



THE

PACK RAT

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. at the Rosemount Community Hall, 2807 - 10th Street N.W., Calgary, Alberta. Here they: organize hikes, backpacking, canoe trips, etc., in the summer; and ski and snowshoe trips, etc., in the winter. There are programs on two of every three Wednesdays and social functions are held throughout the year.

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 3098, Station B, Calgary, Alberta T2M 4L6

MEMBERSHIP FEES: Single \$15.00/Family \$25.00 (annually)

INFORMATION: Bob Baxter of Bob's Bookstore - Phone 282-1330
Hours: Monday to Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Or contact any of the following:

1984-85 EXECUTIVE (October 1, 1984 to September 30, 1985)

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The PACK RAT is published six times a year with the aim to keep members informed about Club activities, and matters of interest and concern to the Association. So keep those trip reports and other interesting articles, memos, etc., coming...they are the lifeblood of this newsletter.

PRESIDENT'S RAMBLINGS

APRIL 1985

With the ski season at an end we can look back on a considerable level of activity and an accident. Many thanks to Dee and Rein de Witt for staying with Sonia until the helicopter arrived, and for picking her up in Banff and driving to the Foothills Hospital. Best wishes to Sonia for a speedy recovery.

Many thanks also to Dick Lowndes and Lowell Buschert for re-organizing and cleaning up the equipment room. As a result we have some equipment for sale, namely, a stereo amplifier and a pair of speakers. If you are interested in purchasing the above, check with Dick for details. If no interest is expressed by the members, the amplifier and speakers will be advertised in the "Bargain Finder".

The Legal Liability Workshop organized by C.A.O.C. and presented by Mr. Jay Straith was very interesting. The major responsibilities of outdoor clubs in terms of leader/coordinator training, responsibility and equipment were described and illustrated by several examples. The second part stressed that member participation was at one's own risk and that the member should share the responsibility in the event of an accident. Mr. Straith concluded with some suggestions to reduce potential club liability as follows:

- a) develop club standards for coordinators
- b) control access to the club by new members and have a training program
- c) incorporate the club and buy liability insurance
(to limit liability to the assets of the club)

The equipment chairman, Dick Lowndes, is reviewing all of the equipment available for rent. Aside from a few items such as emergency location transceivers, commonly called "Pieps", and shovels, much of the equipment is seldom used. Do you have any suggestions on items that would have more demand; what to do with the present inventory and whether or not we should stay in the rental business? Dick would be pleased to have any comments and suggestions.

David Reid
President

THE PERILS OF WILDCATTING

Over last Thanksgiving time, Alistair (the Highlander) and I went a-Rambling without authorization, on a fine day-trek over the Slate and Sawback Ranges: a buckshee trip is called a "Wildcat", and it ended up to be quite a wild one.

On the second last day out, we aimed for Bonnet Peak, but just managed to set foot on Bonnet Glacier at 9,500 feet when our world whited out except for misty and forbidding masses of peaks appearing now and again. So we retreated back down to Badger Pass and thence down towards the headwaters of the Cascade River. Without warning, we found ourselves out-numbered by three grizzlies. The giant sow reared on her hind feet at about 50 metres away. I ducked behind Alistair who continued advancing as he still had another pass to mount that day and had no time to fool around with bears. The sow dropped back on all fours, gathered up her two yearlings and they scurried up the far side of the valley. They behaved like goats and climbed far up the steep slope high onto the adjacent basin.

We managed the next pass alright and camped that night at the muddy shore of a windy morainal lake clinging to the western shoulders of Block Mountain. I elected to take down the tent that final Thanksgiving morning. I removed the tent fly, and had the pegs nicely cleaned when the gale increased in velocity and the tent took off down the muddy slope...hop, skipping and jumping and took a wide leap into the lake. I called to Alistair to come and do something. The tent (only 10 days old) was proving itself not only to not be waterproof, but was actually behaving like the Titanic even though no iceberg was present. I guess the water was icy enough though!

