



# The Chinook

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

Volume 41, Number 5

May 2006

The next Calgary Section Meeting is at 7:30 pm on Tuesday, 16 May 2006  
at the Bow Waters Canoe Club, 1975—26th Street SE

This month:

**The History of the ACC's General Mountaineering Camps**  
By Brad Harrison



Mount Victoria

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**ACC CALGARY – SECTION MEETING  
TUESDAY APRIL 11, 2006**

*Section Business*

Ray Norman asked for volunteers to help with the clean up of the hall after the meeting  
Chuck Young asked for volunteers to help with the collating of the Chinook and circulated a sign up sheet.

*Training & Leadership Committee*

Frederic made the following announcements:

**Discounts** are available for members registering to several courses (Yamnuska, Rocky Mountain Adventure Medicine). See web-site for details.

**Rock Rescue:**

UofC has been booked on Tuesday May 30 from 7:-10:30. Rob Davidson has accepted to do the evening once again. Free but \$30 deposit required. Maximum 16 participants. Deadline to apply is April 30<sup>th</sup>.

**New Coordinator Evening:**

CAOC has been booked on Tuesday June 06 at 7:30. Bill Corbett and Keith Sanford will do the evening once again. Free.

Rock Leadership Weekend

Has been booked on June 24 & 25. Deadline to apply is April 30 – Announcements will be made May 14<sup>th</sup>. Free but deposit of \$175 required. Contact Frederic for application form

Alpine Leadership Weekend

Has been booked on July 8 & 9. Deadline to apply is April 30 – Announcements will be made May 14<sup>th</sup>. Free but deposit of \$175 required. Contact Frederic for application form

The North Face / ACC Summer Leadership Course

Deadline for Application: May 01, 2006. Announcements made June 1<sup>st</sup>. Camp held Jul 29- Aug 5. Cost is \$650 but the section provides a \$150 subsidy.

Keith Sanford announced the Centennial flag challenge launched by the Outaouais Section. Members interested in carrying the flag to a summit are advised to contact Keith.

Peter Lloyd thanked trip leaders for their submissions and requested more submissions, especially single day climbing trips and alpine trips. The sign up sheet is available tonight for members.

*Centennial*

Centennial t-shirts are available for sale at the meetings and through executive members for \$15 each.

*Other Business*

The section is hosting an “Old timers” evening on May 23. To attend, one must have joined the ACC prior to December 31, 1990. More information is available in the Chinook.

A member announced a 2001 campervan for sale.

Leslie Young announced that the trail mix contest has been cancelled due to lack of entries.

Sandy Walker announced the winners of the writing contest.

These entries will be published in the Chinook :

Runner up: Rick Collier

Winner: Marge Reese

**Rock Review – 3 & 4 June 2006  
By Peter Lloyd**

The Rock Review is our annual two-day event, held on the first week-end of June. This year we've again chosen the Ghost River Wilderness Area as our destination. The event allows section members of all skill levels can get out and freshen up their rock climbing skills on one day, followed by an alpine or multi-pitch rock climbs, scramble or sport climbs the following day.

We'll meet at the A&W at Crowfoot Crossing at 07:00h on Saturday morning for waiver signing; car-pool arrangement and fee collection. We'll be camping at the bottom of the Big Hill as per last year. Participants are welcome to meet us at camp. Trips will typically start around 9:00am after sign-up and organization, followed by a barbeque and overnight stay. There is no need to call the Climbing Committee to let them know you're coming. However, if you're new to the section and need more information, please contact Peter Lloyd ([peter.lloyd@shaw.ca](mailto:peter.lloyd@shaw.ca) or 247-0204) for more information.

Participants are responsible for all of their own personal climbing gear (helmet, harness, shoes, belay device, slings etc.) and camping gear (tent, sleeping bag and pad, and mess gear). Club ropes will be available for leaders coordinating organized climbs. Leaders must supply their own rack and slings.

The fee for the weekend including camping on Saturday evening, food and refreshments and great prizes is mere \$20.

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**New Coordinator Evening  
By Frederic Labarre**

The responsibility of coordinating a trip is a hard task, but it can have great rewards. It gives the experienced mountaineer an opportunity to pass along all the things learned over the years: how to organize the trip, how to set a measured pace, how to read terrain and pick out a route, how to communicate with people. We do not climb because we must; we climb because we love mountains. A climb coordinator helps others enjoy the sport, and that can be deeply satisfying. Anyone who has technical skills, confidence, and a sincere interest in the party's welfare can succeed as a coordinator.

