

August 2006

Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers

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MOUNTAIN EAR

The Rocky Mountaineers is a non-profit club organized to promote all types of recreational use of mountainous areas.

*Dear Rocky Mountaineers,
It's summer!*



Jim McLean near Chilcoot Pass, July 2006

Club meetings are held at 7:00 pm on the second Wednesday of each month, September through May, at Pipestone Mountaineering, 129 West Front Street, Missoula, MT. All are welcome!

TRIP REPORTS

June 30th Tom Miner Basin is in the Paradise Valley south of Livingston

Miner Basin is in the Paradise Valley south of Livingston and just north of Yellowstone Park's Gardnier entrance. We ridge hopped north from the Tom Miner Campground to Ramshorn Peak, through the area of the Gallatin Range covered by volcanic mudflows 50-60 Million years ago. The mud trapped rocks and trees of all sizes, many of the trees petrified. The evening of the 30th we spent camped on the north side of the Gallatin Range in the Hylite Canyon Basin south of Bozeman. On the morning of the July 1st we visited the trail head to lakes below Fridley Peak (usually climbed from the Paradise Vally side) and Palisade Falls a national hiking trail.

We followed ridges up from the petrified forest interpretive trail. (Trailhead 7,000 ft, summit 10259 ft) - scary in steep places because the rocks trapped in the mud eroded out easily. But there were rewards also, a patch of white evening primroses blooming, balanced rocks, more caves, and a good view of Lone Mountain sticking up above the Madison Range to the west. The Summit ridge was mostly a grassy walk where we avoided climbing unnecessarily high points to the extreme northern end and the pile of rocks that was the summit.

We followed the trail out. It drops down to Buffalo Horn Pass where the outfitters' trails cross over to the Buffalo Horn Creek side. There was nothing remarkable about the designated trail except that it would have been a boring slog to the top. It also didn't double back, it was the full five miles to the summit. David had found ticks while we were hiking and for that evening we opted to spend the night in a motel in Livingston, getting the last room available in town that night. - *Julie & David Kahl*

July 1 CRASH ON MT. MORAN

Twelve years ago, I received a call from Dr. Elton Adams, a rheumatologist from Great Falls. Elton was to be a guest speaker at a conference in Jackson Hole and wanted to know if I would drive down and climb Mt. Moran while he was there. The route would be up the Skillet Glacier, a 3,000-foot glacier in the shape of a skillet, with the 60-degree handle of the skillet reaching to the top of the mountain. I eagerly agreed and met Elton Friday night in Jackson Hole.

The first part of the approach was a four-mile canoe trip along Jackson Lake. We bushwhacked up the east side 1000 feet to a glacial moraine just below the Skillet Glacier. When we reached the base of the glacier, we set up our camp and prepared for our climb in the morning. After all our preparation was done, we spent the evening going for short hikes around the camp. On one of these hikes, I noticed what appeared to be a snowboard below our tent on one of the moraines. We hiked down to take a better look and discovered the object was the propeller off of a large plane. It weighed about 90 pounds and was at least 5 feet long. With our curiosity running at full speed, we started looking around for more evidence of a plane crash and found several pieces of fuselage. We promised ourselves we'd find out more about what had happened to the plane.

The next day we began our climb up the Skillet glacier. The conditions were perfect and quickly made our way up 1500 feet with only 1500 feet remaining. On a particularly steep section of the glacier, Elton miss stepped and took a fall. He was able to immediately self-arrest, but damage to his ankle had been done. Elton urged me to continue the climb without him, but I declined knowing that it would take a lot of energy to get both of us down off the mountain safely. After what seemed hours, we reached our base camp at the bottom. We quickly packed up our gear and found a way to put it all on my back. The trek down the mountain was painfully laborious for both of us, but we made it to the canoe and paddled back to the car. Elton did his lecture at the conference then drove himself home to find that he had broken his ankle in the fall.

