



The Chinook

The Newsletter of the Calgary Section of the Alpine Club of Canada

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July 2006

There is NO meeting in July. The August meeting will take the form of a barbecue/potluck in Edworthy Park starting at 6 pm on Tuesday, 15 August 2006. There will NOT be a Chinook in August, so put the date for the barbecue in your calendar NOW. See Page 3 for details.



An Unusual Mountain Phenomenon—Spectre of the Brocken

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ACC CALGARY – SECTION MEETING

TUESDAY JUNE 20, 2006

Section Business

Ray Norman asked for volunteers to help with the clean up of the hall after the meeting

Ray asked for volunteers to help Chuck and Leslie with the collating of the Chinook. A sign up sheet was circulated.

Ray announced that Centennial T-shirts are for sale for \$15 each.

Tonight's presentation is entitled "Yamnuska Mountain Skills Semester"

Chair

Ray announced the Calgary Section Executive positions that will be open next year. These include: Chair, Vice Chair, and Collating. Interested members are encouraged to approach Ray to discuss any of the positions available.

Climbing

Orvel discussed a potential problem with using daisy chains and suggested using a second carabiner when shortening a daisy chain. A video is available on the Black Diamond website which demonstrates this effect.

NOTICES

Treasurer

Trevor has the refund cheques for the Fairy Meadows trip with him. Remaining cheques will be mailed to the participants.

Social

The next section meeting will be held on August 15 at Edworthy Park Site #5. This event will be a BBQ in which members are asked to bring salads, snacks or deserts. The section will provide the meat and buns.

**August ACC Calgary Barbecue
Tuesday evening, 15 August 2006 starting at 6:00 pm**

Come to **Edworthy Park** for good food and a fun evening, and get caught up with everyone on your summer mountain adventures . . .

There will not be a regular meeting in August. Instead, come to the barbecue at Edworthy Park Site #5 (same place as previous couple of years) - It is on the south side of the foot bridge over the Bow River. Please bring your favorite potluck dish (i.e. salad, dessert, vegetable dish, casserole, appetizer . . .) The section will provide the meat/tofu for barbecueing, plus buns, condiments, juice and pop. Bring your family!

Climbing Schedule Changes

OPAL RIDGE: Scramble DATE CHANGE - moved to 22/23 July 2006. See schedule for unchanged details.

PAGET PEAK / MT DALY: Scramble DATE CHANGE - moved to 29/30 July 2006. See schedule for unchanged details.

NOTE THAT LATE SCHEDULE CHANGES AND NOTICES THAT TRIPS ARE FULL ARE POSTED IN THE BREEZE AND ON THE WEBSITE. ALWAYS CHECK THESE LISTINGS FOR THE MOST UP TO DATE INFORMATION.



This article was another of those entered in the First Annual Calgary Section Writing Contest, held in April 2006

**Canmore to Exshaw the Long Way
By Istvan Hernadi**

Many years of exploring trails and studying maps of the Canadian Rockies has inspired my numerous ideas for long hikes to remote areas. Recently I was fortunate enough to meet three young ladies who share my passion for epic day-trips. They were quite excited about the idea of a possible one day traverse from Canmore to Exshaw, over three high passes, and with light packs. The trails of Cougar creek and Exshaw pass were familiar from past excursions. All we needed to do to complete the 40 kilometer traverse was to connect those trails with some route-finding.

We estimated about 12-14 hours for this trip, based on previous experience with similar terrain. I told the ladies that only the bravest backpackers had ventured into this hostile place inhabited by hungry cougars, man-eating willows and "nasty" Park Wardens searching for illegal campers. This sounded like the perfect trip for our hard-core team!

Setting out to attempt this traverse in late November gave us only 10 hours of daylight. We started up Cougar Creek at 6 a.m., with headlamps illuminating the rough trail and numerous stream crossings. The night was cold and much of the creek was ice-covered. Negotiating icy rocks and logs, we ended up with soggy boots and cold feet to start our long hike.

As the sun rose above the deep canyon, so did our spirits. The icy trail continued up the valley along the now dry creek-bed. We reached tree-line before noon on open slopes, sinking deeply into pockets of wind-blown snow between the jagged rocks. Breaking for lunch at scenic Cougar Creek Pass we overlooked the front ranges of Banff National Park. A cold wind blew in from the west and dark clouds gathered above.

Descending the east side of the pass we followed tracks made by cougars and elk in the deep snow, and then made our way in thick bush and a narrow canyon up to an unnamed rocky pass. It was 2 p.m., the clouds moved in and it started to snow. Feeling our faces numb from the wind-chill, we needed to bundle ourselves in all the layers of clothing we had.

After a short break we hurried down the slope aiming for a frozen lake barely visible in the mist. Our legs punched through the deep crusty snow while stumbling over unstable rocks. This was not supposed to be a winter trip! Reaching only the half-way point after nine grueling hours dashed our hopes of

getting out before midnight to visit our friend Ruthie. She was waiting our arrival in Exshaw with fresh cookies, but we had no means of contacting her to explain our delay.

Steep slopes, several cliffs and frozen waterfalls complicated the way beyond the lake. Although the occasional trail was spotted, we were forced to bushwhack and bum-slide several icy sections. Lisa's progress was hampered due to a painful elbow after breaking through the ice. She was able to use just one ski pole after that. Darkness and blowing snow greeted us three hours later on the valley bottom, where we consulted our maps, ate some snacks and prepared for an arduous climb to the final pass.

Progress was slow as fatigue, route-finding and deep snow compounded the difficulties. Nobody complained. We were aware of the fact that we must keep moving in order to reach safety. Stopping was not an option without camping gear and the temperature dropping below -5.

