



# The Chinook

Volume 39, Number 2

February 2004

The next Calgary Section Meeting is on Tuesday *February 17th* at 7:30 pm  
at the Bow Waters Canoe Club Clubhouse, 1975 - 26 Street S.E  
This Month:

Climbing in the French Alps  
By Brent Raymond.



Baker Glacier  
By Manfred Czechak

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**ACC Calgary – Section Meeting  
Tuesday January 20, 2004**

A big thank you to Sue Wills for her excellent Aconcagua slideshow presentation.

**Training & Leadership Committee**

- ❑ Courses, Courses, Courses!!! Cheap, Cheap, Cheap!!! That's right, as a Calgary Section Member you are entitled to an assortment of courses this season at discounted rates! Courses have been discounted up to 45%. Take advantage of the opportunity to learn new skills to ensure safe and fun winter adventures. For more information and to register go to <http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/calgary/winter/wintercourses.html>

**Climbing Committee**

- ❑ Ghost Ice Review was a success with over 60 people.
- ❑ The ice-climbing schedule is posted on the website: check it out!
- ❑ Ice Climbing Camp - Center for Outdoor Education on February 13-16. To get more information and/or sign-up, contact Murray Eitzen (see back of The Chinook).
- ❑ Wednesday Night Gym Climbing at the CCC (#6 7130 Fisher Road SE, 252-6778). Every Wednesday starting at 07:30 pm for only \$10.00 (but don't forget to bring your ACC membership card, otherwise no discount for you!). Give it a try!!

**Ski Committee**

- ❑ The winter ski-mountaineering & alpine touring schedule is posted on the website: check it out!

Note: The winter schedule have been completed and published, but this doesn't limit anymore the section to those trips already posted. In an effort to have a more dynamic schedule, if you, as a trip leader, wish to add to the current trip list, you can at any time. New trips can be added by emailing Dave Stephens: [dave@dave-stephens.com](mailto:dave@dave-stephens.com)

**Chinook:**

- ❑ Trip leaders: don't forget to ask your trip participants for trip reports. Deadline for submission is

before the end of each month.

- ❑ New members: if you want to have great fun and meet other members, collating is the way to go. You are interested...just contact Katherine Roblin (see back of Chinook).

**Social, Photo Contest**

- ❑ Digital pictures are now allowed.
- ❑ Official rules will be published soon in The Chinook.
- ❑ If you are interested in being a judge, contact Shannon (see back of Chinook)
- ❑ There will be also on the same night a Trail Mix contest. Bring enough for judges and your recipe for The Chinook.

**Photography Contest 2004**

Calling all photographers! As every year, the Alpine Club of Canada Calgary Section is holding a Photo Contest. This year, we are holding the event on April 20 at the Bow Waters Canoe Club. The evening will start at 7:30, and may run until the wee hours...depending on the number of entries! Also, in the spirit of modernization, we have decided to open the floor to digital pictures. The submission(s) may be entered under the same categories as slides. But, to keep things fair, we have decided on some rules for digital pictures:

1. No picture may be manipulated or modified in any way. So, submit it straight from your camera.
2. You can submit your pictures on a c.d. If you would like to send them by email, give me a shout via email that you wish to do so (shealy@ucalgary.ca).
3. As with slides, submissions start on March 16.
4. Submissions should be clearly marked with your name, a list of the entries and the category number.

If you have any useful advice with digital photography...please let me know! This is a new field for us, so we are learning.

**Photo Competition Rules and Eligibility**

Please read and follow these rules carefully. Failure to follow these rules will result in disqualification from the contest.

The contest is open to any section member whose membership is in good standing.

Photographs will be judged on the basis of a point rating system. Entrants may win one or more places in each class. Entrants may submit two entries in the following classes: Classes 1,2,4 and 7. Entrants may submit three entries in all other classes.

Judges may not enter any of their own photographs, nor may any of their family members.

Each slide must be clearly marked, and legibly marked with the entrants name, slide title, and class number. An asterisk (\*) must be placed in the lower left corner of the slide when held for viewing.

Slides in glass mounts will not be accepted.

All winners receive ribbons and class winners will have their names engraved on the respective trophies.

All photographs must have been taken within three (3) years of the contest deadline.

All entrants must enclose a list of the entries, specifying the class and title of each entry, and include their name, address and phone number.

All entries must be available for reproduction in the Chinook, the climbing and ski schedules and other publications and promotional material offered by the section including displays and slide shows.

Prints must be mounted, with a minimum size of 5"x7". Matting and presentation will be considered in the judging. The entrant's name and print title should be on the back of the print.