Well, when Alistair arrived with the cord and a garbage bag, we debated as to who would fetch the tent. I cleverly argued that as the tent was now about to submerge, I could not see it without my glasses. So, with the gale still blowing, Alistair shoved his clothing into the garbage bag, handed it to me with the end of the cord, knotted the other end around his waist, muddied his lower legs and feet and swam out to the place where the tent had floundered. He trod water, looked down hard into the depths and we both concluded the windswept, muddy-shored, lousy lake was also bottomless. Diving for the tent would only add to the folly. So I hauled in the cord as the muddy blue figure lubbered back onto land for a well earned full mug of tea.

That was Alistair's last trip out before getting the silver pin for valour in attempting a tent swimming retrieval or perhaps for facing the bear on Sunday, and baring the face on Monday.

Dick Jull

...and the deadline for the next Pack Rat will be
4 weeks from now.

Thank you.

ADVENTURE - ASSINIBOINE - FEB. 15,16,17, 1985

PARTICIPANTS: Ken Watson, Jim Bruce, Del Lavalley, Mary Webster,
Brian Pelz and Bill Hayes

The familiar early morning buzz of the alarm clock told me it was time to rise and prepare for flight. It was to be my first helicopter ride ever and I felt the inside of my tummy going around like the copter's blade. Could the rest of the party be this excited?

We made our way out of town in 2 groups meeting at Ken's place in Canmore. A quick coffee and it was off under low clouds, south on the Spray Lakes road. Fresh snow covered the road to Buller Creek. Could a copter fly in those conditions, low clouds and pretty good winds? A group of Boy Scouts, who had camped out, joined us in our wait. From out of the clouds came our bright orange bubble. A study of tree tops was enjoyed during our inbound flight. Naiset hut "Forget-me-not" was to be our home for 3 days.

In minus 10 C and very windy conditions we set off for Wonder Pass. At the Pass it was only the Parks Dept. sign that was visible. Other short local trips were taken in not the best of weather.

Saturday, after a hearty breakfast, it was off on a trail-breaking trip to Og Pass. After a few difficult uphill efforts we finally came out to Og Pass. We were advised of the avalanche danger which was present should we attempt to make our way round to Assiniboine Pass so we returned in the same general direction as we had come.

The evening spaghetti supper was followed with a "rousing Rambler campfire" Oh! those multi-talented Ramblers. Did you know that Del has a lovely singing voice? Ken's scottish accent is uncanny. Ever heard Mary relate her favourite poem? Jim can not only dance but is also quite clever on the mouth-organ. Even quiet Brian had his say. A night to remember. "Forget-me-not" will never be the same.

We ventured in the direction of Assiniboine Pass (-5 C windy) before returning to the hut for lunch. Sunburst and Cerulean Lakes was the afternoon ski. If weather had permitted, trips further afield would have been done.

As we prepared to fly out, the clouds finally lifted enough to give a glimpse of the peak of Mt. Assiniboine.

Once again we congregated at Ken's where his wife, Jean, had prepared a delicious supper. Thank you.

Bill Hayes

ART'S ANNUAL SNOWCAVE TRIP (mid-March)

12 Ramblers took part in this trip to the usual place (snowdrift) up on the Molar Meadows. But due to the heavy sunshine and mild temperature (just below freezing), only one snowcave for three people was built. (Art dug his snowcave some three weeks earlier). The rest of the Ramblers decided to laze in the sun and pitch tents later on. The result: 2 snowcaves, 3 tents and 1 man sleeping out in the woods that weekend. Later on that night we enjoyed a campfire again, good talks and some good jokes along with our drinks.

Next morning came bright and sunny again, and after breakfast we skied the snow slopes across from our campsite. Always a good place to try that (silly) telemark turn. Then some of us skied higher up to South Molar pass and beyond, doing some exploring. It was early afternoon when we skied out again, leaving Art behind who was going to stay one more night. A fine weekend.

3 DAYS ON HAIG GLACIER (end - March)

There were 7 of us, 5 leaving on Thursday morning for a three day trip and the rest leaving Friday morning for a two day trip, including dog Buffy. The trip was marked by high winds at times and white-out conditions. There is nothing much to report except that we had a fairly good time.

