

CLOUDBURST

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Callaghan Valley Updates



FEDERATION OF MOUNTAIN CLUBS OF BC

Fall/Winter 2010

FMCBC and Cloudburst Information



The Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia (FMCBC) is a non-profit organization representing the interests of non-motorized hikers and climbers, and outdoor clubs throughout British Columbia.

The FMCBC

- addresses mountain access, recreation, and conservation issues
- coordinates, builds, and maintains hiking and mountain access trails throughout B.C. through its member clubs
- promotes outdoor education and safety

Membership

Membership in the FMCBC is open to any individual or club interested in non-motorized outdoor activities, and access, recreational, and conservation concerns. Please contact the FMCBC office to receive a list of clubs that belong to the FMCBC (See back cover). Membership is \$15 per annum per membership when a member of a FMCBC Club and \$25 per annum for individual members.

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INDEX

President's Report.....	4
FMCBC News of Interest	6
Recreation and Conservation Reports.....	7
Trails Committee Reports.....	10
Club Ramblings.....	12
Club Activities around the Province.....	20
Club Updates.....	25
Films and Literature of Interest.....	26
Announcements.....	33



Cover Photo taken by Martin Naroznik

Featuring Dan Friedmann, ACC-Vancouver member, heading for the summit of Slalok Mountain to ski the North Face. May 2010.

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Articles

We welcome articles which inform our readers about mountain access, recreation, and conservation issues or activities in B.C. Articles should not exceed 1,000 words. Photos should be approximately 4x6 inch photos with 150—300 DPI resolution. With submitted articles please include the author. With submitted photos please include location, names of people in the photo and the name of the photographer.

Submission Deadlines: Fall/Winter - Oct 15

Spring/Summer - April 15

Email articles to: admin.manager@mountainclubs.org

Advertising: The FMCBC invites advertising or classified advertising that would be useful to our members. Rates:

\$400 back page \$300 full page

\$160 ½ page \$80 ¼ page

\$40 business card

We would like to thank Mountain Equipment Co-op for supporting the FMCBC through their generous contribution of office space from which to base our administration.



The Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

Working on your behalf

The Federation of Mountain Clubs (FMCBC) is a democratic, grassroots organization dedicated to the conservation of and access to British Columbia's wilderness and mountain areas. As our name indicates we are a federation of outdoor clubs and our membership is about 3500 from 22 clubs around the province. Our membership is comprised of a diverse group of non-motorized or self-propelled mountain recreation users including hikers, climbers, mountaineers, backcountry skiers and snowshoers, who all share an interest in the protection and preservation of the mountain/wilderness environment. The FMCBC also has several individual members who are not affiliated with the club, but share our mission and accomplishments. Membership is open to any club or individual that supports our mission. In addition to the work that FMCBC does on their behalf, membership benefits include a subscription to the FMCBC newsletter *Cloudburst* and access to an inexpensive Third-Party Liability insurance program for club members, and Directors and Officers liability insurance for your club organizers.

The FMCBC mandate is "to foster and promote the non-motorized activities of the membership and the general public through leadership, advocacy and education". The FMCBC recognizes hikers, mountaineers and ski-tourers etc. to be a traditional user group and represents their rights province-wide to freely access and enjoy a quality experience in the mountains and forests of British Columbia. Our members believe that the enjoyment of these pursuits in an unspoiled environment is a vital component to the quality of life in British Columbia.

- The FMCBC fulfills its mandate with a comprehensive approach to mountain recreation and conservation by:
- Participating in provincial land use decision processes.
- Working to positively change (and in some cases enhance) government agency policies so that self-propelled outdoor recreation opportunities are recognized and protected.
- Representing wilderness as a legitimate land use and a resource of identifiable value to society.
- Advocating for new parks and wilderness resources, and working to maintain the integrity of existing parks and wilderness resources.
- Advocating for continued access to existing recreational resources.
- Building, maintaining and protecting hiking and mountain access trails.
- Promoting hiking, rock climbing, mountaineering, ski touring and other self-propelled mountain activities.
- Educating the public on conservation issues, related to outdoor recreation.
- Educating its member and the public on mountain and backcountry safety and working with member clubs to address risk management issues.
- Encouraging new membership in our member clubs

Acting under the policy of "talk, understand and persuade", rather than "confront and force", the FMCBC advocates for the interests of its member groups. Much of this work is done through our committees including our Trails Committee and Recreation and Conservation Committee. With the exception of the assistance provided by the FMCBC's Administrative Manager work on these programs is done mainly by volunteers.

The FMCBC was founded in 1971, based on a predecessor organization called the Mountain Access Committee. Since this time the FMCBC has had many success stories working on behalf of our members and the public at large. If you visit our website (www.mountainclubs.org) you can view a list of some of our successes and accomplishments we have had through the years categorized by geographical region. Some highlights include the popular Adopt-a-Trail program and the resolution of several land use issues through participation in various planning processes.

We continue to work towards success on new issues and projects. Much of our work these days tends to be access related where we are competing with other users of the land base or in some cases a lack of investment in existing infrastructure. At the core of these projects, issues and successes (and often the grinding work that goes unnoticed) is the countless hours of time from dedicated volunteers from across the province. Without these volunteers the FMCBC would not exist and we are always looking for new volunteers—no experience required. Through our committees, club advocates and general membership we have much to hope for on the trail ahead.■

President's Report

President's Report

Brian Wood (BC Mountaineering Club)



Brian Wood at Eastern Garibaldi Park

David Robertson

We have seen a busy past few months at the FMCBC with some new initiatives put into place after our AGM in Port Alberni this past June. Based on a survey the FMCBC conducted in the Spring to try to determine priorities, several new committees have been formed. Those who replied to the survey indicated that communication from the FMCBC to the member clubs was important to them, and that two issues a year of Cloudburst is insufficient to keep them informed of what the FMCBC does. In response to the survey, we have begun to email directly a monthly newsletter called the FMCBC E-News to our members and interested individuals. As with Cloudburst, we hope that you, our members, can provide much of the content of this publication by sending us articles that FMCBC members may find interesting or useful. Time sensitive news items would be appropriate for this type of frequent publication, whereas such items would probably be too late for the semiannual Cloudburst. Some ideas for articles include: links to news articles or upcoming events of

interest in your area; summaries of minutes of Trails, Recreation and Conservation Committee meetings, backcountry recreation conflicts etc. We hope to include approximately five to seven articles every issue. So, please if you are interested in contributing suitable articles that might interest our members email Jodi at admin.manager@mountainclubs.org.

At this year's AGM, hosted by the Alberni Valley Outdoor Club on Vancouver Island, members of the Friends of Strathcona Park (FOSP) gave a talk on their continuing difficulties when working as volunteers with BC Parks on trail maintenance. The last edition of Cloudburst referred to the continuing deterioration of BC Park facilities due to government cut-backs. We are worried, particularly about maintaining trails and other infrastructure; and we requested our members, i.e. you out there, to report your findings of park infrastructure. Curiously, when there is no funding for *paid* personnel to maintain trails, restrictions have been imposed on *unpaid* volunteers maintaining trails, presumably such work being of negligible cost to the government. In about 2002, possibly (or probably?) as a result of liability concerns, BC Parks discontinued much of its volunteer support program and the FMCBC effectively discontinued much of its Adopt-a-Trail program, both of which had been reasonably effective in maintaining some trails. Now, in some parks (particularly those closer to the risk management folks in Victoria?), groups such as FOSP and those trying to volunteer in some lower mainland parks were told they could not work on trails without a park ranger being present.

As the government cut-backs have transformed BC Parks rangers into a red-listed critically endangered species, there can be problems in getting a ranger to be present when volunteers want to do trail work. To address this and other problems related to BC Parks, on September 2010, the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC (ORC) hosted a meeting relating to volunteers in BC Parks, details of which can be found at the ORC website, www.orcbc.ca. Scott Benton, Executive Director of BC Parks, and many outdoor groups were present at the meeting, and the question of BC Parks rangers being required during volunteer work in BC Parks was raised. Scott Benton indicated that he was not aware of this requirement and assumed it was some park staff being unfamiliar with guidelines for volunteers "working" in parks. For many years, written agreements between volunteers and BC Parks have permitted work by volunteers *without* a ranger being present, and so Scott assured those present that he would investigate these inconsistencies so as to clarify the current situation. Other issues relating to medical insurance coverage for volunteers, and third party liability insurance for volunteers and the directors and officers of their clubs was also discussed. Hopefully we will be able to report favorably on these concerns in the near future.

BC Parks have also been in the news recently due to another disturbing aspect of park management. In August 2010, the BC Auditor General issued a report which is highly critical of the deteriorating *ecological* conditions within BC Parks. While ecological or environmental aspects are not directly related to recreation facilities, deteriorating natural environments within parks clearly detract from the recreational experience of park visitors. It is not known what effect all this adverse publicity will have on park management but the timing could not be much worse because 2011 marks the Centennial of the founding of the BC Parks system.

It is expected that there will be many grand pronouncements about preserving the natural environment for future generations, just as there was one hundred years ago, but these pronouncements may have to be tempered by reality. While much has been accomplished in BC in the last century, more than 12 % of our land base is now protected in some manner, this

President's Report

protection may not be meeting the expectations of those early visionaries of our park system, just as it seems to be falling short of the expectations of many members of the public.

As part of our attempts to raise our profile both in the public's eyes as well as in our members' eyes, we are presently negotiating with the Mountain Equipment Cooperative (MEC) to form a Community Partnership. These negotiations are in their preliminary stages and we are currently reviewing the MEC's suggestions relating to our long term planning strategy to assist the FMCBC in "capacity building" over a period of years. This is to improve our membership base and our financial position so that we can more effectively serve our members as well as the non-motorized or self-propelled backcountry recreation community, which includes many of MEC's BC-based members. In the past the FMCBC had access to government grants which have now been discontinued, and so we are not able to provide the services that we could offer previously. Thus we are looking to MEC for help. Over the years MEC has supported many short term projects of the FMCBC and our member clubs, and currently also provides the FMCBC with office space. MEC contributes 1% of all sales to community projects and organizations to help protect nature and promote active lifestyles; 40% of that contribution is focused on supporting self-propelled outdoor activity. Many of our current backcountry recreation problems relate to non-compatible recreational activities in areas shared with the motorized recreation community, both commercial users, i.e. tourism groups, and non-commercial users, i.e. the general public. I would expect that most of BC's self-propelled recreationists have encountered motorized recreationists in the backcountry, and have been disappointed (or worse) by the noise, smell and sometimes danger associated with this group. Some of these motorized groups have access to funding from manufacturers and retailers of motorized recreation equipment, and this funding can help these groups when lobbying governments in land use negotiations, and in improving recreation infrastructure for the motorized groups. We also share the backcountry with the resource extraction industries and the electrical power generation industries which can severely impact our recreation activities, and these industries also have powerful lobby groups. It should be noted that while motorized recreation and resource extraction are restricted in many of our provincial parks, there is constant pressure on BC Parks to change park master plans to permit these activities within the parks. Supporting BC Parks to resist this pressure and to negotiate with government requires resources which the FMCBC, by itself, does not have. We are hoping that our future relationship with MEC could assist us in providing advice and some funding to improve our effectiveness as a voice for non-motorized backcountry recreation when dealing with government and these other backcountry user groups. ■

FMCBC AGM 2010

This year's AGM was held in Port Alberni and hosted by the Alberni Valley Outdoor Club. Thank you to all who attended and made it a successful AGM: Left to right back row: Mike Stewart, Monika Bittel, Harold Carlson, Brian Wood, Scott Webster, Bob St John, Dave King, Ken Rodonets, Cedric Zala, Rob Brusse, Eric Burkle, Martin Smith. Left to right front row: Karl Stevenson, Bill Perry, Patrick Harrison, Judy Carlson, Antje Wahl, Eleanor Acker (back), Mary Tanish (front), Karen George, Jodi Appleton, Judith Holm, Peter Rothermel, Jack Brycecland (front)



Judith Robertson

FMCBC News of Interest

Commercial General Liability Insurance

Brian Wood (BC Mountaineering Club)

This article applies only to those clubs who participate in the Liability Insurance Program administered by the FMCBC. It is designed to cover expenses associated with being sued for accidents that may happen on club-sanctioned trips, but it is NOT for direct medical expenses. The FMCBC Insurance Committee recently reported to our members its serious concerns about the warranties or conditions relating to our current Commercial General Liability Insurance policy. The year 2010/2011 is the first year we have been covered by the current policy which was sold to us very shortly before the expiry of the previous policy. Our broker was informed that the previous policy would not be renewed a few weeks before its expiry, and our broker substituted the current policy at the last minute so that we could maintain continuous coverage during the change of policies. Examination of the “fine print” revealed some safety precautions which are not practical, and/or are too onerous for many of our activities, plus there were other ambiguities. After discussing our concerns with our insurance broker at a recent meeting we are attempting to re-negotiate the unacceptable wording and, in addition, to draft a “risk management plan” which would be acceptable to the insurance company and to our members. It should be added that there is no refund policy, and thus there is little point in terminating this insurance as it will automatically expire in May 2011, unless we decide to renew it with more acceptable wording. From our own experience, and from what we have learned from several sources, there are only a few insurance companies that provide this sort of insurance, and so we do not have many options. Nevertheless, in the meantime we will try to investigate other companies with less onerous conditions for participants.