When I returned home, I did some research and found that a DC-3 had crashed on the Northeast ridge of Mt. Moran on November 21, 1950. The plane was owned by the New Tribes Missionary's and had 21 people aboard when it crashed. They had been flying from California to Billings to pick up members of the group and take them to South America to convert tribe's people to Christianity. This was the second plane the New Tribes had owned. The first plane was flying in South America when it, too, had crashed, killing all on board. Witnesses in the Jackson valley had noticed the plane's electrical problems, as it's lights went out as it circled the area in bad weather. Shortly afterwards, a large flash of light appeared on the Northeast ridge of Mt. Moran. The park service was notified that the plane was missing. A group lead by Paul Petzolt tried to get to the wreckage for days, but the weather made the rescue life-threatening. They finally made it to the wreckage after 3 days. No one survived the crash and it was too dangerous to do anything with the crash or the remains, so it was decided to leave the site as it was.

For 12 years I thought about the crash and the mountain I had not climbed, so I convinced my friend Skip Horner that our yearly trip should include this climb. We decided to head to the camp at which I had stayed the time before, climb the Northeast Ridge to see the wreck, head to the summit, and then come down the Skillet Glacier. This way, we would satisfy my curiosity and climb two routes on the mountain.

The trip was much the same as I remembered it. We could not find the propeller from the previous trip, but avalanches could have buried it. The Northeast Ridge was a beautiful climb on a sunny warm day. About 1000 feet from the summit, we came upon the crash site. The plane had hit the ridge directly. On either side of the plane wreck was a shear cliff 1000'. Part of the wreck had fallen to the north and another part to the south. The total devastation was incredible to see. The only thing that did not look completely destroyed was the tire attached to the mangled landing gear. As I looked around at the wreckage, I noticed a small white object sticking out of the sand. I picked it up and found a human jawbone with teeth still attached to it. The teeth still had fillings in it after 56 years. There were many other bone fragments in the area to attest to the incredible impact of the crash. As we headed to the summit, we were consumed by the lives lost on that winter day many years ago.

Skip and I made it to the summit in good time and then descended the Skillet Glacier back to our camp. It had been a great adventure and helped me close the chapter on a part of the Teton history of which I had inadvertently become a part. ~*Jim Wilson*

July 8, Saturday: Fisher Peak (8845')- This is a classic climb in the Swan Range, one of those peaks highly visible from Highway 83, just north of Lake Alva and south of Summit Lake, which looks way more difficult than it is. It is a scramble, but there are many ways that go and not many that end in dead ends, so it's easy to go up one way and come down a different one. I first did this climb 16 years ago and made the top in 2-1/2 hours, but was a bit slower this time. This is a really fun climb with very little brush, only 5 miles round-trip, 4000' vertical gain, great views, and you get the feeling of having climbed something. I highly recommend this trip anytime in July or August. The lower part is done immediately adjacent to one of two streams, and the flowing water is a treat both visually and as a constant source of refreshment. Here are the particulars on how to get there. From Seeley Lake travel north on Hwy. 83 to Morrell-Clearwater Road, which is just opposite of a State Highway Department storage area. Travel 3.1 miles on this road and take a left on Clearwater Loop Road. One-half mile along this road and you will see an overgrown logging road on the right, it is blocked by some large boulders. Hike this road for about 0.8 miles and the road will appear to turn into a boulder strewn dry drainage. Continue up this drainage and within a few hundred vertical feet it will turn into a flowing stream. At around 6000' the stream splits, either way works. As you reach the top of the streams, you will be looking at a myriad of possible routes. Enjoy. ~Steve Niday

July 8th WARREN PEAK (PINTLAR WILDERNESS)

Dan Braby and Jim Wilson from Missoula and Scott Hughes from Stanford met at Jim's cabin near Georgetown lake to climb Warren Peak. We hiked up the Carp Lakes drainage to the base of the Northwest Couloir to begin the climb. As we prepared our crampons and ice axes to ascend the couloir, Jim discovered he had left his crampons at the cabin. We decided that Dan and Scott would do the couloir route, and Jim would solo the South East Ridge. Both parties met at the summit in beautiful weather in good enough time to take the extra effort to head west along a ridgeline that would take them west of Tamarac Lake. The approach, ascent, and hike out was 15 miles round trip and was completed in one day. ~Jim Wilson

