



# The Kootenay Mountaineer

The newsletter for people with year-round pursuits.

September 30, 2012

## Message from the President

The Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC) of which our club is member, has purchased a bulk order of trail markers and has them for sale at \$1 each.

Contact Jodi Appleton at [admin.manager@mountainclubs.org](mailto:admin.manager@mountainclubs.org) for more information on how to purchase them and how we can get them to your region of BC (FYI - Jodi is headed to Kelowna in October and Castlegar in December).

Call for new executive members! We are looking for volunteers to take over the Winter trip Director and Secretary positions in the club. These are two year terms.

The next club social is the AGM, Friday November 16 at the Little Bear Gold Club in Castlegar.

## Message from the Editor

Thank you: Peter for the support, P’Nina for the soup, Don for the transport to my first post accident hike, everyone else for the best wishes, and my stand-in editor Cyndi Mular. The Kootenay region is full of wonderful people along with the wonderful mountains.

## Trip Reports

### Texas Peak - July 2



A diverse group of 11 hikers assembled at Retallack at 8:30 on July 2. We followed the logging road south into Jackson Basin. The road was in

reasonable shape despite the large volume of water flowing down it in places. We got about 1 km beyond

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### Article submission guidelines:

Plain text is great. No need for PDF or Microsoft Word files. Simply cut and paste your text into an email to

[newsletter@kootenarymountaineering.bc.ca](mailto:newsletter@kootenarymountaineering.bc.ca).

Attach your full resolution photos to the email.

Lots of photos, please.

Submission deadline for the next issue is  
November 16, 2012

the bridge before being stopped by snow at 5300'. A bit further on the road was washed out.

We followed the road and then climbed some snow to the col east of Reco (6900'). From here we followed the ridge east, initially on a winter cat track. This ridge walk was generally quite enjoyable. We had a nice mix of grass, rock and snow to walk on and the views were fantastic. Attrition started 2 humps before the peak, where 2 hikers decided to have an early lunch. The rest of us had lunch at the next hump (8000'). I tried convincing Vicki that this was Texas Peak, but she was having none of that nonsense so off we went (down to 4 hardcore hikers now) to conquer our real objective. This involved 400' down, 500' up and 400 meters across. Thanks to Vicki, Texas Peak now has a brand new KMC summit register.

The hike back was uneventful except for some good boot skiing. Thanks to weather man Chris Cowan for keeping us dry all day despite some very threatening (to lay people) clouds. Thanks also to old farts Suzanne Blewatt, Steve and Eliene Miros, Jenny Wild and

were patches in the trees near the top. There was not the usual regrouping at Unnecessary Ridge, but everyone elected to go up the trail to the top of Old Glory rather than going up the face. The insects at the top discouraged people from staying there very long, although there were none in the hut. It was sunny and clear, so the views were excellent. I was very slow going down because my foot problems were very bad, but I was accompanied by Jenny Baillie who was not on our hike, but happened to be there at that time. Most of the group were back to the cars by about 2:30 pm. We were Peter Oostlander, Roy Hopland, Megan Lazaruk, Chris Cowan, Ken Kirkland, Betty Brouse, P'nina Shames, Peter Martyn, Ron Groom, Mark Van Giessel & co-ordinator, Ted Ibrahim

### **Old Glory, July 18**

Three of us hiked from Strawberry Pass, along the 7-Summits trail to Old Glory, up Old Glory by the trail, and down Unnecessary Ridge to our car at the Old Glory trailhead. There was a small amount of snow left on the Lepsoe to Plewman ridge. The weather was



Joanne Seguv. We were happy to be joined by the younger generation, Francois Miros, Robin Sones and David Nimblad (who came all the way from Sweden to celebrate his 19th birthday on Texas Peak)! Bill Sones, Coordinator.

### **Old Glory - July 8**

We met at 8 am at Hanna Creek. We first encountered snow patches after about 3 km, but they were not large enough to make it difficult to follow the trail. The open part of Unnecessary Ridge was clear of snow but there

pleasantly warm with a slight breeze and no bugs, other than ladybugs on the rocks at the top, where we enjoyed our lunch with a 360 degree view of the Rosslund Range. A storm the previous day had washed much of the soil away on the Old Glory part of the trail, but the rest was in good repair. Lucas took many pictures, as he had not been up there before. Total time of about 8 leisurely hours. We were Dave Grant, Lucas Jmieff and coordinator Diane Paolini.



## Gimli Ridge – July 25, 2012



The day started off without a cloud in the sky, a perfect summer day for a hike to Gimli. The group included four new members who were hiking up Gimli for the first time: Iam Smith, Megan Lazaruk, Janet Cook and Lucas Jmieff. Other hikers were: Irme Mende, Mary

Woodward, Vicki Hart, Cindy Schlakoff and her son Cam Shlakoff and me Sherolyn Haakstad. There were 10 of us in the group. There was some snow near the camp site on the way up. The visibility was amazing and the views stunning from the ridge. We had a professional photographer on the trip (Lucas Jmieff) and he took some very beautiful photos and a few are included with this article. We did not see the mountain goats on this trip, but several marmots were not shy and sat out on the rocks. On the way down some



clouds rolled in and we heard thunder, but it didn't stop the group from enjoying a spectacular photo opportunity and enjoying the beginning of the wild flowers. The clouds blew over and the sun came out again and no rain. A very nice day was had by all!

