

The Alpine Club of Canada

# Gazette

le club alpin du Canada

Bonus  
Adventures  
*at the Mummery GMC*



Vol. 36, No. 3 Winter | hiver 2021



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# The Alpine Club of Canada Gazette

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- Zaui Software



## Contributor Profiles



### Dylan Cunningham

Bonus Adventures at the Mummery GMC, page 14

Dylan Cunningham is an ACMG Ski Guide and Apprentice Alpine Guide living in Canmore, Alberta. He feels tremendously fortunate for the mountains and for the people he shares them with. Dylan's boundless energy and adventurous spirit are a source of both joy and frustration to his partners but he hopes they won't abandon him...there is a whole lot left to go see.



### Neil Hilts

High Water, page 24

Neil Hilts grew up in the mountains of Rossland, B.C., before moving east to Calgary a decade ago to pursue university. With an upbringing heavily focused outdoors, Neil spent time backpacking in the Valhallas and skiing at Red Mountain. Now, you can find him on weekends in the Rockies skiing (resort and touring), hiking, running, biking and camping.



### Kate Snedeker

Mummery Memories, page 30

Originally from Texas, Kate made her way to Alberta via New York, Pennsylvania, Scotland and Ontario. She cut her ski teeth in the Colorado Rockies and gained a love for all things mountains exploring the White Mountains. An Intro to Mountaineering course in 2013, soon followed by AST1 was the gateway to a life scheduled around climbing, back-country skiing and mountaineering. Kate is also a public rep on the Canadian Avalanche Association board.



### Ray Hope and Katarzyna (Kasia) Dyszy

ACC Manitoba Section Profile, page 34

After joining the ACC seven years ago, Ray has been rock and ice climbing and mountaineering ever since. He has completed his ACMG TRCI certification and attended this year's Summer Leadership Course at the Mt Mummery GMC.

Kasia is the Member Services Chair and the Events Calendar Coordinator for ACC-MB Section. She is an active volunteer and one of the ACC-MB's main event organizers for winter club activities.



### Petra Hekkenberg

The Back Page, page 42

Petra left the Netherlands in 2015 to live in New Denver, BC where she could surround herself with community and wilderness—the two elements that form the roots of her creative work and being. Petra holds two bachelor degrees in design with the focus on public space design. Whenever she can, she'll be up high, by foot or on skis, to greet the mountains. Petra works part-time for the ACC as a custodian at Kokanee Glacier Cabin, which she describes as “a pure source of happiness.”

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Cover photo: Dylan Cunningham high on Mt Mummery, this pitch would take him to a belay in the large bergschrund above.

Photo de couverture : En haut du mont Mummery, cette longueur emmènerait Dylan Cunningham à assurer dans la vaste rimaille au-dessus.

Photo Tanya Bok

Crew headed to double summit Karakol & Jones Peaks on day 6 of GMC week 6, 2021.  
Photo Juliane Webster



# Celebrating the GMC

Reading through this issue of the ACC *Gazette*, you'll notice a bit of an emphasis on content from this past summer's General Mountaineering Camp. Our first feature article (*Bonus Adventures at the Mummery GMC* by Dylan Cunningham, pg 14) recounts a first ascent on a big peak; *Mummery Memories* (Kate Snedeker, et al, pg 30) collects the thoughts of the participants of this year's version of the Summer Leadership Training that runs each year at the camp; and *Through the Eyes of Members* (pg 38) showcases some of the finest images submitted to our annual photo contest.

The GMC is run in a different location in western Canada's mountains each summer and in 2020 it was postponed for the first time in over 100 years. It's not just our annual camp, it's a heart-and-soul pillar of the club and there's a personal connection for everyone who works and attends. We missed it a lot in 2020 and we're feeling like celebrating.

We also like that those three stories cover completely different aspects of the camp, and of the ACC's mandate: adventure and exploration; training, leadership and safety; and art, respectively.

Thanks to everyone who attended, ran, and guided the return of the GMC, and to those who contributed to this issue.

This issue also includes the debut of three new "departments" for the *Gazette*. **Mountain Safety** will be a regular contribution from Doug Latimer, the ACC's Lead Winter Guide, and will feature technical tips on how to recreate in the mountains safely.

**Camp Journal** will feature a report from one of the camps that the ACC Adventures program runs each summer and winter. Expect first-hand accounts of the guided skiing, hiking and climbing trips that the club offers each year.

The **Mountain Art** department will showcase our mountain culture in all its forms. In 1906, Elizabeth Parker included in the objectives of the club, "the cultivation of art in relation to mountain scenery," and we aim to use the pages of the *Gazette* for some cultivation.

All of these new departments will be regular features in the *Gazette* going forward as we continue to grow the ACC members' magazine.

Our **Section Profile** comes to you from the birthplace of the ACC, Manitoba and the Back Page from one of the prettiest places in Canada's mountains, Kokanee Glacier Provincial Park. Please enjoy this issue, and as always, we'd love to hear from our members. Email us anytime at [gazette@alpineclubofcanada.ca](mailto:gazette@alpineclubofcanada.ca).

—Keith Haberl

# Pour célébrer le Camp général

En lisant ce numéro de la *Gazette* du CAC, vous remarquerez l'accent qu'il met sur le Camp général d'alpinisme de l'été dernier. Notre premier article de fond (*Des aventures en prime au Camp général* de Dylan Cunningham, p. 14) relate une première ascension sur un sommet imposant ; *GMC Journal* (de Kate Snedeker, et al, p. 30) recueille les réflexions des participants de la dernière version annuelle de notre cours estival de formation en leadership ; et *Through the Eyes of Members* (p. 38) reproduit certaines des plus belles images que nos membres ont proposées lors de notre concours de photographie annuel.

Le Camp général, qui se déroule chaque année dans un lieu différent des montagnes de l'Ouest canadien, avait dû être reporté en 2020 pour la première fois en cent ans. Plus qu'un camp annuel, le Camp général est un des piliers du cœur et de l'âme même du club, qui crée un lien personnel pour tous les gens qui y travaillent ou y assistent. Il nous a beaucoup manqué en 2020, et nous avons envie de célébrer son retour.

Nous sommes également heureux que ces trois articles couvrent trois aspects entièrement différents du Camp et de la mission du CAC : l'aventure et l'exploration, la formation, la sécurité et le leadership, ainsi que l'art, respectivement.

Nous remercions tous ceux et celles qui ont fréquenté, dirigé et guidé ce retour du GMC, et les personnes qui ont contribué à ce numéro.

Ce dernier inaugure également trois nouvelles sections dans la *Gazette*. **Mountain Safety** recevra les contributions régulières de Doug Latimer, le guide d'hiver en chef du CAC, qui offrira des conseils techniques pour s'amuser en sécurité dans les montagnes.

**Camp Journal** fera le rapport de l'un des camps que le programme d'aventures des camps du CAC dirige chaque été et chaque hiver. Attendez-vous à des témoignages directs des voyages guidés de ski, de randonnée et d'escalade offerts par le club chaque année.

La section **Mountain Art** valorisera notre culture alpine dans toutes ses formes. En 1906, Elizabeth Parker incluait, parmi les objectifs du club, « la culture de l'art qui touche les paysages de montagne, » et nous visons à faire servir les pages de la *Gazette* dans ce but.

Toutes ces nouvelles sections figureront régulièrement dans la *Gazette* à l'avenir, alors que nous continuons à développer le magazine des membres du CAC.

Notre profil de section vous parvient depuis le lieu de naissance du CAC, le Manitoba et la page de garde de l'un des plus beaux endroits des montagnes canadiennes, le parc provincial du glacier Kokanee. Nous vous souhaitons une bonne lecture de ce numéro, et sommes toujours heureux d'avoir des nouvelles de nos membres. Écrivez-nous en tout temps à [gazette@alpineclubofcanada.ca](mailto:gazette@alpineclubofcanada.ca).

—Keith Haberl

*Les alpinistes se lèvent de bon matin en prévision d'une longue journée au mont Mummery.  
The first climbers wake up very early for a long day on Mt Mummery.  
Photo Christopher Candela*

## Nominate a volunteer

Each year the ACC Awards Committee undertakes the task of sifting through numerous nominations to identify and acknowledge those deserving of The Alpine Club of Canada's Volunteer Awards.

Nominations are now open for exceptional ACC volunteers. The following awards recognize and celebrate ACC volunteers for their contributions to the club and its members:

- A.O. Wheeler Legacy Award
- Honorary Membership
- President's Award
- Silver Rope for Leadership Award
- Distinguished Service Award
- Don Forest Service Award
- Eric Brooks Leader Award

For details on how to nominate a volunteer and nomination forms, visit [alpineclubofcanada.ca/awards](http://alpineclubofcanada.ca/awards) or call the ACC National Office at (403) 678-3200 ext. 222 to receive the information by mail.

Deadline for nominations is **December 31**.

## Nommez un bénévole

Chaque année, les membres du Comité des prix du Club Alpin du Canada consacrent de leur temps libre à passer au crible de nombreuses nominations pour déterminer les lauréats des Prix de bénévolat du club.

Les candidatures sont maintenant ouvertes pour les bénévoles exceptionnels du Club Alpin du Canada. Les prix suivants reconnaissent et célèbrent les bénévoles du CAC pour leurs contributions au club et à ses membres :

- Prix A.O. Wheeler Legacy
- Membre honoraire
- Prix du président
- Prix Silver Rope du leadership
- Prix de service Don Forest
- Prix pour le service remarquable
- Prix leader Eric Brooks

Pour plus de détails sur les formulaires de candidature et la façon de nommer un bénévole, visitez [alpineclubofcanada.ca/awards](http://alpineclubofcanada.ca/awards) ou appelez le Bureau national du CAC au (403) 678-3200 ext. 222 pour recevoir l'information par la poste.

La date de tombée des candidatures est le **31 décembre**.

## ACC grants program

With contributions from many generous donors, The Alpine Club of Canada has established funds to support mountaineering related projects and initiatives. The deadline for submission of grant applications is January 31, 2022. Grant recipients will be announced mid-March.

**The Jen Higgins Grant** promotes creative and energetic alpine related outdoor pursuits by young women. These projects should demonstrate initiative, creativity, energy and resourcefulness with an emphasis on self-propelled wilderness travel and should provide value and interest to the community.

**The Environment Grant** provides support for projects that contribute to the protection and preservation of alpine flora and fauna in their natural habitat. The focus of the grant is wilderness conservation.

**The Jim Colpitts Grant** encourages young climbers between the ages of 17 and 24 to participate in mountain related courses and programs such as wilderness first aid, avalanche training, rock/crevasse rescue and mountain leadership training.

For info and application forms visit [alpineclubofcanada.ca/grants](http://alpineclubofcanada.ca/grants) or call the ACC National Office at 403-678-3200 ext. 222.

## Summit Bid charity auction – act now

The Mountain Guides Ball may be cancelled for this year, but we're full steam ahead on our online charity auction. Which means you can win great gear and art and experiences, and you don't have to get dressed up to bid!

We are asking all those who value the ACC's legacy of mountain leadership, our extensive hut system, and our advocacy for the protection of Canada's alpine environments, to help us make this year's online auction our

most successful event yet!

The auction will be open for bids the week of October 25, with winners of different items announced daily that week. If you RSVP to the auction event you'll be entered to win early bird giveaways. All proceeds go to the ACC's Greatest Needs Fund.

For now, you can check out the donors, and get a feel for the auction on our Summit Bid website.

<https://summitbid.alpineclubofcanada.ca>

Support the ACC's annual charity auction and win!

the **Summit Bid**

CANADA'S PREMIER AUCTION OF MOUNTAIN GEAR, ART AND EXPERIENCES.

Online bidding begins October 25th.

Stay tuned to the ACC's online channels for updates!

## Heritage club spotlight

The ACC celebrates our members who have been with the club for 50 years with an official lapel pin and a wall plaque.

Our 50-year Heritage Club includes Harriet and Bob (Robert) Kruszyna. Bob joined the ACC in 1959 and has been a member for 62 years. Harriet joined in 1962 and remained a member for 55 years until her death in 2017.

You may recognize Bob's name from guidebooks to the Canadian Rockies and Interior Ranges that he, along with Bill Putnam and Glen Boles, authored in the 1970s. Congratulations!



## Heading out for an Adventure?

The ACC online store has got you covered with the latest guidebooks for backcountry skiing/splitboarding, snowshoeing and ice climbing in the Canadian Rockies and Rogers Pass. Members get a 15% discount.

Visit our on-line store [alpineclubofcanada.ca/guidebooks](http://alpineclubofcanada.ca/guidebooks)

## We've got you covered!

The ACC partners with **TuGo®** to sell travel insurance which covers the activities our members do, and provide tailored advice most insurance companies can't.

Call us to ask about our COVID trip interruption insurance plans.

