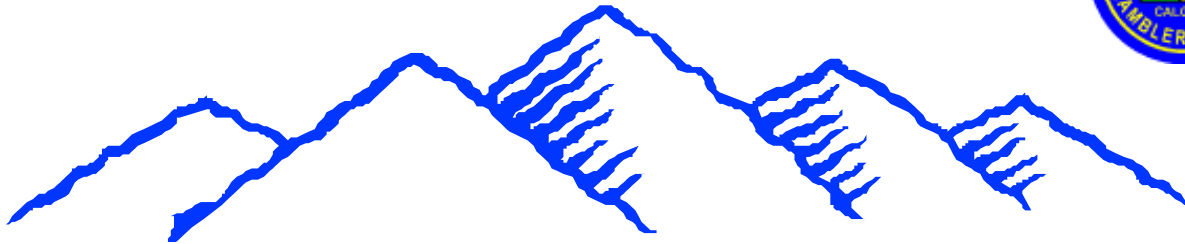


The PackRat



November/December 2005



PHOTO CREDIT BERNARD MULLER

Ramblers gather at the Cat Creek recreation area for a great pot luck wiener roast after a hike to Cat Creek Hills.

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The Packrat is published six times a year by the Rocky Mountain Ramblers Association. We welcome comments, articles, and ideas from our members and, if content is deemed suitable, will be used as space permits.

Email submissions to the newsletter editor at packrat@ramblers.ab.ca or forward contributions to RMRA, c/o Calgary Area Outdoor Council, 1111 Memorial Drive NW, Calgary, AB T2N 3E4.

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President's Report...

AS WE APPROACH the end of another year for the Ramblers, I am happy to report that the club is in good fiscal shape and in great spirits. Lots of activity entertained our membership that remains at the 350 mark. Over 370 trips were called of varying degrees of difficulty, several social events occurred and lots of programs were put on for the membership. We were able to subsidize members in their course endeavors and also we were able to some upgrades for our internet site..

This year we participated in the Alberta Centennial Mountain Expedition by hiking several mountains. We were part of the 100 plus peaks who now have the new Canister and registry book in place. Trip reports and plenty of pictures can be found on their web site at climbalberta.com.

The Wednesday night meeting format continues to change and evolve. We changed our approach to the meeting format as a result of a request from last year's AGM. The change was to hold the programs first at 7:30 pm and the regular meeting later at 8:15 pm. This was better for our presenters as they knew exactly when their portion was to start. We recently used a Wednesday night to hold a wilderness first aid course. The cost of the course was reduced because the Ramblers supplied the hall. We even had a few social nights with no regular meeting, just a social. We are trying new and different meeting formats and the members are

encouraged to provide feedback about the Wed night formats.

The concept of volunteers is what allows a club to be very successful. Volunteers help control costs as well as ensure that the events are a success.

Thank you to all the volunteers that took the time, at the end of the meetings, to sweep the floor as this helps control costs for the hall.

Thanks to all the committees who volunteered their time. Committees such as the safety committee, the web committee, the membership assistants, the newsletter committee and the various committees that have assisted for our many social events. Committees help reduce the workload by sharing the task at hand. We all appreciate your time.

Thanks to the trip announcers for running the regular meetings. It has proven valuable to have a number of people capable of setting up and running the regular meetings.

Special thanks to the coordinators, the heart of the club, for taking time to call and coordinate trips throughout the year.

And finally, thanks to the executive who take care of the necessary endeavors that make a club run smoothly.

Do not forget the Christmas potluck on Wednesday, December 7, 2005. We use this event to hand out the Rammies (Certificate of Recognition) and the pins (cumulative trips since the year 2000). Come on out and enjoy a great

evening and have fun seeing these awards being handed out.

Special Note: Please check your personal information on the web and update it, especially your email. Thanks.

REMINDER

**Deadline
for next PackRat
December 30, 2005**

Important New Legislation

WHAT MOTORISTS need to know about new laws for safely passing emergency vehicles, tow trucks and construction zones.

