



The Kootenay Mountaineer

The newsletter for people with year-round pursuits.

June 30, 2012

KMC Library

The KMC library is now domiciled at Doug Clark's residence in Castlegar. To arrange borrowing any of the collection email Doug (dsc49@hotmail.com).

The collection list is available through this link:

http://www.kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca/library_holdings.pdf

Message from the Editor

As a reminder to all those receiving the newsletter electronically, the current membership list is always available at [KMC membership list](#).

The current trip schedule is available at [KMC Summer schedule](#).

Trip Reports

KMC Hiking Camp II—Hume Creek 2011

Memento on a Mountain

by Graham Kenyon

There's the needle in the haystack and there's the memento left on a mountain. The needle is a metaphor, but in this story the memento was real, though the finding just as unlikely.

Just imagine, hiking along a ridge towards one of those Purcell peaks crumbling into a rubble of rocks, like any of the hundreds of others ranking off in all directions as far as the eye can see. A splendid scene when viewed as a whole, but, close up, one rock looks pretty much like any of the billion others, a place to walk with some caution, to watch for the precarious, the slip, the roll, the fall. But amid the monotone of grey a flash of white catches the eye, way down the slope beside the ridge, a tiny something sticking out from under a rock. Curiosity overcomes momentum; check it out; what on earth is this?

Leon Arishenkoff had found the needle in the haystack.

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Submission deadline for the next issue is
September 16, 2012

Article submission guidelines:

Plain text is great.

No need for PDF or Microsoft Word files.

Simply cut and paste your text into your email and send to newsletter@kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca. Attach your full resolution photos to the email.

LOTS OF PHOTOS, PLEASE!!

It happened at the KMC Hiking Camp II, Hume Creek, 2011. Leon picked up this tiny, plastic pouch, about 2" by 1¼". Inside, a scrap of flimsy, carefully folded paper with the photograph of a man and a message, in French, a little smudged but mostly legible: a short obituary to 'Constant Pharisa, 1997 – 10 years'.

Trip Reports—cont'd

We stumbled with the French, essentially a personal expression of love and regret from *'Ta famille'*, and we speculated on the story of the message being here in this lonely place high in the mountains. Wouldn't it be interesting to find out?



Graham Kenyon photo

Hume Creek Camp—general geographic relevance to finding the memento

This is just what Leon did. The internet is an amazing creature; everything you always wanted to know about anything is inside that black box. In there Leon found Constant Pharisa and where he could write to his family. It took a while, with the language difficulties – French is far from being Leon's native tongue – but he persevered and we now have the story from Constant's daughter Anne-Catherine Pharisa.

The Pharisa's are Swiss. Constant died of cancer in April 1997 at the young age of 51. His passion was skiing and hiking in the mountains, a passion he shared with his family – his wife and three children. In April 2007, on the 10th anniversary of their father's death, the children – now in their 20s and 30s – came to Canada for a heli-skiing holiday with CMH, staying at the Bobbie Burns Lodge. Constant's wife had given each of them a small pouch containing the picture and message, asking them to leave them at a place of their

choosing in the mountains where their Dad would be happiest. That's what they did, each pouch on a different mountain: "... in a nice place close to the top of the mountain, in a little hole in the snow or under a rock, though it was all covered by snow when we left."

Anne-Catherine was amazed that anyone should find any of the pouches four years after they had left them, and she was touched that having done so, Leon would take the time to write and let them know. Leon has an invitation to visit them in Switzerland.

A memento on a mountain; a chance action and a chance encounter; the impossibility of such chances ever converging and culminating in this sharing of distant lives.

"Pour ce 12 avril le reflet de ton etoile brille encore plus fort dans nos coeurs. Ta famille."



Leon (the eagle-eyed finder of the memento) squeezing out 'the last of the summer wine' during the final camp fire evening at Hume Creek Camp. Through disciplined insistence on the measuring cup during the week we somehow found ourselves left with a couple of kegs of wine to consume on that last night. We did consider, very briefly, leaving it for Camp 3, but since Rule 48 (d) iii of the Hiking Camp Regulations expressly forbids the leaving of leftovers, we determined to do our duty and consume the remains. A very pleasant evening was had by all, some more than others.

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Kokanee Park—Proctor Bike Trip May 9, 2012

This trip was to happen May 2nd but was postponed by a week due to poor weather conditions. We cycled from Kokanee Park through Proctor to check out the progress of the Kootenay Lake Village Development. The hiking trail to the lookout was inviting but lunch and cinnamon buns drew us back to Proctor and the

Trip Reports—cont'd

Village Bakery. We were not disappointed with our choice! After our energizing lunch, we had to fight a strong headwind back to the cars and once the bikes were packed, the rain began to fall. The trip was 34-km and took two hours of riding time. The bikers were Miriam Williams, Sandra England, Janice Isaac, Tim Clinton and coordinator Carol Potasnyk.

