

the Elbow Valley Cycle Club presents the
1999 Lake O'Hara XC Ski Weekend
at the Elizabeth Parker Alpine Club Hut



Participant Orientation

February 13 -15 Saturday thru Monday

Tour Co-Ordinator: Peter LaGrandeur (403) 228-0269 (403) 714-3889 cel
lagrandeurp@compuserve.com <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/lagrandeurp/lohxc98.htm>
pre-trip meeting: 1999 February 9, Tuesday @ 7:30 PM @ MacDougal Center 455 - 6 Street SW, Calgary



Risk Acknowledgement & Acceptance of Self Responsibility

The Elbow Valley Cycle Club offers this trip on the understanding it is a **Common Adventure** where each participant conducts him/herself independently, makes his/her own judgements about safety and well being, takes full responsibility for his/her own actions, and contributes whatever he/she can towards the success of the trip. The Tour Co-Ordinator is not a leader or professional guide of any type and acts only to provide basic logistical arrangements for initiating and running the trip. Each participant is expected to possess any skills, equipment, fitness, common sense, etiquette, knowledge of applicable legislations, etc., to enjoyably and safely be involved in this activity. The route, itinerary and all other aspects of this trip are only suggested and, as responsible tourists, each participant is expected to **research everything prior** to the trip to whatever extent he/she feels is necessary to determine that all is safe and suitable. Each participant is the sole and final judge about his/her capability to safely proceed with this tour. All participants recognize **financial loss, physical injuries and death** to be real possibilities facing anyone in the sport of skiing and related activities and agree to assume all risks and consequences. All participants also agree to absolve the Elbow Valley Cycle Club, its organizers, administrators and agents of any liability arising from Club activities. Any person who does not feel confident or self reliant about their abilities or who does not agree with this philisophy should not participate on this tour.



EVCC 1996
Lake O'Hara Participants



Introduction:

1. We will be staying at the Elizabeth Parker hut for the weekend (Saturday night) which is owned and operated by the Alpine Club of Canada, and not at the Lake O'Hara Lodge. Reservations have already been made. Possibly an ACC hut custodian may be present. Map fans might want to know the topographic map number: 1:50 000 82N/8 Lake Louise. Elevation gain from the parking lot to the hut is about 1450'/442m.. The hut is at 6700'/2042m elevation. Hut grid co-ordinates are E457 N893.

2. The building we will be staying in is a log structure with fireplace, living room, kitchen and two-tiered bunks with thick foamies at one end of the cabin. It is a log shelter and usually is quite warm in there. Even though the Alpine Club has downsized the wood stove in the cabin, it still should be adequately heated in the winter. Additional heated sleeping quarters are in another smaller hut (Wiwaxy) outside. Cooking and drinking water is from the creek. Consider bringing your own water treatment pills if you are sensitive to organisms found in stream water. Propane stoves, pots, pans, sinks and utensils are all included in the kitchen. Coleman lanterns light the interior very adequately after dark. There is an adjacent outdoor biffy. No yellow snow around the cabin, please. The hut will have a combination lock on it and the combination is: **TBA**. To open the lock, first squeeze the shackle into the body, then dial the combination.

3. Car pooling may be arranged at the pre-trip meeting. We might as well minimize the number of vehicles going out there to cut gas costs. Keep in mind that some folks might want to stop off in Banff on Sunday evening for a dip in the hot springs and then din din. Plan your transportation groups accordingly.

4. Do not forget to check the weather forecast, avalanche forecast, AMA road report and Parks Canada backcountry trail report before you go.

5. There are pay phones at the parking lot trail head, the Relais shelter and at the Lake O'Hara Lodge should you need to call your stock broker while out in the wilderness.

6. History: The Elizabeth Parker Hut, Wiwaxy Hut and eleven other smaller log cabins were built by the Canadian Pacific Railroad between 1912 & 1923 for their Swiss guides and clientele. During the winter of 1926 - 27, the CPR moved the small cabins down to the lakeshore near the Lake O'Hara Lodge which was built the previous winter. The hut and land previously held by the ACC on the south of Lake O'Hara was given up in 1931 for the two buildings remaining in the meadow now collectively known as Elizabeth Parker Hut, named after one of the Club's founders.