Liability insurance is only one part of risk management; another part relates to liability waivers which are used by most of our member clubs. Many folks who participate in so-called “high risk” activities, e.g. resort skiing, are familiar with them, and one cannot participate in most commercial activities without signing or accepting a waiver. By purchasing a ski ticket, or even accepting a free backcountry access ticket at Cypress Bowl, or by signing a liability waiver, you are effectively agreeing to certain safety practices and conditions laid down by the facility operator or organization involved with the activity. Most insurance companies require that a liability waiver supplied by them is to be personally signed and witnessed by all insured members who participate on club-sanctioned trips. As we feel that some members clubs have better waivers than other member clubs, or even better than the insurance company, we are attempting to have a FMCBC “recommended” waiver to be accepted by the insurance company as a substitute for the insurance company’s waiver. As this seems to be relatively straightforward, once we obtain acceptance by the insurance company of a suitable waiver, we anticipate supplying our clubs with a “recommended” waiver in the near future.

The risk management plan being drafted by the Insurance Committee relates to safety practices, such as proper safety equipment, and when and how it is to be used. This can be particularly tricky to put into words, as there are many different opinions about what precaution are reasonable and appropriate, and in what circumstances. Clearly, we do not want a complex list of “do’s and don’ts” that would be too onerous for our members to follow. However, most of us would probably feel it is reasonable to require participants to wear PFD’s in water paddling sports, and to wear helmets for cycling and roped rock climbing. The wording is important because failure to comply with the safety precautions which we draft and are eventually acceptable to the insurance company would result in loss of insurance coverage. Needless to say, as this matter is turning into a bureaucratic nightmare, we have asked our insurance broker to seek out another insurance company whose conditions would be less of a problem, and we ourselves are investigating other options. ■



**THE FEDERATION OF MOUNTAIN CLUBS
IS LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS!**

**Please talk to your Club's FMCBC Director
to learn how to get involved
or contact Jodi at
admin.manager@mountainclubs.org**

Recreation and Conservation



SW BC Recreation & Conservation Committee Report

Scott Webster (Varsity Outdoor Club) and Monika Bittel (BC Mountaineering Club)

Here are some updates on issues we've been working on in Southwest BC.

1. Tricouni unresolved areas

When the Sea to Sky LRMP was published there was an area around Tricouni Peak (between Squamish and Whistler) that was labeled as "unresolved" in terms of recreation zoning (public and commercial). The recreation and conservation (R&C) committee recently met with Ross Kreye of the Integrated Land Management Bureau (now called the Ministry of Natural Resource Operations) to discuss the future of this area. We drew up a map of areas of interest to non-motorized users, including the popular Mount Brew area, where the Varsity Outdoor Club operates the most recent incarnation of their Brew Hut. Mr. Kreye will be taking our recommendations back to the other stakeholders (including motorized users and the Squamish First Nation) to try to come to a consensus on zoning for this region.

2. Callaghan Valley backcountry access and signage

See report from Scott Nelson below.

3. 21 Mile Creek Update

The 21 Mile Creek watershed (northwest of Whistler) was designated as a non-motorized area in the Sea-to-sky LRMP. It includes Rainbow Lake and a small lake above Rainbow. The watershed supplies drinking water for part of Whistler. Despite the designation, this area has become over run by snowmobiles, which primarily gain access to the area via the Callaghan East Forest Service Road. In September, 2010, FMC representatives met with government officials and snowmobile and commercial recreation representatives regarding implementation of the non-motorized designation. The first step in that process is to educate snowmobilers about non-motorized areas. To that end, with the approval of government, three large signs will be built at strategic locations on the Callaghan East Forest Service Road informing the snowmobilers about the location and boundaries of the 21 Mile Creek non-motorized area. If voluntary compliance does not work, we will push for a section 58 closure of the 21 Mile Creek area and enforcement of that closure. Over the course of this winter, members of the non-motorized sector are asked to post any observations of snowmobile use of the 21 Mile Creek area on the Snowmobile Infraction Database accessed via "Campaigns" on www.bivouac.com. This database has been used effectively to demonstrate to government officials the use of this area by snowmobiles and safety issues created by snowmobiles, including rider-less snowmobiles.

4. Upper Lillooet IPPs

Creek Power Inc. (co-owned by Innergex Renewable Energy Inc. and Ledcor Power Group Ltd.), has proposed to construct three run-of-the-river power projects in the Upper Lillooet valley. The projects would be constructed on North Creek, Boulder (Pebble) Creek, and the Lillooet River. The SWBC R&C committee recently met with the proponents to discuss the project, including some concerns we had regarding road access, impacts on the BCMC hut in the North Creek area, and impacts on the Pebble Creek hot springs. The company representatives seemed quite amenable to working with us to ensure a positive impact on recreation in the area. In particular: they indicated their desire to maintain road access (which would likely be improved as they need to be able to visit the intake structures); the intake on North Creek is near the end of the current road so should not directly affect the hut; the Pebble Creek hot springs would be unaffected (other than reduced flow in the Lillooet) because water for the project would be located in a tunnel on the other side of the road in that area. The committee will continue to liaise with the proponents as the project moves through the environmental assessment process. ■

Olympic Legacy in the Callaghan Valley

by Scott Nelson (BC Mountaineering Club)

July 2nd 2003 the verdict came down. Vancouver would host the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. Some people celebrated; others protested. Everyone knew that big changes were coming, and wondered how things would turn out. The plans were vague at first – alpine skiing in Whistler, snowboarding at Cypress, an upgraded Highway 99, and a

Recreation and Conservation

new Nordic center in the Callaghan Valley for cross-country skiing, biathlon and ski jumping.

We got our first peek at the Nordic center design as part of the environmental assessment process. The proposal looked encouraging. A new paved road to Alexander Falls and several alpine access trails going into the surrounding backcountry. However, during the EA process, the layout of the ski jumps, stadiums and trails was completely redone, and the backcountry access trails were dropped after the public comments period had closed.

The Nordic center officially opened as Whistler Olympic Park (WOP) in December 2007, the first Olympic venue to do so. The first season of operation was hectic. The Nordic center was being run by the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (VANOC). VANOC staff wanted backcountry skiers to buy a snowshoe ticket (to protect VANOC from liability) even though we were not using any of the ski or snowshoe trails to access the backcountry. Skiers were locked in after hours, and some unnecessary search and rescue operations were launched. On the other side of the valley, Callaghan Country was offering free access to backcountry skiers.

The FMCBC engaged VANOC to try to find a solution that would work for both parties. We offered to establish and maintain the backcountry access trails that were part of the original proposal in exchange for free access. We stressed that backcountry users who are not using the cross-country trails for access should not have to pay a trail user fee, but that paying for parking was acceptable. Negotiations went nowhere until we started lobbying the provincial government. Then suddenly VANOC changed their position, offering backcountry skiers free access after signing a liability waiver. There would be a small fee (\$6) to use the cross-country trails to access the backcountry. The same policy would apply over at the Callaghan Country trail system.

That winter things didn't really go much smoother. Some of the WOP staff didn't know what to do with backcountry skiers, and a few people still got locked behind the gate. I started working on laying out and flagging trails from the biathlon range to Hanging Lake and Beverley Creek. By spring 2009 we had both routes finalized. Things were looking up. At a spring meeting WOP staff even suggested putting up some large backcountry information signs right next to the cross-country ski trails. We partnered with the Canadian Avalanche Association to design, commission and install the signs. Funding was secured from MEC and the National Trails Coalition, and we made some rather large signs. In fall 2009 we did four days of clearing work to take out all the big deadfall along the two routes.

For the 2009-2010 season, WOP took over the grooming and day use operations from Callaghan Country's tenure, while Callaghan Country continued to run the lodge at Conflict Lake. The underlying tenures remained unchanged. The route to Hanging Lake was mostly cut off for the 2009-2010 season, but the trail up Beverley Creek skied nicely. After the Olympics were over, with a solid spring snowpack, we spent four days hanging trail markers on both routes. The big signs were ready to raise once the snow melted and the Olympic cleanup was done.

On June 1st 2010, a new organization called Whistler 2010 Sports Legacies took over the operation of Whistler Olympic Park from VANOC. The new operators have a much tighter budget to run on, so they reexamined all their policies, such as staffing, snow removal, parking . . . even backcountry access. Their first proposal, made at the beginning of August 2010, was for a closed boundary that would block



Scott Nelson with one of the large trail signs in the Callaghan Valley

Monika Bittel

Recreation and Conservation

backcountry access through the WOP tenure area and only allow it through the Callaghan Country tenure area. Furthermore there would be no overnight parking and the Callaghan Country parking lot at Alexander Falls was not going to be plowed. After we raised the issue with some key government bureaucrats, the offer was revised to allow backcountry access, but with a \$10 per person fee – the same rate that they charge for snowshoe trail users. We felt that the fee was too high, considering that backcountry users would be spending the majority of their time outside the Whistler Olympic Park area.

In September 2010, we started a survey of backcountry users of the Callaghan Valley. Over 150 people completed the survey, and the results clearly showed that the fees were being set too high. If the backcountry users fees were lowered by half (to \$5 per person or \$10 if you use the XC ski trails) then revenue from backcountry tickets sales would actually be increased, but WOP staff would not be swayed.

Despite objecting to the high fees, we decided to complete the signage project as originally planned. The new WOP managers would not allow the signs to be erected in their planned locations next to the cross-country ski trails, so the locations were moved a few hundred meters uphill. The signs were completed in October, 2010. Much work remains to be done on the trails, but volunteer enthusiasm is waning because of the planned fees for the 2010-2011 winter season.

Looking forward, the future of backcountry skiing in the Callaghan Valley is still uncertain. It's easy to call our investment in the Hanging Lake and Beverley Creek access trails a failure, but I think this fight is far from over. Public opinion counts, and decisions about access and user fees can easily be reversed. On a positive note we are trying to work with the Ministry of Transportation to establish an overnight parking area on Callaghan Valley road just outside of the WOP tenure area. Backcountry access to Metal Dome remains unrestricted. This area offers some great backcountry skiing, but competition with heli-skiers is high. Improving access to Metal Dome with a marked route up through the forest could help us establish a presence in this area, because it could very well be the only one in the Callaghan Valley we have left.

Whistler Olympic Park backcountry access policy for 2010-2011

- Backcountry skiers must purchase an STBA (snowshoe / toboggan / backcountry access) pass for \$10 or a full day pass for \$20 if using the groomed cross-country trails and sign a liability waiver
- Fees will be collected at the gate at the entrance to Whistler Olympic Park
- Identify yourself as a backcountry user with a note on your dash. Leave your name and contact information
- Parking will be available at the day lodge and the biathlon range lower lot. There's no need to stop at the day lodge anymore since the waivers, etc will be taken care of at the gate.
- Alexander Falls parking lot will not be plowed
- No overnight parking will be allowed in the WOP parking lots
- Gate hours are 8:30am-5:00pm, 8:30am-6:00pm after March 1st

Update on the Proposed Spearhead Traverse Hut System near Whistler

Brian Wood (BC Mountaineering Club)

This is an update of an article I wrote for the last Cloudburst issue Spring/Summer 2010. For continuing updates, visit the website; www.spearheadhuts.org.