WEEKEND TRIP TO MT. COLLIE (mid-April)

A short version of our trip. Only Alistair and I to go. Some water on the ice as we crossed Bow Lake. The trail is in poor shape at times with very soft snow. Arriving at the Bow Hut in white-out conditions. Leaving Bow Hut early afternoon. Ski for two hours by compass. Pitch our tent in wind and snow. Going inside the tent right after supper for comfort. Good sleep. Poor weather next morning. Going back to Bow Hut. The sun is coming out. Good skiing on the slopes behind the Hut. We meet some fellow Ramblers. Skiing out in the afternoon. Have to 'mine' for my skis at times in soft snow. Water on the Bow Lake coming in over the top of my boots one time. Enjoying a cold beer back at the car. It was a fine trip.

Wilf

Liz Tassy typed this issue of the Pack Rat. Thank you very much Liz, your help is much appreciated.

2 volunteer typists are needed for the mid-summer and early fall issue of our Pack Rat. Who would like to sniff the Gestetner corrector fluid?

Please contact Wilf.

WAPTA ICEFIELD - MT. RHONDA (April 5th and 6th)

On Good Friday five of us left the parking lot at the junction of the Icefields Parkway and Num-ti-jah Lodge road on Bow Lake at 11:00. The group consisted of Jim Bruce (Co-ordinator), Dave Gregg, Dat Duthinh, Mark Fuglem and Art Davis.

There was a strong wind blowing across the lake and on reaching the other side there were quite a few bare spots on the gravel flats and also places where skates would have been more appropriate than skis. After going upstream to just below the Natural Bridge canyon we donned climbing skins and activated our avalanche pieps for the remainder of the trip to our campsite. The trail was well packed and thanks to some recent snowfall we did not have to ski over rocks.

In the canyon we did get some respite from the wind but it was windy everywhere else. We stopped for a quick lunch break further along then continued on into the bowl and up the steep slope to the portion of the Bow Glacier leading to Bow Hut.

There were quite a few people in this area, some obviously heading on up to the Wapta Icefield for other destinations and those that were staying at the hut were enjoying skiing above the hut. We continued on up and stopped at a high point at the edge of a rocky ridge that overlooks Bow Lake. Our campsite was at 2,600 m (8,530'). Jim had assured us that once up here there wouldn't be any wind as he said he had never been up there when it was windy. Well this was his first time up there in the wind, there's a first time for everything.

We set up our tents, three in total, Jim and Dave sharing one, Dat and Mark and I had one all to myself. As the wind was still blowing at a good clip we erected snow walls at the backs of our tents. We had reached the campsite at 15:30 so spent an hour or so getting set up. There was a small igloo there that was pretty well buried in the snow. I dug into the side of it, apparently it was only a one person residence as there was one small sleeping platform in it. It served us as a kitchen as cooking outside would have been most uncomfortable in the wind. At 16:00 it was -10 C and with the wind blowing we had nearly all our spare clothes on by this time.

Most of us took a walk up the ridge, which was mostly bare rock, it was only 30 m higher than our camp but due to cornices at the edge we were unable to get far enough out on it to look down onto Bow Glacier Falls or the Natural Bridge Canyon areas. We did get good views of Bow Lake, the Lodge, highway, etc.

Dave very kindly offered to use his large pot to boil communal water for our supper as most of our meals only required hot water to either add to food or put it in to heat it up. In order to perform this service for the rest of us he was forced to sit in the igloo out of the wind and suffer the heat from the stoves in use, it must have been a great sacrifice for him as the remainder of the group were able to remain in the fresh air and enjoy the refreshing breezes.

After supper we went for a short ski trip up the Icefield to a high point where we could look down towards the Yoho Glacier and across to Mt. Collie. This point was about 90 m above our campsite.

Although the wind was still blowing the sky was starting to clear up and we were looking forward to see the full moon come up. It was around 20:30 or so that it showed signs of glowing behind the highest peak of Crowfoot Mtn. At first we could see the glow than flashes of light on the snow around the peak like a giant searchlight being flashed on and off three or four times, then it rose over the peak. It was truly a spectacular sight. Dat had retired to the tent but was convinced that it was worth coming out of a comfortable sleeping bag to witness the sight. I don't think he was disappointed. Numerous photos were taken of the event hopefully they will all turn out.