Just as every climbing party needs map and compass, every trip needs

good coordination. The coordinator's goal is to help the party have a safe, enjoyable, successful trip, with minimum impact on the environment. A coordinator must be experienced, with technical skills appropriate for the climb, but does not necessarily need to be the most experienced in the group. A coordinator should be in good enough shape to keep up, but need not to be the strongest in the party. A coordinator does need an abundance of good judgment, common sense, and a sincere interest in the welfare of the entire party. Interested...??

The Calgary Section is always looking for new keen trip coordinators. If you are an Alpine Club of Canada member and haven't led section trips yet but have participated in a number of section trips, then may be you would like to get more involved by coordinating a trip yourself. The Training and Leadership Committee will organize a New Coordinator Evening to prepare you for your first trip and to answer your questions.

During that session, topics like forming the party, preparation/planning, equipment, group and time management, waiver administration and emergency response will be covered. For more information and registration, please contact Frederic Labarre at frederic\_labarre@yahoo.ca

This year the evening will be happening on Tuesday June 06 at CAOC. CAOC is located at 1111 Memorial Drive NW (building is located on the SW of Memorial Drive and 10 Street). Doors will open at 07:00pm and the evening program will start at 7:30pm. The presenters will be Bill Corbett, Keith Sanford and myself. No reservation required. See you there...

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**Reunion**

**7 to 10 pm Tuesday 23 May 2006**

If you were a member of the Calgary Section or of the main club on or before 31 December 1990,

Please come for a social evening at the Clubhouse of the Bow Waters Canoe Club, 1975—26 Street SE (the current usual meeting place for the section). If you feel like contributing that way, bring some cookies or other snack food. Tea and coffee will be provided.

For more information call Jana at 249-4997 or contact her by email at jcakl@shaw.ca

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**The winner**  
of the 2006 First Annual Writing Contest sponsored by the Calgary  
Section is **Marg Rees**, for **sacred passage**.

sacred passage

such a simple thing,  
a scattering of crumbs on a mountain summit,  
a thank-you to the mountain gods for safe passage through their do-  
main.  
so many times i have had their blessing  
and reached the peak among the clouds.  
looked down on green valleys with flowing creeks,  
distant mountains of rock and snow,  
the different tones of earth and stone.  
i have paid the price of long trails, thick forests and hillsides of jumbled  
rock.  
i have walked in the early morning,  
seen the dawn creep into a blackened sky;  
painting the mountain tops in the gold and pink alpenglow.  
i have walked in awe of the simple beauty around me;  
a raindrop on a new green leaf,  
the moss growing on a fallen tree,  
ice patterns on rock,  
tall towers of stone,  
a cloudless sky.  
i feel the gods around me watching my journey,  
protecting both me and the creatures of nature.  
keeping order in the scheme of life;  
the peace of slow growth, the violence of sudden death.  
i feel thankful for the privilege of safe passage;  
for being allowed into this sacred place of forest and mountain,  
to have my soul immersed in the freedom of the wind,  
to touch the sky from a high place.  
and all because the mountain gods allow me to pass.

Another poem from the Writing Contest

When I first slept at the toenails of Delphine Glacier in the Purcells

By Mary Ann Rombach

...And huffing our last puffs, we entered the camp, where others  
rose to greet us. They led us in the blackness to space for pitching tent:  
a cold and barren place it was, 'pon pebble bed of olden stream. But  
Fatigue now peered out from Eye, for Any place to Rest.

So on cruel stones we placed our tent, godthanks for airy mat-  
tress. Without them our poor tired flesh would have no pause to sleep.  
We laid upon those cushions soft, satisfaction filling heart, that we were  
free from nightlong torture, and would not wake with body marked.

We slept like babes  
still wrapped in womb  
sunk deep in down and feather  
Goss'mer shell of nylon 'round us  
Filt'ring sounds of WaterSong

For streams hymned everywhere  
around us  
swelling airs to sweet crescendo  
...then ebbing way into the night  
transporting soul  
to morning's light



**Shunga-La-She 23 October 2005  
By Christopher Campbell**

The day started out with a 6:30 am rendezvous at the Esso gas station in Turner Valley. While we waited for a few stragglers, Lisa-Lee regaled us with stories from her trek in Nepal, from which she had just returned. The air was crisp and stars were in abundance. From the gas station we pooled our vehicles and made the short drive down Highway 546 along the Sheep River toward the Junction Creek rest area. As we organized our gear at the parking lot we realized that we were going to be crossing the river in darkness. We walked down to the river with headlamps gleaming and a few rays of sun beginning to find their way over the Highwood Range. The Sheep River was just above knee deep at its midpoint and cold enough to get rid of the morning weariness. Most of the party had hip waders or wet-suit booties which were stowed in the bushes after the river was crossed. By the time we dried off and got the hiking boots back on it was roughly 8 am and we started along the Junction Creek Trail.