To recap: the recently-formed Spearhead Hut Committee (SHC) is investigating the practicality of building and operating a series of backcountry huts on the Spearhead Traverse in Garibaldi Park. This area is becoming increasingly popular and visitor numbers in the late winter and spring are now estimated to be in the thousands. Summer hiking usage is also increasing significantly with the recent trail building by Whistler Blackcomb. The SHC Chair, Jayson Faulkner, has prepared the announcement on the following page.

Recreation and Conservation

Spearhead Hut System Proposed for Garibaldi Park

The Spearhead Hut Committee has formally submitted a conceptual plan to BC Parks for the construction of hut system along the Spearhead Traverse (the Spearhead and Fitzsimmons ranges), the spectacular mountain ranges that connect Whistler and Blackcomb Mountains. This proposal comes from a working group comprised of representatives from the Alpine Club of Canada Whistler Section (ACCW), Alpine Club of Canada Vancouver Section (ACCV), Alpine Club of Canada National, British Columbia Mountaineering Club (BCMC), memorial groups (the Kees and Claire Memorial Hut Society and the Brett Carlson Memorial Group) and other interested parties. This coalition of support represents a broad base of non-motorized backcountry user groups committed to sustainability and environmental stewardship. The Spearhead Hut Committee (The Committee) is the organizing and advocacy group that will design and build this system of huts.

When completed, the hut system will be comprised of a number of huts, spread at intervals along the 40 km circuit. The huts will provide summer and winter shelter, with overnight accommodation, heat, water, toilets and self-serve cooking facilities. The hut system will allow winter and summer backcountry travelers to experience this remarkable environment relatively unencumbered by equipment and heavy packs. Establishment of the hut system will also mitigate and control the current random user/uncontrolled camping impacts that are occurring throughout this area. The huts will also broaden the potential user base of the Spearhead range to include older people, and those with less experience than would currently be able to experience and enjoy this region of the park in the summer and winter seasons.

The Spearhead Range is unparalleled in North America in its combination of length, quality of terrain, accessibility, and position within the alpine wilderness of Garibaldi Park. Skiers and backcountry travelers from around the world have begun to discover this opportunity. The proposed hut system would support what is undoubtedly one of the most sought-after backcountry trips in North America and would be considered one of the great alpine hut tours in the world. It is anticipated that this would be a legacy project as BC Parks celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2011.

For more information contact:
The Spearhead Hut Committee,
Jayson Faulkner – 604 902 0080

Here is some additional information supplied by a Spearhead Hut Committee member:

The Spearhead proposal is not a commercial venture, and the financing of the huts will be largely come from donations and fundraising events, which have already started. Initial interest is encouraging. There are plans for an official opening fundraising event to be held in Whistler the day after US Thanksgiving Day, i.e. 26 November 2010. The huts are likely to hold 20 – 30 people, and during busy periods there will most likely be hut custodians. The huts will be located above tree line so as to reduce impacts on alpine vegetation, and will also provide emergency shelters, as this high alpine route is subject to severe weather conditions. A summer route is being finalized, and hopefully a reasonable summer trail will eventually be built. ■

Trails



Howe Sound Crest Trail Upgrade progress in 2010 and beyond.

Alex Wallace (FMCBC SW Trails Committee Co-Chair)

Progress continues on the Howe Sound Crest trail upgrade project, with 5 BC Parks rangers and a 12 person volunteer crew from the Vancouver Korean Hiking Club (plus Alex Wallace of Trails Committee) putting in the new steel bridges on concrete block foundations at Strachan Meadows on 18th of September. The new Bowen Lookout and final gravel surfacing of the first stage of the trail also neared completion, although the Provincial BC Bid process for hiring a contractor once again resulted in a very late start this year, with a race against deteriorating weather conditions before the October 8th shutdown. Nonetheless the delays over several years also have meant that it was possible for the Federation of Mountain Clubs to apply for funding from the Federal Government's short-lived National Trails Coalition

Trails

program, and cheques totalling \$150,000 in trail funding from Ottawa have now been received via the FMC office (Jodi & Brian) and spent by BC Parks during 2010. We look forward to the project continuing in 2011, as there is still \$130,000 of the VANOC Cypress Legacy funding dedicated to this trail held in the Park Renewal Fund. Apart from ranger staff hours, no funding has been received from Victoria towards maintenance and upgrading of this popular trail, and so Alex Wallace is writing on behalf of the Federation of Mountain Clubs to the Ministers of Environment and Tourism for completion funding to ensure that the project continues to The Lions, and hopefully to Deeks Lake.

Directional signage has now been installed on Unnecessary Mountain and St Mark's Summit, however there needs to be a GPS survey and approval from Metro Vancouver before



Alex Wallace

Howe Sound Crest Bridge construction crew at Strachan Meadows

formal upgrading of the trail to St Mark's commences - as the trail in places switchbacks in and out of the Capilano Watershed, and technically hikers have been trespassing for some decades. (The trail is considered in legal terms by Metro Vancouver and BC Parks to be on the height of land plus the 10 metre strip West of this line.) The number of exposed roots on the St Mark's section also means that the upgrade planning and construction will have to be careful not to simply cut these and possibly destabilise the trees as has happened in the past on other trails. Alex Wallace with planner Vicki Haberl and Larry Syroishko of BC Parks and Ken Juvik, the Metro Vancouver Forester, did a survey hike from Magnesia Meadows back to Unnecessary Mountain in late August to determine what signage and other improvements, and possibly detours, need to be made. At least one old trail sign now points to the Harvey Creek drainage logging road (Trail L5 on Roger Freeman's map) which unfortunately has become totally overgrown and impassable over the years, and so now is a terrain trap for descending hikers who possibly are in distress. Safety issues like this need to be addressed as the project progresses. ■

Letter Writing Opportunity to support new FMCBC Member Club

Patrick Harrison (Hike BC)

Hike BC, FMCBC's newest member club representing the National Hiking Trail in B.C., respectfully requests members of FMCBC to write their politicians to support the National Hiking Trail in B.C. The NHT is the only national footpath in Canada; the NHT distinguishes itself from other national trails by being non-motorized rather than multiuse. The national trail is currently in Surrey and White Rock in the Lower Mainland and in Central BC utilizing several heritage trails including the 1861 Gold Rush Pack Trail and the Goat River Trail. Political Ministers to write include:

Murray Coell,
Minister of the Environment
PO Box 9047 Stn Prov Govt
Rm 112, Parliament Buildings
Victoria BC
V8W9E2

Steve Thomson
Minister of Agriculture and Lands
PO BOX 9043, STN PROV GOVT.
Victoria BC
V8W9E2

~ Thank you,
Patrick Harrison
President, Hike BC

The Honourable Jim Prentice
Minister of the Environment
Les Terrasses de la Chaudière
10 Wellington Street, 28th Floor
Gatineau, Quebec
K1A 0H3

Kevin Krueger
Minister of Tourism, Culture, and the Arts
PO Box 9071 Stn Prov Govt Victoria BC
V8W9E9

Club Ramblings

Mountain Mentors

Ron Dart (BC Mountaineering Club)

I was young in those days,
keen to learn mountain lore, to take to glaciers and snow packed
slopes,
could ski better than walk, left school before finishing,
against my elders' advice, to live the
mountain life, to be far from the madding crowd.

There were, of course, dangers on peaks,
places to be alert and alive to when off piste,
when in
deep powder.

It was Edward who pioneered avalanche safety in those
unsure, untried years, research from Alta Utah our
north star, *The ABCs of Avalanche Safety* (1961) our
primer and sacred text on the subject.

Alpine touring in those years was still in its infancy, and
it was Edward again that did much of the early work on
transceivers, when most of us used antiquated means to find a
buried friend.

It was in the late 1960s, I was one winter never a day not
on skis, traveling the slopes like a mountain gypsy, high
ridges and peaks my meccas and New Jerusalem. Was there
more to mountain life than skill finesse and the rush of a
challenging and steep descent between rocks on all sides?

Dolores, you walked me yet deeper and further, taught me
much of the real reasons for mountain life and soul sanity.
Your many books were tender, probing, informed, D. H.
Lawrence and Martin Heidegger, deep ecology and mountain
Soul knit affectionately with soft powder Tai Chi spirituality,
the new society and way of being ever before you.

It was all about future primitive, wisdom of the earth and a return
to the mountains.

You parted paths for reasons oft stated, a sadness I felt, but understood
the reasons for—mentors are rare in our time, mountain mentors that
remain together rarer still.

You took different trails, took to different peaks, far, far from
one another---Edward to a one room log cabin in Alaska,
Dolores in Silverton,

You left us Dolores in January 2007. It was kind of you Edward to make
the long journey south to attend the funeral to bid adieu to Dolores.
Did you realize how the trip would end?

The funeral over and done, you decided, at 80, to do a final deep powder
descent. Why? What were you feeling at the time? You died on the
mountain Dolores called home.

The thick ropes of mountain memories are not easily shredded or ripped
apart. ■

Delores LaChapelle (d. January 22 2007)
Edward LaChapelle (d. February 1 2007)



Courtesy Tami Knight

Club Ramblings

Going Crabbing: Trying it out at Haida Gwaii

Nowell Senior (Caledonia Ramblers)

I'd never tried crabbing before, but a first time trip to Haida Gwaii provided the opportunity – in particular the North Beach at Tow Hill where the large male Dungeness Crabs were lined up waiting to be caught by crab-hungry first-time crabbers.

My plan was to catch a couple of these crabs and have them for an early morning breakfast on the beach where I was to catch them.

The locals told me that I couldn't have come at a better time, since the crabs were now mating in the shallow waters of the ebb tide.

I'd never really considered how crabs go about mating other than thinking that it might be a hazardous undertaking, with passions high and all those sharp claws waving and snapping about.

Anyway, at 6:15am of a cold, windy, rainy morning, armed with waders up to my chin, a calliper to measure the crabs, a net to scoop them up with, and a pail to drop them in; I waded into the churning surf.

I had expected to see a solitary male crab sort of slinking along under water looking for a female companion, then chasing and seizing her if he felt she might enjoy his company for a while. The reality turned out to be a bit different from what I expected. I saw what appeared to be the top part of the head of a crab with peering eyes protruding from the sand beneath the swirling tidewater. I crouched down to get a closer look, dug my net beneath the crab and hoisted it out of the water. He was a beauty, and obviously bigger than my calliper to measure him with and the pot I had to cook him in. Not only that, but he must have had a lot of bone or muscle density, as he felt much heavier than he looked. He was all tangled up in the net, and, as I flipped him upside down to get him into the pail, I saw that another smaller crab was clinched beneath his belly.

I thought that he had been using the hiding-in-the-sand-element-of-surprise strategy for meeting his mate. Of course I had come along and surprised both myself and them in their honeymoon bed, as it were.

By the time I had pulled them from their bed, shook them around in the net, and separated them, the male crab was utterly disgusted with me; he gave me an indignant glare and strode off sideways into deeper waters. I could have re-netted him, since he was now single again, but I didn't have the heart to take and boil him after wrecking the relationship he was enjoying until I came along – so I let him go.

I turned to see what his former mate was up to, but all I could see was the top part of the head and eyes protruding from the sand more or less in the same spot I had hoisted the pair from. Was it the same female who had snuggled down into the still-warm bed, or was it another male who had sneaked in with her and who was now looking up at me apprehensively? I didn't stay to find out. My enthusiasm for crabbing was now like the sea - it was ebbing. I sloshed my way over to my own mate waiting patiently for me in the car.

We left the crabs to go on with their lives and drove to Port Clements, where, after a breakfast of ham and eggs, we went on with our lives. ■

Let's Go Get Steined, From Divide To Valley

Mack Skinner (North Shore Hikers)

In 1996, I was in the Stein Divide atop Caltha Peak watching the Valley burn. Having been captivated by the unique alpine landscapes of the Stein, I vowed to return when it was possible to complete the traverse across the Divide and down through the Valley to Lytton. The opportunity arose ten years later when I read the North Shore Hikers' newsletter and saw the posting for an eight-day backpack.

So there we were at km 16 Lillooet Lake forest site, me and three characters I'd never met before: our fearless leader Ryszard "yes my pack is big, it's a Polish condo" Brykajlo; Iveta "c'mon you guys, let's get going, chop chop" Janot;

Club Ramblings

and Bob “if I could just get the right type of AAA batteries for this GPS, we could find which direction is east” Boyer. Their immediate friendliness and enthusiasm for the trip ahead erased any apprehensions I'd developed on the drive up, and their toughness and esprit de corps proved invaluable in the days ahead.

