

Dec 1978



**THE PACK RAT**

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION

The objectives of the Rocky Mountain Ramblers Association are "to protect the interests of Ramblers and to maintain their rights and privileges; to foster a greater love, use and knowledge of the countryside; to assist in the preservation of countryside amenities; to secure travel facilities for Ramblers; to function as a bureau of information; to facilitate public access to the mountains and woodlands; to organize social functions for the members".

The Ramblers meet every Wednesday evening at 8:15 p.m. in the basement of the First Lutheran Church, 1001-7 Ave., Calgary, T2P 1A8. There they organize hike, ski-tours, backpacking and canoeing trips. There are programs on two of every three Wednesdays. The Ramblers also hold social functions throughout the year.

For information phone 282-1330 (Bob Baxter at Bob's Bookstore, hours: Mon. to Sat., 10 to 12, 1 to 5:30) or any of the following in the evenings:

President:	Brian Westcott	286-7288
Vice President:	Ordell Steen	276-7642
Secretary:	Annemarie Marriner	289-4356
Treasurer:	Ron Folkins	283-6114
Leaders' Chairman:	Peter McGill	261-6073

The Pack Rat is published a minimum of six times a year. Its aim is to keep Rambler members informed on activities and to stimulate interest and concern in subject areas in which the Association is now involved and perhaps should become involved. The present editor is Tony Forster at 265-9623. Trip reports and articles from members are welcome.

EDITORIAL

Hello folks, I'm back again and as the big chief I decided to return my old friend the Pack Rat to the front page.

Old members will recognize his/her smiling face as the fellow who was on the Ramblers original Pack Rat way back in 1957. This portrait was taken off the magazine in 1974 for economic reasons. But I feel that the magazine lost some of its appeal. It was like putting a cartoon on the front cover of Playboy, it's just not done! So, by returning to our old format, I hope to revitalize the magazine and hopefully get more Ramblers to participate in its monthly creation!

Congratulations to all of our newly elected executive. To Brian, Ordell, Annemarie, Ron, Peter, Pat, and Benita, all the very best for the coming year.

Winter has arrived so I hope you'll all get out and enjoy yourselves. There will be more people X-C ski-ing this year; one reason for this, of course, is the

*Joyeux Noel et Bonnes Hereux Nouvelle Anné!*

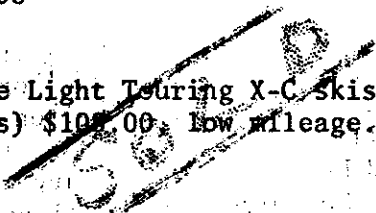
increase in lift ski-ing \$9.50 to \$12.00 at Sunshine and \$9.00 to 10.50 at Louise. So have fun, but be careful. Try to come through the season with tips intact.

T.G.F.

FOR SALE

One pair Galibier Mountaineering Ski Boots - Size 10. Good Condition - \$75.00 o.n.o. Phone Bob Farrell 245-5256

One pair Fiberglass Epoke Light Touring X-C skis with toebindings. 195 cm. List price (excluding bindings) \$100.00. Low mileage. Asking \$60.00 - phone



COFFEE STOP NEWS!

Here's a new restarant to try. It's called the "Tee Haus," and it will be open for breakfast from 6 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday. It's located at the Pigeon Mtn. resort (Deadman's Flats). Reservations are required if 10 or more people want to stop for dinner on the way home.

THANKS

We are extremely grateful to Jenny Prest's typing students at Okotoks for helping us with this issue of Pack Rat.

ANNUAL DINNER & DANCE - OCT. 14, 1978

60 Ramblers attended this year's bash at Fort Calgary House in the Stampede Grounds. With such a marvellous setting we all helped ourselves to Prime Rib with all the trimmings and a delicious desert.

After the dishes were cleared away we all got down to some dancing which was supplied by a D.J. called Ron Colledge. He kept us all entertained by his wild antics, some people liked his style, others didn't approve, well thats life! But I think most of use had a great time and our thanks must be given to Jan Gill for all the arranging she had to do.

T.G.F.

WESOLEYCH SWIAT BOZEGO  
NARODZENIA I SZCZESLI-  
WEGO NOWEGO ROKU.

POLISH?