Safety & Liability:

1. Be aware this is not an officially guided tour led by any description of professional guide. It is a **“common adventure”** outing, with some logistics handled by a co-ordinator. A common adventure consists of a group of people who jointly take part in an activity and have the skills, ability, experience and equipment to independently participate without relying on others to successfully and enjoyably survive. Having said all that, wise and responsible travelers in the back country always work together as a team. All members of the party stay together in groups and do everything they can to help each other out along the way, especially in adverse conditions and emergencies. Teamwork! Ya!

2. **SAFETY IS YOUR OWN RESPONSIBILITY.** No one else is responsible for you. **EVERY PERSON SHOULD BE SELF RELIANT AND INDEPENDANT. Educate yourself prior to this trip with the proper skills in backcountry nordic skiing, winter survival, clothing and equipment, avalanche awareness, wilderness first aid and map & compass reading.** If you are still not confident, then do not come on this trip. The tour co-ordinator *may* screen participants, but you are the final judge as to whether or not you should be on this trip. In the interest of safety and so as not to pressure others to plan a search party, **please stay together with others at all times**, except when on the fire road going in and out. No one will be amused to have to go out looking for someone who strayed away and got lost. **Dead serious!!**

We might have two groups, i.e. strong skiers and new skiers, depending on where we go. Remember, hazards do exist in the winter back country. A trip like this is never guaranteed to be safe. Lots of things could happen. **The risks involved include, but are not limited to, freezing weather, deep snow, slippery trail conditions, avalanches, thin ice over water, physical injury, property loss, wild animals, death...**

3. Other than in the minimal risk areas on the access road between the parking lot and Lake O'Hara, we do not plan to go into any avalanche prone areas. **However, it is required, nonetheless, that avalanche transceivers, probes and shovels be carried by each trip participant.** These may be rented from places like the U of C Outdoor Program Centre (220-5038). Please endeavour to know how to use them before going on the trip. Reserve ahead of time. Bring either the ones with the newer 475 kHz frequency or the older dual 475 kHz/2.275 kHz frequencies.

4. It is not advisable to ski alone. Ski with a buddy, preferably in groups of minimum four people. If you are going to step off the trail for a pitstop, leave poles or a pack on the trail so others know you are there. Be aware there are several avalanche runout zones on the east side of the road which, in some snow years, and depending on the time of day and year, can cross the road. Hence the requirement for avalanche transceivers. **When crossing avalanche zones, do so one at a time and do not stop. Remove pole straps from wrists, safety straps from skis and undo the pack waist band. Do not underestimate the power of moving snow;** one cubic metre of snow can weigh 1000 pounds. Add a mountainside of momentum to that plus tree trunks and boulders and you have a formidable hazard. Basic avalanche safety awareness is a full weekend course in itself so we can't cover it all here. Your best bet is to stay on the road, off the side slopes and don't go down into the creek on either side of the road. No fooling.

There are also slide zones at the north east end of Lake O'Hara and above both sides of MacArthur Pass.

6. **When you arrive back at the trailhead on Sunday, please sign in** on the list in the envelope that will be located under the windshield of

my car (1991 black two door Jeep Cherokee) so that we will know who all has safely arrived back at the parking lot. **Do not forget to do this!!** A pencil will be in the envelope. Please be reasonably prompt returning to the parking lot.

Itinerary:

The intent of this trip is to ski up the access road to the Relais Shelter adjacent to Lake O'Hara and then into the Alpine Club's Elizabeth Parker hut. After that, we MAY ski to the end of Lake O'Hara, the Opabin moraine, or MacArthur Pass. This is NOT a mountaineering "peak bagging" trip.

If you are unable to make it on this tour, do try and let me know even if it is at the last minute i.e. 6 AM on Saturday morning. 228-0269. I now have a cel that I carry with me in covered areas: (403) 714-3889. Let me know if you are going to be late, a day late, or absent, etc..