The Stein crossover basically runs from Mt. Currie, near Pemberton, to Lytton through some of the wildest territory imaginable: from fields of Volkswagen-sized boulders (*Stein* is German for *stone*) to forests with blow down so severe it resembles a giant game of pick-up sticks. It also, in my experience, puts a hook into you that never lets go.

Due to a 2003 flood/landslide forcing closure of the Lillooet Lake - Lizzie Lake road to vehicles, what used to be an 11 km drive, albeit in a strong 4WD vehicle, is now a hoof that gradually but relentlessly ascends 1000 meters of elevation to Lizzie Lake, where you are greeted by a 4-star campground and a 2-star lake.

Day 2 saw us passing through what is called The Gates of Shangri-La, where the landscape changes suddenly, like someone drew a line, from the familiar coastal subalpine forest to a unique and gorgeous alpine landscape of flower-filled meadows liberally sprinkled with rock. Due to our leader's poetic musings over this spot, it became The Gates of Shang-Ryszard. A quick swing past Lizzie Cabin (a lovely, functional, even homey hut built by Dave Nickerson and three friends with their own money) brought us to the start of the otherworldly lakes that populate the Divide; the trio of Arrowhead, Heart and Iceberg, where we camped.

From the ridge just behind Iceberg Lake one can see the entire Divide, from the huge glacier-clad peaks, like Skook Jim, in the south; to Figure Eight Lake, a world-class hourglass-shaped pond in an equally top-flight locale sitting on a saddle between the Stein Valley looking eastward and the Rogers Creek watershed to the west; to the light aquamarine Caltha Lake, positioned in the dead center of the landscape in front of Caltha Peak, a place that always seems to be making its own weather; to the viewing ridge itself which extends north then east to meet Cherry Pip Pass and then the ominous-looking Tundra Ridge, running to Poppet Lake -the end of the Divide and beginning of the descent to the Valley.

In 1996 I had camped at Figure Eight Lake, due south of Tundra Lake. On this trip we decided to proceed in an opposite direction and approach Tundra Lake from its north side. Day 3 saw us skirting the huge amphitheatre before Caltha Lake and Peak on our way to the pass overlooking Tundra Lake. It is a sight which takes my breath away even the second time around - a large amoeba-shaped pool whose deep blue/purple colour recalls Oregon's Crater Lake. It's surrounded by near-vertical walls on 3 sides with a small ridge suitable for camping at the far end. To reach this required a traverse of the talus-strewn north shore of the lake, a two km trip taking four hours. Not relishing the idea of boulder-bashing along the shore, I set out solo taking a high route, hoping to save time and effort but, you guessed it, doing neither. Sheer bluffs, unrecognizable from the pass, required some serious downward rock-climbing and some truly frightening moments. For me, the primary activity this evening was adrenalin-depleted catatonic lake-staring.

The next day should have seen us landing in the Valley at Stein Lake, but the Stein gods had other plans. Though we had seen some foreboding clouds on the west end of Tundra Ridge at daybreak and spotted some innocent-looking rain in the next valley, a half-hour after gaining the ridge it suddenly began to hail with stones the size of peas for 20 minutes, during which time there was dramatic overhead thunder and lightning, with us standing on the highest point in the area. After bivouacking slightly lower down through the electrical hailstorm, a serious snowstorm ensued, which didn't let up for hours.

Proceeding eastward high above Tundra Lake, the ridge splits into two, with the preferred route to Stein Lake being the one leading leftward. Given the ongoing snow-bombing we were experiencing and the dan-



Stein Divide

Mack Skinner

Club Ramblings

ger of being up high, we had no choice but to take the right ridge, which would take us down at least 300 metres in elevation to Poppet Lake, a small pretty lake with imposing sheer walls of the two ridges practically encircling it. It was here in 1996 that the closest thing to a hurricane I've felt in BC caused one of my aircraft-aluminum tent poles to snap in the wind and rain at 3 a.m. like it was a twig. This time, being mid-September, was marginally more benign, settling for eight or more inches of snowfall. While all our stuff got good and wet, to never seriously recover, we rather enjoyed the winter wonderland.

Our chief got out his tarp (there are advantages to carrying your condo with you) and Ryszard's Café was in operation with a strict seating capacity of three, and the Powdered Grub Olympics began. Ryszard cheated by having a small Tupperware box of fresh peas that resembled the hailstones but were greener and yummiier.



Mack Skinner

Tundra Lake

trail anywhere for the 1000-meter descent to Stein Lake, and negotiating through the bluffs and deadfall took intense concentration. But at least we had gravity on our side, and the snow abated with the lower elevation. We breathed a sigh of relief upon reaching the west end of Stein Lake. After all, how tough could a trip along a lakeshore without significant boulders be?

Having negotiated the Divide, it was felt the hardship was over. Now it was time to lick our wounds as we hippity-hopped down the river valley humming "The Happy Wanderer". Again the Stein gods intervened. We had heard there was "some deadfall" on the secondary right-leading route down to Stein Lake, but nothing could prepare us for what came next.

All agreed that the trip from Poppet to the campsite at the east end of Stein Lake was the single most difficult day of backpacking any of us had experienced. There was no discernible

The rest of the day can only be described as a total team effort in the face of an implacable foe; the next six hours were the toughest three km I've travelled anywhere. The deadfall was Brobdingnagian -- in some places, six logs piled on top of one another eight feet high, with no way around except over and sometimes under. I envisioned, crawling on my belly under blow down in the mud with 50 pounds on my back, what it might have been like fighting Charlie in 'Nam. The bush grabbed every part of you and often seemed unwhackable -- it separated Ryszard from his glasses permanently without him even knowing. When, after 4 ½ hours, Ryszard suggested thinking about a camp spot, the response was unanimous: we were going to fight till this battle was over, even if it meant using headlamps in this ominous land of logs. The thought of waking up the next morning to do more of the same was more than we could bear. We arrived at the campsite with about one-half hour of daylight left.

The trail east out of Stein Lake began like the Skagit Trail, a nice little riverside stroll. I thought, maybe now we're finally on easy street. But the consistent ability of the Stein gods to dash hopeful expectations arose once more. The fire which had cut short my traverse ten years earlier reared its head. Anyone who's hacked through post-fire landscapes, with its blow down, debris and strangling bush, can attest to the frustration, concentration and muscle power involved. At the beginning of the day, we looked at covering 52 km in three days - not too big a problem. After Day Six, we still had 42 km to go with two days left. Bigger problem. Especially considering the extent of the fires that have ravaged this once-proud valley, whose remaining gigantic Douglas firs and yellow cedars attest to its history as one of the last untouched watersheds in south western BC prompting a series of concerts featuring big name acts to Save the Stein.

In November 1995, the Stein was indeed saved and made into a park and, only six months later, there was a huge fire that burned all summer; in fact it was The Fire of that summer. It appears that close to half the timber in this 52 km-long valley went up, which, for me, has rather killed the spirit of the place. This is aided by the fact that little is being done to maintain the Upper Canyon, the part nearest Stein Lake; trail-marking is haphazard, much blow down and

Club Ramblings

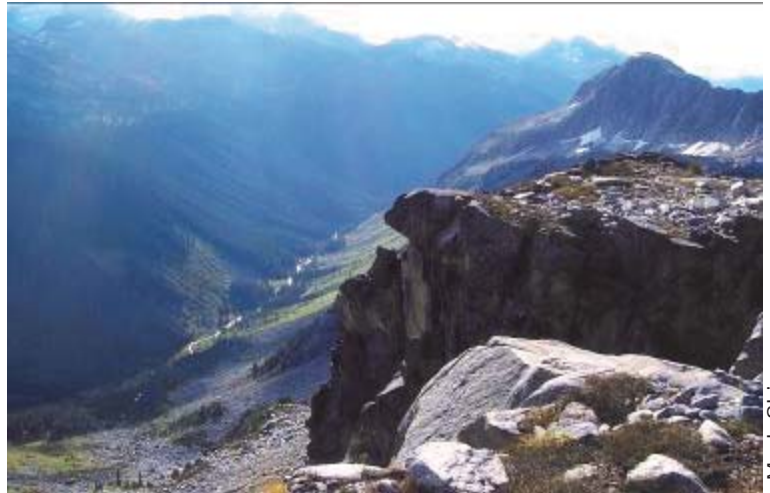
bush is ten years old, there is no signage, and, as a result, few are going there. We met a group of seven people at Heart Lake, early in our trip, and two groups of two people each in the following eight days. It's a great place to go if you want solitude. I might add that the Divide, which is outside the park, actually appears to be better maintained than the park itself.

To make an already too-long story short, three of us stumbled out of the Valley by the end of the eighth day, having walked too far too fast on, in my case, feet sporting seven toes each from four straight days of wet boots and socks. Our leader, preferring the slower, more contemplative style, which I usually favour when I'm not ailing, ambled out on Day Nine.

Why the Stein hook in me? I am certain I was affected by early 1980's publicity surrounding the "Save the Stein" campaign, but all efforts were directed at saving the Valley, leaving the alpine Divide little-known, under-appreciated and unprotected. The Divide possesses a scenic palette that is one-of-a-kind. In a similar fashion to the South Chilcotin, one can look at pictures and recognize the geography. The combination of flower-strewn meadows, rock and ice places the Stein stamp on its alpine. The lakes are pure and serene, all differing in shape, colour and atmosphere, with two of them, Tundra and Figure Eight, being breath-taking. And Elton Lake, which I have yet to stand beside, is reputed to be the prettiest of all. The tenting and landscape-viewing options beside these lakes are as good as backcountry camping gets.

Something in the human psyche places a high value on surmounting challenges, and the Stein provides these. Though there are faint trails and sporadic cairns along the way, route-finding is essential, and off-trail options are many. The weather is described in Gordon White's "Stein Valley Wilderness Guidebook" as "volatile at best", a brilliant brief description. Plenty of challenge to overcome.

I am sure part of the hook for me is the opportunity to get it right. In 1996, we took advantage of what we thought was an abatement of the fire to start our trip, only to discover the fire rearing its head again. On this trip, the difficult day from Poppet to Stein Lake coloured the remainder of the trip. The aforementioned guidebook declares, in understatement, the route we took "is bushy, especially in the lower sections, and is more difficult than the standard route via the ridge". In contrast, the book describes the preferred path as a "fantastic ridge walk with views of Stein Lake, Stein's south ridge, and North Stein". In retrospect, it might have made sense to remain at Poppet till things dried out somewhat, then carry on via the preferable route along the ridge-top. I recently discovered a Stein backpack trip report (<http://www3.telus.net/eugster/outdoors/hike/stein1/stein1.shtml>), which stated maintenance work had been done on this ridge route, making it less difficult than we had anticipated.



Stein Valley from Tundra Ridge

Mack Skinner

Still, hindsight is 20/20, and escaping the snow looked very tempting. But learn from our mistakes. Recommendations for people wishing to do this trip: by all means do the Divide. The day-long walk up to Lizzie Lake is an unfulfilling grunt, but once there a magical world really does open up, one unlike anything you've seen before. My initial post-trip recommendation would have been to skip the Valley.

The only redeeming Valley features for me were better weather, a few pictographs in the Lower Canyon (which a friend of Bob's knew about; the locations of most of these are not well-known), and the remaining gigantic trees, particularly Douglas fir, yellow cedar and hemlock. But these impressions were formed under some duress. With more time and some better weather, the last few days in the Valley would have been more enjoyable. The Valley certainly highlights a different ecosystem—one drier and less punishing than the Divide. Thus, the full traverse proceeds from subalpine rainforest to alpine to high-and-dry river valley—a stunning diversity for a backpack.

Club Ramblings



Mack Skinner

Burnt Stein Valley forest

To make the Divide a loop (and avoid the ordeal of trudging the north shore of Tundra Lake), go from Iceberg Lake to Caltha Lake, then on to Figure Eight Lake. If you wish to take a day off and go peak-bagging (the 8000' Caltha Peak is most easily done from here), glacier-walking, or just hang in a great view spot, this is it. The approach from the south to Tundra Lake is more humane, and your first contact there is the camping area. To return, if your nerve is up, take the even wilder end of Tundra Ridge west, down to Cherry Pip Pass and out. This trip could be done in a week or less. Do it, or the full traverse, and see if the Stein hook grabs hold of you too. ■

Bugaboos/Nakimu Caves - August 22-29

Ron Dart (BC Mountaineering Club)

Who, tired of knocking at preferment's door, ... went to learn the gipsy lore.