Effective October 31, 2005, new legislation makes it safer for police officers, firefighters, ambulance workers, tow truck operators and construction workers on Alberta's roads.

Motorists must slow to 60 km/h, or less if the posted speed is lower, when passing emergency vehicles or tow trucks stopped with their lights flashing. **Fines for speeding in these areas will be doubled.**

In construction zones, motorists must observe the posted speed. When workers are present, **fines for speeding in these areas will be doubled.**

For more information on this legislation, call toll-free 310-0000 then dial 7880-427-8901, or visit infra.gov.ab.ca.

WATERCOLOUR SHOWINGS

*You are invited to attend an
exhibition/sale of my watercolour paintings:*

- **Calgary Waldorf School Christmas Faire**
November 19 (10:00 AM – 5:00 PM)
- **Husky Christmas Craft Fair**
November 22, 23, 24 (11:00 AM – 2:00 PM)
- **Bragg Creek Christmas Market**
December 3 (10:00 AM - 4:00 PM)

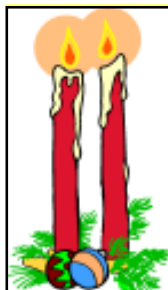
Details found on: www.members.shaw.ca/naturalimpressions

For more information, please call Annette LeFaive
286-8588 or email amlefaive@shaw.ca
(Viewing by appointment also possible.)

Rocky Mountain Ramblers Dinner & Dance

ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, Ramblers dined and danced the hours away at the Calgary Winter Club. Thanks to all who supported this event—you made it a success! A special thanks to Jim P. for being the MC again this year and those who donated door prizes: Campers Village, Forzani Group, Coast Mountain, Sport Swap, Wally D., David M., Ron H., Dorothy-Ann R., and Irene W. Annette L. donated the prize for the fun awards that will be given away at the Christmas potluck dinner (the suspense builds).

The dinner was a buffet with lots of food: chicken, ham, Assorted vegetables and salads and, of course, desserts. If you thought Ramblers exhibited fine co-ordination and motor skills in the mountains, you should see them on the dance floor! There were some fabulous turns and dips, feats of agility that would amaze the Cirque du Soleil, a large contingent of chicken dancers strutting and clucking and many of Rasputin's friends showing their prowess at Russian dancing! Tom Flanagan valiantly tried to herd us all in one direction during the line dances. For proof of a good time, see the last page of the newsletter.



Christmas Pot Luck December 7 at 7:00 PM

Please bring an appetizer, main course item or dessert sufficient for six servings, plus a plate, cutlery, cup and/or glass. Coffee or tea will be available at the hall.

Trips Director Annual Report...

Activities

Hiking, Backpacking,
Skiing, Cycling,
Climbing,
Scrambling,
Mountaineering, Education
& Awareness
Programs, Social
Functions

Meetings

Every Wednesday
evening at 7:30 p.m.

Mail

Rocky Mountain Ramblers
Association
c/o Calgary Area Outdoor
Council (CAOC)
1111 Memorial Dr NW
Calgary, AB T2N 3E4

Trip Info

282-6308 Information
Line and at Meetings

Website

The Packrat is available on
the RMRA website at
www.ramblers.ab.ca. If
we have your email ad-
dress, you will be auto-
matically notified that an
electronic copy of the
Packrat is on the website.

FOR YEAR 2004/2005, the Rocky Mountain Ramblers have continued their tradition of offering exceptional value, excellent trips, challenging destinations and wonderful camaraderie to the membership. And again, we have experienced growth in official trips, trip days, and person days while remaining constant in average trip participation and average trip difficulty.

In the past year a total of 377 trips went out for an increase of 5% over 2003/2004. Participation was high with a total of 3,370 person days representing an increase of 15% over 2003/2004. Summer trips increased by a modest 2.4% but winter trips were up by 18% with snowshoeing showing an increase in participation of 2480% and trip days of 2600%. While cross-country skiing showed a modest decline in activity, snowshoeing and downhill skiing are on the increase. Clearly, a summer hiking club is re-discovering a viable winter hiking activity.

