



# The Chinook

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

Volume 41, Number 6

June 2006

**The next Calgary Section Meeting is at 7:30 pm on Tuesday, 20 June 2006  
at the Bow Waters Canoe Club, 1975—26th Street SE**

**This month's Speaker: Jacob Johnson  
"Yamnuska Mountain Skills Semester"**



Solo or Trad on the Snake Dike, by Felix Camire

**Inside this issue:**

---

Minutes from May Section Meeting		2-3
Notices		3-4
Summer Schedule		5
Bear	Richard Collier	6-9
Trophy Hut	Angela Pocsik	9-10
Fay Hut	Michael Teekens	10-11

**ACC CALGARY – SECTION MEETING  
TUESDAY MAY 16, 2006**

**Section Business**

Ray Norman asked for volunteers to help clean up of the hall after the meeting and 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 "The History of the ACC GMC" by Brad Harrison

**Chair**

Ray announced the Calgary Section Executive positions that will be open next year. These include: Chair, Vice Chair, Ski, Environment & Access, Membership, Social, Treasurer, Library, Ropes and Collating.

Ray encouraged members to read the printout of the job descriptions and to approach him to discuss any of the positions available.

**Vice Chair**

On behalf of Keith, Ray asked for feedback regarding the increase in section membership. Suggestions provided from the members include:

- |                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Proximity to the mountains | Increasing population |
| Number of trips available  | Number of volunteers  |

**Climbing Committee**

On behalf of Peter, Ray reminded the members that the Rock Review will be held in the Ghost on June 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, and that the summer schedule is out.

**Centennial**

Wade offered clarification regarding the 'Centennial Trip' to Sentinel Pass on July 15th. The goal of the trip is to get as many section members as possible out in the same general area . Subgroups are then encouraged to attempt the various objectives in the area.

**Other Business**

The Ghost Access Plan will soon be released. No details were available yet on how access may be impacted, but it is suspected that travel and camping may be limited to specific areas.

\*\*\*\*\*

**ANNOUNCEMENT  
From Michael Teekens**

**Canada Post Centennial Stamp Release  
Wednesday, 19 July 2006, 5:00 pm to 7 pm  
at the Civic Centre in CANMORE**

This is a follow up to the announcement that Canada Post will issue a special stamp commemorating the Centennial of the Alpine Club of Canada.

On July 19<sup>th</sup> in Canmore at the Civic Centre, Bob Sandford will give a brief slideshow on the history of the Club. This will be followed by a few words from a representative of Canada Post who will unveil the special stamp. I am told that the stamp designers will be present.

Mike Mortimer, Chairman of the Centennial, and I have come up with the idea of having a limited number of First Day Covers signed by prominent people of the ACC and, we hope, by the stamp designers. The signed First Day Covers will be for sale, and are very desirable for the collector.

It would be wonderful if ACC members make a point of buying and using "our" stamps. Maybe having our own stamp will inspire interest in collecting among club members!

Please join us at 5 pm on Wednesday July 19<sup>th</sup> for this once in a life-time centennial event!

**Ghost Update  
By Bill Marriott**

The Ghost Access Management Plan is now official. The changes to climber access that were anticipated in the draft plan have become law. The full details including maps can be found at <http://www.srd.gov.ab.ca/regions/southwest/ghost/>.

Climbers will be affected in two ways:

- (1) restrictions on camping - in particular the popular campsite at the Banff Park boundary is not a designated 'random' camping site so expect to be fined if you camp there;
- (2) vehicular traffic on the road beyond the first river crossing into the North Ghost is now prohibited.

We continue to be hopeful that travel into the North Ghost will be opened in the future if the CASA fish study indicates no threat to the native bull trout population. The only thing standing in the way of the study is funding so get out your chequebooks and write them a cheque.

\*\*\*\*\*

**NOTICE**

Remember that there is NO MEETING in July. There WILL be a July Chinook but there is NO CHINOOK in AUGUST. (Even Chinook editors get to go on vacation sometimes.) Please write about your adventures in the mountains and get it to me by 26 June for inclusion in the July Chinook.

The August meeting will take the form of a barbecue in Edworthy Park on Tuesday August 15th. Book your calendar, — maybe we'll have better weather this year!

