



NEWSLETTER

Alpine Club of Canada

Toronto Section

Winter
2003

Docking Out

by Kit Moore

Bon Echo is closed for the season! The new boat is in dry dock, our dock is out of the water and up on shore, and the ACC hut is locked up for the winter (except for those intrepid ACC ice-climbers able to get across the frozen lake, assuming it freezes over properly this winter).

We had a great Bon Echo season this year, with many busy weekends, and over 500 visits during the six months we were open. Thanks to all the custodians who helped Cliff and me this year, and who earned another free weekend or season's pass by doing so...including Danielle Beaton and Mike Wright, David Bridges, Larry Forsyth, Bryan and Sean Freill, Paul Geddes and Willa Harasym, Calvin Klatt, Nikki Licht and Marc Power, Leo Markle and Karen Woo, Michael Marxen, David Myles, Glenn Norris, Grant Parkin, Chris Rogers, Ray Rutitis, Mike Stein, Paul Witherly, and John Wylie. A special thanks goes to Willa and Paul, for their excellent organization of our Ox Roast weekend this year, and to the 12 stalwart members who came out late in October to help us close up for the season on docking-out weekend.

This season's "epic of the year" was a giant multi-ton rockfall that occurred on Vertigenous, one of Bon Echo's most popular climbs. The rockfall was preceded by a climber fall on pitch 2 - just above the famous Vertigenous tree - after which the injured party was lowered to safety by his partners. The leader continued to the top with the other member of the team, only to find that a huge rock was about to come off, threatening to cut the rope and fall on his belayer. The leader had the presence of mind to wait for help from custodian John Wylie, who had been watching the situation unfold from the boat. John was able to dock the boat at the stairs, race to the top of the cliff, lower a rope and help bring the climbers up before the two-ton rock was dislodged safely. We plan to clear any remaining loose blocks there early next spring, while the Park is still closed and the lake is relatively deserted. This year, Chris Rogers and Larry Forsythe also managed to find some loose boulders on Red Groove and Mac's Books/Formication, so take care when you revisit these climbs next year too.

While I'm on the subject of Chris Rogers, thanks again to Chris for his continuing work on the trails and for all his work, along with Cliff and Leo, helping us to get a new boat and motor. If anyone happens to see the old ACC boat on Lake Mazinaw next year, don't panic - it's not a ghost, it's the real thing, but with a new owner! We were glad to find a new home for our faithful boat with good friends Pauline and Steve Smart of Smart's Marina, who have helped us care for the old boat so well over the last 12 years.



Docking Out Haul Bags

Before closing I want to remind members that I'm already looking for at least 30 custodians for next year, and am anxious to start filling the list soon - we have less than five months before docking-in on the weekend of May 3-4. Don't forget that every weekend as a custodian entitles you to another free weekend during the season. And if you take more than one weekend, or do something monumental, for example as Leo Markle plans to do with his exciting "new outhouse" project next year, then you may be treated to a pass for the rest of the season. If you're interested in returning next year, or trying it for the first time as an apprentice custodian, please call me at 416-469-3567 or email me at martyandkit@yahoo.ca And of course Cliff and I will welcome you for docking-in weekend, when we always need help opening for the new season. We hope to see you then!

Toronto Section Executive

Chairperson & Section Rep	Paul Geddes	905-821-9625	harasym.geddes@sympatico.ca
Past Chairperson	Willa Harasym	905-821-9625	harasym.geddes@sympatico.ca
Secretary	Susan Andrew	905-634-2805	sandrew@cogeco.ca
Treasurer	Karen McGilvray	416-465-0660	karen@rockoasis.com
Membership	Eva Fellegi	905-277-5287	
Membership	Gary Eisele	905-277-5287	
Awards	Bruce Eidsvik	416-489-4663	bruce@voicegenie.com
E-Communications	Sandra Bowkun	416-482-1526	show@it.ca
Newsletter Editor	Jayne Beardsmore	416-365-9074	jayne@mie.utoronto.ca
Web Site	Allan Hansen	416-766-0385	al.hansen@excite.com
Communications	Paul Chvostek	416-482-4526	paul@it.ca
Communications	Erica Valentine	416-539-9788	heartval@yahoo.ca
Communications	Willa Harasym	905-821-9625	harasym.geddes@sympatico.ca
Bon Echo Hut	Cliff Glover	416-759-1566	
Bon Echo Hut	Kit Moore	416-469-3567	
Boat Coordinator	Chris Rogers	905-729-4768	burns2794@rogers.com
Bon Echo	Leo Markle	416-778-9239	leom@ross-clair.com
Bon Echo	Karen Woo	416-778-9239	kwoo@formglas.com
Bon Echo	Larry Forsyth	905-825-3356	lforsyth@acres.com
Mountaineering	Don Collier	416-884-4098	dcollier@mail.rosecom.ca
Rock Climbing	Karen Woo	416-778-9239	kwoo@formglas.com
Ice Climbing	Dave Britnell	905-884-3842	icfetiche@globalserve.net
Ice Climbing	Bill Piekos	905-338-3201	bill-piekos@cibc.com
Access Committee Chair	Leo Markle	416-778-9239	leom@ross-clair.com
Access-Member at Large	Veronica Feenstra	905-524-1342	veronicafeenstra@hotmail.com
Activities	Ray Rutitis	905-831-6399	
Activities	Erica Valentine	416-539-9788	heartval@yahoo.ca
Activities	Mike Stein	905-274-3018	michael.stein@cdi.ca
Activities	Brenley Crawford	905-828-1791	rockmama@rogers.com
Activities	Michael Marxen	416-922-0970	michael.marxen@utoronto.ca
Activities	Norm Greene	905-792-7551	ngreene@idirect.ca
Activities	Sandra Bowkun	416-482-1526	show@it.ca