We have increased our corps of coordinators with Norman, Greg, Yolande, John, Aldis, and Cornelis all moving up to full coordinator status. Brenda, Jennifer and Dave have recently been nominated as probationary coordinators.

The Ramblers are a volunteer based organization and without volunteers there would be no social events, no newsletter, no programs, no meetings and no trips.

With regard to trips, some coordinators have been particularly

busy and deserve special mention. Thirteen coordinators took out ten or more trips in the past year and six coordinators took out 20 or more trips. Those six coordinators were: Carl, Jim, Ivan, Alistair, David, and Allan, with Carl, Jim, and Ivan taking out 30 or more trips.

Carl continued his tradition of being the busiest coordinator with 49 official trips to his credit. Recognition to these busy coordinators will be extended at the Annual Christmas Potluck Dinner in the form of the coveted Rammy Awards.

Also receiving additional recognition for longer term coordinator activity will be: David, Ron, Ivan, Bernie, Christine, and Jim receiving bronze pins for taking out more than 50 trips since October 1, 2000 and Carl receiving the gold pin for taking out more than 150 trips since October 1, 2000.

The year 2005 was a momentous occasion in the history of our province as Alberta celebrated her 100th anniversary. The Alberta Centennial Mountain Expeditions project to summit 100 of Alberta's peaks was of particular interest to the Rocky Mountain Ramblers.

Having been active in a similar initiative some 25 years earlier to celebrate Alberta's 75th anniversary by summiting 75 of Alberta's peaks, Ramblers, under the stewardship of Tony, were eager to participate in this year's project. In all, Ramblers were active participants in the successful ascents of eight Alberta peaks: Mount Baldy; Mount Allan;

Crowsnest Mountain; Mount Richardson; Mount Cory, Big Sister; Oyster Peak and Mount Bogart. Special thanks to the coordinators and the trip participants who celebrated our province's birthday with this outstanding effort.

I have very much enjoyed my year as Rocky Mountain Ramblers Trips Director, so much so that I have decided to stay on for another year. I have also enjoyed working with and receiving the support of the outgoing executive. I am looking forward to another outstanding year of serving as a member of the incoming executive.

My year as Trips Director has been made much easier by the participation of the following coordinators who volunteered for two-month stints as Trips Announcer: Philip, Dave, Greg, Doug, and Allan.

For the upcoming year, I will be assisted by the following volunteer Trips Announcers: Ron (Nov/Dec); Dave (Jan/Feb); Doug (Mar/Apr); Greg (May/June); Philip (July/Aug); and Christine (Sept/Oct).

I urge all members of the Rocky Mountain Ramblers to participate in and to enjoy the extensive program of winter and summer activities to be offered by our coordinators over the next year. I also encourage you to prepare yourself accordingly for the activities you choose to participate in. Wear the proper clothing, carry the gear appropriate for your chosen activity and accept a part of the responsibility for the success of the trip.

Please remember, the trip coordinators are not guides or gurus.

They are volunteers who put in a significant amount time planning the trips you enjoy. They are deserving of your support and your thanks for the job that they do.



PACKRAT ADVERTISING RATES

The Club offers advertising space in PackRat and the following rates apply:

Quarter Page	\$10
Half Page	\$20
Full Page	\$40

Payment **MUST** be received prior to publication.

Riots, Mummies, Earthquakes & Volcanoes

By Ron Mason

AFTER RECOVERING FROM our Patagonian marathon, (see Packrat issue for July/August) with a few days in the fleshpots of Santiago, we took a flight north to Quito, capital of Ecuador. Being new in town, it took several attempts to get a taxi downtown. We soon realized this was because of riots and demonstrations. Our driver tried valiantly to get us into the town centre but after meeting many riot police, barbed wire barricades and burning tires we decided to retreat. We were dropped off at a quiet park but in no time, it was full of rioters and police firing tear gas. We retreated to our hotel. Not long after, I went out to send an email and was greeted by another whiff of tear gas.

