



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 and knowledge of the countryside; to assist in the preservation of countryside amenities; 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 - 7th Ave. S.W., Calgary, T2P 1A8. There they organize hikes, 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 232-1330 (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:

1979 - 80 EXECUTIVE

President	Ordell Steen	282-5156
Vice-President	Brenton Barr	283-7668
Secretary	Mary Fletcher	269-2255
Treasurer	Darlene Weger	266-1376
Leaders' Chairman	Dick Jull	265-3665
Programs	Dieter Steffen	282-0553
Social	Annemarie Merriner	289-4356
Packrat	Art & Brent Davis	233-7229
Equipment	Peter McGill	277-2196

The Pack Rat should be published a minimum of six times a year, It's aim is to keep 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.

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For a club that lives up to its no littering motto outdoors it has been noticed that some members fail to live up to our good reputation indoors. After our meetings it is not unusual to find a number of empty or half empty paper coffee cups or juice cans around the hall. There are two garbage containers, one at each end of the kitchen counter, please use them. The odd ashtray can usually be found so there is no excuse for one member who has been observed smoking during the meeting, flicking her cigarette ashes onto the floor then stomping out the cigarette on the floor.

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The Fairholme Range running from Lake Minnewanka south to the Bow River were named after Palliser's sister, Grace Penelope Palliser (1815 - 1901) who married a William Fairholme from the village of Greenknowe, Berwickshire in Scotland in 1853.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The A.G.M. will be held on Wednesday, October 15th at our usual meeting place. Paid up members are eligible to vote for the new executive. The regular meeting will take place at 7:30 p.m. for purposes of organizing trips and the A.G.M. will start at 8:00 p.m. There will be other items on the agenda of interest to all members so be there.

ANNUAL DINNER AND DANCE

Date: October 25th, 1980.
 Place: 3625 - 4 St. S.W. - Southern Alberta Old Timers and Pioneers Assoc. hall.
 Cost: \$13.00 per person - includes the dinner with wine, dance after dinner.

There will be a limit of 75 tickets so don't delay getting yours before they are all gone.

A WORD IN APPRECIATION

The end of another year for the R.M.R.A. A time to look back on the events of the past year and to recognize and be grateful to the people who have given a lot of thought, time and effort to help make it a very good year. All of us who just sign up for trips and go out and enjoy ourselves need to give a very special thank you to all the leaders. Thank you leaders, we appreciate you though we don't always tell you.

As I looked through my diary just to see where I've been for the past year I found a lot of good memories and I'd like to personally thank the following leaders: Art Davis, Dee & Rein de witt, Wally Drew, Tony Forster, Dick Jull, Peter McGill, Ray Merriner, Helga Pattison, Dieter Steffen and Brian Westcott.

I enjoyed all the trips I went on and from the trip reports I know I also missed out on a lot of good trips too so I know that other leaders have many grateful followers. What more can we as followers do except say Thank You and please keep up the good work as we are looking forward to another great year.

Also a very special thank you to Dieter for all the programs over the past year and to Annemare for some very good parties!!

Forever grateful,

Darlene Weger.

PACKHORSES TO THE PACIFIC - Cliff Kopas
 Gray's Publishing Limited, Sidney, B.C.

An interesting tale of Cliff & Ruth Kopas' journey after their marriage in Calgary in 1933 and starting out on Sheep Creek west of Okotoks with their clothes, some camping equipment, five horses and \$2.65 in cash. Their destination was the Pacific at Bella Coola. Their route to Jasper is along trails that many of us have been on and it is quite easy to visualize their experiences along the way. With reference to Camp Parker on their way to Nigel Pass regarding the trees carved "with several skilfully carved tributes to Teacher's Highland Cream" these carvings are still easily recognized. A great wilderness experience, worth reading.

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GRIZZLIES SPICE MONASHEE TRIP

With youth and a super-jock physique on his side, it was not unusual to find Dick Lee strolling ahead of the group. This day was no exception. We came over a ridge and there on a bench was a star-shaped lake set like a jewel in an alpine meadow. As we oohed and awed, a bear just below was saying "good morning" to Dick, almost face to face. After a couple of snorts the bear gave up trying to converse with this tongueless creature, turned and charged back into a small clump of scrub evergreens.

"There's a bear in that bush", he warned, recovering his tongue just as the rest of us arrived.