Spring Skiing at Kokanee April 21—28, 2012

35 mm of rain in 36 hours! That's not supposed to happen during a ski touring week, but it's what we experienced. The snow was already soggy when we went into Kokanee because of temperatures in the lower teens. Very different from the same week last year when we had one of the best powder days ever on April 28th. Oh well... that's spring skiing... unpredictable.

Because of the conditions, it was a week for touring and not yo-yo-ing. Surprisingly, we saw very little avalanche activity. Kevin, the cabin custodian, said that it was a record year for snowfall in Kokanee. We did our beacon practices the "old way" by burying beacons in the snow because those in the beacon-basin were too deep with over 4 metres of snow above them.



Bert and Fred on Kokanee Glacier

Despite the bad snow conditions for skiing, seven peaks were climbed during the week including Mt. John Carter and Sunset. Mt. Robert Smith was climbed, which is not often done in winter. Nansen was climbed, followed by the ridge between Nansen and Giegerich which is a different, but interesting, way

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to ascend Giegerich. The glacier was visited once and two of the Pyramids ascended followed by a descent alongside the Battleship. Some people climbed all seven whilst others did a few less and had easier days.



A fine day—just before the rains came.
View of Battleship and Pyramid in Kokanee

On the heavy downpour day we were mainly cabin bound but I went for a ski to Kokanee pass to test my new RAB jacket made out of EvENT fabric. The jacket worked fine but my pack failed the test and the stuff inside got soaked.

During the heavy rain, ponds had started forming in the snow maybe due to the buried ice crust lower down. In the valley leading to Mt. Robert Smith, it was the first time I had ever seen large ponds formed in tree wells due to the amount of precipitation.



The heavy rain created ponds in the snow!

We all enjoyed the week of good company, great meals, games of O-Hell and getting to the summits. We were...Sue and Bert Port, Linda and Dave Kennedy, Liz and Terry Huxter, Emilee Fanjoy & Fred Thiessen, Vivien Bowers and Eric White, Rita and Ken Holmes (reporter).

Short Ski Traverses—West Kootenay Area

by Sandra McGuinness

This past spring, Doug and I, along with Cindy Walker, spent a couple of days skiing a very scenic ridge-line traverse from Ferguson to Armstrong Lake in the Badshot Range, passing over the summits of both Great Northern Mountain and Mount Thompson. The entire trip, once you skin up from Ferguson is at or above tree-line on terrain ideally suited for travel on skis. That trip got me thinking that, as Doug and I will be (we hope) gone from Canada come next ski traverse season, pulling the details of all the short ski traverses we've done in the area together, might be helpful for people who want to do some of these trips. So here are, in no real order of quality, importance, difficulty or any other adjective, five local ski traverses and a recommendation on one traverse not to do.

Apex Creek to Proctor with ascents of Mount Lasca and Mount Irvine

Distance: 40 km (approximately)

Elevation Gain: 3000 metres

This was one of my favorites as it traverses wild and rarely visited areas of the West Arm Provincial Park. There are some steep slopes along the way, and some unavoidable avalanche terrain. Depending on when you go, ski crampons could be handy. Once you leave the Whitewater slack-country area, you'll be entirely alone, and unlike other routes, there are no clearcuts, no snowcats, no helicopters... just wilderness. Leave a mountain bike (as we did) or one vehicle at the start of Carson Creek FSR in Proctor and then drive up to Whitewater Ski Resort to start the traverse.

Get yourself up to the ridge above the Silver King chair, and either ski/bootpack up the NW ridge of Half Dome or, traverse out into the head of the 5 Mile Creek valley and skin up to the ridge above Kutetl Creek (GR765915, NAD83). Traverse north for about four kilometres to a col on a ridge at GR938783 (NAD83) and descend the north facing slope (corniced) into the valley below. Continue in a north-easterly direction to gain the next ridge line at 2050 metres at GR955795 (NAD83). Make a descending

traverse to the north and gain the ridge at GR951804 (NAD83) above a small tarn. Follow the ridge line north to Mount Lasca. There is good camping by the lake on the south side of Mount Lasca, which is an easy ski ascent from this side.

