

THE HIGH ROAD

Alpine Club of Canada



photo Dave Rothwell

Meetings,

Central Okanagan Group

First Tuesday of the month 7:30 p.m.
 Bunkhouse Restaurant
 2777 KLO rd Kelowna BC
 Call Dave Rothwell 250-768-0002

South Okanagan Group

3rd Monday of the month 7:00 p.m.
 Barley Mill Pub
 2640 Skaha Lake Penticton BC
 Call Sid Scull 250-490-0590

North Okanagan

Call Pat Reiter 250-549-4789



Section Executive

Chair	Dave Rothwell
Treasurer	Sid Scull
Trip Coordinator	David Urness
Secretary	Kathy Walraven
Memberships	
Janice Letkeman-McQuilkan	
National	Cathy Mather
Newsletter	Patrick Reiter
Web Site	Jim Tanner
List Server	Mark Force
Director	Neil Fried
Director	Brian Butt
Director	Rob Friburg

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OK ACC Website

www.members.shaw.ca
 /accokanagan/ACCOK.html /

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Well if you are reading this message then congrats to Pat Reiter on his first successful newsletter. Thanks Pat for taking over this task and as he has already attested to, gathering material can be a challenge so lets keep the stories and trips rolling in. It has been a very successful past year in terms of trips and camps. Among some of the highlights were last years trip to Great Cairn Hut, the Wapta Traverse, summer camp at Icefall Brook, the Asulkan weekends and a great time was had at Fairy Meadows just a few weeks ago. I am sure there are many great stories to be told from some of these trips. Thanks to all those who helped make these outings a success and to those "posers" who allowed Pat and myself to bring home some memorable images .

The executive committee has a few new faces this year and we are currently working hard to establish the locations for this years summer camp and next years winters ski camp. We are also looking towards the centennial celebrations in 2006 and are working on some projects. Volunteers for these events are always needed so I encourage all members, new and old, to contribute in any way as to help make our 100 year celebration a success.

On a personal note, congratulations to Dave and Allison on their new home and expected addition to the family. I guess there will be a new "trip coordinator" in their household. Congrats to Cat, Pat, Carla and Antoine on becoming new "land barons" and we should have lots of house warming parties to attend..... Antoine also deserves another mention for his successful summit attempt of Aconcagua over the xmas holidays and if you bump into him, get the story on his swimming at 14,000 feet.

As the weather gets warmer I am more tempted to hang up the skis and get the climbing gear out but there still may be a few turns to be had. Well I could go on but I don't want to take up all Pats space so I look forward to seeing you all in the hills this spring and summer.

Dave Rothwell
President
Okanagan Section
Alpine Club of Canada



Quotable Quotes;

From Fairy Meadows Winter 2005

'The 5.10 ba (butt assist) was the hardest move Ron ever made!'

'Good thing we skied at least one big line, eh Trent?'

'I only do the things I enjoy!'

'Brian's story finally rated a "10" (for Brevity)!'

'Huck'in good time, eh?'

'High Pressure = High times in the mountains, yeh!'

Section Trip Reports

New Years at Peyto 2005

by TJ Tessel and Andrew Wrench



Four ACC members overcame the geographical difficulty of getting together for an awesome ski trip. Pat Reiter from Vernon, TJ Tessel from Enderby, Andrew Wrench from Sicamous and Cat Mather from Revelstoke.

We met in Revelstoke, supper in Golden and arrived in Castle mountain hostel by 10:30 PM. We got up at 5:30 AM, had breakfast at Lake Louise hostel and started up Peyto lake trail by 9:30. With a temperature of -20 and an interesting ski down to the lake we had our sights set for Peyto glacier.

Across the lake and coming up to the moraine with very thin snow cover made for interesting route-finding. We picked our way through the rocks, and managed to keep the boot packing to a minimum thanks to our fearless route-finder Pat and reached the weather station in three hours.

From the weather station it was a very straight forward ski across the glacier and to the hut, arriving at 3:30p. It was an early night to follow an early morning of clouds. After we filled our bellies, we set our sights on North Rhondda, skied across the glacier and into the cirque of the Rhondda's weather started to clear as we gained the east ridge. Followed the ridge to the false summit at 10,200 feet.

