

June 1970



THE PACK RAT.

"THE PACK RAT" #

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NEWSLETTER OF THE

ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION

Editor: Peter Gillingham

Publisher: Sandy Vair

Time: Every Wednesday evening at 8:00 p.m.

Place: Bob's Bookstore - downstairs at
1026 - 15th Avenue, N.W.,
Calgary, Alberta

Phone: 232-1530

Summer Activities: Include hiking, climbing, swimming camping
backpack trips.

Winter Activities: Include skiing, ski-touring, skating, snow-
shoeing, hiking.

In addition to our outdoor activities, an active Social and Program
Committee organizes many social functions and Wednesday evening
programs throughout the year.

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The "Pack Rat" is published a minimum of six times a year. Its
aim is to keep Rambler members informed of club activities, and
to stimulate interest and concern in subject areas in which the
club is now involved and perhaps should become involved.

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EDITORIAL

A man needed special paper to make a copy from a Xerox Machine. He took out the regular paper, inserted the special paper and ran his copies. He then replaced the regular paper but did not check to see that it was in straight, or that the machine was reset properly. He walked, away, happy as a lark, having received what he wanted.

The next user pushed the button for copies and a light came on, feebly blinking "out of order". The special paper man returned later in the day to run regular copies and found the repair man with bits of the machine all over the floor.

It is this lack of concern for the future that is ruining our world. Our young people take dope today and die tomorrow. The boy who speeded on the highway yesterday is maimed for life. We are just beginning to find out the long-term effect of certain drugs and chemicals.

Perhaps we are overcome by the same mania that overcame the lemming. The last point of stress breaks and flings us into a panic-stricken urge to run away and eventually destroy, not only ourselves, but every living thing on earth.

Scientists tell us that we are heading full speed towards the point of no return and in some cases have already passed it. Oil pollution spreading across the land and killing the oceans, and all the other perils to our environment, are like a great fungus that is encroaching upon us at an ever increasing rate. Perhaps the experiments that have been made so man can survive on the moon will have to be applied to our own earth, and we will walk about in protective suits carrying our air supply on our backs. We are led to believe that Canada has great expanses of untouched wilderness, yet a man said when he flew over the country he was appalled at the number of seismic lines, well sites, miles of logging cuts and roadways in so-called wilderness. The argument is, when the gold is in the ground is it not a waste to leave it there? Logically, yes. We have to use our assets to live, but the balance of value has been so weighed down, that all that is really essential to our very existence is slipping away into a great blackness where we are now blindly groping to bring it back--yet on the other side we are still piling hazards.

The members of outdoor clubs, and the Ramblers are one, should realize more than any others, the preciousness of what they see each weekend, clear running waters, profusion of flowers and birdsong and miles of untouched forest. Is it not our duty to join forces with such groups as the Wilderness Association and the Earth Day Project, in an all out effort to educate others as to what is happening to our environment and fight to rebalance the scale of life? One day, and that day is not that far distant, we may awaken to a world that even God, with all his skill, is unable to repair.

How well do you sleep? If pollution concerns you, then you do not sleep well!

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WHAT IS A WILDERNESS?

By: Ray Marriner

What is a wilderness? If we turn to the most recent Canadian edition of a well known dictionary we find the following definition:

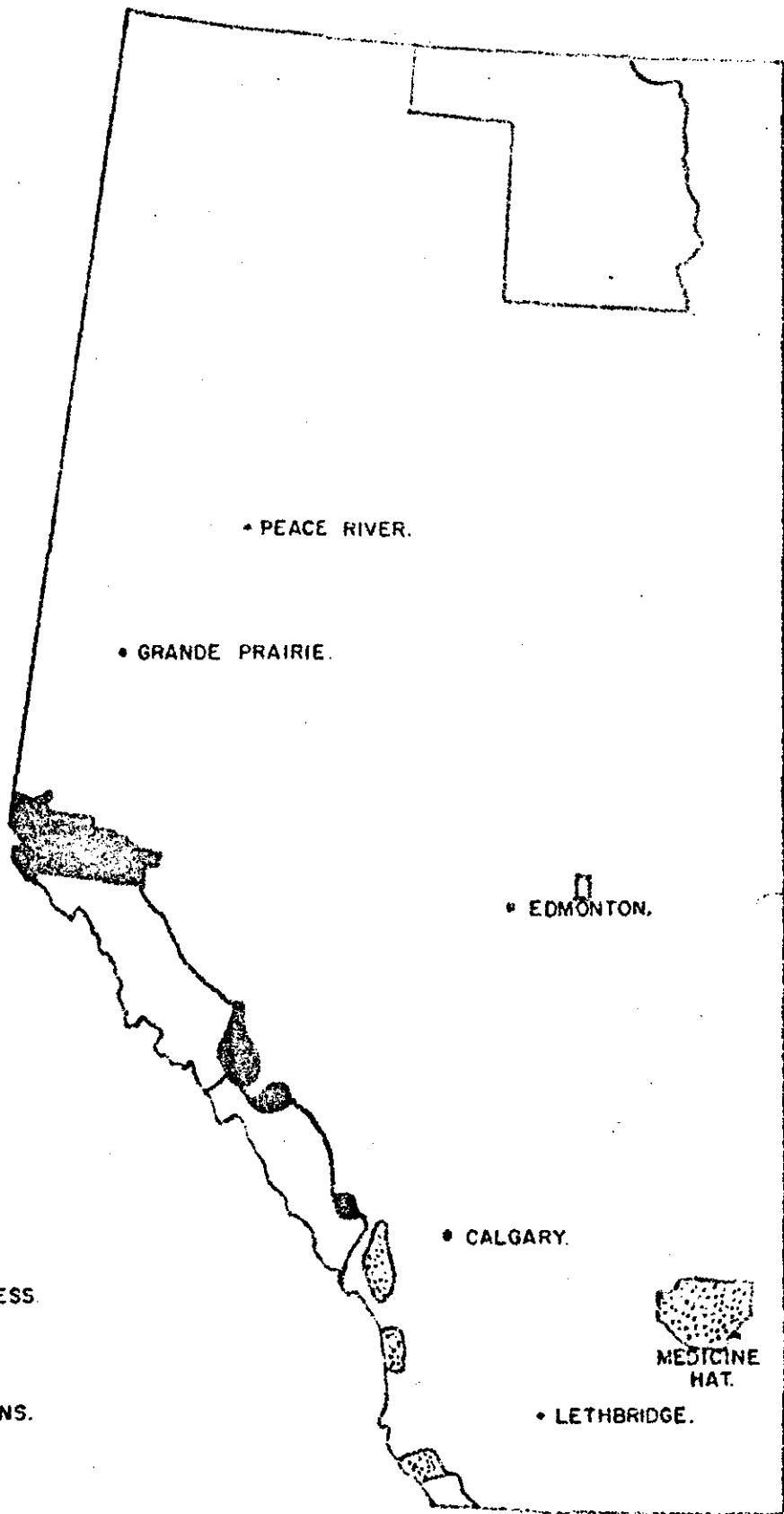
1. an uncultivated, uninhabited or barren region.
2. a waste, as of an ocean.
3. a multitudinous and confusing collection.

Is a wilderness as useless as these definitions suggest? The Alberta Wilderness Association does not think so and has recently submitted briefs to the Provincial government suggesting the establishment of various wilderness areas throughout the province together with legislative changes to ensure adequate protection for these areas - see the map on the back of this article.

The Alberta Wilderness Association suggests that a wilderness area be defined as a tract of undeveloped land set aside for the preservation of a natural environment, retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent structures, roads or human habitation. Minimum size of such tract shall be two days foot travel in the least dimension or one hundred thousand acres. A wilderness, in contrast to those areas dominated by man and his works, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man - where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. It shall have outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Further benefits may be scientific, educational, cultural, historical, or the simple enjoyment by people in such manner as will leave the area unimpaired for future generations. Hunting and fishing shall be permitted subject to the Game Act and such regulations and seasons as may be prescribed by the Fish and Wildlife Division. Mechanical vehicles and aircraft would be prohibited.

The fact must be recognized that scenery, wildlife, and everything else that is denoted by wilderness ARE NATURAL RESOURCES. Their immediate monetary worth may not be equal to that of coal, oil, gypsum, timber, etc., on a gross, Province wide basis - however, in the unique ecological situations called "wilderness" value to the people of the Province will increase rapidly as time passes.

A wilderness as a resource, if given the opportunity and the protection, can last forever because of its replaceable facility. The current mistake which is made is the assumption that there is an unending supply of wilderness and that there is not any need to be worried about it now. The fact is that the supply of wilderness is nearly exhausted now, and without serious protective measures will soon be a thing of the past. While it is a replaceable resource, it is only itself that is replaced. Wilderness can only come from wilderness.



LEGEND



NATIONAL PARK.



CURRENT WILDERNESS.



DESIRABLE ADDITIONS.

WILDLIFE ENCOUNTERS

During the many forays of the Ramblers into the back country it is not uncommon to encounter at a distance many species of wildlife, including bear, moose, sheep, goats and elk. However, during the present hiking season two encounters have been made with wildlife which could have had tragic results if it had not been for the "cool" way in which the persons involved handled the situation.

By now everyone in the Ramblers is aware of the heroic manner in which Daphne Smith kept a cougar at bay for some thirty minutes during a lone encounter on the Kindersley Pass trip. On her initial contact with the cougar it made a lunge at her, clawing her left arm and knocking her to the ground. Daphne succeeded in getting to her feet very quickly and started talking to the animal in soothing tones--in this manner she kept the cougar from repeating its attack for over half an hour, when other Ramblers appeared on the scene, scaring the animal away. Daphne, we commend you for your coolness and courage during this ordeal.