Sure enough, a bear appeared from behind the bush, took a look at us and galloped off into a draw which ran up the hillside to our right. Seven pairs of eyes rivetted to the spot where it disappeared. Seven brains speculated. Black or grizzly. A few steps forward brought more of the draw into view. My god! Two bears! A glint of silver fringed their fur. Grizzlies!

We talked a lot about bears the next couple of hours.

This was Dick's second encounter with a bear. Two days earlier, in the wee hours of the morning, he spied a black bear near our camp. Now, after this second incident, he was declared, undisputedly, "Bear Scout."

Even though this event certainly "spiced up" Peter McGill's Monashee back pack, August 1 - 10, and could be considered a deterrent, we (Peter and Esther McGill, Tom Thurston, Dick Jull, Darlene Weger, Dick Lee and Shirl Bayer) feel that Monashee Provincial Park in south-central B.C. is excellent hiking country. This small park (13,566 acres) is mostly high country; rugged peaks (3,000 to 9,000'), narrow valleys, alpine meadows and jewel lakes.

To reach the park, take Highway 6 east 31 miles to Cherryville. Turn north to Sugar Lake, continue past the lake and follow the Monashee Park signs to the parking lot. It's about 25 miles from Cherryville to the parking lot where hiking begins.

An alternate route is to go south at Revelstoke on Highway 23 to Nakusp, then follow Highway 6 south and west to Cherryville. Although this second route includes two ferry crossings, which could cause delays, it also gives a bonus; a view of the peaks in the park across Arrow Lake.

From the parking lot the well-kept trail with bridges across crystal streams winds through cedar forest to Rainbow Lake. The lush growth, reminiscent of rain-forest, suggests that rain is normal in these parts. Our experience reinforced this suggestion; we had some rain every day but one. It's an easy eight miles to the well-kept campground at Rainbow Lake.

The park warden who resides there looks after this campground and another on the plateau at Peters Lake, keeps the trails navigable (the only trail beyond here switch-backs up the saddle to the plateau and on to the campground at Peters Lake), cuts firewood and tries to answer questions about the area.

We camped at Rainbow Lake, then headed into the high country..

A 2500-ft. elevation gain carrying full packs left us pooped, but the starving hordes of mosquitoes at Peters Lake drove us on to Mergie Lake where they were reported to be less plentiful. This turned out to be true.

Less-than-perfect weather kept us here three nights. Day hikes were in order and we explored Fawn Lake, Valley of the Moon, Gates Ledge; the landscape ranged from delicately flowered alpine meadows to stark moonscapes. Added features were mountain blue birds, monkey flowers, ptarmigan, a spruce grouse we almost touched, marmots, the remains of an old cabin and a running commentary on geological features.

On the fifth day we moved camp to Bill Fraser Lake, and that's when we encountered the grizzlies. We were not overly surprised as we had seen bear signs - excreta and diggings - every day.

Our sixth day out was memorable on three counts. Firstly, it was our longest and hardest day with 10 to 11 hours on the trail. We trekked from Bill Fraser Lake, across South Caribou Pass to Peters Lake and down all the switch-backs to Rainbow Lake. This put us into position for an easy hike out to the parking lot the next day.

Secondly, three members of the group, the two Dicks and Peter, climbed Mount Fosthall (8,791 ft), an elevation gain of 1800 ft. from South Caribou Pass. They returned marvelling about the panoramic view they had of all the country we'd hiked and much more.

Thirdly, Peter saved his reputation as a bush-whacking trip leader. Until we headed up to South Caribou Pass from Bill Fraser Lake, we had encountered very little bush-whacking. But here dead-fall laid traps for us among tangles of rhododendrons, gooseberry bushes and other waist-high growth. By the time we reached the pass, there was little danger that Peter would lose his long-standing reputation.

Peter also has the reputation of "taking care" of the people on his trips. At no time during this trip was he in danger of losing this reputation. He rigged up tarps as shelters from rain and wind (while commandeering every piece of string in camp short of boot laces), had a fire blazing at the drop of a match, and made sure everybody carried in a ration to warm the cockles of our hearts, etc., around the evening campfire.

When climbing Mt. Fosthall, a bleak prominence without many landmarks, the fellows tell me that he built cairns all the way up so that if the weather closed in suddenly, they could still find their way down safely. Now that's a leader!

Shirl Bayer.

