



CAMC
CENTRAL ALBERTA MOUNTAIN
CLUB

May 2009 Newsletter

www.camchiking.ca

President's Report

Greetings CAMC,

We have very full and awesome hiking schedule for the 2009 season.

A big thank you to Doug Robson for the leg and lip work that made that happen for all of us; and to each trip leader who stepped up to volunteer their time and talent to lead trips.

We have some very experienced talent in our club and each one of these people have shared their knowledge and love of hiking freely and generously with many of us. My hope for this club is that the spirit of responsible kindness and love of the hills set the tone for our shared experiences. The participation of hikers, trip leaders and executive make a great club.

The weather is somewhat unsettled which resulted in a change of plans for a couple of hikes. Karen's trip to Opal Ridge turned into a trip to Dry Island Buffalo Jump. Steve and all turned around on Yam due to a whiteout and hip belt deep snow. (Tough bunch) The trip to Wind Tower turns into the next try at Yam.

It is great to see some new faces, welcome, if you love the mountains and want a hiking community you have come to the right place. Welcome back old members!

Sandy

REMINDER TO TRIP LEADERS TO ASK FOR A VOLUNTEER BEFORE THE HIKE STARTS FOR A TRIP REPORT TO BE SUBMITTED TO NEWSLETTER EDITOR - THANKS TO DAN FOR THE 2 SUBMITTED FOR MAY

Next CAMC General Meeting will be May 13, 2009 at Kerrywood Nature Centre @ 7:30 pm. See you there.

Upcoming event and other tidbits

Brian Davies is offering a GPS course through Red Deer Community Programs. The dates are Thursday May 14 and 17, and Saturday 23. The cost is \$65. Brian is very knowledgeable and has been teaching this course for many years. To register call Marilyn Bradley at 403 342 1059.

There has been some interest in doing some hikes throughout the week that are non-scheduled. This could be done by contacting individuals separately on the membership list.

The web site is currently up and running working and the 2009 Trip Schedule can be down-loaded and printed. Website is <http://www.camchiking.ca/>

For Sale –

Hiking Map and Guide for Banff & Mt Assiniboine

Topographical Map. Asking \$9.00

Call Carmelle -403-342-6157. She can bring to next meeting or get it to you somehow.

Trip Reports

CAMC Yamnuska trip report for April 25, 2009 – submitted by Dan (whom we picked up in the parking lot)

Chills, spills and thrills.

A newbie, this was my first mountain trip with CAMC and it was an experience that will surely stay with me for some time to come. A total of 14 of us congregated in the "Yam" parking lot for the pre-trip circle briefing/introductions, upon where it was determined that the majority of people attending were there to "have fun" and new member Carl, surprised us with his disclosure of "I'm Carl and I'm an alcoholic", which of course, curried favour with many of the membership.

Overcast, with low hanging cloud, the temp sitting around 1 degree and a recent late season snowfall covering the trail, we begin to make our way up. The first portion of the trail through the trees was sublime with terra firma under our heels and a steady but not arduous ascent. As we reached higher elevation, the snow got deeper. (Mental note for newbie....gaiters are no longer dorky, but cool! wish I had some) Nearing the crest of the treeline it was time to peel back a layer as warm up was complete. (newbie: "man...this pack is heavy...did I really need to bring all this stuff??")

Beyond the treeline, a wonderful vista of the adjacent valley and distant peaks. (newbie: "this is friggin awesome...I'm gonna climb all of those!!") Making our way through "The Crack" in the mountain, snow is deeper yet and new snow is beginning to fall. (newbie: "this is beautiful...why would anyone be anywhere else??") Instruction comes from the leadership..."it will be windy on the other side, now is the time to put on your wind layer". Everyone dons their shells...etc...and as promised...it is windy, not only that but, it's snowing more. (newbie: "cool....wow...that's a long way down...we're going to cross that?? Where's the helicopter going to land, shouldn't there be a trail?? is there a Starbucks nearby??")

The "scree", that's what us mountaineers call a slippery slope with lots of loose rocks and an accumulation of snow apparently. (newbie: "oh...look at mountain man Steve in the lead with all his fancy gear and know how!! Crap!....there's snow in the toe of my 7 yr old boots and my 85% cotton "adventure pants" from Costco, are soaked up the knees....this one \$10 "hiking pole" from the liquidation warehouse keeps collapsing and freezing to my wet glove...this is awesome, is that other guy really 79????") Crossing the scree with the wind whipping up the slope and snow blowing all over the place, I'm reminded of the cozy sofa at home, flipping channels and landing on discovery channel with one of those Everest Expeditions where visibility is nil and people are moving ridiculously slow with giant, calculated steps. Ok...I get it now.

As we near the middle of the scree another instruction. "Ok...we'll get everybody to spread out crossing this part...5 meters before the next person...there's a chance of an avalanche or slide through this area, we don't want to lose a bunch of you at once if it goes". (newbie: "Goes??? I've got a foot long trek pole frozen to the wrong hand, I'm cold, wet and numb to the knees, there's a never ending toboggan ride from hell to my right, I just walked by a spot where I think a bighorn sheep peed his pants and now I'm supposed to know how far 5 meters is before I go, so I don't die with a bunch of strangers?? This rocks!!!")