On a July 4th trip into the Tumbling Creek area, down from Wolverine Creek, Jack Carter and Henk Oliemens rounded a corner on the trail to find a Grizzly Bear taking its supper just across the stream a mere 100 feet or so away. Henk whispered "Grizzly" and they both froze in their tracks. Apparently the bear wasn't aware of their presence and carried on, rooting around. After a while it started wandering off up a scree slope in the opposite direction, much to Jack's and Henk's relief. Finally it must have caught their scent as it let out a loud "whoof" and scampered off at high speed.

Those who have studied the habits of the larger wildlife species seem to generally agree that they will not attack unless cornered, surprised or provoked. Daphne's run-in with a cougar was indeed rare, and she herself feels that it was possibly provoked or disturbed by something or somebody before her arrival, or possibly had young in the immediate area. It is not a good idea to hike alone or wander away from the main group. If you are hiking alone a small bell attached to your pack will help warn animals of your approach. If you are suddenly confronted by an animal do everything in your power to stay calm; if it hasn't seen you do nothing to attract its attention; do not run, talk in soothing tones to it if such action is necessary. For further do's and don't's when travelling in bear country it is suggested that you read "Some Bear Facts" an article written by Al Samek and published in the April 1969 edition of the Pack Rat.

BOOK REVIEW

By: Jannis Hare

NOTES FROM THE CENTURY BEFORE

A Journal from British Columbia

by Edward Hoagland, Random House, \$8.50

Too few Canadians are aware of the value of our heritage. Celebration of our 100th year turned minds briefly to our past and luckily there is now an upward trend for publishers to print the stories of our country.

It took an American, Edward Hoagland, to delve into a remote area of B.C. where the past is still living. A river boat took him 165 miles from the coast up the Stikine River to Telegraph Creek, A history storehouse of the goldrush era. As a visitor to Canada he was not blinded by the over all first impression, but gained for himself an understanding and appreciation of his subject. He recorded what he saw and what he heard, not in journalistic reporting, but with a poetic instinct, unearthing the gems that residents had hidden in their minds. In few words he captured the characters of trappers, prospectors, homesteaders and rivermen. The reader hears, feels and smells the country as well as sees the word pictures which Hoagland paints. He takes us up wild rivers, by plane over glaciers to Indian villages and through tangled forests. He tells of grizzly bear incidents and places where "one side of the valley is a wall of green ice and on the other side are hot springs damned by leaver and surrounded by vegetation as in a botanical garden".

This book does not have the plot of a murder, yet it has the mystery of mountain valleys, the thrill of thundering waterfalls, the understanding of human behaviour, the fascination of fact. It unveils a small part of Canada's unexplored backyard which, thanks to this writer, will not be lost in oblivion.

A SUNSET AND LIFE

By: Chuck Lang

Submitted by: Jack Carter

Strange, how the hill never changes. Harry and I used to play "Indians" in this meadow. Harry's my brother. There's the birch we used to climb. Yes, its just as it always was. But we'll never play here again. How long has it been since I've seen Harry... six, seven months? I wonder what he's doing now?

It seems kind of quiet up here along, especially after leaving all that racket down at the house... almost like the day Grandpa died. I was just a kid then, and he was about the best friend a kid ever had... next to Harry. I climbed all the way to the top of "Two Mile Cliff" that day, and sat out in my old cedar tree and cried. I used to call it my "thinkin tree". Maybe I'll just climb up that direction and see if the old thing is still around.

The leaves are all crisp and colored now, and here we can catch a glimpse of the river valley below. Won't be long now until the day autumn sun will cool down and the leaves will really crunch underfoot. Harry and I used to use board to scrape paths in the leaves and pretend they were roads. We were careful to stick to the paths but Silver would take short cuts sometimes. Silver was our dog. She's dead now too.

No, the hill doesn't change much. There's where we used to dig sassafras roots for sassafras tea. Over there is the tree house Grandpa helped us make from grates we swiped down in the town. Surely is quiet up here. I'm almost to the ridge now and it will be easier climbing. I can't run up these hills as I used to.

The ridge climbs steeply here, parallel to the valley. The trees are still pretty thick, but just ahead they begin to thin as the cliffs drops to the valley floor. Dad used to switch us for playing on top of this cliff, but I'm too old for the willow switch now.

Well, the old "thinking tree" is still here. The gnarled, grey trunk still hangs over the rocky lip all alone. It should have fallen into the valley long ago. The guys back at college might think I'm silly for sitting up here in this old cedar tree, but they're too far away.

Our little cottage certainly looks small nestled down there at the foot of the hill. Beyond it is the highway hugging the hills all the way to the Ohio River. Stretching the two miles to the opposite range of hills are the broad, flat river bottoms, cut lengthwise by the lazy, meandering Scioto River. The sun is a red ball resting on a jagged horizon and cushioned in a veil of pink clouds. Dark shadows of dusk are filling the opposite hills, but light is still glinting off the river and making it gleam in its bed of yellowing corn.

Things haven't changed much, but somehow its different. Maybe I'm the one who has changed. I've grown up and grown away, but this is where I belong. This is where every man belongs.