MANNING PARK HOLIDAY BACKPACK

July 30-August 7 1978

Page 3

LEADERS: Marjanne & Tom Flanagan

Frances Camp  
Nancy Earle  
Rom Folkins  
Daphne Smith

Helga & Bob Pattison  
Ruth & Tom Thurston  
Brian Westcott  
Del Lavalley

We sure hit it right for weather--90-95 degree temperatures for the whole trip--not a drop of rain for nine days. Spent the first 4 days on a loop trip south of #3 highway which took us to Monument 83, into the Pasayten Wilderness in the U.S., then north to Monument 78 and the Pacific Crest Trail. The trail was very good but the views left a little to be desired because of the heavy coastal-type vegetation in that area. We camped 2 nights at Mosquito Camp (well named!) and some of us climbed Mount Winthrop, elev. 7,810.

On our return to the Park Centre an overnight car camp at Lightning Lakes provided a much appreciated opportunity to have a dip in the lake and a feast of fresh food.

The second half of our trip found us doing the Heather Trail which was an absolute joy for views and flowers. The trailhead is reached by a 10-mile motor road up Blackwall Mountain, which is North of the Park Centre. For some 15 miles we rambled along open ridges and meadows literally covered with flowers with a sea of mountain peaks for the background. Snow-covered Mt. Baker was a constant companion as were the twin spires of Hozameen and the Four Brothers. We had an easy climb of the First Brother with an elev. of 7,435. Our flower list topped 65 species among which to be noted were a red columbine, an orange tiger lily and the red gilia. There were numerous humming birds in the meadows and we also saw grouse, Oregon junco and pine siskin as well as the ubiquitous raven. Wildlife was not especially abundant but we did see many deer--on Mt. Winthrop we saw two deer laying on a snow patch, presumably for relief from the very high temps. A family of hoary marmots was also observed. All in all, a memorable trip. Del..

HALLOWEEN PARTY

Two beautiful ladies forced a second vote for the best costume at the Rambler Halloween Party, October 28, 1978, but Roger Woodgate was the honor by a narrow margin over Diana Gonsalves.

The award for ugliest costume went to Ordell Steen (only the face and feet were fake) and the funniest costume was worn by Tony Forster wearing an umbrella on his head. (This may be the latest style in Britain, but what wins the funniest Halloween costumes over there?)

Our appreciation goes to Lil Henegman for volunteering her home to hold the party, and to Dick Lowndes for bringing his speakers and arranging the stereo system for dancing. A thank you also goes to Vivi n Budgen and Tony Forster for their time and contribution. The efforts of the several people who brought food are always appreciated. The organization of the party was made simpler and more enjoyable because of the assistance of all these people. Thank you. Pat Rosettis.

GLAEDELIG YULE

DANISH?

WITH A NAME LIKE CHARLIE HOW COULD AN ENGLISHMAN RESIST?

September 24, 1978 saw approximately eight adventurous Ramblers follow Tony Forster on the never-ending search for a route up Mt. Charles Stuart. Apparently Arnold Westberg and Bill Leach conquered this elusive peak earlier in the year, but to date, as far as I know, this feat has not been accomplished officially by the Ramblers.

"What is its appeal?" I asked. The answer I received was that it is inaccessible. I should have known! Tony had been up there earlier in the year and survived with only a long cut on one arm and a couple of bruises. I had heard of another trip where the group had gotten scattered and had to turn back after various hair-raising experiences. When Tony had been exploring in the spring he had attempted to follow a creek bed up towards the mountain, but eventually the stream had become impassable. His hope was to go back up this stream bed in the fall when the water was low.

We parked in the trees above Harvey Heights and looking north were shown two dark green symmetrical ridges with Charles Stuart in the background. We were to aim for the valley between these ridges.

"There's not a trail, I take it?"

"No, no trail."

We set off through the woods and it was actually quite pleasant: fairly open, and soft underfoot, with the occasional log to hop over. We seemed to veer to the right and came across a creek bed. Tony wasn't sure if this was the right one so we clambered up the side of a hill and walked along it to the west for a bit only to walk down the other side and head back to the creek again. By this time we were farther up the creek. The banks had become steeper and more difficult to get down, but it was either that or not get down at all later. "Do we have to follow the creek?" was the question.

"Yes" was the reply.

There is a certain fascination in following a creek bed to its source. I think everyone should do this once in their hiking career. Only once, mind you. As my fellow hiker said, hiking isn't just getting to the top of a mountain. It's the trees, the valleys, the rocks and the creek beds as well. You have to enjoy just being there.