## Mt. Thompson - July 29

Mt. Thompson overlooking the Creston Valley was the destination for our hike July 29. The group met in Salmo at 7:30, and we were parked at the Mt. Thompson Lookout ready to hike by 9:45. The forest service road climbs steeply over a distance of about 11 km from the valley floor up to the lookout at 2137 metres. There is a campsite at the lookout for those interested. The fallen tree that blocked my way earlier this month has since been cleared by the locals. We were treated to a close encounter with both a mule deer and a large hawk on the drive up, both creatures kindly holding still next to the road while we admired them.

The "Rim Trail" follows a ridge through alpine meadow with 360 degree views and very little change in elevation. We enjoyed the wildflower displays and the many butterflies and hummingbirds feeding on them. The bear grass was in bloom, along with many lupines, stone-crop, paintbrush, etc. Mary identified the most prolific wildflower as a Mariposa Lilly. An intermittent cool breeze kept us bug-free and gave relief from the hot sun. The remains of last winter's snow melted away on one short section of the otherwise dry and excellent trail. Note there is little or no water to be had on this trail, unless one climbs way down to the lake on the backside of the ridge.

After several gentle ups and downs, we arrived at the highest point marked by a repeater cone. There we had an early lunch about 11:00 looking down on the Kootenay River as it snaked its way past Creston into

Kootenay Lake. We decided to lose a fair bit of elevation to cross to and climb the next bump on the ridge to the South. Unfortunately the trail does not seem to go past the high point, so this part of the journey was half open meadow (lovely) and half bushy game trails (less so). We did get to see the lake nestled on the back side below the saddle point, but decided it wasn't worth climbing all the way down to. The top of the destination bump turned out to be too covered with trees to get any views (explaining the lack of a trail), so we retraced our path and headed back. One could continue along the ridge further south if desired.

About half way back we spotted two hang-gliders that had just launched off from the lookout where we had parked. At this point there is another lower ridge that extends several kilometers to the East. It looked like

good hiking, so one could make a side-trip with enough time – good for those who camp at the top the night before. We got back to the cars about 2:15 for a second lunch. Total distance hiked about 10 km. We began our slow descent of the road about 2:45 and were back in Salmo by 5:00, including a stop for ice-cream.

Participants were Tom McLachlan, Brenda Haley, Vicki Hart, Mary Woodward, Drew & Cindy Turner, and coordinator Ross Bates.

### **Mt. John Carter - August 1**

Three of us met at Nelson Safeway at 7 am & met Robin Lidstone at the bottom of the Gibson Lake road. We all then rode up to Gibson Lake parking lot in Robin's truck. We decided that we would decide on our destination when we reached Kokanee Lake when we could see how much snow there was. On reaching the lake we, it looked as if there was still a lot of snow on John Carter, so we decided to go to the Kokanee Glacier Cabin instead. There was no snow on the path along the lake but there was still some ice on the lake. No-one had an ice axe & two hikers had footwear unsuitable for snow. When we reached the cabin we could see that there was indeed a lot of snow on John Carter. On the return we met Peter Oostlander with two friends who had gone up John Carter (since he was coming from Christina Lake, Peter had decide the 7 am in Nelson was too early for him & his friends). There was more snow than they expected & it had been more difficult. One of them had a fall & had one leg grazed from a fall. The weather was perfect for hiking, warm but not hot, and mostly overcast. We were Robin Lidstone, Trevor Mackay, Bernadette Laporte (a visitor from California) and co-ordinator Ted Ibrahim.

### **Ripple Ridge / Monk North - August 8**

Nine of us met in Salmo before heading off to the parking area in Stagleap Park at the top of Kootenay Pass. Along the way we were momentarily held up by early bird campers heading into the Shambala music festival site. The weather was ideal, with a lot of sun tempered by a cooling breeze along the ridges. After a fast start (5 km/hr for 45 min) up Ripple Ridge we slowed our pace to enjoy the views and the bear-grass blooms. Upon reaching Lightning Strike at the end of the ridge, we then dropped down and over to scramble up Monk North, a peak just opposite. Much of the rock on this peak is an interesting conglomerate of different materials. From the top you can look back at the

Kootenay Pass parking area and the lake far below. After a long lunch we decided against going over to Monk South and did a leisurely descent back to the cars with frequent stops. Total distance hiked was 12.1 km, moving time 3 hrs 58 min, accumulated elevation 951 m (Thanks to Ted for the GPS stats). The actual hike lasted over 6 hours, so we must have lounged about in the sun more than I thought. Participants were Brenda Haley, Jason Garvey, Ken Kirkland, Betty Brouse, Mary Woodward, Janet Cook, Ted Ibrahim, Ray Neumar, and coordinator Ross Bates.