Day 1 - Saturday

1. We will leave Saturday morning, rendezvousing by 07:00 AM in the parking lot of ***Our Lady of Assumption School*** at 34 Avenue and Sarcee Trail NW (7311 - 34 Avenue NW) (the northwest corner of the junction of Sarcee Trail and the Transcanada Hwy #1/16 Avenue NW). From there we can form into our car pooling groups. Next stop is the ***Laggan Bakery*** in Lake Louise's Samson Mall at 09:30. For those who wish to meet us out there, we will meet at the parking lot at the base of the Lake O'Hara fire road at 10:30 AM. For those arriving at the trail head early, **please don't take off up the trail until you are accounted for as being present and your avalanche transceiver is confirmed to be functioning.**

2. We will be skiing twelve kilometres on a summer fire road that is not plowed in the winter. It is easy going with no tricky terrain, however it does go uphill most of the way. If there is trail to break, we will all take turns. There will likely be tracks already made by other skiers and/or a snowmobile. (Snowmobiles are used to ferry supplies to Lake O'Hara Lodge in the winter time.) Be prepared to carry an overnight pack containing your sleeping bag (3/4 season), food and clothing. It likely will



weigh 40 - 50 pounds. For anyone clued out on the use of ski wax and who is desperately concerned about slipping and sliding around on their skis while going up or down hill on the road, consider using climbing skins, available from OPC.

3. When arriving at the Lake O'Hara area, do not proceed any farther unless you know where to go or you are with someone who does. You will be getting close when you pass the summer campsite on the right. If not, then wait farther ahead at the "**Relais Day Shelter**". If there have been a lot of skiers in the area, trails could be going all over. The trail to the **ACC Elizabeth Parker** hut will branch off to the right from the road between the Relais building and the outhouse. It is less than a kilometre to the hut from the road. If you go any farther on the road, you will see the Lake O'Hara Lodge ahead and around to the left. **For those who arrive first at the EP hut, they could make sure there is plenty of firewood chopped and brought in, water is drawn from the adjacent creek and brought in and snow is shoveled away from the door.** If it is cold, start a fire in the living room woodstove to get the chill out of the hut. **Be sure to have the combination for the ACC hut if you plan to be there first and you want in.**

4. Saturday evening, those with energy left might be interested in a night ski around the cabin meadow (bring headlamps for this).

Day 2 - Sunday

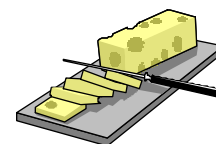
1. The plan for today may be to head up to the **Opabin Moraine**. This route begins with the ascent starting halfway along the south side of Lake O'Hara. The moraine itself consists of rolling rock piles. As long as we stay away from the valley walls, we should be able to avoid any snow slide hazards. Depending on the snow conditions, we may ascend Opabin Pass itself. We would not go southward beyond this col.

2. For those who stay around the hut today, be aware that **Lake O'Hara Lodge** is open at this time of year and are often open to day skiers in the area for lunch.

Day 3 - Monday

1. Monday morning we could do things like ski along the south side of **Lake O'Hara** to the end and see the frozen waterfalls at the far end. Another option would be to head up to **MacArthur Pass** to the west of EP hut. Other tours or activities could also be done in the morning. After lunch we will head back down to the cars at the parking lot on the Trans Canada Highway. Then onward home, maybe stopping at Banff hot springs and then din din. In the past, we have had supper at the **Barbary Coast** restaurant on the main drag in town.

Meals:



1. Everyone can be responsible for their own (three) lunches and Sunday & Monday (two) breakfasts. We will be having communal meals on Saturday and Sunday evenings. This is usually much easier and is often a much more social way of doing it than having everyone waiting in line to lean over their own pot. Saturday's theme has traditionally been Mexican. For Sunday's flavour, how about Italian? We also have had Gluwein (hot mulled wine) and appetizers as an apres before dinner. **At the pre-trip meeting, we will organize what food items participants can bring for each of the communal suppers.**

2. At lunch time on Saturday, you will likely not have arrived at the hut yet, so plan to eat it along the trail somewhere.

3. Those responsible for gluwein should plan to have it ready for consumption by 5:00 PM at the latest. (Remember not to boil it or it will turn bitter.) **Suggest be back at the hut by about 4:30** as it gets dark early this time of year. Those responsible for supper should have it ready by 6:00 PM. If you were assigned to bring something, you can look after cooking / preparing it. **Those who did not do any cooking could consider helping with the washing.**

Hut Customs:

1. Hut Rules - Take boots off at the door; con-

sider bringing indoor shoes e.g. runners. No yellow snow around the buildings. **Always fill gas stoves and lanterns outside;** store fuel outside. Clean up after yourself. Skis outside unless they are in for a reason. No chopping wood inside. Take out the slops pail when it is three quarters full. No smoking.