Charles Stuart Creek is surrounded by amazing and challenging formations. I love the rocks: The big huge boulders where you need a boost or an extra hand to scramble up, the imposing rock in the middle of the stream (where you can squeeze through on one side while wondering if it would have been better to go on the other side; but I'm not so sure if I like the other rocks: the sort of medium-sized, constantly jostle you up and down kind, the around over, "ouch another edge", "There's got to be an end to this", kind.

FRÖHE WEIHNACHTEN UND EIN  
GLÜCKLICHES NEUES JAHR

GERDAN

It's deathly quiet inside a creek bed. Very still. I have always imagined the Rockies to have a personality all their own. I don't know if anyone else has noticed this, but it seemed particularly prevalent in the creek bed: A harsh, new young, strong, independent kind of emanation.

In the creek bed as you get deeper and deeper, the rock rises above you on either side. It is steep and high. There is no where to go but back or ahead. This in itself can be frightening. As I mastered the worst places with an "on-all-fours" dubious kind of skill, I began to wonder how we would get back again. It's funny how one man's worry is another man's challenge. On the way back Tony presented us with a tree bridge and an amazing technique called sliding on one's bum.

It seems to take an awful lot of bends in the creek bed until you reach the last turn and can see Charles Stuart standing calmly but impressibly before you; but that "I want to see what's around the next one..." kind of attitude keeps you going.

As the main group neared the end of the creek bed they carried on up the ridge to the right. Apparently from there it is just a case of dropping down another 500 feet again and taking what looks like the last short climb to the top. So, next fall when the creek bed is again almost dry, and with an early start, perhaps the Ramblers will find their way to the top of Mt. Charles Stuart.

VIVIEN BUDGEN

EDITOR'S NOTE: Back list error.... In the above report "Stuart", should be spelt "Stewart"..

Mount Charles Stewart (9315 ft) was named after the Honorable Charles A Stewart (1868-1946) Premier of Alberta from 1917-21

WAPTA LODGE WEEKEND  
by  
Marianne Flanagan

Mary and Doug Cambell brought together 21 hardy souls for a good, cold weekend at the Lodge. The food, rooms, skiing and snow-shoeing were all well enjoyed. Any spare time was spent trying to start the cars. Overnight lows were around -30 degrees, and there were no plugins, so some trouble was expected of course. But several of the newer cars would not come to life even after generous dollops of gas line anti-freeze and long sessions of electric shock treatments, (battery to battery, that is.) Alastair's Towing did a brisk trade. It was thought that if we could roll the reluctant cars down the Field hill, they were bound to start!

Warm clothes and brisk activity staved off most of the cold in this area of good trails and magnificent mountains. (P.S. Do not leave your car parked on the highway in Yoho. It's called illegal parking, and costs \$35.00.)

SRETAN BOŽIĆ  
NOVA GODINA

Croatian

TRANSLATED FROM CROATIAN:  
Happy Christmas  
~~Happy~~ NEW YEAR!

## OF AVALANCHES AND MEN

By Peter McGill

As hikers in the central Canadian Rockies we are all well aware of the devastating effects of avalanches. In the spring we can see the slots carved through the forest floor with massive trees piled like so much cord wood along the margin of the avalanche path. Those familiar with Tokumm Creek will recall that the avalanches sweep off an unnamed range to the west with such force that they plough up the opposite slope for some three or four hundred feet. Power they have. Instantaneous they are, and at times they are intensely destructive.

Now we have been talking about the giants. Those great avalanches that sweep down in the spring with climax ferocity.

There are dry snow avalanches too. I remember one time as a young man that I went to ski in the Craigieburn Basin in the foothills of the Southern Alps of New Zealand. My friend Selwyn Buckwell and myself trudged in for four long hours with a week's supply of food and skis, axe, and rum. Before we reached the hut we could see that a giant avalanche had swept the basin clear of every last morsel of powder snow and piled all that good powder in fifty and hundred foot humps in the narrow throat of the basin. We spent that week experimenting with different ways of cooking dried beans and peas and dehydrated meat and lamentin, the vagaries of snow. We had in addition to the four hour walk out to the road a sixteen-mile walk to the Cass Railway Station.