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CALDRON LAKE REVISITED

Labour Day weekend, forecasts of sunny weather, so off to Caldron Lake with climbing Mistaya Mtn. in mind. Hoping to get up and get some good views, unlike the Labour Day weekend last year when we only got occasional glimpses from the summit through the clouds.

Matt Dymond, Martin Pahl and I left Saturday morning and drove to Peyto Lake Viewpoint parking area and then set off along the trail

to the Viewpoint and down the 300 m elevation loss to Peyto Lake. After crossing the outwash flats and going on up the creek we stopped at the Hydrometric Gauging Station and eyed a narrow gap in the creek and decided to cross. Martin was the first one over, luckily he had the longest legs and very kindly helped us by reaching over and taking our pecks which enabled us to jump over with no difficulty. We then backtracked downstream and up across the creek which comes out of Caldron Lake and on up an avalanche slope. Part way up we stopped for a short lunch break, at this point we saw six others heading up towards Peyto Glacier. Matt picked out a likely looking route to get up to Caldron Lake, and, although steep going no great difficulty was experienced.

On the way up we had had mostly sunny weather but shortly after our arrival at the lake a trace of snow was in the air although the intermittent sunny periods did continue until around 7 p.m. we found a good campsite, near a small stream and behind a rock ledge which offered some wind protection. After setting up camp around 2 p.m. Matt and Martin decided to head for the Delta Glacier and then on to Mt. Patterson (3197 m - 10,490'). After they left I saw two people coming across the scree slope on Peyto Peak and thought that this must be Dick and Marg Lowndes who probably changed their minds and decided to come along after all. I went over to meet them but it was two fellows who were going to camp at the far end of the lake. They informed that they were with another four who were behind them. This would be the six people we could see down in the valley when we stopped for lunch. After I returned to our campsite I saw the other four appear around the corner of the scree slope on Peyto Peak and after wandering around for about five minutes surveying what they had to go across they turned and left. Those who have crossed that scree slope with the 100 to 150 m cliff at the bottom of it can understand why they chose to retreat.

Shortly afterwards I took a walk over towards the Delta Glacier and on reaching the top of what appears to be an old terminal moraine of the glacier saw my two stalwart companions disappearing over a rise in the glacier heading towards Mt. Patterson. I strolled back to the camp and after lazing around and building a wind break for our cooking area had supper around 6 p.m. Shortly after 7 p.m. I decided to see if there was any sign of the others and upon reaching the top of the moraine around 8 p.m. saw them coming across the glacier. I met them down at the edge of the glacier and they informed me that they had been successful in their climb of Mt. Patterson. On the way over to meet them I saw one ptarmigan with three chicks, they were almost full grown. This is my fifth trip to Caldron Lake and it is the first time I have seen any wildlife there, although I have seen goat tracks. Arriving back at the camp around 9 p.m. the others had supper and by 9:45 it was starting to snow so we hastily retired.

On arising the following morning we found about 3 cm of snow on the ground, it was calm and had quit snowing. After a breakfast and a look at the clouds we decided we had had enough and packed up and left. On our return we had no difficulty except when I decided to pick a route down and we ended up on the wrong side of the avalanche slope and had to bushwhack through waist high spruce to the open slope. Of course it was soaking wet and so were we by the time we got through it. Due to the cool weather the creek was no problem

to get across as all the surface melt on the glacier has come to a halt. After a short lunch break during which we spotted a mountain goat on a ledge just below tree line on Caldron Peak we continued on back across the flats and the final slog back up the trail to the Viewpoint. Back at the parking lot we were able to sit in the sunshine and enjoy tea and cookies. The weather was probably behaving for just a short time as we had rain nearly all the way back from Lake Louise to Calgary on the way back. Martin stayed behind with plans to remain in the mountains until Friday.

Congratulations to Matt and Martin for their climb of Mt. Patterson. Quite a strenuous day, especially after backpacking to Caldron Lake then doing the climb after. As far as I know this is the first time a member of the Ramblers has climbed Mt. Patterson.

When packing up to leave I vowed never to come back to Caldron Lake due to the foul weather encountered there, but, come to think of it maybe sometime next July there may be a chance of some sunny weather, is anybody interested?.....

Art Davis

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ASCENT OF MOUNT BOURGEOU

Some days you never know what is going to happen on the hiking trail. The Rocky Mountain Ramblers set off to commemorate Alberta's 75th Anniversary by climbing Mt. Bourgeau (3,615') on September 28th. We arrived at Bourgeau Lake about 11:15 that Sunday morning, after a relatively uneventful trek up from the highway. We munched our "pre-lunch" goodies and contemplated the climb up the impressive peak which loomed above us. It was drizzling rain as we sheltered under the trees donning our gaiters and assorted winter gear in preparation for the climb.

