

Wrangell St. Elias News

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"

Vol. Six Issue One

January & February 1997

Two Dollars

The Wild Train Ride

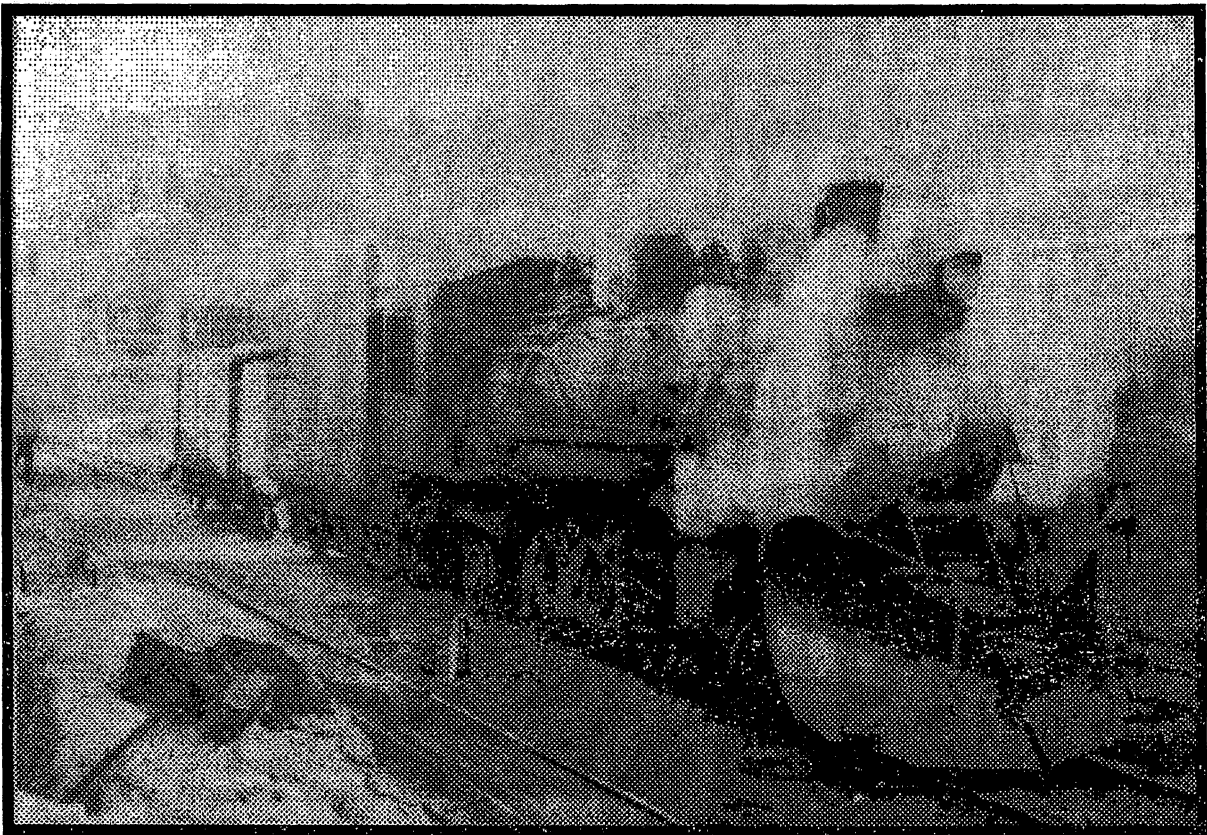


Photo courtesy James McGavock

Riding down the hill from Kennecott to McCarthy in this train would be quite a thrill for any kid growing up in Kennecott in the late 1930's. But there was one small detail that engineer Art Holt failed to tell our hero, young Jim McGavock. Don't miss THE WILD TRAIN RIDE on page 8.

Mt. Saint Elias' South (Harvard) Ridge

A mountain climbing adventure by David Hart

A note from the publisher

BY BONNIE KENYON

Christmas is just around the corner as I begin this issue's "note" to you, our readers. Rick and I just put our tree up the other day and the space underneath holds some rather interesting looking packages which has naturally piqued my curiosity. Most years I have an idea or two what might be hidden under the wrapping paper and bows, but Rick has me stumped this year. What is especially satisfying to me is seeing the blank look on his face when he studies the packages addressed to him! I believe we are both in rare form this year!

On the cover of this issue you will notice a picture of Engine #74 which we all have subscriber and "Kennecott Kid," Jim McGavock to thank. His most recent letter (see Letters to the Editor, page 31) and picture arrived shortly after we mailed out the November/December '96 WSEN. In his letter, Jim mentioned a "Wild Train Ride" he experienced as a child when he and his family lived in Kennicott. I called Jim and asked if he would send us the story to share with you. Jim got right on it and you can find his account on page 8. Thanks, Jim, for sharing your memories with us!

Sometimes the history of the McCarthy/Kennicott area seems like a giant jigsaw puzzle to me, just waiting to be put together! Although subscriber Ron Simpson is not a Kennecott Kid, he continues to add a piece here and there to the puzzle. Jim wrote to Ron recently and mentioned a "neat

looking closed 4 door sedan" he remembered. Leave it to Ron to search through his collection of historic snapshots and find a picture of the exact car Jim had referred to. We also include this on page 31.

I want to also thank subscriber Cliff Marwood of Pentioton, British Columbia. Cliff and his parents lived in McCarthy in the early 1920's. I was thrilled to receive 3 photos from Cliff just recently. They are Hubriok photos of Kennecott Glacier, Miles Glacier and McCarthy. This leads me to share with you that Cliff has—among others—5 panoramas by "Cap" Hubriok, one black and white and 4 hand-tinted by Mrs. Hubriok and other photos that depict the early days of McCarthy and area. If anyone out there is interested in touching bases with Cliff, you may want to drop him a line at #141-3333 S. Main, Pentioton, BC V2A8J8 or give him a call at (604) 492-1048. In the future we hope to share with you several of the photos he sent us awhile back. Thank you, Cliff, for entrusting us with a few more pieces to McCarthy's historical puzzle!

A new contributor to WSEN this issue is David Hart. His article, *Mt. Saint Elias South (Harvard) Ridge*, originally appeared in SCREE, a publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Our special thanks to Willy Hersman, SCREE's editor, for sharing David's story with us all. We met Willy when he visited our area this last summer with Neil O'Donnell. SCREE is a monthly publication of the club. Their address is: Box 102037, An-

chorage, AK 99510.

We received two press releases that someone out there might find informative. One calls attention to visual and performing artists. Alaskan Viewpoint Publishing is now compiling information for its 1997 statewide directory "Who's Who in Alaskan Arts." Local artists are invited to be a part of this important reference book, free of charge. For complete information and questionnaire, send a self-addressed, 55 cents stamped, 9X12 envelope to: Who's Who in Alaska Arts, HCR64, Box 453, Seward, AK 99664. Be sure to specify visual or performing arts.

The second news release is from the U. S. Commission for Scholastic Assistance. This organization supplies the public with over 700 different scholarship sources. Their lists include the scholarship names, addresses, application deadlines, summaries about the scholarships and the amount the scholarship will pay your child. Most scholarships include junior colleges, career and vocational schools, 4 year colleges, graduate schools, medical and law schools. A small example of the scholarships available to students include: Handicapped Student Scholarships, Members of a Church Scholarships, Scholarships for "C" Students, Veteran Children's Scholarships, Scholarships for Minorities and much, much more.

For information, send a self-addressed stamped #10 envelope to: The U. S. Commission for Scholastic Assistance, Box 668, O'Fallon, IL 62269.

(Cont. pg. 5)

Items of Interest

BY BONNIE KENYON

Kim Northrup: Summer and fall are busy seasons here in the McCarthy area, but some activities come to an abrupt halt once winter rolls in. Most of the local businesses close down, outside help leaves and even a few of our regulars take off on exciting ventures. Kim fits perfectly into the latter description.

Putting finishing touches on her summer employment as manager of the McCarthy Lodge, Kim immediately started packing for her winter escape. This new direction took her south—as far south as Ramona, Ca., where she is getting first-hand training on how to raise Great Pyrenees and Pyrenean Shepherds.

Because I hadn't heard from her since she left us on Oct. 17, you can imagine the thrill I had when I received a phone call from her the other day. She tells me she is one busy but happy lady! Along with her hosts, Jim and Kim Lasley of Ramona, Kim's first month in sunny California was filled with dog shows and baby-sitting the Lasley's 25 Pyrenees. Over Thanksgiving it was "no vacancy" at their boarding kennel with 100 visiting dogs and 7 new puppies needing individual love and attention.

The weather is beautiful, says Kim, and her trailer is outfitted with full-time electricity

(even a microwave). The Lasley's property includes 4 1/2 acres of grapes. Sounds like heaven on earth, doesn't it? (Well, maybe the abundance of fruit, says Rick, but 100 dogs? No way!)

Richard Villa: Speaking of dogs...Richard certainly has his hands full of these critters. He's dogsitting Mike McCann's 9 sled dogs as well as 2 local dogs thrown in. So, when we asked him what he was up to these days, he quickly remarked, "hauling drinking water (7 to 8 gallons daily) for his team." He

ports these days.

Malcolm Vance and Junior: Malcolm and son Malcolm Jr. are temporarily basking in the warmer temperatures of Novato, Ca. They are spending the holidays with Malcolm's mother, Suzanne Lundberg, but should be back shortly.

Malcolm, a long-time local dog musher is down to one dog these days, his former—now retired from active duty—lead dog, George. Actually, Malcolm says he is considering upgrading (I suppose that's a matter of opinion to some!) to a snow-machine.

The other day Malcolm and son stopped by for propane. Junior came inside and visited with me for awhile. During our most interesting conversation, I asked him if he had any dogs left at home. He paused a moment then said, "No, just George." I take that to mean George has been promoted!



WSEN staff photo

You never know what you might see on a mail day! "Tom" Kritchen on his way to his new quarters at the Miller farm.

is finding time to do some dog sledding across McCarthy Creek, he says. I'm sure Richard and our other local mushers would like to see a bit more snow to fill in those rough spots on the trails. In the meantime, does anyone have any extra hard wood to help beef up Richard's sled? It's missing a few necessary sup-

Ken and Carly Kritchen: While Ken is busy clearing brush and working on their barn, Carly is gearing up for her 2nd annual Christmas tea and cookie exchange to be held at the Kritchen homestead on Dec. 18—ladies only! Ken will only have a day to eat all those goodies before he and

Carly pack up the truck and head out to Cordova for Christmas. I asked him if the entire Kritchen clan was going. Yes, was the answer. Let's see, with the 3 turkeys gone (1 tom is now keeping Jeannie Miller's hen company, 1 was eaten for Thanksgiving dinner and 1 is in the Kritchen's freezer) that only leaves 8 chickens, 3 dogs,

2 cats, 3 goldfish and 3 carp ... I think that's all folks.

John Adams: John just returned from spending a satisfying Thanksgiving holiday with his son Andy Adams in New York. Andy is in his first year at the U. S. Military Academy at West Point. Now talk about a proud father! He couldn't say enough good things about Andy's hard work and new surroundings. Being a holiday, Andy was allowed time off. Renting a car father and son took in a bit of New York sight-seeing—flightseeing being one side trip. (Leave it to John to find an airfield in the middle of New York!)

John enjoyed staying with his aunt who lives near the academy. Sounds like she took good care of him, too, and made sure he arrived back to the airport in plenty of time—and style—in one of those extended limousines, no less. Welcome home, John, and keep up the good work, Andy. We're proud of you, too.

Tim Mischel: Mail days during the winter usually bring out just the local people who pretty much stay here year round. Tim is one who meets that description. I had a chance to visit with him this last week while the incoming mail was being sorted. I asked him what was happening on the hill (meaning above Kennicott). It seems Tim is considering some serious changes these days. He says he may put his property up for sale which includes land and buildings at the Angle Station and in Kennicott. If anyone is interested in contacting Tim, you may do so at PO Box MXY, Glennallen, AK. 99588.