Word from the Chair

by Willa Harasym

This is my last Chair's report to the Section. As of the AGM on November 23rd, my spouse, Paul Geddes has taken on the role of Chair. I thought I owed him to at least report to the close of my tenure. As Paul and I very much operate as a tag team, you have not seen the end of me! I am staying on the Executive in a communications role.

Now where to start? As I wrote my last report, I was heading off with fear and trepidation to manage the annual Bon Echo Ox Roast on September 14th. It went just fine. Lots of people helped out with the provisioning, set up and cooking. We had almost 50 people attend to put a huge dent in three big roasts of beef, veggie chili, potatoes, corn, garlic bread, salads, and a range of desserts. We won't dwell on the fact that I forgot the extra wine and that my punch was a bit ho hum.

The climbing was great on the Friday for some early birds and then again on Saturday. The rain thankfully held off until the middle of Saturday night. For the diehards, I heard the afternoon climbing on Sunday was good after the rock had time to dry (we had to leave early). But most people peeled out by lunchtime on Sunday. Too much partying?

More recently we held our Annual General Meeting on November 23rd. It was gratifying to see so many people out - over 80 of them. Was it the downtown location, the yummy food, the excellent slide show, a resurgence of interest in the Section, climbers wanting to reconnect with their climbing friends in the off season, or all of the above?

Dan Clark's slide show on climbing in New Zealand and Australia was great. It confirmed our suspicions that mountaineering and rock climbing there are quite different experiences from ours in the Rockies and on the Escarpment.

I am pleased to report that there are very few changes to the Executive. Norm Greene, after three years of outstanding service, has handed the mountaineering baton to Don Collier. Leo Markle has taken on the high profile position of Chair of the ACCess Committee. Thanks for Paul Geddes' fine leadership of that Committee over the last two years that helped to revitalize it as an important part of what the Section does, on behalf of its members and for the climbing community in general. As I discussed earlier, Paul Geddes is now Chair of the Section. Bill Piekos, who has been instrumental in leading Section ice climbing activities for the last several years, has joined the Executive to formally assist Dave Britnell in that role. During the year we bid *adieu* to Shari Langdon and Lynette Lo, both of whom have relocated in the West. We are envious.

As a Section, we had the pleasure at the AGM of acknowledging the contributions of three people to the ongoing vitality of the Section and its activities. (Thank you

to Larry Forsyth and Dave Brown for facilitating the Section awards process.)

Sasha Akalski, owner of the Toronto Climbing Academy, was given a Section award for his continued participation in offering ½ price climbing nights at his gym to Section members, as well as allowing us on prior occasions to use his premises for our meetings. Chris Rogers was honoured by us, in particular for his ongoing management of boat issues relating to Bon Echo. He has, over the years, put in countless hours assessing our boating needs within financial constraints, sourcing the boats and motors to meet those needs and doing skillful and time consuming outfitting of our boats by his own hands. John Carey, recently lost to his family, friends and our Section in a climbing accident, was also given a Section award. It recognized his dedication, as a member of the Executive and the ACCess Committee, to facilitating the Section's climbing activities and to working to ensure continuing access for all climbers to our local climbing crags.

Happily, our Treasurer reported that the Section's finances are in good shape, despite having spent a pot full of money on our new Bon Echo boat and motor. And membership is reported up significantly over the same time last year. These are both good signs.

The Executive recently decided to adopt a less centralized way of meeting. We have now divided ourselves into portfolios: Administration, Communications, Bon Echo, Activities and the ACCess Committee. The different portfolios will manage the issues relevant to their area and, using a more streamlined way of communicating in a small group, will be more effective at involving Executive members and getting the jobs done.

If any members are interested in becoming involved as part of the Executive in any of these areas, speak up by contacting the new Chair. And don't forget, we are always looking for individuals to suggest or run a Section activity.

Now on to winter and lots of ice and snow. Check out our healthy schedule of activities in the list included in this newsletter.

See you around.

