

groups reported extended tent-bound stays.

There were two significant search-and-rescue operations this year. One climber became disoriented on attempting to exit the icefields via the Kaskawulsh Glacier and Slims Valley. A two-day helicopter search located him, unhurt but heading away from his intended destination. Two climbers on the King Trench route were reported overdue and probably out of food and fuel by their aircraft pilot. Five days after their expected completion date, the weather cleared up enough for a helicopter search of the area. The pair were located at 16,500 feet on the route. Food, fuel and a radio was dropped to them and they managed to descend without any further assistance. One of the climbers sustained a substantial frostbite injury to his hands during their day to the summit. He subsequently was treated in an Anchorage hospital and lost tissue from several fingers.

Anyone interested in climbing within Kluane should contact: Mountaineering Warden, Kluane National Park Reserve, Box 5495, Haines Junction, Yukon, Canada Y0B 1L0, or call (867) 634-7279, or fax (867) 634-7277, and ask for a mountaineering registration package.

ANDREW LAWRENCE, *Park Warden*

*Mt. Wood to Mt. Macauley to Mt. Steele, High Traverse.* On July 28, John Millar, David Persson and I flew in to the Trapridge Glacier, where we met Alun Hubbard and Dave Hildes, who were finishing up glaciology fieldwork. In the next five days, we made three camps on the east face of Mt. Wood (4840m) at 3000, 3900, and 4200 meters, and summited in fine weather on August 3. Highlights of the climb included spectacular icefalls at the 3200- and 3700-meter levels that required complicated route finding. From camp in the Wood/Macauley col, we climbed the straight-forward northeast ridge of Mt. Macauley (4690m) to the summit and continued to the col between it and "Southeast Macauley." On August 5, we made the first ascent of what was perhaps the highest unclimbed peak in Canada, "Southeast Macauley" (4420m; GR 268818), via its mellow northwest ridge, and then made a gliding descent of its equally casual southeast ridge. Up until this point in the traverse, most of the terrain was broad ridge or face and well suited for skiing.

After a storm day, we continued along the ridge, which was becoming narrower and heavily corniced. On August 7, we summited the previously unclimbed "Northwest Steele" (4220m; GR 323787). Over the next two days, we made slow but important progress over heavily corniced, exposed ridge, which included a somewhat rotten 20-meter knife-edge ridge section. Next, we descended from "Northwest Steele" into the notch separating it from Mt. Steele. This descent was a cautious wade through 40° waist-deep snow at the top of a 1200-meter avalanche slope in order to avoid ice cliffs.

The notch was undoubtedly the crux of the traverse, as it was riddled with heavily corniced knife-edge ridges separated by platforms. One cornice was too precarious to cross, so we were forced to drop down onto the southwest side of the ridge via a 100-meter 55° snowslope, traverse a very unstable, 50° bowl, and then re-ascend to the ridge crest via a 100-meter 75° ice slope covered in 30 centimeters of rotten snow and ice. Following the ice pitch, we reluctantly set up camp in the exposed notch. The next day, we tackled the last major technical difficulty in the notch, a set of three massive cornices (dubbed "the cobras"), the first of which was a severe knife-edge ridge capped with two rotten cornices, one on top of the other. While leading across it, David broke through many times.



*A windy day at 4000 meters on the north ridge of Mt. Steele. DAVE HILDES*

Finally, we arrived at our main objective, the unclimbed north ridge of Mt. Steele (5073m). Except for one dangerous cornice at 3840 meters, the north ridge was just a snow slog. An extremely windy day forced us to stop early and camp in the shelter of a crevasse at 4220 meters. On August 13, we summited Mt. Steele in superb weather, having completed the first traverse from Mt. Wood to Mt. Steele. We called the traverse *Millar's High Life* (Alaskan Grade 6, WI3). After descending the southeast ridge of Steele, we flew out of the St. Elias to Kluane Lake on August 15.

According to Wallis (1992 *CAJ*, pp. 4-19), "Southeast Macauley" would have become the highest unclimbed peak in Canada once Atlantic Peak was climbed in 1995. However, according to Wallis (1998 *AAJ*, pp. 230-231), "South Slaggard" (4370m; GR 220786) was the highest unclimbed peak in Canada when he climbed it in July 1997. Various reliable sources have confirmed that our ascent of "Southeast Macauley" was the first. I invite Mr. Wallis to clarify this apparent discrepancy.

JEREMY FRIMER, *Varsity Outdoor Club (UBC)*

*Mts. Hubbard, Kennedy, South Kennedy, and Alverstone, Various Activity.* On June 22, Kurt Gloyer of Gulf Air Taxi flew Douglas Bonoff, Doug Zimmerman, and I to the 2580-meter level on the Cathedral Glacier in Kluane National Park from Yakutat. Two days were spent hauling loads to approximately 3300 meters. On June 26, we established a camp at 3880 meters on the Cathedral Glacier between Mt. Alverstone and Hubbard. On June 27, we attempted the east face of Alverstone but were unsuccessful due to poor snow conditions.

The next day, at 1:30 a.m., we departed camp for an ascent of Mt. Hubbard via the north face/icefall. Easy climbing led around seracs until we were able to gain the east shoulder at