At 21:00 it was -16 C, the sky was clearing and there were some occasional calm periods. When we had checked in at the Lake Louise Warden's Office the weather report was for unsettled conditions all weekend, but, they had just received a new report stating that a Pacific high was expected later that day and luckily for us it arrived.

Saturday morning the others were up and around about 7:00, it was -17 clear and calm. I finally got up at 7:30 and found it quite chilly but once the sun was shining on our campsite we were able to get our breakfast in relative comfort.

Around 9:30 we headed off to Mt. Rhonda. We followed the route we had skied the evening before then headed over towards the base of the mountain. There was only one fairly steep place requiring a series of switchbacks and at the end of this we found ourselves on the summit ridge which is 1.25 km. long and rises only 100m to the summit. At this point there is a weather instrument, presumably used by the Peyto Glacier Research crew in the summer season. It is at an elevation of 2,970m - 9,745'. We stopped here for a snack and at this time could see two climbers approaching the summit of Mt. Collie, 3.5 km. away on the other side of the icefield. We also had great views of Mt. Ayesha to the north of Mt. Collie. The final ski to the summit was straightforward with only one short dip requiring some sidestepping. The views from the summit were great from the height of 3,070m - 10,070'. We could look down and see a group from the Peter Whyte Hut at the head of the Peyto Glacier approaching the slopes of Mt. Rhonda. There was a group going up toward Mt. Collie and others in two's or three's in the Mt. Gordon and Nicholas-Olive Col areas. With the lack of wind it was quite comfortable on the summit and we fully enjoyed it taking in the views and getting lots of photos.

The ski down from the summit was truly enjoyable. The steepest place I walked down instead of sidestepping and found the snow only up to my knees in the deepest places. From here the run back to camp was great, quite a change being able to ski anywhere and not sink down to your knees as is the case this year in most areas around tree line and lower.

We arrived back at camp around 14:00 and had another snack and a drink of Bang-Tang and then started packing up. Someone commented that their pack seemed to not weigh any less than on the trip in. When I got home I checked mine and it weighed exactly the same despite the fact that I had eaten nearly all the food I'd taken. Presumably a lot of the extra weight is moisture absorbed by the sleeping bag. I can't think of any other explanation for this fact.

While skiing in was no great pleasure the trip out was miserable. Of course having a backpack doesn't help matters at all. When we left our camp at 15:00 it was -4 and still clear and calm. By this time we were all showing signs of good sunburn. We didn't encounter any soft snow even down at the level of Bow Lake so obviously the temperature there had not risen above freezing. Jim and I reached the parking lot at 17:00 after dropping our packs and skis at the lodge.

At the parking lot we met two climbers who had been ice climbing on Bow Glacier Falls and one of them, who was from Scotland, knew many of the climbers there that Jim had also climbed with, a small world isn't it.

Jim and I drove down to the lodge at 18:00 and decided to go ahead and have supper then as the desk clerk advised us it would start to get crowded in another half hour or so. Just before we started eating we looked across the lake and saw the others heading across towards the lodge. We had finished our delicious meal by the time they arrived then waited for them to satisfy their appetites. The place was quite full by this time and they had to wait a while to get a table. While there I found out that the correct pronunciation of Num-ti-jah is Num-tie (like the one worn around men's necks) - jaw. By the time we left the lodge it was down to -12 so it must have been a cool night for anyone still up on the icefield.

This trip prompted me into getting a new sleeping bag and I certainly will not use the same tent again on a trip like this. It is too low to sit up in properly which is awkward getting dressed and undressed. The ideal accommodation of course is an igloo or snow cave.

Thanks to Jim and the rest of the group for a real enjoyable weekend. Now that I've got my second peak in this area, having gone up Mt. St. Nicholas a few summers ago I hope to have another weekend like this one and get up Mt. Gordon. Maybe next Easter? How about it Jim?