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## Shadow Lake Lodge winter opening 2022 announced

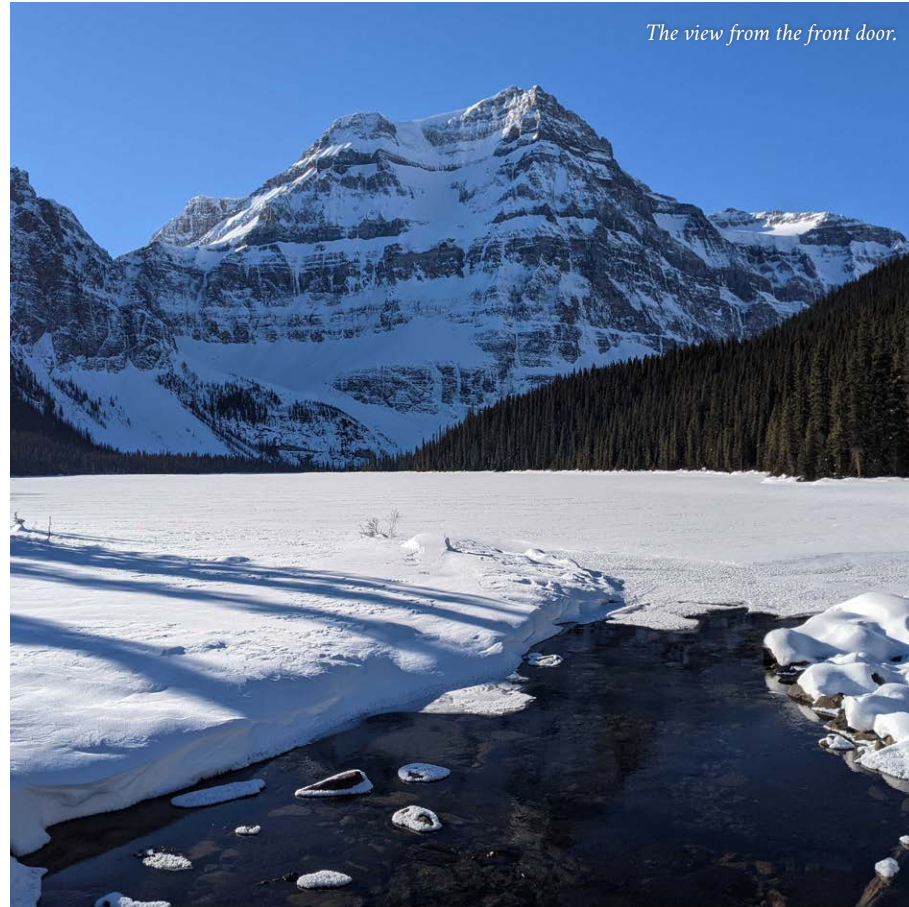
Bookings are open now for our winter 2021/2022 season. Visit [Shadowlakelodge.com](http://Shadowlakelodge.com) to make a reservation.

Our winter season will run from January 21 to March 27, 2022. We'll be open on weekends only, for Friday and Saturday overnights. Check out our winter page and we'll see you in the snow!

We'll have the same amazing hospitality and food service that you've come to expect.

All of our cabins are cozy with propane heaters and deluxe down duvets. Food service will be in our dining room, or if you prefer, in your cabin. We'll have a crackling fire going in the CPR cabin for you as well. Access to the lodge is a 4-hour ski up Redearth Creek.

Come enjoy the winter at Shadow Lake Lodge.



The view from the front door.

Trips organised and led by Dan Mazur, with 12 successful Everest expeditions, 3 successful K2 expeditions and many others. High altitude rescues: Roman Giutashvili from Everest, Gary Ball from K2, Lincoln Hall from Everest, and Rick Allen from Broad Peak.

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- June-July-Aug '21 - Gasherbrum 1 and 2, K2 Summit, 8000m Training, Broad Peak, K2 Base Camp Trek, Pastore Trekking Peak (near K2).
- Sept-Oct '21 - Manaslu, Cho Oyu, Shishapangma.
- Oct-Nov '21 - 7000m Peaks! Ama Dablam, Baruntse.

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## 2022 International Basin GMC

Since 1906 the Alpine Club has been putting on the General Mountaineering Camp each summer. Next year we are excited to be exploring the Northern Purcells at International Basin. Come join us next summer for some modern day mountain exploration.

[alpineclubofcanada.ca/gmc2022](http://alpineclubofcanada.ca/gmc2022)

Alpine Club of Canada

# Winter Mountain Programs

## ACC Winter 2021/2022 adventures are open for registration!

We are excited to offer a roster packed with opportunities to try new sports, develop mountain skills, and travel to incredible, pristine locations. In an effort to increase representation we are broadening our programs to include more diverse groups to explore our winter with a safe and welcoming peer group.

### Mountain Safety

- Avalanche Skills Training 1 – 8 offerings
- Avalanche Skills Training 2 – 4 offerings
- Advanced Decision Making in Avalanche Terrain
- Crevasse Rescue – 2 offerings

### Developing Skills

- Intro to Backcountry Skiing and Splitboarding – 6 offerings
- Intro to Ski Mountaineering – 2 offerings
- Early Season Ice
- Intro to Ice Climbing
- Intro to Lead Ice Climbing
- Intro to Mixed Climbing
- Intermediate Ice Movement

### Powder Camps

- Fairy Meadows Powder Camp
- Kokanee Powder Camp
- Rogers Pass (Asulkan) Powder Camps – 2 offerings
- Women and Non-Binary Ski Camp

### Traverses

- Wapta Traverse – 1 turns week and 1 tech week
- Bow Yoho Traverse
- Columbia Icefield Ski Mountaineering

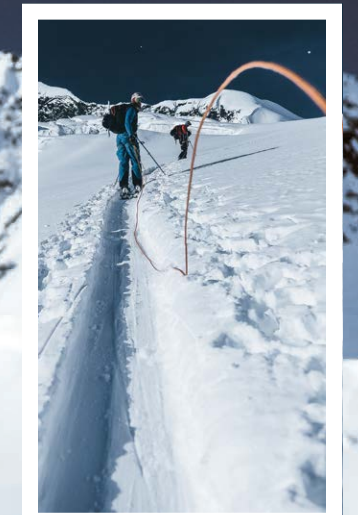
### Safe Spaces

Please note that these camps are population-specific booking only. BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour.

- Intro to Backcountry Skiing – Women and Non-Binary edition
- Intro to Backcountry Skiing – Split board edition
- Intro to Backcountry Skiing – BIPOC edition
- Avalanche Skills Training 1 – BIPOC edition
- Women and Non-Binary Ski Camp

Check out [adventures.alpineclubofcanada.ca](http://adventures.alpineclubofcanada.ca) for more information on courses including dates, prices, COVID protocols, cancellation policies, etc.

**Please be advised that for everyone's safety, we will require proof of double vaccination for all hut-based trips.**



Dylan Cunningham starting up the ice arete during the F.A. of Smokeshow.  
Dylan Cunningham entreprend l'arête de glace pendant la première ascension de Smokeshow.  
Photo Tanya Bok

# Bonus Adventures at the Mummery GMC

Story by Dylan Cunningham

**It's** been 45 minutes since we started up the Blaeberry Forest Service Road near Golden and our convoy is now slowing to pull off into a clearing. The valley here is filled with a fog from last night's heavy showers and it tangles with smoke still lingering from a summer of intense forest fires. Soon I'll be flying back into the Mt Mummery area for another week of guiding at the ACC's General Mountaineering Camp. I wait for others to park and I wonder if we'll have the visibility to fly. As the morning sun creeps its way into the deep valley I get a glimpse of treetops on the far side of the river. Things are not quite as murky as I'd originally thought. I park and unload my bags. 🏔️

Chucky Gerrard, GMC Manager, is coordinating the helicopter exchange with the week six participants. He gets a break in the action and pulls me aside. Chucky is excited that Kathy Meyer and I, both working at the camp and training to become mountain guides, are planning to stay up in the area after the week is over. We want to do some exploring and perhaps attempt an unclimbed route on Mummery. The ACC has always supported aspiring guides and exploration is what the GMCs are all about. With this tradition at heart, Chucky encourages our budding plan.

On our short flight from the staging area to the camp we break out of the gloomy valley and into the alpine. The helicopter lands and a flurry of moving bags and welcoming smiles command my attention for a short while but not for long. I can't help but take in the area. Sun showers are making their way through the mountains and they cast the peaks in a dignified light. Mt Mummery's towering east face dominates the view. It's an unclimbed bastion of rock and almost all of it is threatened by seracs that periodically send avalanches of ice roaring down to the glacier below – not where you would want to climb.

Still, one feature protrudes enough to escape the hazard while drawing an aesthetic line directly from glacier to summit. It's the NE Buttress that I first noticed while guiding on week three. Looking at it, I feel a familiar giddiness bubbling up inside me. I love the process of imagining a new climb. Will we get a chance to explore it? Would such an adventure be fun or would it be "fun?" I look forward to finding out!

## Plan falls apart

As the week goes on, the feelings of expectancy only deepen. Kathy and I spend our spare time conceiving a plan for the NE buttress and take every opportunity to get up close and personal with the mountain. On the first full day of camp, she and two other guides climb the Southeast Ridge which is our most plausible descent route. Later on, the two of us manage to get a few free hours to sort out the approach to our line. We ascend the Karakal Glacier a short ways and climb up a rock corner that brings us to the hanging glacier below the buttress. From there we can tell the route looks promising.



Cedar groves on the hike out.  
Des bandes de cèdres lors de la randonnée.

Kathy climbing the slabs below the hanging glacier during our reconnaissance mission.  
Kathy escaladant les blocs sous le glacier suspendu durant notre mission de reconnaissance.

Photos Dylan Cunningham







*Smokeshow on Mt Mummery IV 5.6 45° 850m.*

*Le « Smokeshow » du mont Mummery, IV 5.6 45° 850 m.*

*Photo Dylan Cunningham*

As our fellow campers witness these excursions they start probing about our intentions and it's fun to feel the curiosity building in all of us. For many GMC guests, the concept of new routing in the alpine is somewhat exotic and we enjoy sharing in the excitement. They take it as hard as we do when things take a turn and the plans that we've been concocting look like they won't come to fruition: first, the weather forecast is looking bleak, and then Kathy decides that she will have to leave camp right after the week is over. I feel the three-legged stool of conditions, partners and time beginning to topple. On it sits my aspiration to climb Mummery and excitement gives way to achy feelings of disappointment.

### New partner search

I choose not to give in. Instead, I prop my stool up with a healthy dose of hope. So begins the search for other potential partners at camp. I start with the guiding team: Jordan is keen but has to be home for family; Nino is leaving on another guiding stint the day after our week at the camp; Darek is encouraging but personally uninterested; Jim also has other commitments. It's now the night before the week is to end and I'm starting to feel like a crazy person that just won't give up on a failing idea.

That evening, Jim suggests I ask Tanya Bok. She is one of the participants at the camp and has more than enough climbing experience to be a worthy partner. I had the opportunity to see Tanya's skills in action during the rope rescue course I taught that morning and while we went ice climbing in crevasses that afternoon. I enjoyed her sharp wit and I admired her fluid movement. Jim recommended her as a strong partner to try a new route with. What more encouragement did I need?

I found Tanya soaking up the last rays of sun behind the dining tent with a glacier ice-chilled

cocktail in hand. I tried to recruit her for my plan, but she was surprisingly hesitant. Unsurprisingly, she needled me about being the sixth to get asked. She was excited by the idea and wanted to go, but was concerned about her fitness for a big day on a technical route. I agreed to her wise suggestion of a rest day before launching out and she signed on. Our outlook brightened further when Chucky let us know that the ACC wanted to feed and house us at the camp free of charge while we stayed.

Our fellow GMCers were once again just as excited about our adventure as we were. So began all kinds of support in the form of leftover snacks and bars they thought might help ensure our success. Tanya and I were well on our way in transitioning from a guide and a guest of the camp to a pair of alpine climbing dirtbags. All we needed now was for the bad weather that was spinning our way to take its time arriving.

### Game on

For our rest day, we napped, ate, packed our bags and gleefully embraced an improving weather forecast. All the new arrivals to the Artists Week – the traditional last week of the GMC – took an interest in our plans and ushered us off to bed early.

In the dark morning I was eager to wake to a starry sky, but I crawled out of my tent to feel a warm sort of snow falling from the sky. But not snow exactly...ash. I looked up and my headlamp illuminated little bits of the BC forest coming down to rest around the camp. Not exactly prime alpine climbing weather, but better than rain!

Tanya and I ate a few bites with a cup of tea and then resolved to eat properly at an hour more befitting of breakfast. Off across the glacier we went and soon we were weaving amongst the massive crevasses near the base of the route. Chunks of ice on the glacier evidenced our short-lived but very

real exposure to some of the looming seracs above. We scampered along as quickly as we could.

Less than an hour from our comfortable camp, we were at the base of the climb. I embraced the very rare pleasure that the GMC had afforded us. We hadn't experienced any of the usual "pleasures" that commonly precede racking up. There had been no getting lost, no bushwhacking for hours, and no fight with a treadmill of scree or talus. I also wasn't groaning from poorly rehydrated goulash, rather, I could still recall some of the finer flavours from the previous night's gourmet enchiladas.

### A new route on Mt Mummery

And the route itself? I am happy to say that it lived up to our expectations! Overall the line was intuitive and provided enjoyable climbing throughout on rock that was "AAA" by Rockies' standards. Tanya and I found a nice climbing rhythm with only one part of the route that threatened to break our stride. A wide and overhanging corner crack in the upper ridge presented a significant crux but it was overcome with thrilling stemming with hands on wildly incut jugs. The upper ice arete then put us in fantastic positions. We were in awe of the glacial ice tumbling down from seracs on both sides and found ourselves climbing into a massive bergschrund to belay a final pitch directly to the summit.

From there, we assumed coming off the peak would be straightforward if not a bit protracted. After all, Kathy, Jim, and Jordan had described their trip up and down the Southeast Glacier and Ridge fairly casually. Tanya and I found good humour in how they underplayed it but we also made use of the long rest it afforded partway down. Just off the ice and onto the rock we laid down near a tarn in the warmth of a sun cutting through the smoke for the first time that day. What better than to name it Smokeshow? A nod to the unexpectedly high quality of the route as well as for the hazy conditions we climbed it in. So, take it all with a grain of first ascensionist salt but I reckon it's worthy of being a Rockies Classic. I can truly recommend going to do it, even if you have to hike in from the road.