Each of us took turns at breaking trail while detouring around cliffs and impenetrable bush. Five long hours passed before we reached Exshaw Pass in knee-deep snow. Elated at reaching the last pass, we could see dim lights in the distance. Was it the elusive town of Exshaw, or just another smokestack in the mountains?

The night's heavy snowfall obscured the next 15 kilometers of trail. Our food and water supplies were minimal, but we shared what was left. It was a masochistic death march the rest of the way. Following a frozen creek we slipped and fell several times. We tried to keep each other awake by singing and telling stories, each step bringing us closer to safety.

Our group of explorers arrived at the edge of town about 8 hours overdue, and more than 21 hours after leaving Canmore. We felt exhausted, but happy to have accomplished this rarely attempted traverse under difficult conditions. Thereafter we have been known as Team Maso-Chix.

SHORT CHINOOK, EH? ONLY EIGHT PAGES!

Question: WHAT TO DO??

Answer: SEND ARTICLES for the September issue

There can't be more to read if you don't write it!

**Rock Review. Review.
June 3 and 4, 2006
By Colin MacPhee**

Having re-located to Calgary at the beginning of May it was a clear intention of mine to enjoy the mountains thoroughly. As luck would have it, the ACC has been around since 1906. Not quite as long as the Rockies, but certainly long enough to be able to teach a Bluenoser a thing or two.

My initiation into the Rocky Mountain experience turned out to be the annual event known as the rock review, held in the magnificent Ghost River Wilderness Area.

Starting out bright and early at Crowfoot Crossing, the assembled crowd of bleary eyed mountaineers went from loose throng to well oiled machine with the addition of a little coffee and some direction from trip coordinator Peter Lloyd. I was fortunate (and grateful) to have received a lift to the site from a club member in true alpine, car pooling spirit.

Two hours later, we were in the Ghost, had made camp, and were on our way to the STD Wall. (Silver Tongued Devil, there are no double entendres in rock climbing...)

A few people chose a different venue this day, as the Ghost is a place where, to quote a more knowledgeable man than I,

"Numerous features come to a dramatic union in the Ghost River to produce a most unique and unforgettable rock climbing arena."

Andy Genereux

Author of Ghost Rock

To say that I agree would be an understatement. As many Calgary Section ACC members already know, the topographic variety and staggering beauty of this natural treasure has the power to lift the spirit, excite the mind and inspire the soul. The great expanse of the river bed stretches away from the campsite and is buttressed on all sides by scenery which promises delights for hiker, alpinist and rock climber alike.

A few changes in access regulations meant that a gingerly trot through the river was required for the approach to STD. Let's just say that reaction to the water's temperature was mixed. For the record, I can say with a fair bit of assurance that no fish, spawning or otherwise, were injured due to climbers' wading activities.

Approaching this issue from a pragmatic point of view; we are truly blessed to have one of the premier outdoor recreation areas in the world in what is basically our backyard. As I'm sure many club members know, the alpine en-

vironment and the ecosystems therein are in fact, extremely delicate, Alpine riparian areas, even more so.

While all human activity produces an environmental impact, motorized travel amplifies it exponentially. I would only share that in my province of origin, Nova Scotia, vehicular traffic, especially off road "toys" of various sorts are absolutely wrecking havoc with the wilderness.

Considering that we drove right up to the doorstep, I'll walk through the river any time. Here endeth the sermon. Hats off to Peter L. for selflessly risking life and limb to rescue a dropped shoe!

Throughout the day, climbers challenged single and multi-pitch climbs on the myriad STD routes. People were trading off leading climbs, top roping it, and functioning as the belay slave with friendly enthusiasm. Sunny weather combined with the beautiful views made for a great day on the rock. Some commented on being a might rusty, but then, that is what the rock review is for.

With the day done, people once again braved the chill of the river and returned to what proved to be an excellent BBQ with all the trimmings, --- including a couple of large aluminum tasties. The seamless transition from rock wall to the evening's festivities revealed the dozens of hours of volunteer effort from all involved in organizing this exceptional event. On behalf of all those in attendance, please accept my heartfelt thanks.

It is definitely of note that Ghost River trailblazer Frank Campbell was in attendance. It was an honour to meet this soft spoken fellow who modestly described his life's adventures as "Just being in the right place at the right time."

It now must be revealed that I snuck in and got another burger before everyone had at least one. To the burger nazi I apologize, although your frequent and timely announcements were delightful. I'm not sure what you do for a living my friend, but if it doesn't suit you, Calgary may need a town crier. Additionally, it was great to have Superman in attendance for the evening. (It's all in the tights, basically.) Oh, Orville, I'm working on getting you a bigger mason jar for next time...

The raffle went off very well with swag supplied by MEC and Wicked Gravity. Shout outs to J.C. and Al for their support. They have the things that make things work.

Adding to the atmosphere of the bon-type-fire were the musical talents of several campers and a large amount of scuttlebutt and conviviality from everyone.

Sunday saw a few early departures, some more climbing and a couple of scrambles here and there. The rain held off like clockwork. See ya next year everyone!

Note to the quartermaster: Please order one lawn chair.

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NO CALLS AFTER 10 PM IS THE POLICY OF THE SECTION, THANK YOU

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Chinook Submissions: Any article relating to the Club or the mountains is welcome. Please send submissions as an email attachment to **callanan@telusplanet.net** before the 26th for the next month's issue. Microsoft Word documents (Arial font) work the best. Submissions become the property of the Alpine Club of Canada and are subject to editing.