

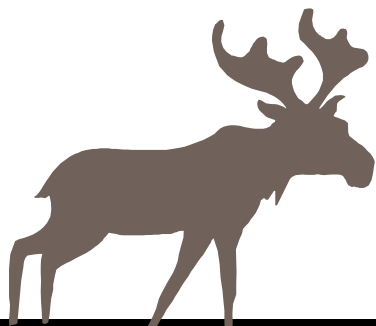
The PackRat

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2006



Views of the rocky towers of the Liberty Bell and Early Winters Spires



WHAT'S INSIDE?

Hiking in the North Cascades	2
Christmas Trivia	5
Holiday Humor	6
Legend of Christmas Gifts	6

**RMRA
Executive Committee**

President

Tom Flanagan
president@ramblers.ab.ca

Vice President

Anita O'Reilly
vicepresident@ramblers.ab.ca

Treasurer

Laszlo Jamniczky
treasurer@ramblers.ab.ca

Secretary

Linda Eastwood
secretary@ramblers.ab.ca

Trips Director

Ron Hunter
trips@ramblers.ab.ca

Program Director

Jim Paterson
programs@ramblers.ab.ca

Social Director

Barbara Mitchell
socialdirector@ramblers.ab.ca

Membership

Dorothy-Ann
membership@ramblers.ab.ca

Newsletter Editor

Irene Willett
packrat@ramblers.ab.ca

Past President

Allan Mathies
pastpresident@ramblers.ab.ca

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.

E-mail 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.

Copyright 2006 by the Rocky Mountain Ramblers Association.

Hiking in the North Cascades, Washington State

by Ron H.

A group of seven went on a mostly car camping trip in mid-July to hike some trails in and around North Cascades National Park. The park is located in Washington State just south of Manning Park in British Columbia, with access via State Highway 20 which parallels the Canadian border across much of Washington.

Our initial goal was to convene at Pearrygin State Park near Winthrop as it provided a convenient base for hikes on the eastern side of the Cascades, with the added amenities of a lake and showers. We were fortunate to reserve a couple of spots as it is very popular, especially on weekends.

Five departed Calgary on Friday and two on Saturday via the sleepy border crossing at Nelway, BC to access State Highway 20. It is shown on maps as a "scenic highway" but a lot of it was a scenic view of trees. The group of five went in three cars and swapped around passengers from time to time.

However, at one point when they reconvened it was found that Christine was not in any of the cars as the drivers thought she was in one of the other cars. Fortunately, this was discovered after having driven only a few miles.

An overnight stop was required en route, however both groups found that accommodation was not easily available in

small town Washington on a busy summer weekend. On Saturday the town of Republic was completely booked for a funeral, a wedding and a family reunion.

Carolyn had picked up a "Don't Waste Your Time" guidebook which allowed us to select some good hikes to try out. This and other guide books had warned some of the hikes were often impassable until late July account lingering snow, but this year's hot weather meant snow was not to be a problem.

The group of five headed up Twisp Pass on Sunday for a fairly long day. The weather was sunny and hot with lots of flowers in the meadows. The only drawback was that biting insects were very prevalent any time a stop was made. On the return a steep descending bushwack was undertaken to make a loop out of the hike. Unfortunately, the rough terrain and vegetation covering the rocks led to Jean injuring her knee on the climb down.

The next two days involved hikes in the Washington Pass area, the high point of Highway 20 at 1669 metres. While there are many trails in the North Cascades, they often involve large vertical gains through forest to finally get to the alpine areas. In some cases there is gravel road access to the trailhead, but these are often narrow and rough, requiring 4-wheel drive vehicles. Fortunately

Heather Pass loop starts at a high trailhead on the highway so we gained the flowery meadows (with lots of pink heather) in a relatively short time on an

The next day we came back and hiked to nearby Blue Lake, a fairly short hike of an hour & a half to an alpine lake. On the way up there are views of the

up the evening before. The Forest Service campsite was beautiful although we had to bring in drinking water. The pit toilets were actually quite nice



excellent trail. This was also an alpine larch tree area, as the Cascades are the other North American location of this tree. Views of the surrounding peaks were quite scenic.

With the snow only recently melted we observed a profusion of flowers, many of which we had not seen in the Canadian Rockies, e.g. red columbine. A bonus was a lack of the previous day's flies or mosquitoes, which were not an issue for the rest of the trip (guide books note they can be a summer problem).

rocky towers of the Liberty Bell and Early Winters Spires.

The hot sun meant the toughie in the group (Carolyn) took a swim despite the fact the far end of the lake still had a snow slope plunging into the lake.

The following day we shifted location to the west (and usually wetter) side of the Cascades at a campsite a few miles up the Cascade River. En route we dropped off Christine & Bob to do a three day backpack for which a car shuttle had been set

for a semi-wilderness location. The dense forest of huge trees festooned with moss attested to the heavy rainfall that this area receives.

After setting up camp we did a short hike to Mount Sauk. It has a good gravel access road to the tree line from where a switchback trail through lush meadows accesses a ridge with fine views of Mount Baker to the northwest and the main Cascades to the east. Definitely a worthwhile trip when time is at a premium, with more alpine

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,
Website, and at Meetings.

Website

The Packrat is available on the
RMRA website at
www.ramblers.ab.ca.

If we have your email address,
you will be automatically notified
that an electronic copy of the
Packrat is on the website.



flowers than we could count.

Next up was one of the most popular hikes, Cascades Pass. We followed the Cascade River up to the trail head from which the trail switchbacks 36 times through the forest before traversing to the pass. On a hot day the big trees provided some relief from the beating sun. Not content to stop at the pass, we continued on the trail up a ridge called Sahale Arm where the views just got better. Although the trail continues to the Sahale Glacier, on this hot day we plunked down for lunch and viewed it from afar.