The valley in its glory of sunset is all my world. This is life. This is the whole universe rolled into one beautiful picture and focused at me, but I am not a part of the picture. No one can see me. I am perched on the edge of the world and the sun is on the other edge, and everything is below us. This is my past and present and future. This is Harry and Grandpa and sassafras tea.

The shadows have filled the valley now, and the cars on the road below have turned on their lights. They speed on going nowhere, watching the stripe that slides beneath their lights. They are a part of the picture, but they have not seen it. Before them they saw the lights, while I saw God tonight.

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This is the eighth and final article in a series dealing with the common trees of the Rocky Mountains and Foothills.

VIII. DOUGLAS FIR

By: Howard Anderson

Douglas fir occurs in localized areas in Alberta such as at Waterton, Crownest Pass, Vermilion Lakes, Windy Ridge and the Wildcat Hills. Its distribution may be associated with some of the lower mountain passes. Generally it grows on exposed slopes where there is a sufficient supply of moisture.

The cones have distinctive three-forked bracts protruding beyond the scales. The seeds mature and are shed during the autumn. The wing on the seed is approximately 2 - 3 times the length of the seed itself and thus facilitates dispersal by wind.

The bark of older trees is quite characteristic, being deeply furrowed into reddish-brown ridges. It may be up to four inches thick which makes Douglas Fir quite resistant to ground fires. In some stands, such as the west side of Barrier Lake, there are old trees extending well above the tree canopy. These veterans perhaps have withstood numerous fires and have lived for 200-300 years.

DISCOVERING WILD FLOWERS

By: Jannis Hare

We all know that the crocus is the first signal that life has come back to the hills after a long winter. By the time its flourish begins to dwindle, the protective pine forests are splashed with a mist of pink. The shy Laddy Slipper (Calypso) thrives in the cool shadows. Along the forest trail a tiny dogwood spreads its white flowers over the ground. It is called Bunchberry for when the flower disappears a cluster of bright red berries takes its place.

It is the end of June and color begins to show along the higher pathways. Trailing Twin Flower with its tiny double pink blooms spills a heavenly scent on the wind. One-flowered Wintergreen stars the moss with its single white bloom. The Glacier Lily can't wait for lingering snow to disappear. Its green leaves pop through to present a yellow flower.

The end of July is a festival of colour in the high meadows. The common crimson Paint Brush of the river valleys, here displays whatever shade it may choose, from deep red or yellow to white, or an attractive combination. Its companion, the Purple Flebane, offers a charming contrast.

No one can ignore the beauty of False Heather as it carpets the hillsides with deep pink, cream or white bells.

On the rocky slopes, Mountain Avens struggle against the wind, their white blossoms bobbing about on short stems. Moss Campion will cling where there is little soil, sprinkling small mauve flowers over a pillow of moss-like green.

These are only a few of the flowers that will catch your attention as you walk from the valleys to the mountain tops. When eating lunch by a stream, you may have the company of Swamp Laurel or Dog Tooth Violet. You may have to battle your way through bushes heavy with white Rhododendron. Don't be surprised if you round a corner and find a fir tree in bloom. It is just the Clematis that likes to decorate things. It is a climber with purple four-petalled flowers that turn into silken grey puffs.

If you wish to learn about the flowers, it is a fascinating study and there are several good books in the stores.

Enjoy the flowers and remember "take only pictures".

WERE THEY WATCHING US ALL THE TIME?

By: Claora Levin

We moved on lost, silent moss,
From copse to copse
White feet of fox.
Our ploddings (we wore snowshoes)
Meshed the linking prints
Which then were lost --
Thirst and hunger?
An exploratory walk like ours? --
Upon the snow.

We found them,
Flight of ghosts,
Frost frozen paths
Winding
Through our prints,
White pine scents,
The shade's snow core
Of venturesome
Spirals,
Hesitations,
A day's parabola
And balsam.

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THE ANNUAL A.C.C. CLIMBING SCHOOL

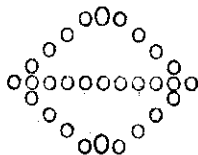
By: Al Samek

The City of Calgary's Recreation Department's Mountaineering Course, put on by the Alpine Club of Canada every winter, is something all Rambler members should consider taking. It is a basic course and most of the subjects covered are useful in general hiking and back-packing. The subjects covered are geography and geology of the mountains, route finding, equipment, rope handling, knot tying, a rockclimbing film is shown, snow and ice craft, ski mountaineering, map and compass reading and safety and survival.

At the end of the course, class members may spend a weekend in Banff at the A.C.C. Clubhouse and go on various climbs in the area with experienced club members. On this weekend we climbed the west face of Mt. Cory and put to practical use, what we had learned in class, such as knot tying, rope handling, belaying, etc.. In the evening, supper was had at the clubhouse and later on an excellent

film on climbing safety was shown.

The next day we climbed several short routes on a huge boulder at the base of Mt. Rundle. This rock also affords a good place to practice rappelling, since permanent anchors have been installed on the rock. Whether you are interested in climbing or just hiking, it is certainly a worthwhile course and will undoubtedly be held again next winter.