Word from the Editor

by Jayne Beardsmore

Whew! Thanks to all of you who submitted your articles by the deadline so that I'm newsletter free over the holidays and can concentrate on the necessities of life like climbing, skating, snowboarding, skiing and après!!! The next issue Spring/Summer deadline is April 15th. You can submit things by e-mail to jayne@mie.utoronto.ca.

"Ultimate High"

by Tony Marshall

It is with sadness that the Toronto Section lost one of its outstanding members, John Carey, during a section mountaineering camp in the Battle Range of British Columbia. While traversing a 50 degree snow slope on the descent from the summit of Billy Budd, John slipped and was unable to self-arrest. During the ensuing 300m fall, he sustained severe head and bodily injuries from which he succumbed on the evening of Aug. 18, 2002.

For me, I always enjoyed John's enthusiasm at executive meetings, in the climbing gyms and especially while rock climbing up at Bon Echo. I was also captivated when John shared his adventure of doing 19 pitches of hard 5.9 rock up Mt. Rundle in Banff. A memory I cherish, is of the time I visited John and his wife Kerry at their beautiful Victorian home in Lynden before they moved to Mississauga. John proudly pointed out the many architectural details, including the chestnut woodwork they had lovingly restored.



To his great delight, John Carey received his autographed copy of Göran Kropp's "Ultimate High" on July 18, 2001 at the Helly Hanson Store in the Square One shopping centre, Mississauga, Ontario.

Photo and text by Tony Marshall

Tragically, the ever lively and entertaining Göran Kropp, 35, (pictured above) also passed away while rock climbing at Frenchman Coulee, a popular climbing area near Vantage, Washington, some 135 miles southeast of Seattle. On Sept. 30, 2002, Göran was finishing a route on Sunshine Wall when he fell 60 feet and hit a rock ledge before continuing to the ground. According to Kropp's belayer, Erden Sukru, 41, of Seattle, he was within feet of finishing "Air Guitar" when he fell. "The rope went slack, then started to rip the gear. The entire chain of pro pulled ... Göran impacted the shelf on which I was belaying, and fell another 25 feet onto the talus. He was dead on first impact and did not suffer."

Among his many mountaineering accomplishments which included summiting Shishapangma, Cho Oyu, Mustagh Tower, and K2, Göran Kropp is best remembered for having cycled from his native Sweden to Nepal, carrying his own gear and food from Kathmandu to Mt. Everest, soloing it without oxygen and then cycling back home - a 14,000 mile round trip under his own power!

In 1999, I hiked to Everest Base Camp along with Joandice Tigley (my then girlfriend, now wife) and Rick Marshall, my brother from Banff. Our Sherpas carried food for Göran and his girlfriend Renata Chlumska who were climbing on Everest in a bid to put her (the first Swedish woman) on the summit. On the trail at Dingboche just after my brother and I had summited Island Peak (Imjatse), we had the distinct pleasure of meeting Göran's father, Gerhard. Most impressive was this man's love and support for his son that he flew from Sweden and was hiking by himself up to Base Camp to greet Göran and Renata after completing their successful summit bid.

In July of 2001, Göran came to Toronto to present his slide show at the Uof T's Convocation Hall. Earlier in the day, I met up with John Carey at Square One to get a copy of Göran's book signed for my brother Rick, while John had one signed for his extensive collection. It was then that I took this last photo of the two of them together. For a good half hour, Göran spoke lightheartedly with John and myself and thanked me for bringing their food to Base Camp before we left to see his wonderfully animated presentation later that night. Göran spoke like no other speaker you've ever seen. He possessed a style all unto his own, one that tempered incredible accomplishments with self-effacing humility, wit and mime-like humor.

For those of us whose lives were personally touched by these two vibrant individuals, we'll miss them dearly.

Return to Red Rocks & Joshua Tree

by Kit Moore

In each of the past ten years, I've tried to visit Red Rocks Nevada at least once, and Joshua Tree California at least once. This year I was lucky enough to do both in one trip, running from March 7 to April 9, a great time of year for both areas. After ten years of visits, it's hard to find new climbs I can do and tell you about, but we managed to find some new routes worth highlighting for you, and a few old favourites worth revisiting.

Red Rocks

You can climb in Red Rocks any time of year, but my favourite months are March, April and May, when days are growing longer, and you can usually expect a mix of hot and

cold weather. This year was no exception - some days we were frozen out of shaded areas, and other days those were the only places where temperatures were bearable.

The trip began with a warm-up sport-climbing day in the Black Corridor, with my old Red Rocks pal Wendell Broussard, my only climbing partner older than me (although admittedly he looks ten years younger). That evening, one of my favourite Bon Echo partners, Chantelle Bergeron, arrived, and we set out the next day for the warmest, most accessible area, for some more warming up. We chose the Ultraman Wall, just a short hike from the first pullout on the one-way loop road that takes climbers and tourists to the trails leading to most of the canyons in Red Rocks. There we warmed up on Ultraman (5.8) and three other one-pitch moderate routes, all bolted, in full sun, and on beautiful, richly coloured red rock.