It was sunny and the snow glistening the fun was about to begin. In front of us a beautiful untracked bowl of steep and deep. The first tracks were so epic, we had to do it again. Then it was back to the hut for dinner followed by a sunset ski and the arrival of the Swedish woman's ski team for Pat. After the crib competition we had an awesome fireworks display by our piro

technicians, Andrew and T.J. to bring in the New Year with a blast.

The first day of the New Year we started with sunny skies and this time our sights were set for South Rhondda. Summated around noon with some awesome panoramic views of Yoho ice-fields and the presidents to the south and North Rhonda, Mt. Thompson to the north.

After skiing off South Rhondda, another beautiful powder descent we skied across the glacier east to a huge snow drift to do some hucking. After this a great ski down to the hut for appies and dinner, after dinner we decided with some influence from the Swedish ski team to take an alternate route back to the highway.

The next day was sunny and cold as we skied south to the Bow hut. We took advantage of the warm hut for lunch and skied down the narrow gorge and across Bow lake arriving at the lodge around 3:00 PM with a temp of -28. Cat and Pat braved the cold to hitch hike back to the cars after having problems starting the car we were off to the Revelstoke hostel (Catto Revy).

North Face Winter Leadership Course, January 8-15, 2005

by Trent Marshall

This year I was fortunate enough to participate in the Winter Leadership Course at one of the Golden Alpine Holidays lodges in the Esplanade Range, east of Glacier National Park. There were 10 great participants from Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary and Banff. The three instructors were, Brad Harrison, Peter Amann and Cyril Shokoples. Each day presented new opportunities to learn or reinforce previously learned skills required in back-country skiing. Much of the week was spent assessing snow conditions and route finding. Lectures were also given on technical skills such as short roping and weather observations. This was, by far, one of the best courses I've taken. We were encouraged to route find in areas we wouldn't necessarily ski up for the purpose of dealing with objective hazards in a somewhat controlled setting. The stability also deteriorated throughout the week, adding to the learning environment. Other than the -30 weather and running out of beer, I would highly recommend this course.

Kootenay Snow Mud Rally 2005

by Janice Letkeman-McQuilkan



A gaggle of fifteen adventurers collected from opposite ends of the Okanagan Valley including a sole Vancouverite Laura, temporarily increased Salmo's population during the third annual Kootenay Ski Tour.

After a communal breakfast in #10, the convoy reached the parking lot under stellar skies at 0900 to launch towards our first objective, Huckleberry Hut. The cozy hut is located eight kilometers up the trailhead on the South West shoulder of Cabin Peak gaining 1400 feet crossing numerous creek and navigating sections of the downhill Alder bush slalom course. The hut is part of the Bonnington Traverse, a fabulous ski tour with terrific ridge views and cozy hut options along the way. Joining our throng from the Kootenay Mountaineering Club was Sandra M. who provided some great local area information.

In addition to reaching the hut, we also managed to sample some of the ski terrain from Cabin Peak. Snow conditions challenged our ski skills making us all stronger and better after the experience. Carmen and Cathrine's hooplas were especially exuberant! Fred, Andy and Chris chose a creek shortcut providing pure entertainment for all. Too bad Sid and Laura missed the survival ski. Returning to the trail, rock ski owners had the added advantage of plunging through streams avoiding the effort of disengaging boot from binding [read Brian and John] and those with scratch-less skis kept them that way during creek crossings [read the rest]. Craig also managed to test his telemark runaway ski binding and is reported to have gazed longingly at the AT brake system.

To commemorate our aqueous descent, we met at the Woolly Ymir Pub and raised a glass of Congratulations to Jamie &

Cathrine's wedding engagement which nearly coincides with Brian & Pam's first wedding anniversary...The Ymir Pub?? What were we thinking?