Loy Green: Loy is staying

busy but not exactly off the streets of McCarthy. And he's doing his share of babysitting. Not dogs, but the McCarthy Lodge's generators that supply the power for the telephone system. It's temporary, of course, until Betty returns from Anchorage. In the meantime, Loy's enjoying having plenty of electricity to operate his computer and the use of a telephone!! Look out McCarthy, Loy will probably be standing in line for his own phone next time Copper Valley Telephone comes calling!

Jim and Audrey Edwards: A big CONGRATULATIONS to Jim and Audrey! We are pleased to announce (with their permission) that while in Anchorage on October 29, Jim and Audrey were married. A small party was in attendance which included Audrey's sister, Marelyn Betcher of Anchorage. Steve Edwards, Jim's son, and wife, Lana, were witnesses of the happy occasion.

Rick and I wish you our very best, Jim and Audrey.

Ed LaChapelle and Meg Hunt: Ed and Meg are definitely not traveling at a snail's pace these days. We received an e-mail message from Ed in November outlining he and Meg's travel plans. At the time Ed's message arrived on November 14 from Olympia, Wa., he was almost ready to take off for a week in Switzerland to attend a snow and avalanche conference to be followed by a stop-over in Cincinnati on the way back where Meg was to meet him. They were then planning on driving to Indiana to spend Thanksgiving with Meg's mother.

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After returning to Olympia for a couple days, Ed says next was a week long trip to Canada to do some avalanche training for heli-ski guides.

While in Switzerland, he was eagerly looking forward to spending a weekend with friends (and frequent visitors to the McCarthy area), Walter and Ursel Mueller. Speaking of the Muellers...I was informed by another very good friend of theirs, our favorite Swiss couple just may pay us another visit this upcoming February. I hope Ed will confirm this when he files his next report!

Rick and Bonnie Kenyon: It always seems strange to write about yourself, but I did want to work in a picture I took of Rick's latest project—a portable ice fishing shanty. He built it in our workshop with a little of this and that, some might call it the McCarthy way. Then he transported it on a sled behind our snowmachine to it's winter destination which was Long Lake—about 18 miles away by the route he had to take. The transport went without problem, with Ken and Carly following up on Rick's progress later that afternoon. Once the days get a little longer with more daylight, ice fishing is a must. And the fresh water burbot or ling cod, as we refer to them, are excellent eating.

Inquiry on local UFO!

McCarthy:—Did you see what Jim and Audrey saw? At



WSEN staff photo

Rick prepares to make 18 mile run with snowmobile pulling ice shanty.

approximately 5:50 p.m. on December 4, Jim and Audrey Edwards of Swift Creek (3 miles SW of McCarthy) were walking home from picking up their mail at the Kenyon homestead. Darkness had already settled in for the night as Jim and Audrey made their way down their airstrip towards home. Before passing their caretaker's cabin, Jim suddenly noticed a flash of light to his right and heard a "buzzing" noise. He instantly looked up to about 80 degrees from his line of sight, he says. Towards the bluff and horizontal to the tree tops, an object Jim describes as approximately 1' to 2' in diameter was travel-

ing "so fast, it is hard to describe." He estimates the object traveled 100 yds. in the 1 to 2 seconds it was in view. The object came from behind him and disappeared in the direction of Ken and Carly's homestead, south west of Jim's home.

Audrey who was looking down at the trail in front of her saw the light reflected on the snow and hearing Jim's exclamation of surprise, looked up to see "sparks" then a white burning streak. Jim guesses this only lasted about 10 seconds.

Jim, who has lived in these parts for over 20 years, says he has seen

falling stars, meteorites and the like but he doesn't believe this unidentified flying object fits into these categories. He says it was "definitely in the lower atmosphere" and looked to him like a "rocket flare."

What do you think?

Terry and Dee Frady: It may not be big news to some of you but, like Dee says, "It's big news when it happens to you!" Terry will be celebrating (I'm not sure that is the right word) his 50th birthday on Jan. 12. You might want to drop in and offer your congratulations or sympathy.

A Note from the Publisher (cont. from pg. 2)

Wrangell St. Elias News welcomes aboard the following new subscribers: Erin Adkins, WA; Keith Beheler-Amass, WI; Glenn McGovern, LA; Susi Gobel/ Stephan Klank, Germany; The Huffine Family, NC; Iver Johnson, WA; Nathan Almquist, MN; UAF Rasmuson Library, AK; J. Robert Cooper, PA; Herbert Schnack, NE; Larry & Kathleen Kritchen, AK; Lyle Kritchen, AK.

Kennicott River Footbridge project update

BY RICK & BONNIE KENYON

Twelve contractors from as far away as Vancouver, Washington, submitted bids to construct the bridges over the Kennicott River. Amazingly, the two lowest bids were only \$377 apart. Swalling Construction (Anchorage) was the low bidder at \$1,561,904. Second lowest was Roger Hickel Construction at \$1,562,280.93. At the other end of the scale was North Pacific Construction at \$2,390,037.

Swalling Construction received a letter of intent to award the contract from the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) on November 21. Howard Mozen, president of the McCarthy Area Council, received a phone call from a Swalling representative that same day asking for community support to change the bridge design from the steel truss bridge with 4 sets of piers to a "clear span" cable supported

bridge. According to Project Manager Mark Dawson, the new design could save the DOT approximately \$300,000. This idea was met with little enthusiasm in the community as most people felt any major changes would entail a long delay in the project. Most residents that I spoke to also expressed reluctance to reopen the public process, whether they liked the new design or not.

According to John Patterson of DOT&PF, "DOT will not change one iota of design criteria without going back to ground zero on public involvement." Jim Elieff told me, "The public picked the design—and we are committed to the October 1997 deadline for the project completion." They both assured me that "there is no move afoot at DOT to change the design."

Just prior to press time on the morning of December 13, I talked with Mark Dawson at his

office in Anchorage. According to Dawson, the required bid documents, bonds, etc. are completed and submitted to the state. Although Swalling hasn't received the contract or the notice to proceed with the McCarthy Footbridge project yet, they are expected within the next day or two.

Dawson said they expected to have a crew in our area sometime mid to late February. He assured me we should see some action by the first of March. "We are on track and moving ahead," commented Dawson.

Swalling Construction has been in business since 1947 and was started by Al Swalling who, interestingly, worked on the Copper River & Northwestern Railway. According to Dawson, the elder Swalling was on hand to help close down the railway in 1938. His son, Mike Swalling, is now the president of the company.

McCarthy Road upgrade options

BY RICK KENYON

There has been a lot of talk about "paving the McCarthy Road" lately. I talked with Ken Pendleton at the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) recently and he gave me the following information.

What some at DOT&PF are proposing is not paving, but a process called "HI-FLOAT." There are several variations of the process, basically a bituminous surface treatment

(BST) or an asphalt surface treatment (AST).

An asphalt or bituminous material is sprayed on the road surface, then a sandy, gravelly crushed mixture (called D-1) is applied, smoothed and compacted. The result is what appears to be a gravel road, coarser than pavement. The color varies depending on the materials put down.

The process is cheaper and simpler than pavement, and

recent studies have shown that maintenance is less also. When it becomes necessary to re-do a section of road due to frost heaves or severe pot-holes, it is easier to replace than pavement.

According to Pendleton, the advantage over gravel is two-fold — less maintenance and better dust control. He said there is no difference in normal vehicle speeds over the two types of surfaces.

Phone service area expansion update

BY BONNIE KENYON

McCarthy—
Tuesday,
November 19 was
a red letter day for those
interested in McCarthy's
expanding telephone service.
For those in the May Creek,
Dan Creek and Nizina areas,
phone service came quite a bit
closer.

Ron Ashe, Ben Matteucci,
Dave Klein, Nick Van Dyke, all
representing New Horizons
Telecom, Inc. of Palmer, arrived
in McCarthy bearing gifts for
Copper Valley Telephone's
Sourdough Ridge repeater site.
On a previous trip in
September, New Horizon
shuttled buildings, propane
tanks and solar panels to the

repeater site. This time they
brought batteries, propane
generators, more solar panels
and last, but certainly not least,
the radio gear necessary to
stretch local phone service to
include our outlying neighbors.
The equipment came by truck
over the McCarthy Road. John
Adams of McCarthy Trail Rides
provided the crew with lodging
for their week long stay.

The first order of business
was to transport the truck load
of equipment from John's place
on the west side of the
Kennicott River to the repeater
site at the 3550' level on
Sourdough Ridge. Pilot Steve
Carvalho made short work of
that job with a Bell 204
helicopter which belongs to

Northern Pioneer of Palmer.

According to Ashe, most of
the installation work was
completed before the crew left
on the 27th of November. Two
men expect to return shortly
before Christmas to finish the
wiring. Ashe stated the site
should be ready for operation
sometime after the first part of
January.

Copper Valley Telephone
technicians, Linc Craig and
Russ Jindra, were also in
McCarthy on November 19.
They removed the radio
batteries from the west side
public phone until April, and
installed an external antenna at
the Kenyon's cabin

"There is no pleasure to me without communication: there is not so much as a sprightly thought comes into my mind that it does not grieve me to have produced alone, and that I have no one to tell it to."

—Michel de Montaigne (1533-92)

Water Well Drilling by Track Rig March '97 Coordination

McCarthy area and remote sites
both east and west of the Kennicott

- Drilling rig on track
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The Wild Train Ride

A special friend was Art Holt, a locomotive engineer on the Copper River & Northwestern Railroad. When he brought a train to Kennecott, he would always beckon me to come up into the cab of the locomotive to ride while they switched cars around. This friendship led to "the wild train ride from Kennecott to McCarthy," a story I have told many times.

BY JAMES MCGAVOCK

The camp had been closed down for two or three years in the early 1930's. They decided to resume operations in 1935. The company kept a train crew at Kennecott all winter while the railroad was closed down from December to June, to move loaded ore cars to a siding near McCarthy and return some empties every two or three weeks. They would fill cars here at Kennecott in the sacking shed. They would stack the sacks up on the flat cars. When all the cars were loaded, they would take the full ones down to McCarthy and bring a few empties back.

The engineer (Art Holt) seemed to think I was a nice kid and he would always beckon me to climb up in the cab while he switched the cars at Kennecott.

One day he asked, "Would you like to ride down to McCarthy with me tomorrow?"

I said, "Sure." So, when the time came I could hardly wait. It was a surprise to me that there were several women and children going along, too, because there was limited room in the cab of a steam locomotive. There we were. We started out

going down the hill from camp.

There is somewhat of a grade between Kennecott and McCarthy, and for some reason the brakes didn't work on the ore cars. Wow! Soon we were going 70 or 80 miles an hour. McCarthy went by like a blur. There was a big long trestle at

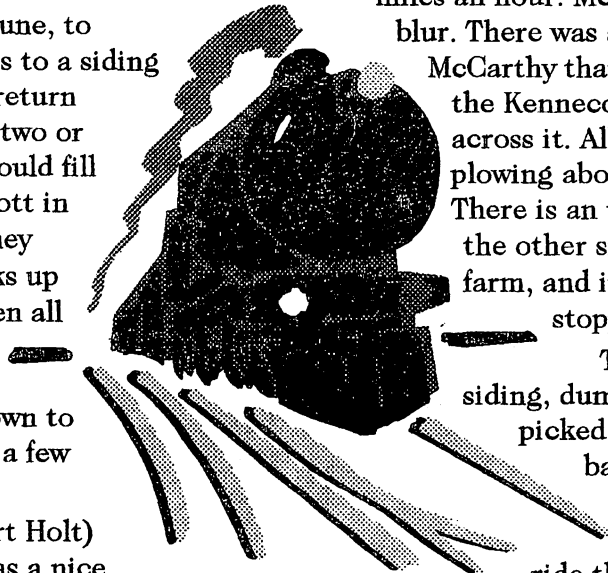
McCarthy that crossed the two forks of the Kennecott River, and we zipped across it. All the time we were plowing about two feet of snow. There is an upgrade after you get to the other side just near the Iverson farm, and it slowed us down and we stopped.