"BACK TO BACK" BACK PACKING

by: Vikki Bernhardt

Otter Tail Pass, June 6, 7 - Glacier-Montana, June 13, 14 - Tumbling Glacier, June 20, 21

No. 1. Otter Tail Falls

Six Ramblers initiated the season's backpacking with a trip up the Otter Tail Pass. Although it was early June, the fire hazard was so high it necessitated a personal permit from the warden, causing a delay of several hours. Shortly before noon we set off on a trail which was quite good, barring intermittent log falls. One of these log crossings caused a minor catastrophe in the form of rent clothing but luckily for Alex, Howard Kelly was along with his "magic pack" and the lasses, Helga and Vikki, were able to sew a fine seam which endured for several more excursions.

The trail rose steeply the last third of the ten miles - about 2,500 ft. in all. Eagerness and energy brought the group to the pass early and a hasty supper was consumed so that a south ridge could be scaled before dark. The ridge provided a view of Helmet Creek plus a view of numerous other creeks. To any but such experts as Al, Alexander and Brian, it would have been a puzzling picture indeed.

The night was perfect but not so the new day. Plans to climb a north ridge were carried out despite a gathering storm. It was worth it. The Valley of the Ten Peaks and the O'Hara group rose before us with Mt. Sharp standing out in the south.

On the trip out, the rains came. This was not unpleasant until a single log over the raging swollen torrent of Helmet Creek had to be crossed. Even this was accomplished without incident and all trooped back to the parking lot at the Paint Pots, well satisfied with the weekend in Kootenay.

No. 2. Belly River - Chief Mountain - Glacier, Montana

The seven hardies who set off to conquer Chief Mountain were beset by the same problem that befell all of Southern Alberta that weekend - rain - (not a problem to all).

Not to be easily deterred, the plans were merely adjusted to the conditions and the trip actually became car camping at the Belly River Campground, with packs carried for practice!

After a leisurely lunch, well deserved by the drivers who suffered much the worst part of the weekend behind the wheel, we went on a hike to Ptarmigan Lake in Many Glaciers Park. We set off about 2.00 pm and spent several hours in a misty dampness, much improved over the morning's deluge.

Sunday we tried to drive to the base of Chief Mountain but were foiled by water and low 1970 cars. We returned to Many Glaciers and hiked up to Swift Current Pass. We even went up a ridge to the left and almost got a view. The swift changing weather whirled a thick fog down the valley, obscuring all but the pass. Gradually, the fog partially lifted and we made our way back, enjoying immensely descending by way of the large snow fields which had been so slowly ascended.

It is a long drive and conditions had been far from ideal, but the camaraderie of the seven far outweighed the trivial unpleasanties. Tony Moron broke in his new equipment and himself admirably on this his first back pack.

No. 3. Tumbling Glacier

Third try and the bull's eye. Perfect weather for two whole days!

Nine Ramblers loaded two days' supplies on their backs, left cars at Marvel and Paint Pot parking lots and set off for Numa Pass. It was hot! Nine people sizzled and smoked as they plodded along up the trail to the coolness above.

Finally, the pass and a lovely lunch on a large rock surrounded by snow! Having snow thrown at you was no punishment. In fact, several of the party walked bare footed in this for the remainder of the weekend while in camp.

About 2.00 pm we went on up to Wolverine Pass and then climbed a ridge to the north. This ridge uncovered a splendid 360° sweep showing the Bugeboos far away, and the mountains of O'Hara reached up sharply. The Ball range was always visible even from our camp.

The tents were put up with the view the prime factor and flaps were never dropped. The night was very warm and a huge yellow moon kept this longest day of the year almost completely light.

The mosquitoes were the only source of annoyance the entire two days.

Sunday Leslo and Alexander went up Wolverine Pass, crossing Tumbling Creek. The rest had a lazy day and did nothing! At 3.00 pm we went down via Tumbling Creek. The bridge was washed out so Ochre Creek had to be crossed by means of the inventiveness and ingenuity of the male packers. We three females just crossed, not without gratitude. A lovely fresh sprinkle removed some salt from over-active cooling systems.

Thus ended yet another lovely weekend in the back country.

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ASCENT OF "THE SNOW DOME"

by: Peter Billingham
and Jack Carter

First Day's Climb

Dark clouds swirl around the mountain peaks above the Athabasca Glacier as we gather together our equipment in preparation for a weekend on the Columbia Icefields. This despite the promise of a fine weekend earlier in the day. For we is this Victoria Day weekend ski and glacier camp-out trip had been planned as the climax to our ski season activities. The previous year Gunther and Peter had attempted to reach the top of The Snow Dome, only to be frustrated by a persistent layer of cloud blanketing the last few hundred feet of the Dome - this year they are determined to make it to the top, so here they are with nine other "intrepid" Rambler members preparing for the ascent to our overnight camp.

