

# Alpine Club of Canada

## Information sheet B5

The Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) was founded in 1906 by a number of like-minded mountain enthusiasts including A. O. Wheeler and Elizabeth Parker. The club was founded to advance mountain education, preservation, learning, exploration and leisure, with the goal of helping Canadians appreciate their alpine heritage.

The original objectives, stated in the ACC Constitution, were:

1. The promotion of scientific study and exploration of Canadian alpine and glacial regions
2. The cultivation of art in relation to mountain scenery
3. The education of Canadians to an appreciation of their mountain heritage
4. The encouragement of the mountain craft [climbing] and the opening of new regions as a national playground
5. The preservation of the natural beauties of the mountain places and of the flora and fauna in their habitat
6. The interchange of literature with other alpine and geographical organizations

*Canadian Alpine Journal*, Calgary: Alpine Club of Canada, volume 1, 1907

The Alpine Club of Canada hosted annual summer climbing camps at a variety of locations in either the Rocky or Selkirk Mountains. These camps lasted one week and the participants explored, hiked and climbed. Participants congregated in an alpine meadow where sleeping and dining tents were pitched. New members “graduated” by ascending a mountain over 10,000 feet (3048 metres). The Canadian Pacific Railway supplied two professional Swiss Guides for camp.

Byron Harmon became a charter member of the ACC, and the club’s official photographer. Harmon rarely missed a yearly excursion with the club as it provided endless opportunities to expand his photographic and alpine experiences. Harmon’s work with the ACC was important in the promotion of his career, as the publications the club produced carried his images across the world to alpinists, explorers, scientists and editors. In turn, the profile of the ACC and awareness of Canada’s mountain west were both greatly advanced by Harmon’s work.

Harmon met a host of people through his association with the Alpine Club of Canada. Some of these climbers would be very influential in Harmon’s life in Banff. With these people he shared the secrets of mountaineering, and formed some of his closest friendships.