Matthew Arnold *The Scholar-Gipsy*

The Bugaboos in the Purcell Mountains are an idyllic place for mountaineers and photographers. There is something to please the palette for one and all. We mountain gypsies took to Rogers Pass on August 22nd under a low cloud morning, and we reached Wheeler Hut by mid afternoon.

August 23 promised to be a beauty and charmer, and we were up and gone from Wheeler Hut by 7:00 am. We drove the long and dusty road from Brisco to Bugaboo Glacier Provincial Park. We arrived at the trailhead, then the trudge up to Conrad Kain Hut began (ladders to climb and chains to grasp across narrow rock ridges). We did the trek to Kain Hut in 2.5 hours, and found fine bedding places in the double loft. Kirsten Knechtel (our guide for the climb the following day and one of the first women to become an accredited mountain guide-she was off to climb Mt. Robson later in the week) joined us in the evening and briefed us on the climb up Hound's Tooth.

August 24th was our tester day. We were gone from Kain Hut just as dawn joined us, and round steep rocks we wound. Then we were roped up two short pitches as we edged round Son of Snow patch. We strapped on crampons, tied into ropes and were soon climbing up Bugaboo Glacier, skirting wide open crevasses. We encountered some thin ice pitches, and Kirsten again demonstrated her mountain skills; adze and pick to ice and steps were hacked out in moments. We belayed round narrow ridges, front pointing with the crampons, and up more steep pitches, well anchored. The final scramble to the summit of Hound's Tooth took us over loose rock, and we sat on the perch just before noon. The views of the ice fields and spires in all directions were a definite delight. Our trip down from Hound's Tooth had plenty of excitement—rappelling down a sheer rock face with crampons on and blue crevasses ever before us. The weather continued to spoil us, and we were back at Kain Hut by 4:30 pm (a 10.5 hour day).



John Mclellan

John Laframboise, Peter Murphy, Marilyn Cram, John Mclellan, Ron Dart, Brett Rueff, Eric Defoe outside the Nakimu Caves

August 25 (Kirsten left us the previous eve-

Club Ramblings

ning) was a slower but still a full day. We hiked up to Applebee Dome campsite, then higher to the col between Crescent and Eastpost Spires (some fine views of Upper Vowell Glacier and the ice packed Howser summits). Peaks and spires, high mountain lakes, deep rutted glaciers and ice floes were in abundance. A few dared to dive into the frigid waters, and graphic photos were taken and not to be forgotten. Our upper loft sleeping quarters with expansive windows at Kain Hut (under a full moon) reminded me of Swiss Heidi and her room in the loft at her Alm Uncle's in the Swiss Alps—the glaciers are quite a sight to see under the full night lamp and the star thick sky. The night was as bright as the day.

We left Kain Hut in the Bugaboos early in the morning on the 26th, and made a quick trip down the mountainside (1.5 hours) to our vehicles (still wrapped well in chicken wire). Our goal was to meet and have lunch with Pat Morrow in Invermere. We had a fine lunch with Pat at the Blue Dog Cafe, then Pat took us to Wilmer (where he lived) to see the Kain cairn. Pat kindly gave each member a free copy of one of his books, then it was up to Golden (where we visited the special 'Swiss Guides: Shaping Mountain Culture in Western Canada' exhibit at the Golden Museum), and back to Wheeler Hut again.

The weather had turned quite nasty in the evening of the 26th, and the rain continued to fall (loads of fresh snow on the higher peaks) on the 27th. We slipped down to Canyon Hot Springs on the 27th to ease aching muscles and wash off days of sweat. It was definitely an in hut sort of day.

August 28th was a demanding day. We left Balu Pass trailhead at 7:00 am, reached the Pass (plenty of fresh snow had fallen) about 9:30, then the descent into grizzly country in Cougar Valley began. The Nakimu Caves (3rd largest in Canada) in the Cougar Valley was our destination. Eric Defoe (Avalanche Rescue Commander at the tragic deaths of the 7 students in 2003: see CBC 'School Trip Tragedy') was our guide into the deep rocky labyrinth and cave maze. Eric was a walking encyclopaedia on the Nakimu Caves and the Rogers Pass area. We were soon descending thin wire ladders into the darkening cave, and Eric took us through such narrow passages as Mica-Schist, St. Peter's Staircase, The Subway, Turbine, Witches Ballroom and many other tight fitting rock squeeze ways. We spent four hours underground in Nakimu, and learned much about the living history and multiple routes (5.9 kilometres) in the caves. The Nakimu Caves have quite a tale to tell. The unique moonmilk configurations, fragile stalactite soda straw formations and dated wood ladders are magical sights to see. We left the Caves by 4:00 pm and were back at the vehicles by 7:00 pm (a 12 hour day behind us).

August 29th we were in the cars and gone by 7:00 am, and after a breakfast at Denny's in Revelstoke, the mountain gypsies were back in the Fraser Valley again by mid-afternoon. ■

Trip Participants: John McLellan, John Laframboise, Peter Murphy, Marilyn Cram, Brett Rueff, Deanna Sherratt, Matthew and Oly Eichstadt, Ron Dart (trip leader and reporter)

Conrad Kain and Phyllis Munday: Mount Robson (1924)

Ron Dart (BC Mountaineering Club)

"There! Lady! You are the first woman on the top of Mt. Robson" I said out loud "Thank Heaven!" for it was a four-year-old ambition at last achieved.

Conrad Kain to Phyllis Munday

The first summit ascent of Mount Robson (then thought to be the highest mountain in BC) was done by Conrad Kain in 1913, and the dramatic nature of the climb is well recounted in *Where The Clouds Can Go* (Chapter 14). A read of 'The Mt. Robson Adventure' and 'The First Ascent of Mt. Robson' walks the curious reader into a mountain adventure that cannot but hold the imagination spellbound. Those who have studied the well wrought life of Kain often linger at his initial climb of Robson, and, in doing so, miss the rather tense and almost fatal climb he did of Mount Robson with Phyllis Munday and friends in 1924. The 1924 climb of Robson was not recorded in *Where The Clouds Can Go*, but Phyllis Munday wrote an account of the arduous trek, and it was published in *Canadian Alpine Journal*.

Club Ramblings

Phyllis and Don Munday are known as the dean and grand lady of mountaineering in the Coastal Range of BC. It was the Mundays that initiated the interest in Mount Waddington (higher than Robson), and they made many trips to the Waddington region from 1925-1940. *Phyllis Munday: Mountaineer* (2002) and *A Passion for Mountains: The Lives of Don and Phyllis Munday* (2006) tell the tale of their well lived lives in evocative depth and detail (the latter book being finer than the former).

Phyllis Munday wrote about the Kain-Munday climb of Robson in 1924, and her article, 'First Ascent of Mount Robson by Lady Members', was published, as mentioned above, in the 1924 edition of *Canadian Alpine Journal*. The article recounts in graphic and not to be forgotten poignant images, the harrowing trip to the summit and the equally challenging descent to base camp. The article by Munday is well worth the read, and it fills in an often ignored trip to Robson that was led by Kain.

'First Ascent of Mount Robson by Lady Members' (pgs. 68-74) is Phyllis Munday at her literary, descriptive and artistic best. She was initially surprised, so she tells us, when Mr. Wheeler gave her the green light to do the 'big climb'. Kain was the leader and guide on this ACC trip. The two groups rose at 2:30 am and were well on their rock scrambling way by 3:30 am. It was an arduous trip upwards from the rocks to the many thin ledges and glacier. The ice axe of one of the guides went into a crevasse, and a couple hours were spent retrieving the axe and skirting some rather threatening glaciers. There was even a slip into a crevasse that took time for the recovery. It was Phyllis Munday that held firm as two members of her rope went into the ice blue crevasse. These accidents slowed up the pace, and it was not until '9:30 am we lunched on the rocks, about 10,500 feet, in sight of the great ice wall'. The summit of Robson was not reached until 4:30 pm, and the care taken by Kain to get both groups to the peak took time. The group had been on the move for 13 hours when they bagged Robson's alluring peak, and the descent had yet to be done.

'On the glacier below we found our tracks all obliterated by heavy avalanche snow' and Phyllis Munday, feeling like a spider on a thin rope filament, slipped over an ice edge, looking for the 'first foothold'. Fortunately, her instincts were right, and the group roped down to the rocks. The day was thick with smoke from a fire and a storm was moving closer to Robson. Twilight and night were inching ever closer, and Kain decided to bivouac for the night about 10:30 pm at 9,500 feet. The climbing party had been on the mountain for 19 hours, and they were still far from base camp. 'We were mighty thankful there was no rain or snow, as clouds were down on the glacier and all the shoulders and cliffs of the mountain were hidden.'

The group was up and on the move by 3:30 am (24 hours after they had begun the trip), and they reached High Camp by 5:00 am. The trek downwards took them to Lake Kinney Camp by 8:00 am 'where we prepared a good second breakfast'. The group did not reach Main Camp until 2:00 pm. 'having been on the go almost thirty-five hours'.

Munday finished her article by saying 'One is denied opportunity of studying the many interesting details of such a magnificent mountain when roped together, so that my ambition was then, and still is, to climb Mt. Robson again'. Don/Phyllis Munday never did climb Mount Robson again. Their attention turned to the Waddington Range, so well described by Don Serl in *The Waddington Guide: Alpine Climbs in one of the World's Great Ranges* (2003). It was Conrad Kain, though, that made it possible for Phyllis Munday to be 'the first woman on the top of Mt. Robson'.

Phyllis Munday took a helicopter trip to the Waddington Range with Sir Edmund Hillary in 1955 (*Canadian Alpine Journal*: 1956), and when she was 87, a generous donor made it possible for her to fly to Waddington yet again to relive many a tender memory (*Beautiful British Columbia*: Spring 1983). If it had not been for Conrad Kain, the young Phyllis Munday (30 years old at the time) might never have been the first woman to climb Mount Robson, and both Kain and Munday should be recognized and honoured for their unique accomplishment on Robson's white clad throne. ■



John McIellan

Ron Dart (left) and Pat Morrow (right) at the Kain Cairn in Wilmer, BC

Club Activities Around the Province

ACC Vancouver Island Section Summer Camp: The Alava Bate Sanctuary July 17th-August 8th 2010

Martin Smith (ACC– Vancouver Island Section)

Introduction

As recently as 30 years ago virtually nothing was known about a rumoured hidden alpine paradise in central Vancouver Island somewhere to the north of the road between the mill town of Gold River and the west coast village of Tahsis. A range of rugged snow capped mountains was obvious from the coast – and, indeed, had been long used as marine navigation aids – but, at that time climbers had yet to penetrate the thick bush and steep cliffs that surround the massif on all sides.

Finally in 1979 and 1980, Island climbing legends Syd Watts, John Gibson, Paul Erickson, Robie Macdonald and others made forays from the northeast via Sebalhall Creek and from the west via the Perry River and on the second trip Macdonald and Erickson were able to climb to the summit of Mt Alava. From the summit they were able to look down on a series of glaciated valleys surrounded by the massive, barren, red rock walls of several major peaks. Cradled between the mountains were two lovely green/blue lakes. It was a scene unlike anywhere else on the Island, almost as if the glaciers had only just retreated.

It was Robie Macdonald who originally coined the phrase, but it wasn't long before this unique and breathtakingly lovely area became known to all as "The Sanctuary".

Thirty years on and the Sanctuary remains a little visited place. One attempt has been made to gain park status but, as yet, the land belongs to the Crown and enjoys no formal protected status. Although logging has penetrated far up the Perry, Sebalhall and Conuma watersheds, the natural defences of the Sanctuary are formidable and, so far, have remained intact.

The southern limit of the Sanctuary is located about 10 km northwest of the junction of the Gold River/Tahsis (Head Bay) Road and the Conuma Main logging road and, as a whole is, perhaps, 25 square kilometres in area.

Four major summits and a number of satellites surround three main lakes. Beginning roughly in the south and moving clockwise; Mt Bate, Mt Alava, Mt Grattan, Thumb Peak and the unofficially named Tlupana Ridge define the limits of the area.

The Sanctuary encloses the headwaters of two watersheds. A tributary of the Perry River flows northwest out of Peter Lake and down to Alava Lake between the walls of Mts Alava and Grattan. The Conuma River, on the other hand, has its origin in "Shangri La" Lake, which is found below the north aspect of Mt Bate and the south aspect of Thumb Peak. The river flows out of the lake southeast down the canyon between Mt Bate and Tlupana Ridge. A low col between Shangri La and Peter Lakes separates the two drainages.



