

the character of climbs. The club has been working on smaller climbs on their own in recent years, but government restrictions may have additional impact.

The outing program accounted for a number of far-ranging trips in 1974, which included the Glacier Park Wilderness, Mount Olympus, the Trinity Alps in California, the Nootka Sound Canoe Outing, Enchantment Lake Basin, Boston Basin, the Green and Yampa Rivers in Utah, and abroad to south-central Norway.

To augment a trend, more and more of the climbing fraternity took to cross-country skiing in winter and spring, forsaking the old sport of downhill skiing. The club held schools for both downhill and cross-country instruction. Much of the activity centers at Mount Hood around Mazama Lodge at Government Camp. For beginners there are many trails and roads to follow, with more and more groups touring the ridges and canyons, dodging down through the timber, and crossing creeks on snow bridges.

JACK GRAUER

Mountaineering Club of Alaska. The past year was an unfortunate blend of success and tragedy for the MCA. On the first day of 1974 an avalanche in the Chugach Range took the life of Mark Rainery, Huts and Cabins Chairman of the club, who had made the first winter ascent of Koktaya (5300 feet) only moments before. His youthful enthusiasm and acceptance of responsibility had offered the club much promise for the future. And then on May 24, Herb Christie, a veteran bush pilot whose singular and intimate knowledge of the northwest Chugach had enabled members to undertake several significant climbs in the region, was killed near the Matanuska Glacier while piloting his Cub.

If prior years have been consistent in their frustration of our attempts to record winter ascents among the surrounding Chugach peaks and in more distant Alaskan ranges, then 1974 continued that pattern, with some notable exceptions. Tanaina Peak (5350 feet) in the Chugach was ascended by the Rainery party the day prior to their avalanche tragedy. On January 13 a group led by Will Cottrell gained the summit of Cantata Peak (6410 feet), making another Chugach winter first. The Wrangells saw their first winter ascent, and the second highest winter summit yet attained in Alaska, with the climb of Mount Blackburn (16,523 feet) on March 18 by a team of club members. Other winter climbs witnessed much effort but less success, among them being the early February attempt on Mount Spurr (11,070 feet), which was aborted after six days by wind and lowering weather.

The club's spring and summer climbing activities at higher altitudes necessarily assume the aspects of winter climbs, with longer days and moderated temperatures offering the only differences. On March 27 Icefall Peak (8000 feet) in the Alaska Range was climbed by the Bjarne

Holm party, which reached the summit in a first-route ascent from the Gakona Glacier. Peril Peak (7040 feet) in the Chugach saw its fourth ascent, and by far its earliest in the season, in the May 26 climb led by John Pinamont.

Significant but unsuccessful attempts were made to traverse the Sargent Icefield in March and to ascend the unclimbed north ridge of Mount Sergeant Robinson (10,500 feet) in August. The club continued its function as a clearing house of Alaskan climbing information by reporting, in addition to club climbs, the first recorded ascent of the highest point of the Sargent Icefield, Peak 6115', on March 10 by the Woelkers-Moore party. No formal mountaineering schools were held by the club this year, but assistance was rendered to local high schools undertaking climbing instruction. Members were also active participants in two avalanche operations and two downed-aircraft recovery attempts.

The Hiking Committee had an active year, completing a successful Chilikoot Pass trip as the prelude to more ambitious plans for hiking-climbing treks in 1975 to Katmai National Monument and the Arctic National Wildlife Range. And the club indirectly entered the political arena in a big way: long-time member and supporter Lowell Thomas, Jr., was elected Lieutenant-Governor of Alaska.

Despite the sad moments of 1974, the future of the club and of climbing in Alaska promises to be both active and rewarding.

THOMAS E. MEACHAM, *Director*

Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. The club's Mountaineering Section began 1974 in possession of a small tract of land near Mouth of Seneca, West Virginia. A major goal for the year was the construction of a cabin on this site for the use of climbers at Seneca Rocks. A generous appropriation was made by the club, and over \$2000 was collected through a fund raising program within the Mountaineering Section. Our cabin committee negotiated a contract for a prefabricated cabin, and work at the cabin site began in February. But in May these efforts were frustrated by a condemnation notice on the site from the U.S. Forest Service. At the time of this report, negotiations for the purchase of a new site for our Seneca Rocks cabin are still in progress.

In other areas, our efforts were more fruitful. In order to make the section more effective as the spokesman for climbing in the Washington, D.C., area, the Mountaineering Section actively solicited participation in its activities by all local climbers. Membership in the section grew in 1974 despite a dues increase. Monthly meetings and programs were well attended. A training session was held monthly. Participation in weekly club trips to a variety of local and distant climbing areas was high.