Drop off the southeast ridge of Mount Lasca (steep and corniced) into an eastern tributary of Midge Creek and ski northeast to a small pass south of Mill Lake at GR988842 (NAD83). From this pass, traverse north-east into another pass at GR998848 (NAD83). Ski due east through this pass and drop down in an easterly direction until you are near the main forks of Midge Creek at about 5,600 feet. Follow the western fork of Midge Creek up to gain the divide between Wilson and Midge Creek at GR045837 (NAD27). Ski north along this divide (steep and wind-rolled in parts) for a couple of kilometres to a high point at GR044847 (NAD27). Find a spot to get through the cornice and enjoy a good north facing run down to a couple of small tarns. Cross over the next ridge-line north to reach a large round lake (GR045866, NAD27) south of Mount Irvine. This a good camp location.

Above the lake, gain the south ridge of Mount Irvine and ski over the summit (steep with wind-rolls) and continue skiing along the north ridge of Mount Irvine until the ridge splits at Proctor Creek. Follow the ridge that runs northeast from this split (the ridge to the east of Proctor Creek and west of Irvine Creek) and follow it until you reach Carson Creek FSR in Proctor. Ski out down the road as far as snow allows.

Kemp Creek Horseshoe with ascents of Mount Kemp, True Blue and Trafalgar Mountains

Distance: 30 km (approximately)

Elevation Gain: 3000 metres (approximately)

This ski traverse allows you to tag three summits including the elusive and hard to reach Trafalgar Mountain. Camping in the larch forest near Trafalgar Mountain is delightful.

Either leave a mountain bike (as we did) or one vehicle at Keen Creek FSR off Hwy 31A west of Kaslo, then drive south of Kaslo to Arena Road (near the airstrip) and follow it for about one kilometre to Bjerkness FSR. This is in the True Blue Recreation Area. Follow Bjerkness FSR for about 2.5 km to a T intersection and

Trip Reports—cont'd

take the right hand fork, drive as far as snow allows. Ski crampons handy.

Ski up Bjerkness FSR until you get to road end at about 3,500 feet near some forks on Kemp Creek. Ski easily up the eastern fork of Kemp Creek and gain the east ridge of True Blue Mountain at 6,500 feet where there is a large flat spot on the ridge (GR028241, NAD27). Ski west over the summit of True Blue Mountain (usual Kootenay wind rolls) to a broad saddle on the ridge above Kemp Creek (GR096236, NAD27). Make a descending traverse (avalanche hazard) to a small tarn that flows into a bigger lake, then skin up, and ski up through larch forest to reach a larger tarn to the northwest of Trafalgar Mountain at about 7,500 feet. There are lots of good campsites in the larch forest around the tarn.

From the tarn, skin west up an easy draw to an 8,000 foot saddle below the west ridge (indistinct) of Trafalgar Mountain. Skin up to this west facing slope (ski crampons could be handy) to the summit plateau. There are three rocky prominences scattered about the summit plateau. I cannot remember which is higher, we went up them all, and all require only a short amount of easy rock scrambling.

Next day, regain the broad saddle above Kemp Creek at GR096236 (NAD27). If you ski north via the small tarn at GR986234, NAD27), you can traverse into the saddle (steep) without having to gain any elevation. Ski down into the head of Kemp Creek (steep) and traverse north for a couple of kilometres at about 6,500 feet towards Mount Kemp. Gain the south ridge of Mount Kemp via an easy draw at GR987256, NAD27), and ski north to the summit of Mount Kemp. Ski down the north ridge of Mount Kemp to pick up Nashton Creek FSR at about 5,500 feet. Ski out down Nashton Creek FSR to Keen Creek FSR and out to your bike or car.

Nakusp Range

Distance: 45 km (approximately)
Elevation Gain: 4000 metres (approximately)

This traverse is a bit longer and follows the full length of the Nakusp Range through beautiful open alpine

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terrain from Rosebery in the south to Wilson Lake in the north. Drive up Wensley Creek FSR from Box Lake as far as snow permits and leave one vehicle (or a bike) at the snow-line then drive south to Rosebery Provincial Park and take West Wilson FSR to where Ranch Creek FSR heads south. Drive as far as snow allows up Ranch Creek FSR and park.

Start the trip by skiing up Ranch Creek FSR to about 4,000 feet where there is a big cutblock. Leave the road here and start following the ridge-crest north which you will ski along for the next several days. The basic idea on this traverse is to follow the height of land north all the way past Summit Peak to Wilson Lake. There are innumerable excellent campsites along the way, and lots of options for route variations. Purists could ski over every prominence along the ridge which would increase the distance, elevation gain and difficulty of the trip.

We followed the ridge-crest north from Ranch Creek FSR all the way to the prominence about one kilometre northwest of point 7243 feet (7,200 feet and GR649559, NAD27). From there, we descended to the west to a broad saddle with two small tarns at GR632569 (NAD27). We skirted the next four high points on the ridge crest on the north side, the only difficulty being a steep climb (avalanche hazard) up to a flat spot on a north-south ridge at GR620583 (NAD27) where we had a very scenic campsite.