Sunday morning rang blue and clear with Carla leading discussion in our caffeine support group under morning rays. With a bomber ice pack, stellar blue skies and wonderful ridge views, the day promised to be an excellent ski tour. From our main summit, the Purcell's visible to the North, Red Mountain in the South and our previous day's peak to the North East. Surprising everyone, our ski descent sounded with enthusiastic hooplas and hollers at the wonderful discovery of great spring skiing conditions on a vertical run of 1300 feet. A great finish to an already spectacular day.

The star of our slippery mud rally descent was Craig's white Benny. Just before our descent into the seven kilometer mud pits, Craig made a point of securing road side assistance from the red Toyota 4X4 in exchange for Fudge brownies...it worked. To celebrate the successful muddy descent, Andy jumped out dancing a celebratory jig to the musical accompaniment of honking horns.

To re-energize everyone for the trip home, a quick bite at the Grand Forks Hotel specializing in Russian food... Jackie ordered peanut butter for her sandwich.

It was a great weekend getting to know like-minded folk and another opportunity to explore some great ski touring terrain.

Summer and Winter Section Camps 2004-2005

by Pat Reiter

This past year we have had a great summer and winter camp. Summer 2004 saw us at Icefall Brook in August and in February 2005 we were at Fairy Meadows in the Northern Selkirks.



The Summer camp was unique because we had the opportunity to stay with Brad Harrison at the ACC GMC (General Mountaineering Camp) the food was excellent and the climbing was spectacular. We climbed three out of the five Lyell's all over 11,000', Mons Peak, Division and Mt Cambria. The catch was we had to take the last two days to tear down the camp. Was it worth it? The answer was a resounding yes! What a phenomenal experience!

31 for 2 was all I heard as I was losing yet another crib game to Ev. Here I was sitting with nineteen other participants in the Bill Putnam hut at Fairy Meadows enjoying the cozy atmosphere. We just had a great day touring up to Unicol and now we sitting back relaxing as we waited for dinner to get ready.

At the other end of the table came a reverberation when I heard someone exclaim "nice sound for a half inch speaker..."

This will be the fourth time the Okanagan Section has visited this wonderful area (one summer camp and three ski camps).

In 2003 we had snow everyday and great powder skiing but virtually no touring up high. In 2005 we had perfect visibility and no new snow. With these conditions we were able to travel high in the alpine with spectacular visibility. The downside was we really had to search hard for fresh snow. Areas traveled to included Pioneer peak, The Shoestring Glacier, Unicol, Mt Colossus, Mt Enterprise, Sir William and of course the coveted but heavily skied Practice Slopes. For the first time in a long time the Father Nelson run was skied. 2500' vertical drop which almost brought this author to tears of frustration. Leaders such as John Warren, Nate and Rich (Duck) lead fantastic adventures all over the Fairy Meadow region.

The winter of 2005 was a mixed bag of snow conditions but the one thing we had was a stable snow pack and if there was one unique experience from this trip it was the fact that some slopes skied exceeded 40 degrees which was a first for this author in the back-country. Two words..... goose pimples.

The past few camps, summer and winter have been great. Fantastic experiences, great friends, great food and drink especially the Pasta dish prepared by Trent, Brian and Kathy...



Previous OK Section Trips

Bruins Pass, Rogers Pass

Jan 24/25 2004

Pat Reiter

The last email was read, details were in place and we were set for an epic adventure up in Rogers Pass. Ken McClure and Kathy Walraven were the group leaders and the objective was Bruins Pass. This Pass is a big objective that ends with a short knife ridge near the top. The elevation is about 2300m with spectacular with panoramic views in all directions and a superb ski down.

Our participants were Daniel, Kat, Andrew, Antoine, Graham, the group leaders and myself Pat. We woke to snow so at the Park office we changed our objective to a reconnaissance up the drainage and if conditions limited us a ski up Grizzly shoulder.

We were on the trail at 8:30 and we started to spread out almost immediately along the drainage as the avalanche paths started to loom above us. Silence prevailed as thoughts went to the tragedy that had occurred almost a year ago.