All submissions, starting March 16, may be delivered to Shannon Healy's place: **please call/email the day before you wish to drop pictures off** (contact information at the bottom).

Categories for the photo contest:

- Class 1 - Canadian Mountain Scenes
- Class 2 - Mountain Winter Scenes
- Class 3 - Mountain Scenes From Outside Canada
- Class 4 - Mountaineering
- Class 5 - Rock Climbing
- Class 6 - Ice Climbing
- Class 7 - Ski Mountaineering
- Class 8 - Portraits of Mountaineers
- Class 9 - Flora
- Class 10 - Fauna
- Class 11 - Humour
- Class 12 - Prints
- Class 13 - Best In Show
- Class 14 - Unclassified
- Class 15 - Club Activities
- Class 16 - The Legacy Award -

If you are interested in judging this year's photo contest, we certainly could use your help! Please contact either Cam Roe or Shannon Healy for information.

### **The First Annual Hiking Trail Snack Competition!!!**

Yes, you heard right....in order to jam up this year's photo contest, the ACC is also holding a cook-a-thon. Now is your chance to demonstrate your culinary skill in preparing hiking trail treats! On the same day as the Photo Contest, (April 20) bring in your snack submissions for a chance to win a Gift Certificate at MEC, not to mention the fame and immortal-

ity by getting your picture in Chinook! Wow! As well, bring in the recipes of your hiking delights, and we will publish them in the Chinook.

Rules to the Snack Competition:

1. You must make your snack. Cliff bars are not acceptable.
2. You may submit more than one snack.
3. By "snack", we mean something that doesn't require preparation, like a stove, to eat. Something you can slide into your pocket and eat while you are walking.
4. You don't have to make enough for all attendees...just the judges.
5. There are no categories. Sorry, but it's up to the judges. So, just make something healthy, happy and tasty.

On the day of the contest, we'll have a table set up for you to deposit your snack. I'll then call forth the judges, to sit and sample while the Photo Contest is going on.

**If you are interested in being a snack judge, please email me for information. Some skill in consuming snacks is required.**

Good luck, and happy cooking!

Shannon Healy  
ACC Social Co-ordinator  
shealy@ucalgary.ca

### **Calgary Section Mt. Alexandra Mountaineering Camp 2004**

- When:** **Week 1:** July 24 - July 31, **Week 2:** July 31 - Aug. 7, **Week 3:** Aug. 7 - 14
- Where:** Mt. Alexandra Area, Rocky Mountains, British Columbia
- Base:** South Rice Brook (GR 833 588, 82N/14). This is a fly-in camp. Bring your own tent for sleeping. A cook tent and drying tent will be available for cooking and bad weather.
- Who:** 18 (max) Calgary Section Members per week
- Cost:** Approximately \$ 325 (final costs will depend on helicopter costs).
- References:** **BOOK:** *Climber's Guide to The Rocky Mountains - North*
- MAPS:** 82 N/14 Rostrum Peak
- WEB:** <http://peakbagger.tripod.com/Climbs/Alexandra/Alexandra.htm>

htm

The campsite will be located just west of Mt. Alexandra (11,120') on the upper reaches of South Rice Brook. There are a wide variety of objectives including scrambles and hiking opportunities. Whiterose Mountain and Mt. Spring-Rice are highly recom-

mended.

The camp is **self-guided, self-catered, and self-managed** so participants should have the requisite skills (a snow and ice course at minimum) and be prepared to contribute in every way to ensure a successful and safe camp. In particular, **all participants are expected to act as trip or rope leaders.**

For more information, detailed participant expectations, and an application form see: [www.wdmarriott.com/acc/alexandra.htm](http://www.wdmarriott.com/acc/alexandra.htm). Or contact Bill Marriott (wdmltd@shaw.ca).

**Booking:** To reserve a spot we require a non-refundable deposit of **\$ 200** with your application. Your application **must** include volunteering for specific tasks. Failure to indicate a willingness to help with the chores or leading will result in the application being returned. Please make cheques payable to ACC Calgary Section and send along with a completed application to Bill Marriott, 52 Royal Birch Manor NW Calgary, AB T3G 5K3.

### **Ski Leaders' Weekend**

**Jan. 17 – 18, 2004**

Jacqueline Louie

What do you need with you if your ski binding breaks? What emergency gear should you have in your pack, if you need to survive overnight in the backcountry? How do you plan a successful ski trip?