Before I start my principal story let me add one further item. I have ridden in an avalanche. Arranging for the ride was remarkably easy. In spring conditions I skied through a slot in a cliff at Temple Basin, Arthur's Pass, New Zealand. In a moment I was inbedded in wet snow up to my knees. The snow above me cut with a jagged line perhaps to the depth of about two or three feet and in the next few moments I was riding in a wet turgid mass down the mountainside headed for a cliff. As I recall it wasn't a lightning passage. I attempted to swim backwards but this was rather difficult with two skis still strapped firmly to my feet. These were the days of bear trap harness. Safety harness still had to be invented and even better, still had to find its way to the Antipodes. Anycase a slight change in gradient slowed and then stopped this wet snow before I was due to flow over the cliff edge. I wrenched myself free and skied off to the hut with a very healthy regard for deep wet snow.

But let me turn to my story. On Sunday, November 11th, 1978, nine Ramblers arrived at 10:30 a.m. at Bow Summit. That's just a week or so ago so my story really isn't old. Sunday was cold but clear. A beautiful clear blue sky but cold as hell. And there was lots of that white stuff around. Most intended to hike on their cross country skis. Esther and myself were going to ski the powder. And like a bunch of curious ptarmigan we seemed to scatter in as many different directions.

Now Lil, the houseparent at the Rampart Youth Hostel had told us on Saturday evening, that the previous Tuesday it had rained. We can guess that it rained and then froze. We can also guess that all the exposed rocks high on slope were covered with a rind of ice. Between Tuesday and Saturday it had snowed. Certainly at lower levels multiple snow layers were preserved, but at higher levels and in

exposed positions there was probably only the new snow fall on a frozen base.

The ski area at Bow Summit is west of the Banff-Jasper road and is really confined to a wide flat ridge that progressively narrows upwards to cliff bands of a higher peak. This slope can be subdivided in two parts by a tree lined bench about half way up the slope. The upper basin, so called, is steep to very steep and has a cornice on the shoulder to the north. To the south this basin is bounded by a steep broken rock face that forms the northern wall of a cirque. You can go up to the first bench and then ski south along a bumpy terrain to the bench to the old observation hut. Only the old observation is no longer there.

Let me pick up my story again. At 11 p.m. Ordell Steen had reached the middle bench and skied south over the hummocky terrain to the site of old observatory. Esther and myself followed on downhill skis. At 1:30 p.m. we saw two persons climbing along the ridge towards the cliff bands above the upper basin. They turned south and passed horizontally across a snow patch to the north boundary of the cirque wall. Below them was a steep snow patch interspersed with boulders and then a steep exposed rock face. Below that again was a scree slide and the bench on which we were skiing. We wondered aloud whatever were these people doing there. Maybe they had a death wish.

We joined Ordell on the site of the old observatory and discussed the possibility of an avalanche. We agreed that in the upper basin with its crust of wind slab the chances were high. This discussion wasn't a long philosophical thing. It was quick and brief and fingers quickly froze as we took off our skis. We skied down from the observatory. The powder was good. At a turn round a hummock, we observed, "By God there's been an avalanche!" "There I told you it could avalanche!" But most as quickly our eyes galvanized on two black figures cast to the south side of the avalanche debris.

It was a good size avalanche. The humps were up to the ten feet thick and was possibly an acre of avalanche debris at the foot of the scree slide.

I can always remember taking a St. John's Ambulance First Aid course. It went on for nine bloody evening, three hours per evening and had all sorts of dedicated woman persons who did nothing but need the handbook so they could make all the male persons look like bloody idiots in the final test. But now it was Ramblers to the rescue and memories of the St. John's Ambulance first aid course were very real.

What did we find? We found two men somewhat battered from a slide of 700 feet down the mountain side and a passage over a 200 foot rock face. Instead of being buried they were cast to one side of the toe of the avalanche. Miraculously they were still alive. One man lying on his back complained of pain in his upper left leg. He had a compound and multiple fracture of his left femur. The other man had straw-colored fluid and blood streaming from his right ear. He had a giant welt over his right eye. He complained of pain in his back. We called two other skiers over and Dick Jull and David arrived. We stripped off all available down clothing and put jackets under them and over them. Dick fed them hot coffee. Ordell ruck off to notify the Park Board of the accident and arrange for a rescue. I left with David and Esther for sleeping bags and foamies. The time was now 2:15 pm. Down at the cars Esslie and Betty brewed up hot tea for the victims and the porters. At 3:00 p.m. with Zita Morgan, another woman skier and two young fellows, we arrived back at the accident.