From this campsite, we skied through the pass south of Mount Ferrie at GR603583 (NAD27) and traversed southwest to gain the ridge-crest again at 6,650 feet, just south of two small tarns. From this small pass, we stayed on the ridge crest all the way to another camp at two small tarns east of Summit Peak at 6,750 feet.

To exit, ski over Summit Peak and continue down the west ridge until the ridge turns to the north at a pass at GR539592 (NAD27). Ski north along this ridge for about 3.5 km until the ridge forks at GR534618 (NAD27). Ski north down an easy draw through open timber and pick up Harlow Creek West FSR at 5,500 feet. Follow this spur road down to join the main Wensley Creek FSR and ski out to your vehicle.

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Ferguson to Armstrong Lake via Great Northern Mountain and Mount Thompson

Distance: 35 km (approximately)

Elevation Gain: 2400 metres

This is probably the easiest traverse I've ever done yet travels through some incredibly scenic terrain and passes over the summits of two named peaks - Great Northern Mountain and Mount Thompson. It is best done from early to mid April on when the cat-ski operation (Great Northern Mountain) has shut down for the season.

Leave one vehicle (or bike) at the start of Thompson Creek FSR off Hwy 31, just south of the junction of Hwy 31 and the Beaton Road. Continue south down Hwy 31, and, at Trout Lake, follow signs to Ferguson. From Ferguson, an old mining road climbs to about 1900 metres on a ridge-line to the east of Great Northern Mountain and gives easy access to the ridge-crest which is followed northwest for the entirety of this traverse.

Just before the end of the road in Ferguson, an unsigned road (marked by a "Road Deactivated" sign) travels north. Start skiing from Ferguson and follow this road all the way to the ridge crest at about GR647166 (NAD27). There is only one junction of note, at about 1,160 metres, or after about 2 to 2.5 km of skiing, you will reach a T intersection, go right and you will soon be rewarded with expansive views up Ferguson Creek.

The road will take you all the way to about 1900 metres on a ridge crest between Fissure and Broadview Creeks. Staying on the ridge crest, ski west to about 7,000 feet where a prominent 300 foot peaklet lies between you and Great Northern Mountain. You can ski over the top of this, or do what we did and traverse around it on the south side and skin up an easy draw past a small tarn at the head of Alpha Creek to gain the east ridge of Great Northern Mountain. Ski west to the top of Great Northern Mountain, then descend the southwest ridge into a pass at the head of Mountain Goat Creek.

Follow a snowcat road uphill and north to gain another pass at GR601173 (NAD27). From here, you can see the route to Mount Thompson which follows the ridge

crest west then north to the south outlier of Mount Thompson at GR568188 (NAD27). We skirted the minor peak at GR575183 (NAD27) on the south side on easy ramps, but you could also ski over the top if you chose.

From the southern outlier of Mount Thompson, descend northwest facing slopes, steep in places, to a small tarn tucked under the south side of Mount Thompson. Traverse about 0.5 km due west to the south ridge of Mount Thompson. We dumped out a load of gear from our packs here, and skied to the top of Mount Thompson via the easy south ridge. You won't want to miss this as you can ski right to the summit and the views are tremendous. From the south ridge of Mount Thompson, do a descending traverse to the west to gain a sub-alpine ridge of burnt timber that runs south towards Pollman Creek.

To exit, ski generally southwest, crossing a series of gullies interspersed with some short, steep descents to reach a cutblock at about 1660 metres and GR527184. Once you've descended to about 2,000 metres, you can see this cutblock below you which makes navigating easy. Follow the road (Thompson Creek FSR) down to Armstrong Lake at about 800 metres. There are dozens of great places to camp along the route. We had one camp overlooking Mountain Goat Creek, just below Great Northern Mountain, and one camp in burnt timber on the ridge above Pollman Creek.

Bonnington Range

Distance: 42 km (approximately)

Elevation Gain: 2800 metres

Although this is a well known and popular traverse, every year people ask me for a route description so here is one way to do the traverse. As with most other traverses in this area, the terrain is pretty simple and there are a multitude of route options. Information for all the huts, including grid references and GPS waypoints is available on the KMC website.

