

Huron Peak - North Ridge from Clear Creek

Difficulty:	Class 2
Exposure:	
Summit Elev.:	14,010 feet
Trailhead Elev.:	10,560 feet; Elevation gain: 3500'
RT Length:	6.75 miles
Trailhead:	Clear Creek. / Winfield

Hikers: Rick Crandall; Brett Crandall **August 31, 2006**

My first fourteener, as with many seeking to try one, was hiking up Mt. Elbert in 2002. I loved getting to summit but it was a hard grind for me, mainly due to being out of shape and suffering some lung issues. I didn't think then I'd ever do another. But after years of hiking with my dog Emme, I decided to take another shot at one – especially the joy of doing it with my son, Brett. We picked Huron Peak because I'd heard it was not too long and a pretty hike up a mountain that is somewhat by itself in the Sawatch Range on the other side of Independence Pass from Aspen.

This story is a reach-back, trying our memories, although we do have some photos commemorating the hike.

This mountain is graded Class 2, but it's an easy Class 2 with only some modest hiking on rocks approaching the summit cap. Huron was re-calibrated in 2002 from 14,003' (just barely a fourteener) to 14,010' which means even with some erosion it will maintain its status.

Brett and I set out early in the morning from Aspen, in the dark, drove over the pass and headed for the upper trailhead which is about two miles up a rough 4WD road from the ghost town of Winfield, itself located up a Chaffee County road about half way between Leadville and Buena Vista.

Winfield is a ghost town with a half dozen buildings left, some of which have been partially restored. Silver mining is what started Winfield, which hit its stride briefly by 1881. It actually went through several names, like Lucknow and Florence. At its peak, the town had 1500 residents, three saloons, three stores, two hotels, a boarding house, a church and a school.



The town of Winfield



The schoolhouse

The silver mining crash of 1893 halted mining activity in Clear Creek Canyon, with some resumption in 1900 and finally halting in 1918.



We spent no time looking at Winfield and we went on in our 4Runner up the rough road to the upper trailhead at 10,560'.



Once at the trailhead, the hike immediately started gaining elevation through a series of switchbacks. These continued all the way up to the tree line.

Rick headed up switchbacks at about 8:00 am.

Eventually there was a nice flat wildflower meadow that leveled the climb for a while.



**Rick headed up again,
after the wildflower
meadow behind.**

Some of the wildflowers:





At 13,400' with the remaining route to summit in view.



Final pitch to the summit – some easy Class 2 rock hopping mixed with scree.



Brett reaching summit first – naturally. No, he didn't barefoot it all the way up!



Rick following up to summit – and very happy!



Summit: Huron Peak 14,010' 11:15 am, 3 hours from trailhead.

North Apostle Ice Mountain West Apostle



View from the summit: The Three Apostles, three thirteeners that can be climbed from Huron, but it's a very long day featuring some route finding and Class 4 climbing.



Clouds gathering , so we had a quick lunch and headed down

Thanks Brett,
I'm hooked!