Art Davis

FAY HUT

The Fay Hut trip has always been a popular overnight stay for us Ramblers over the past few years. Here is a bit about it's history. Maybe you will understand more about that hut and have a more enjoyable stay next time.

WII

This year (1977) marks the 50th anniversary of the Fay Hut - the first climbing hut to be built by the A.C.C. At the 1925 Lake O'Hara camp, informal campfire discussions had led to the formation of a committee to make recommendations regarding such a hut. This committee, consisting of Mr. Moffat and Mr. Geddes, both of Calgary, and Mr. Waterman of New York, recommended that the proposed hut should be built in the vicinity of the Ten Peaks but well off the beaten track; that it be built close to timberline; and that a fund be started for its construction but no work be started until the amount collected was adequate. Apparently it was also planned initially to build the hut of stone, but this idea was dropped as impractical. It was then moved that the above committee be elected to carry out the project.

The following year at the Tonquin Valley camp it was reported that over \$1,635 had already been collected or pledged (\$850 from New York, \$300 from Minneapolis). A site up Prospector's Valley had been investigated and was found to have adequate wood and water. As the amount collected was now considered sufficient it was moved that the Hut Committee be empowered to proceed with construction. Later in the year a party including Dr. Cora Best and two C.P.R. Swiss guides (Rudolph Aemmer and Edward Feuz) revisited the proposed site. The Swiss guides favoured a higher location, but as this would escalate costs prohibitively the earlier location was settled on.

A Banff contractor, Mr. Sam Ward, estimated he could build the hut for \$1,250 and put a trail to the site for \$300. This was agreed upon and the Hut Committee was appointed to supervise construction. The C.P.R. transported material from Banff to Marble Canyon free of charge, and the completed hut had an inside dimension of 16 feet by 18 feet. Mr. Moffat (and others) visited the site on July 2, 1927, and a few additional items were decided upon, bringing the final construction cost for the hut to \$1,450.

At the 1927 Little Yoho camp, Mr. Geddes reported that \$1,998.15 had been collected to date, while \$1,995.88 was paid out, leaving a balance of \$2.29. However \$58.09 was still owing, which was presumably covered ultimately by new donations. He also suggested that the as yet unnamed hut be called the Fay Hut after the nearby peak of that name. He had written to Prof. Charles E. Fay asking if his name could be used and had received an affirmative reply stating that it would be an honor. Prof. Fay had founded the Appalachian Mountain Club (1876) and helped found the American Alpine Club (1902), and served many years as President of both. He first came to the Canadian Rockies in 1890 and made 25 visits in all, doing much pioneer exploration and climbing in both the main and Selkirk ranges.

Mr. Geddes then recommended that a permanent committee be set up for future huts, and it was decided that the current committee carry on with the addition of new members as necessary. Unfortunately Mr. Geddes wasn't able to serve much longer in this capacity, as he was tragically killed later that year in a climbing accident on Mt. Lefro .

The Fay Hut is situated upon a fairly extensive wooded ledge overlooking Prospector's Valley and Tokumm Creek, at an elevation of approximately 7,000 feet. Above it lies a wide glacial amphitheatre bordered from east to west by Quadra Mountain and the first six of the Ten Peaks (Fay to Allen). The glacier occupying this amphitheatre has receded considerably since the hut was built, and part of the discharge from its western lobe provides the jut with a water supply as it comes splashing down a short distance away in a series of waterfalls. Approximately one mile west of the hut and situated in the adjoining valley lies pretty little Kaufmann Lake, at the foot of Mt. Tuzo and Deltaform.

To get to the hut one must leave the Vermillion-Radium Highway at Marble Canyon and proceed up Prospector's Valley along a "primitive" trail following the north bank of Tokumm Creek. This valley was named by Walter Wilcox in 1899 after a prospector's camp he discovered near its entrance. After approximately 5½ miles the stream descending down the valley from the eastern lobe of the aforementioned glacier is crossed, and within the next half mile a large (12') boulder is encountered beside the trail. It is at the following tributary stream that the Fay Hut trail branches off from the main valley trail, and a sharp eye is required to follow it up the approximately 1,500 foot climb to the hut. The ledge upon which the hut stands is reached near its eastern end, and the exit to the amphitheatre above is also in this direction. A confusing factor is that the hut is usually misplotted on most maps, generally being placed too high and in one case even up the wrong valley. The total distance from highway to hut is approximately 8 miles.