Across the scree and up "the chute". You know the expression, between a rock and a hard place? that's what a chute is and that's where you try to stuff your body, pack and dignity through. I got my body and pack through. Wow!!! the wind is really whipping now and there's a wall of weather quickly consuming us!! apparently we've finished the "easy part"!!! I've got cramps in my frozen quads and I don't know how I'm going to continue on, or make it back...but...looking at the ground we've covered, in these conditions, I can't help but feel a sense of accomplishment for having made it this far and being able to let go of fear and common sense. (newbie: "this is exhilarating...I can't believe I just did this...I'm gonna do this every weekend...if I live") RING!! RING!!! RING!!!! Is that a friggin cell phone??? JEEZUS!!! So much for the "moment", still...this is pretty cool!!

The weather has really deteriorated quickly and our guide has made the call..."I'm sorry folks, it's getting a bit too risky to continue on, I think we're going to have to turn back and leave this one for another day". No one argues. Back down the chute, the traverse across the scree is made even more difficult now by the fact that the wind is blowing much harder up the slope and visibility is nearly less than that 5 meter spread. The steps

and trail that were cut on the way here are quickly being erased and a sense of urgency is now being conveyed amongst the group that we need to get down and fast, focus is now the priority. Our guide and experienced hands tend the flock making sure to get us all back to safety.

Crossing through the crack, back to the other side and a different world appears, the wind is no longer a threat and big flakes of snow are floating gracefully down. The tension that gripped us on the other side falls away and light hearted conversations fill the air as we stroll back down the trail. As we reach the parking lot....full fledged flurries are now fallingthe timing was good. Thanks to our guide and the support of experienced members everyone is able to make their way home safe and sound. What a great trip!!!

This newbie is hooked...the combination of a challenging environment in a spectacular setting and sharing the experience with a great group of like minded enthusiasts is too much of a pull to not come back for more. Thanks to everyone that made this first trip for me, one that I won't soon forget.

The stats:

Distance: 10.3 km (round trip)

Max Elevation: 2061 m

Elevation gain: 712 m

Time: about 5 hours

Enjoyable moments: Innumerable



Yamnuska
Pictures submitted by Dan



Yamnuska – pic submitted by Dan

Dry Island Buffalo Jump May 2, 2009 – submitted by Dan

Firstly, best wishes to Karen and her family, hoping all is well. Looking forward to future hikes together. This hike was an alternate to Opal Ridge South, as recent snow had made that trip impractical. A small group of seven met at the AMA parking lot for the trip out with Doug standing in as trip leader.

The weather was sunny and warm, the first nice day in a while.

We arrived on-site at the upper parking lot, pausing for a moment or two to gear up and take in the scenery of the canyon, mesas and river below.

Heading onto the leading ridge, we began our descent with a myriad of path choices in front of us. A mild cooling breeze gave some relief from the heat that was quickly building as we took in the sights of the seemingly infinite variations of form taken by the land through the process of wind and water erosion.

Each corner that we turned and ridge that we advanced past presented yet another stunning vista with well defined strata marking the layers of time in the cliff faces, set against the backdrop of a clear blue sky. At times the prehistoric landscape appeared

alien or other worldly with unfamiliar shapes carved into the rocks and dirt, scrub and cacti dotting the surface. The parched landscape still presented as beautiful with the changes in colour in the rocks, and the odd crocus flower darting upwards from the meagre surroundings. The sun moving across the sky created a different view from moment to moment as the changing shadows made their way through the relief of the rock.

Down at river level, a quick survey of possible routes had the group splitting into two, with the adventurers making a quick scramble of the opposing ridge and the other half staying nearer the bottom, following the base of the ridge formation. Scales and distances can be deceiving in this terrain, as a look back towards the beginning of our trek seemed much further visually that it had been actually. At times loose rock and dirt made navigation of the route a challenge but that was usually short lived, with all the opportunities for alternate paths. One of the nice features of this area is being able to choose the level of difficulty that you are comfortable with from walking down on the canyon floor to near vertical scrambling.

At 21 degrees, it felt warm and it wasn't long before we stripped off the outer layers and were taking in water. A bit of bushwhacking down near the bottom and another descent by the adventurers brought everyone together again. Re-joined we made our way up to the top of Dry Island stopping for a group pic. While there are plenty of choices for routes, there are also times when the route just runs out and a bit of doubling back and re-evaluation is needed. After a short stop for a drink and snack, we started the trip back. Taking a direct and nearly straight-up route that provided a good cardio workout up to the road and a scramble back up to the lot finished the hike off very nicely. Once at the top, we jumped in the vehicles and drove back down the road to the picnic area and enjoyed lunch in the warm sun.

This is a terrific hike that is close to Red Deer, with lots of great photo ops and a good variety of routes and challenges.

Thanks Doug!

The stats:

Distance (round trip): 6.2 km

Max. Elevation: 881m

Min. Elevation: 719m

Differential: 162m

Time: about 4 hours



Dry Island pic submitted by Dan



The only CAMC e-mails that are connected to the correct people as of today are for the Newsletter and Courses Chair. We are still working on this through the Web Design. If you need to contact an individual on the Executive team, please check their contact info on the Member List that was sent out by Carmelle.

CAMC Executive 2009		
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