### One last terrifying adventure

Our time on the mountain was over but our adventure was not yet complete. During each year's Artists Week the club invites an artist – this year it was Patti Dymant – to take up residence and host art classes for participants. The emphasis of the week is on hiking to viewpoints, setting up easels and interacting with the landscape in a different fashion from what's done in the other weeks of camp.

As Tanya and I shared our story of the climb, the artists urged us to elaborate and interpret our adventure by putting it down on paper. My plan was to have a hearty breakfast and be on our merry way

down the valley, but Tanya had the vision to accept the invitation and try our hands at watercolours.

Little did I know that painting a watercolour could be so terrifying. I'm accustomed to the hazards of climbing that are pointedly life-threatening, so how bad could landscape painting be? After 10 minutes of waffling over a pen stroke and another few minutes balking at the idea of adding a shadow of colour to my page, Patti came to my aid. "Be brave," she said and I laughed audibly when I recognized my trepidation.

Patti then shared a favourite quote from artist John Singer Sargent: "watercolour is an emergency in progress, make the best of it." It reminded me of the commitment needed in climbing and the philosophy of movement begetting itself. I remarked at how I had left my sphere of confidence and succumbed to fear. Patti's encouragement and wise instruction helped me push into it and stretch myself. I'm thankful for being put in that place. The experience of painting put a special twist on my time in the Mt Mummery area. It helped me see the mountains in a different way and broadened, if even for a moment, how I experience the mountains.

Ultimately, the climb with Tanya on Mummery was a highlight of my summer. I know Tanya feels the same way and we have each other to thank for making it so, the GMC for enabling it, and the art for adding a whole new dimension. ~ACC

*Tanya with our watercolours of Mummery.*

*Tanya et nos aquarelles de Mummery.*

*Photo Dylan Cunningham*



Un aperçu de l'intérieur du glacier Mummery.  
Peering down inside the Mummery Glacier.  
Photo Tanya Bok

# Des aventures en prime au Camp général

Un récit de Dylan Cunningham

Après 45 minutes passées sur la route de service de Blaeberry Forest, près de Golden, notre convoi ralentit pour s'arrêter dans une clairière. Les lourdes averses de la nuit ont rempli la vallée d'un brouillard emmêlé d'une fumée persistante à la suite d'un été d'intenses incendies forestiers. Prêt à retourner dans la région du mont Mummery pour une autre semaine de guidage, j'attends que les autres se garent et me demande si nous aurons assez de visibilité pendant le vol. Puis le soleil du matin, faisant son chemin dans la vallée profonde, me fait apercevoir la cime des arbres du côté opposé de la rivière. Les conditions ne devraient pas être aussi brouillées que je l'avais cru. Je me gare et décharge mes bagages.

Chucky Gerrard, le responsable du Camp général, et qui coordonne l'échange en hélicoptère avec les participants de la sixième semaine, s'écarte de l'action pour me prendre à part. Il est heureux que Kathy Meyer et moi, qui travaillons au camp et nous entraînon pour devenir des guides de montagne, ayons prévu de rester une fois la semaine terminée pour explorer la région et peut-être tenter un nouvel itinéraire au mont Mummery. Le CAC a toujours encouragé les aspirants guides, et l'exploration est une des principales raisons d'être des Camps généraux. Ayant cette tradition à cœur, Chucky encourage notre projet en germe.

Le court vol en direction du camp nous sort de la vallée sombre et nous fait entrer dans les montagnes. L'atterrissage attire mon attention vers une rafale de sacs en mouvement et de sourires accueillants, mais brièvement, car je ne peux m'empêcher d'admirer la région. Des averses par temps ensoleillé frayent leur chemin à travers les montagnes et jettent un éclairage digne sur les sommets. Imposante, la face orientale du mont Mummery domine la vue : c'est un bastion rocheux non escaladé, et presque entièrement menacé par des séracs qui envoient périodiquement des avalanches de glace vers le glacier en contrebas.

L'endroit semble loin d'être idéal à escalader, mais un élément y saillit suffisamment pour éviter le danger et tracer directement une ligne élégante du glacier jusqu'au sommet. En guidant durant la troisième semaine, c'est le contrefort du nord-est que j'avais remarqué en premier. Le regarder provoque un vertige familier en moi : j'ai toujours aimé imaginer une nouvelle escalade. Aurions-nous la chance de la tenter?

Une telle aventure serait-elle amusante ou non? J'avais hâte de le découvrir.

Le plan s'écroule

Au cours de la semaine, l'appréhension s'intensifiait. Kathy et moi passions notre temps libre à concevoir un plan pour le contrefort du N.-E. et profitions de chaque occasion de nous familiariser avec la montagne. Le premier jour entier du Camp, Kathy et deux autres guides escaladèrent la crête du sud-est, qui était notre chemin de descente le plus plausible. Par la suite, nous avons passé quelques heures de notre temps libre à régler l'approche de notre trajectoire. Nous montons le glacier Karakal sur une courte distance puis nous escaladons un coin de roche qui nous mène au glacier suspendu sous le contrefort, et de là, nous pouvons voir que l'itinéraire semble prometteur.

Témoins de ces excursions, nos camarades de camp commencent à nous interroger sur nos intentions, et il est amusant de sentir monter cette curiosité collective. Chez plusieurs invités au camp, l'idée de nouveaux itinéraires a un attrait exotique et nous aimons partager cette excitation. Ils se désolent autant que nous que les plans préparés s'annoncent infructueux. D'abord, les prévisions météo semblent peu favorables, puis Kathy décide qu'elle devra quitter le camp dès la semaine terminée. Je sens que les trois fondements que sont le climat, les partenaires et le temps commencent à s'écrouler, pendant que ma hâte à escalader Mummery cède le pas à une déception douloureuse.

En quête d'un nouveau partenaire

Je choisis de ne pas abandonner et de me soutenir avec une bonne dose d'espoir. C'est ainsi que débute, au camp, ma quête d'éventuels nouveaux partenaires. Je commence par l'équipe des guides : Jordan est intéressé, mais doit retrouver sa famille ; Nino se lance dans une autre mission de guide le lendemain de notre semaine au camp ; Darek m'encourage, mais se dit peu intéressé ; Jim a d'autres engagements lui aussi. Nous sommes à la veille de la fin de notre semaine et je commence à me sentir comme un fou qui s'accroche désespérément à une idée qui échoue.

C'est alors que Jim me conseille d'en parler à Tanya Bok, une participante du Camp suffisamment expérimentée pour faire une bonne partenaire d'escalade. J'avais pu reconnaître ses habiletés durant mon cours de sauvetage par corde ce matin-là, de même que son esprit vif et ses mouvements fluides durant notre escalade de glace en après-midi. Selon Jim, elle serait une solide partenaire avec qui tenter un nouvel itinéraire. Qu'est-ce que j'attendais d'autre?

J'ai rejoint Tanya, qui profitait des derniers rayons du soleil derrière la tente à manger, un cocktail glacé à la main. Ses hésitations à se laisser recruter m'ont surpris, davantage que ses reproches à se faire inviter en sixième. Le projet l'attirait et elle voulait y aller, mais s'inquiétait de sa forme physique pour ce qui serait une longue journée sur un itinéraire technique. Je suis tombé d'accord avec la sage idée de prendre un jour de repos au préalable, et l'entente s'est conclue. Nos perspectives



Ci-dessus : Dylan entreprenant la crête de glace.

Above: Dylan starting up the ice arete.

À gauche : L'un des nombreux endroits propices au déjeuner du mont Mummery.

Left: Mt Mummery has many great breakfast locations.

Photos Dylan Cunningham



s'améliorèrent encore plus lorsque Chucky nous fit savoir que le CAC comptait nous nourrir et nous héberger sans frais au camp pendant notre séjour.

Nos camarades du Camp général se trouvaient de nouveau aussi emballés que nous par cette aventure, et manifestèrent leur soutien en nous offrant des restes de collations et des barres nutritives qu'ils espéraient faire contribuer à notre succès. Tanya et moi, l'invitée du camp et le guide, étions sur le point de nous changer en alpinistes recouverts de poussière. Nous n'avions plus qu'à espérer que la mauvaise météo ne se presse pas pour nous rattraper.

### C'est parti

Pendant notre jour de repos, nous avons mangé, fait la sieste, rempli nos sacs et profité de l'amélioration des prévisions météorologiques. Tous les nouveaux arrivants à ce qui est traditionnellement la dernière semaine du Camp général, la semaine des artistes, se sont intéressés à nos projets et nous ont poussés à dormir de bonne heure.

Tôt le lendemain, j'espérais me réveiller sous les étoiles, mais suis sorti de ma tente pour sentir une sorte de neige tiède tomber du ciel. C'était de la cendre. En levant la tête, ma lampe frontale illumina les petits débris de la forêt de Colombie-Britannique qui se déposaient autour du camp. Les conditions n'étaient pas idéales pour l'escalade, mais tout de même meilleures que la pluie.

Tanya et moi avons grignoté un peu avec une tasse de thé avant de décider de mieux manger à une heure plus adéquate pour le petit-déjeuner. Nous avons traversé le glacier pour nous faufiler bientôt entre les crevasses massives près de la base

de l'itinéraire. Des morceaux de glace sur le glacier ont prouvé notre courte, mais bien réelle exposition à certains des séracs au-dessus de nous. Nous avançons aussi rapidement que possible.

À moins d'une heure de notre campement confortable, nous atteignons la base de notre escalade. J'étais reconnaissant pour ce plaisir très rare auquel le Camp général nous avait donné accès. Perdre son chemin, randonner en brousse des heures durant, se battre contre un tapis roulant d'éboulis ou de talus : tous ces « plaisirs » habituels nous avaient été épargnés. Je ne me plaignais pas de la bouillie réhydratée de la veille non plus ; je me rappelais plutôt les saveurs plus fines des enchiladas gastronomiques que nous avons mangées.

### Un nouvel itinéraire au mont Mummery

Pour ce qui est de l'itinéraire, je suis heureux de dire qu'il s'est montré à la hauteur des attentes. Son tracé généralement intuitif a procuré tout au long de l'escalade des rochers qualifiables de « AAA » d'après les normes des Rocheuses. Tanya et moi avons trouvé un bon rythme d'escalade et une seule partie du chemin a brisé notre élan. Une fissure large et surplombante dans la crête supérieure présentait un point important, mais qui a été surmonté en effectuant un pontage palpitant avec des « poignées de valise » profondément incisées. L'arête de glace supérieure nous a ensuite mis dans des positions fantastiques, impressionnés par la neige glaciaire qui dégringolait des séracs à nos côtés, et nous nous sommes retrouvés à grimper une rimaye massive pour assurer une dernière longueur vers le sommet.

De là, nous avons estimé que la redescendre serait simple, bien qu'un peu long. Après tout,

Kathy, Jim, et Jordan avaient raconté leur montée et leur descente du glacier et de la crête du sud-est avec décontraction. Tanya et moi avons reconnu leur humour dans la façon dont ils minimisaient la situation, mais nous avons aussi profité du long repos qu'elle nous offrait à mi-chemin. Tout juste sortis de la glace et sur la pierre, nous nous sommes étendus près d'un petit lac dans la chaleur du soleil qui perçait pour la première fois à travers la fumée ce jour-là. Comment ne pas nommer ce lac Smokeshow (« Spectacle de fumée ») en hommage à la qualité inattendue de l'itinéraire comme aux conditions brumeuses dans lesquelles nous l'avions réalisé? Grain de sel mis à part, cette route mérite de devenir un incontournable des Rocheuses, que je peux sincèrement vous conseiller même si vous devez y aller à pied depuis la route.

### Une dernière et terrifiante aventure

Terminé, notre moment dans la montagne ne marquait pas la fin de l'aventure. Chaque année durant sa semaine des artistes, le Club invite un artiste — Patti Dymont, dans ce cas-ci — à s'installer et animer des cours d'art pour les participants. Cette semaine-là, l'accent se portait sur la randonnée vers des points de vue où installer des chevalets et interagir avec le paysage autrement que ce qui se fait pendant les autres semaines du Camp général.

En écoutant notre récit de l'escalade, les artistes nous ont pressés de développer et d'interpréter notre aventure sur le papier. J'envisageais d'avoir un solide déjeuner et de poursuivre notre chemin dans la vallée, mais Tanya a eu l'idée d'accepter

l'invitation et de nous essayer à l'aquarelle.

Je ne m'attendais pas du tout à ce que peindre une aquarelle soit aussi terrifiant. Habitué aux risques potentiellement mortels de l'escalade, comment peindre un paysage serait-il dangereux? Après avoir hésité 10 minutes sur un trait de crayon et résisté quelques minutes de plus à l'idée d'ajouter une ombre de couleur à mon canevas, Patti m'a porté secours. « Courage, » dit-elle, et j'ai bien ri de reconnaître ma trépidation.

Patti a partagé une citation favorite de l'artiste John Singer Sargent : « L'aquarelle est une urgence en évolution, tirez-en le meilleur parti. » Cela me rappela l'engagement nécessaire en escalade, et la philosophie des mouvements qui s'engendrent eux-mêmes. Je remarquai comment j'avais quitté ma zone de confort et cédé à la peur. L'encouragement et les sages conseils de Patti m'ont aidé à continuer et me dépasser. Je suis reconnaissant d'en avoir fait l'expérience. L'activité de peindre a donné un goût particulier à mon séjour dans la région du mont Mummery. Elle m'a aidé à voir les montagnes avec un regard différent et a élargi, au moins pour un moment, l'expérience que j'en fais.