Arn Harse had located them too. Dick and Arn had taken off their boots and were warming their feet. Warm hands were a luxury. Zita fed them hot chocolate and kind words. Now we decided to put a foamy under the fellow with the broken leg. To do this we splinted both legs together with ski poles and scarves, raised him carefully and put him in a sleeping bag and on a foamy. We were about to do the same for the man with the head injury when Ordell arrived with the helicopter. The time was now 4:00 p.m..

The helicopter landed on a hump in the avalanche. Two park wardens came down to the scene of the accident. The man with the suspected back injury was loaded on to an aluminum frame and placed in sleeping bag like sling. Only to begin with the locking pins in the frame wouldn't lock. They were frozen and so were our hands.

The zipper on the sling is closed. The helicopter (a Bell Jet Ranger) hovers, snow flies and everyone tries to secure all loose items. The scene is beginning to resemble a Rambler auction with a scatter of clothing and skis. A cabiner is snapped onto the helicopter sling. The warden snaps another and rides off with the victim in a seat harness. At 4:45 or 5:00 p.m. the second victim was slung out. It was almost dark. It most certainly was cold and off we skied down to McGill's truck to drink, well, cold beer, of course.

The Park wardens were very efficient and very well trained. The pilot of the helicopter was outstanding. In all it was a first rate and very efficient mountain rescue. But make no mistake, it was the mountain people, Dick, Arn, Ordell, Zita, Leslie, Esther, Betty and David who very materially saved these men's lives.

#### AVALANCHES! - RULES OF THUMB

##### Precaution

Only one person at a time on a suspect slope: all others watch the person that may be in danger.

Remove ski pole straps, ski safety straps, loosen all equipment. Put on mitts, cap, and fasten clothing before being exposed to avalanche danger. Carry and use avalanche beacons or, at minimum, an avalanche cord. Carry sectional probes and shovels.

##### If Caught in an Avalanche

Discard all equipment. Making swimming motions, try to stay on top and work your way to the side of the avalanche. Do not cry out or open your mouth after you are in the avalanche. Get your hands in front of your face and try to make an air space as you are coming to a stop. If you are near the surface as the slide comes to a stop, thrust a hand or leg upwards.

##### If you are a Survivor

Visually follow the victim down the avalanche path, noting the exact point at which you loose sight of him. Physically mark the spot where you last saw the victim with a ski pole or similar object. Search for him along the flow line directly below the last seen point. Mark the location of all clues. Probe the most likely location, beginning with the area of greatest deposition.

You are the best hope for survival. Do not desert him and go for help unless help is only a few minutes away. Remember, you must consider not only the time for you to get help, but the time required for help to return. The victim has only a 50% chance of surviving for one half hour. If you must go for help, mark the route so a rescue party can follow it back. Return with the rescue party.

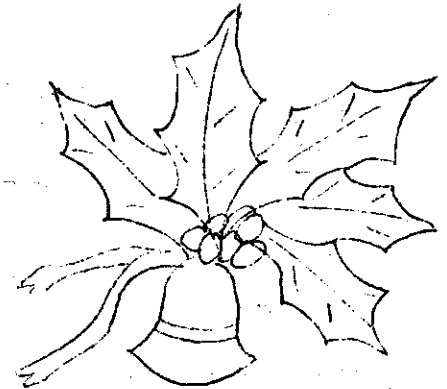
"DOES YOUR CAR START COLD"  
to the melody  
"Do Your Ears Hang Low"

Does your car start cold,  
Thought it's not so very old?  
Do you need a neighbour able  
With a great long set of cables?  
Do you just turn on the switch  
And mutter "You old sunofabitch!"?  
Does your car start cold.

Does your car start cold,  
When it's 49 below?  
Do you need a little push?  
Could you use a little tow?  
Do your hands and feet congeal  
While you sit behind the wheel?  
Does your car start cold.

Does your car start cold,  
Is the gas line always froze?  
Is your car so very new?  
Is your face all turning blue?  
Did you buy it overseas?  
Has it got you on your knees?  
Does your car start cold?

By: Ann  
Tony  
Monika  
Marianne.



A very merry Christmas to you all!  
Don't forget 1979 is the rambblers  
Silver anniversary. It all started way  
back in 1954 when "Huckey's Hikers" became  
R.M.R.A. So lets all make our anniversary  
year something to remember. Happy New Year!