Then we backed up to the siding, dumped the ore cars, and picked up the empties and went back to McCarthy. The women were scared to death. They wouldn't ride the locomotive back with the engineer and crew. I thought the ride was kinda neat. I wasn't scared at all. They certainly gave some thought to throwing us children off in the snow banks on the way down, but they didn't do it.

When we got back to camp, word of the wild train ride soon spread over the mukluk telegraph. I had not asked my parents for permission to go.

I was grounded at home for some time.

The McGavock family lived at Kennecott for 13 years. Jim's father Jim McGavock Sr. was a master mechanic. (He was also an amateur radio operator.) "We had it pretty nice the 13 years we lived at Kennecott," says Jim Jr. "Indoor plumbing, steam heat, electricity, and pretty good rail service to Chitina and Cordova." Jim now lives in Ogden, Utah. His sister, Jean McGavock Lamb lives in Littleton, Colorado.



Mt. Saint Elias' South (Harvard) Ridge

BY DAVID HART

“Yakutat Marine Operator, this is the Nunatak, over.”

“Go ahead, Nunatak.”

“I'd like to place a long distance calling-card call to Anchorage, over.”

“Okay, Nunatak.

What is your radio call sign, please?”

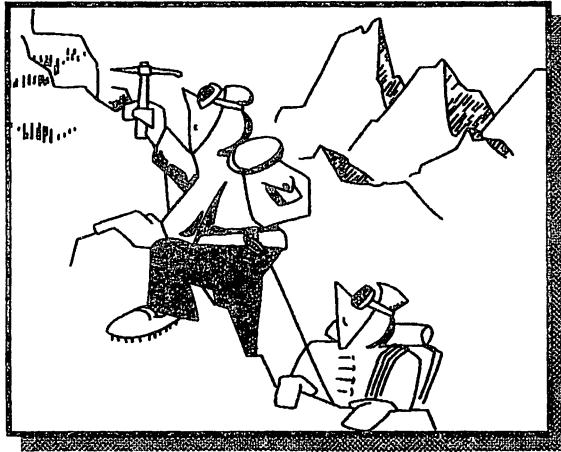
“I don't know my call sign, over,” I innocently replied. What I didn't admit was that I not only didn't know my call sign, but I didn't even have one. Furthermore, I wasn't on the Nunatak and I wasn't even sure there was such a vessel. I was on the summit of Mt. Saint Elias and the nearest boat was 18,000 feet below us on the calm waters of Icy Bay.

“Nunatak, in the future I suggest that you find out your call sign and post it next to your radio. And please don't yell into the mike; I can hear you just fine. Now, what number would you like to call?”

I couldn't very well explain to her our position up here; that it was ten degrees below zero and the wind was gusting thirty-five miles per hour creating a wind chill of -66. All I could offer was my apology. “I'm sorry. The number I'd like to call is area code nine-zero-seven, two-six-five...”

Mt. Saint Elias, at 18,008 feet, has the largest vertical relief of any coastal mountain in the world. Its proximity to the Gulf of Alaska provides an

unlimited source of moisture for the region's notoriously heinous storms. Several years ago, a group of Anchorage climbers attempting the mountain received over thirty feet of snow during a two week period. An expedition to this



coastal region of Alaska is a serious endeavor, indeed.

On May 1, six of us rendezvoused in Chitina to begin our 1996 Mt. Saint Elias expedition. Our group consisted of Paul Barry, Kurt Bauer, Jacques Boutet, Brad Gessner, John Lapkass and myself, all from Anchorage. Some of our gear included 250 pounds of food, 9 gallons of fuel, 90 carabiners, 20 ice screws and 10 snow pickets. A lightweight expedition, we were not.

Paul Claus, and his father John, of Ultima Thule Outfitters met us on the Chitina airstrip with their DeHavilland Beaver and Piper Super Cub. Several members of our group have used the Claus' flight service on five prior expeditions, and we have always been pleased with

their excellent service. From Chitina, it was a ninety minute flight to the 7,900 foot level of the Bagley Ice Field, just north of Saint Elias. Both planes regrouped here, as our 9,750 foot landing site on west ridge of Mt. Haydon (11,950 feet) was only large enough to accommodate the smaller Super Cub. During the next three hours Paul shuttled us and our gear from the Bagley Ice Field onto the mountain. We all felt the effects of the altitude, and it was 6:00 PM before we had our base camp completely set up.

“OK, when do you guys want me to come back for you?” Paul asked.

“Two weeks from today - May 14,” we answered. Given good weather, we felt we could be to the summit and back within a week. We hoped an additional week would allow for any storm delays we might encounter along the way. With that, Paul gunned the Cub's engine, and he was gone.

“Hmm. Well, we're here. Now what?” we wondered.

The South Ridge (1947 Harvard Route) of Mt. Saint Elias has received increasing attention during recent years. If Saint Elias has a standard route, this South Ridge might be it. Rated an Alaska Grade 3 (on a scale of 1 to 6), it is one of the easier routes up the mountain and only slightly more difficult than Abruzzi's original 1897 route, one usually avoided due to its very high serac avalanche exposure.

This is not to say that the South Ridge is completely safe. It certainly is not, as much of the route is prone to slab avalanches immediately after a storm. We were especially concerned with the notorious mile long traverse around the north side of Mt. Haydon. These twenty-five to forty degree slopes are extremely dangerous during or immediately after a storm. A month after our ascent, a Mexican climber was killed in an avalanche on these same slopes. Still, several parties each year usually attempt the route and we were the second expedition of 1996. Two months earlier, a hearty trio succeeded in making the first winter ascent of the mountain via the same route.

"If we get an early start in the morning, we may be able to make both double-carries to the Haydon Col tomorrow," some one suggested. Our first camp was two-and-a-half miles to our east, in the col between Haydon and Saint Elias. Our strategy was to double-carry two weeks of supplies to the col so that we could comfortably wait out any storm, and not be forced to cross the dangerous Haydon Traverse when it was unsafe. From our base camp, the route to Camp 1 would ascend the ridge east for one and a half miles, then traverse the north side of Mt. Haydon for one mile before reaching the col.

We went to sleep that night feeling fortunate that we had been able to fly in and establish base camp the same day we left Anchorage.

"I'll take the first lead,"

John volunteered the next morning, stepping into his randonee ski bindings. The sun was shining, the winds were calm, and the views were amazing. Glistening far below us, Icy Bay and the Gulf of Alaska reminded us that we were almost two vertical miles in the sky.

"Let's hold back here, and give John and Jacques some space," Paul suggested. Our first rope team had just crossed a snow bridge spanning a massive crevasse. Immediately beyond that was the mental crux of the route, the Haydon Traverse. We were confident that the snow conditions were stable, yet safe practice dictated some space between rope teams on such a huge avalanche slope. When John and Jacques were but tiny dots across the face, Paul and I followed. Brad and Kurt did the same.

After a bit of route-finding to minimize our slope angle, we reached Camp 1 and cached our gear on the leeward side of the col. We had been told that this col can be an exceptionally nasty place during a storm, so we were prepared to dig huge snow walls for protection when we finally did move camp here.

A one hour ski back to base camp was much more enjoyable than the four hours we spent carrying our loads to Camp 1. It was early evening by the time we returned to base camp so we deferred moving the second half of our gear over to Camp 1 until the next morning.

"OK, we'll see you guys over at the Col." Paul and I bid fare well to the other four and began retracing our tracks from the

day before. Beautiful weather and a set trail made for a relaxing ski until we reached the Haydon Traverse.

"Dave, I think I see a fracture up ahead," Paul said. In deed, just downhill of our old ski tracks was a half inch wide fracture paralleling our route for a hundred feet.

"Twenty-nine degrees," I said to Paul after measuring the slope angle. "I'm sure this was n't here on our first trip across." Even though we still felt confident about the snow stability, we unroped and spaced apart for the remainder of the traverse. It was a welcome relief to finally reach Camp 1. For the next seven days, we would all be hoping more than anything else that these slopes would remain safe until we passed across them one final time.

"Do you want the lead or shall I?" Paul asked.

"It's all yours, Paul. I'll throw the fixed line in my pack, and we can cache it wherever we turn back." Paul and I headed off for a couple of hours before dinner to explore the route above Camp 1.

"Dave, I don't think this will go," Paul shouted back down to me, part way up a steep ice face. "Go ahead and belay me back in."

"Sure thing. Let's try that traverse over to the left," I answered. Paul climbed back down fifty feet to his last ice screw and then traversed left, around the corner. Three pitches later, we were on the gentle slopes leading up to the crux rock band.

"The rock band doesn't look so bad from here, Dave. We may not need the fixed line after all. Let's cache it and go have some dinner." Just as we started down, John and Jacques arrived at our high point. They, too, were curious to explore the route before donning our heavy packs the following morning. As the four of us descended the 1,000 feet back to Camp 1, we left our ice screws in place so that they would be awaiting our return twelve hours later.

"John sure is making good time," I commented to Paul, as he and I arrived at the base of the rock band the next morning. John was almost a full pitch above the five of us, climbing smoothly through mixed terrain in the fifty degree couloir. As the rope came taut on Jacques, he and John began simul-climbing with running belays. Kurt and Brad followed a few minutes later, and then Paul and I brought up the rear. Two pitches later, we were all sitting on top of the rock band at 11,700 feet, enjoying the warm afternoon sun. Looming above us was a huge forty to fifty degree snow and ice face more than 2,000 feet long. Half way up this face was a four foot thick fracture line extending 1,000 feet across the entire face. Below this fracture, the snow had avalanched down to bare ice. It must have been an incredible sight to watch this massive slide obliterate everything in its path. At least we knew the slope was now safe.

Through the combined effort of four engineers, two doctors and an altimeter, it didn't take long for us to figure out that we were 1,600 vertical

feet and fifteen pitches shy of Camp 2. We still had a full afternoon's work in front of us.

"Paul, I don't like this. I'm not sure we should go on." We were seven pitches above the rock band, and I had just followed Paul's lead up the four foot fracture and on to the snow slopes above. The security of our ice screws was now gone, as the snow was too deep to reach the underlaying ice. In theory, when a slope avalanches, the resulting fracture line is the boundary between stable and unstable snow. We knew that it should be safe to continue on, although it was difficult to convince ourselves of this at the time.

Two pitches higher we reached the security of a rock outcrop at 12,700 feet. It was getting late, and rappelling back down the ice face was going to take some time. We decided to cache our gear in the rocks and retrieve it as we passed through with our remaining gear the following afternoon.

"Ping. Ping. Ping."

"What are you doing to my poor picket over there, Dave?" Paul asked. The only suitable anchor for our cache was to pound a snow picket "piton-style" into the rock. At least we knew our cache wasn't going anywhere.

Five rappels and some down-climbing found us back at the top of the rock band where we made one final rappel. Again, we left all eighteen pickets and ice screws in place as we descended to Camp 1 so that our return trip would be quicker the following day. Twelve hours after leaving, we

returned to Camp 1, happy to have climbed through the crux of the route. As we melted snow for dinner, we were treated to a fiery pink alpenglow sunset.

"It doesn't look very good outside, guys," came the comment from an adjacent tent the next morning. Scattered clouds, light wind and snow flurries greeted us as we peeked outside. Up higher, gale force winds were shooting large snow plumes into the sky. None of us were too keen to repeat yesterday's route and climb into a brewing storm, so we took a welcome rest day. Fortunately, the weather settled down and by mid-afternoon it was sunny again. It appeared that we would only lose that one day.