The first 4 km were very flat with heavy tree cover and only a few views of what looked like the Shunga-La-She ridgeline. As we walked and chatted a dispute began to ensue over what "Shunga-La-She" actually meant... Various suggestions were presented, including Ram Mountain. We followed the frozen horse trail until we came to a small creek, which ran along the Junction Lake Route. After some amount of not so arduous bush whacking and creek crossing the trail improved and we followed it west along the side slopes of the creek.

The trail varied between loose scree slopes and dirt trail through trees as we slowly gained elevation and vegetation got sparse. We kept a good pace but stopped a couple of times for snacks along the way. As the morning frost burned off we realized that the day was going to be fantastic. The sky was crystal clear and the sun was throwing enough heat that we began to shed layers. Within an hour or two our south facing approach to Shunga-La-She was visible with what looked like the summit just above a long gradual incline of scree. We stopped and rested in the morning sun before the formidable uphill portion of the trip began. As we started off following a cliff band speckled with trees Bob saw the first signs of wildlife for the day – Bush bunnies! The path we followed stayed visible most of the way up the scree slope and we found ourselves on the summit just after noon. We had lunch on the summit and shared snacks, which included chocolate that Lisa-Lee brought back from Nepal and wine gums that I brought from Calgary (not quite as exotic but a hit anyway!).

The wind was howling on the summit and the great weather allowed us

a fantastic fall panorama. To the West and South the Highwood and Dogtooth ranges were visible and to the East was a rolling view of the foothills with the Sheep River in the foreground. We took some pictures, donned our helmets and began to glissade down the scree slope. We made our way down, occasionally yelling "rock" to warn others of the impending danger....then the dreaded cry of "tree" was heard from a few members of the group...Heather looked up to discover a tree had in fact dislodged itself! She dodged out of the way and it came slowly rolling past her and down the slope. We got back to the river crossing at approximately 4pm and most of the party cleaned the mud off their gear while crossing the river. We then drove out to Black Diamond for some beer and snacks and the conversation soon lead to stories about trekking in Nepal. It turned out I was the only one who hadn't been there! All in all it was an amazing day.

To set the record straight I decided to do a Google search for Shunga-La-She only to find links to erotic Japanese cartoons. After a bit more investigating, and finding out that Shunga means "spring picture" in Japanese, I decided to end the fruitless (yet informative) search. Maybe some day the true meaning of Shunga-La-She will turn up - but until then it will remain a bit of an enigma – and an interesting topic of conversation.

**Participants:** Bob Tothill, Julie Miller, Lisa-Lee Johnson, Heather Robertson & Chris Campbell

### **A Real Ghost Experience**

By Stacey Karalash

Each time I find myself cruising West on the SR 940, on an early morning, with the sun rising and the peaks outside the truck's windshield glowing pink in the morning light, I find myself thinking the same thing.... What adventures will the Ghost deliver to us today? Perhaps these reoccurring thoughts are due to my history of both great times and mini-epics experienced in this exquisite area. Perhaps, it is due to the anticipation of a real "ghost experience", of which many tales have been told from those who have traveled before us.

One chilly January morning, Gerhard, Mathieu, and I set our sights on "Beowulf", a rambling, multi-pitch Grade 4 waterfall ice climb located deep in the north Ghost River Valley. We piled into my truck, a club cab Toyota, which allows for lots of cozy togetherness and squishing in the front, while our packs and ice tools had more than enough room to enjoy in the bouncing back.

As we bounced the truck through the first few creek-crossings of the Ghost River, my thoughts lingered on great memories and easy roads. Gerhard, sitting with his knees around his ears in the back seat, entertained us

with stories and very bad jokes. We had made it quite a ways into the North Ghost Valley, beyond the more heavily traveled trails, intending to spend our day on a quiet route in a beautiful twisting slot-canyon.

