

Hiking at Whistler

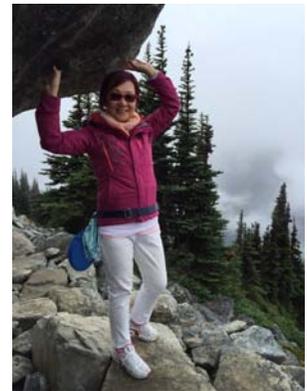
Angelo Lo



Arthur organised a full day fun-filled hiking event for the HKU Alumni Association on July 25, 2015. There were a total of 20 participants who joined us to experience the test of Mother Nature. We battled through sunny breaks, fog, rain, wind and even hailstones. It was a rare and interesting day.

Ten of the participants arrived a night early to avoid the early morning drive to Whistler and stayed at Coast Blackcomb Suites. We enjoyed a potluck dinner and shopped around the Whistler Village. We stopped at the famous ice cream shop, Cows, which claims to have the “Best Ice Cream in the World”.

At 9:30 am on July 25th, we assembled at the Whistler gondola station and took the gondola to the Roundhouse. We took a group picture at the huge Olympic Podium. Then, we decided to go up the “Peak 2 Peak” Gondola to Blackcomb. The technology involved in building the “Peak 2 Peak” was amazing. There were six engineers and one engineering student in our group and they had a good discussion about this grand engineering project. We learned that the “Peak 2 Peak” holds three world records: longest distance, greatest span and highest lift.



Next, we hiked up Blackcomb for an hour and returned to the Roundhouse and had lunch there. The hiking trail on the Blackcomb Mountain was an easy walk under the lead of Douglas Cheung’s seven-year-old son, Logan, and Arthur turned out to be the assistant guide. Actually, all the three young participants were in the lead. We were also fortunate to sight a marmot on the way.



After lunch, the majority of us took the chairlifts to the top of the Whistler Mountain. Some of us decided to stay at the Roundhouse and some took the gondola back down to the Village. For those who have not taken chairlifts before, it was certainly a spine-chilling experience. As the chairlifts were slowly climbing the mountain, we felt the icy wind and drizzle kissing our faces. When we went past the first rocky mountain, a deep snowy valley was unfolded under our feet. Then, we went past a second rocky mountain and another deeper valley displayed underneath. It was nerve-racking for those first-time

chairlifters.

Finally, we reached the top of the Whistler Mountain and took another group photo in front of the Inuksuk. The fog got thicker, so we had to take extra caution in trekking up and down the rocky path. Even though we could not see a bird's eye view of the valley, we enjoyed walking in the mist. It felt like walking on top of the world. On the way down, it was so foggy that we could not even see anything in the chairlift.



Coming back to the Roundhouse, we took a second ride on the "Peak 2 Peak" to enjoy the breathtaking view between Whistler and Blackcomb. On the way back, we were able to board the glass-bottom gondola and admired the valley and the greenery below. Eleven of us

stayed at the Roundhouse for the BBQ dinner while the rest descended the mountain and departed. The BBQ buffet dinner was unexpectedly good, with prime ribs, chicken, and a wide variety of appetizers, entrees, and desserts. There was a live band playing retro songs of the 70s. While we were enjoying our dinner, the sun came out of the fog and there was a rainbow overhanging in the sky right outside the large patio. That concluded our day trip, and some of us were looking forward to the next hiking.