"Well, it looks pretty socked in again," Paul said the next morning. "It's not really snowing or blowing; I just can't see anything. But, we should still be able to follow our route; what do you say we give it a go?" With that, we hopped outside and packed up camp.

Three hours later Paul and I were the first to leave camp and climb above the col. As we climbed higher, the clouds began to dissipate and blue skies prevailed. Our ice screws and snow pickets were still in place, so all we had to do was clip in our rope and climb on. We were enjoying possibly the highest "sport-mountaineering" in North America. It turned out to be a wonderful day. Wonderful, that is, until we reached our cache and had to single-carry all sixty pounds of our gear the final 600 feet to Camp 2.

"Maybe we can dig in on the other side of that crevasse?" I suggested. Camp 2 was located on a large and very exposed bench at 13,300 feet. The high winds during the past week had scoured away much of the snow, revealing glacier ice and neve ice. After a bit of exploring we finally found a spot with enough snow to dig a reasonably protected camp. Three hours later the six of us were brewing up dinner inside our cozy tents.

"With any luck, we'll be at high camp tomorrow night, guys. Let's cross our fingers."

To our dismay, the winds picked up later that night. Unbeknownst to the rest of us, Jacques and John's snow walls had blown over onto their tent during the night, requiring a midnight reconstruction session. By the next morning, the winds were blowing a constant forty miles per hour with gusts up to sixty.

"It's pretty bad out here, Paul," I shouted through the nylon tent walls. I had spent almost two hours in the windstorm reinforcing our own snow walls and digging out our tent. "It's clear, but really windy! There's no way we're traveling in these conditions."

"Well, come on back inside and let's wait it out," came the reply.

Later that afternoon, the winds died down enough that we felt we might be able to reach Camp 3 at 15,200 feet. We packed up camp, and started climbing at 4:00 PM.

"Are we being stupid here, Dave?" Kurt shouted through

the wind, ten minutes later. The -40 F wind chill was certainly bordering on what we thought was dangerous. Fortunately, the terrain between Camps 2 and 3 was not overly difficult, and we were able to move quickly to keep warm.

"Let's push on a bit further. If it gets much worse, we can always head back down."

The one advantage of these high winds was that it stripped away deep snow, exposing solid footing for our crampons. As a result, we were able to climb quickly, and by 6:30 PM Brad kicked the last step up to our bomb proof Camp 3.

Our high camp was located in a massive bergshrund crevasse at 15,200 feet. Whereas our last camp had been very exposed and limited in the amount of snow available for walls, this camp was paradise. We felt we could safely weather any storm here.

During the past thirty hours we had gained over 5,000 feet of elevation. Our bodies recognized this as we prepared our high camp with throbbing heads and heavy breathing.

"... forecast for Yakutat and vicinity is scattered clouds and light wind with little chance of precipitation..." came the voice from our VHF marine radio.

"Great!" we all shouted. It appeared that tomorrow would allow us a shot at the summit. With that, we agreed to set our alarms for 7:00 AM.

"Brrr, it's cold. I can't wait to get into the sun," I

complained, my head frosty from brushing against the interior tent wall. Our high camp was so well protected that we wouldn't receive direct sunlight until early afternoon. As a result, the overnight low temperature of -15 F seemed worse as we melted snow for breakfast. According to the weather forecast, Yakutat was experiencing temperatures ten degrees above normal. I shivered at the thought of even lower temperatures up here if a cold front came through.

"Two quarts of water, some food, my down parka and some wands," I answered, describing the contents of my summit pack. We were hoping to travel light for the final 2,800 foot climb.

We left high camp at 11:00 AM with calm blue skies above us, and scattered clouds below 13,000 feet. This morning was the first time in a week that the upper mountain did not have snow plumes shooting from its ridges. That was a welcome omen.

"What do you think, Paul? Should we try the rocky south ridge, or the snow face to its right?" Paul and I were once again first out of camp this morning so we got to choose the route to the summit.

"Let's stay off the ridge; the rocks may slow us down. The snow on the right looks pretty good." With that, we began an ascending traverse up the forty degree slopes, keeping the south ridge proper just to our left.

"Paul, why don't you come on up. I'll belay you in." I was tired from leading for the last two hours, and it appeared that our intended route to the summit would be more than we had bargained for. "It looks like the snow changes to ice right above us, Paul. It will take a long time to safely climb this last 1,500 feet of forty-five degree ice. And climbing past those huge snow mushrooms on top of the face looks really tough. Maybe we can traverse further to the right across the southeast face, and try those snow slopes over there?" I said, pointing a quarter mile to our right.

"Sounds good. Let's see if Kurt and Brad want to lead for a while." We gladly followed the others as they traversed below some unavoidable seracs to gain the snow slopes far to our right. For the next two hours, Kurt's steady pace carried us up the forty to fifty degree slopes.

Five hundred feet below the summit, Paul volunteered to lead through the final obstacle, a six foot up-thrust crevasse extending across the entire face. There was no avoiding this, so we each had to grunt our way up the overhanging gap in less than perfect style.

"Hold on; I've got to put on some clothes, Dave," Paul yelled back to me. As soon as we exited the southeast face onto the upper east ridge, we were blasted by a frigid thirty-five mile per hour breeze blowing in from Canada. We instantly lost the reflective heat and wind protection offered by our southeast face route. The wind chill immediately plunged to

-66 F. As Paul hastily grabbed some more clothes from his pack, I leapfrogged past him, not wanting to stop in the biting wind. Ten minutes later we reached the 18,008 foot summit of Mt. Saint Elias. It was 4:00 PM and we had been climbing for five hours. It had been only seven days since we landed in base camp, 8,000 feet below us.

To the northeast, the massive Mt. Logan massif dominated the skyline. Further to the right were Mts. Vancouver and Augusta, and in the distance, Mt. Fairweather. To the left of Logan we could make out Mts. Steele, Lucania, Bear, Bona, Blackburn and Miller. We knew that we couldn't spend much time up here in these frigid conditions, so we hurriedly snapped some summit photos.

Reaching the summit was special for all six of us. Saint Elias is a beautiful mountain in a spectacular setting. Its difficulty and notoriety made our good fortune all the more satisfying. As a bonus for me, Saint Elias was my fifth summit of Alaska's five tallest peaks. And for Paul, it was his fifth summit of Alaska's six tallest.

As a novelty, we pulled out our VHF marine band radio and made a few radio phone calls to some friends back in Anchorage to let them know we were safe, and on our way down.

"Dave, we've got to start down. I'm getting cold," Paul said with some urgency.

"You're right; let's get out of here." Our ten minutes on top went all too fast. We took one final look around and

headed down as fast as we could, just as Jacques and John arrived on the summit. Kurt and Brad were only minutes behind them. They, too, only stayed long enough for a few photos, before joining us back on the protected southeast face. We had completed only half of our day's journey, and we were very careful not to let down our guard until we reached the security of our high camp two-and-a-half hours later.

That night the weather forecast again predicted clear skies and calm wind for the next two days. "Congratulations, everyone," we all offered. "Just one more long day and we'll be back at base camp!"

Our eighth day on the mountain dawned crystal clear as far as the eye could see. Our entire route was laid out below us. Unfortunately, base camp looked very far away. The sky above was a deep violet, and three miles below us the waters of Icy Bay glistened in the sun, enticing us for a swim. But that would have to wait. We packed up camp, and at 11:00 AM began the long process of clearing all our belongings from the mountain. When we reached Camp 2 an hour later, we found eight inches of fresh snow awaiting us. During our summit bid, the lower mountain had received a healthy dump of snow. Over a foot of fresh powder now covered the crux ice face between Camps 1 and 2, making down-climbing considerably easier. As a result, we had to rappel only two pitches to reach Camp 1.

"I guess we should keep going, as opposed to camping here?" someone suggested. With that, we retrieved our cache at Camp 1, and began plowing a three hour trench across the Haydon Traverse. Almost two feet of fresh snow made this section particularly difficult, especially when combined with our monstrous loads and an already long day. Fortunately, the new snow covering the Traverse had fallen slowly and without any wind, allowing it to bond well with the existing snow pack. Although somewhat nerve-racking due to its notoriety as an avalanche slope, our return to base camp was

uneventful.

Thirteen hours after leaving our high camp, we had descended over 5,000 feet, and arrived at base camp safe and sound. An hour earlier we had placed a call to Charlie Sassara, Ultima Thule's Anchorage contact, to let him know that we would like to be picked up the following afternoon.

It was a welcome relief to finally fall asleep at 3:00 AM knowing the dangers were over, and that we could relax until the sun cooked us out of our tents the following morning.

As promised, Paul Claus arrived in his Super Cub ten hours later, at 1:00 PM. Our

expedition was over. That night we were all back home in Anchorage after only a ten day absence. For such a successful trip up Mt. Saint Elias, we were truly fortunate that it was not much longer.

Summary of Statistics:

AREA: Alaskan Saint Elias Mountains

ROUTE: South (1947 Harvard) Ridge (Alaska Grade III), Mount Saint Elias, 5,489 meters, 18,008 feet, May 1-10, 1996 (whole party).

PERSONNEL: Paul Barry, Kurt Bauer, Jacques Boutet, Brad Gessner, David Hart, John Lapkass

"Mountains are to the rest of the body of the earth, what violent muscular action is to the body of man. The muscles and tendons of its anatomy are, in the mountain, brought out with force and convulsive energy, full of expression, passion, and strength." —John Ruskin

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Good news from the Wrangells

BY BONNIE KENYON

For the past several issues of WSEN a page has been dedicated to the news surrounding the activities and beginnings of the McCarthy-Kennicott Community Church building project. I plan on continuing the regular update, but I also have a desire to begin the new year with a slightly different format—branching out to include items, articles or sayings that are meant to encourage, uplift and have a spiritual aspect—in other words, Good news from the Wrangells!

A couple months ago I received a letter from a subscriber who wrote: "I think I have an idea for a real interesting article for the WSEN—and it involves Bonnie telling her story of how a young lady from Florida (I think that's right) found her way to McCarthy, Alaska. You see, I'd really like to know, Bonnie, how you felt when you first had to travel the McCarthy Road and what you must have thought when you first glimpsed the Kuskalana Bridge!! Because I'm thinking that it probably did not have side rails on it—heck, it may not have been floored too good either—how in the name of Heaven could you bring yourself to go across that!! And was it in the summer, or even worse—the winter!!?? When you got to the end of the road, what must have been your first thought when Rick said, "This is it, honey"—did he already

have a cabin up there or what? How did you manage to survive your first winter up there? Did you ever think that one day you would run a newspaper business and even a Bed and Breakfast in a town that has no electricity, running water or even sewers? That one day there would be COMPUTERS in your cabin!?! How did a young lady from Florida ever survive being overnight in a 12 FOOT ROAD



GLACIER? How did you ever get used to not having fresh fruits and vegetables all the time? Bonnie, I think you could write such an interesting article and it could be continued from one issue to the next. How about that?"

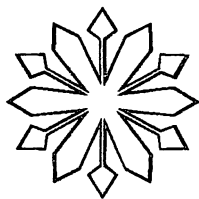
My first reaction to this request was, "Who wants to read about me and my adventures?" After all, each of us living here certainly has a story of how and why we ended up in this part of the world, but MY story? I'm more inclined to

hear and dig out YOUR story. (Especially, when the person who penned the above request is a "Kennecott Kid" with oodles of history to share about her growing-up experiences in the once mining town of Kennecott during its heyday.)

The more I thought on my friend's request the more I realized, however, that if something I share helps and encourages even one person, then it is well worthwhile. So why on a page dedicated to church-related news and religious topics? Because in order for me to answer the questions my friend posed, I must bring out the spiritual aspect of why and how I am where I am and do what I do.

In the next issue of WSEN, I will begin my story on how a young lady from Florida found her way to McCarthy, Alaska. Stay tuned.