It is already past two in the afternoon as we descend the snowcat ramp onto the ice of the lower flats of the glacier and begin the hour long trek to the first ice fall. Up past the yawning crevasses and huge chunks of ice of the first ice fall, staying very close to the north rock wall our party starting to straggle out. Onwards past the huge tumbling ice avalanche which marches slowly but unceasingly off the cliffs of the north rock wall. We climb for well over two hours and it is now time to rest and regroup before ascending the second ice fall.

The second ice fall is several hundred feet high and the steepness is such that it is necessary for us to angle back and forth to make the climb comfortably. Up and up, one ski ahead of the other, the breath coming short, the pack feeling heavy. The sky in the west is growing ever darker and the wind picking up now, the sun breaking through the clouds on occasions, its rays dancing on the ice-shoathed cliffs above and the flats of the lower glacier stretched out below.

We are now over the toughest part of the day's climb with only the long steady climb along the smooth channel of ice to the base of The Snow Dome itself remaining. By 6.00 pm we can see Mt. Castleguard and the great pyramid of Forbes. The early birds of the party are fortunate to be able to take a short tea break at the tent of two youth hostellers encamped on the ice for the night. Despite heavily loaded packs, all members of our group make the 4½ to 5 miles to the base camp site within 4½ hours. The last rays of the sun have now disappeared off the summit of Forbes far to the south, the sky overhead and to the west sullen with grey, the wind growing in intensity, and there is snow in the air.

The Storm

The serious business of setting up camp and getting supper underway begins. A flat spot is dug out of the snow and a wall of snow formed as a windbreak - each fellow takes a short turn at the digging, the effort at this 10,000 ft. altitude being readily felt. The tents are up and Helga and Josie prepare supper while the fellows finish snugging down the camp. Brian and Al plan to bivouac with the aid of a sheet of canvas and this is set into place in front of the large club tent. Supper is slow in coming but finally we all huddle together in the large tent to eat.

Time to settle down for the night. The wind is now really howling and snow is falling quite heavily. Brian and Al crawl in under their canvas and actually look as though they will be quite snug for the night. Six settle down in the large tent and two in Jack's tent - but oh, oh, it looks like Peter is going to be left out in the cold. Much pleading with Jack and Robin and Peter is admitted to the small tent, although this means sleeping with his head towards the fly of the tent and being well sandwiched.

The night that follows is never to be forgotten. The buffeting of the tents in the howling wind prevents all but the most relaxed from getting to sleep. It's now around 2.00 am and we can hear Brian calling to Al to see if he is OK. Fortunately, the night is not extremely cold and despite the storm we finally drift into slumber. 4.30 am, for some strange reason there doesn't seem to be much room in the tent any more - Robin is yelling that he is pinned under the weight of the drifted snow. Peter struggles into his clothes, and after much effort spews out into the storm. The sight which greets him reminds him of the often seen pictures of Arctic expeditions - snow streaking along horizontally, the visibility practically nil, and tents half buried in snow. About this time Brian extricates himself from beneath the snow-covered canvas, and somehow wedges himself into the comparative comfort of the large tent. Tommy, who is located at the end of the tent, is just about squeezed out into the snow drift. Al elects to stay below the canvas and snow. Dig, dig, dig - finally the worst of the drift is dug away from the small tent, only to find that the front pole has snapped under the weight of the snow. With the aid of a ski pole, the front of the tent is stabilized. While much snow has built up around the large tent, it is OK, and everyone is weathering the storm relatively comfortably. Peter appears back in the small tent as a ghost to Robin and Jack, being well covered in a layer of wet snow.

For another three hours we endure the roar of the storm. It is as though the mountains are reminding us that they are the masters and that they can be deadly for those not prepared.

7.00 am, and, for Peter, once again into the storm to dig out the small tent. But first - where is Al? "Al, are you OK?" From beneath the hump of snow in front of the club tent comes a muffled "Yeah, but how about digging me the hell out of here". It is impossible to tell exactly which way Al is lying and it takes nearly twenty minutes of steady digging to get him out from underneath the snow and canvas. Apparently he is nonethe worse for his experience, although being pinned in one position leaves him in a cramped state for a while. The people in the "Grand Hotel" tent are roused, and the small tent is dug out.

Suddenly a number of forms appear out of the snow and gloom of the morning. Unbeknown to us, a number of Alpine Club members have weathered the storm above us and this was the vanguard of their group on their way back down the glacier - a pow wow in which we learn that they had a complete collapse of one of their tents in the storm - and then they are gone.

No breakfast, our chief concern being to get camp broken and off the glacier as quickly as possible. The snow has ceased and the wind has abated, but visibility is still practically zero. Finally, we are ready to go. It appears that we are due for a very hazardous trip down, but lo the gods are with us: after all - as we set off the mist begins to lift and sunlight filters through. As we ski down we regroup every few minutes in case the gloom decides to descend again. We reach the upper ice fall, but with the heaviness of our packs weighing on us, the trip down is made carefully and without much style. Onwards past the ice fall and down past the crevasses of the lower ice fall and we are on the lower flats. We are wet, still a little numb and very hungry. Some of us feel a little weak from the efforts of the morning, but finally we ski off the toe of the glacier and relax. For Gunther and Peter a second rebuttal by the glacier is more than just a little disappointing.