A number of backpackers were continuing on to a campground near the glacier, taking advantage of the ideal conditions.

The last hiking day we had planned to go to Hidden Lake, a trip that involved over 1,000 metres of vertical, but given the heat we decided to just do touristy walks in the area.

When the temperature peaked at over 100°F. later in the day we were happy with our decision. In search of relief we went for brief dips in the glacial fed Cascade River, which was refreshing on this day.

Overall a great trip with good weather being a key. In wetter conditions the views would have been lost and the trails slick, although most were well graded to National Parks standards.

TWISP PASS (6,100 ft): 2,400' vertical, 9 miles

HEATHER & MAPLE PASS (6,600 ft): 1,950', 7 miles.

Trailhead: Rainy Pass

BLUE LAKE (6,300 ft):
1,100', 4.4 miles

SAUK MOUNTAIN (5,537 ft):
1,200', 4.0 miles

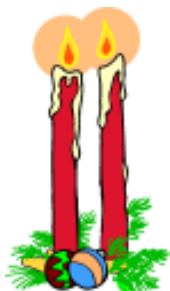
CASCADE PASS (5,400 ft)/
SAHALE ARM: 6 miles, 1,740' to pass; 2,940' to Sahale camp

**THE APEIRON SOCIETY
FOR THE PRACTICE OF PHILOSOPHY**

This is the Society's 20th year of philosophical seminars and discussions. All who are interested in the practice of philosophy in everyday life are welcome. This year's theme is: "Freedom and Identity"

PROGRAM FOR THE FALL OF 2006

December 05	Richard Bickley (Psychologist) Topic TBA		
Meetings	7:30 pm sharp, at the Scandinavian Centre, 739-20 Avenue NW		
Membership	Annual: \$30	1 Jan to 31 Aug: \$15	
Entrance Fee	Members & 1st Visits: \$3	Students & Seniors: \$5	Non-Members: \$7
Contacts & Info	www.ApeironSociety.org	Laszlo @ 252-7332	Jerry @ 202-1671



**Christmas Pot Luck
December 6 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.

WATER COLOUR SHOWINGS

**SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 25, 2006**
Calgary Waldorf School Christmas
Faire (10 - 5)
515 Cougar Ridge Drive SW
(behind the COP ski jump)

**SATURDAY
DECEMBER 9, 2006**
Christmas in the Creek Market
Bragg Creek Community Centre
(10 - 4)

WEBSITE : www.members.shaw.ca/naturalimpressions
PHONE: Annette Le Faive 286-8588
EMAIL : amlefaive@shaw.ca

Viewing by Appointment Welcomed

Don't forget to renew your membership before year end. The expiry date is November 30/06.

The membership fee for 2006-2007 is \$25.

*Welcome
New Members*

Gary Newhouse

Rhoda Trehearne



MISTLETOE

Mistletoe was used by Druid priests 200 years before the birth of Christ in their winter celebrations. They revered the plant since it had no roots yet remained green during the cold

A Little Christmas Trivia

DIDJA KNOW?...

Christmas Cards



The custom of sending Christmas cards started in Britain in 1840 when the first 'Penny Post' public postal deliveries began. (Helped by the new railway system, the public postal service was the 19th century's communication revolution, just as email is for us today.) As printing methods improved, Christmas cards were produced in large numbers from about 1860. They became even more popular in Britain when a card could be posted in an unsealed envelope for one half-penny (half the price of an ordinary letter). Traditionally, Christmas cards showed religious pictures. Today, pictures are often jokes, winter pictures, Father Christmas, or romantic scenes of life in past times.

Celtics believed mistletoe to have magical healing powers and used it as an antidote for poison, infertility, and to ward off evil spirits. The plant was also seen as a symbol of peace, and it is said that among Romans, enemies who met under mistletoe would lay down their weapons and embrace. Scandinavians associated the plant with Frigga, their goddess of love, and it may be from this that we derive the custom of kissing under the mistletoe. Those who kissed under the mistletoe had the promise of happiness and good luck in the following year.



Dinner & Dance Event

Social Director, Barb, reports that the recent dinner and dance event was again successful and an enjoyable evening of good food and fun at the Winter Club.

Special thanks and appreciation go to those who donated draw prizes.

Sport Swap
Ron Hunter
Wally Drew

Mountain Equipment Co-op

Holiday Humor

What is the difference between the Christmas alphabet and the ordinary alphabet?

The Christmas alphabet has No L (Noel).

What Christmas Carol is a favourite of parents?

Silent Night.

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?

Frostbite.

What do you get when you cross an archer with a gift-wraper?

Ribbon hood.

What do you have in December that you don't have in any other month?

The letter "D".

Where does Frosty the Snowman keep his money?

In a snow bank.

How does Santa Claus take pictures?

With a North Pole-roid camera.

What happens when Frosty the snowman gets dandruff?

He gets snowflakes.

Legend of Christmas Gifts

The tradition of giving gifts has many roots; however, the most widely accepted one evolved from the story of St. Nicholas, a bishop, who was born in Turkey. The story goes that he had heard of a family with three daughters all over marriageable age who were unable to wed as they had no dowry. St. Nicholas had to give up all of his worldly possessions to become a bishop so he took three bags of gold coins and dropped them down the chimney. The coins landed in the girls stockings which had been hung to dry on the fireplace. St. Nicholas was caught in the act by their father whom St. Nicholas begged to keep his secret, however, barely two days later the entire village learned of the gifts.



Don't Forget!

**Deadline
for next PackRat
December 29, 2006**