Local church building update: Two propane heaters have been purchased for the community church building. They arrived in time to give them a good work out. John Adams and Rick Kenyon are now putting heat in the upstairs for a community get-together on Dec. 17 at 7:00 pm. John purchased ceiling lights which he and Rick are installing in time for the upcoming event. A little progress makes a lot of difference at this stage and we are thankful for each completed step.



OUR TOWN

January 1922 February



OF LOCAL INTEREST

The drill, which is to be used for the testing of the Nizina Bar, has been brought from Young Creek and delivered at station 94. It is believed that Gus Johnson will return shortly and begin operations.

Mrs. Aron Erickson and Mrs. Victor Olsen spent Monday visiting at the Iverson ranch, and returned to Kennecott in the evening in Mr. Iverson's sleigh.

On the Copper River Railroad dating from January 1st the war tax has been discontinued on all passenger tickets, freight and express. The war tax is still in effect on telegrams.

Jan. 7

OF LOCAL INTEREST

Mrs. M. S. Wilson of Kennecott is a McCarthy visitor today, the guest of Mrs. Walter Sommer.

Mrs. Jake Nafsted of Tonsina is the house guest of Mrs. J. B. O'Neill.

Chick Nelson made a trip to Dan Creek this week and returned to town yesterday.

Our first real deep snow fell during Wednesday night, about two feet of it. All the freighter population are much pleased.

Shorty Gwin made his annual trail breaking drive through all the streets with heavy bobs on Thursday morning.

Mrs. Pete Johnson has been moving this week into the International House.

The Laaniners will lease the building she has vacated, conducting baths and laundry.

Jan. 14

LOCAL NEWS

Jack Schultz made a trip to Chitina this week, where he purchased a tractor from the Alaska Road Commission. It is the largest machine which was used on the Fairbanks trail work, and the new owner intends to use it for contracting here.

Mrs. F. A. Iverson has been visiting friends at Kennecott this week.

Mrs. Nafsted has been the guest of Mrs. Wilson of Kennecott this week.

Dr. and Mrs. Gillespie were McCarthy visitors on Thursday.

Martin Harrais, who has been wintering outside, is returning tomorrow.

Fred Ahrens has been laid up with pleurisy this week.

J. H. Murie is freighting to Chititu.

WEATHER

At the change of the moon last night the mercury dropped considerably, so that we are now enjoying the first real cold snap this winter. At 8 a.m. the thermometer registered 40 degrees below zero.

GREEN GROUP PROPERTY

That Alaska is always a point of interest to many people in the States is evidenced by the publicity

given by "outside" big newspapers to any new discoveries in the Alaska mining field.

Under date of January 1st, in the San Francisco Examiner, the financial editor, Mr. Denis Donohoe, has an article on the mineral production in Alaska during 1921 with Dr. Alfred Brooks' annual report as his groundwork.

He goes on further to mention the strike which was made at the Green Group last season.

As Mr. Donohoe spent many years in this section and still has many friends here, we quote his remarks verbatim.

"The most noteworthy new copper discovery of the year was reported by John E. Barrett on the Green Group McCarthy Ck. about a mile east of the Kennecott properties. Work on the Green Group uncovered a rich ore chute of chalcocite, with an average copper content in excess of 65 per cent. This news is of special interest to the writer. He was the original discoverer and locator of this group of copper claims."

MINING ON THE CHITITU CREEK

Work on a bigger scale than there has been for several seasons, is planned by the Andrus Co. to be in progress on Chititu Creek next summer according to letters which have been received from the management by the boys in the winter camp.

It is believed that two

distinct plants will be maintained, one to mine the Kernan benches and the other on No. 9 Creek Claim. Over fifty men will be employed.

Lou Anderson and George Nickles, who have been doing prospecting on No. 9 Rex Creek and have driven several hundred feet of tunnel, have given up the work on Rex. Lou Anderson is starting prospect holes on 9 Chititu. Henry Schultz is also prospecting that claim.

Jan. 28

PIONEERS OF ALASKA MCCARTHY IGLOO

The McCarthy Igloo of the Pioneers of Alaska, held a successful business meeting last Tuesday evening and also initiated four new members. The bylaws were read & adopted after interesting discussions thereon. Martin Harrais, a charter member of Fairbanks Igloo was present and gave an enjoyable talk about early days.

A movement is on foot to purchase the A. B. Hall, which is now on the market at a very reasonable figure. This building, being fully equipped with seats, musical instruments, and gymnasium paraphernalia, together with lights and all necessary furniture will, if purchased, give the members of this igloo a property which will compare favorably with any in the Territory.

Ed McMullen, who has been prospecting on Notch Creek this winter, had an experience recently which might have resulted fatally. While being hauled to the surface by his partners the seat became unhooked and he fell to the bottom of the shaft, a distance of forty two feet. Mr. McMullen received a severe shaking but no bones were broken, we are all glad to know.

Mike Knowles, who made the January mail trip into Chisana with dog team returned on Monday, making good time considering everything. He leaves again in a few days with mail and freight for Chisana.

TELEGRAPHIC DEVELOP ALASKA

New York, Feb. 3rd. Secretary Fall in an address here urged the development of Alaska by private interests, declaring that the Government had interfered too much with business in the Territory.

LOCAL

Sig Wold and Con Miller, two enterprising young men have taken over the Greenstone Inn from Roy Burns, who left with his family for Cordova this week.

The new proprietors have resumed the old name "Alaska House" and are featuring "Service with a smile."

Feb. 4

CHARTER MEMBERS

McCarthy some day will be a second Butte. Those who have faith to invest at the present time will reap the reward that is due.

A strong lodge,

organization or society of any kind is essential to the uplift and welfare of any town. When you see a few trying to keep up the interest of the social affairs during these long winter days, jump in and help the good cause along, others are doing it, why not you?

Any organization that has for its chief aim the welfare of your neighbor and the care of the invalid, is worthy of your moral and financial support.

With only a few the burden is unnecessarily heavy, your help will lighten the load and some day you will be proud to say "I am a Charter Member."

LOCAL

Mrs. C. F. M. Cole left on last Sunday's train for Cordova and will not return until the track is clear. The rest of the family are doing fine.

John Nickell who returned recently from the Nebesna, has re-opened the Alaskan Barber Shop.

It is rumored that Al Doze has fallen heir to over ten thousand dollars. We always knew he would fall into something.

HEAVY SNOW FALL IN THIS SECTION

The news of the Knickerbocker Theater catastrophe in Washington, D. C. started several of the residents clearing the snow off the roofs of their houses.

With the aid of a rope around Scotty Hannigan's waist and Lubbe hanging on like grim death at the other end, the post office building, which is the highest in McCarthy, was thoroughly cleared of five months accumulation of snow, which was some

weight.

Feb. 11

Mrs. V. J. Dwyer, of Strelna, sprung a delightful surprise on the little folks today when they all received an invitation to meet at the Alaska House at 4 o'clock for an ice cream party. Needless to say, they were all on time and fourteen little ones sat down to a beautifully appointed table and were served ice cream, and cake with just the kind of frosting on it that they liked, and other good things too numerous to mention.

Those who assisted Mrs. Dwyer in entertaining the children were, Mrs. J. B. O'Neill, Miss B. Stuart and Mrs. J. A. Moore.

The Chef surpassed himself & the children all wished that Mrs. Dwyer would come and live here in McCarthy.

BRIDGE CREW ARRIVES

John Vinquist and crew of bridge builders arrived in McCarthy this week and will do considerable work on the trestle, blasting out boulders in the channel to make the pile driving easier in the Spring. The following are in the party: August Johnson, Ed Fundeen, Nils Forsberg, A. R. Reeves, Andrew Anderson and R. B. Edmison.

Feb. 18

KENNECOTT NEWS

Henry Alheidt, janitor at the Kennecott, left on the last train on the way to spend a vacation outside. Henry has been connected with the copper camp for several years, prior to which time he was game warden for this precinct.

Abe Morris, youngest

son of Mrs. Elizabeth Underwood of McCarthy, has secured the position.

John Bence, Fred Erichson, J. A. Moore and others were visitors to McCarthy this week

Carl Carlson, bridge foreman for the Copper River railroad, who quite recently joined the ranks of the newly weds, was a McCarthy visitor this week accompanied by his wife.

REAL ESTATE

James Hussey has purchased a half interest in the Golden Hotel building from Ed Lindig.

Archie Pauline has renewed his lease on the building he occupies with the Alaska Soda Fountain, and has also leased the adjoining store building formerly occupied by J. P. Hubrick.

The lease is for a period of five years, both buildings are owned by the Laurie Brothers of Cordova.

John Barrett, writing to the News, states that his family has been suffering from the flu, and that the weather in Seattle has been very unpleasant and not to be compared with the McCarthy climate.

Several new sleds are in course of construction and several new dogs are being broken to harness in readiness for the McCarthy Derby which will take place some time in the spring.

A new weekly paper has been started at Anchorage. It is published by Mrs. Southworth formerly of Nenana and is called "Town Topics."

Feb 25



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ALASKA STATE SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION

Learn to read and anticipate the snow conditions and terrain ahead.

Deep, fluffy snow requires more power to operate the machine since it sinks deeper in loose snow. You must be on the alert to shift your weight because the snow base is unstable and steering may be difficult. If you are in deep snow, turn in as wide an arc as possible and look for a firmer base.

If you do get stuck, and this can happen to anyone, do not spin your track as this makes the vehicle sink deeper. Never try to lift the machine out unless there is no other way. Turn the engine off. If the machine is stuck facing uphill, turn the skis to the side and pull the front end of the machine around to a downhill position, gently rock the machine as you steadily and slowly apply the throttle. Place your feet on the running board at the opposite end from the end which is stuck. Never place foreign material beneath the track for support.

If you have tried all this and your vehicle is still stuck, ask someone to help you pick the rear of the snowmachine up and move the vehicle several times to remove snow packed in the suspension. This will also pack the snow under the track for a firmer base.

Hard-packed snow has a

more stable base, but can be tricky in drifted areas where the packed snow is not uniform. Unplanned jumps, bumps, or dips are more likely to cause back injury, especially at higher speeds because of the hard base.

Ice

Ice is as hard and unyielding as concrete. Use extreme care on ice. Beginners should use a great deal of caution and low speeds. The machine is hard to control and spins are quite common. Fast stops are impossible on ice. To stop, let up on the throttle easily, allowing the machine to coast to a stop. Control is best when you are seated.

Avoid icy slopes. Even on flat land, the track does not grab ice. Going up or downhill can be treacherous on ice. Freezing rain can turn a hard-packed surface into a dangerous area.

If you are alone and break through the ice, keep calm. Extend your hands and arms forward on the unbroken surface. Then kick to a nearly level position and work forward onto the ice. If the ice breaks, stay in this position and slide forward again. When you reach firm ice, do not attempt to stand. Instead, roll away from the break area. This distributes

your weight over as broad an area as possible on the weak ice.

Do not venture out onto lakes or rivers without knowing ice conditions. Test the thickness to be sure if it is safe. There should be at least eight inches of clear ice. Do not go onto ice at points where streams flow in or out as

streams flow in or out as

ice may be thin. A large number of deaths take place every year due to snowmobilers breaking through thin ice.

During freeze-up and approaching break-up, ice will be thinner at points and ends of islands. Avoid these areas. Be aware of tide shift areas along shores of all bays, oceans, seas and mouths of rivers.

Lake and river ice crack during extremely cold weather. Water seeps up through the cracks and makes slush as it mixes with snow. The snow on top insulates the slush and keeps it from freezing. Never travel across ice until you have checked it for slush. If dark spots appear on your tracks behind you, get off the ice immediately.

The best rule is to avoid waterways. If you must travel on ice, check thoroughly that it is safe, and wear a personal flotation device/float coat.