July 15, 2006 Saturday: Siamese Lakes in Great Burn Proposed Wilderness Area

Jim McLean, Bo, and Colter met Jim Goss at Clearwater Crossing and started up Straight Creek trail late morning on Saturday, July 15th. About halfway up we enjoyed a wide cascade in an open meadow which provided welcome relief from the 90 degree heat. As we reached the ridge that began our descent into the Lower Siamese Lake, Jim McLean had problems with a stomach bug that he would not shake for the remainder of the trip. Jim exhibited tremendous fortitude in being able to complete this nearly 25 mile trek.

We arrived at the Lake at 8:30, established camp, climbed out the way we came, then turned right to climb over Chilcoot Pass and descend the Cedar Peak Trail to complete our loop. We spotted at least 15 elk in a bowl several hundred feet below us. Our trail disappeared while above treeline but I knew which ridge to follow in hopes that we would pick it up again further down. Due to all the vegetation, or perhaps my poor orienteering skills, we ended up having to bushwack through 1,500 vertical feet of alder and some cliff bands. Luckily we did pick up the trail near Fish Creek, though I was off a couple of miles

from where I expected to be. Although there was some activity at Clearwater Crossing, and evidence of horses along the trails, we did not see a soul during the entire hike. We arrived back at our cars a bit after 3:00 PM, but Jim McLean's ordeal was not over - he got a flat tire on the way out, and still needed to drive to Great Falls that evening. - *Jim Goss*

Lolo Peak, July 22nd: This trip of the Classic Series was well attended, with 11 people bold enough to head up a mountain on one of the hottest days of the year. All but one reached the top, and Julie had planned to hike only to Carleton Lake. Steve Niday and Wayne kept up a fast pace and reached the top first, while the rest of us pretty much stayed close. Alden and Bret elected to go to the south summit which is a little higher, while the rest lingered on top soaking in the views. We took a long break at the lake on the way down to sponge off and refill water bottles, and didn't get back to the trailhead until early evening. The participants were Fred Schwanemann, Mary Dalton, Steve Niday, Julie Titchbourne, Wayne Shelor, Forest Dean, Frank Dean, Bret Doucett, Thomas ?, Alden Wright and Steve Schombel. - *Steve Schombel*

Lima Peaks: This trip wasn't advertised, but this was a neat area so I'd like to pass on some information. The Lima Peaks are the small group of high mountains you see to the SW of Lima from the interstate. They are separated from the Centennial Range by Monida Pass, and from the main group of the Beaverheads by hills and a pass to the west. You can take the Lima exit and drive into the East Fork of Little Sheep Creek Campground, which will put you close to Garfield Mountain, at 10961' the highest point. There is a primitive road beyond the campground, and I estimate that I got within 4 miles and 3700' of the top. I followed a faint trail, scrambled up a steep hillside, and crossed a large grassy meadow to reach the base. The slopes were gentle, like on Lolo Peak, but the scree was very loose making the going a little tricky. From the top you can see the Tetons and into Yellowstone, rugged peaks in Idaho, and many ranges in other directions. This area is well worth a visit. - *Steve Schombel*

MT HAGGIN (PINTLAR RANGE)

On July 23, Jim Wilson, Chuck Stokke, Scott Wilson and Tim Hahn climbed Mt. Haggin the peak above the town of Anaconda. The approach was made from a subdivision on the east side of the mountain near Mill Creek. The road winds high up the ridge to tree line. We parked the truck (a four wheel drive is needed) and followed a trail along the ridge to the summit. The summit ridge is very long covering several miles, but is a much faster way to the summit than going up through Hearst Lake. The whole trip took about 6 hours ~*Jim Wilson*

"Always carry a flagon of whiskey in case of snakebite, and furthermore, always carry a small snake." ~ [W. C. Fields](#)