### **HIKING CAMP 2012 Carnarvon Lake - Camp 2**

*Simon Mitchell*

**Participants:** Glenn Cameron (Leader), Leon Arishenkoff, Gary Beaudry, Ed and Hazel Beynon, Tom Braumandl, Cheryl Gwillim, Louise Hammerich, Mark Hatlen, Jocelyne Martin, Marilyn Miller, Simon Mitchell, Hamish Mutch, Ron Perrier, Rob Richardson, John and Muriel Walton, Stuart Ward, Zuzana Zach, Jenny Baillie (Camp Cook).

Half the group partied at the HiRidge motel in Elkford and 4.30 am our time arrived much too soon. The others were damp and bug bitten by the time we arrived at the helicopter rendezvous, but everybody was in good spirits. We had an obsessive helicopter pilot who made some of us undo our porcupine defences and move our vehicles so that he had a good downhill launch. Maybe it was because one of their helicopters had crashed in the Spring!

Flying up, my first impression was of a bleak place with ugly slag heaps for mountains. I could hardly believe our camp site, perched on a scree slope. The helicopter landed on a rocky pimple from which our sleeping bags had a propensity to roll into the creek. Then came the hike to camp with some of our gear, up and down and through two creeks. This was followed by a session of mining rocks to make a tent site that was not quite level. It turned out that there were no completely flat spots and after a few days one became used to balancing on one's right cheek in the biffy. We had an amazing new shower constructed by Mark and Ron. It worked well except that the wind blew the screen up and exposed all to people by the cook tent. That afternoon several of us hiked to Carnarvon Lake which was spectacular and quite blue. On the way we walked through our intended camp site in a meadow by a stream. It turned out that it was a wind tunnel which

is why it had been spurned by the helicopter pilot flying in camp one. After catching a couple of fish in the lake with Gary's rod I started to like the place.

On Sunday the whole group decided to start with the only inviting hike, up the green mountain opposite our camp site to an unnamed peak. We traversed up a pleasant sheep trail (animal trails certainly made hiking easier all week). We then climbed the ridge line through a scree slope to the summit at 8700', about 2000' above camp.



This offered wonderful views of the surrounding peaks and vistas of Alberta. It was a great place to assess the hiking possibilities for the rest of the week. After an easy ridge walk to the next peak North, we circled back to camp through a huge meadow, "the vertical golf course". We saw 9 elk fairly close by.

It was now apparent that hiking here involved a lot of steeps and scree. However, there were beautiful meadows lower down, full of flowers. Muriel and Hazel counted 163 different species which, I understand, is a record. Ed was also collecting data for the BC Breeding Bird Atlas. He found 27 species. The most interesting were Brewer's Sparrows which nest high in the mountains, so little is known about their breeding habits.

On Monday we hiked to the head of the valley. Going to the col involved a steep scree slope with a big drop-off on the other side. Ron, Leon, Glenn, Cheryl and Jenny made it to the top of Mt. Muir negotiating a tricky chute through the cliffs.

That day we really started finding fossils. They were everywhere once we started to look for them. Outstanding ones were Tom's bunch of crystallized worms, Zuzana's coral bouquet and Louise's big horn coral.

Tuesday was an epic day for most. A steep scramble behind camp led to the scree and on to a high point at about 9100' overlooking Mt Maclaren. Ron, Leon,

Rob, Gary, Stu, Tom and Glenn then followed the ridge to Mt Shankland and beyond. They came down a steep scree slope into the cirque below Shankland, luckily finding an animal trail that made perfect switchbacks. Most memorable were the close encounters of the sheepish kind. The people on top came close to two groups of five

and six. I was in camp and six rams walked right past me 20' away. They can't have met many humans to be so amazingly tame.

Meanwhile the Beynons and the Waltons were having a productive day looking for flowers.

On Wednesday Glenn, Cheryl, Leon and Ron tackled Mt Strachan. This was an unprepossessing block of a mountain with a chunk off one end that had fallen in a big slide. Apparently it was quite steep and loose scree made it challenging.

Most of us went up the side valley above Carnarvon Lake past a waterfall to a puddle below big cliffs. Stu unwisely took a dip. Zuzana, Stu and Gary decided to hike to the ridge line below Mt Maclaren. From there it looked relatively easy to make it to the peak. Gary and Stu carried on to the highest point of the week at 9250' and were rewarded with great views of the prairies. Unfortunately this was not Mt Maclaren, but almost, and going any further would have involved rock climbing.

We went back to the lake and many fish were caught and released. Tom and Jocelyne survived a swim.

It started raining on Thursday and continued till Friday afternoon. A few thunder storms and snow on the tents made it interesting. We discovered that the cooler insulation kept you warm! The peaks looked more



impressive dusted with snow. We kept ourselves amused playing games. Louise was a great MC. Ron found few takers for bridge!