Martin Smith

Panorama from the summit of Tlupana Ridge on the eastern edge of the Sanctuary. Spans an arc from south to northeast. From left to right: Mt Bate, Mt Alava, Mt Grattan just peeping above the shoulder to the left of the Thumb gendarme, Thumb Peak and the northwestern end of Tlupana Ridge. Ice covered Shangri La Lake below between Mt Bate and Thumb Peak.

Club Activities Around the Province

As with many of the mountains of Vancouver Island, the geology of the Sanctuary has its foundations in volcanic activity. The entire area is mid/late Triassic volcanic with the predominant rock type in the Sanctuary being karmutzen pillow lava. It is this that gives the sheer rock walls surrounding Shangri La and Peter Lakes their distinctive red/brown hue. Rough textured, solid and grippy - climbing karmutzen lava is like climbing on Velcro.

The Sanctuary comprises a compact but rugged area. Distances between objectives are short but travel times and effort are considerable. From camps at Peter or Shangri La Lakes, almost everything is a full day trip.

It has been many years since the Vancouver Island section of the ACC held its annual summer camp on the Island. A more worthy Island location than the Sanctuary is hard to imagine and this, therefore, was our chosen objective for 2010.

Preparation

To visit the Sanctuary is a unique and privileged experience. With this in mind, it was decided very early on in the planning phase that, above all else, we would do all we could to keep our footprint on the area as low as possible. Group size would be limited and (as has become increasingly the practice in recent years) we would fly in and out and take all (and I mean all) of our waste with us.

Interest in a week in the Sanctuary was overwhelming. The original plan was for two one-week camps of fourteen people each, but it was soon necessary to add a third week and, even then, supplement everything with a wait list.

Rick Hudson, ably assisted by Phee Hudson, organized the putting-together of all that 42 people would need to keep body and soul together for a total of 22 days in a place about as remote as you can find on Vancouver Island.

A large dome tent was purchased to serve as a mess/community facility. Tables and chairs, cooking facilities and fuel, storage for food, first aid, emergency communications and more were assembled. Most importantly, a waste disposal plan was designed and agreed to by all. Last but not least, Rick arranged helicopter transport of every ounce of stuff we needed and its retrieval later such that we would leave absolutely nothing behind. Week One would transport all communal gear to the helicopter pick-up and set everything up at Shangri La Lake. Week Three would take everything down and organize its removal (including an estimated 300 lbs of human waste). Week Two would sit back and congratulate themselves on their cleverness in avoiding such unpleasantness.

Camp managers were: Rick for Week One, Cedric Zala for Week Two and Robie Macdonald and Rick Eppler sharing Week Three. As first ascensionists of most summits in the Sanctuary, having Rick and Robie in charge was a real treat.

Finally, not content with organizing everything, Rick H, together with Lindsay Elms, made a reconnaissance of the area by means of a bushwhack day trip up the Conuma River canyon to Shangri La Lake on July 13th. They reported high levels of snow with no clear ground. This was good news in that it would mean that our footprint on the area would be even lower than anticipated and that bugs would be virtually non-existent.

The Camps

An exhaustive description of the activities of 42 people over three weeks is well beyond the scope of this report. A camp log was kept in the mess tent for everyone to record their adventures in and later consolidated and edited by Cedric. It currently runs to 42 pages of route data, trip descriptions, opinion, musings, flora and fauna sightings, recipes and more.



Martin Smith

Using an air assist in order to leave the Sanctuary as we found it.

Club Activities Around the Province

The common thread running throughout the journal is a sense of privilege just to be in such a place and the recognition of being able to enjoy it in the company of friends all equally appreciative of the beauty all around.

From the first helicopter lift on July 17th, and for 20 days thereafter, the Sanctuary basked in the longest spell of uninterrupted clear weather in what turned out to be a generally indifferent Vancouver Island summer.

Every day eager hikers, climbers and skiers were to be found exploring the peaks, ridges, snowfields and couloirs of this wonderful area. From the technical demands of the Mt Bate and Mt Grattan to the friendly confines of Tlupana Ridge, we were out there every day in perfect weather, climbing, scrambling, skiing, botanizing and more.

By my estimate the combined efforts of the three weeks saw 33 successful ascents of Mt Bate, 28 of Mt Alava, 26 of Mt Grattan, 11 of The Thumb gendarme, 46 of Thumb Peak and 48 of Tlupana Ridge. The number of ascents sometimes exceeds the total number of participants since folk went back to repeat enjoyable routes on a number of occasions. In fact I think Frank Wille (Week 3) did everything twice! There were also several recorded trips to the Sanctuary's lesser known objectives, "Little Alava" and the SE pinnacles on Mt Bate for example.

All of our adventures made an invaluable contribution to our knowledge of the area and reinforced in us all the fact that the Sanctuary is Crown Land that still does not enjoy any formal protected status. As long as this continues, vigilance will always be required so that others may continue to quietly enjoy the area as we did.

The Firsts

The above generalities notwithstanding, I would be severely remiss if I did not report that the efforts of the group also included several firsts.

On July 27th Martin Hoffman and Chris Ruttan made the first ski descent of Mt Bate. Starting from the base of the summit tower, they took just 43 minutes down to Shangri La Lake.

On July 30th Martin Hoffman and Andrew Pape-Salmon made the first ski ascent and descent of the main snow couloir on Mt Alava (below the Alava/Little Alava col)

On August 6th and fifteen years after each was first climbed separately, Mort Allingham and Karen Hoover successfully enchainned The Thumb gendarme and Thumb Peak. They described the climbing as mid 5th Class overall and required a rappel to overcome an impassable gap in the connecting ridge.

The Epics

No climbing camp, especially one of three weeks duration would be complete without an epic or two. In fact, there were several. I'll let the appropriate extracts from the camp log tell the tales.

"The Great Dome Drama": July 22

7:05 a.m. and great cries for aid are heard by those asleep or dressing in their tents!

Graham (Maddocks), alone in the dome tent, where he had a stove on in preparation for his first cup of java, suddenly noticed that the tent was lifting to windward. He lunged for the rising side – good thing he is 200 lb of muscle and not one of the light ladies – and hung on for dear life.

Under full sail the dome could generate some impressive lift and then it would be all over. All over the lower valley, most likely!

Reinforcements arrived. The tent had shifted downwind several feet, off its pedestal, the stoves were



Martin Smith

Two of the original explorers of the Alava Bate Sanctuary, Rick Eppler (left) and Robie McDonald (right) between raps on Mt Grattan in 2010. Still joined at the hip and by a quadruple fisherman's for good measure.

Club Activities Around the Province

still on and the kitchen table had fallen over and landed where the gas bottles were. Excitement! Confusion!

Many hands were quickly mustered to switch off the gas (no fire, luckily) and we used water buckets and later pickets to anchor our home.

In Catrin Brown's never-to-be-forgotten log entry after the event, "Graham suggested we could use the full biffy bags to help as anchors. But we weren't sure if the expletive would be "Oh shit, there goes the tent" or "Oh tent, there goes the"

The Accident: August 01

The day started out with blue sky and excited energy exuding from all, although it proved to be a day of big ups and downs - both literally and figuratively. The entire group of fourteen us were kicking steps into the snow en-route to Mt. Alava by 8:00 a.m.



Martin Smith

The west aspect of Mt Bate from the saddle between Mt Alava and its lower satellite to the south

While waiting for others to catch up, Lindsay (Elms) took a tumble into some rocks. He gashed his head a bit and landed badly on his right hand. It appeared that he'd dislocated his thumb and the rounded end of the bone was poking out through the skin.

Val dressed and stabilized Lindsay's hand; the cut on his head was thankfully not very bad. Once Lindsay was ready to go, he returned to camp with Mort, Karen, Val, Robie, and Walter. The climb back up to the (Peter/Shangri La) col is not the easiest at the best of times, but Lindsay naturally did a great job one-handed. From there it was across the steep slope to the west of the lake, and then back again to camp.

Once back at camp, Robie and Mort used the satellite phone to call out. After finally being able to get a signal, calling the RCMP did not work, so they called 9-1-1 and sent in our coordinates at about 10 a.m.

The wait for help to arrive then began. This consisted of Lindsay entertaining the group, plus periodic sightings of the other folks up on Alava. At 13:00 we heard a helicopter coming in, landing close to camp. The four air rescue people assessed Lindsay's condition and said they would be taking him to Gold River where he would travel by ambulance to Campbell River for treatment. With Lindsay onboard they flew off toward Alava on their way to Gold River.

(As I write this on October 10th, Lindsay is already well healed and back in the hills again).

The Wrong Way Round Peter Lake: August 04

Under a red, smoky sunrise, Walter, Val, Mort and Karen set off to complete their interrupted climb of Mt. Alava. Snow conditions had changed a lot in 3 days. The traversing slopes above the small lakes leading to the col were steeper and icier than earlier in the week. As we neared the enlarged rock fields at the bottom of the col to Peter Lake, we heard the crack of an avalanche let go and looked up to see large snow chunks rolling down the middle 2/3 of the approach col to Alava, right over (our intended) route. This was at 8 a.m. as we sat on the rocks and guessed which section would go next.

(Note from the author. This is the same couloir in which Martin and Andrew made their first ski ascent/descent on July 30th and which Rick Eppler climbed in its entirety just 3 days previously).

Val and Karen had a memory of Lindsay telling them that there was a regular route around the east side of Peter Lake which would lead to the east ridge of Alava and the summit. Mort and Walter took their word for it, and the foursome started scrambling along the lake shore bluffs. Before long we were spread-eagled in a kilometre-long traverse of steep cliffs above the lake, with screeching gulls circling overhead.

The exercise came to an end at the top of a smooth, angular ledge that ended at what Mort now calls "Terror Wall". He

Club Activities Around the Province

needed an emergency roped belay to come down from that spot and it was clear we had to go down to the lake or back the way we came. Val slipped on her rock shoes and scampered down a few ledges to the lake shore rocks. The rest of us (slightly shaken and wearing boots) rapped down to where she had picked out a spot onto the snowfield and over to the boulder run-out.

From the meadow, Walter, Mort and Karen took the high road over rounded bluffs around the end of the lake to the outflow. Val accused us of lacking “adventurous spirit” and opted to do a little bootless lake hiking. It looked like a shallow, underwater ledge would run all the way along the shore to the grassy outflow. But before the end, she was bootless, sockless and bottomless and scampering up from the lake onto the bluffs. After composing and clothing herself she followed the high route to join us for the wade across the stream.

(The group opted for the traditional route on the east shore on the way out, with a quick scamper across the foot of the avalanche threatened couloir).

The Thanks

To Rick Hudson for the concept and organisational efforts

To the camp managers: Rick H, Cedric, Robie and Rick E for their leadership and encouragement

To Search and Rescue for getting Lindsay safely on his way

To E & B Helicopters for doing the same for the rest of us

To Tony Vaughn for the *in situ* design of a platform for the safe airborne transport of 300 lbs of sh*t. Not a drop was spilt nor left behind!

To everyone whose companionship made this the most memorable of trips.

A few closing words are always appropriate in order to try to reinforce some of the sentiments we all felt as a result of our visit to this special place. I won't even attempt to improve upon Catrin's entry in the camp log at the end of Week 1. I quote her here verbatim.

“Having heard and read so much about this area over many years, in the back of my head before the trip had been a quiet unspoken thought that I might be underwhelmed – that it could not live up to its expectations. I could not have been more wrong, or more impressed by everything that we have experienced here. Suffice to say this has been one of the best weeks ever in the mountains for me, heightened by the sense of how few have gone before.



Group on the summit of Mt Alava.

Ken Wong

Grateful thanks to the early explorers and especially to Rick and Cedric for making it happen. May the next 2 weeks be as happy for you all”. ■

For those interested in further details on the Alava Bate Sanctuary visit:

<http://www.summitpost.org/the-alava-bate-sanctuary/650691>

http://members.shaw.ca/beyondnootka/articles/bate_alava_sanctuary.html

Club Updates



VITIS Creates Bursaries and Elects New Board

Eric Burkle (Vancouver Island Trails Information Society)

The Vancouver Island Trails Information Society, publisher of *Hiking Trails 1, 2 and 3*, is pleased to announce the election of a new board at its recent annual general meeting. VITIS also approved the creation of bursaries for students in outdoor recreation and environmental studies programs at the University of Victoria, Camosun College, Vancouver Island University and North Island College, to increase the interest in the outdoors and in hiking on Vancouver Island. The bursaries are expected to be in place by early 2011 and are intended to be given annually to one student in each of the four post-secondary institutions. VITIS also approved a contribution towards the replacement of the floating bridge at the Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary, a peaceful little jewel and resting place for migrating birds near Saanich municipal hall, appreciated by hikers and birdwatchers alike.