En fin de compte, cette ascension de Mummery avec Tanya a été le point culminant de mon été. Je sais que Tanya partage cette impression, que nous pouvons nous remercier de l'avoir faite ensemble, remercier le Camp général de l'avoir favorisée, et remercier les arts d'y avoir ajouté une toute nouvelle dimension. —CAC

*Pendant notre repérage, l'escalade de Kathy entre le glacier Karakal et la glace suspendue du contrefort N.-E.*

*Kathy climbing between the Karakal Glacier and the ice hanging below the NE Buttress during our reconnaissance.*

*Photo Dylan Cunningham*

*Tanya à mi-chemin de la crête*

*Tanya partway up the Ridge.*

*Photo Dylan Cunningham*



# Explore outer spaces this winter

Get the  
inside scoop!  
Subscribe to  
**Hut Insider newsletter**  
for hut news, deals,  
cancellations and more.  
at [alpineclubofcanada.ca/  
newsletters](http://alpineclubofcanada.ca/newsletters)

The ACC operates 16 huts in the winter months. The best-known and most accessible ones such as Elizabeth Parker Hut, Elk Lakes Cabin and Cameron Lake Cabin are in high demand. But there are several options for more remote and less crowded options – for both the huts and the terrain. If you're looking for winter adventure, and deep snow to enjoy all to yourself, check out these options.



## Sydney Vallence (Fryatt) Hut

**Sleeps:** up to 12 in winter

**Approach:** Start early because it will take you a full day to get to Fryatt, although later in the season you can save some kms by crossing the frozen Sunwapta River directly from the highway.

**The Dream Trip:** Four days: a day to ski in, two days to explore the vast terrain of the upper Fryatt Valley and a day to ski out would be a trip you'd remember a lifetime.



## Stanley Mitchell Hut

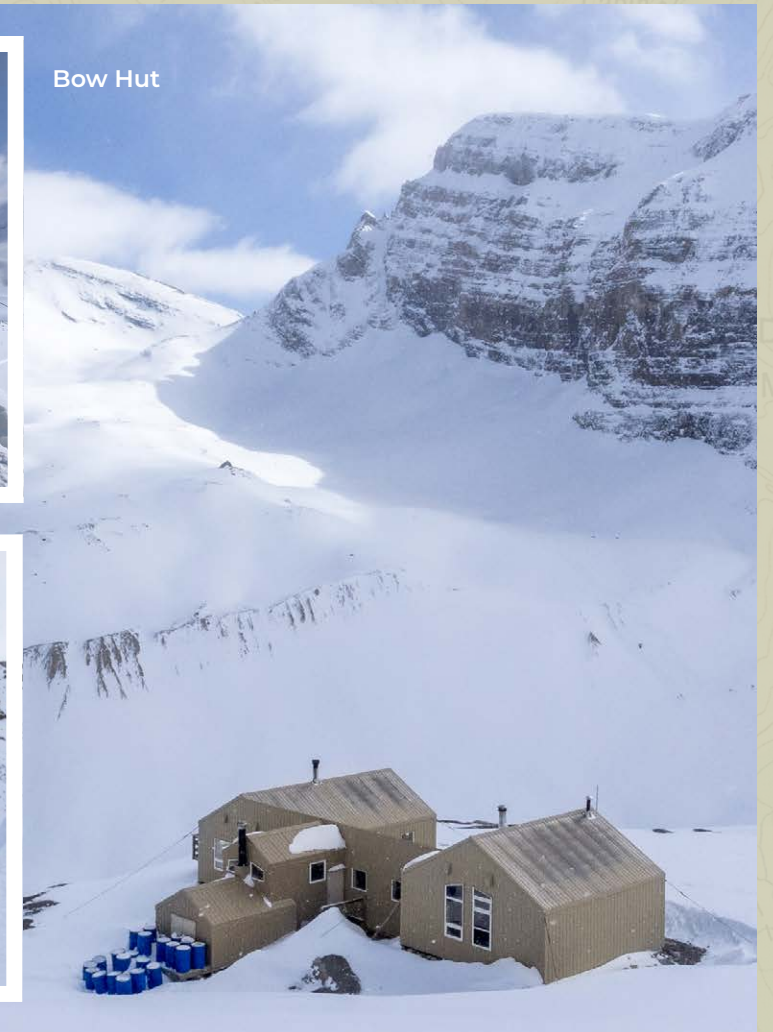
**Sleeps:** up to 22 in winter

**Approach:** Your party should consist of strong skiers if you're planning on making the 23km trip into Stanley Mitchell Hut in a day. An option is overnighing at the Takakkaw Falls campground.

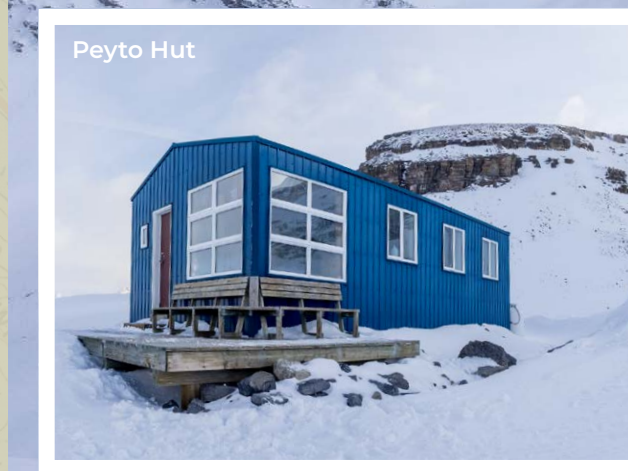
**The Dream Trip:** Stanley Mitchell is large and well-equipped enough to be a base for a ski trip of a week or more. And more importantly, there is enough fantastic ski terrain to support a trip that long. Before heli-skiing, Hans Gmoser began CMH with trips based out of this hut.



Balfour Hut



Bow Hut



Peyto Hut

## Peyto Hut or Balfour Hut (from Bow)

The Bow Hut is well known as the heart of the Wapta as well as the jump-off point for many of the best adventures on the icefields. The Peyto and Balfour Huts are each a relatively short hop from Bow, to the north and south, respectively.

**Sleeps:** Both Peyto and Balfour sleep up to 16 in the winter

**Approach:** For either Bow to Balfour or Bow to Peyto, the distance (about 7 km) and the elevation gain (580m to Balfour, 430m to Peyto) are manageable. But you're going to want good visibility as Wapta navigation can be tricky in a whiteout.

**The Dream Trip:** Skiing from Bow to either Peyto or Balfour Hut is a nice, gradual step toward longer glacier crossings, hut-to-hut trips and a full Wapta or Bow-Yoho Traverse. Add on a day or two to properly explore the slopes in the areas before returning to Bow.

More info: [www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/huts](http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/huts)

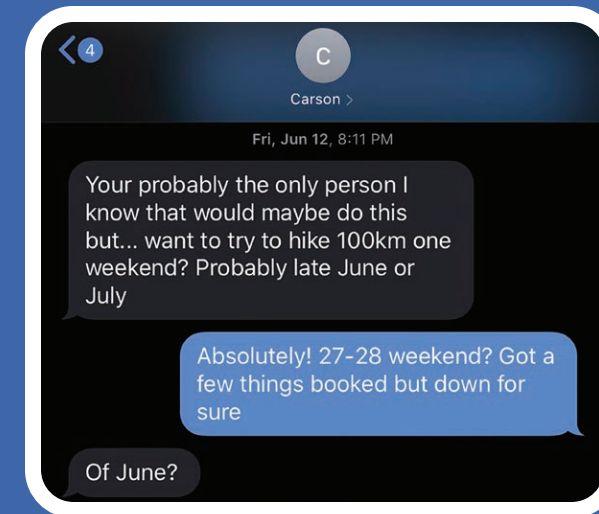


# High Water



Two friends  
return to  
the source  
in the Siffleur

Story by Neil Hilts



That single text message from my friend Carson was enough to talk me into an aspirational weekend backpacking adventure two weeks later. I knew it would be a huge undertaking, but I was also foolish to think that it wouldn't be that bad, even that it would be a breeze.

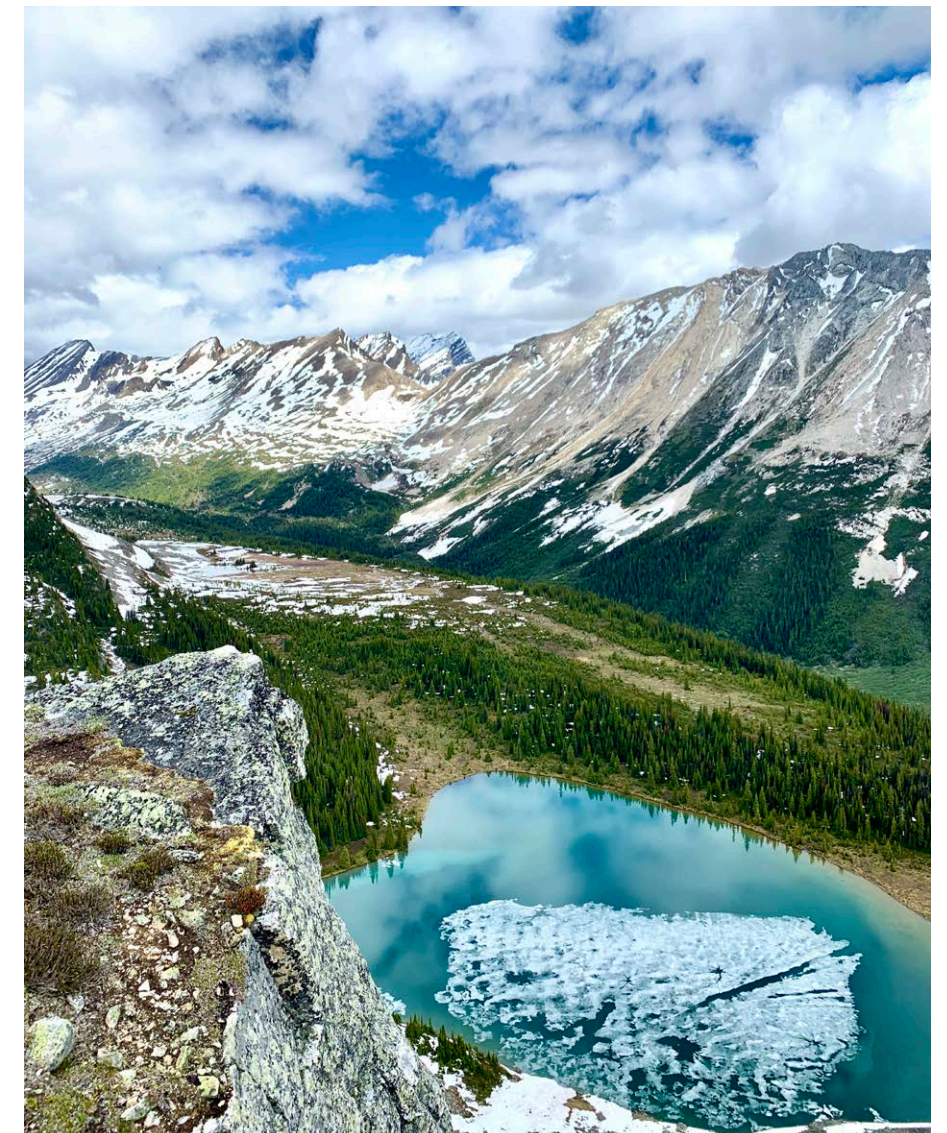
What makes someone want to hike for nearly their entire day in a remote location with tough conditions and many unknowns? And how do you end up with two people that want to do this?

Carson and I met in the mountains two years prior and both of us have a similar attitude to exploring the outdoors and pushing our limits. Earlier in 2020, we'd connected again after a few treks two years prior. Both of us in our mid-twenties and strong hikers, this was a new challenge. We were used to picking spots on a map and both were eager to escape the city, especially during the COVID pandemic. The open outdoors and fresh air would be a reprieve from the 9-5 city life.



*Left: The author stands on North Molar Pass, very close to the same spot where he met Carson, his current hiking partner, two years earlier in a chance encounter. Photo Carson Wronko*

*Right: Early on the first full day, Carson and Neil's best view of the day shows a look into the valley they'd continue to hike through, along with a steep descent to the unnamed lake below. Photo Neil Hilts*





Sometimes a trip is about the destination, and sometimes it's about the journey or about distance. For this trip, the distance was priority number one, but we were happy to attempt it in such a spectacular area.

#### Getting sorted

A week before, we hadn't confirmed our destination and I was nervous since the forecast wasn't looking great, but Carson doesn't let the weather alter his decisions, unless something dreadful is coming, so it was all systems go.

We chatted Wednesday night and Carson pitched ideas – my favourite was going back to the place where our friendship began, a route which actually had a trail to follow, rather than his other suggestions of finding our way with plenty of bushwhacking.

#### Evening one

I picked up Carson from work in Calgary before stopping to grab a 6-pack – important night one fuel. Friendship can deepen over beer. We hiked into Mosquito Creek with daylight left and were unfazed about our 7:30 pm start. At camp, we drank a few beers and reflected on past trips and our shared love of nature and adventure.

#### Saturday

Up at 6:00 am, we were pleased to not hear rain as we rolled out of the tent. We brewed coffee, snacked and watched the sun start hitting the mountains, which increased our optimism for the day.