Chantelle Bergeron on Ultraman – Red Rocks

During a week or so of warmer weather, we were joined by Nikki Licht, Marc Power, and other friends for some of the classic routes, most of which I mentioned in past Red Rocks articles. Icebox Canyon was a great source of cooler routes - Shady Ladies (5.7), Van Allen Belt (5.7), Cold September Corner (5.8), The Sensuous Mortician (5.9), Mister Masters (5.9+), and Knotty Behaviour (5.10). I especially enjoyed The Sensuous Mortician, located on the ominous-sounding Necromancer Wall, which also offers Hop Route (5.7+) and Fold-Out (5.8). When you're in the area, don't forget to check out Lebanese JoJo (5.9+), Romeo Charlie (5.10+), and Amazing Grace (5.9) and its companion climbs, Earth Juice (5.10+) and Grape Nuts (5.10c). Climbing gods and goddesses will want to try Greased Lightning (5.10) and Smears for Fears (5.11)...I haven't!

When we hit another cool spell, we headed for Pine Creek Canyon and stopped at the Brass Wall, a sunny varnished section of the cliff, 20 minutes along the canyon trail and

uphill to the right. Here we hung out on some old favourites - Topless Twins (5.8), Varnishing Point (5.8) and Mushroom People (5.10c) - as well as one exciting new climb, Bush Pilot (my guidebook says 5.8+, but I thought 5.10a!). This area offers many warm climbs on a cold day - you might also want to try Heavy Spider Karma (5.6), Straightshooter (5.9+) and No Laughing Matter (5.10-).

Chantelle's last climbing day of her trip was a cold one, so we decided on Cat in the Hat (5.6+), another sunny face, out of the wind that day. We both rated it a winner - five pitches of exposed climbing on the south face of Mescalito Peak, about half an hour's walk into Pine Creek Canyon. Don't forget to bring your route-finding skills and double ropes for the rappels. The guidebook says five pitches, but we easily did the last two in one, taking care to avoid rope drag.



Kit Moore route-finding in Red Rocks

After Chantelle left the next day, my wife Marty and I did some hiking in Red Rocks, drove down to Joshua Tree looking for warmer weather, and enjoyed some camping and hiking there during the following week. I was glad to have the rest, but of course tempted to continue climbing when I saw other climbers enjoying the J Tree rocks and boulders wherever I went.

By the time we returned to Vegas and Marty left for home, I was once again ready for some Red Rocks climbing, this time with Fernando Nuflo, one of my Rock Oasis climbing partners.

He had driven from Toronto to Vegas, and would be joined in a week by Dianne Harris, his best friend and real partner, for some more Red Rocks climbing. Fernando, Dianne, and I spent a few days on multi-pitch routes, like the classic 7-pitch Frogland (5.8-) at the entrance to Black Velvet

Canyon, and the exciting 4-pitch Dark Shadows (5.8-) in Pine Creek Canyon, complete with small pond and waterfall.



Pitch 1 of Frogland - Red Rocks

Now that Ferguson's Hotel is off our list for recommended accommodation in Vegas, we decided to check out the new and improved Red Rocks campground...not bad for US\$10/night campsites! Even though there's not much vegetation around, the campground is set in a bit of a valley and so gets some shelter from wind and weather. Each tentsite has its own water tap, taken from a reservoir filled daily, and nearby newly-constructed toilets. We all agreed that Vegas hotels can't compete with the campground in three important respects - it's cheap, close to Red Rocks climbing, and far from the noise and lights of the downtown Vegas gambling strip!

Joshua Tree

Before Dianne arrived, Fernando and I took a 6-day side trip to Joshua Tree, where we met up with Mike Makischuk for some perfect J Tree climbing conditions in April. My main goal for this part of the trip was to repeat Figures on a Landscape (5.10b), a beautiful 3-pitch route on the North Astrodome in Wonderland, one of J Tree's more remote climbing areas. I first climbed this route ten years ago, but have been reluctant to lead pitch 1 and have had trouble finding a partner that would. This pitch is definitely 5.10b, until you get to the long traverse at the end of pitch 1, which ends with 15 feet of unprotected traverse, finishing with a tricky 5.10d move (my opinion!). I was still unwilling to try leading it, so was overjoyed when Mike said he'd like to lead pitch 1 if I'd lead the rest. Mike did a terrific job on this pitch, which was definitely more challenging for Fernando and me! After that, I did the following two pitches in one (5.10a/5.9), and found it a breeze compared with Mike's crux pitch.



**Fernando and Mike in Joshua Tree
Pitch 1 of Figures on a Landscape**

While we were in J Tree, we also spent a day at Conan's Corridor, one of the more accessible areas in J Tree, and one of the most unique. We climbed the same three routes I mentioned in my previous J Tree article a few years ago - Gem (5.8), Colorado Crack (5.9) and Spiderman (5.10a) - all worth doing again and again. This area can be a little tricky finding, but if you have to squeeze through a narrow corridor to get into the climbing area, you're probably there!