"Many of the phenomena of Winter are suggestive of an inexpressible tenderness and fragile delicacy. We are accustomed to hear this king described as a rude and boisterous tyrant; but with the gentleness of a lover he adorns the tresses of Summer." — Henry David Thoreau

Snowmobile hand signals

BY RICK KENYON

In years gone by, the chance of meeting other snowmobiles on the trail in the McCarthy area was about as remote as our area is. Lately, however, it has become more common for small groups of locals to travel together, making some form of communication between riders desirable.

A uniform set of snowmobile hand signals were approved last June by the American and Canadian Councils of Snowmobile Associations.

These hand signals should be performed with the left arm, except for the stop signal, where the driver is likely using his left hand on the brake lever.

The left and right turn signals are the same as those used by automotive drivers.

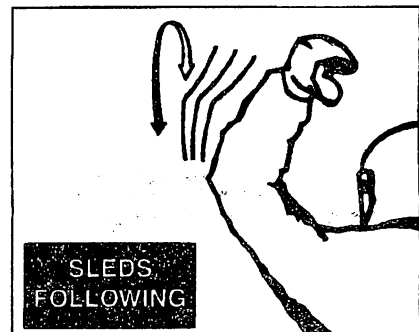
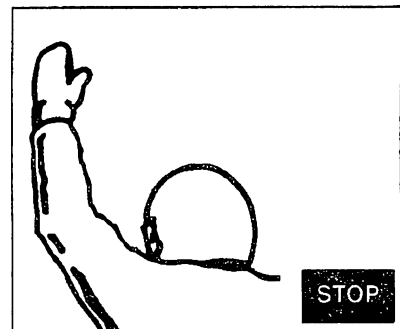
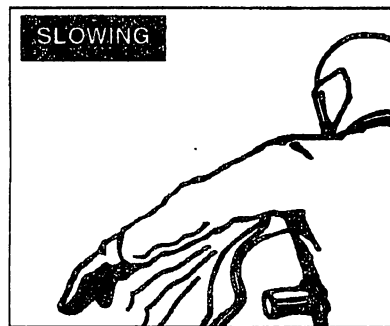
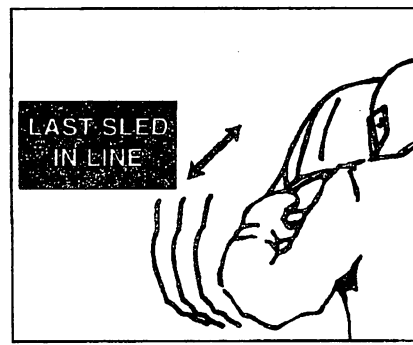
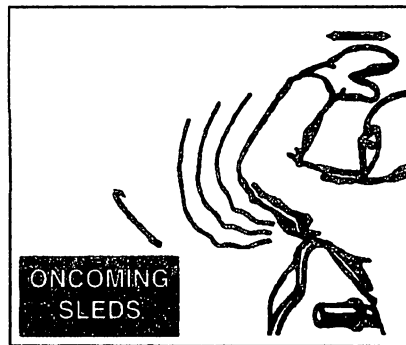
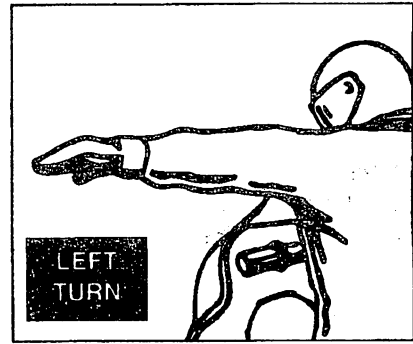
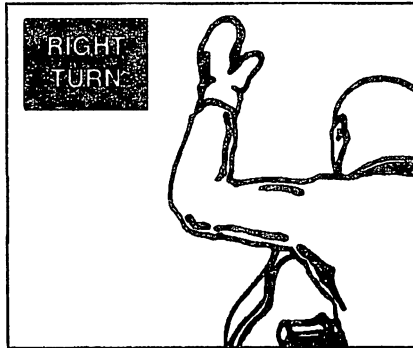
To signal a stop, raise the arm up above the shoulder. The forearm is kept straight and the palm of the hand is kept flat.

The slowing signal is made by extending the left arm below the shoulder and down from the side of the body. The arm is moved up and down in rapid succession. This quickly catches the attention of riders behind you.

To signal oncoming sleds, raise your left arm to shoulder height. The hand points at the side of the trail and is held at about helmet level.

To signal sleds following a lead sled of an oncoming group, raise the left arm, elbow bent with the thumb pointing backwards. The driver swings his arm forward and backward over the shoulder.

To signal the last sled in a line, extend the left arm below the shoulder. With the left forearm and palm flat, make a karate-type slash outward and upward repeatedly at a 45 degree angle.



"We despise all reverences and all objects of reverence which are outside the pale of our list of sacred things. And yet, with strange inconsistency, we are shocked when other people despise and defile the things that are holy to us." — Mark Twain

Lead-acid battery care—the rest of the story

by Ed LaChapelle

The last issue of the Wrangell St. Elias News carried advice on *The Care and Feeding of Lead-Acid Batteries*, but left one topic unfinished—the way to determine state of battery charge by measuring the battery voltage. The brief discussion to follow explains how this is done.

The DC voltage at the terminals of a lead-acid battery is determined by three things: battery temperature (°F), rate of charge or discharge (amperes) and state of charge (% of full charge). If the voltage, temperature and amperes in or out are measured, then the fourth quantity, state of charge, can be determined. The relationships among these quantities is not simple, hence there is no simple

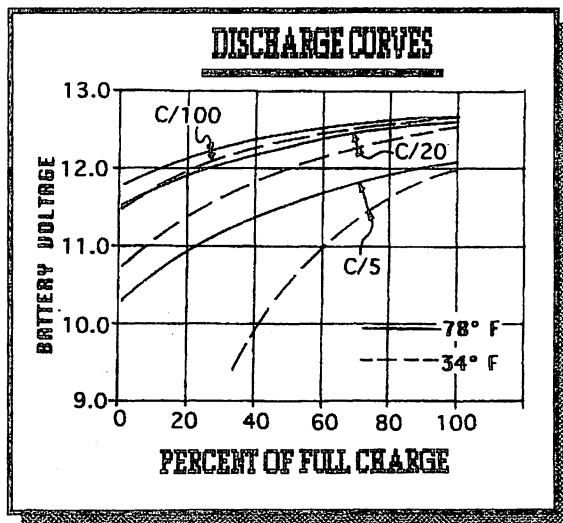
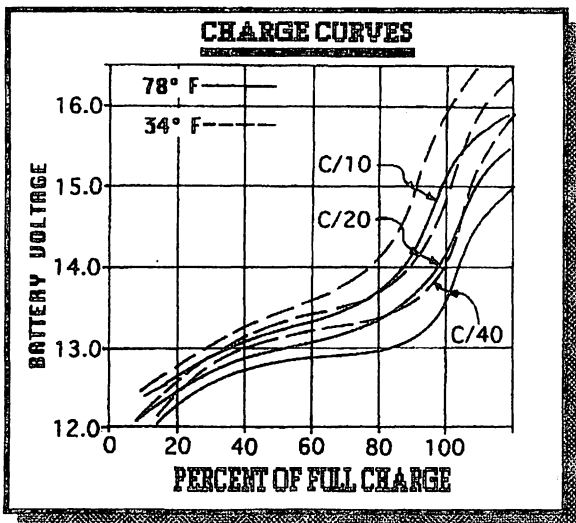
formula to get the state of charge. Instead, we have to resort to sets of curves plotted on a graph to get this answer.

Several sets of curves are given in the accompanying two figures. One figure is for a battery being charged. The other is for a battery discharging current into a load. Each figure contains two sets of curves, one (solid line) for 78° F, the other (dashed line) for 34° F. Battery voltage and state of charge form the coordinates. Each set of curves represents various charge or discharge rates, in amperes, labeled C/5, C/20, etc. The symbol C represents the storage capacity of the battery in ampere-hours. For example, a battery with 100 ah capacity discharging at a

rate of 5 amperes would be represented by the curves labeled C/20 (100 divided by 20 = 5). These curves are drawn to represent 12-volt batteries.

To find a battery's state of charge, determine the charge or discharge rate in amperes, estimate or measure the temperature and measure the terminal voltage. Select the curve that most closely represents the given situation, find the measured voltage on the left of the graph, read across to intersect the selected curve and from this point read down to the state of charge on the bottom of the graph.

These curves are based on data presented by Richard Perez in Home Power Magazine for February/March 1989.



*Friends don't let friends
go without a subscription to* **WSENV**

Free bulletin for Alaska hunters

BY RICK KENYON

The Alaska Department of Fish & Game is publishing the *Alaska Hunting Bulletin*, a free newsletter dealing with "the nuts and bolts of practical wildlife conservation as that relates to hunting." The second issue of the *Bulletin* was published in October of 1996. It covered such topics as:

- Southeast Alaska Deer Hunting Prospects: What Can Hunters Expect?
- Deer Hunting Elsewhere in Alaska: The Outlook for Kodiak Island and Prince William Sound
- North Slope Moose Population Decline a Mystery
- Hunting for Trophy Meat and several others.

You can subscribe to the bulletin in several ways: 1) call (907) 267-2580 and leave your name and address. This is a 24 hour a day voice mail system; 2) FAX your request to (907) 267-2433; or send your name and address via e-mail to susanr@fishgame.state.ak.us. Subscriptions are free.

One of the problems for us in the bush has been getting our new licenses — particularly a fishing license for ice fishing. Our old licenses run out December 31, and some of us don't get out to "civilization" to buy new ones until spring or summer. It is possible to get an application by writing to: Dept. Of Fish and Game, Licensing Section, PO Box 25525, Juneau, AK 99802-5525. You may call 1-800-478-2376 and ask them to mail you an application. If you have access to a FAX machine, another option is available which is much faster.

The Bulletin tells how to use a new FAX service to get license and tag applications, as well as other hunting, fishing and trapping publications. To use the service, dial (907) 267-2885 using your FAX machine handset. A mechanical voice will ask you to make sure that you have no other documents in your FAX machine feed tray, and then to press START. When you hear that, press your start key and hang up the handset. The machines will take over from there.

What you will get is a list of phone numbers from which your FAX machine can pick up a number of other documents. The list is changed periodically, but when I called in late November I got the following list:

(907) 267-2860 Alaska Hunting/fishing/trapping license and tag application form. Two pages.

(907) 267-2867 Alaska Fur Dealer & Taxidermy license application.

(907) 267-2866 Alaska Waterfowl Conservation and King Salmon stamp application.

(907) 267-2869 Documents Required for Shipping or Transporting Game Taken With a Hunting License Out of Alaska.

(907) 267-2870 The Comeback Trail. 10 pages. (News about the Fortymile Caribou Herd.

(907) 267-2871 Alaska Hunting Groups.

There were about 15 other documents listed, but this listing will give you an idea of what is available.