Next day, the riots had quietened down somewhat and we were able to see a little of this interesting city. We joined up with our tour group and left Quito the next day for a bus journey across the

double chain of volcanoes that are the backbone of Ecuador. After crossing a pass at just over 4,000 m we descended to the jungle headwaters of the Amazon at about 500 m elevation. From the bus, we took a large powered dug-out canoe to a jungle lodge—our home for a few days. There we went swimming (no piranhas or alligators!), floating down river on tubes, walking in the forest, playing soccer on the beach and drinking vast quantities of beer to keep hydrated.

Next stop was at the beautiful town of Banos, at the foot of an active volcano, Tungurahua. This volcano had last erupted in 2000 and although the town was evacuated, it was not damaged. I hiked about half way up through fertile fields and greenhouses but there was not even a puff of smoke to be seen.

The next bus continued south and we stayed in the beautiful city

of Cuenca before continuing to the Peruvian border. There we had to walk across the no-man's land through customs to a new bus. This took us to Mancora, a popular surfing resort where we were accommodated in a hotel right on the beach. Although we were still in the tropics, the temperature was comfortable because of a cool breeze from the Pacific Ocean. In spite of the big waves, the local fishermen went out alone on balsawood rafts (only about 2-1/2 m long and less than a metre wide).

Continuing south along the coast, we came to some of the



most interesting parts of the trip. The Inca civilization is well known but I knew nothing about their predecessors living on the Peruvian coast and many recent discoveries have been made. Our first visit was to a very new museum dedicated to the display of the contents of a Moche tomb of about 500 AD. This is reportedly the only intact tomb of its kind discovered since Tutankhamun and contained magnificent gold jewellery as well as the well-preserved mummies. Close by were huge mud brick pyramids with colourful friezes and a "Mud City" with walls up to eight metres high decorated with bas relief.

Continuing down the coast to Lima, we were fortunate to arrive on the Cinco Mayo, the most important festival in many S. American countries. We were able to enjoy the amazing parades of colourful dancers and musicians. Next stop was Pisco—a miserable town to have provided such a delicious national drink. I arrived in Nazca with great anticipation of a flight over the Nazca lines—made famous by Van Daniken's stories of alien landing sites. However, we got rather more than we expected. As we waited for the flight at the hotel, there was an incredible noise and shaking and everything went blurry for a few seconds. Then it was quiet. We had experienced a 3.5 earthquake—fortunately there was no damage. Soon after we flew over the desert marvelling at the multitude of geometric figures and shapes of hummingbirds, monkeys, *spacemen* and many others. I guess the earthquake could have been the aliens landing but we didn't see them.

Leaving the coast behind, we climbed back up into the mountains to Arequipa, where we were extremely fortunate to see *The Ice Maiden* in the local museum. Juanita's mummified remains were found on top of a volcano at 6,500 m where she had been sacrificed about 500 years ago. Usually she is travelling the world for scientific study.

Climbing higher into the mountains we reached Cusco, the previous Inca capital at an altitude of 3,300 m. Although this is very much a tourist city, it is still a great place to explore. There is



not much left of the original Inca city but there are lots of interesting ruins in the immediate surroundings. Of course, the main attraction is Machu Picchu, a few hours away by train. The classic way to approach is by a 3-day trek along the Inca Trail, but I was prevented from doing this by an attack of the *Inca's Revenge*. However, I was able to explore the site itself and even climb an impossible looking peak beside it. This was only possible because the Incas had built steps up most of the way and built a temple on top. They appear to have carved stone as if it was styrofoam the way huge pieces were fitted together so accurately.

I was reluctant to leave, but we had to catch the train back to Cusco for our next destination was Lake Titicaca at an elevation of 3820 m. The border between Peru and Bolivia runs across the Lake and the local joke is that Peru gets the titi and Bolivia gets the caca. Our group (about ten people) took a boat to a small island where we were dropped off to hike up to a village for lunch, and were then picked up at the other end of the island. The boat took us to another island where we were billeted with a local family for the night. Two of us climbed to the highest point in the gathering darkness, guided by two young

boys about eight years old. After supper the locals laid on a great dance party with dancing indoors and out to wonderful flute and drum music.