Those who ventured out on Thursday were soaked, but most of us enjoyed short hikes on Friday going up the valley and to the waterfall below Shankland. Glenn, Cheryl and Leon made the summit of “Almost Maclaren”.

We partied on Friday night. We discovered that Gary could juggle, Stu could sing and Marilyn knew many jokes. Our week had come to a close too soon.

We had an awesome group of people and had much fun together. Glenn was a great leader, working away in the background, and everything ran smoothly. We had the best camp cook ever in Jenny. I’m sure nobody lost weight! She even had time to do some serious hiking and some great water colour paintings.

In conclusion, the area was not as beautiful as at some of the other hiking camps, but there was plenty to do and see: 6 peaks to climb, ridges, meadows, flowers, a beautiful fishing lake, wildlife and fossils. Even our rocky camp site worked well with good views, a breeze during the day and *NO BUGS*.

### **Camp 3 - It's not about the hike**

*Graham Kenyon*

The Rockies look much better from a distance. They have a majestic look to them, a kind of sweeping flow of ridges and peaks, craggy cliffs tilted at odd angles above skirts of scree curving into the valleys, pleated by forested fingers probing upwards between the scoured chutes of winter avalanches. It's hard to figure out the scale, they tend to look distant even when they may not be far away, aloof, not in a cold way but not something you'd want to rush up to and fling your arms around.

When you do get up close and personal, when you've wandered up through the green and pleasant haven of meadows beyond the dark coniferous forest, when you approach the grey massif of the mountain itself by way of ridge, gully or bluff, it is then you discover the Rockies are, well, rocky. Not the solid granite bedrock that encourages confidence, but the loose crumbling rubble of decaying,

upheaved sea bed that slides and rolls under the gentlest of touch. The best part of hiking these high places is the view off somewhere else to the distant mountains and valleys beyond. At your feet there are just the rocks of various shapes, sizes and anchorage, all demanding total concentration, care and balance. So how did they get here in such abundance on this relatively gentle slope with no overshadowing peak to weather and fall, just a vast plain of rubble, from where?

The bolder folks who venture on to the splintering crags that pass for summits contend with booby-trap holds and falling missiles. They do it anyway, because it's there, I guess. Meanwhile others loll about with Bighorn Sheep close enough to see the cud mashing in their jaws as they casually relax, despite the proximity of these strange beings from another planet.

Wild creatures give life to what would otherwise be just the view. Of course there are the obsessed for whom the simple act of admiration and wonder is not enough. Each camp has its record bearing proud witness to species identified and carefully catalogued. Tiptoeing through the woods behind ardent birders is an experience to wonder at in itself: that flash of yellow, an Immature Yellow-Rumped Warbler, really? Then the remarkable sight of this husky, bearded hiker, pack off, on his knees peering through a magnifying glass at some microscopic violet bloom hidden amongst the wiry alpine grass – in situ of course, this



might be the only specimen left on the planet. While one might marvel at such passion and knowledge, I'm with Walt Whitman: "*You must not know too much, or be too precise or scientific about birds and trees and*



*flowers. A certain free margin helps your enjoyment of these things.*" One might say the same thing about rocks, fascinating though the discovery of fossils trapped in ancient sediments may be, precise identification is to me less important than simply holding something that once lived a hundred million years ago.

We had one casualty in the rocks, with all the elements of high drama: the report – man down on the mountain, possible broken leg; the anxious planning, the what-ifs, to phone or not to phone; the rescue team heads out – but then the casualty hobbles into view within sight of camp, aided by friends and mysterious medications we all want to share. Laid up for the rest of the week, but with spirit unrepressed.

This incident and my innate curiosity about my fellow campers – this wealth of mountain experience temporarily lodged in this meadow – prompted a question: what was your most memorable experience in the mountains? Try it sometime; you'll be enthralled as

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the stories unfold. Benighted and groping down a mountain in pitch darkness; Denali, the ghostly view of mountain goats emerge on a misty morning; Ellesmere Island, the silence and the farness; boulder hopping in the Valhallas too many years ago; a thousand birds lift off a lonely, grey beach on the West Coast Trail; Tongariro Crossing in New Zealand, the hike of a lifetime; falling from the lead on a rock face and bouncing off the belayer who somehow hangs on; the impossible magnificence of a Himalayan dawn; the stillness of Berg Lake contrasted with the devastation of an avalanche; watching helplessly a son escape from a precarious hold over hundreds of feet of space; elation on the top of Whistler on a perfect fresh snow day; neophytes caught in a spring storm at Kokanee, dark and sleet, soaked and shivering, and the cabin is nowhere to be found.

So what has all this to do with Camp 3? Well, to paraphrase a certain racing cyclist, it's not about the hike. All of us at Camp 3 know what we did, and anyone who wasn't there is probably not interested in what we did, except for the competitive souls in the other camps who have no need to worry. We enjoyed the experience of simply being up there in the wild, in perfect weather, with no bugs, sharing time and stories with good people who understand what this is all about. How long have we been doing this? Seems like



a lifetime, but it isn't, not yet.