Leave one car at the big parking lot at Porto Rico Road south of Nelson and drive around via Salmo to Bombi Summit. Start skiing at Bombi Summit and follow the Munson Road system (go right at 3.7 km and 3.9 km and left at 5.4 km - all kms marked) for 6.4 km to the second of two small spur roads that exit to the east

Trip Reports—cont'd

(skiers right). The correct spur road begins to go uphill immediately and is about 100 metres after the first. You can also cut off some distance by following the powerline more directly. Follow the spur road up for a couple of switchbacks, then where the road levels out, leave the road and climb to the broad pass between Grassy and South Grassy. Descend 80 (vertical) metres to the east to the Grassy Hut.

From Grassy Hut ski easily towards the summit of Grassy Mountain and, just to the west of the summit, ski down a north ridge to a broad saddle. Cross a major road and continue traveling north to the northeastern (highest) of the two Twin Peaks. Ski down the north ridge until you can drop off the ridge directly east into a basin (some cornices). Take the fall line down skiing generally east to come out on another major road.

Follow this road up to a broad pass and follow it as it descends a short distance heading northeast until you are between the two forks of Glade Creek. Skin up 400 metres heading due east (compass handy) to a col at GR671658 (NAD83). If you look carefully, you should be able to see the Steed Hut in the basin to the east. A descending traverse, steep at the top, should take you right to the cabin door.

From the Steed Cabin ski east and cross over the next ridge at about GR681658 (NAD83). Descend a short but steep slope towards the small tarn below (no need to go all the way to the tarn), then contour and climb slightly to a saddle on the ridge at GR685668 (NAD83). Descend slightly and then climb up to the narrow col due north at 684676 (NAD83). Follow this prominent ridge first east then north and ski down into the head of Erie Creek. Follow the south side of one of the branches of Erie Creek east and climb 400 to 500 metres to the Copper Cabin.

The last day is easiest if the visibility is good and avalanche hazard not too high. Ski up to the south ridge of Copper Mountain and ski along the height of land crossing over Territory, Colony and Empire Peaks. Drop down to Barrett Lake, pick up the old logging road and ski out to Porto Rico Road.

If you need to bail from this trip due to weather or avalanche hazard, you can ski out via logging roads in either Forty Nine Creek or Snowwater Creek. The

Forty Nine Creek exit is not a suitable escape route if avalanche hazard is high.

Kootenay Pass to Whitewater Ski Resort

Finally, the one NOT recommended short traverse in the area starts at Kootenay Pass and ends at Whitewater Ski Resort. This traverse garnered some popularity as it was published in Trevor Holsworth's old ski touring guidebook for the area. If you decide, for whatever reason, to do this traverse, it will take about four days and you will spend most of that time skiing through valleys that have been clearcut. You could tag some peaks along the way, which for me, would be (and was) the only impetus for this trip, otherwise it affords little interest and your time is best spent elsewhere.

More details on all these traverses including the ever-popular but brain numbing GPS tracks is available on www.bivouac.com. For old fashioned bibliophiles, Chic Scott has a new edition of his book "*Summits and Icefields Columbia Mountains*" due out in the fall and most of these traverses will be included in the new edition.

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Brilliant Overlook Hike May 27, 2012

It was a beautiful sunny Spring morning when KMC hikers met at the Brilliant Bridge Park and Pool at 9:00am. They carpooled up to the large parking area near the Dove Hill Trailhead, where Jim and Cindy joined the group at 9:15am, making a total of 20 hikers. By 10:00am the group reached the Dove Hill viewpoint at about 600m. By 10:20am the hikers reached the Brilliant Overlook Trailhead just above the Brilliant Dam on the Kootenay River.

Two rock climbers were spotted on the face of the mountain below Brilliant Overlook. They were following the moderate sports route built by Dave Lussier and aptly named "Megawatts".

The KMC's continued up the trail across the scree slope. A very friendly Burmese Mountain Dog with its three humans and a Golden Lab pup with two more humans were encountered there.

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The group took a long hydration break at the McPhee Viewpoint, around 11:20-11:30am, at 772m. A trio of turkey vultures provided entertainment as they soared up thermal air currents. By 12:00 noon the hikers had reached their goal—the Brilliant Overlook at 915m. The air was quite clear with just a faint haze around Red Mountain to the south but clear views of the Lower Arrow Lakes to the west. Mt. Sentinel appeared to be completely clear of snow but the Norns Range still had its white mantle. The Brilliant Dam has at least one gate open to release melt water from the Kootenay and Slovan Rivers into the Columbia.