Before heading home, we also spent a day at Hemingway Buttress, which has a full range of routes - sun in the morning, shade in the afternoon. Here we started on the classic White Lightning (5.7), then moved up to Prepackaged (5.10a) and the much harder Poodles are People Too (5.10b). I'd like to have gone back to do Head over Heals (5.10a) and The Overseer (5.9), but they'll have to wait for the next trip.

For those planning to go to J Tree, you can drive from LAX (3+ hours), Las Vegas (4+ hours) or Palm Springs (1+ hours), but the best airfares tend to be to Vegas. Camping is cheap if you stay up in the park (US\$10 per week whether you camp or not), and more expensive if you stay lower in Indian Cove near the main highway. Don't forget to bring in lots of food and water if you stay up in the park - it's a long drive back out to town, and not worth it unless you need ice, showers or some other necessity of life. As for campground, we usually stay in Jumbo Rocks, which tends to be quietest and often has empty campsites, especially if you arrive on a Sunday. On the other hand, if you're adept at worming your way into someone else's campsite, Hidden Valley Campground is great and is the traditional first choice of climbers - a little too crowded for my taste though. Ryan Campground is another popular choice but has fewer boulders around its perimeter, and so is much colder, windier and more exposed in bad weather.

Fortunately, bad weather is a relatively rare occurrence for Joshua Tree, as it is in Red Rocks, so camping is usually a pleasure in either area. Good weather is just one of the many reasons I keep returning to these places year after year. If you decide to go, feel free to give me a call, and I'll be glad to share whatever information I have for these areas. I hope to see some of you there one day soon!

Ice Climbing Report

by Dave Britnell

"Hey, Doc!" I yelled to the Doctor as he walked into the room. "Don't you know that these electrodes are supposed to be attached to my frontal lobes?" I questioned my Doc. Man, these guys don't know anything.



Chapel Pond, Daks

Well, here are the Ice Trips for 2003:

Jan 10 - 12 Thunder Bay

Bill Piekos 905-338-3201

Jan. 18 Eagle's Nest

Brian Irving 416-303-5897

Jan. 25 Rosseau

Dave Britnell 905-884-3842

Feb. 8 Bow Lake

Don Collier 905-884-4098

Feb. 15 – 22 Rockies

Bill Piekos 905-338-3201 Dave Britnell 905-884-3842

Feb. 28 – Mar. 03 New Hampshire

Michael Marxen 416-922-0970

Mar. 7 – 9 Quebec City

Bill Piekos 905-338-3201 Dave Britnell 905-884-3842



Winter Camping on Diamond Lake

Ice Climbing in New Hampshire

Feb. 28 – Mar. 03, 2003

by Michael Marxen

Two years ago in 2001, a group of Toronto ice climbers undertook the 10h drive to the mountains of New Hampshire. All right, some people actually took the plane into Boston. Still, the trip was a huge success majorly due to the engagement of Lynette Lo, who befriended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Outing Club (MITOC). The stay at their Intervale cabin was comfortable and extremely cheap. US \$5 per night for a hut with cooking facilities, heat and ideal access to some of the best ice climbing in the East.

In the mean time, Lynette has relocated herself to some ‘real’ mountains out West. But others have followed her lead to maintain the good relations with MITOC. MITOC actually owns two cabins, which could both be utilized for ACC outings. Check out the MITOC webpage for more details: <http://web.mit.edu/mitoc/www/>.

This winter, we have joined forces with the Montreal section to mount another ice climbing trip to NH on Feb. 28 – Mar. 03, 2003. Some MITOC climbers might actually join our group and can probably give us some good insider tips. For details contact Michael Marxen at 416-922-0970 or michael.marxen@utoronto.ca. I am sure we will have a great time on the ice in the East, while we wish Lynette all the best for her adventures in the mountains out West.

**** ATTENTION ICE CLIMBERS ****

Through the efforts of your ACCess Committee, Hamilton Region Conservation Authority has agreed to open a previously closed area to ice climbers for Winter 2003

FELKERS FALLS CONSERVATION AREA

This area will be open exclusively for individuals, no groups or schools will be allowed.

CLIMBING PERMIT REQUIRED

See climbers.org for details on obtaining a permit.

Climbing To a New Low

by Willa Harasym

You would have to be unable to see, not to have noticed, over the past couple of years, the way that climbing activities have been co-opted by the advertising and corporate worlds to push their products and/or images. Whether it is a Toyota truck driving around Everest area or a rock climber pushing mutual funds. We have seen them all.

I don't have any ownership of the image of climbing, but as a climber, I certainly have been amused and a bit cynical at the trend. (It is particularly rankling when the photo gets the gear/stance/place wrong.)

Having read a recent advert, however, I am now down right annoyed! Climbing is now being trashed by our own. A new low has been reached.