UPCOMING TRIPS

Floating Tarkio Gorge, Saturday, August 5th

I thought of this trip in the middle of the July heat wave, with expectations that hot weather is here to stay. If Sunday, August 6th turns out to be a significantly hotter day, I might reschedule. Tarkio Gorge is the segment below the heavily used Alberton Gorge, and features only two class II-III rapids which make it totally doable in an inner tube or crude raft. We will meet at the Tarkio river access site at 11:00 AM, and float leisurely down to Forest Grove. This should only take 2-3 hours, so we could opt to extend further downstream depending on weather. After completing shuttling issues, people are invited to our house at Riverbend (near Lozeau). The Mineral County Fair/Rodeo is also taking place in Superior for anyone who is interested in making it a complete day. Contact Jim Goss at 822-5000 or jgossorcreich@blackfoot.net.

August 5-6, Sat-Sun: Parke Peak- Glacier Park- A canoe trip up Kintla Lake would make this a 5000' climb over about 3 miles one-way. This should be a fairly easy scramble. We would drive up Saturday afternoon and car camp at Kintla Lake. Sunday we climb the peak and drive home. Steve Niday, 721-3790.

1 August 11-13: Bitterroot Backpack to Watchtower Lake

This is a 30 mile loop along Sheephead and Watchtower Creeks with a full day of cross-country travel along the Bitterroot Divide. We'll hike up Sheephead Creek Friday, camping near the head of Indian Creek and return along Watchtower Creek Sunday. Saturday we'll make our way along the Divide, climbing Watchtower Peak if feasible, eventually reaching Watchtower Lake. Contact Doug Kitchen at 546-0946 or dougkitchen@msn.com if interested.

AUGUST 18-20: Fri – Sun GLACIER CLASSIC - Glacier National Park- Two Medicine Area. Frank Kleschen will go early Friday to Two Medicine campground to try to secure the group campsite, or individual sites if that fails (thanks, Frank!) Food, drinks, campfires, and camaraderie on Friday and Saturday evenings. Contact Forest Dean for more information. (Home: 721-6384, Cell: 240-7612, Email: fdean@midlandimplement.com).

FRIDAY, 8/18: Arrive and set up camp in Two Medicine Campground.

SATURDAY, 8/19:

Rising Wolf Mountain/Flinsch Peak Will head out from Two Medicine and ascend the south side of Rising Wolf (class III). Once on top it is a walk along the ridge to the summit, then down along another ridge to the west, before ascending Flinsch Peak. Then will take the trail back, over Dawson Pass and descend to the lake and back to camp. Total Distance: 14.5 miles, Elevation Gain: 6000 feet. Leaders: *Forest Dean and Steve Niday*.

Scenic Point: Day hike 3.1 miles up to Scenic Point. Elevation gain: 2,242 feet. Trail ascends the Appistoki valley, then climbs to Scenic Point. We will hike from Two Medicine Road to Scenic Point and back. Total distance 6.2 miles. Moderately strenuous. Leader: *Lorraine Riedl*

SUNDAY, 8/20:

Mt. Rockwell Will hike to Upper Two Medicine Lake, then along south shore to an ascent of the northern side of Mt. Rockwell. (Class III and IV). Will try to catch ferry back across Two Medicine Lake on way out, cutting off the last couple miles. Dinner at Serrano's in East Glacier before drive home. Total Distance: 13-15 miles—Elevation Gain: 4300 feet. Leader: *Forest Dean*.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN GOING ON THE GLACIER TRIP: We are trying to secure the group campsite, so **IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN GOING ON THE GLACIER TRIP, PLEASE CONTACT LORRAINE RIEDL** (lorraineriedl@aol.com or 327-0566). We are trying to get an idea of how many people are going. If we end up in individual campsites, they are \$5/person, and can accommodate 1-2 cars. Entrance fee to Glacier is \$25/7 days or \$30/year. Thanks!

August 26, Saturday: Going-to-the-Sun Mtn.- Leave early and return late Saturday. The route would be dependent on participant's desires. Steve Niday, 721-3790.