Participants: Peter McIver, Suzanne Blewett, Ross Scott, Ray Moore, Paula Barnes, Chris & Helen Hatch, Andrea Morris, Keith & Sherry Watson, Alex & Kathleen Nichol, Pegasis McGauley, Knut Langballe, Peter Wood, Sherolyn Haakstad, Tom Smith, Caroline Shimik, Graham Kenyon



## **Gwillam Lakes, Black Prince - August 11/12**

*(the most stimulating trip ever - Val)*

Elena scheduled her first KMC trip to Gwillam lakes with an ascent of Black Prince on a perfect warm and sunny weekend this past August. I signed up as co-leader which means that Elena did all the organizing work. I helped out with guiding the group up the mountain and this is a great way of getting some new talent to organize club trips.

And what a great trip it turned out to be! We gathered at the meeting place at 2pm on the Saturday; no early alpine start for this group! After the usual 50 km dirt road slog, doing the chicken-wire dance and checking out the view of Mt Gregorio from the outhouse window, we were underway by 5 pm. (Oh yes, during the long car trip various wine pairings were discussed for future trip dinners; the 2008 Merlot from a Trail, BC winery receiving high praise).

A pleasant hike followed past scenic Drinnon and Wicka Lakes, and by the time we arrived at the premier camping Gwillam Lake area, our group had bonded nicely. Once dusk settled over our tents, falling meteorites painted the darkening sky with bright streaks. Some of us got up after midnight, albeit by necessity, to be treated to a great show.

The group started up the ridge trail shortly after 8am, and reached the Col after about 45 minutes where we stopped for photos and the naming of the various neighbouring peaks by Peter Jordan. Midway along the

ridge is the little Hillary step that everyone negotiated cautiously, with good results.

Then we pushed up to the final summit and with a bit of hand and foot coordinated effort we were on top. From our 9000ft perch, the views were breathtaking to Mt Lucifer right across, Mt Bohr and Urd Peaks to the North, and Gregorio dominating the Southern view.



The summit register had enthusiastic entries of various kids, as young as six years old as well as a Nepalese rupee from a solo peak bagger of great fortitude.

We returned via a different route to the hanging lakes where we observed a strange phenomenon: a crater size hole in the lake bottom. Various photos were taken and Val swam up close to do an inspection. All this evidence will be forwarded by Peter Jordan to a lake sediment expert. It is hoped that he can report on the expert's findings in a future issue of this newsletter.





After arriving at camp, we enjoyed some sun bathing and alpine lake swimming or more accurately “polar bear dipping” comes to mind. We reluctantly packed up camp and walked out after this multi faceted excursion into Valhalla Provincial Park. We made some new friends and had a great time!

Participants: Elena cigala-fulgosi (coordinator), Jenny Wild, Valerie Evans, Megan Ken Budyk, Dustin Rippendale, Peter Jordan, Corinne Knox, Matty Walton, Peter Oostlander (reporter)

### **Fife to Highway 395 bike ride - BC Day**

Taking a break from bagging peaks AND the frolicking crowds at Christina Lake, we decided to do a fun bike



ride from the old railway stop of Fife above Christina lake to the railway bridge near highway 395. Fife gained some notoriety a few years ago with the

marijuana bears story. Sure enough, there is still a sign on the rail grade warning the bicyclists about few remaining habituated bears that might show up on the trail.

We first checked out the old lime ore bin on the CPR spur and then biked the rail grade above Christina Lake to the Kettle River Bridge built in 1951. Recently a sturdy set of stair steps was built down to the river at the bridge, giving access to a nice beach and swimming hole below. The temperature there was in the mid 30C range, so it did not take us long to dive into the cool river.

As promised in my trip invite, the school of bass and some rainbow fish was at the usual spot below the bridge piling and we snorkeled through them. It was like swimming in an aquarium! The floating in the stream back to our starting point was a real treat as well. Nicely refreshed, we hiked back up to our bikes and finished the ride to the awaiting truck and trailer that brought us all back to the starting point.

There was some discussion in the group whether the Kettle River water temperature was cooler than Christina Lake or not, so we decide to test it by diving into the lake and check it out. At 26C the lake was indeed warmer, but not by much! Some refreshments and appetizers on our cabin deck finished off a very nice day.