A young couple with toddlers who were already asleep when we rolled in, asked about our plans for the day. They seemed pretty shocked about our idea to go past Fish Lakes and hike more than 40 km that day – rightfully so; it was ambitious.

The trail took us above treeline and towards North Molar Pass. Near the crest of the pass, we walked across the spot where Carson and I had met two years prior when he had been out solo and I was with some pals.

#### Flashback

Myself and three friends were out for our first backpacking trip that year, hiking into Fish Lakes, just west of Lake Louise, up the Icefields Parkway.

We started Saturday morning for the planned 16-km hike and were not well-prepared, with heavy packs and no hiking poles. When we reached the top of North Molar Pass, we saw a lone hiker, which turned out to be Carson, coming towards us through the deep snow. He told us how he triggered a small snow slide and was nervous about making it down to Fish Lakes. Grant, Jason, Wade and I decided to continue on this route, and invited Carson to join our party. He pondered for a few minutes and ultimately joined us on our descent through the spring snow.

*Above: Carson stays steady on a sketchy side slope above a fast-moving creek below, much to his chagrin. Photo Neil Hilts*

*Left: Neil stands above an unnamed falls as the duo pushes to avoid crossing any creeks or streams by going further upstream. Photo Carson Wronko*

*Right: Carson displays a moose shed found nearby the Siffleur Wilderness campsite and remarks on the size of the animal before its death.*

*Below: Saving his boosters until the final day and last pass to climb, Carson vaults over a stream to avoid wetting his feet further. Photos Neil Hilts*

At the campsite, the four of us got to know Carson: he lived near Edmonton and had a ski racing background like myself, plus he loved hiking pursuits and big challenges. He left on his own early the next day and I figured that it was a one-time meeting.

Back in Calgary, I received a new follower on Instagram – Carson - who asked if I wanted to backpack the next weekend. Nothing wrong with going into the wilderness with someone you've just met, right?

We set out for a single-nighter to Baker Lake. It was a tremendous trip and built our friendship as we connected over our love for exploring and camping. After that, Carson left for the summer, and we didn't see each other again until March 2020.

#### Descent and onward

After reflecting and taking photos at North Molar Pass, we dropped down to Fish Lakes to the campsite for more reminiscing. From there, we had to head northwest, which involved a minor creek crossing that would pale in comparison to the next day and a half.

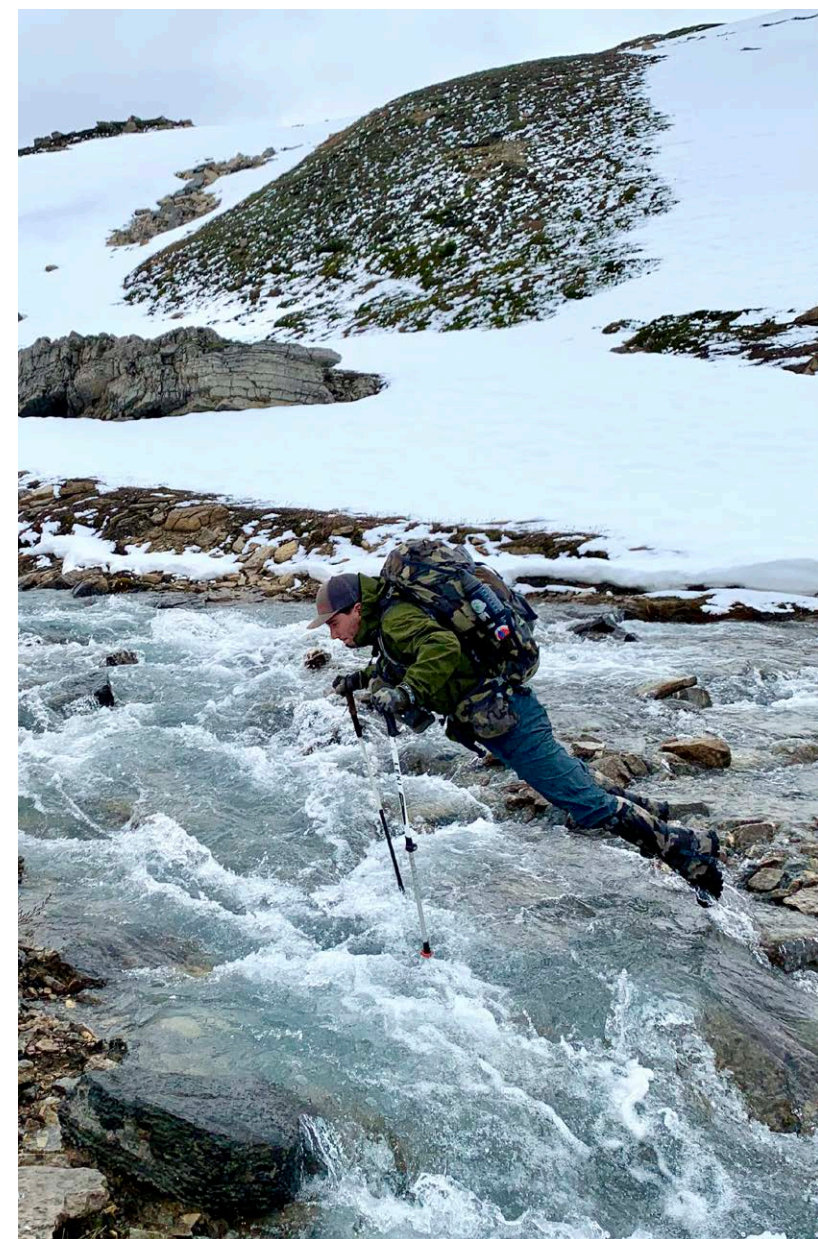
Hiking up, we found ourselves perched above a beautiful lake shimmering in the sunlight and mirroring the landscape. I saw the trail a few hundred feet below and realized I had taken us too far. Being stubborn guys, we climbed down around the slope in a sketchy area – an example of the types of decisions – small errors that added time and effort – that we made all weekend.

At kilometre 14 we got a view into the next valley and discovered the route ahead held another snowy pass that we would have to negotiate, this one longer than the descent from Molar Pass, and also warming in the sun. Around kilometre 20 we scrapped our plan of an extra six-kilometre detour to Devon Lakes to save time.

The next valley was mostly snow free, but in its place the heavily overgrown trail posed a new challenge. Our GPS app showed us nearing a 'primitive' Parks Canada campsite where we considered camping. It had been 10.5 hours and 33 km and I needed to sit and refuel, but we decided that there was more daylight to seize – perhaps another hour or two, but the day stretched further.

Two hours later, we saw the trail go into the Siffleur River and come out the other side. It was below our knees, so we took off our shoes and strode across. But when we turned the corner, another crossing.

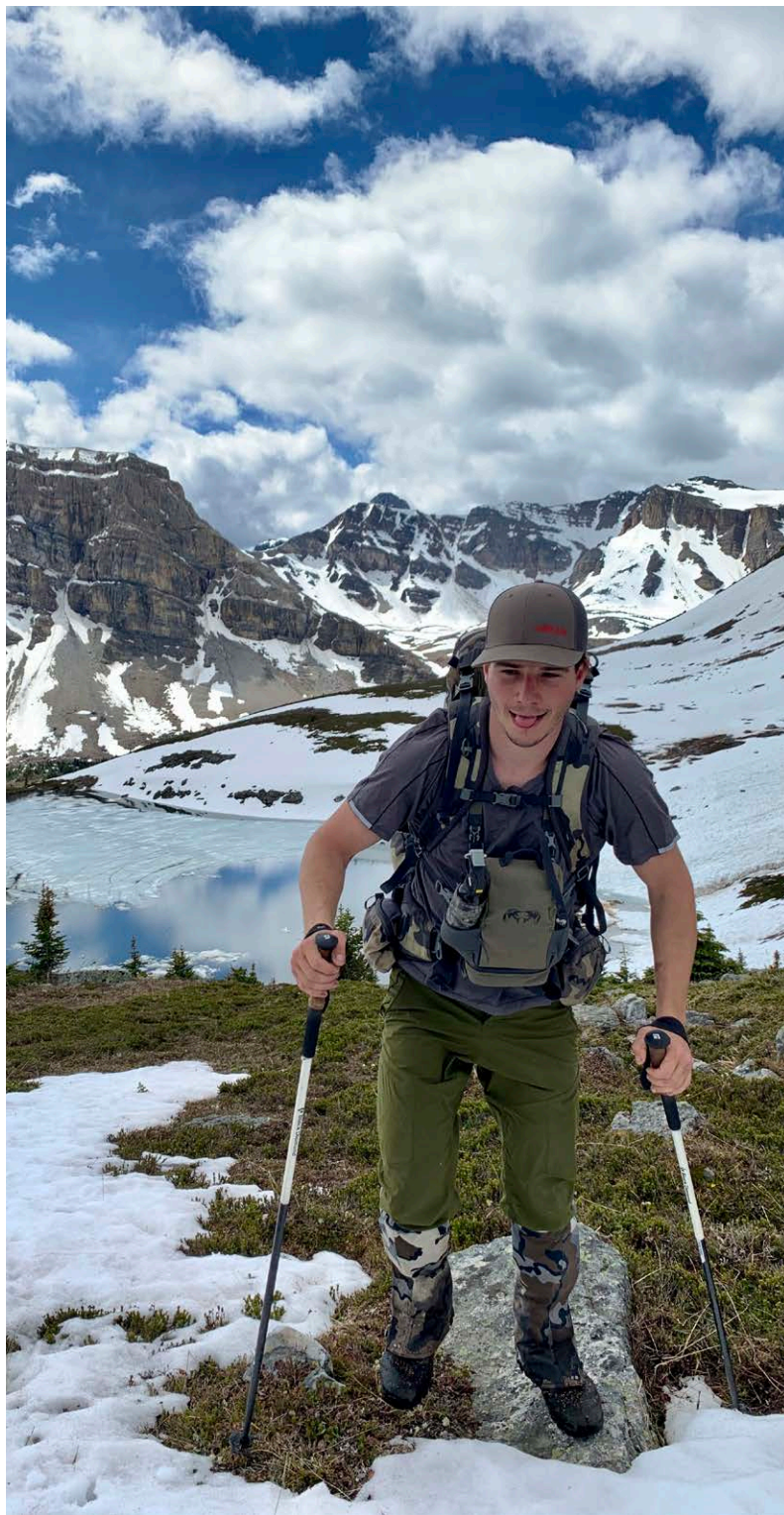
The river had split a few hundred metres higher, and we had unknowingly crossed onto a small island. Now, there was another crossing where the river was much faster and deeper – up to our mid-thighs. I was nervous, but I went first, wearing my Crocs. The current was stronger at the other side of the 6 metres crossing, and before I was out, my foot rotated, and my Croc fell off and floated down the river.



I planned to throw my Crocs to Carson, but he now had to cross barefoot. Carson stepped in and looked steady, but as he neared the bank, he stumbled and panicked, jumping to the shore quicker. It was a close call and he got wet above the waist but stayed on his feet and was able to scramble out. Phewf!

Five kilometers further, the trail forked again at Dolomite Creek. We were keen to keep pushing, but this much much larger creek would have

Photo Neil Hilts



swept us away had we tried to cross. We followed it upstream through very swampy territory with horrible mosquitos.

Eventually, at 43 km and at 9:00 pm, 13.5 hours into our day, we stopped. We found a mossy, comfortable area to camp, set up the tent in an instant, boiled some water, and inhaled our dehydrated meals. Sleep arrived quickly.

#### The way out

Throughout the night there was steady rain but in the morning, it lessened, allowing us to depart quickly. Unfortunately, the trail was still on the other side of the creek, so we continued looking for a suitable crossing. Carson considered a few spots, but I was not confident in my skills getting through the raging waters.

Our differing preferences were apparent. Carson wanted to get back to the trail and even said he'd swim across, while I wanted to stay on the east side of the creek because the map showed we'd have to cross again. The problem with my plan meant very heavy bushwhacking and a slow pace, plus rocky, steep side slopes where a misstep would cast us into the water.