As we drove, we came across a more difficult creek crossing. Sitting in the idling truck, we assessed and debated whether we could make it across, and if we did not, what the consequences would be (for those of you who have spent a few hours chopping your high-centered truck out of a partially frozen river, you know exactly what I mean...). Another truck pulled up behind me and waited. Well, at least there was help around, so across we went. Success! A few bumps, some sliding as the truck gained the icy creek edge on the far bank, and we were safely across.

Feeling quite brave, we approached the next river crossing. Now, this one looked tricky - a thin blanket of ice spread all the way across the wide river-bed. There appeared to be two ways for us to cross - vehicle tracks on both the right and left. I opted for the right, and just before heading across, turned back to see the other truck just starting across on the left. It quickly became quite a show. The other truck made it about halfway across, and then suddenly both front tires punched through the ice. The driver began rocking his truck madly back and forth, with water shooting dozens of feet into the air from the rapidly spinning tires. He succeeded getting his front tires out of the now huge hole, but only for a few seconds before his back tires found root in the same place. This left his poor truck tilted skywards in an angle that looked very unnatural.

So across we went on the right side, intending to lend a hand to this incredibly stuck truck about 2/3 of the way across. Then, on the other side back across the creek, came another vehicle, this time a big black truck. We saw these people stop and check on the stuck truck, then get back in their vehicle, and come over to where we were to cross. Out bounced a couple, who quickly informed us that the 'stuck truck' people were doing "just fine", and that they were off to climb 'Fang and Fist' (a difficult climb a bit further up the North Valley) as they didn't have a tow rope to help out. Oh, and could you please move your truck out of our way so we can get to our climb?

I asked if they could use my towrope to pull the very stuck truck out, as I have a little truck with a very underpowered engine. The black truck couple informed us "Hey man, they're doing OK chopping ice, and that's what a *real* Ghost experience is all about... digging for hours. If they're still digging at the end of the day, then we'll give them a hand." So we dutifully moved out of the black truck's way, shook our heads in amazement, and doubled back to get in a position to try to help the stuck truck out.

Well, it's a small world indeed. We found two of our fellow ACC mem-

bers on their knees wielding ice axes, and trying to chop ice from around their stuck truck's tires. We positioned my truck for the pull, hooked up the rope, put the "grip tracks" between my tires and the ice I was on (won at an Ice Review, I might add!!), and after a couple quick tugs, they were out. Interestingly enough, we were all headed to climb Beowulf that day.

We all finished the drive together (with the black truck folks long gone, of course), then walked into canyon and up to the start of the ice climb. "Stuck Truck" folks offered to let us go first, as the climb is in a tight canyon, and we would need to spread out two parties out. They gratefully told us "The only reason that we are here is because you helped us out". We weren't quite ready to climb, so off the other team went. We climbed behind them up the beautiful twisting canyon, enjoying roped pitches mixed with some easier soloing on rambling, featured ribbons of ice. The sun was shining, the air was crisp, and we were all happier than clams to be enjoying this fine day on such a fantastic climb.

We again met up with the other team near the top of the climb, where their leader had just finished putting up a rope on the last, steeper, pitch. Looking at my watch, I saw that it was getting late, and time to start thinking of turning around. It looked like we wouldn't have time to do this final pitch. But the belayer of the other team offered us to second their line, as he was feeling pooped. So after a quick swapping of teammates, Mat and I seconded their line, and the other climber headed further up the canyon with Gerhard for a bit more exploration.

We enjoyed a quick descent, with the five of us working like a well-oiled machine to set and share rappels. On the way down, there was much discussion of where they would treat us to a beer, if we made it successfully back across the river crossings. The drive back went well, involving only a bit of hunting for the vehicle tracks in the quickly diminishing daylight. We traveled all the way back with the other folks, right into Cochrane, where we shared pizzas, beers, and many stories of good times and great climbs in the Ghost.

As Gerhard, Mat, and I drove into Calgary under a blanket of stars, we reminisced over the course of our day. We started the day as a team of three, then, by lending a hand to two fellow climbers in a jam, we ended up having a fantastic day out, climbing more than we could have ourselves, meeting some great people, and ending the day laughing about it over beers. The 'black truck' couple's words echoed in our heads... "The Ghost is all about spending hours digging and chopping your truck out". Well, I heartily disagree. The **REAL** Ghost experience is about helping each other out, so that we ALL can continue to enjoy amazing experiences in this area that we are so lucky to have.

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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.