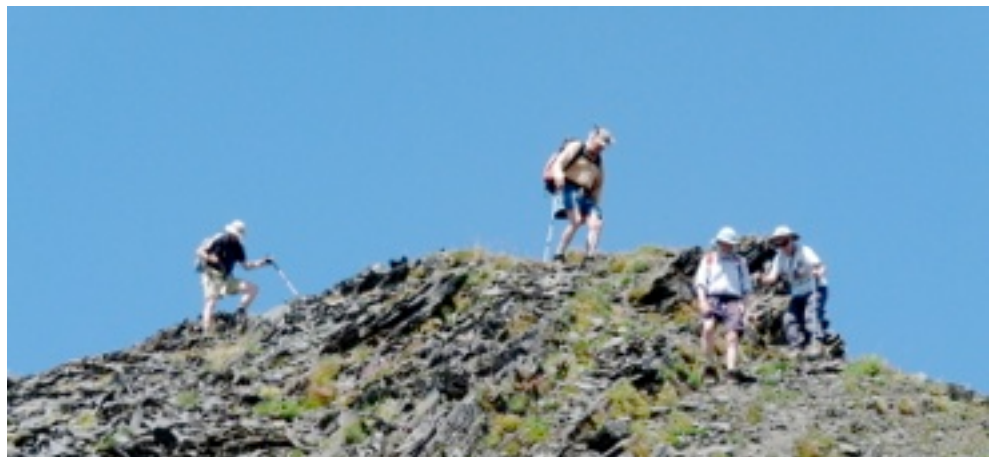
Participants: Janet Cook, Eric Ackerman, Gina and Kate Oostlander, Peter Oostlander and Ingrid Enns (organizers)

### **Mt. Reco - August 12**

The group of 11 gathered at Retallack at 9:45 am and, after a 35 minute drive south on the forestry road,



hiked for an hour and 40 minutes summiting Mt. Reco at 12 Noon. An hour for lunch and a visit included attempts to identify the various peaks in the 360 degree view and investigation of a cache in a cookie tin containing a bank book, notes and other mementos in memory of a hiker unknown to any of us. After visiting with a group of ATVers from Revelstoke at the parking site, we were back at Retallack by 3:30 pm making for a fine outing. Attendance: Zuzana Zach, Ken Kirkland, Betty Brousse, Ted Ibrahim, Peter Tchir, Ed Beynon, Hazel Beynon, Ray Neumar, Bob Dean, Mary Woodward and Trip Leader, Don Harasym.



## Old Glory August 16 2012

Despite a very short notice, eight of us were in attendance. A beautiful day! Part of the group hiked



up the face of Glory while the remainder made their way on the trail and up the backside. Attendance: Caroline Laface, Pat Sheppard, Al Sheppard, Dave Grant, Brenda Haley, Bob Dean, Wayne Hohn and, Trip Leader, Don Harasym.

## Idaho Lookout - August 22

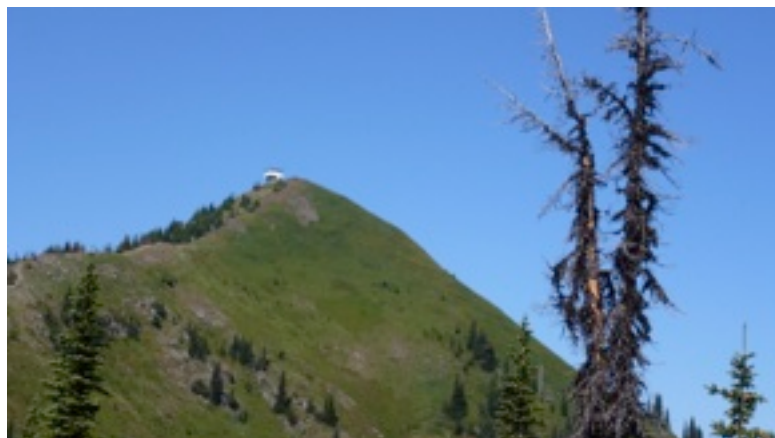
This is my first chance to submit a trip report to myself as editor! As well, I'm guessing that most of my readers will be long time members who, as several of the participants on our trip commented, have themselves done the walk up Idaho Peak many times.

First off, let me test my rather feeble memory and list the participants: Bob, Ted, Ed, Hazel, Don, Jay, Joyce,

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Brenda, Jen, and Tim. I have no desire to mangle those last names that I couldn't hold in my memory. I'll need note paper on a hike if I intend to try this another time.

Secondly, let me say what a wonderful day it was. The wild flowers were everywhere and colourful. The sun slowly warmed the cool early breezes and the views from the top made it hard to decide where to sit for lunch. For myself, I spent most of my time checking out the lake view.



Following lunch we wandered back down the trail before heading up and over three small bumps along the ridge towards Selkirk Peak, which was an added bonus for me. For the whole of the outing the company was congenial, guaranteeing a thoroughly pleasant day out in the mountains.



Finally, I'd like to mention my newcomer's impressions regarding the access to hikes and mountains here in the Kootenay. As immigrants from Alberta, almost all of the hiking and climbing that my wife and I have done has been done in the Rockies. Fine, paved, two lane highways lead to paved parking lots at the trail heads from which the tree line is never too far away, or indeed, the trees are never too thick and heavy anyway. The use of multi-kilometer, rugged, single track roads, where meeting an oncoming vehicle is an adventure, or



where you may be many lonely kilometers away from help in case of trouble, requires a mind shift for us softies from the Rockies. Reading the reports regarding the effect of the heavy snow pack this winter and the incredible rains this May and June on the roads has added to the impression. One advantage of course is the enormous amount of elevation gained, as compared to having to bushwack through steep, dense forests. It's all part of an education process, adapting to this wonderful area.