**Climbing partners needed**

I am a new member in the Calgary section and I am desperate to find climbing partners since the season is starting and I do not know anyone in Alberta. I am an experienced multi-pitch climber. I possess trad gear, ropes but no car. Lead 5.10 in shape, but right now, I need to get back in shape...  
Nivea L. de Oliveira email nideoliv@ucalgary.ca

**Trips added to the Schedule**

Date : June 11th            Trip destination : **Grizzly Peak**  
Type : Scramble            Length : Short  
Trip coordinator's name : Angela Pocsik            Phone number : 547-3740  
Email address : [apocsik@telus.net](mailto:apocsik@telus.net)

Date : July 22 or 23            Trip destination : **Mt Lougheed** NW ridge of NW peak.  
Type : alpine            Length : long (estimate 12hr day)  
Rating : rock to 5.5            Trip coordinator's name : Ian Hunt  
Phone number : 247-7046            Email address : [irhunt@ucalgary.ca](mailto:irhunt@ucalgary.ca)  
General comments : max 3 people per rope, max 2 rope teams if leaders available. i.e. 6 max including leaders.

Date : August 26 or 27            Trip destination : **Mt Athabasca**: Silverhorn or normal route  
Type : alpine            Length : long (estimate 12hr day)  
Rating : intermediate            Trip coordinator's name : Ian Hunt  
Phone number : 247-7046            Email address : [irhunt@ucalgary.ca](mailto:irhunt@ucalgary.ca)  
General comments : max 3 people per rope, max 2 rope teams if leaders available for the Silverhorn. Plan to camp or stay in the area for the whole weekend, probably try to drive up Friday night.

**Changes to climbing schedule**

**WINDTOWER**: scramble originally set for June 17 or 18. DATE CHANGED to the following weekend, June 24 or 25. See schedule for unchanged details.

**MT. ANDROMACHE**: alpine climb set for July long weekend CANCELLED

**EIFFEL PEAK**: this scramble is going 24 JUNE (not July). Scott Berry 240-3232 or [scottcberry@shaw.ca](mailto:scottcberry@shaw.ca)

**MT. RAE**: scramble 25 June coordinator's correct email address is [sassevil-leremi@yahoo.ca](mailto:sassevil-leremi@yahoo.ca)

NOTE THAT AS TRIPS FILL UP, NOTICE OF THIS MAY BE POSTED IN THE BREEZE. ALSO, LATE SCHEDULE CHANGES CANNOT MAKE IT INTO THE CHINOOK; CHECK THE BREEZE FOR MORE UP TO DATE LISTINGS.

***The following article received Honourable Mention in the 2006  
First Annual Writing Contest***

**BEAR  
By Rick Collier**

By 3:30 am it was cold enough that I fitfully considered lighting the Dragonfly so John and I could huddle about its meagre flame and warm our hands; but not so cold that I was willing to forsake the bleak and restless comfort of my summer sleeping bag. And what the hell, it was damn near time to get up anyway. Little did I realize that a mere fourteen hours later the memory of this chilly decision-making would create the scenario for my most intense -- but dumbest -- close encounter of the ursine kind.

We had bivied on a tiny black-gravel platform painstakingly scraped out of the ice and scree of one of several rock heaves on the west side of the upper Haig Glacier. Earlier in the day we'd sweltered up the French Creek valley, all awash in the tidal flux of a late July snowmelt. Perhaps it was the warmth of the day or the insouciance of advanced age, but neither of us considered that it might be cold--very cold --sleeping on ice on a glacier at 9000'.

Our objective . . . no, hold on; let's be ruthlessly honest -- it was my objective, another obscure quasi-summit, a peak little known and less climbed, one more exotic bump on my infamous 'list'. After unreasonable and persistent nagging, John Holmes' resistance had collapsed and he agreed to accompany me on another bizarre new-route attempt.

Mount Monro, first climbed in 1973 from the west by Bernie Schiesser and a large group of clients, was a peak I had glanced at from Mount Maude, the slopes of Robertson, and the snow banks of LeRoy. It is, perhaps surprisingly, an awe-inspiring massif, but one that I had hardly taken seriously, likely because no one else did. Its black hulk forms the tattered SW ridge of Sir Douglas and would probably not be considered for peak-hood except for an unexpected swoop of rock at the south end rising into a substantial tower.

The night before our climb, we had hunkered in the glacial scree, sipping hot soup, chucking rocks at a marauding raven, and examining our route -- a potential first ascent up the dark, brooding east face of Monro. In truth, it had been more than just the cold that had kept me fidgeting throughout the wee hours.

But, of course, the story of the snow, ice, ledges, cliffs, and rappels on this route is another tale for another time. Suffice it to say that we scabbled up the face to the summit of Monro and, by luck if not competence, arrived back at

our bivy in mid-afternoon, at which point the following familiar dialogue ensued:

"So, how'd you sleep last night?"