Cindy Campbell photo

Missing in Photo: Cindy Campbell, Don Harasym

Very few golfers were out on the Castlegar and District Golf Course but it was lunch time. Our friendly Burmese Mountain Dog made a second appearance but did not mooch or steal anyone's lunch. A raven did a quick flyby as the lunch stop drew to a close. Several hikers took the short detour on the way back to the main trail to view the Vise. It is a sharp cleft in the rock and a good shelter on a rainy day. By 1:00pm the group reached the Lower Trail Head at 913m. From here the trail led back down into the valley following three shady shortcuts and two segments of the forest service road. The hikers crossed the McPhee Creek Road and after a fourth short section of trail and a turkey hen sighting reached the overgrown road around the south end of the Golf Course. By 2:15pm the group passed the Forestry fuel reduction area and arrived at the north side of Tower Ridge Subdivision. Here two hikers headed to their Tower Ridge home and two more went to the Club House for well earned refreshment. The 16

remaining hikers continued to the Dove Hill Parking area and said their goodbyes there around 2:30pm.

It was a great hike with fine weather, good company, wonderful views and good trails. A special thanks to the Friends of Parks and Trails trail stewards and summer workers for keeping the trails we used in such good shape.

Hikers included Denis & Sue Nursey, Chuck Macklon, Rae McCreight, Don Harasym, Bob Dean, Robin Lidstone, Ross Bates, Sheila Moro, Pat Bruce, Alex & Kathleen Nichol, Mark Halten, Leif Devantier, Norm Yanke, Mary Prothro, Cindy & Jim Campbell, and coordinators, Alan & Pat Sheppard

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Syringa Creek—Yellow Pines Trail April 29, 2012

Thirteen KMC members met at the Syringa Creek Provincial Park Boat Launch at 10:00am on Sunday, April 29, 2012.

In bright sunshine the group crossed the road and hiked up the switch backed trail under tall ponderosa (yellow) pines.

They branched off the main trail and after a short scramble above Syringa Creek canyon stopped at the first viewpoint. The view here was out over Lower Arrow Lake to the South. The rail trail was visible in the forest on the opposite side of the Lake. The hikers descended back to the main trail and contoured on and up to the second viewpoint for a lunch stop. This view overlooks the Lower Arrow Lake but in a westerly direction.

After lunch the group descended to the main trail and continued contouring until the trail dropped down, crossed the road and ended in the Park's picnic site parking lot. The hikers passed through the picnic grounds, playground, campsites and then along the beach back to the boat launch.

No animals were spotted on the hike and very few birds. While spring foliage was out only balsamroot, yellow glacier lily, syringa, wild strawberry and domestic cherry blossoms were spotted along the trail.

Hikers included Don Harasym, Bob Dean, Caroline Shimek, Eric Ackerman, Robin Lidstone, Ken Kirkland, Betty Brousse, Cindy Shlakoff, Sherolyn Haakstad, Tom Smith, Pat Bruce, and coordinators, Pat & Alan Sheppard.

International Basin—Ski Mountaineering May 6—12, 2012

by Ken Holmes

I've been interested in ski touring in International Basin since passing through there 23 years ago on the Rogers pass to Bugaboos traverse. The KMC hiking camp in 2009 provided an opportunity to scout out the area further and check out the Mark Kingsbury cabin built by the Columbia Valley Hut society.

So I was really happy to be flying into the area on a 'bluebird day' from Golden on May 6th which provided another short opportunity to view the area as we flew past Mt David to the headwaters of Bobby Burns creek and the cabin.



Cabin with Sandiland and Strutt Peaks

After settling in we skied up to the col west of the cabin, where the other four left their skis and climbed the unnamed peak on foot, whilst I skied from the col down a tempting slope until stopped by cliffs. My excuse for not climbing up icy scree and snowy rocks was that I had climbed the peak at hiking camp.

That night, when going out for a pee at about 3:00am, I noticed a fire about 40 feet away from me. Being half asleep I couldn't think why there should be a blazing fire so I staggered towards it to take a closer look and noticed a pair of skis nearby. Shortly after going back to bed I noticed a bulky figure walk past the windows in the moonlight. Even more mysterious! I got up and shouted "hello can I help you" as the figure moved back towards the fire. There was no reply. Was it Sasquatch? The next morning the others told me that a

group of three had arrived at about 10:30pm the previous night when I was asleep. It turned out that they were a group of three from Montana on a lightweight, fast trip from the Bugaboos. They were travelling essentially with day packs with no tents or sleeping bags and just sleeping by fires. After providing them with a cup of tea they called for a helicopter and were lifted back to their car.

Meanwhile we set out up the valley for Mount Sibbald and skinned up to the NW ridge. Andrew and Paul decided to scramble up the ridge on foot whilst Bert, Fred and I decided to ski down the slopes leading down to the Duncan. Partway down we stopped after each spied a tempting snow ramp leading to the south ridge and slopes, and avoiding the cornices. Our minds worked in unison. 'Let's do it'. The ramp provided a really nice route on skis all the way to the summit where we met up with the "scramblers". An inviting snow rib tempted us to ski down the NE slopes thus completing a circumnavigation of Sibbald via the summit.