### **Pot Hill - September 5**

"Pot Hill" is one nickname given to the twin peaks between Grassy and Siwash. One can access them via the Munson FSR (about 14 km gravel) which leaves from the Bombi summit. This was a relatively short half-day hike without too much elevation gain, but great views and all above treeline. We left the weigh scales in Castlegar at 9:15am and were down by 1:30pm. This hike has a high view-to-effort ratio, with even a few huckleberries thrown in for good measure. Participants were Bob Dean, Don Harasym, Marilyn Miller, Helen Foulger, Tom Smith, Louise Hammerich, Brenda Haley, Laurie Charlton and coordinator Ross Bates.

### **HIKING ESSENTIALS**

*Ross Perrier*

There are many lists but this is mine. They are arranged in a relative order of importance and would allow one to survive overnight if necessary (imagine that you have broken your leg, can't be rescued that day, and have to spend the night outside – what would you need to survive?). That should determine the essence of any list.

**Water.** It is hard to survive without a water source. One can go several days without eating.

**Signaling mirror/Emergency Locator Beacon.** A mirror is the best simple way to signal help as it can be seen from a long distance especially from the air. Whistles are of less use as sound does not travel well. Emergency locator beacons are obviously the best things to have if help is needed. One of the best is the De Lorme Inreach, a 2 way satellite communicator with 2 way texting for SOS and personal communication. It sends up to three pre-loaded messages, SOS in emergencies, and has automatic location tracking every 10 minutes. When coupled with the De Lorme Earthmate PN-60W GPS, it allows

outbound and inbound messages with its internal keyboard and message screen. This also has De Lorme Topo maps for all of North America. Cell phones, UHF Radios, walkie talkies and satellite phones (very heavy and thus impractical) have value depending on location. Lighting a safe fire is useful 24 hours a day.

**Large garbage bag.** The large orange leaf bags can serve as an emergency shelter and increase visibility. A bivy sack may be a better option but is much heavier. The Integral Designs 8'x10' Siltarp 2 is another light great choice.

**Warm clothing.** The amount varies with the season but every pack should have a warm jacket (down is light and warm but shouldn't get wet), rain jacket and pants, long underwear, touque, gloves, and neck warmer. A light sleeping bag would be nice (the Western Mountaineering Ultralite weighs less than one pound).

**Seat cushion.** Keeps your bottom warm and off the ground. Thermarest seats are best but closed cell foam pads also work well.

**Map and compass.** If your GPS fails (batteries run out), a compass is invaluable. It is worthless if the declination is not known. 1:50,000 topographical maps should be carried on every hike.

**Fire.** Fire starter, matches, lighter

**Food.** Ideally should carry an extra day's food, 1000 extra calories over and above that day's food would be a minimum.

**First Aid Kit.** Athletic tape, pain killers and steristrips with bandaids would be a minimum.

**Insect Repellent.** DEET is safe and the best consistently effective repellent.

**Flashlight.** LED headlamp best. Spare batteries. A must if you have to walk at night which is not unusual.

**Knife.** Multipurpose tool like a Leatherman with pliers may be better than a Swiss Army Knife but are very heavy and may not have many actual uses (cutting of arm if trapped by a rock). Keep blade sharp.

**Sun protection.** Sunglasses, sunscreen and lip protector with sunscreen.

**Nylon cord.** Useful for many things.

**Keys and identification.**

**Pack.** One large enough to hold all this stuff. I like the 38 liter Deuter Futura.

**Common Sense.**

## **MT ROBSON PROVINCIAL PARK – BERG LAKE TRAIL**

*Ross Perrier*

Mount Robson, at 3954 m (12,972 ft), is the highest mountain in the Canadian Rockies. It was first climbed by Conrad Kain and party in 1913. The park was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1990. Possibly the premier backpacking trip in Canada, I have wanted to do it for many years. Campsites must be booked (1-800-689-9025) and are in demand in the summer. Most of the hikers were from northern Alberta and BC, along with a surprising number of Americans and Germans.

After hiking camp, I drove on one of the most spectacular roads in the world, the Icefields Parkway to the park. Visitor facilities are in the neighboring communities of Jasper, Tete Jaune Cache and Valemount. Register at the Visitors Center and get your permit. All campsites, with a total of 97 camp tent pads, have food storage boxes, pit toilets (no toilet paper), and wash basins. Camp stoves are mandatory. Sleeping is not allowed in the shelters except in emergencies.