Heading up the right side of the creek, we were soon in sight of the waterfall tumbling down to Bourgeau Lake. I came to a fork in the trail. Most of the others who were ahead of me had chosen the path closest to the creek. A better defined trail follows the gully, farther away from the creek, and this is the trail that I know. I could see the others grouped ahead at the waterfall so I took time to survey the hill above me thinking that it would be easier to take the higher trail.

There was something to discourage me from doing this, however. As I looked up the hill, a movement caught my eye. Blending well into the brown countryside and tearing into the dirt with his paws was a beautiful grizzly bear. He was intent on his business but as I yelled to the others, "Bear, bear, bear!" and pointed madly in his direction he lifted his elegant head, seemed to look at me, and then went back to his chores. The others, of course, couldn't see him at first, but as he moved down the valley exploring under the rocks, they caught sight of him. Tony and Brent, who had come up the left hand side of the creek, were quickly joined by the rest of us as we decided that it would be nicer to have the creek between us and the bear. He appeared to be looking for food as he proceeded across the mountainside. If he was aware of us, he was fairly oblivious.

After this diversion, we then scrambled up, sometimes on the side of, sometimes over the rocks in, the creek bed. As we reached the top of the waterfall the wind was blowing and the rain was pouring down. The better prepared ones of us were putting on rain pants, but my dud Gortex jacket was literally soaking up the rain. The sky had been grey and unfriendly most of the day and fog was drifting in and out of the area. Needless to say, I protested the climb and when I did Mary wisely pointed out that I couldn't go back by myself. Tony said we would find some shelter farther up and sit out the rain. I knew that there was no shelter farther up, but I figured Mary was probably right (because of the bear) and since it was only 12 o'clock as Tony said, I decided to plod on. I'm really glad that I did.

In our progress towards the second lake close to the pass, we spotted one of the grizzly's tracks in the snow. Some of us were talking excitedly about our encounter with the bear and we decided that certainly he wouldn't still be there on our way back. As we rounded the side of the mountain, the wind and rain disappeared as quickly as they had come. My spirits lifted as I thought maybe it won't be so cold and miserable after all.

We munched a bit more of our lunch close to the pass. Earlier we had agreed to meet at the top of the pass and pow-wow whether or not to continue the ascent of the fogged in mountain. But, as we gathered there, although Bourgeou was still hidden, the view was quite expansive of the Sunshine and surrounding areas and without too much discussion, we decided to "go for it".

As we climbed we looked back upon the valleys and mountains to the west and "could see for miles and miles". This was to be the last of our incredible views for awhile. At one point we heard someone yelling behind us and we turned to see about 15 mountain sheep darting across the slope below us. We still couldn't see the top of the mountain and the more we climbed the foggier it became. It got colder and it started to hail; Needlepoints of hail that stabbed into our cheeks if we turned our faces toward it. My pants became wet through and my legs became numb with cold. I thought I would never get warm again. At one point the fog was all around me and I couldn't see any of my fellow Ramblers. I had visions of being lost on the mountain.

Eventually the hail stopped and as I climbed and climbed I couldn't help but get warm again. At times the fog would lift and the wind would tease us by giving us glimpses of gorgeous blue Alberta sky. But still we couldn't see the peak. We were getting closer though. Tony said he recognized the terrain from Helge Pattison's pictures. One of the new members was also beginning to feel the climb, but with encouragement from the others who knew that we were much too close to quit now, she decided to go on.

Our last bit of super encouragement came as I lay collapsed on a rock with my back to the peak, giving my body a chance to rejuvenate before climbing the last long slope to the top. Hearing a yell, I turned to see above me blue sky and a clear view of the summit. With a "we can see the top, let's get going while we can still get some pictures!", I saw Tony leaping and bounding towards the mountain top.

Quite a bit more leisurely, I got myself in gear, and with one more sustained effort, we were all there. It was 3 p.m. It had taken almost 6 hours to climb 4,915 feet.

It was very cold standing by the cairn as Tony fastened the Alberta 75 compass with the summit register (Christened with all our names) to it. Quickly we took the pictures holding our Alberta 75 flag and Tony passed out the Alberta 75 badges, which we humbly accepted. We couldn't see all that much from the top so we left, much more quickly than we had arrived.