2. On group trips to huts like this, there are always chores to do. These include shoveling snow from the door, clearing a path to the outhouse, chopping wood and carrying it in, hauling water from the creek, food preparation, dish washing and stowing, boiling the dish cloths and tea towels using bleach, taking out the grey water, burning burnable garbage, packing out all non-burnables, sweeping the floor (especially at the time of departure), etc.. Please pitch in without being asked. **If you see something that needs doing, just go do it.**

3. **Before leaving, be sure the buildings and surroundings are ship shape.** i.e. the hut should be fully stocked with chopped firewood, the floors swept and dry, lanterns refueled, slops pail emptied, and drinking water emptied outside.

EVCC Trip Fees:

1. The trip fee covers only the hut rental, National Parks back country hut usage tax, photocopying of the orientation package, and miscellaneous expenses of the tour co-ordinator. Travel costs, all food (including the bakery in Lake Louise and dinner in Banff), personal front country permits (the tags you hang from the rear view mirror), hot springs, gear rental/purchase, etc., are extra.

2. The rationale for the Alpine Club charging for use of the hut is as follows:

Because of the large area covered and the remoteness of many of the ACC huts, there is a fee for accommodation at all ACC facilities. The fees help pay for maintenance, such as removal of outhouse barrels, supplying firewood, upkeep of stoves, lanterns and other fixtures, and major repairs and additions to the buildings themselves. In addition, substantial contributions from hut revenue (\$10,000 in each of 1993, 1994, and 1995) go directly into the "Energy, Water and Waste Management Fund" used to develop more efficient and responsible

means of managing the ACC presence in the wilderness. Their goal is to come as close as possible to zero impact on the areas in which they operate facilities, and can only do so with the help of informed, conscientious, and paid-up hut users.

EVCC Refund Policy:

Refunds will be issued only after all expenses are paid or if a suitable replacement is found. Refunds subject to Executive Committee approval.

General Notes:

1. Each participant should have their own basic first aid kit comprised of such items as moleskin, disinfectant, bandaids, a few triangular bandages, first aid tape, gauze, scissors, etc.. These fundamental items are things that self sufficient persons should have.

2. If doing any shoveling, exhibit courtesy and be sure to use your own. It is easy to damage this item and no one else appreciates finding their own/ rental \$50 spade bent or broken. It happens easily.

3. Let us not forget that using this small hut for an overnight stay is an exercise in high density communal living. There sometimes has to be give and take, so patience is the order of the day. We generally have fairly compatible groups on this trip but tolerance may still be required. Do not complain if others snore or make noise going outside in the middle of the night. It comes with the territory. No one is perfect, including yourself.

4. The most common waxes that likely would be required for this trip are (SWIX) red, green, blue, and purple. Extra blue is often a good all-around wax i.e. blue with some purple in it.

5. We need someone to do a write-up and take photographs of our trip for the Club's newsletter, Cadence. Hopefully somebody can volunteer their skills for this.

6. All vehicles stopping in a National Park must have a Park Motor Vehicle Permit. Permits can be obtained at the Park gates or from Park Information Centres. Cost of this not included in trip fee. Participants must supply their own permit.

Lake O'Hara & ACC Elizabeth Parker Hut Access Map

NORTH

9 km between Hwy. #'s 1 & 93 junction & junction to Lake O'Hara Fire Road Parking Lot

Hwy. #93 to Jasper

2 km between Lake Louise & junction of Hwy.'s 1 & 93

West Lake Louise Lodge

Hwy. #1 to Golden

Wapta Lake

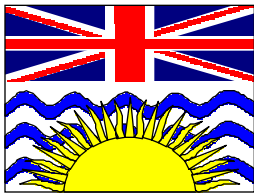
Parking Lot (trailhead)

Start

Lake Louise

Lake Louise

Hwy. #1 to Banff



BRITISH COLUMBIA

11 km between parking lot & Relais Shelter

MAP NOT TO SCALE
PL 97/01/20

CONTINENTAL RANGES

BOW RANGE

Cataract Creek

fire road - 11 km

avalanche zones

avalanche zones

Summer Campsite

avalanche zones

Finish

Schaffer Ck. outhouse

1 km between fire road & ACC Elizabeth Parker hut

Elizabeth Parker Hut (Alpine Club of Canada)