These were some of the topics that were addressed at a recent ACC ski leaders' weekend, held at the Canmore Clubhouse and attended by 20 people. Facilitated by amateur leaders, it was excellent value for money (\$20 per person including accommodation) and packed with information on what it takes to organize a successful backcountry trip.

#### **Saturday**

Saturday morning presenters were Chuck Young, speaking about pre-trip planning; Marg Rees, group management; and Jane Maduke, navigation using map and compass. While the speakers covered a lot of ground, there was also plenty of opportunity for participants to ask questions, share experiences and compare notes on what works when they're co-ordinating trips in the mountains.

Afternoon sessions included a two-hour transceiver practice on the hillside behind the clubhouse, a ski repair clinic presented by Ray Norman, and a navigation review for people who needed some extra time with map and compass.

The weekend wasn't all work. Saturday's daytime sessions were followed by happy hour with snacks and liquid refreshments courtesy of the ski committee, and a sumptuous potluck dinner with contributions by everyone who attended.

One of the most memorable parts of the evening was the talk by Bill Corbett about getting lost in the Rogers Pass area in late December. It was a sobering reminder that any-

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one, no matter how competent, could be forced to spend a night in the wilderness for any number of reasons. If people are caught in an avalanche, if they break a ski binding or injure themselves – all of a sudden they're not making it home that night.

One of a handful of people to summit all 54 of the over 11,000-foot peaks in the Canadian Rockies, Bill suffered frostbitten toes after taking the wrong route down from Sapphire Col. He and Dan Doll spent the night outdoors after skiing through the middle of the night, and were rescued by helicopter the following morning thanks to their ACC friends who had reported them missing.

Bill, who is expected to make a complete recovery, also brought all the gear and clothing he normally carries on a day trip to show our group. It may seem like extra stuff to carry, but if you're stranded in the mountains, it can help save your life.

***Survival tips:***

- **Leave your intended destination and trip route with someone responsible. Bill and Dan's friends knew the approximate area where they had planned to ski, but there were a variety of routes they could have taken. When their friends realized they were missing, they spent a lot of time figuring out where the two skiers might have gone.**
- **Carry a GPS, map and compass. Bill, who usually carries a GPS, left it behind on this trip thinking he wouldn't need it. They also tried a different return route on the spur of the moment and didn't take the time to make sure they were going the right way. If they had pulled out their compass earlier they would have realized they were heading in the wrong direction a lot sooner.**
- **Carry that emergency gear - be prepared in case you need to spend a night outdoors. Don't compromise on quality. At the same time, make sure you cut down on weight and bulk wherever possible. Bill has his things weighed, down to the gram.**
- **Good equipment is made by a variety of companies. For example, Edmonton-based Kluane Mountaineering makes lightweight quality down (800 fill). Carry some sort of tarp that can help shelter you, for example a Zdarsky tarp.**
- **Learn emergency skills. Bill and Dan built a snow cave that helped shelter them overnight.**

**Sunday**

For those who stayed the entire weekend, Sunday was a ski day. We divided into two smaller groups for a practice day outdoors (group management at French Creek, navigation at Healy Pass).

For any trip leader who didn't attend the ski leaders' weekend, or anyone who is considering becoming a ski trip leader – keep this event in mind the next time it's held (maybe next winter, depending on interest). This is a great way to sharpen and review your

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skills, and a good opportunity to get to know other ACC trip leaders better. And get inspired for your next ACC trip.

*Organizer:* Ray Norman (assisted by the rest of the ski committee)

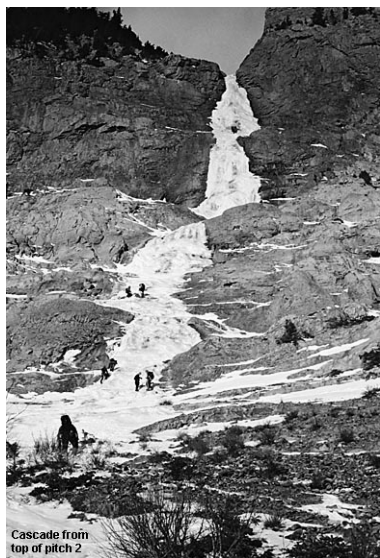
*Participants:* Bill Corbett, Garry Denman, Peter and Judy Haase, Heather Eadie and Jason McCrank, Jane Maduke, Jacqueline Louie (scribe), Greg McDougall, Scott Montgomery, Celia Norman, Phyllis Normey, Chris and Pat Payne, Marg Rees, Andy Strangemann, Sandy Walker, Chuck and Lesley Young.