"Oh, fine; how about you?"

"Just a bit cold; nothing serious, though."

"Same."

"We brought enough food and fuel; guess we could spend another night."

"Yeah, I suppose we could."

"I'm not all that tired."

"Right. I know what you mean."

Then, simultaneously: "Let's get the hell out of here!"

Twenty minutes later we were packed and hoofing off across the glacier toward French Creek col, about to learn, once again, how distant causes lead to strange encounters and even stranger insights.

We were able to glissade and boot ski down the névé to the first of the alpine meadows, but this shortcut dropped us into an unfamiliar drainage left of the normal route; our gain in time was rapidly eroded by skulking about over minor ridges and through light bush looking for the trail. Eventually, I suggested that we split up and search separately, he taking a low route and I a high one, each ready to whistle up the other when the track was found -- an efficient and practical plan, but not too smart.

I trotted through the heavy green grass of a broad couloir and pushed my way up the far side along a game trail overspread with thick, dark branches to emerge in a small hillocky meadow with cliff to my left and a haze of miniature larch to my right. I started to blunder forward into this meadow when the slightest of brown movements caught my eye.

Oh oh! There it was, not twenty meters away, the biggest, plumpest grizzly I'd ever seen, contentedly grazing through a patch of clover. And she was not alone -- prancing and leaping at her side was a single cub, looking every bit like some animated Winnie-the-Pooh teddy. A magnificent sight, both comedic and eloquently natural, it was the epitome of the sublime, fusing beauty, grace, and -- of course -- terror. A mother bear with a cub is not to be trifled with.

I had not yet been seen, nor heard, nor smelled, and so I quietly began to back up. But then I hesitated, and stopped.

"Why?!" you may well ask. And to answer, I must briefly digress:

Some years back I and a party of climbers were exiting Boivin Creek west of Elkford, marching along the broad trail, chattering cheerily, and enjoying the greenery and the warmth of a late afternoon, when someone said, "What's a cow doing this far away from the valley?" We stopped, I heard a silent alarm

bell, someone else said, "Where?" "Just off to the left, down by those pines."

And, yup, you could just see the rim of a brown back swaying through the underbrush. Only it was no cow.

"Bear attack drill number three!" I barked, and half the group dropped to one knee, releasing the safeties on their pepper sprays and bringing canisters to firing position, ready for a full-frontal charge. The rest of us ranged behind this first wave of defence, whistles in mouths, cheeks plumped out. And I, the fearless leader of this lost brigade, extracted my banger, already dangerously half-cocked, hanging from a lanyard inside my shirt.

"Blow," I shouted, and a scream of whistles screeched forth. The movement in the low bushes ceased, and the bear stood up. And stood up. And continued to stand up. It was enormous, the King Kong of grizzlies, rising slowly up onto its hind feet. And I, safety-conscious woodland wonk that I am, instead of shooting my camera and getting the wild animal picture of the decade, fired off my banger . . . whooooooosh, kablam!

Poor Mr. Bear just stood there, weaving his wonderful head back and forth, bewildered and perplexed, and then dropped back on all fours, ambled down the embankment, across Boivin Creek, and disappeared into the thick forest.

Since then, my wife (who was part of this excursion) teases me about how I sacrificed a prize-winning photo of a calm, peaceful, vegetarian bear, up on its hind legs trying to discover what all the fuss was about, for the sake of my delusional paranoia. After all, it was we who had intruded raucously into his tranquil domain; he was just minding his own bearish business.

So it was this memory and the sting of regret that, there, in the wilds of upper French Creek, caused me to halt my silent retreat and turn back toward the two bears, carefully sliding my camera from its case, extending the telephoto, stilling my trembling hands, and taking the picture of a lifetime. I should have left it at that: we all know unplanned bivies happen when we try to cram in one more summit before dusk. *Radix malorum est cupiditas*. The root of all our ills is greed. "Damn," I thought, "I've got to get a shot of the cub."

I don't know if it was the 'clunk' of the shutter or a minuscule shift in the wind, but without the slightest warning she charged. Fast. Big. Sharp teeth. Dark claws. The cliff just behind me. No escape. Trying desperately to recall Steve Herrero's advice about bear attacks, I fell to my knees, chattering wildly, loudly, and like a madman waving my hiking poles about my head. But truly, I had lost all hope.