As the morning progressed the weather improved with the sun started to shine through. We had a group discussion that we continue onwards towards Bruins and see how far we could get. As we hit the alpine we stopped and dug a pit on a SE prospective. We were satisfied with the stability and continued up the last ridge towards the pass. We had a few other groups in the area and we watched 2 strong skiers descend Bruins in perfect deep powder turns. As we ate our lunch Ken approached each skier and asked how they felt and weighed the options of heading to the top of the pass. Again a group consensus was formed that we go for the top as we all felt strong, the weather had improved and our time frame was good.



Fast forward now to skiing down.....I'm three quarters the way down and have just linked a hundred turns or so and my thighs are burning! How exhilarating to have a run so long that my legs ache because of the length of the descent. Everyone was stoked at having the opportunity to have had such a great run down.

We finished the day with a short skin up Balu pass and a ski through to the bottom of the valley ending at Glacier Park Lodge. The next adventure was our 'Pork' meal in the cafeteria that night. Note to self... Either bite the bullet and get the buffet or have a plan in place to eat in your room. This is possible through some creative use of 'legal' heating appliances already found in the motel rooms.

Our second day we chose a similar objective and skied Ursus Minor's trees. This is NE of Bruins pass with a similar elevation gain but more secure in a treed slope. The snow was spectacular and face shots were not uncommon! To exit out of this area involved a ski through a steep gully, which lead to the valley bottom. This is one area you do not want to be if the snow pack is not stable. It is a big terrain trap. Antoine, Daniel and Andrew had some fun hucking off a drop into deep pow and blasting their way to the bottom!

We had one glorious run down and were completely stoked with having the opportunity to ski some of Rogers Pass greatest offerings with a great bunch of friends! As we grouped at the vehicles to descend to lower elevations our thoughts turned to the Frontier in Revelstoke were we could get our paws onto a big greasy burger with all the fixings to repair the damage from the meal we had the day before....

A big thank you to Ken and Kathy for coordinating the weekend and to all whom attended to make the adventure as memorable as it was!

Needle Peak Trip Feb 15/04

by Brian Butt

After an early morning meeting at the Tim Hortons in Kelowna, Ken, Kathy, Kat, Rob, Mark, and myself (sorry if I missed someone) set off down the Coquihalla. Just the other side of the toll booth we passed under the highway to park. The sky was clear and the forecast was for precipitation in the afternoon.

After repeatedly breaking through a crust with narrow tele skis on a previous trip, I opted for a big fat pair of downhill skis. If your goal is to get a really good upper body workout when climbing, make sure to use the heaviest possible setup, get skins that cover only 1/2 the ski base and make sure to wax them so they slide well backwards. Despite testing my setup on a lift serviced hill first, I soon felt myself taking one slip backward for every two steps up.

I should have listened to the guy in the shop, but he didn't have wide enough skins anyway. Tree roots and rocks can sometimes provide extra traction while trying to skin up. Sorry if I held anyone up.

After coming up out of the treed switchbacks we could see Needle Peak and a nice powder bowl off to our right. The big highway looks pretty insignificant from up there. The bowl had a large overhanging cornice and we could see a group of skiers tracking it up. We had a lunch break and headed across to the bowl. We discovered the snow to be much better than the wet slop we had climbed through in the trees. After a hop off the cornice, my ultra heavy all metal powder pig skis finally became worthwhile! We had a beautiful run through some great untracked powder. Then it was time to hike out of the bowl. By the time we got back to the top of the trees again, the weather that had been forecast was moving into the bowl and it was time to head down. The texture of the snow, on our way back down, was described as wet tree bombs mixed with moss and twigs. Not as nice as the bowl, but interesting to ski through.

On the drive home Mark entertained us with stories of the hazards of wearing a large plastic bum while hosting a Karaoke: How to maintain your plastic bum with duct tape after it is violated by drunken OUC students: and How a small African

nation appears to have cornered the market on big fake removable bums. Thanks for having me along on a fun adventure!

