lydia Cheney</u> was wed to <u>Brendan McKiernan</u> in Connecticut. Congratulations and Happy Hiking to all the couples!

ADDRESS CHANGES: Tom and Jane Meacham, 486 West Fifth Street, Loveland, Colorado 80537. Patrick and Anna Dugan, 6501 East Tenth, Anchorage, Alaska 99504, 333-9325 (home).

NEW AND NEWLY PAID UP MEMBERS: Charles Kibler, 4158 Hood Court, Anchorage 99503; Don Stockard, Geological Sciences, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, Calif. 91109. Mrs. Janet Bailey, 2113 Stanford Drive, Anchorage, 279-2389 (home). Charles and Andy Renkert, 1225 S Street, Anchorage, 277-0354 (home). Brigitte Ressel, Box 447 (mail), 8730 Lake Otis Pkwy. (home), Anchorage, 344-2676 (home) 279-3471 (work). Alan Sherry, 7342 West Eighth, Anchorage, 272-9439 (work). Carol Phillips, 2511 Eagle, Anchorage, 272-7422 (work). Steve Hackett, c/o Union Oil Company, 2805 Denali, Anchorage, 279-1481 (local), Box 1702, Estes Park, Colorado 80517 (home). Harold J. Clark, 3308 Wyoming Drive, Spenard, 279-4650 (home).

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