Relais Day Shelter

Lake O'Hara Lodge

Lake O'Hara

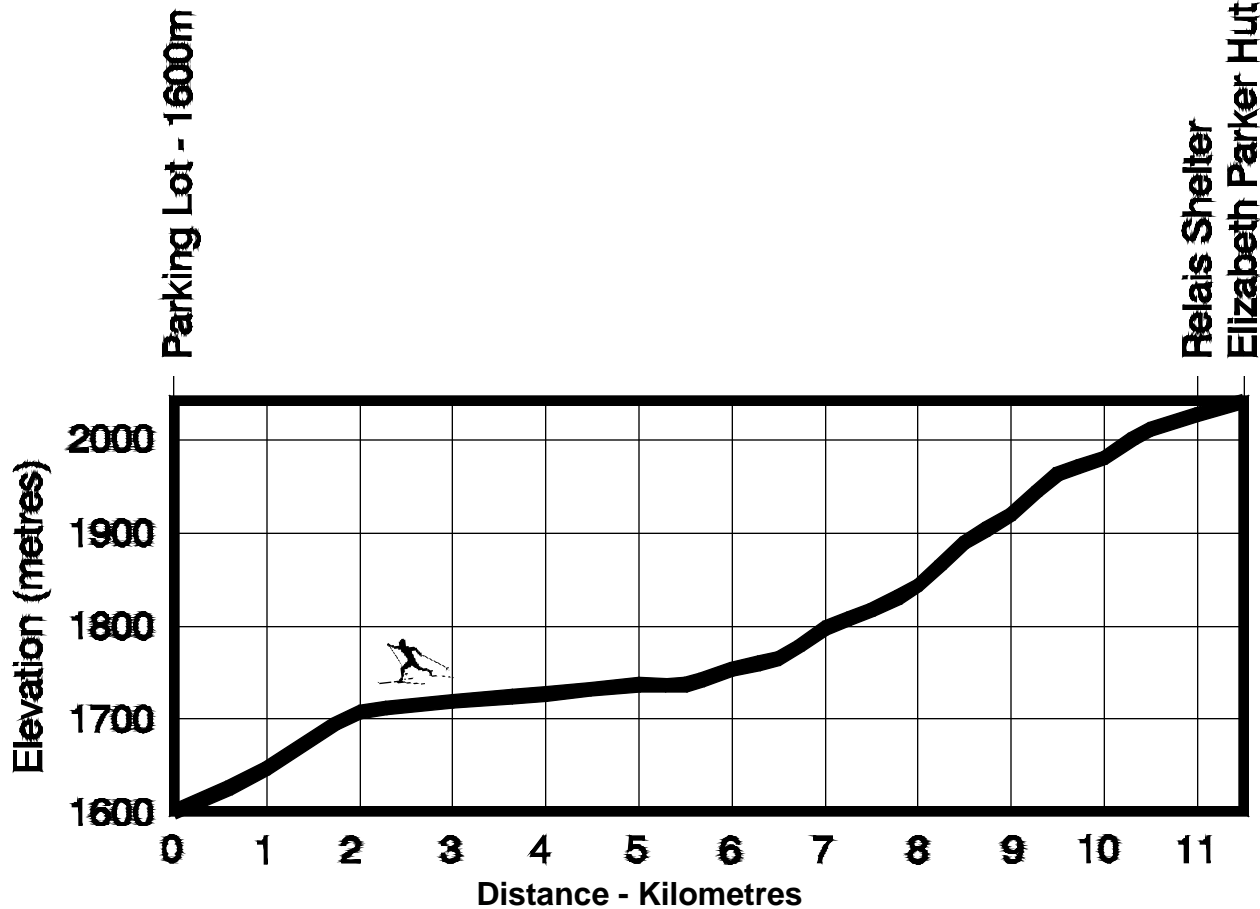
MacArthur Pass

avalanche zones



ALBERTA

Lake O'Hara & ACC Elizabeth Parker Hut Profile



Useful Phone Numbers & Web Sites:



•wardens: Lake Louise (403) 522-3866
Yoho (604) 343-6324
trail report (403) 292-5478



Environment Canada
Environnement Canada

•weather forecast: 299-7878
1 (900) 451-4555
<http://www.weatheroffice.com>



•RCMP: Lake Louise (403) 522-3811
Field (604) 343-6316



Alberta Motor Association
So Many Ways To Use AMA

•AMA road report: (403) 246-5853
<http://www.ama.ab.ca/roadrep/roadrep.htm>



•avalanche info:1 (800) 667-1105
<http://www.avalanche.ca>
<http://www.discoveralberta.com/ParksCanada-Banff/AvalancheInfo/>