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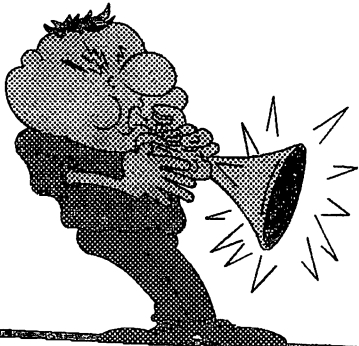
- Glacier Flightseeing
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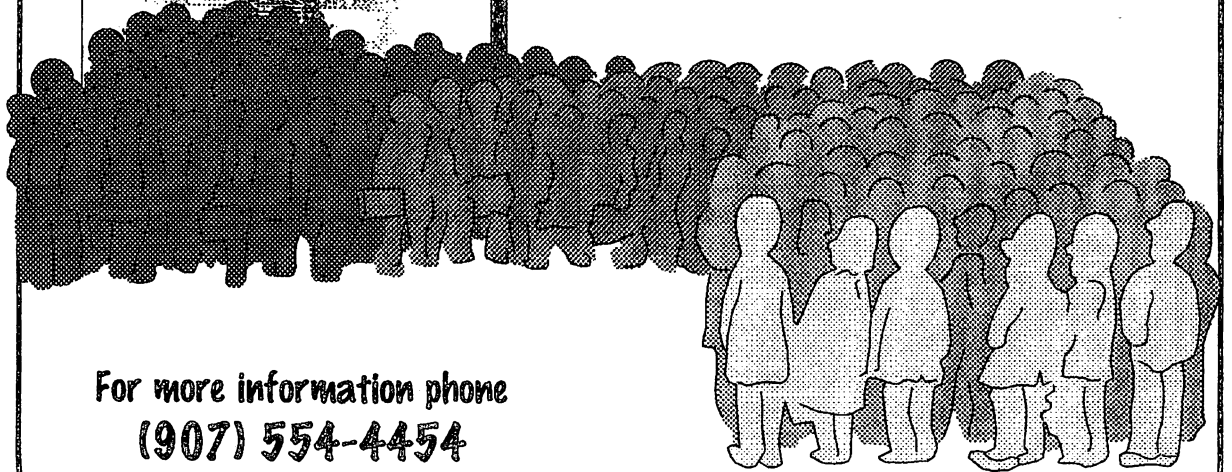
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A
Visitor's Guide to
Kennicott & McCarthy
1997



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FOR 1997!**

A Protest Against Present Tax On Trappers

We thought you might enjoy the following diatribe against lawmakers and taxation. It ran in the February 18, 1922 issue of the McCarthy Weekly News. It's amazing how little the substance of the news changes over the years!

If I had the lamp of Alladin, some wonderful things I'd do. If you have a moment to listen I'll mention one to you.

First of all, on each lawmaker, a life-long tax I'd impose, because tax seems to be the nature of those who to Juneau go.

By action of our legislature a tax now does impose on the hide of the rat or weasel, for what purpose no one knows.

The mink and the marten also their mite must give. The warden says, "I'll warn you one boys," if in this country you want to live.

Emergency they say is the purpose, I think it's against our will, their figures on taxation is like hootch from a still.

Many a poor and honest

prospector his grubstake has tried to make in this, God's free country a few of nature's furs to take.

Just look at our millionaire trappers, and our wealthy prospectors, too, and all of the well-to-do Natives who can hand this to you.

Now, to one and all what's the incentive? This applies to our lawmakers too. It's the percentage check you're after, instead of encourage, we'll tax you.

It seems to me it would be better to encourage the few who are left, God knows Alaska needs them this tax has left.

Oh, yes, I'd almost forgotten, the fox, whose fur is blue, it did not escape the attention of this bunch the chosen few.

The man who spends his money for improvements and for this fox of blue a license if he is to continue & a tax on what he raises too.

What a howl you would hear from the farmer, the bean and the spud who grows, if a tax on his efforts were levied as the result of the seed he sows.

Now, who is the one to suffer? Just listen, this means you.

It's the prospector, the Native, the trapper, the country also, and the chosen few.

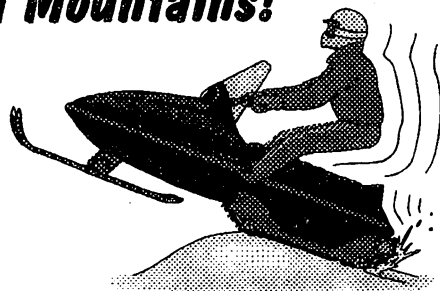
To those who are still in the country, the few who are left behind, a few more jabs of this nature, then we'll move to another clime.

A Subscriber

— Valdez Miner 1922

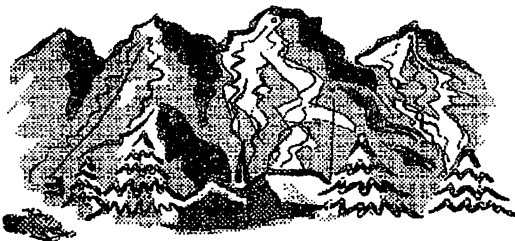
Snowmachining the Wrangell Mountains!

The place to stay during your snowmachine visit to the McCarthy area.



Local trail information and assistance

McCarthy Trail Rides

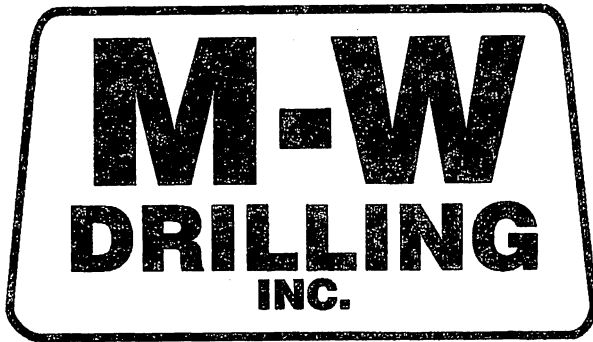


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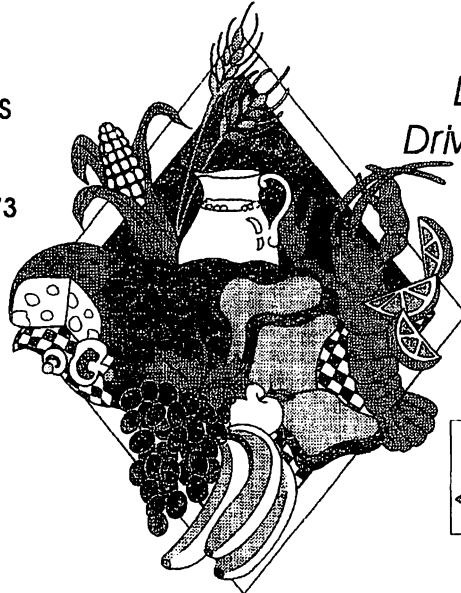
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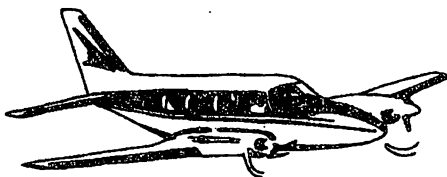
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Cooking with Carly

BY CARLY KRITCHEN

When my husband and I added on to our cabin a few years ago, we dug a small root cellar under the back of the cabin that is accessed through a trap door in the bathroom. Although we don't use the cellar much during the summer, this time of the year it's bursting at the seams. My potted rose bushes are on the floor alongside boxes of apples and potatoes, and the rest of the shelves are filled with produce from our garden. This year we have carrots, turnips, beets, squashes and a couple of pumpkins, plus two whole shelves of cabbages!

It was a bumper year in my garden for cabbage. It seems like I finally partially eradicated the root maggots and cut worms that usually plague my cole crops (although I'm sure they'll be back in force next summer!), and I grew some really big cabbage heads. Cabbage stores really well in a root cellar, so I'm sure we'll be enjoying it up until our next year's crop is in the ground.

The Alaska Cooperative Extension service has a publication called "Alaskan Grown Cabbage- More Than Just Sauerkraut" that is just full of tasty recipes. This quick soup is one of my favorites. I've added a little basil and a bay leaf for a little extra flavor.

LITHUANIAN CABBAGE AND POTATO SOUP

2 large peeled and diced potatoes
1 small head cabbage, shredded
4 or 5 diced carrots

4 cups water
4 cups milk
1 tsp. dried basil
a bay leaf
salt and pepper to taste
1 Tbsp. butter

Boil potatoes, carrots, basil, and bay leaf in water until just tender. Add milk and salt and pepper. Then heat, but do not boil. Add butter just before serving.

Makes about six servings.

This is one of my favorite winter salads. Leave the peels on the apples to add some color.

APPLE COLESLAW

4 cups green cabbage, sliced very thin
1 red apple, chopped in 1/2 inch pieces
2 small onions, sliced

DRESSING:

1 tsp. cider vinegar
2 Tbsp. apple cider or juice
1/4 cup yogurt (or substitute extra mayonnaise)
2 Tbsp. mayonnaise
2 tsp. honey
1/4 tsp. curry powder
1/4 tsp. salt
dash cayenne pepper

Pour cabbage, apple, and onions into a bowl. Stir until well mixed. Then whisk dressing ingredients, and pour over salad. Mix again. Top salad with fresh cilantro or fresh parsley if you have it. Serve.

I have several recipes for stuffed cabbage rolls, but this one is a little different (and really delicious!)

SWEDISH STUFFED CABBAGE ROLLS

1 medium cabbage

1/2 cup rice, cooked in 1 cup water
1 lb. ground beef (or moose!)
1 egg
1 cup milk
1 1/2 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper
2 Tbsp. butter
2 Tbsp. brown sugar
1/2 cup chicken broth
2 Tbsp. flour
3/4 cup evaporated milk
1/2 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. pepper

Cut out core of cabbage. Steam in a Dutch oven to soften leaves. Remove leaves gently. Drain on paper towels. Trim the center vein from each leaf and set aside

Combine cooked rice, ground meat, egg, milk, 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, and 1/8 teaspoon of pepper and mix lightly. Place about 1/4 cup of filling on each cabbage leaf. Roll up and secure with toothpicks. This should make about 16 rolls.

Brown rolls on all sides in melted butter in the Dutch oven. Sprinkle with brown sugar. Add chicken broth, cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 45 minutes or until rolls are tender.

Combine flour and evaporated milk. Remove cabbage rolls from Dutch oven and keep warm. Slowly stir milk mixture into the pan drippings, stirring constantly. Add 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Cook over low heat until thickened. Spoon sauce over warm cabbage rolls. Makes about 6-8 servings.

A look at the weather



BY GEORGE CEBULA

October 1996 was cold and wet. There were 10 days with lows of -10 or lower and a total of 17.4 inches of snow. The first measurable snowfall was 1.8 inches on the 3rd.

The average temperature for October was 17.0 (30.9 in Oct. '95 and 29.2 in Oct '94). The high was 46 on October 8th (56 on Oct. 3, '95 and 52 on Oct. 12, '94) and the low was -22 on October 28th (1 on Oct. 16, '95 and -5 on Oct. 29, '94). *This compares with Silver Lake's average temperature of 16.5 (32.5 in Oct. '95 and 28.6 in Oct. '94). The high at Silver Lake was 41 on October 3rd (60 on Oct. 4, '95 and 54 on Oct. 4, '94) and their low was -21 on October 28th (9 on Oct. 16, '95 and -3 on Oct. 13, '94). KCAM in Glennallen recorded new record low temperatures for 9 of 12 days between October 17 and 28, with the low bottoming out at -30 on October 27th.*

The total liquid precipitation was 2.77 inches (0.21 in Oct. '95 and 0.81 in Oct. '94) with total snowfall 17.4 inches (1.1 inches in Oct. '95 and 1.9 inches in Oct. '94). Most of the precipitation occurred on October 30th and 31st, with 1.62 inches of liquid and 2.8 inches of snow. *Silver Lake had only 1.21 inches of liquid (0.42 in Oct. '95 and 0.99 in Oct. '94) with 10.9 inches of snow (4.5 in Oct. '95*

and 8.0 in Oct. '94).

The snow depth at McCarthy began with 2 inches on October 3rd fell to a trace by the 5th and increased to 6 inches on the 7th. It decreased to 4 inches on October 9th and stayed at that depth until the 23rd. Additional snow increased the depth to 10 inches by October 26th and the month ended with a 7 inch snow depth. *Silver Lake had a 3 inch snow depth by October 5th and stayed at that depth most of the month until the rain on October 30th and 31st reduced it to a trace. The lake ice began to form on October 18th and Silver Lake was ice covered on October 20th. The ice thickness was 6 inches by October 31st.*

November saw the temperature warm a bit the first half of the month and then turn cold again the last half. Precipitation was very light for all of November. The average temperature at McCarthy was 3.7 (1.5 in Nov. '95 and 3.2 in Nov. '94). The high temperature was 37 on November 4th (40 on Nov. 1, '95 and 39 on Nov. 3, '94) and the low was -33 on November 24th (-37 on Nov. 29, '95 and -41 on Nov. 25, '94). The record temperatures for November are high of 48 on November 1, '70 and low of -46 on November 11, '89. *Silver Lake had an average temperature 2.8 (2.2 in Nov.*

'95 and 4.9 in Nov. '94). The high was 41 on November 1st (45 on Nov. 1, '95 and Nov. 1, '94) and the low was -32 on November 25th (-37 on Nov. 30, '95 and -36 on Nov 25, '94).