2.00 pm - amid much merriment we dry out and eat our first meal of the day at Cirrus Mountain campground. Robin and Jack head down to the Alexandra Youth Hostel to arrange for overnight accommodation. We still hope to make the top of The Snow Dome on the morrow. The rest of the day is spent relaxing, eating and a short walk in the evening shows promise of a fine tomorrow.

The Snow Dome Ascended

Someone is roaring around the cabin - it's Gunther, shaking everyone. "But it's only 5.00 am", someone says. "Doesn't matter, let's get going", retorts Gunther in his best German-English accent. A fast breakfast, and an equally fast 10 mile dash along the highway and we find ourselves once again climbing the glacier. But, oh, what a difference - the morning is fantastically beautiful, the icefields are silent now, the icefalls a pure white against a dark blue sky, the snow and ice sparkling in every direction. For a while, most of us climb with our thoughts reflecting the beauty of that which we behold - to think that this is a world of beauty unto itself only seen by a privileged few is both awesome and exciting. We climb the first and second icefalls in the fresh snow of the storm, along the ice channel towards the base of The Snow Dome. We reach the site of our old campsite by 11.00 am, and decide to eat lunch. To the west rises the great peak of Mt. Columbia at 12,294 ft., the second highest peak in the Rockies. To the south the huge peaks of Forbes (11,902 ft) Mt. Lyell (11,495 ft.) Mt. Alexandra (11,214 ft.) and many other famous peaks loom large along our field of vision.

Lunch is over and we are now ready to make the final trek up onto The Snow Dome itself. As we climb, Mt. Bryce (11,507 ft.) appears. About this mountain the most ecstatic member of our group, Jack, enthuses "How many years I have waited to see this beautiful peak with its frightful precipices from across the vast snowfields of the Columbia". Sight of this mountain is for Jack the highlight of his trip. Higher we climb, our group now straggled out for over half a mile. To the southwest we can now see the serried ranks of the Selkirk's. Onwards we climb, stopping frequently now to catch our breath and admire the immensity of the panorama laid out now almost below our feet - trying to tuck it all away in the corner of the mind so that it will never be lost.

Other mountains appear as we climb, Clemenceau tucked between Columbia and King Edward. Suddenly there is no more mountain to climb, we act almost as though we were the first people to ever make the summit. After the frustrations of the previous two days we feel justified in our exhilaration in reaching the top of the 11,340 ft. Snow Dome. The sun is warm and the sky is clear, but the air temperature is only 6° above zero. Around us the mountains stretch in every direction to the edges of the earth. All the great ones are there, Castleguard, Bryce, Columbia, King Edward, Clemenceau, Mt. Alberta, The Twins, Kitchener, Athabasca, and to the east the Brazeau and Maligne groups. You look at this vast sea of mountains and glaciers and hope that you can remember them as they are now till you die. They have been climbed but never really conquered, belonging to a world alien to men, allowing us here for a little while at a time.

We take our pictures, remove our climbing skins, a shot of rum to celebrate, one last 360° visual sweep of the panorama and it is time to start down. Today we will be able to enjoy the run down to the fullest, blessed by perfect visibility and unencumbered by heavily loaded packs. Helga and Josie are impatient to start down, wishing to get chilled fingers and faces warmed up again. The vast expanse of The Snow Dome itself seems unbroken but Helga comes to a sudden stop - she has just about skied into an open crevasse. With caution we continue on our way with Rick and Jamie showing off their superior parallel style of skiing. Despite the coolness of the air the snow is quite soft from the warmth of the sun, and several falls are taken as "sticky gremlins" grab the edges of skis. We regroup again at our old camp site. More photos, more rum. Everyone is in tremendously high spirits - good and bad jokes and comments are flowing freely.

We start the long run down to the toe of the glacier and the great mountains we have been privileged to see for these few brief hours sink behind the vast prairie of ice which is the Columbia. The ski down is smooth, and we regroup occasionally. Good humour is still running high, and Robin takes much ribbing from Rick and Jamie. Once again down over the two ice falls. We take our time along the lower flats - most of us are now feeling the effects of a strenuous day. Down around the crevasses on the toe of the glacier, our 1969/1970 ski season has ended.

Conclusion

The trip described in this article was made by 10 members of the Ramblers and one guest on the Victoria Day weekend, May 16 thru 18, 1970. Leader Gunther Mueller, Helga Dauer, Josie Zeweic, Jack Carter, Robin Smith, Brian Crummy, Al Samok, Peter Gillingham, Jamie Mackie, Tom Thurston and guest Rick Shillingworth... The Athabasca Glacier is situated at the southern end of the Jasper Park and its toe is easily reached from the Banff - Jasper Highway shortly after crossing the Sunwapta Summit. The ski climb up to The Snow Dome itself is in no way technically difficult, and can be made by anyone who is reasonably fit, has a reasonable knowledge of the mountains, and at least an intermediate skiing ability. As a group, we learnt much from our experiences

on this trip, two of the most important lessons being: firstly, always have a healthy respect for the mountains and their whims; and secondly, always be prepared to cope with their whims by being properly equipped.