And, then, three meters from me, she stopped short, huffing, wheeled about, and bounded back to her child. I edged closer to the brow of the cliff, and a second time she charged, but again stopped short, pawing the ground, jaws

slavering -- I was sick with the great stink of her breath -- again she retreated to her cub. Her third charge, the closest, was her last; satisfied that I was subdued, she and her cub vanished into the firs.

It was a close call.

But maybe not just my close call.

Ms. Bear had come near enough that I gazed directly into the deep well of her brown eyes. I know what I saw there. Make no mistake about it -- like all mothers facing threat or catastrophe, she was terrified, terrified beyond her own well-being, beyond all possibility of endurance.

There was no doubt who was the beast and who truly was the civilized creature, normally polite and circumspect.

Which is why, I suppose, John and I sang bawdy barroom ballads, loudly and off-key, all the way back to the parking lot.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Trophy Hut, Well's Gray Provincial Park**

**March 24<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> 2006**

**Written by Angela Pocsik**

Trip Coordinator: Alan Fortune

Participants: Marianne Azizi; Sue L Kuznik; Chris Wright; Angela Pocsik; John Warin; Christian St-Pierre; Ray Van Nes; Sim Galloway

Conditions: Overall stable snow pack with mostly sunny and mild/warm temperatures

Do you enjoy yo-yo turns? Do you thrive off of skiing powder? Do you love exploring new terrain? How about a stellar snow pack? Ski touring? Does relaxing in a sauna after a fantabulous day of skiing sound good? If you answered yes, then you will want to check out this area.

Alan's exceptional backcountry knowledge and experience, safety awareness, combined with the familiarity of the terrain was invaluable. Also, having radios definitely made a difference. We skied Discovery, Moul, and Table Mountains. It does not take long to put in 3000-4000 feet of skiing in one day. The terrain has plenty of skiing below and above tree line, with mild to aggressive slopes.

The trips started off Saturday with a beauty helicopter ride to the cozy hut. John was quickly put to work once we arrived because he had to 'gently' thrust his body against the door to open it up. Once settled in, we skied behind the hut. On our first full day, Sunday, the group split into two – one group went

ski touring and the other group did yo-yo turns. Snow penetration was up to the knees at times – not bad for early spring conditions. There was no hurry to get back to the hut because the sun was still glowing strong at 5:30 pm. On Monday we skied behind the hut.

Tuesday was a hump day for a couple of us. That is the beauty of doing a seven day trip at a hut. One does not have to feel guilty for maxin' and relaxin' for a day. The group that went out skied to Moul Mountain, which offers heli-skiing like terrain. Wednesday and Thursday was more of first we go up, then we go down, then we go back up and then back down, out to Table Mountain and in behind the hut. There was a slide that was triggered on Wednesday – it was on a slope roughly 55 degrees and about 7 meters in length– the trigger was a bum slide on the sweet spot.

Friday we skied out—good timing to head out because the snow was starting get heavy with the rising temperature. We headed back to Table Mountain. Some of the most challenging skiing ended up being the ski out in isothermal snow. It does not take much to slide face first into the snow.

Now onto food: One can never bring too much salsa. It will be eaten. But one can bring too much pasta. A 4 pound bag (or was that 4 Kilograms?!) of pasta could've fed not only a group of our size, but the cougars, moose and the lone marmot could've been invited as well. One can also eat too much hot pepper. Did you know that the standard scale for hotness is 1-10? On our dinner table we had one that ranked 400!

Can't say enough great things about this trip – one just has to go!

\*\*\*\*\*

**Fay Hut 24/26 Feb 2006  
by Michael Teekens**

The weather forecast looked quite good and not too cold. Chuck Young easily collected enthusiastic skiers to experience the spanking new log building which has replaced the historic Fay Hut, burned down in the huge forest fires of a few years ago. On Friday morning we assembled at 7 a.m. and drove off to the parking lot opposite the Marble Canyon in Kootenay National Park. After the usual avalanche transceiver check we crossed the road to the trail into Prospector's Valley. All those black tree trunks poking through the snow were quite a sight -- an eerie feeling, yet the burn allowed views up the valley and of the slopes on either side. The snow conditions were excellent with cover of well over one meter.

The skiing is rather uneventful until the 10.5 k. turn-off to the hut, then going right and uphill, steepening as you gain elevation. Chuck and Allan Main were going ahead to set the trail and guide us. When it got too steep we took off our skis, tied them to our backpacks and walked up to the rope for a pull up a rise of about eight meters to the bench on which the hut has been rebuilt. Once we were all safely on the bench we skied the short distance to the hut. Once inside we started a fire for heat and water; the winter water supply is from snow-melt only, and lots of it was needed for nine people. After a good meal we socialised for a while and by 9 p.m. all were ready to sleep.