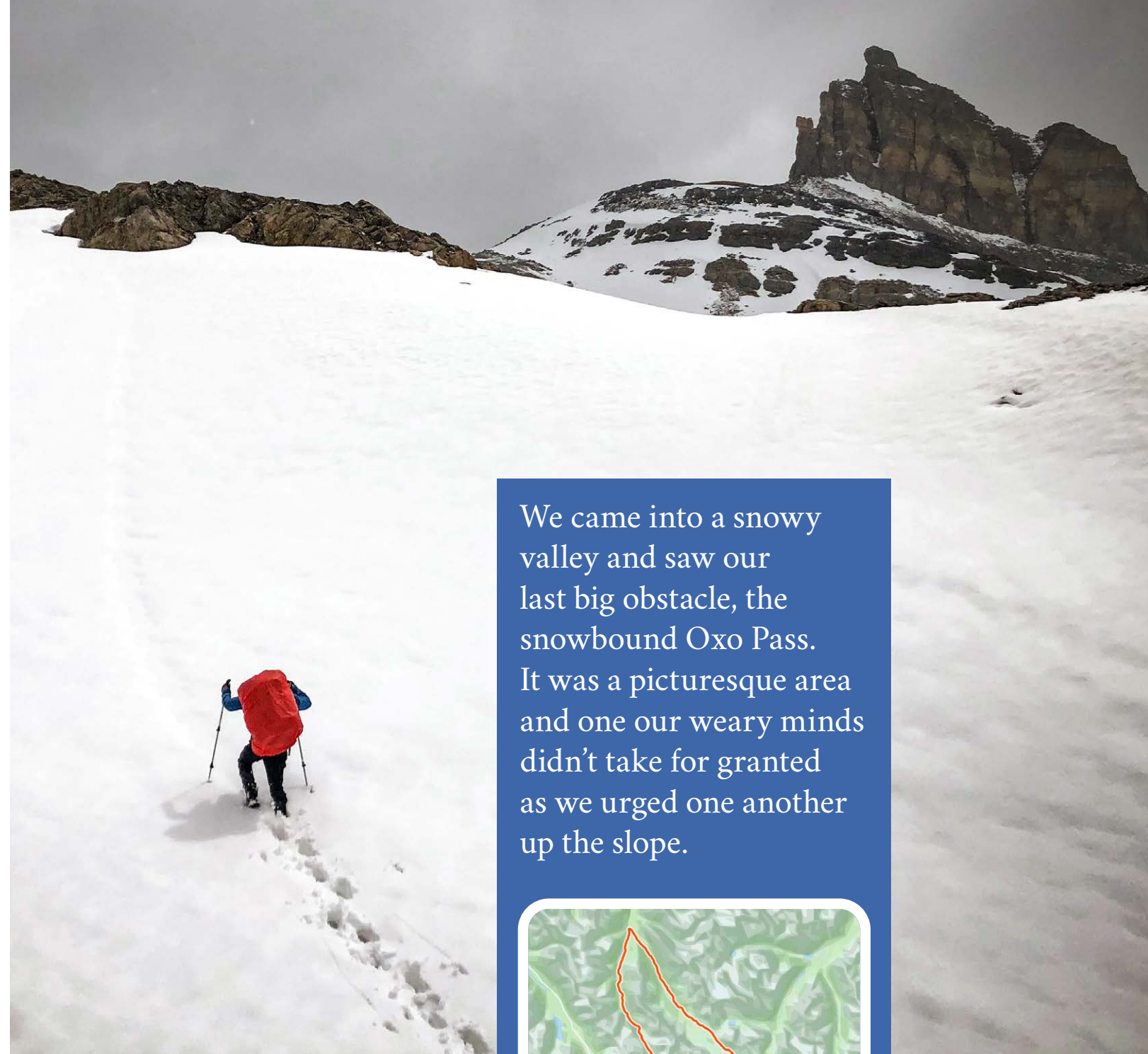
We stayed on the east bank and after a few hours, we reacquired the trail – Carson even got down to kiss it. Enjoyment was short-lived as we realized that the trail crossed the raging creek once more. Not comfortable with the crossing, I again wanted to bushwhack upstream, and Carson was game, but I could tell he wanted to get it over with.

Further up, we saw the trail on the other side of the creek going towards a pass and we realized that we had to wade in whether we liked it or not. Assessing the options, Carson settled on a part maybe four metres wide. With a Herculean effort, he heaved his backpack across, clearing it by about a foot. He scurried across through the fast-rushing waters.

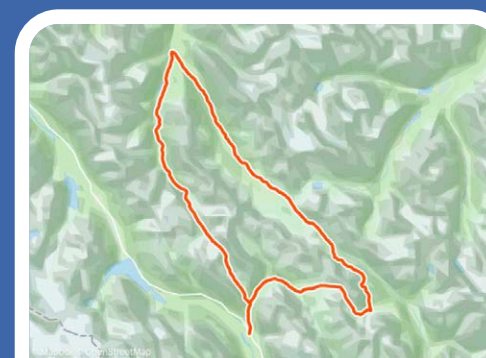
Having a larger backpack, I didn't trust my throw, so I went upstream. Again. This meant I'd have to walk on a steep slope that was riskier, but I preferred that over going through the deeper water. I found a spot that was shorter and shallower, allowing me to stride across (not worrying about my boots getting wet).

We came into a snowy valley and saw our last big obstacle, the snowbound Oxo Pass. It was a picturesque area and one our weary minds didn't take for granted as we urged one another up the slope. The few small streams did not impede us at all.

Once atop, we had to do some light bushwhacking before hitting the trail we came in on on Friday night. Eager to take off our wet shoes and rest, we zoomed down and arrived at the parking lot around 3:00 pm.



We came into a snowy valley and saw our last big obstacle, the snowbound Oxo Pass. It was a picturesque area and one our weary minds didn't take for granted as we urged one another up the slope.



**Congratulations, this activity is your longest hike on Strava!**

Distance	Elevation Gain
74.17 km	2,157 m
Moving Time	Calories
20:11:10	6,972 Cal
Avg Speed	Avg Heart Rate
3.7 km/h	95 bpm

All said and done, the trip was 75 km long with more than 20 hours of hiking. We bonded, overcame obstacles, faced fears, and truly challenged ourselves.

Feet in the creek, and with a beer in hand, we reflected on our decision to hike into an area with lots of water crossings during the heavy melt/flow season. Now we know.

Is a 100 km trip on our radar sometime? It could be. Depending on the elevation and planning, the two of us may meet up again to take on a similar challenge – one that drives us but that not many others can understand. For now, I'll do some easier trips where I get to relax at camp a bit more. ~ACC

*The author fights through wet snow as the pair trek towards the Oxo Pass and close in on the end of their adventure.*  
Photo Carson Wronko



# Mummery Memories

Story by Kate Snedeker and other participants of the 2021 Summer Leadership Course



## The Summer Leadership Course at the GMC

For over two decades the ACC's General Mountaineering Camp has hosted the Summer Leadership Course presented by The North Face, a unique, guide-led learning experience for volunteer ACC trip leaders. The course is highly subsidized as the ACC invests in the mountaineering as well as soft skills of volunteer leaders from sections from across the country.

Since its inception, the course has been molded and led by one of the longest standing and most experienced Canadian mountain guides, Cyril Shokopoles. Raised on the Alberta prairies, Cyril's guiding legacy now spans more than three decades and multiple generations of mountain lovers. He's a passionate and talented teacher and everyone leaves with a fresh appreciation of the mountains — the risk and rewards.

As a tribute to Cyril, and to "draw back the curtains" on this course, this summer's participants present this diary of our time on the Mummery Glacier.

Above: Early morning at the cook tent. Photo Chris Tunison  
Left: Short roping on Day 2. Photo Jenny Bradshaw

### Day 1 – Meet, Fly and Greet (by Kate Snedeker, Calgary Section)

We met in Golden, BC on a smoky morning and convoyed up dusty roads to the GMC helicopter staging area. A mountain of gear and supplies and 30+ people were ferried up to a glacial moraine and the site of the Mt Mummery GMC.

Cyril assembled our crew and laid out his ambitious plans for the week. Our group was made up of ACC members from Ontario to BC, with a range of experience in the mountains, and varied careers such as law enforcement, public health and engineering. Cyril assigned daily tasks from weather monitoring and morning briefings, to radio call check-ins and carrying group gear. No wallflowers allowed on this course – all are expected to contribute. With a blend of humour and skilled give-and-take, Cyril draws on each person's strengths to make everyone feel comfortable participating. After an excellent first dinner we waddled off to prepare for the next day...

### DAY 2 – Short roping on Mountain Goat Mountain (by Jenny Bradshaw, Calgary Section)

The 5:30 am air horn started our first full day. After breakfast and adequate amounts of caffeine, we gathered for our group meeting and started off. Heading up towards wildflower meadows, instructor Adam Burrell discussed types of mountain hazards and how to mitigate some of these through short roping. We learned the foundation skills of pacing, modeling, communicating and spotting, and moved into the technical terrain.

First was passive short roping, then Adam demonstrated the hand-belay technique. Gaining elevation, we added standing and seated hip belays and incorporated the terrain for increased stability in each technique. Looking at terrain features with protection in mind led us into terrain belays. We used ridge and other rock features to create friction in the system or protection points. We wiggled our way up to the summit in pairs, with Cyril and Adam coaching, and all of us getting to know and trust each other more with every belay.

We triumphantly made our way back to camp for another amazing dinner and our evening meeting. There were many smiles, knowing that we had an awesome team and a great week ahead!

### Day 3 – Maps, Anchors, Route Planning and LSD (by Isobel Phoebus, Jasper/Hinton Section)

Even with cold, rainy weather on Day 3, our instructors were equipped to teach without venturing far from camp. Adam ran us through navigation including maps, declination,



Mapping practice on Day 3.  
Photo Chris Tunison

coordinate systems, compasses, sighting bearings and location finding.

With a break in the rain, we regrouped outside for Cyril instruction on anchors. We reviewed common anchors, sliding X, girth hitch, clove hitches with the climbing rope, and fixed point anchors. We discussed knots, equalization, directions of pull, angles, materials, redundancy and more.

Back to the paper maps, we put our navigation skills together in a theoretical route-planning exercise, taking us from basecamp to the top of Mt Mummery, including route stages, distances, elevation changes and estimated travel times.

After witnessing our enthusiasm for gear, Cyril taught us the load strand direct (LSD) method of lowering a climber when belaying from above. The students learned the steps of LSD and set off in competition to see who could



The group gathered at an outdoor classroom.  
Photo Chris Tunison







Into the crevasse on Day 4.  
Photo Cam Roe

lower their teammates most calmly, correctly and efficiently. It was a productive rainy day with lots of information and tips that we could put to use in future club trips!

*Day 4 – Glacier and Crevasse Rescue Skills (Ray Hope, Manitoba Section)*

On the helicopter ride into basecamp, Cyril's eagle eye spotted the perfect bulge on the glacier that could serve as our ice climbing multi-pitch practice area for our glacier day and on Day 4, and the weather couldn't have been better. A quick hop over the moraine next to basecamp and we were on the Mummery Glacier. Our meandering trip down to that bulge allowed us to practice weaving through the labyrinth of crevasses, going around some and stepping over others. Being a

Glacier skills practice on Day 4.  
Photo Cam Roe



dry glacier (one that doesn't have any snow on it), Mummery gave us an opportunity to practice our box step and short roping skills (only this time on ice), and try some glacier ice climbing, which we learned is different from waterfall and "gym" ice.

On the bulge, we covered low-angle, multi-pitch ice climbing, including leading, seconding, placing screws and building anchors. We ended the day with crevasse rescue, where a few lucky members of our team got to hang out in the refrigerator (down in a crevasse), while the rest of us constructed drop loops, 3:1 and 6:1 pulley systems to haul them up – all made it out safely!

*Day 5 – Peak Day (Kate Snedeker)*

With glacier skills refreshed and the smoke mostly at bay, on Day 5 we ventured out to bag one of the area peaks. I started as lead on my rope team of five, with Adam directly behind providing comments and corrections. Having spent much more time on glaciers skiing, peering down into the depths of summer crevasses was fascinating – and a bit scary. We spent the first part of the day weaving between crevasses, gingerly probing snow bridges and marking suspicious spots. Other GMC teams had the same objective that day, and had started earlier. Thanks to the efficiencies that Cyril had drilled into us, we caught up fairly quickly. Not wanting to pass the others, I tackled a tricky skill, one that is a challenge for me, the slow and steady "guide pace."

We traded leads, passed the big mama crevasse near the top of the glacier, and stepped onto rock

and shed our ropes. From there, a short but loose and exposed scramble led to the top of the peak where we could see across two provinces. No time to dawdle though, as the sun was threatening to make the crevasse maze even more challenging. We scuttled back down to our ropes, clipped in and threaded our way back to camp, dinner and debrief.

*Day 6 – Soft Skills and Rock Hardware (Rob Janousek, Squamish Section)*

We devoted much of Day 6 to presentation and discussion in our canvas-walled camp classroom. Cyril led the group through an abbreviated course in wilderness emergency management, with an emphasis on how our roles as trip leaders necessitate a repertoire of skills above and beyond the basics of mountaineering. We addressed how to respond with critical interventions should an accident occur, including the effective use of electronic communications in the backcountry.

Next up was a pivot from a technical systems focus towards the soft skills of leadership. We reflected upon the responsibilities we have as trip leaders, to the ACC and our trip participants as well as to ourselves. We examined models for effective teambuilding and conflict resolution. A particular focus was given to areas of equity and inclusion in our participation in mountain adventures. We as leaders in the club need to reflect on our biases and blind spots to ensure we are fostering a culture where all participants can feel welcome, particularly those who have faced greater barriers to a sense of belonging in mountain activities.

We were excited to get moving again for some practical skills practice and by the mid-afternoon we had migrated to a nearby rock bluff where Adam instructed us in the use of rock protection. We had opportunities to place a variety of pieces from pitons to nuts and cams and have our handiwork examined by the instructors.

The day proved to be particularly dense with content from a wide range of topics. Even though we stuck around camp, there was palpable exhaustion from the fast-paced absorption of information all day.

*Day 7 – Peak Day (Matt Lynch, Southern Alberta Section)*

On the previous night, we were presented with a rare offering: a choice of plans! Each of us could decide between sharing lead on a peak (with supervision) and a rock rescue session.

In the morning teams are ready to go but the smoke had settled in like an unwelcome uncle. The camp doc steps in. All trips are temporarily cancelled due to the extreme air quality. There is a



Cyril Shokopoles  
Photo Ray Hope

mix of disappointment and acceptance in the air.

Cyril, ever the professional, smoothly expands his rock rescue session to the entire course group. Within moments we are all placing anchors, practicing switching to lowering while bringing someone up in guide mode (the LSD method from Day 3), passing a tied-off segment of rope through an Italian hitch, and hauling mock-injured partners up to the anchor. A good chunk of our hands-on session is through full-on rain, which is a blessing in terms of smoke.