Read this excerpt from a multi-page advertising supplement from a recent issue of Canadian Business, written up and accompanied with mountain photos, under the section called "Real Men's Journeys" (*Real Men?* - I guess we shouldn't be surprised at the target market):

Heli Mountaineering

Okay, we know you will one day climb Everest, just because it is there. In the mean time, let's start you on something a little lower. In the Rockies maybe. Oh yeah, and because you're pressed for time, maybe we'll forget about climbing the boring stuff, like the first six thousand feet. You're too "Alpine" to be messing with that, anyway. And since we've got the copter to take you to the pointy bits, we might as well use it to drop you off at the resort for a hot tub, dinner and Cristale after you reach the summit. Everest can wait, don't you think?

Does CMH have to aim so low in seeking customers? (An aside: The next activity written up under "Real Men's Journeys" (with a photo of the single prop Cessna 206 air plane, not the activity) was the "Love Air Mile High Tour", out of Whistler. The pilot pulls a curtain and puts on head phones. While the advert is more explicit, I will let you figure out the rest!)

Who's Protecting Your Access?

by Paul Geddes

The Access Committee has a new Chair, Leo Markle. Leo has been active in the Section for a number of years and on the Access Committee for the past two years.

The Access Committee is continuing to evolve in its role of protecting climbing access in Southern Ontario. Land managers have come to trust the long term commitment of the members of the Committee in providing support of land management issues related to climbing.

The Access Committee has established the following goals:

- To create a responsible climbing community through education and advocacy.
- To conserve the natural environment by reducing the impact of climbing activities.
- To maintain and develop access to Ontario rock and ice climbing sites.
- To treat other climbers, non-climbers and land managers with respect and understanding.

If you share these goals, please support us. Your actions determine our success in protecting access. I would like to thank the Access Committee Executive and it's members, for their dedication to access issues during my term as the Committee Chair. Paul Geddes

Review of www.GearReview.com

by Wila Harasym

If you are an outdoor gear freak or just wanting to buy a new pair of climbing shoes or a GPS, you could do worse than check out this site.

The site has thorough reviews of all kinds of gear of interest to climbers under topics such as climbing, camping, mountaineering, packs, filters/hydration, sleeping bags, snow gear, ultra light gear, tents, pack stoves, food/cooking gear, etc. Dozens of product groupings (e.g. ropes, climbing shoe, bivy bags, backpacks, socks, etc.) are then summarized in comparative reviews. In addition, the site offers product advice and operating instructions, e.g. everything you might

want to know about rope construction and care. And it is all searchable by product type/activity or manufacturer.

For those of us who don't know what to take or who live and die by our lists, there are a set of sample gear lists for a range of activities such as backpacking, mountaineering and climbing.

Finally, if you are looking for the contact details or a link to an outdoor gear manufacturer, the site has an alpha search listing. They even promise that if you can't find the company you're looking for, just email the company name to them and they will add it to their list, usually within a few hours.

Backcountry Huts

Book review by: Paul Geddes

A recent addition to my mountaineering library is "Backcountry Huts & Lodges of the Rockies and Columbias" written by Jim Scott. After extensive research this new 287 page guide came onto the market about a year ago. I was not too anxious to purchase it, as I have always relied on my copy of the 1984!! guide High & Dry, Huts in the Canadian Rockies to access information on huts in the western mountains of Alberta and British Columbia.

I was pleasantly surprised when I finally bought a copy on my most recent trip to the mountains. It has details on no less than 124!! huts and lodges in the western mountains. Currently, The Alpine Club of Canada manages only 20 of these huts so this delivers a lot of additional destinations for you to consider. Even this vast list is already becoming dated as new huts have been built since it was first published in 2001. As well, a few hut caretakers don't want their hut details published, so there are always other gems to be discovered, tucked away in the mountains somewhere.

Learning the locations of the mountain huts and lodges in this guide is a good way to become familiar with various mountain climbing and ski mountaineering areas in western Canada. Two pages or more are devoted to describing each location. Map titles, GPS coordinates and elevations are given. Summer and winter access routes are detailed. Useful guidebooks and web sites for each area are also listed. Warning!! unlike the 27 huts listed in the High & Dry guide, this new guide includes many very expensive lodges costing hundreds of dollars per night, so be very sure that you head out on the right trail.

Available at MEC or order through the national ACC office in Canmore, \$25.00.

TORONTO SECTION CLIMBING CAMP

SUMMER 2003

Tentative Location - FAIRY MEADOWS

Tentative Date - AUGUST 2003

CONTACT - DON COLLIER

416-884-4098

dcollier@mail.rosecom.ca

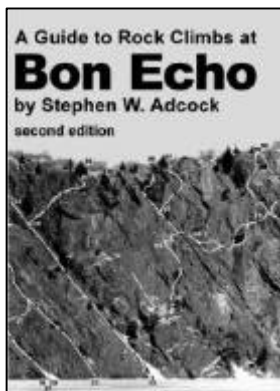
New Revision to Bon Echo Guidebook

We've sold 2/3 of the print run of the second edition of "A Guide to Rock Climbs at Bon Echo", and now it's time to start thinking about a third edition. Comments, criticisms, corrections and other constructive inputs are solicited. I want to rewrite the climbing history section, so anyone who can help with this is welcome to contact. Old pictures are especially wanted - I can scan prints and 35 mm negs and slides so a short loan is all I need.