Saturday morning looked promising, though we started skiing a little on the late side. Chuck and Allan went ahead to check out the route to get above the head wall to the glacier leading to Neil Colgan Hut. They set up the rope before signalling us to ski up and traverse the steep slope. Twice they put ropes between trees. It was exciting but not for the faint of heart and it took time.

By about midday we were all safely up; snow conditions were superb and there were great views beyond and to the west. After a lunch break near the start of the glacier we roped up in two groups. Our objective, the Neil Colgan Hut, was still quite far away. For me it was a first to be there in winter but by the time we were nearing the final climb up to Colgan, it was getting a little late, and the wind was picking up. We decided to head back at 3 p.m.

Now for the fun part; we took off our skins and had a great time skiing down virgin snow. We all had tumbles but it was fun; Dianne won the prize for superb and fearless skiing. The sun was lowering as Chuck and Allan set up the first rope for the descent. Going down is always more challenging and we took our time to do it safely. By 5:45 we were all back at the hut to relax in front of a roaring stove, have dinner and socialize before retiring by 10 pm.

Sunday was relaxing. Outside it was cloudy now and later on it started snowing a little. After breakfast we packed, cleaned the hut up and got ready for the return. The exciting part was getting down the super steep section by rope. Once safely below it, we skied with our skins on down the drainage to the valley floor in the deep snow. By 11.30 a.m. we were in the valley, where we could join the trail, have our lunch and cruise out through lightly falling snow. This track is nice and gently downhill. By 3.45 pm we were back at the cars, which had quite a lot of fresh snow to be cleared off. By 4.20 pm we were homebound. A great trip it was and cheers to our leaders Chuck and Allan. Many thanks. It was a successful trip indeed.

Participants: Chuck Young, Allan Main, Bob from Virginia, Katerina Mervat, Katrin Froese, Caroline Fisher, Dianne Schon-Brolsma, Bob West and Michael Teekens the scribe.

**SECTION ENQUIRIES:**

P.O. Box 1995  
 Calgary, AB  
 T2P 2M2

**ADDRESS CHANGES:**

The Alpine Club of Canada  
 P.O. Box 8040  
 Canmore, AB T1W 2T8  
 (403) 678-3200 678-3224(f)



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

### Calgary Section Contact Information

**Chair:** Ray Norman 403 609-0337  
**Past Chair:** Vacant  
**Vice-Chair:** Keith Sanford 932-9626  
**Treasurer:** Trevor Penford 238-3486  
 Tpenford@buffalo-oil.com  
**Library:** Cam Roe 253-5463  
**Secretary:** Renee Lavergne 697-8482  
 climbingren@hotmail.com

**Member Services:**  
 Chair: Angela Pocsik apocsik@telus.net

**Social Committee:**  
 Chair: Jacqueline Louie 289-5787  
 Derek Kemp 253-5339

**Climbing Committee:**  
 Chair: Peter Lloyd 247-0204  
 Orvel Miskiw 932-2800  
 Andy Strangemann 220-0212  
 Rebecca Haspel 275-5656  
 Dave Hanson 827-5441  
 David Roe 282-8025  
 Tom Fransham 880-4455

**Club Ropes**  
 Peter Lloyd 247-0204  
 Cell 471-2493  
 Peter.lloyd@shaw.ca

**Access Committee:**  
 Chair: Bill Marriott wdmltd@shaw.ca

**Training and Leadership Committee:**  
 Chair: Frédéric Labarre  
 frederic\_labarre@yahoo.ca  
 Stacey Karalash 283-1206  
 Scott Montgomery 831-3580  
 Roberto Salguero 262-3913  
 Andy Strangemann 220-0212

**Ski Committee:**  
 Chair: Jason McCrank 229-9451  
 jasonmc\_acc@hotmail.com  
 AlanFortune fortune2@telus.net  
 Ben Stephenson  
 Stephensonben@hotmail.com  
 Heather Eadie Heathereadie@hotmail.com  
 Mark Lane acc\_markl@yahoo.com

**Chinook:**  
 Carmie Callanan (Editor) 813-8959  
 callanan@telusplanet.net

**Collating:**  
 Chuck & Lesley Young 239-4611  
 c.young@shaw.ca

**Calgary Section Web Site:**  
<http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/calgary>

**Email List Service** (post and subscribe)  
 acccalgary@hotmail.com

**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.