On the way down, again we had tremendous views looking west and south. The dark green and golden fall colours created a variegated pattern below distant snowy mountains and smoky sky. We rallied at the lake at the pass. We had more or less agreed that we should stay together from then on in case the bear was still around.

As we rounded the bend just before the falls where we had first seen the bear, I was calling unashamedly into the air, just to let him know where we were, in the hopes that if he heard me, he would decide that he didn't want to be there. As I said before, we figured the bear would be long gone, but it didn't hurt to be cautious.

Mary was just ahead of me when in a kind of a loud whisper I said "he-a-r-r-r-y...". I could see the bear not far below us, still burrowing industriously in the dirt. I was jumping up and down to let the others behind us know that we had seen him when Mary said, "Now Viv, be calm, we should all get together". We backed up towards the others and then we descended as a group, warily watching, but fascinated by, the legendary creature. One or two of us stopped to take pictures, and then we carried on down to the lake and back to the cars.

We had a beer by the side of the road and then supper in Coanora. A typical ending to a not so typical day.

Vivien Budgen

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The September 23rd climb of Mt. Bourgeau was led by Tony Forster and participants were Karl Biederstedt, Bill Pippy, Mary Fletcher, B. J. Jakabec, Brent Hickey, Jim Wilson, Vivien Budgen and Barb?

STORM MOUNTAIN

On a dismal looking Sunday (Sept. 14th) morning Bill Pippy, Matt Dymond, Ordell Steen and yours truly set off to try Storm Mtn. (10,372' - 3163 m).

We had a nice surprise as we headed west, the mountains were clear and very snowy, maybe we'll have a good day after all.

But on getting to Castle Junction our mountain had disappeared behind a shroud of mist. Ordell and Matt's idea of climbing the N. W. ridge was cancelled due to lack of visibility. They therefore decided to join us in finding the easy way up, hoping that the mist would clear.

By 9:30 a.m. we were all jumping, stumbling and leaping through

the burnt out section of a pine forest near Vermilion Pass. This part was interesting because the wet stumps were steaming from the sun's rays as it slowly dispersed the mist.

At last we saw our mountain, 4000 ft. to go! After three hours of bushwacking up through a very wet icrest we finally reached a break in the cliffs above that I recognized from a previous trip. This break was a snow filled gully which lead us onto the crest of a wide flat ridge.

While plodding up the snowy ridge we heard loud crashes coming from the mountain opposite. We watched with awe as tons of snow avalanched down into the valley.

By 2:00 p.m. we had all arrived on the summit, so, out came the cameras for the usual snaps. But this time it was a little bit different.

To celebrate Alberta's 75th birthday our club took part in a plan to climb 75 peaks. Storm Mtn. was one of the chosen peaks so we had the job of placing in the summit cairn a canister containing a register and anniversary pins. We also had along a large 75th Anniversary flag which added a bit of colour to the summit shots.

It was very cold and windy on the summit but we had great views of Mt. Temple, Hungsabee, Bell, Stanley, etc., etc. After a few minutes on top we descended to a more sheltered spot for a bite to eat.

The descent to the car was tiring and we arrived back just as it started to rain so I'd say we were very lucky to have had such a good day.

A meal at Banff rounded off a very enjoyable and memorable trip.

Tony Forster.

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The Alberta Rockies Mountaineering Society with approval from the Alberta 75th Anniversary Commission undertook to place summit registers atop 75 classic peaks in Alberta for the celebration of the province's 75th birthday. Thanks to Tony Forster the Ramblers were assigned Mt. Bourgeau and Storm Mtn. The benefits of these climbs are that believe it or not, people get paid for climbing. Actually it is just a rebate for expenses at \$3.00 per day per person to a maximum of 3 persons for three days. A colour film was provided to register the summit record, panorama shots, etc. Also Tony will have to submit the photos and trip description to the Commission which will be entered in the Provincial Archives.

On behalf of the club thanks are extended to Tony Forster and the participants of the two climbs, just think you are all a part of the history of Alberta now!

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Hopefully the next issue of the Peck Hat will contain a trip report on the climb of Mt. Victoria (11,365' - 3464') by Ordell Steen and Wilf Twelker on Sunday, October 5th. Congratulations to you both. One member of the Ramblers (half the Peck Hat staff) will be madder than blazes that he missed the trip.

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