**Cruisin' Up Cascade**

Shannon Healy

On Dec. 21, a warm, blustery day, Ian Hunt led a trip up Cascade Falls (W2-3). The participants included Darryl Jensen, Brock Grolla, Peter Minions, Patrick Dunn, Andy Myers and myself. For many of us, this was a first time ascent up this formidable classic.

At 8:30, we gathered at the Cascade Falls parking lot, and began to assemble our gear. Our first test of bravery came soon after: a small plane landed on the airstrip directly behind the parking lot, which we were in the process of crossing. (Perhaps the ice climbing guide should include a commitment grade for air traffic danger...?) Apparently this airstrip is closed to common use; only emergency landings are permitted, to reduce noise pollution.



Cascade from top of pitch 2

Just before 9:00, we had reached the base of the climb, and began to tool up. There was one party (ha! One party of two! Read it and weep!) just starting ahead of us at the base. We decided on three teams: Ian leading Patrick and myself, Andy leading Brock, and Darryl leading Peter. The grade of the first few pitches was an easy grade 2: several parties typically solo these pitches to the harder ice above. We, however, opted for safe and steady, and were roped up for the start. In fairly good time (~11:00), we slogged our way through the snow to the higher pitches.

As the day progressed, the temperature grew steadily higher finding the last two grade 3 pitches a sloshy mush. However, our intrepid leader Ian located, on the right hand side, a fantastic and somewhat hidden line of perfect ice that seemed to have escaped the day's melt. Sadly, the other two groups did not follow, and stuck to the wider but wetter left hand side. After a quick snack, we cruised up this bulging pillar to the next and final pitch.

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Once again choosing the dry side, Ian led a line that dipped into an ice gully (about a foot deep) requiring some funky stemming and ending in an interesting contortionist escape. The final few feet of ice, which was low grade, was hollow, resulting in a deep drumming sound as we hammered on it (which we could hear on the pitch below). By 2:00, we were toasting our success on the climb's summit with tea and cookies and basking in the intense sunlight. Immediately after, we began a three part rappel to the start of the more difficult pitches, then slogged through the snow to the base (there is an easy trail on climber's right that circumvents the first easy ice.) As we approached the base, we ran into another party in the process of starting up. So, in total, apart from our group, there were two other parties of two...one just ahead of us, and one starting as we were leaving. Pretty lucky, eh?

Apart from a pit stop at the Canmore ESSO for some cheesies and chocolate milk (the feast of the *true* ice climbing warrior!), we, at that point, called it a day.

Note: the times written herein may or may not be accurate and are based entirely on memory.

**Tech Tips: Slippery Rappelling and Lowering**

Orvel Miskiwi

While ice climbing on a very cold day recently, I ran into an unusual situation of lowering people and rappelling with very little friction: a rope was forgotten at home and so we ended up doubling a 9mm rope and pitching out a full-ropelength iceflow. From the top, we lowered party members or rappelled to the bottom on the single rope in order to do the climb again with the top rope. By then, the rope was very icy and it was difficult to control with various common devices; this resulted in a dangerous situation, but we were able to survive with caution and the non-standard use of a prussik for friction instead of just a backup.

The problem was serious enough that I spent some time at home reflecting and experimenting with a few brake devices and came up with a number of enhancements (of a type) which would greatly ease and secure lowering in such tricky conditions. Generally, a braking system can be enhanced by increasing the amount of friction acting on the rope, and that is easiest to accomplish by introducing additional wraps or bends which the rope undergoes as it passes through the system.

1. One of my partners tried rappelling with a Reverso and said he hates it for rappelling; he ended up using a figure 8. Control with a figure 8 was inconsistent and poor with icy mitts on the icy single 9mm rope.
2. While threading a figure 8, if you simply put a twist in the loop which is pulled through the big ring before dropping it over the small ring of the 8, the result is greater friction as long as the twist is sustained in use, but this configuration may be best achieved as in 7. below until you are completely familiar with it.

3. While threading a figure 8, if you pull the loop of rope through the big ring of the 8, then over the small end as usual, but THEN twist the loop and pull the resulting circle back over the small ring of the 8, the result is a big increase in friction for one direction of pull, and a lockup for the other direction. This is a stable configuration, but you have to experiment to find the direction of the twist which will let you feed rope through it at all, in the direction you want. It's workable for straightforward lowering or rappelling, but it's not very practical in general, since it is not reversible and must be unclipped in order to escape from it.