We were coming to the end of our journey with a bus ride into Bolivia to La Paz. We found there were riots in the city, and we might have trouble getting out of the country if the airport was closed. It so happened that the next day was the most important festival in the city and the protesters agreed

to have a truce and let the parade go on. We were fortunate to spend the whole day watching the bands and dancers go all around the city and with help of our guide and hotel porters, we escaped to the airport with a minimum of fuss.

It was somewhat of a relief to settle back into an airline seat. Our journey had ended as we started—with riots and demonstrations. The next day the airport was closed. We were already thinking where would we travel next?

**Don't forget to renew
your membership
before year end.
The expiry date is
November 30/05.
The membership fee
for 2005-2006
is \$25.**



THE APEIRON SOCIETY FOR THE PRACTICE OF PHILOSOPHY

This is the Society's 19th year of philosophical seminars and discussion.
All who are interested in the practice of philosophy in everyday life are welcome.

This Year's Theme: **"Questions of Nature and Philosophy"** Residual Program Fall 2005

Nov 1	Philip Currie (Department of Biological Sciences, University of Alberta) <i>Controversies in Dinosaur Studies: Fur, Feathers, Hot Blood and Extinction</i>		
Nov 15	Jesse Hendrikse (Department of Philosophy, U of C) <i>Genes and Environments: Why the Nature/Nurture Debate Won't Go Away</i>		
Nov 29	Kevin Gunn (Innovation Coordinator, SAIT; Executive Director EnerVision) <i>Eco Urban Design</i>		
Dec 13	Marc Ereshefsky (Professor of Philosophy, University of Calgary) <i>Where the Wild Things Are: Environmental Philosophy and Human Nature</i>		
Jan to Apr 2006	The Winter 2006 Program will be out in shortly with a continuation of the Nature and Philosophy theme.		
*7-8 May 2006 *tentative date	Weekend Symposium at the U of C Kananaskis Field Station - Topic TBD		
Meetings	7:00 to 9:30 p.m. at the Scandinavian Centre, 739-20th Ave. N.W.		
Format	45 minute talk followed by refreshments and then a lively Q&A session		
Membership	Annual membership: \$30	1 January to 31 August: \$15	
Entrance fee	Members and first visits: \$3	Students and Seniors \$5	Non-members: \$7
Contacts & Information	http://members.shaw.ca/blenander/Apeiron/Apeiron.html	Laszlo @ 252-7332	Fred @ 284-0997

A Tribute to Phil Spaulding

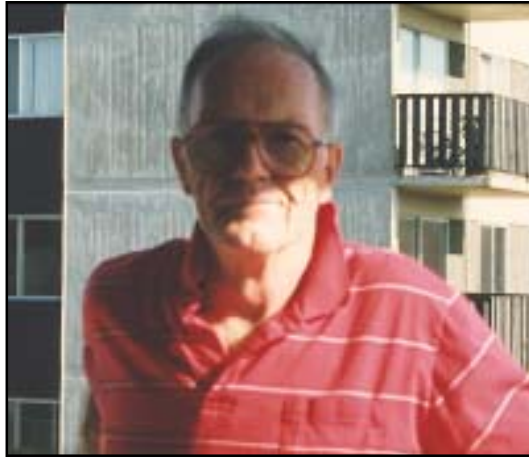
1922-2005

Phil came to Ramblers in early 1990 after more than 35 years as a researcher and teacher of Anthropology. He loved hiking and skiing and Ramblers offered lots of both so he spent the next 10 years enjoying the mountains and foothills and enjoying the company of like-minded outdoors people. As much as he loved the hiking and skiing, he loved even more the chance to discuss, to question, and, yes, to argue, about all manner of issues. He read widely and was full of curiosity about the world around him.