We finish our day in the haven of the dining tent, talking through the entire week and all that we learned. It's a month later now, and I'm still working hard on catching and reinforcing it all. I have two sessions booked with the SA section to teach some of the skills I learned. –ACC

Summer Leadership Course group shot.



# The ACC Manitoba Section

The Canadian prairie climber:  
when vertical space is at a premium,  
distance is just a state of mind.

By Ray Hope and Katarzyna Dyszy

*In the heart of the prairies lies the birthplace of The Alpine Club of Canada: Winnipeg, Manitoba. As Elizabeth Parker and Arthur Wheeler sat down to pen the ACC into existence, one can only imagine how strong the call of the mountains must have been. That same call drives today's Manitoba Section.*

## The Canadian Shield - Manitoba's Playground

When not venturing to the mountains, where do ACC Manitoba members go to scratch that climbing itch? The curvature of the earth hides what lies just two hours east of Winnipeg - the Canadian Shield. Covering (or should we say "Beneath") much of Northwestern Ontario, this exposed Precambrian igneous rock is a remnant of what were once peaks higher than today's mountains. While some of this rugged landscape sneaks slightly into the eastern part of Manitoba, the really good stuff is in Northwestern Ontario. Surrounding the town of Kenora, Ontario is a treasure trove of crags that are accessible for day trips (if you call six hours of driving accessible). More typical are weekend adventures that include climbing during the day and congregating around a fire at backcountry campsites along the many lakes, including the well-known "Hilton" and the "Bellagio".

Many of the Kenora climbing spots were developed in the 1970's by ACC Manitoba's past president, Peter Aitchison, and his contemporaries. The Manitoba Section had been struggling to survive, and Peter not only built the local club back up, but also built a cadre of climbers who would develop most of the crags and routes that are climbed today. These gems have become the Manitoba Section's playground.

One such gem is Gooseneck, situated a short forty minutes north of Kenora. Two cliffs (Main Cliff and South Cliff) boast a spectrum of single pitch climbs as well as some of the few local multi-pitch climbs. While the Main Cliff has been well-climbed

since its development, the South Cliff had sadly become forgotten. However, last year a group of Manitoba Section members got their gardening tools and rappel rigs out and began the arduous process of bringing it back to life, with final efforts this year making it ready to send once again.

## Where there is cliff and water, let there be ice

The South Cliff is also garnering year-round attention as it has become a base for farmed waterfall ice. There is little natural climbable ice in the Kenora area. So last year, a dedicated group of Manitoba Section members, led by local cliff icing legend Paul Monney, descended on the South Cliff to spray it with water pumped up from the adjacent Gooseneck Lake. After a few -20C weekends of around-the-clock spraying, the cliff was fat with ice and ready for epic ascents.

They say timing is everything, and so is bad timing. Days after the South Cliff was fully iced and ready to be climbed, provincial COVID health orders were announced that would prevent travel from Manitoba into Ontario. In fact, the orders would be enforced by Ontario Provincial Police stationed at the border. Since the orders would not come into effect until the following Friday, a band of ice climbers took Thursday off work to get their first and last epic climb in.

This epitomizes the spirit of the Manitoba Section community, which we hope would make Elizabeth Parker and Arthur Wheeler proud! ~ACC



*Teams of three or more for glacier travel are safer than teams of two where the likelihood of one person arresting their partner's fall into a crevasse is very low.*



## Glacier Travel and Crevasse Rescue for two-person teams

Doug Latimer, ACC Lead Winter Guide, photos by Zoltan Kenwell

*This article assumes a basic knowledge of crevasse rescue systems and is not a substitute for proper training.*

*The Europeans have developed a new strategy: tying friction knots on the rope between the two members of the team.*

More than a year ago I began writing a small book about safe glacier travel and crevasse rescue. Unlike avalanche safety, glacier travel does not have a national body defining best practices and promoting research.

There are a lot of details about crevasse rescue that mountaineers should know – far more than can be covered here. For this article, I would like to bring attention to arresting a fall and crevasse rescue for a two-person team.

### You won't hold the fall

First, let's kill the idea that a single person can reliably hold the fall of a second rope member into a crevasse. If you'd like to see it attempted in a controlled setting, check out this video by a Czech guiding company: <https://bit.ly/CrevasseFalls>

Yes, there are cases when a single person arrests a victim falling in a crevasse (I've done it

once), but the probability is low and it hurts like you wouldn't believe. The bottom line is that a two-person rope team using traditional skills has a dangerously high probability of catastrophic failure when one member falls into a crevasse. What surprises me most about the above statement is how long it took climbers to realize this. Traditional rope systems are simply not adequate for two-person rope teams.

### Adding friction knots

Fortunately, the Europeans are way ahead of us and have developed a new strategy: tying friction knots on the rope between the two members of the team. When a fall occurs, these knots bite into the snow and create friction that significantly reduces the force transmitted to the rescuer. Utilizing friction knots, a two-person rope team has a realistic chance of surviving a fall

in favourable snow conditions. The effectiveness of these knots can be seen in this video, produced by the French guiding community: <https://bit.ly/BrakeKnots>.

While researching the material for my crevasse rescue book, I didn't have anyone jump into a crevasse, but I did measure the amount of force transmitted through the rope to hold a 100 kg person. Once the friction knots set, the load on the surface was only 22 kg. These knots work.

Unfortunately, knotting the rope creates new problems. Most crevasse rescue systems utilize the same section of rope the victim is hanging from for the rescue – either by prussicking, or by winching up. The existence of friction knots in this line makes both self-rescue by the victim via prussicking, and winching the victim up, next to impossible. Friction works both ways.

If you are using friction knots it becomes essential to have either a separate rope or extra coils from the existing rope available to perform a crevasse rescue. The drop loop rescue system is simple and effective, but requires a bit more than twice as much rope as the distance between each rope member. For two-person rope teams, the minimum recommended distance between climbers is 15 metres. A party of two using a 60 m rope with friction knots does not have enough free line for both team members to perform a drop loop rescue without a separate rope and therefore your rescue system becomes more complex.

### Other considerations

This would be a great solution if that was all you needed to contend with, but unfortunately, it's not. Keep in mind that all mechanical advantage numbers for rescue systems (2:1, 6:1) are theoretical, not practical, even under ideal conditions. And then there are a bunch of other real-world problems that complicate things like snow anchors (which are poorly understood) and direction of pull on the anchors.

In short my tiny little crevasse rescue book keeps putting on weight and taking longer than expected to complete. While frustrating, this is a good thing. We need to better understand the strengths and limitations of our systems and equipment. From there we can develop standards and produce best practice guidelines for the ACC and mountain community in general.

### In summary

Friction is good when falling into a crevasse, so put knots on the rope. But friction is bad when trying to extract the victim, so have a rescue rope, use pulleys and efficient capture devices, and minimize contact with the snow. Keep learning, and make sure your skills are current before you set out.



### Dig deeper

My crevasse rescue book will be available online at [www.shadowlightproductions.ca](http://www.shadowlightproductions.ca) (under the Ebook tab) and I have already begun to adapt these standards into the crevasse rescue courses taught by the ACC national office. ACC members and sections are welcome to contact me through my website regarding training. It is my hope that we can define the standards and best practices for glacier travel and crevasse rescue throughout North America. ~ACC

*As the ACC's Lead Winter Guide, Doug Latimer teaches our instructional courses on Avalanche Safety and Crevasse Rescue, and guides our backcountry ski camps. Doug runs a video and multimedia company and is the author of Avalanche! The Guide's Guide to Safer Travels in the Mountains.*

*Crevasse can be visible, or they can be covered in seasonal snow. Friction knots can improve the chances of arresting a fall, but only in certain snow conditions.*

*Crevasse are the single biggest danger of glacier travel.*



# Through the Eyes of Members

Entries from the GMC Photo Contest



*"The picture was taken around 8.30am when we were ascending the first glacier on our way to Mount Barlow summit. As one of the team was a little bit behind it was a perfect shot. What I liked in this picture is the impression of remoteness and solitude on the huge icefield."*

*Photo: Christopher Candela.*

The General Mountaineering Camp means a lot to us, it provides us with the opportunity to connect ACC members with an outdoor space that we've all come to love so deeply – very powerful experience both for us and the participants, a tradition that has continued on since 1906.

Beautiful mountain vistas, meaningful days, and a strong sense of comradery... these are all notes that are consistently hit at the GMC – so how do you translate these experiences into images? Furthermore, how do we judge them for a photo contest?

Mountain Hardwear has been a long-time partner of ours and the headline sponsor for our annual GMC Photo Contest. Participants submit photos from their week and then we have the honour of picking the top three to win a tent, pack or sleeping bag.

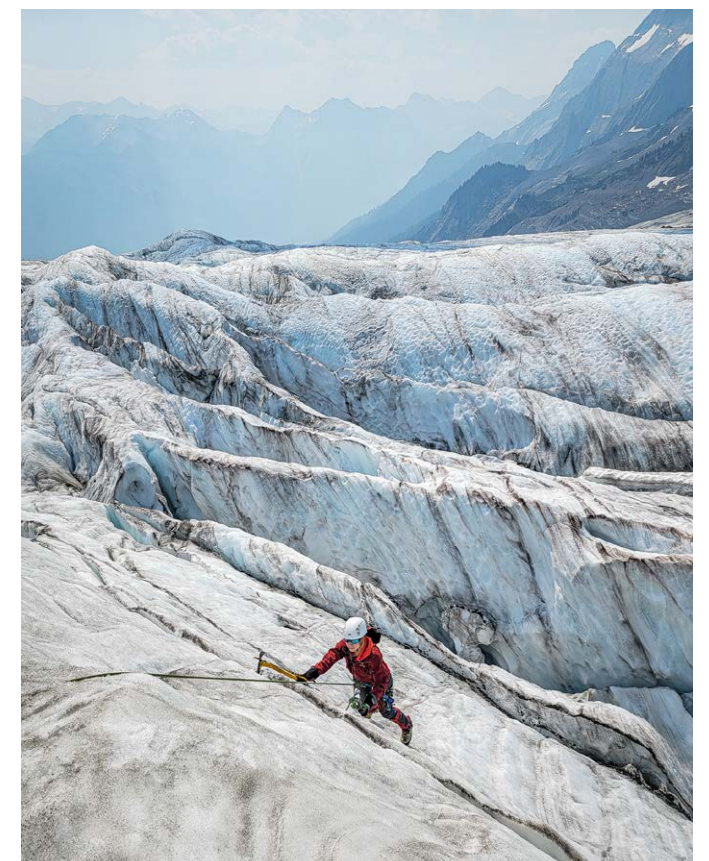
So how do we go on about judging photos on qualities one could argue is completely subjective? Read on to find out and to see who our winners are!

## First

Many of us head into the mountains to feel small, to have our skills tested by its challenging terrain and to surround ourselves with untempered natural beauty. We think this photo encompasses all of that and combines it with a technically sound and well-composed image.

In the face of the pandemic and raging wildfires this summer, we feel the image of small team tied together on a glacier surrounded by smoke presents us with something powerful. On a technical photo standpoint, the photo is well-composed, provides a sense of symmetry and doesn't keep you guessing as to where to look. Well done Christopher!

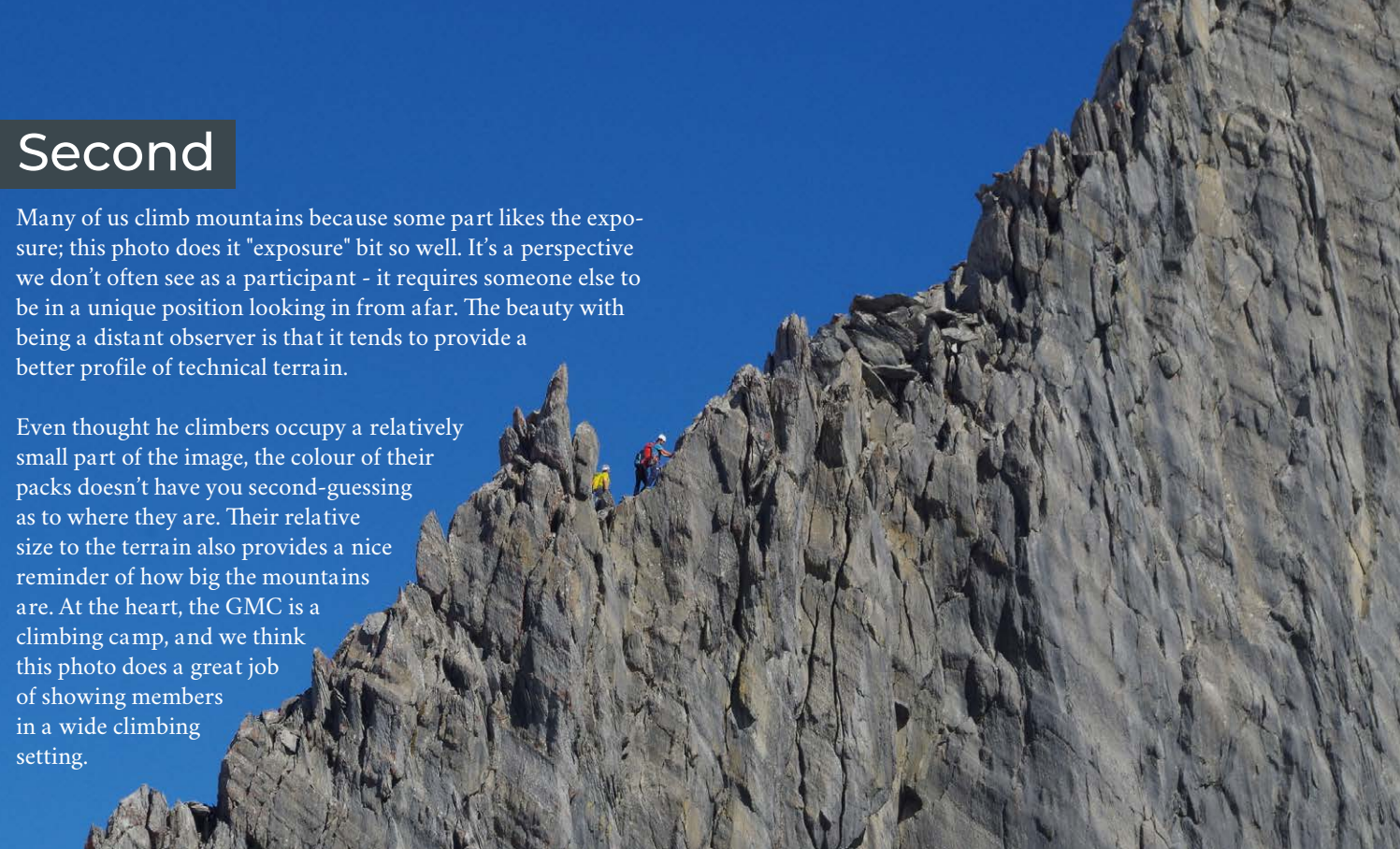
*"Crevasse exploration and ice climbing."*  
*Photo Annette Young*



## Second

Many of us climb mountains because some part likes the exposure; this photo does it "exposure" bit so well. It's a perspective we don't often see as a participant - it requires someone else to be in a unique position looking in from afar. The beauty with being a distant observer is that it tends to provide a better profile of technical terrain.