Summit slopes of Mt Sibbald

That afternoon a group of seven arrived from the Bugaboos on their way to Rogers Pass. They camped near the cabin as they had a number of boxes of food supplies stashed there. Later that night they asked if we could use some red wine that they couldn't finish as they were oversupplied and too tired. Of course we were happy to oblige! The next morning they asked if we could fly out supplies that they could not use. This turned out to be more food than we had flown in for the whole week. Their trip was a complete opposite from the young Montana guys. They all had huge packs and one told me his pack weighed 65 pounds

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when he set out. He still had three days of food when he arrived at the cabin and their food drop.

We set off in the direction of the Spillimacheen Glacier intent on climbing Cony Peak. We caught up with the other group as they were deciding how to cope with a steep slope that provided a challenge to reaching the glacier. After reaching the glacier our ways parted and we traversed below Mt David and were tempted to climb up a nice looking slope to the col East of Mt David and abort Mt Cony. A steep 600ft snow slope was then boot-packed from the col to the summit of David (this was the real David, not the whaleback hump on the ridge ascended during hiking camp). At the 2009 hiking camp I had failed to climb the real David via the loose rocky west ridge and just short of the summit, so I was happy to have finally summited.



Mt David—We climbed the right hand ridge

The next day we crossed the valley to the Carbonate glacier which we followed to a col that provided access to Sandiland Peak and Strutt peak. Sandiland was climbed first from a col between the two. The ridge had a couple of tricky spots that warranted using a rope for protection on the descent. The ascent of Strutt was easier and we carried our skis on our packs so we could ski from the summit.

That night the weather changed and it started to snow and was still snowing and windy the next day. We had a late start when the snow eased and headed for an unnamed peak NE of the lake where the 2009 hiking camp had been located. The break in the weather turned out to be a 'sucker hole' and after totally losing

visibility near the lake we returned to have 'elevenses' and coffee at the cabin. After lunch we set out again and managed to get up to a col SE of the peak. As the weather deteriorated yet again we aborted the idea of the peak in favour of a great ski back to the cabin in a few inches of powder on a hard surface.

The storm passed through and Friday was fine sunny day which tempted us to ski to the upper Carbonate Glacier below International Mountain with the goal of climbing Mt Richards. A steep, icy snow slope and icy, loose scree had to be boot packed, carrying skis, to where we could put skis back on to ascend to the upper glacier. We had great views of the impressive Malachite and Horseman spires that got even better as we traversed the glacier and got closer to them. Paul, Fred, Bert and Andrew ascended Richards, as shown on the map. I felt that it was just a bump on the ridge and not worth the effort. However it was very photogenic, so I had a restful time taking pictures of the others as they ascended, whilst also gazing at the impressive Malachite and Horseman spires and plotting how they could be climbed (but not by me!).



Mt Richards

The long descent on skis was interrupted by the icy, loose scree slope that had to be descended, carrying skis, between the upper glacier and the lower glacier. Since it was our last day and the skiing was good we descended all the way to the bottom of the valley below the hut and were rewarded by an enjoyable "half-pipe" little canyon just before valley bottom. A great way to end the trip!

We were... Paul Allen, Fred Thiessen, Bert Port, Andrew Port and myself, Ken Holmes (scribe).

Trip Reports—cont'd

**North Bannock Cr FSR to Gimli Trail
June 17, 2012**

by Mike Brewster

Here is some info that may interest KMCers, This past Sunday June 17th, Al Sinki and I drove to the very end of the north Bannock Cr FSR—some 32km from the pavement at Slocan City. The road is in excellent condition with no impediments whatsoever. For those with some knowledge of this road it is the access to the Gimli Trail; from the switch back to the Gimli parking area, stay straight ahead and slightly down hill. Follow the well traveled road, which switches back twice going down hill. The next intersections are marked with rock cairns. The road ends in a very good turn-around eight kilometres from the Gimli turn. We flagged a route through the bush and timber to the base of the large avalanche path leading up to the Mt Dag basin. This is a spectacular hiking area with a very short approach—only 1.5km from the road end to the slide path. Right now is the best time to go, before the snow leaves the upper slopes and the green succulents erupt. Expect to see bears. Happy trails!