David Brown

2075 Castlefield Crescent
Oakville, Ontario L6H 5B4

brownmail@sympatico.ca



Another Trip of 15 Minute Approaches – French Alps

by Bill Piekos

Jennifer and I have recently visited this superb climbing area and would like to share some beta. We hope it proves useful to anyone planning a trip there for the first time. If you have already climbed The Dru, or had epics on the massive walls of Grand Jorasses – read no further! However, if you secretly thought of going there one day to grovel in the footsteps of climbing history: this article is for you!

No matter what type of climbing you are into, you are assured to find countless venues to enjoy your sport. Ice, snow, mixed, alpine rock and cragging abound in fantastic numbers. Also,

this is Europe, so do not count on humping big loads anywhere!

Simply take your day pack, catch a telepherique (gondola), hike for 10-15mins and start climbing.

OK... so not all the choices are t-h-a-t easy, but very many are, indeed.

TRAVEL LOGISTICS:

There are several ways of getting to Chamonix, subject to flight carrier schedules, etc.

We took an Air Canada flight to Munich, then a short Lufthansa flight to Geneva and traveled by car from there. PS It pays to make your car bookings from Canada. It takes about 1 hour by car from Geneva, mostly on 130km/h motorway (just like our Hwy 400 in a cottage rush hour!).

Having a car is most convenient, but you can also get everywhere by a Chamonix bus, or train, both of which run regularly and will stop (sometimes on request only) at many climbing areas and telepherique stations. PS If you drive, keep in mind that whoever gets on a "roundabout" first, has a right of way. Otherwise you will get creamed and increase your trip costs substantially!

This is a very busy place, with plenty of folks climbing, hiking, parapenting and mountain biking everywhere... After all, how else would Euros stay so trim while eating tons of cheese, huge plates of meat with lip smacking sauces and consuming wine by the gallon? Just like in Canmore, there are more dogs then people (or so it seems!) and they are permitted to accompany their owners to local eating establishments – very classy from the canine perspective!

Early September seems ideal, as it is already low season, offering less bustle and lower prices. Otherwise, July and August months are considered prime.

WHERE TO STAY:

The deep valley where Chamonix is located, represents an excellent choice for your stay. There are a few towns located there, all within a few minutes of each other by car, bus, or train. Chamonix is the biggest and the most famous one. The other ones are Argentiere, Les Houches, and further on, Vallorcine. Chamonix is very busy, noisy and somewhat polluted by frequent traffic. Others are much smaller and hence more relaxed and less expensive. There is a neat British pub in Argentiere called The Office. If you go there, tell its owner, Jane, that we say hi!

Many choices of accommodations abound: from expensive hotels (150-200 Euros per night) to hostels and everything in between, including private homes. Good choice seems to be

MGM condo chain, which rent by day or week at a huge discount from regular hotels. If you go as a group, you can get a nice 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom, fully equipped condo (including private Jacuzzi and sauna!) accommodating up to 7 folks, for about 80-90 Euros per day. Smaller units rent for cheaper... You do the math, but this is not much more than our ACC Club in Canmore... These are located in Chamonix, Argentiere, as well as Les Houches. Orion condo chain also offers similar choices.

All towns offer well supplied grocery shops (Petite Casino is a popular chain), restaurants, bars, climbing shops, etc. Food prices seem to be on par with our hometown, except for French wine, which is unbelievably affordable at 3-5 Euros a bottle (cheaper than Coke)!

Buy a weekly, or seasonal pass for telepheriques to save extra money, as you will use them a lot.



Typical street in Chamonix

GUIDES:

Visit a Tourist Information Office (there is one in each town) and get a topo map of the valley, with all of the major mountain ranges nicely marked, including hiking and approach trails and of course: telepheriques! The offices also display daily "meteo" in French and English and are a good source of general information about the area. Each town has a Mountain Guides office should you require their services.

There is a staggering number of telepheriques, allowing average folk to gain much elevation without humping loads for hours to get to the alpine terrain pretty much anywhere in the range. There is even a larger number of "refuges", or huts, strategically positioned throughout the range, allowing for a relaxing rest, or a few days of stay. These are usually

fully equipped, with beds, blankets and a custodian crew who will cook meals for you (bring your Euros or credit cards!).

The numerous climbing stores offer wide selection of gear and guidebooks. Also check at magazine/newspaper stores, as they also have good selection of guidebooks and sometimes carry a broader selection of English versions. PS Gear prices seem on par, or higher than our MEC, so do not plan on getting any bargains...Buy your gear at home!