Great Cairn Ski Trip - ACC OK Section, Feb 21-28, 2004

by Cat Mather

Quotes from pre-trip email--

From Cathy's Contact--"Firewood is not supplied, the ACC can advise you on the best course of

action when you make your reservation. The hut is minimally equipped for cooking on a coleman

white gas stove, a set of pots, pans, dishes, bowls, forks, spoons, knives are supplied." From National..."The Great Cairn is fully loaded with pots and pans and axes and shovels and

sleeping pads...The only thing you'll need is some matches and paper for the wood stove as well as white gas. "

From Us

"Looks like there is NOT wood cut, so if we have room...." "If we haven't found out status on firewood and there is room in the chopper we can bring some in." "I think we should bring firewood" "Why no information about this place?"

And from our hut registry entry ---

1st Day - "Fly in 21st, 1st Question - why no hut entries since Aug 21/03? 2nd Question - why almost no entries in Feb of any year?"

2nd Day - Clear blue sunnies, ascent of Guardsman Glacier. (Sir Sandford) Despite a little crust, it was a great ski. So nice to be skiing this high and wild mountain.

3rd Day - Mostly clear and off to Mt Silvertip via the same glacier. Flat light stopped us just short of the summit. Great views of the Gothics plus more. Skiing heavy snow but fabulous runs.

4th Day - Oh no! Low cloud and fog. Off to ski the trees across the valley. Skied the trees off the NW ridge of Mt Guardsman. After being cliffed out a couple times, we had another day of great skiing.

5th Day - Rest Day? Sort of. A few short runs outside the hut on Palisade. Hucking off a couple of rocks and the day is done.

6th Day - Wake up to zero visibility. Hard to see the outhouse rocket ship at

times. Went down the valley to the trees below Guardsman. Two runs of Pow-Wow!! One more great day in Paradise.

7th Day - Wake up to even less visibility. The rocket ship has disappeared! However, we decide our barometers are true (high pressure) and head for Haworth Glacier. By late morning the skies start clearing and the N side of Mt Palisade provides three steep, deep, long runs. Fog rolls in for the final descent of E side of Palisade, and we almost ski off the ice-falls and cliffs. After re-organizing (read rope - editor), we find a last stellar line.

8th Day - Fly out. Still have no answers to the 2 questions from Day 1. We had such an amazing week of skiing out of such a great little hut. Decent weather and good stability had a lot to do with it. For Big Mountain Adventure Skiing with a group of friends, this place would be hard to beat."

The Crew

Dave Rothwell (spill-o-matic)

Pat Reiter (King Shit)

Andrew Wrench (straight up)

Cathy Mather (splat cat)

Evelyn Ens (yippee Yee Ha)

John Warren (cliff diver)

And from Pat Reiter's comments after-- Sir Sandford is a Big Ass Mountain, the area is spectacular and the hut as small as it is mighty fine and cozy for being so remote! We had a great crew, great food and spirits (mountain fresh air...)



Upcoming Section Trips

March 25-28 2005 Back-country skiing at White Water. Contact Trent Marshall 250-860-2367 email; trentmarshall@yahoo.com

April 2-3 2005 Sapphire Col-Lily Traverse, Rogers Pass. (Advanced) Contact Cathy Mather 250-837-4434 mtncat@rctvonline.net

April 9-10 2005 Rock Climbing at Devils Elbow, Kelowna BC (Blumers Bluff). Contact Leon Blumer 250-762-0609

May 6-8 2005 Mountaineering, Mt Baker via the Coleman-Denning route Washington. (Advanced) Contact Trent Marshall 250-860-2367 email; trentmarshall@yahoo.com

May 29 2005 Rock Climbing at Cougar Canyon Vernon BC. Contact Chris Meyrick 250-765-6123 email; cmeyrick@mail.com

May 21-23 2005 Mark Berger Ski traverse in the Monashees. Contact Mark Force 250-767-6132 email; dirtbagpook@hotmail.com

June 18-19 2005 Annual Mt English Climb. Geared to the novice, learn some snow skills. Contact Neil MacGibbon 250-763-9702 email; neilanddee@silk.net

Summer Camp 2005 TBA
Contact Dave Rothwell
email: mountainphoto@shaw.ca

Winter Camp 2006 TBA
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