4 years after the hut was opened the A.C.C. 1931 camp was held near Eagle Eyrie at the head of Prospector's Valley, and the hut saw considerable use by climbing parties intent on climbing the peaks accessible to it. In the succeeding years both the hut and the trail leading to it have suffered the ravages of time. As the lower portion of the trail closely parallels the tributary stream which descends past the hut it has become considerably washed out, while higher up it is indistinct through downed timber and new growth. Around 1949 a windstorm hit the area and blew down many trees on the ledge upon which the hut stands. Unfortunately one of these trees hit the hut itself, knocking it slightly askew and rendering it no longer rat-proof. Major repairs were not feasible and so the hut has languished on in this state, being visited by infrequent parties who wish (as the original hut committee recommended) to get "off the beaten track".

John P. Manry

WOLVES MAKE A COMEBACK

(from The Mountain Guide 84/85)

Long misunderstood, the wolf has often been subjected to man's harsh judgements. As early as 1859 wolves were poisoned by fur traders. By 1896 they were already considered uncommon. They were killed in Banff National Park during a rabies control program in the early 1950's. By 1953, it was estimated that there were a mere four survivors in the park.

Since then attitudes have changed dramatically. Today the wolf is recognized by wildlife experts as an integral part of the natural ecosystem. Like the eagle, the coyote and man himself, the wolf's role as predator is to help keep the numbers of prey species--such as elk, moose and deer--from becoming so numerous that they destroy their food supply and in turn ruin the very habitat that supports them.

In national parks, wolves are protected, as are all other animals.

The population growth of the wolf is slow but packs have been sighted in many of the river valleys of Banff National Park. Even today, wolves are far more common in Jasper than in Banff.

Though now safe in the national parks, wolf hunting circuits often take the animals beyond park boundaries where they may be killed by hunters or become subject to provincial predator controls.

SOME JOKES

TWO RAMBLERS were hot and very thirsty as they walked across the moors. They thankfully sighted a remote farm with the word "Teas" displayed on the front.

The farmer was standing by the gate as they approached. "Tea for four please", they clamoured.

"Nay, we don't make teas."

"But it says that you do."

"That were't t' chap as lived here afore."

"Oh! well you must get it off before Easter and Whitsuntide or you'll be having a constant stream of inquiries."

"Ah know, we had last year and t' year afore."

"The Dalesman" February '85

WHINE AND ROSES

On a backpacking trip on the Loyalsock Trail in Pennsylvania, I saw two revelatory entries in the trail register.

Joanne Osgood: I have blisters on my feet, my shoulders are sore, my back hurts, we got lost, we saw a bear, it rained all night and I'm soaking wet.

Peter Osgood: Great trip--except for Joanne.

Andrew J. Ryan
"Reader's Digest" December 1984

A TRAIL GOODY

MAGIC BARS

½ cup butter or margarine
1½ cups graham cracker crumbs
1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
1 (6 oz.) package semi-sweet chocolate morsels
1 cup chopped nuts

Preheat oven to 350 (325 for glass dish). In 13"x 9" baking pan, melt butter in oven. Sprinkle crumbs over butter; mix together and press into pan evenly. Pour sweetened condensed milk evenly over crumbs. Top evenly with chocolate bits and then nuts. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool thoroughly before cutting. Store loosely covered at room temperature.

Joan Diblin
San Francisco

Submitted by Wally Drew

ADVERT

Muller Kite Ltd. of Cochrane would like to let you know that they have kites for you to fly. If interested phone: Muller Kite Ltd. 250-2343 or 932-6760

And think about pollution sometimes fellow Ramblers! There was a fellow in L.A. at one time who went on vacation to a mountain resort. When he came back his colleagues asked him how was your holiday? Really good he said. There was only one thing that bothered me throughout that time,

Breathing all that air I could not see!

Wllf