The new VITIS board includes the following: Eric Burkle - President, Irm Houle - Treasurer, Grahame Ruxton - Secretary, John Harris - Director and Past President, Betty Burroughs - Director (Archive and Socials), Joyce Folbigg - Director (Nominations), Sheila Delaney - Director (Outreach).

Several of the VITIS board members are also active in Victoria-area hiking and walking clubs, such as the Outdoor Club of Victoria, Volkssport and WalkSmart - some of them for decades. ■

Vancouver Island Spine Trail Association reports progress in 2010

Gil Parker (Vancouver Island Spine Trail Association)

VISTA continues to promote the development of a 700 km Vancouver Island "Spine" Trail from Victoria to Cape Scott. The proposed route is mostly at medium elevations to take advantage of ridge lines and sub-alpine openings – for example through part of Strathcona Provincial Park. The route passes near many communities, yet retains its wilderness character, following historic routes and completed trails where they exist.

This summer, VISTA organized and completed "VI Spine Relay 2010" in June, a traverse of the current trails on the VI Spine route, linked by bike along roads for incomplete trail sections. This was a major success, involving about 70 participants and including community days in six centres along the way, with lots of media coverage. It was a tremendous achievement for Andrew Pape-Salmon, who did much of the organizing, and who led all the sections, including running the challenging North Coast Trail and snowshoeing Forbidden Plateau in Strathcona Park. In total, about 665 kms were covered on foot, bike and horseback, chronicled in detail in the VI Spine Relay BLOG on the website.

Running the North Coast Trail

The Relay included a brand new segment of our long term trail, the "Runners Trail," from Headquarters Bay on Alberni Inlet to Francis Lake toward Lake Cowichan. This trail is nearing completion by a group of agencies spearheaded by the Tseshaht First Nation in Port Alberni. Next year it is expected that the southern segment from Langford to Shawnigan Lake will be started by the Capital Regional District (CRD) and the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD). This trail will complete a continuous route from Victoria to Lake Cowichan, to be used jointly by the Trans Canada Trail and by the VI Spine.

The VI Spine has been endorsed by many clubs and regional and municipal institutions..

VISTA has named Scott Henley of Qualicum Beach as Executive Director of VISTA to direct the next phases toward completion of the VI Spine Trail. Scott has extensive experience in mapping, corporate management and execution of non-profit projects. He will bring an expert and determined focus on bringing together many stakeholders who have an interest in the social and economic benefits of the VI Spine Trail. ■

For more information contact: Gil Parker, VISTA President. 250-370-9349. vispine@vispine.ca

Films and Literature of Interest



Swiss Guides: Shaping Mountain Culture in Western Canada

Ron Dart (BC Mountaineering Club)

I was doing a trip in August with the Chilliwack Outdoor Club to the Bugaboos and Nakimu Caves. Much to our delight and surprise The Golden & District Museum was hosting the 'Swiss Guides: Shaping Mountain Culture in Western Canada' Exhibit from. We had arrived just in time. The Exhibit was about to close in a few days. So, although weary and worn low from the Bugaboos trip and about to embark on the Nakimu Caves trip, we stopped in Golden, slipped over to the District Museum and took in the well organized and historic Exhibit.

I lived in Switzerland from 1972-1974, near the Berner Oberland Trilogy (Jungfrau/Eiger/Mönch), and then, near the Matterhorn in Zermatt. So, I have a special fondness for the unique Swiss mountaineering ethos and culture.

There were three aspects to the 'Swiss Guides' Exhibit I found most attractive and compelling.

First, there was, obviously, the historic tour, replete with archival photos, ropes, boots, pipes and much else hung on banisters or under glass. These mountain artifacts walked the interested and curious mountain historian into the tale of the Swiss Guides in Canada from the late 19th century until, almost, the present time. Needless to say, the golden age of the Swiss Guides (1899-1954) did not end the ongoing work and significance of the Swiss Guides in Western Canada. The saga continued to unfold after 1954, and continues to do so. In short, the age of the Swiss Guides remains relevant in shaping mountain culture in Western Canada. The small town of Golden needs to be lauded for organizing such an event with the Swiss government.

Second, the book, *Swiss Guides: Shaping Mountain Culture in Western Canada*, was offered to those interested for a minimal price. The book is more of a primer and missive on the Swiss Guides in Canada, and there are twenty-two thin and sparse chapters, thick with photographs, on the history of the Swiss Guides in Canada. Gratefully so, 'The End of the Golden Era' (chapter 11), takes the reader only to the midpoint in the book. The rest of the very Swiss red-white covered book highlights the role of the Swiss in Western Canadian mountaineering, mountain rescue, avalanche safety, the guiding profession, helicopter skiing, ski lift technology and resort planning.

Swiss Guides was written by Iona Spaar, and seems to be a joint venture of, mostly, the Swiss government and Canadian consultants. Each chapter is merely a stone skimming the surface of the water approach to the topic, but for novices it is a good starter. The photos tend to dominate the book, but the bibliography points the way to more substantive writing on the topic.

Third, the high point for me of the Exhibit was the rather old black and white silent films of Swiss Guides leading people to a variety of peaks in Western Canada. I was rather fortunate, after contacting Irv Graham in Golden, to get copies of the films. They are real keepers and collectors items, and I understand more is yet to come from the film archives. The three films, 'She Climbs to Conquer (climb of Mt. Victoria)', 'In the Shadows of Assiniboine' and 'Climbing Mount Tupper' were filmed in the 1930s by WJ Oliver, and each film cannot but hold the attention of the interested mountain buff. The walk into history via the films is most alluring and attractive. The use of tricouni boots, alpenstocks and hemp rope were all part of the attire of the time. The means and modes of climbing, although somewhat dated today, speak to us across the decades. Needless to say, much more needs to be done on Canadian mountaineering history, but the three short films are a fine gateway into such a telling. 2011 is the 100th anniversary of the building of Edelweiss (the Swiss Village in Golden), and it is the 125th anniversary of Yoho/Glacier National Parks, so be sure to celebrate and visit the Guide's chalets that still stand on a bench above Golden. ■



Swiss Guides Exhibit in Golden

Karin Dart

Films and Literature of Interest

The Wildest Dream: George Mallory Revisited

by Ron Dart (BC Mountaineering Club)

Just allowing for the possibility that Mallory *could have* reached the summit qualified for being burned at the stake in Reinhold Messner's castle.....The media singled out Anker as the 'hero' of the Mallory discovery, frequently so by overlooking the others' contributions to what had been a team effort—a fact sometimes overlooked by Anker himself.

~Jochen Hemmleb

Detectives on Everest:

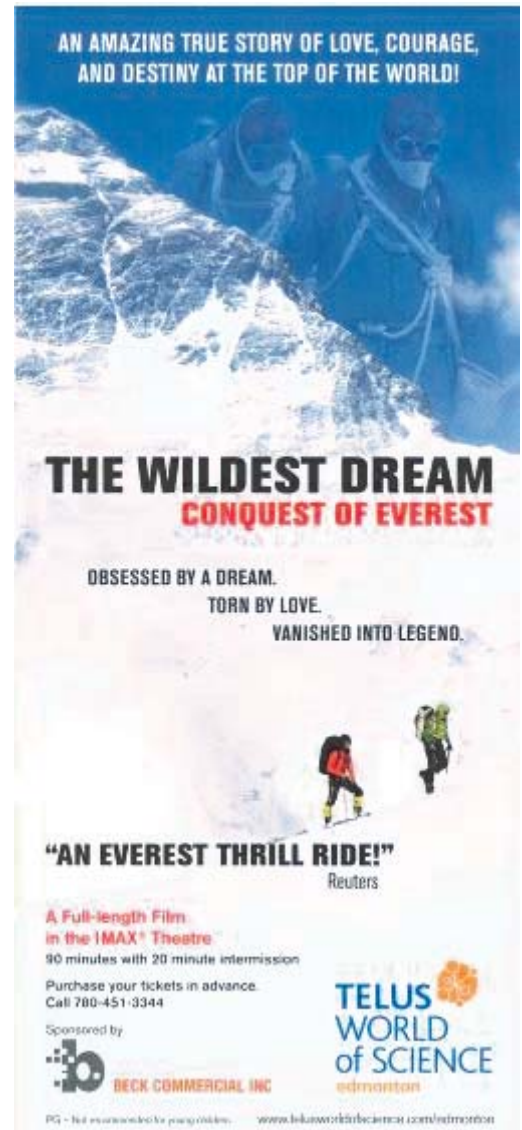
The 2001 Mallory & Irvine Research Expedition (2002) p.24

I was in Edmonton on the Labour Day weekend visiting my son, daughter in law and granddaughter. Much to my delight and surprise the Telus World of Science was doing a special feature on George Mallory. 'The Wildest Dream: Conquest of Everest' is a revisionist and provocative read of the tragic 1924 Mallory/Irvine ascent of Everest. The establishment position is, of course, that Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay were the first to stand on the summit of Everest in 1953. But, is this the case? The ongoing sleuth work of Conrad Anker and those involved in the '2001 Mallory and Irvine Research Expedition' (Anker is the central investigator in 'The Wildest Dream') has raised some suggestive insights about Mallory being the first on Everest. It was Anker and others, more than a decade ago, who found Mallory's body, although Anker has tended, improperly so, to get much of the credit.

I have been quite interested in the telling of the Mallory tale and the way the 1999 and 2001 expeditions have challenged the Hillary/Norgay position in the last decade. The publications of *Last Climb: The Legendary Everest Expeditions of George Mallory* (1999), *The Lost Explorer: Finding Mallory on Mount Everest* (1999), *Ghosts of Everest—The Search for Mallory and Irvine* (1999), *The Wildest Dream: The Biography of George Mallory* (2000), *Mystery of Everest: A Photobiography of George Mallory* (2000), *The Second Death of George Mallory* (2000), *Fearless on Everest-The Quest for Sandy Irvine* (2001) and *Detectives on Everest: The 2001 Mallory & Irvine Research Expedition* (2002) have brought the myth and legend of Mallory/Irvine into the mountaineering ethos once again, but it was Anker's article in the National Geographic (October 1999) that, in a first hand account way, reignited the interest and debate about Mallory and his passion for Everest. Anker was on the May/1999 Mallory finding expedition that found Mallory's body. But, did Mallory actually reach the summit of Everest? Did Irvine? Anker tended to be more delighted about actually having the body in May/1999 than in nudging the argument about Mallory reaching the summit before Hillary/Norgay. The 2001 expedition (in which Anker was not involved) must be heard and heeded alongside Anker's position. There are tensions in the tribe that must be faced.

'The Wildest Dream: Conquest of Everest' is a visual feast, and the film tends to operate at three levels. First, there is the attempt by Anker, friends and filmmakers to trudge as high as possible on Everest in the same sort of clothes and equipment that Mallory/Irvine and others wore in the 1920s.

This part of the film is more than worth the watching. Second, the subtitle of the film is 'Obsessed by a Dream, Torn by Love, Vanished into Legend'. There is no doubt that Mallory was obsessed with climbing Everest, but he was also torn by



Films and Literature of Interest

his love for his wife (Ruth) and his three small children. What was more important- domestic responsibilities or the dream of Everest? Could Mallory have both? The letters between George and Ruth Mallory are read in tender and endearing detail. The tensions that Mallory lived with are common to all who push the limits in the mountains if married and having children. The tension is common to all who try to live the domestic-visionary way. Third, there have been a few objections to Mallory reaching the summit of Everest. Could he have actually done the final pitch to the summit of Everest? Most use a ladder for the simple reason the final pitch can be quite difficult. Anker decided to have the ladder pulled away, and he and companion attempted to do the pitch without the ladder. Mallory was known as a superb climber, and if Anker could do the final pitch without the ladder, then there is no reason Mallory could not do it. Anker reached the summit of Everest after a few tentative and worrisome moves and moments. Surely Mallory could have done the same. But, did he? This will always be the unanswered question. Did Mallory/Irvine die, after a fall, as night was near, coming down the mountain? Anker has now proved that a good climber can do the final pitch without the use of the ladder. There is also the fact that Mallory had promised to place the photo of Ruth on the summit if he reached it, and the photo was not found in the many letters on his clothing when Anker found the body in May/1999.