The total liquid precipitation was only 0.16 inches (0.46 inches in Nov. '95 and 2.40 inches in Nov. '94) with only 2.2 inches of snow (3.9 in Nov. '95 and 19.6 in Nov. '94). This compares with 0.71 inches of liquid (0.60 in Nov. '95 and 1.88 inches in Nov. '94) and 5.6 inches of snow (4.0 in Nov. '95 and 17.0 inches in Nov. '94) at Silver Lake. The snow depth at McCarthy was 7 inches for all of November. *Silver Lake started the month with a trace, increased to 3 inches on the 5th and to 4 inches on the 13th. It stayed at 4 inches for the rest of the month.*

December and January are usually the coldest months with the lows falling to -50 and colder. Daylight is cut to just under 5 hours by December 21, before it begins to increase again.

I spent all of October and November at Silver Lake taking care of the campground while Gene and Edith Coppedge were visiting family in the lower 48. It was a real experience and I'm glad I could do it for them. This was their first chance to travel together in almost 10 years.

"He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." — Matthew 5:45.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Happy trails to you!

BY RICK KENYON

Recently there has been a lot of talk—both for and against—building a multi-use trail from Chitina to McCarthy. The latest proposal that I have heard has come from the State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF). It is for an eight feet wide paved trail at a cost of something like a million dollars a mile! Very different from most people's idea of a "wilderness trail."

It seems to me that one of the main problems has been bringing people together from the different groups that might benefit from the trail. Unfortunately, some skiers and dog musher folks do not want snowmachines to be able to share the trail — the same with bikers, hikers and ATVs. We are not likely to get a multi-million dollar project that is only going to benefit one small interest group.

The second problem is that no government agency seems to have the capability to think or operate on a scale that is anything but grandiose. If we want a low-impact dirt or gravel trail, why not take the bull by the horns and do it ourselves? I believe we could have that trail in a few short years if we would band together and form a real partnership with all who have an interest in the project.

The National Park Service (NPS) could play a major role, without any major funding, by surveying and dedicating a route. If easements are needed from private or corporate landowners, NPS has the expertise to help obtain them.

DOT&PF could provide their talent on design, and help obtain what funding is

necessary for materials through federal Transportation Enhancement programs. Likewise for State Parks, who has shown an interest in the project.

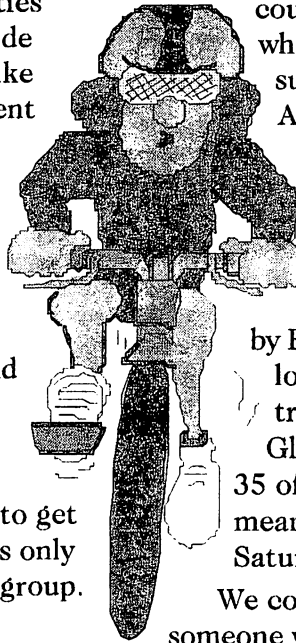
I believe, however, that the major role could be played by those who of us who will benefit most from having such a trail—the hikers, bikers, ATVers, skiers, dog mushers and snowmobilers ourselves.

A small group of Valdez residents have banded together to form the Valdez Trail Association. The group, headed by Frank Cook, the president, has a long term goal—the creation of a trail system stretching from Shoup Glacier to the Tsaina Lodge at Mile 35 of the Richardson Highway. In the meantime, volunteers come out on Saturdays and brush out existing trails.

We could do something similar. If someone with a burning desire to see such a project completed would head it up, I'm sure many, if not most, of the local residents would volunteer labor. There must be a number of special interest clubs who would like to get involved—snowmachine, bicycle and ATV.

Perhaps we could use a version of the "adopt a highway" program where individuals or groups take responsibility for keeping a designated stretch of highway clean. I'll volunteer to pioneer the first 3 miles of trail out of McCarthy.

Is anyone out there interested? Or should we just sit back and see if Uncle Sam will do it for us? Let's hear from you!



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Ogden, Utah
November 7, 1996
Dear Bonnie & Rick,

I thoroughly enjoyed the articles about the railroad in the September/October and November/December issues of WSEN by Ron Simpson and John P. Killoran. These articles brought back many memories of my years at Kennecott.

I remember the combination passenger/baggage coaches we traveled in between Kennecott and Cordova. I remember the five locomotives, Mikado 2-8-2's numbered 70 thru 74. I got to ride on #74 between Kennecott and McCarthy. (The Wild Train Ride) which I reminisced about at the last two reunions.

I shall never forget all the talk in camp when Engine #73

(not #71) blew up on the Million Dollar Bridge. The Engineer was fatally injured. The Fireman survived, severely scalded and burned. They could not jump out of the cab on the bridge. The Fireman visited with my family in Salt Lake City in 1946, his face was badly scarred and he had never gotten over the tragedy.

I am enclosing a snapshot of Engine #74 in front of the machine shop at Kennecott. The only picture I have of the rolling stock of the CR&NW. Engine #74 was the only locomotive equipped to spend a cold winter in Kennecott. It had heaters in the tender.

The McGavock family left Kennecott in June of 1937 on the CR&NW. When we arrived in Cordova, a boy my age asked

me where I was from, when I told him he took me to a nearby siding to show me the "Kennecott" observation coach. It was a wooden coach like the others but had dining and sleeping accommodations.

My father told me that private railroad car "Kennecott" was provisioned and waiting on the ocean dock when Stephen Birch and his bride arrived in Cordova in July of 1916 on their honeymoon, but they never traveled to Kennecott. She was an eastern socialite and disliked Alaska.

Kudos and best wishes to both of you. You are doing an excellent job publishing WSEN.

Sincerely,

Jim McGavock

P.S. I remember Fred Hanson the superintendent of the railroad. He had a neat looking closed 4 door sedan, I do not remember the make, with flanged wheels to ride on the rails. He would make a trip or two to Kennecott from Cordova in the summer.

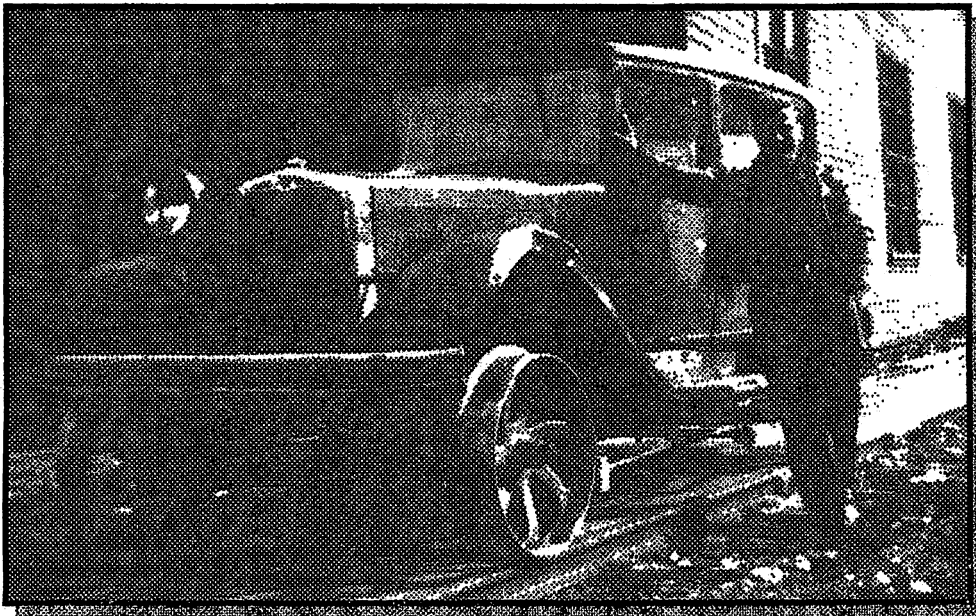
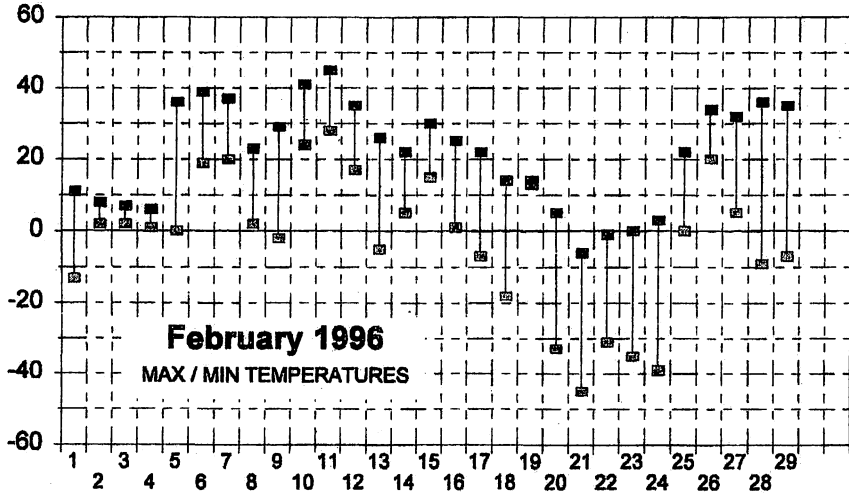
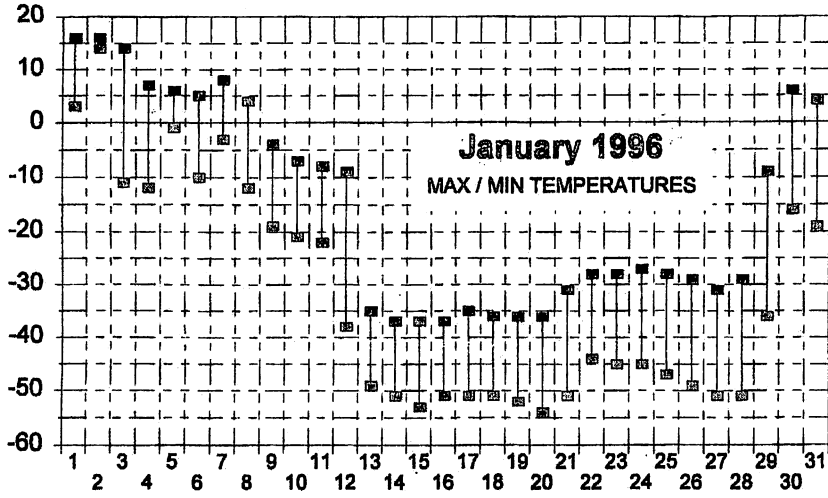


photo courtesy Ron Simpson

CR&NW superintendent's personal track car. Photo taken around 1942 in Chitina. According to Al Swalling, who worked on the railway from 1928 until it shut down in 1938, Superintendent F. A. Hansen was never known to ride in the railway coaches, preferring instead to use this gas car exclusively. This may be the Studebaker numbered A-1, placed into service in 1935. Person in photo is a U.S. Army personnel. Thanks to Ron Simpson for photo and information.

Weather - What can we expect?

Wingell St. Elias News
 McCaffrey
 PO Box MXY
 Glennallen, AK 99588

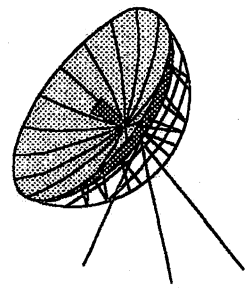


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