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Trip Report

[Home](#)
[Future trips](#)
[Past trips](#)
[Trip guidelines](#)
[Conditions](#)
[Routes >](#)
[Forum](#)
[Membership](#)
[Reference >](#)
[FAQ](#)
[Photo contest](#)
[What's new](#)
Member
[Login](#)
Changes
 today

 yesterday

 < 7 days

 < 30 days

Albert Edward (mountaineering)

[return to Reports list](#)

Wed Jun 30 to Thu Jul 01, 2010

 Leader: **William Wright**

Co-Leader:

DAY 1: Four of us set out from the Raven Lodge parking area at approximately 3 PM under a mixed sun and cloud sky. The boardwalk trails around the meadows are now basically clear of snow, but this changes to a mainly winter-like snowscape from Lake Helen Mackenzie on. I was personally happy to see the bridge over Piggott Creek free and clear of snow... having now recovered from a close encounter of the watery kind 2 months ago.

Early on we met a group of 5 backpackers doing basically the same trip as us, 4 gals and 1 fellow (from Campbell River Search and Rescue) all in their early 20's. We wondered about the attire of a couple of them... sweats, very light approach shoes, shorts, no gaiters, etc., but they were in good spirits and had youth on their side. I dimly remember being that age and going off into the wilds similarly equipped... and I somehow survived too.

We stopped at the Ranger Cabin for a break, and were surprised to find it open. It did not seem to be a forced entry, perhaps it had been left unlocked on purpose. A quick peek inside revealed comfortable living conditions, complete with a hot water tank.

William found the Sid Williams cabin for us. I have noted that this is a penchant for him, no trip to this part of the woods would be complete without a search for the cabin. The cabin itself, while still standing, and perhaps in good shape for its age, would not tempt me to spend a night inside. I have heard that the Strathcona Park Public Advisory Committee has recommended the cabin be retained as an historic site, but to not rebuild it.

From the cabin on the 2 groups went their separate ways, with the young crowd sensibly heading for Circler Lake, while us senior citizens headed boldly for the headwall. Our reasoning was to camp above the headwall to make the summit day shorter, and to climb the steep slopes while the snow was soft rather than in the early morning when it could be rock hard. We arrived at a suitable campsite on the plateau below the main Jutland-Frink ridge at about 7:30 PM. After setting up tents and having a quick dinner (mainly sandwiches and the like plus hot drinks), we watched a colourful sunset before turning in around 9:30.

DAY 2: What goes pitter-patter in the night? One answer would be rain. Those with smaller bladders tell of the wet stuff mixed with snow at about 2 AM. In the days leading up to the trip we saw the forecast suns transformed into clouds, and then showers. Weather forecasts lately seem to change overnight, and we hoped, to no avail, that the forecast of showers on our summit day would be wrong.

I awake at 4:30 AM to find William all packed and ready to go, cheerily saying he can see the lights of Campbell River. What a liar! Pure leader optimistic propaganda! I can see through that ruse, can't fool me, especially when I can see

the rain on the tent fly. Everyone's up at 5:30, with expectations of summiting lower than the current cloud cover. Mounts Brooks and Elma play hide and seek in the mist. It's a no go. By about 7 AM we are heading back to the headwall, where once past the steep bit (ice axes very necessary) there was some good bum sliding. We retraced our steps back the way we came, glancing back now and then to see if it had cleared around the peaks. It had not, and while the showers were only intermittent, the clouds had if anything thickened. We ended the day with lunch at Fat Teddies in the lodge. Visibility was now down to perhaps a few hundred meters.

While some readers may gloat on their wise decision to not join us (and I admit being in that camp from time to time) I can honestly say we had a swell time. We were in the great outdoors, we had perfect temperatures for backpacking, there were no bugs, and no hoards of people. But most of all what makes these trips special is the good company of fellow companions who make the best of whatever nature has in store. Thanks William for admirable leading of this trip... just don't get up so bleeping early! (Bob)



Most photographed spot this winter, now free of snow
[Geoff Brameld photo]



Helen MacKenzie
[Geoff Brameld photo]



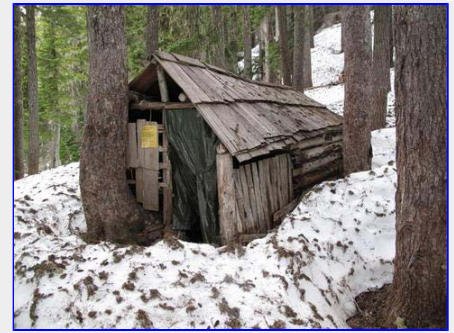
Fellow hikers at Rangers Cabin
[Geoff Brameld photo]



Plenty of snow above Helen MacKenzie
[Geoff Brameld photo]



The Crew
[Geoff Brameld photo]



Sid's Cabin
[Geoff Brameld photo]



William working a steep section
[Geoff Brameld photo]



Linda and Bob making their way to Half Dome
[Geoff Brameld photo]



July 1st and snowing
[Geoff Brameld photo]



Poor visibility, we're heading back
[Geoff Brameld photo]

Report contributors: Geoff B, Bob S,

Participant list (4 of 4): Geoff B, Linda H, Bob S, William W,

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