4. With a figure 8 in the standard configuration, a considerable increase in friction can be attained by using the small ring instead of the large; ie., pull a loop of the rope through the small ring and drop it over the big ring, then clip the big ring onto the carabiner. (Good Luck with getting the rope through the small ring, especially an icy rope, but forget about trying it with a rope larger than 9mm; some figure 8's are easier than others, to thread this way. As a last resort, it's usually possible to free up the closest end of the rope and feed it through the small ring endwise, then back through, instead of trying to squeeze a bight through the ring.)

5. Often toyed with but rarely done, the small ring of a figure 8 can be used in Sticht plate configuration instead, usually with a big improvement in braking over the figure 8 configuration (even small-ring figure 8).

6. As an enhancement on the small-ring-as-Sticht plate configuration, a loop of the control rope can be pulled through the big ring and clipped onto a carabiner which the 'Sticht' carabiner is clipped to: ie. 2 carabiners in a chain, with the first one on the harness being the one I mean, and the second one holding the loop of rope through the small ring.

7. Friction through a figure 8 in the standard basic setup can be greatly increased by flipping the control end across the static end and pulling it down between the static end and the big ring of the 8. This produces a stable configuration with much greater friction, without unclipping or rethreading, and yet which can be instantly and easily escaped from. Again, every specific figure 8 will perform differently. I tried 3 types and found that a Clog circular 8 produced the most friction, a DMM HeartBrake the least, and a Black Diamond Oval Mini-8 in between. But note that the greatest friction is not necessarily the best; it may be excessive, and so, a nuisance. Every situation is unique, depending on the weight, strength, and experience of the climber(s), the specific devices available, the size and condition of the rope, and weather and terrain conditions: wet snow, ice, or freezing rain; sloping ground or a vertical rappel.

8. An ATC also performed very poorly on the icy single 9mm rope: The device has 2 slots, whereas I was using only one.

So then I realized that the control could be multiplied by making two loops in the single rope and clipping them both through the ATC. This is a symmetric and reversible configuration which produces great braking friction, but as a result does not pass rope easily, as for taking up slack or reversing, and must be unclipped for an escape. Double-threading a rope through an ATC-type brake can be done in 2 different ways: spiral and mirror.

In the spiral configuration, the 2 loops of rope slide around the carabiner together, in the same direction, so they do not resist each other. In the mirror configuration, the two loops of rope slide around the carabiner in opposite directions, so there is friction between the 2 loops

as well as between them and the carabiner; also, on the outside of the device, the section of rope linking the 2 slots has a tighter bend in the mirror configuration, producing greater friction. The mirror configuration causes less residual twisting of the rope than the spiral configuration because its 2 loops feed through in opposite directions: the second loop tries to undo the twist caused by the first loop.

9. Without attempting to cover a wide range of brake devices, I'll mention a related pair which are available to every climber carrying at least one carabiner: the Munter hitch and its big brother the Monster hitch. The Munter itself is a very capable brake but rather underesteemed, likely because of its low-tech nature. It produces a braking advantage in the range of 20:1, is simple to 'tie', and is reversible. With the simple addition of another loop of the rope, it becomes the Monster hitch, with a braking advantage (speculatively) in the range of 400:1, which is, amazingly, still reversible.

10. My point in all this is not that you or I should memorize a whole lot of such setups for unusual or difficult situations, but rather that there are usually more options available to the climber in such a situation than may initially meet the eye. However, it DOES help in those cases, if you have spent some time in the comfort of home, the pub, or a gym, experimenting with your own climbing gear to get some idea of ways that it can be adapted for special purposes.

**Reunion**

We are planning to have a Reunion for old timer members of the Alpine club those who were members before Dec 31 1989. We have booked tentatively a hall for 50 people for April 28th 2004, Wednesday. We need to hear from you if you are interested to take part in this Reunion, so we can book the right size hall. Please call Jana at 249 4997 or e-mail [jcaki@shaw.ca](mailto:jcaki@shaw.ca).

**For Sale**

Tired of keeping your slides in little boxes? They deserve a good home! For Sale: plastic vertical slide trays that hold 100 slides (two vertical trays holding 50 slides each) About 10 available \$6,- each. plastic vertical slide trays that hold 80 slides. asking price \$5,- each. All in good order. Also for sale: plastic slide frames. 100's for sale 10 cent each, or 100 for \$8. Please call Michael Teekens @ 286.7927

**For Sale**

Berghaus-Yeti gaitors for backcountry ski boots. Never glued to boots. Sizes medium and large. Asking \$30 each.  
KM knee high covers for climbing boots. Grippy waterproof soles, breathable nylon uppers, never used. Sizes medium & large. Asking \$50 each  
Paul 249-4997