Phil was born in Burlington, Vermont, the second son of a wealthy man whose skills included playing golf and the stock market. His mother died soon after his birth but his father married again and this new wife was much loved by Phil. The easy life ended with the '29 market crash and the family turned to farming.

Phil joined the U.S. Navy in December 1941, ending his naval career as Boatswain's mate PO Second Class. He was part of the landing force at Normandy. After the war, he was encouraged to get an education and so he returned to school to eventually graduate with a BA and MA in Anthropology.

His greatest fascination in his work was the Aboriginal people. His BA degree came from the University of Alaska where he must have become interested in the



Aleut people because he did his Master's thesis on them and returned many years later with his second wife, Donna, to do further fieldwork.

He came to the University of Calgary in 1968 where he taught and did research for the next 20 years, retiring in 1988. Very much respected and admired for his field studies and his teaching, Phil was always prepared to listen to his students' ideas. His work with the Metis Indians of northern Saskatchewan led to his authorship of a text on Native culture still used by today's students.

Phil must have been one of the original Mr. Fix-it men. He had to build, rebuild, renovate, everywhere that he lived. Probably the only place that escaped his remodeling was the apartment he lived in for the few years around his retirement and early post-retirement time. While teaching full-time, he decided to put a second storey on his bungalow in NW Calgary. Later, he maintained that it was this rebuilding that was a major factor in the end

of his second marriage. When the house was finally sold to new owners in the mid-90s, he was more than a little disappointed when the new people decided to have the entire house remodeled professionally.

He bought a home near the Cranbrook airport and moved there in January, 2000, driving his truck and hauling a trailer filled with furniture through stormy weather and icy roads. When Phil decided to do something, he just went ahead and did it. So waiting for better weather would never have occurred to him.

In 2004, he moved to an acreage about 80 km south of Cranbrook near Kingsgate, close to the U.S. border. It was a beautiful location on the banks of the Moyie River, nestled among large evergreens, where the deer would come to graze close to his back door. He liked to call it "Just Heaven".

It was while living here that he was diagnosed with cancer in April of this year. His eldest daughter, Kate, undertook to help care for him, most of the time in his own home. In late August, she and her husband took him to their home in Northern California where he died August 26.

Phil was a man full of energy who had a great zest for life. He hated pretension and always saw through sham. He respected honesty. He had a temper but he also had a marvellous sense of humour. He loved nature, music, hiking, skiing. He was eccentric, lively and interesting. He was a Rambler.

I'm Not Old, I'm Just Mature...

Today at the drugstore, the clerk was a gent.
From my purchase this chap took off 10 percent.
I asked for the cause of a lesser amount;
And he answered, "Because of the Seniors Discount."
I went to McDonald's for a burger and fries;
And there, once again, got quite a surprise.
The clerk poured some coffee which he handed to me.
He said, "For you seniors, the coffee is free."
Understand – I'm not old – I'm merely mature;
But some things are changing, temporarily, I'm sure.
The newspaper print gets smaller each day,
And people speak softer – can't hear what they say.
My teeth are my own (I have the receipt),
and my glasses identify people I meet.
Oh, I've slowed down a bit...not a lot, I am sure.
You see, I'm not old...I'm only mature.
My friends all get older...much faster than me.
They seem much more wrinkled, from what I can see.
I've got "character lines," not wrinkles...for sure,
But don't call me old...just call me mature.
The steps in the houses they're building today
Are so high that they take...your breath all away;
And the streets are much steeper than 10 years ago.
That should explain why my walking is slow.
But I'm keeping up on what's hip and what's new,
And I think I can still dance a mean boogaloo.
I'm still in the running ...in this I'm secure,
I'm not really old...I'm only mature.

Author Unknown

Travel Stories Wanted!

Got a great adventure to share? I am always looking for stories to feature in the Packrat. Send me yours to packrat@ramblers.ab.ca



***"Man cannot discover
new oceans unless he
has the courage to lose
sight of the shore."***

Andre Gide

Scenes from the Annual Dinner & Dance