Depending on your objectives, you may need different guidebooks. The selection is very comprehensive. Most are in French, but some are also available in English. PS Even if you do not speak French, it is rather easy to make sense of the plentiful pictures and topos. The following seem best from what was available:

Ice, snow and mixed:

"Neige, Glace et Mixte" by Francois Damilano and Godefroy Perroux. It comes in French only, but with many pictures and very comprehensive descriptions. There are also two other guidebooks in English or French, which describe alpine climbs in the Mt Blanc massif.

Alpine rock:

"The Mont Blanc Range Topo Guide" by Michel Piola. This is a great guidebook, in French or English (shop around if you cannot find the latter version), describing the most popular routes throughout the region. It includes full topos and pictures of all the routes.

"Les Aiguilles Rouges. Escalade au soleil" by Thomas Dulac and Godefroy Perroux. This is another great guidebook, describing many of the rock routes in Aiguilles Rouges, which is a range on the other side of Chamonix from Mt Blanc. No glaciers and very little snow (if any) assure easy access and fantastic views on Mt Blanc side of the valley. Many pictures and full topos make this guidebook very comprehensive for this popular alpine rock area.



Climbers on Midi

Cragging:

“Crag Climbs in Chamonix” by Francois Burnier and Dominique Potard. This is a superb guidebook, describing numerous crags in the valley, in French, or English. It contains full topos and many pictures.

PS A good website about Chamonix in general is: www.Chamonix.net. www.planetmountain.com offers good beta on Euro climbing et al.

CLIMBING:

I have left the best for last. In one word, it is nothing short of spectacular. A quick study of the guidebooks should produce many choices for stellar climbs and I will leave them for you to explore and salivate over... You will be choosing from countless, often snowy spires jutting from glaciers on the Mt Blanc side of the valley, to Aiguilles Rouges range on the opposite side, offering pure alpine rock in a beautiful granite range and many crags peppered in between... The choices are truly amazing and this is not even counting Switzerland and Italy being so close by!

A lot of routes are bolted, but not always. Most folks use double ropes (many use twin ropes) and bring a small rack for added peace of mind. As you may be clipping some manky pitons on older routes, a couple of screamers may also be a good idea.

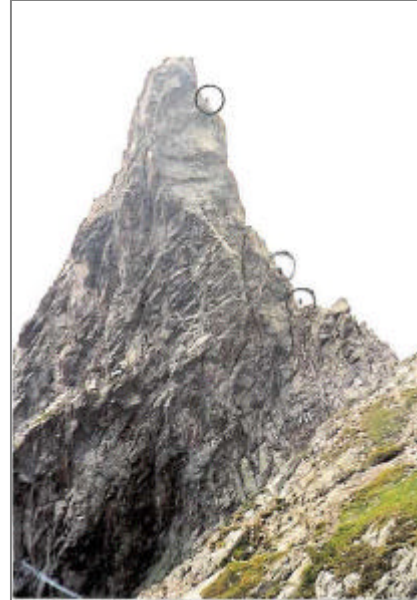
My personal (and therefore biased!) suggestions for general orientation, or first outings, are as follows:

Vallorcine. A nice crag, several minutes by car/train from Argentiere, offers many nice, three pitch routes, mostly bolted. 15 minute walk from a parking lot, or train station. The French use a different grading system so it is always good to figure it out before committing to a more serious route.

Mani Puliti route on Aiguille da la Gliere, in Aiguilles Rouges range, offers a very nice alpine route: 10 minute approach from a telepherique station and 6 mostly bolted pitches, although a small rack (a few medium nuts and 2-3 medium cams) comes in handy on one of the pitches. The route is about 5.8 with easy walk off and one 30m rappel at the bottom. You could also rap the route should the weather break, etc.

SE Ridge of L'Index, also in Aiguilles Rouges range, offers a more committing outing (the way down is up), of airy, but straightforward climbing, up a nice ridge to the summit of this small, but popular peak. It requires a 15 minute approach, goes at about 5.6 with the first pitch being the crux. The guidebook suggests that gear is not required, but do take a small rack as there is little, if any, fixed pro, on many of the 5 pitches of this route. One steep rappel gets you down from

the summit close to the descent gully, which requires some easy scrambling at the top.



Parties rappelling off L'Index's summit

I have attached a couple of pictures, but Pat Morrow I am not! So, if you want to take additional peeks at some of the routes, go explore this nice website, which I came across during my research. It belongs to two American guides, Kathy and Mark and is guaranteed to have you running to your travel agent in no time: www.cosleyhouston.com
PS They are super guys and were kind enough to email me some beta before our trip!

Lastly, there are many trails, which are clearly marked on the map you obtain from the Tourist Information Office, offering fabulous hiking opportunities for the off days, or when you nurse a hangover from a late night at The Office...

Jennifer and I ended up climbing for 5 days, as well as doing some hikes with my sister Nina and her friend Penny who accompanied us on this trip. As suggested before, the area offers something for everyone and is guaranteed to satisfy any outdoorsy enthusiast.

I hope you will get to enjoy it as much as we did.