Trip Photos

**Smallwood Creek
June 3, 2012**



Marilyn Miller photo

Smallwood Creek hike participants

**Gilpin Grasslands
May 19, 2012**



Liz Huxter photo

Hikers at the start of the trip, looking at Bighorn Sheep herd [top left]



Liz Huxter photo

Looking South to the Kettle River and the International Border



Liz Huxter photo

Hikers cutting across Grasslands

June 21, 2012

by Kim Kratky

As you probably know, the BC government announced on March 20th that the Jumbo Glacier Resort project had received approval. This does not mean that “Jumbo is a done deal,” as so many people seem to think. The government still faces concerted opposition from the majority of East and West Kootenay residents, a generally negative impression by the people of BC as to the environmental impact and economic viability of the resort, the very real threat of a lawsuit brought forth by the Ktunaxa First Nations and ensuing injunction prohibiting the developer from any activity, and major concerns about funding from French investors.

In this section I'll bring you up to date on Jumbo Wild activities since late March. On March 22nd the West Kootenay Coalition for Jumbo Wild met in Nelson to plan strategy at the offices of the West Kootenay Eco Society. Representatives of the Society, Kootenay Co-Op Radio, the KMC, the City of Nelson, and the Sinixt people were present. We were able to, on short notice, hold a “candle light vigil” at city hall on March 25th. This was attended by about 200 people. On the same day Jumbo Wild reps K. Linda Kivi, Martin Carver and I were interviewed by Global TV, resulting in province-wide coverage on Global's evening news. On April 22nd the Coalition organized an Earth Day/Jumbo Wild rally and march in Nelson attended by some 300 people. On April 29th I made a presentation on Jumbo Resort at the East and West Kootenay Environmental Justice Conference at LVR Secondary in Nelson.

Activities continued in May as six of us from the Coalition's steering committee presented at a Jumbo Wild Teach-In at the Nelson United Church to about 25 activists. On the Provincial level, the government's passage of the controversial Bill 41 on May 24th sparked an angry response. The relevant portion of this bill modifies the Resort Municipalities Act so that the government can create a resort municipality in an area without any residents and can appoint a mayor and council. North Kootenay Lake activists invited me to be the master of ceremonies at their Jumbo Wild rally in Kaslo's Vimy Park on Saturday, May 26th. Our plan was to greet the Minister responsible, Steve Thompson, scheduled to be in Kaslo to address a conference, but he unexpectedly cancelled his visit. The rally went ahead as some 300 people listened to speakers and local musicians and honoured long-time Jumbo Wild

activists Inger Kronseth, 90, and Edith Mautner, 98. Featured speaker was Joe Foy, a national director of the Wilderness Committee, formerly the Western Canada Wilderness Committee. The rally raised some \$1500 to further efforts of Jumbo Wild. Four of us from the Coalition also met with Joe to discuss strategies for province-wide and international actions. On May 29th and 30th four of us from the West Kootenay (Nelson Councillor Candance Batycki, Eco Center director David Reid, K. Linda Kivi and I) were in the East Kootenay for a strategy session with executive members of the environmental charity Wildsight (based in Kimberley) and the Jumbo Creek Conservation Society to plan upcoming events and harmonize our activities. On June 9th, the Coalition and Kootenay Co-Op Radio hosted a rock and blues benefit for Jumbo Wild at the Royal Hotel in Nelson. Five local bands donated their time and energy, as over \$2700 was raised.

This summer, the Coalition plans to continue its pressure on the French investors. Over a thousand post cards have been sent to the investors by Kootenay residents; we have filled their email in-boxes, and the Ktunaxa have several times asked for a meeting with them. As well, the Coalition will be establishing a Democracy Camp in the upper Jumbo valley and possibly at Farnham Creek in order to monitor activities of the developer. To this end, the Coalition is sponsoring a democracy and peace activist workshop in Nelson on July 9th from 10am to 4pm. We also hope to coordinate with Jumbo Wild supporter Bruce Cockburn at his sold-out performance at Nelson's Capitol Theatre on August 8th. He has already given a Jumbo Wild benefit concert in Cranbrook last year. Kaslo resident Randy Morse (author of the well-known photo books *Canada: the Mountains* and *The Mountains of Canada*) continues to develop his book and ebook *Jumbo Wild Forever*. Contact him at <http://morseonmountains.wordpress.com/> if you have photos of the Purcells to submit. We also can confirm that renowned alpinists, film makers, photographers and travelers Pat and Baiba Morrow will be presenting a Jumbo Wild fundraiser and multi-media event at the Capitol Theatre in Nelson on Sept. 27th.

As you can see, Jumbo Wild is alive and well. You can help by donating time and money and by buying a copy of *Purcell Suite*, a book of writings on the Purcells with a contribution from our own Hamish Mutch. Keep up to date by consulting the Eco Society website <http://www.ecosociety.ca/> and also that of Wildsight, <http://www.wildsight.ca/>