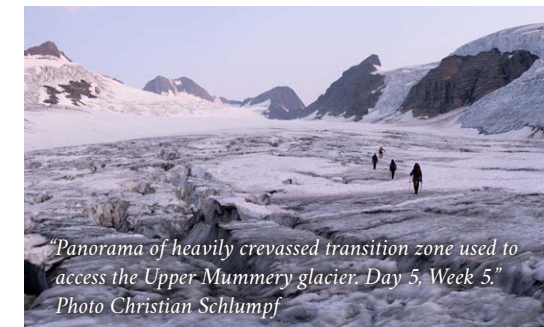
Even though the climbers occupy a relatively small part of the image, the colour of their packs doesn't have you second-guessing as to where they are. Their relative size to the terrain also provides a nice reminder of how big the mountains are. At the heart, the GMC is a climbing camp, and we think this photo does a great job of showing members in a wide climbing setting.



Thanks to everyone who submitted their photos this year, we were just shy of 250 entries! See you all next year for another GMC and contest! ~ACC

### PHOTO INSIDER

Find more images from this story at [www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/gazette](http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/gazette)



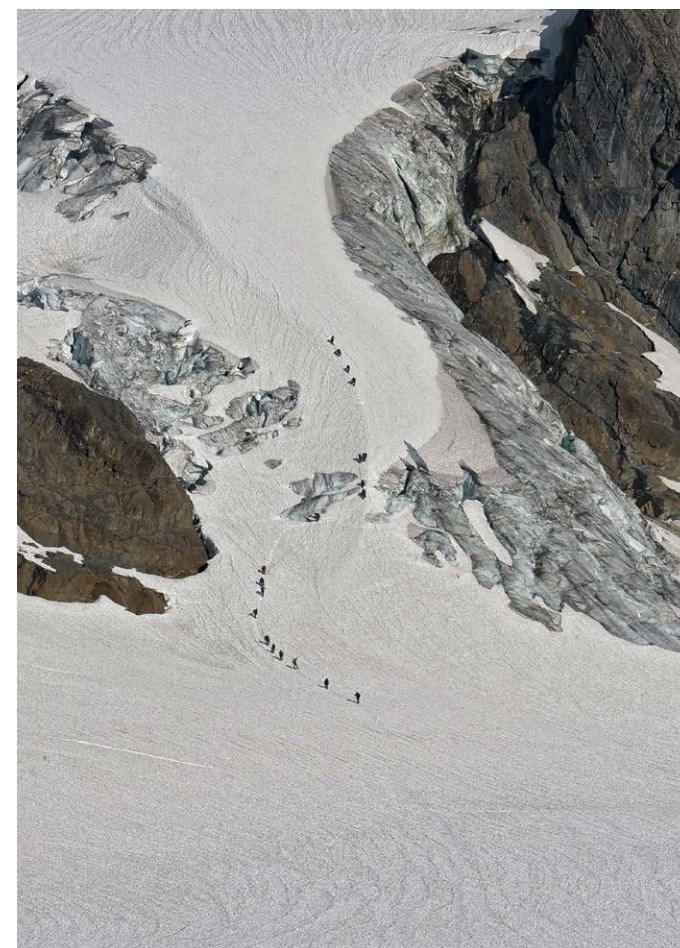
"Panorama of heavily crevassed transition zone used to access the Upper-Mummery glacier. Day 5, Week 5." Photo Christian Schlumpf



Photo Andrew Dunlop



Photo Marianne Otterstrom



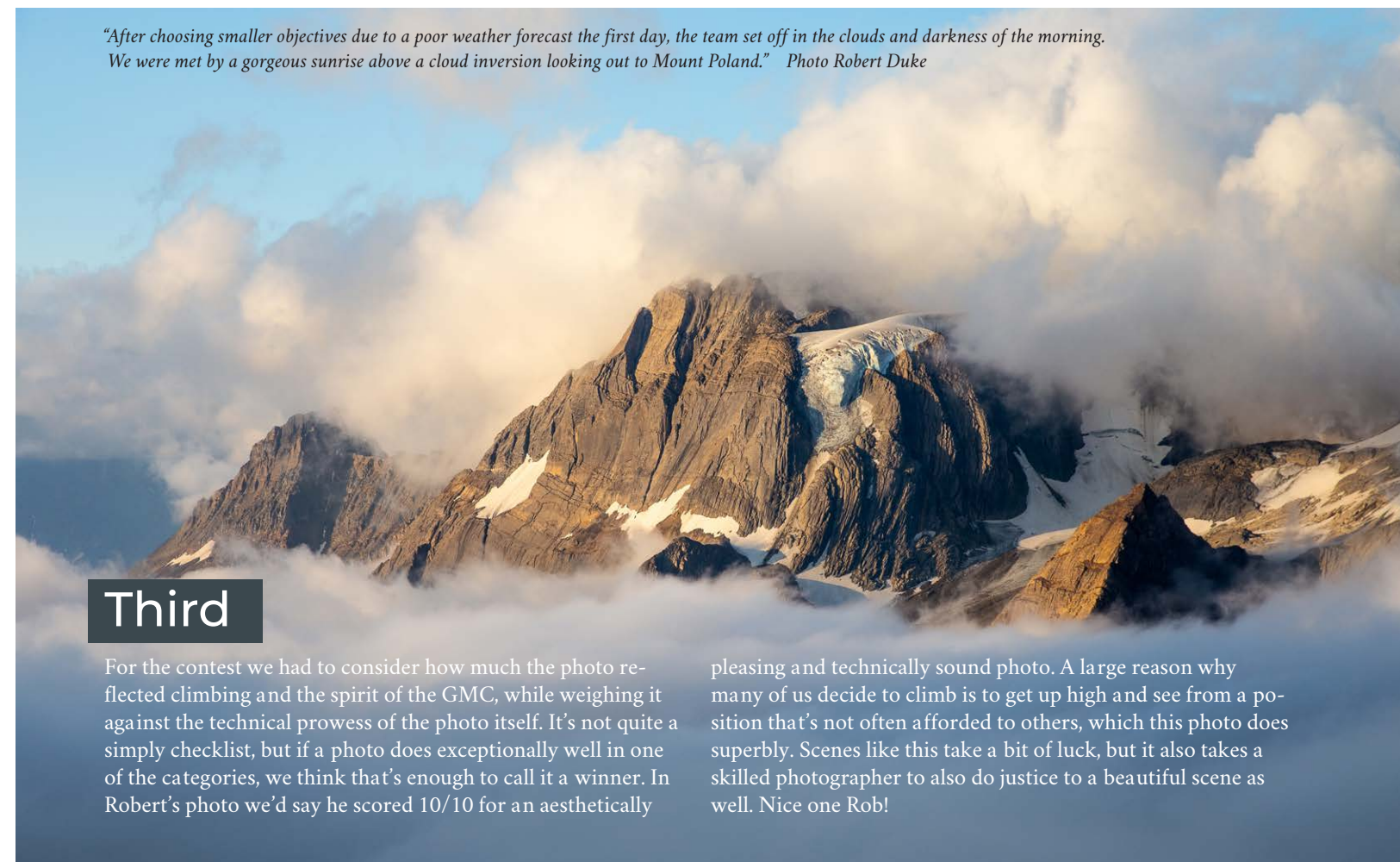
"Climbers heading to Mt Karakol." Photo Glen Crawford.



"This was taken on an ice skills day where we worked on our glacier travel, ice climbing and glacier morphology. As we rappelled into a crevasse on the lower Mummery that any Himalayan glacier would be proud of, I snapped this shot while I shivered in the bottom."

Photo Miles Kenyon-Slaney.

"After choosing smaller objectives due to a poor weather forecast the first day, the team set off in the clouds and darkness of the morning. We were met by a gorgeous sunrise above a cloud inversion looking out to Mount Poland." Photo Robert Duke



## Third

For the contest we had to consider how much the photo reflected climbing and the spirit of the GMC, while weighing it against the technical prowess of the photo itself. It's not quite a simple checklist, but if a photo does exceptionally well in one of the categories, we think that's enough to call it a winner. In Robert's photo we'd say he scored 10/10 for an aesthetically

pleasing and technically sound photo. A large reason why many of us decide to climb is to get up high and see from a position that's not often afforded to others, which this photo does superbly. Scenes like this take a bit of luck, but it also takes a skilled photographer to also do justice to a beautiful scene as well. Nice one Rob!

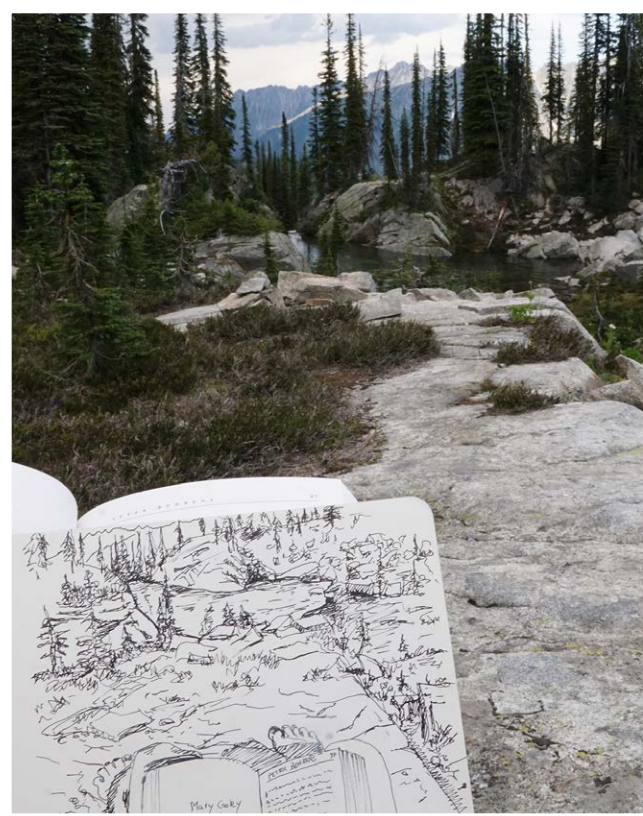
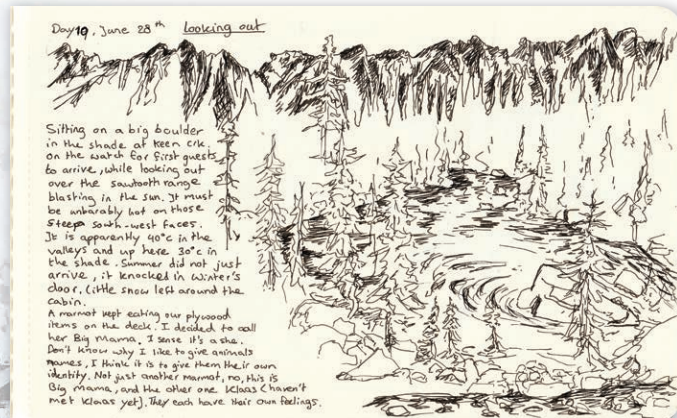
## Kokanee Journal

If you spent time in Kokanee Glacier Provincial Park this past summer, or if you're a local in the New Denver, BC area, you may know Petra Hekkenberg. Drawn by Canada's nature and wide-open spaces, Petra relocated from the Netherlands to BC's Slokan Valley and is now one of the club's rotating custodians at the Kokanee Glacier Cabin. She's also an artist, photographer, writer and keen observer of nature in all its forms.

Petra recorded her first summer at KGC with a daily journal of thoughts and sketches that brilliantly capture mountain life in the Kootenays, the sublime beauty of the park, and the slow roll of season change from spring to high summer to autumn.

The ACC will be featuring Petra's journal entries in a series through this coming winter on Aspects, the ACC blog for those of us that want to keep one foot in the brilliant, sunny stream of summer even as we embrace our alpine winter. ~ACC

You can follow Petra's art and words at [blog.alpineclubofcanada.ca/kokaneejournal](http://blog.alpineclubofcanada.ca/kokaneejournal)



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