Hiking alone, my 50 liter pack was at its maximum. The trailhead is a kilometer from the Visitors Center and sleeping overnight is not allowed (although I did in my camper and escaped detection for once). I planned to walk the 21 km to Berg Lake over 2 days, day hiking for 2 days and returning in 1 day. The trail follows the gorgeous, glacial silt laden Robson River, in the headwaters of the Fraser River. With no lake along its entire length, that silt is carried all the way to Georgia Strait (I kayaked around Gabriola, Valdez and Galiano in June and it was easily noticeable in the currents). Along the flat 4.5km to Kinney Lake, one meets a stream of day hikers. The Kinney Lake Campsite is at 7 km and has a shelter. Mt Robson creates its own micro climate and an interior rainforest of cedar and hemlock. Beyond Kinney Lake the trail enters the spectacular Valley of a Thousand Waterfalls. I camped my first night at Whitehorn (21 sites) at 11 km.

The trail soon starts its 1800 foot climb to Berg Lake. The many huge waterfalls are spectacular – the Falls of the Pool, White Falls and Emperor. At the top of the climb at 16 km is Emperor Falls campsite (16 tent pads) and at 19km, at the start of the lake, is Marmot campsite (7 tent pads). I was lucky to get a permit for the Berg Lake campsite at 21 km, with 26 tent pads and

a “chalet”. The closed in shelter has large storage lockers, big tables and allows cooking inside. It is the premier place to camp. It sits across the lake, under the towering north face of Mt Robson with its two huge glaciers, Berg and Misti, spilling down the mountain and terminating in the lake. Ice calves off frequently producing loud roars that reverberate across the valley. Icebergs litter the lake. Rearguard Campsite (5 pads) at 22 km and Robson Pass Campsite (15 pads), at 23 km are also available.

There are many day hikes available. The Hargreaves Lake Route continues to meet the Toboggan Falls Route. Above is a small non-limestone cave with 6 chambers. This trail can be continued to Mumm Basin with alpine lakes and great views. The premier day hike is to Snowbird Pass. The 11 km trail climbs moraines and cliffs above the massive Robson Glacier. One passes a sign placed in 1913, now 1.5km from the present terminus of the glacier. The trail continues along a pretty boulder strewn creek through a meadow to eventually reach the saddle of the pass. On the other side of the Snowbird is a gigantic glacier that fills the entire valley. The hike requires a full day. I was surprised at all the people day hiking with no pack. They seem unaware of possible severe weather in the mountains.

The 7 day, 105 km Moose River Route crosses Robson Pass to Adolphus Lake continuing on to the Jasper National Park trail system. Moose Pass returns you to Mt Robson Park and down the Moose River to Highway 16 near its confluence with the Fraser River. This must be one of the most beautiful places in Canada and possibly the world. The trip has become the second favorite backpack of my life (after Havasu Canyon in Arizona). I walked out in a day and continued on my driving holiday through northern BC, the Yukon, and Alaska.



## KMC 2012 trip schedule April to November

Day	Date	Destination	Type	Grade	Contact	Phone	email
Saturday	2012-09-29 00:00	Columbia River Trail (Ootischenia to Sunnydale)	hike	B1	Pat & Alan Sheppard		
Saturday	2012-09-29 00:00	Mt. Brennan	hike	C2	Bill McNally		
Sunday	2012-09-30 00:00	Dominion Peak	hike	C2	Peter Oostlander		
Wednesday	2012-10-03 00:00	College Creek Heights	hike	B2	Ross Bates		
Saturday	2012-10-06 00:00						
Sunday	2012-10-07 00:00						
Monday	2012-10-08 00:00	Thanksgiving Day					
Wednesday	2012-10-10 00:00						
Saturday	2012-10-13 00:00	Mystery trip - Family Hike	hike	A1	Peter + Ingrid + kids		
Sunday	2012-10-14 00:00	Blueberry Creek Heights	hike	B2	Ross Bates		
Wednesday	2012-10-17 00:00						
Saturday	2012-10-20 00:00						
Sunday	2012-10-21 00:00						
Wednesday	2012-10-24 00:00						
Saturday	2012-10-27 00:00						
Sunday	2012-10-28 00:00						
Wednesday	2012-10-31 00:00						
Saturday	2012-11-03 00:00						
Sunday	2012-11-04 00:00						
Wednesday	2012-11-07 00:00						
Sunday	2012-11-11 00:00	Champion Lakes - hike	hike	A1	Ross Bates	250 304-2534	rbates@selkirk.ca
	Mother's Day (May 13, 2012)	Father's Day (Jun 17, 2012)					

**Classification of Hiking Trips:**

Physical: **A**-easy **B**-moderate **C**-strenuous **D**-very strenuous **E**-Extended, multi-day trip.

Technical: **1**-hike **2**-scramble **3**-scramble, perhaps with some exposure **4**-climb

**5**-climb, continual belays

**Classification of Biking Trips:**

Difficulty: **A**- easy **B**- moderate **C**-strenuous **D**-very strenuous

**1** - suitable for all bikes

**2** - hybrid or mountain bike recommended

**3** - moderate mountain biking skills required

**TRIP COORDINATORS: PLEASE SEND WAIVERS TO THE SUMMER TRIP DIRECTOR**