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MISCELLANEA

I think everyone will find this edition of the Pack Rat more than usually interesting. The number and quality of the articles submitted has been most gratifying. Keep up the good work, and don't forget, your criticisms and suggestions, as well as contributions, are welcome in working towards a better Pack Rat.

Our thanks go out to Anne Marie Sakowitz for her excellent job in typing the 9th edition of the "Pack Rat".

It is our sad duty to report that the Grand Master of Club bachelors has fallen by the wayside, and that two minutes' silence will be held in his memory at dawn on Friday, July 31, 1970. All kidding aside, we are happy to announce the engagement of Anne Marie Sakowitz and Ray Marriner. We understand that the wedding date is July 31 and that the ceremony will take place before a small group of close friends. Our every good wish goes out to you for your future happiness.

Madeleine le Sueur is soon to depart our fair land for her homeland of South Africa. Madeleine has appeared from time to time on our trips and has kept us all highly amused with stories of her escapades and scrapes during her stay in Canada. We wish you the very best of luck, Madeleine, and who knows, we may see you on the trail again one of these years with a whole set of new yarns.

Roger and Judy Woodgate are currently visiting friends and relatives in England. Kirsteen Bannerman is soon off on one of her world jaunts, this time leading a tour to Europe. Gunther Mueller's parents are currently visiting with him from Germany.

STILL WANTED - one female member of the RMRA to act as Social Editor of the "Pack Rat". Must have a capacity for listening to gossip, gathering information from members, and be able to keep a fairly good eye on the Ramblers' social events.

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PUMPKIN CAKE

2 cups sugar
1½ cups vegetable (salad) oil
1½ cups pumpkin puree (canned variety will do)
4 eggs
3 cups plain flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 " " soda
2 " cinnamon (more if desired)
1 " salt
2 cups seedless raisins
1 cup chopped walnuts or pecans

Preheat oven to 350°

Place sugar, pumpkin puree and oil in large bowl - beat well on medium speed (hand beater will do).

Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

Sift together the flour, baking powder, soda, cinnamon and salt, and fold into the cake batter.

Stir in raisins and nuts.

Pour into a greased 10" tube pan/loaf pan(s). (Pan(s) may be lined with greased foil).

Bake one hour or until done- DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR UNTIL ONE HOUR.
Let cool before turning out.

(If cooked in a cake pan or loaf pan(s) will not require as long as a tube cake.
Just about the hour).

HIGH ALTITUDE COOKING

Increase moisture by two tablespoons.

Decrease baking powder/soda by one quarter.

Increase oven temperature by 25°.

COOKING THE ROAST

Slow cooking of meat always enhances the flavour and tenderness.

* e.g. 5½ lb. Rib roast beef = 4 hours at 225° (gas oven) - leave in oven to cool off (if to be taken on a camping trip).

Not necessary to preheat oven.

Rub rosemary, salt, pepper, a little onion salt and oregano into meat and place in a deep pan in the centre of the oven. Does not require any basting.

Sediment in pan after roast is cooked makes delicious gravy. Thicken with flour and add an Oxo cube and Worcestershire sauce according to taste, and water.

* Enough for seven hungry hikers for supper and lunch the next day.

MEMBERSHIP

New and Renewed Memberships

(Please attach this list to your February 1970 list)

Bob Farrell	Ste 18, 322 - 14th Avenue S.W. (3)	-
Blake Gordon	2026 - 23rd Avenue N.W. (44)	239-7416
Tony Moran	1004 - 1st Street N.W. (41)	277-1650
Sherry Engels	309 - 3rd Avenue N.E. (61)	266-6138
Hugh Peck	Box 233, Sexsmith, Alberta	-
Gayo McCrindle	Ste 4 - 721 - 13th Avenue S.W. (3)	269-6824
David Crowe	Room 155 Rundle Hall, U of C	-
Ann Robinson	1510 - 34th Street S.E. (22)	272-1297
Sidney Lee	4612 Fordham Cr. S.E. (23)	272-1350
Ruth Alexander	303 - 2010 Ulster Road N.W. (44)	282-7257
Evelyn Low	303 - 2010 Ulster Road N.W. (44)	282-7257
Esther Jeffrey	2 - 1711 - 35th Street S.W. (4)	242-7863
Noel Watson	408 - 1231 - 15th Avenue S.W. (3)	269-2551
John Woodhatch	317 - 10A Street N.W. (41)	283-7176
Piense Ven Den Putte	Baker Sanitorium	-

Change of Address

Karen Kalder	1622 - 23rd Avenue S.W. (4)	245-5307
Art Borron	?	239-4363