August 26 and 27th, Unnamed Point 6933' in the West Cabinets (Scotchman Peaks). We will backpack up to Little Spar Lake on Saturday, about 4 1/2 miles with 1700' elevation gain on a good maintained trail. Then on Sunday we will bushwhack to a saddle SW of the lake and follow a ridge around. This appears to be about 3 miles with another 1700' gain. There are some cliffs at the base of the east ridge, so if this direct approach won't go, I hope to have time to detour around to the west ridge. Last year I found a way around the worst of the brush. Call Steve Schombel at 721-4686 for information.

September 8-10, Fri-Sun: Rainbow Peak/Mount Carter- Glacier Park- We will drive to the campground at the foot of Bowman Lake and camp there Friday night. Very early Saturday morning we'll get in a boat and motor or row up the lake about 5 miles. From there, we will climb Rainbow Peak and traverse to Mount Carter, then descend to the Lake and make our way back to the boat late Saturday. The drive back will probably be on Sunday. This will be a physically demanding trip with some difficult terrain. Steve Niday, 721-3790.

"Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage."

OTHER INTERESTS

AUGUST GREAT BURN STUDY HIKES. Contact Beverly at 240-9901, thegreatburn@yahoo.com if interested.

Lost Ridge, Mallard Larkins, Idaho Aug 4-7 (Moderate to difficult)
Description: Investigate a corner of the colossal Mallard Larkins roadless area. Total trail miles: 20

Five Lakes Butte, Mallard Larkins, Idaho Aug 11 - 14 (Moderate)
Description: Swim, fish, and be happy near one of the several subalpine lakes in this area. Assist with lakeside cleanup. Total trail miles: 6

Wahoo Creek, Sheep Mtn, Idaho Aug 18 - 20 (Moderate)
Description: Check out Sheep Mountain roadless area. Total trail miles: 12

Aug 25- 27 Meadow/Rawhide - 2-3 days (FSS) (Moderate)
Description: Bike and hike two roadless areas (Meadow Creek-Upper North Fork and Rawhide). Total trail miles for hikers: 16 Total trail miles for bikers: 14+

LOOKING AHEAD...

The September Rocky Mountaineers' meeting is a potluck for picture/slides of your summer trips! Digital images can be projected and anyone having slides is welcome to bring them to be shown on our slide projector. Those only having prints contact Steve Niday 721-3790 about getting photos scanned so they can be projected at the meeting.

GEAR CHECKLIST *In addition to a good pack, good boots and good attitude:*

Sunscreen	Hat with brim to cover ears	Moleskin for blisters
Extra socks	Whistle w/ predetermined signals	Warm clothing
Hiking stick	Compass/map/GPS	Bug repellent
Camera	Small rope	Bear spray
Rain gear	Knife	Water filter or water supply
Lighter	Chapstick w/ spf	Scarf/handkerchief
Flashlight	Toilet paper	Reflective warming blanket
Binoculars		Cell phone for safety

**ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND LIABILITY
WAIVER**

Family Yearly Membership: _____ \$20.00 for paper newsletter
_____ \$10.00 for electronic newsletter

Make checks payable to 'Rocky Mountaineers' and send to:

The Rocky Mountaineers, PO Box 4262, Missoula, MT 59806

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

I have read this release and indemnity agreement and have fully informed myself of its contents before I have signed it.

PRINT NAME: _____

Signature/Date: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian if Under 18: _____

Club Contacts

Website: www.rockymountaineers.com **Email:** info@rockymountaineers.com

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President: Steve Niday, 721-3790, seniday@yahoo.com

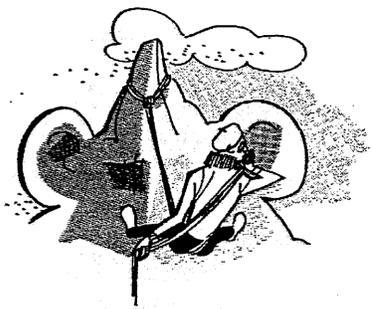
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