Mallory and Irvine have now passed into legend, but 'The Wildest Dream: Conquest of Everest' has dared to raise the question about Mallory reaching the summit of Everest before Hillary/Norgay. We do have hard evidence that Hillary/Norgay reached the summit of Everest first, but there is growing suggestive and speculative evidence that Mallory might have been there decades before. It is essential that Anker's work be put in the context of those who did the more thorough 2001 fact finding mission on Everest. In short, Anker needs to be in a fuller conversation with Jochen Hemmleb/Eric Simonson who wrote *Detectives on Everest* (2002). 'The Wildest Dream' tends to favor Anker, and this is a serious limitation in a fine film. The alternate film, 'Found on Everest: Detectives on the Roof of the World' is a must see and corrective to the dominance of Anker. ■



In the Path of an Avalanche: A True Story (2003)

by Vivien Bowers, Greystone Books

Review by Ron Dart (BC Mountaineering Club)

It was a classic, classic avalanche path...This avalanche
was so immense that it had spilled outside of the historic
track and crashed through mature larches on either side
p. 130

I was fortunate this summer to journey to Kokanee Glacier Provincial Park, and, when there, to trek up to Silver Spray cabin for a few days (rather Spartan in comparison to the much newer and more elaborate Kokanee Glacier cabin). I was quite interested in hiking to Silver Spray cabin for the simple reason that on January 2, 1998 six experienced backcountry skiers were caught in a massive avalanche that took their lives. Silver Spray cabin is now closed in the winter, the cabin has been damaged a few times by avalanches, and there is a memorial plaque near the cabin that commemorates those who died on that fateful and tragic day in January 1998.

In the Path of an Avalanche: A True Story tells the graphic and not to be forgotten tale of the deaths of those in the Selkirk Mountain range who dared to cross the fragile snow pack in Clover Basin above Silver Spray cabin. Vivien Bowers is a journalist, and she definitely knows how to tell a story well, and recount it she does in both a sensitive and probing way. Bowers sets the stage well for the tragic drama. She ponders the history of the winter conditions that preceded the trip, the warning that could and should have been heeded, the anticipation of the snow adventure, those who took to the upper slopes and those that remained behind, and the consequences of questionable decisions made. Bowers does not pass judgment, but she does ponder, from a variety of angles, the fragile snow conditions on the fateful yet blue bonnet day of the tragic avalanche.

In the Path of an Avalanche builds, chapter by chapter, the tale, and each chapter unfolds well and leads the reader into the sadness of the event. Chapter 10 ('Bringing in the New Year': Wednesday December 31) and Chapter 11 ('The Mountain Shrugged': Friday January 2) cannot but hold the immersed reader spellbound. The high hopes of those at Silver Spray in the New Year, the superb and alluring weather of January 2nd, then the shrugging of the mountain and its dire consequences

Films and Literature of Interest

for those on it are told with much finesse. The second half of *In the Path of an Avalanche* deals with the difficult and trying work done by the Search and Rescue teams in the area. As the weather deteriorated, bodies could not be found or evacuated, and the media, like birds of appetite, circled the area for a worthy news story.

The six deaths above Silver Spray on Clover Basin were but part of a larger story of the time. There were other avalanche deaths the same day. 'The death toll equalled that of the worst day for recreational avalanche deaths in Canadian history, which had occurred seven years before when nine helicopter skiers had perished in the Bugaboos' (p.142). The latter half of *In the Path of an Avalanche* is a must read and primer on the complicated nature of doing search and rescue when all the variables seem to be against such a heroic vocation. The final couple of chapters ('Reverberations' and 'Afterword') bring this painful episode of BC mountaineering history to a poignant and reflective close.

Vivien Bowers has carefully and meticulously written a sensitive yet probing book on one of the worst ski mountaineering accidents in British Columbia. Much can be gleaned from this missive at a variety of levels, and this book should be part of any mountain library of those who regularly take to the mountains in the winter or those interested in Search and Rescue work. ■



The Purcell Suite: Upholding the Wild (2007)

K. Linda Kivi (edited)

Pat Morrow (Foreward)

Review by Ron Dart (BC Mountaineering Club)

It is 100 years this year since Conrad Kain initially visited the Purcell Mountains. Kain's introduction to the Selkirk and Purcell Mountains is ably and insightfully recounted in *Where the Clouds Can Go* (chapters 8- 9). There is a sense in which the legend of Kain and his mountaineering exploits are inextricably linked with the Purcell Mountains and the Bugaboos. I had the good fortune this summer of spending a few days at the Kain Hut and roaming the ice fields and rocks of the Bugaboos. The group I was with (Chilliwack Outdoor Club) also had the good fortune to do a lunch at the Blue Dog Deli in Invermere with Pat Morrow; then Pat took us to the Kain Cairn in Wilmer, and, graciously so, to his home in Wilmer.

The publication of *The Purcell Suite: Upholding the Wild* is an edited collection of essays that is more than worth the reading. The book is divided into three parts: 1) Looking Back, 2) The Living Wild and 3) an Appendix on 'The Cabinet Purcell Mountain Corridor'. Part I, 'Looking Back', ponders and reflects upon the indigenous culture of the area (and the undermining of such a culture), the Kain-Thorington mountaineering heritage and those that have opposed the wreaking of havoc on the wilderness by the captains of industry. Part II includes a variety of essays on how 'the living wild' can remain so in an age and ethos that has attempted to tame, domesticate and reduce the wilderness to a crude, profit making resource. The Appendix highlights how the Purcell Corridor stretches from sacred sites in Canada into the United States.

The essays in *The Purcell Suite* (some longer, some shorter) walk the extra mile to clarify the fact that there are different understandings of just what the wild and wilderness is, and the inevitable tensions that emerge between conservation, preservation and exploitation. In short, the book is not an ideological rant or single voice speech of one-mind thinkers. There are a variety of thoughtful paths taken that ponder how the wild can be upheld. There is no doubt K. Linda Kivi deserves many a generous kudo for her thoughtful and balanced editorial presentation in *The Purcell Suite*.

It would be quite remiss to be silent or ignore the many fine photographs in the book. They are evocative and alluring. They appeal to and draw the interested into the charming yet threatened world of the Columbia Valley and the Purcell Mountains. Pat Morrow wrote the 'Foreword' to *The Purcell Suite*, and his wise, personal and sensitive insights linger for the reader to ponder as the text is trekked through from trail's beginning to end.

It is 100 years this year since Conrad Kain visited the Purcells, and it is quite fitting that Kain's initial journey, legacy and lineage is featured in *The Purcell Suite*. Do purchase, read and inwardly digest this primer on the Purcell Mountains and the Columbia Valley. Life will never be quite the same again after sitting at the feet of the authors and hearing what is being said and why. ■

Films and Literature of Interest



The Forgotten Explorer—Samuel Prescott Fay's 1914 Expedition to the Northern Rockies

Edited by Charles Helm and Mike Murtha, Rocky Mountain Books (2009)

Review by Mike Nash (Caledonia Ramblers)

This review first appeared in the 2010 Canadian Alpine Journal

During a five-month period in 1914, Samuel Prescott Fay, with Canadian outfitter Fred Brewster and three other men, traveled through the largely unexplored territory of the northern Rocky Mountains between Jasper and the Peace River. En route, Fay found occasional signs left by native and non-native hunters, trappers and surveyors, but as far as is known, his was the first party to make a continuous south to north traverse. He traveled against the grain of the land, on a route so arduous that it has never been exactly duplicated. With five men, five saddle horses and sixteen pack horses, Fay's outfit arrived intact at Hudson's Hope in mid-October after traveling and clearing trail for 16 weeks and 1,200 kilometres through Canada's northern Rockies. There, late in the season, he rested, resupplied, and returned to Jasper via established routes, walking most of the way over the Edson Trail.

Fay explored, mapped, and photographed many features, keeping detailed journals that are currently held at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC and that have never before been published in a single work. His party collected important wildlife information and specimens for the US Biological Survey and various Canadian agencies. The geographical names that he proposed included key features of present-day Kakwa Provincial Park: Mount Alexander Mackenzie (later Mount Sir Alexander), Babette Lake, Mount Cross (named for his friend and member of his party killed in France in 1915), and Kakwa Lake. His party was the first to photograph some outstanding features of the region, notably Kinuseo Falls (which Fay also named), Gwillim Lake, Sukunka Falls and Wapiti Lake, all now in provincial parks around the present-day community of Tumbler Ridge. Particularly stunning are the photographs of Mount Ida taken from what Fay called 'Matterhorn Camp' on Moonias Pass in Kakwa. It was there, on a hot summer day in 1983, that I bushwhacked with a 30-kg pack up the same slope that Fay toiled over with his horses. On gaining Moonias Pass Fay said, "This is without doubt the most magnificent, the grandest view we shall ever have from a camp, and it is something worth going thousands of miles to see." I entirely agree! Indeed, a similar photograph of Fay's 'Matterhorn' taken in the mid-1980s from Moonias Pass by George Evanoff was featured on the cover of BC's northern parks map.

The Authors: Dr. Charles Helm is a Tumbler Ridge physician and author who has devoted nearly 20 years to passionately exploring and promoting that community's mountains and history. Mike Murtha is a former BC Parks planner in Prince George, whence he took a personal interest in researching the histories of northern BC's mountain parks. Helm and Murtha had earlier collaborated on researching the travels of Prentiss Gray who, drawing on Fay's 1914 trip, journeyed in 1927 and 1928 through the northern Rockies from the Peace to the Fraser River. In 2002 Helm and Murtha accompanied 84 year old Sherman Gray on a helicopter re-enactment of his father's historic travels, and they later wrote a feature article summarizing the history of this part of the eastern flanks of the north Rockies in the 2004 Canadian Alpine Journal. So it's not hard to appreciate where they got their enthusiasm to see Fay's journals in print, thus filling the last, previously unpublished gap in the history of the exploration of Canada's Rocky Mountains.

The Forgotten Explorer contains Fay's day-by-day journals as well as 54 high-quality photographs and five harder-to-fathom maps. Fay's journey is meticulously recorded, regardless of trials of weather, travel and camp life. His descriptions of the geography and the flora and fauna are extensive, especially birds and mammals, making the book interesting to a broad range of readers. The editors consulted a local naturalist to put these sightings in a modern context, and it is evident in the endnotes that they correlated Fay's route details with Brewster's journal and their own knowledge on the ground. Geological details, though, were not Fay's forte, and he missed recording features such as fossils and caves that are known to be along parts of his route.

The book opens with an introduction by Bob Sandford, followed by an in depth foreword by the editors. Fay's journal, plus five appendices also written by him, fills most of the book; followed by biographies of Fay's party, present-day route access, and comprehensive endnotes. If there is a weakness with the book, it's with the maps. Fay's hand-drawn route map is small and difficult to make much of, and a future edition of the book cries out for a larger, foldout or pocket insert version, plus a series of contemporary route maps. However, the editors have provided a fine endnotes section; and, by carefully reading this in conjunction with Fay's journal and a topographical map, one can pinpoint much of the route. Fay's journals alone are sufficiently engaging that I felt like I was there with them—mostly wishing that I was, and occasionally thankful that I

Films and Literature of Interest

wasn't. The 96 years that have passed since their journey seem to melt away, especially having visited some of the places they traveled through.

An interesting side-story is that Fay's party only heard of the war in Europe in October from a trapper they chanced upon when they emerged from the mountains. Soon after their adventure, all five men volunteered for service there, where two of them, Bob Cross and Jack Symes, were killed. It is hard to reconcile the transformation that the world has undergone since 1914, while much of Fay's route and the types of adventures that he and his companions had there remain pretty much unchanged today.

In summary, I highly recommend this book to anyone with an interest in the history, natural history, and especially in getting out and exploring the northern Rockies through Jasper, Willmore, Kakwa, Monkman, Tumbler Ridge and the BC and Alberta Peace Region. ■

The Forgotten Explorer — Samuel Prescott Fay's 1914 Expedition to the Northern Rockies; edited by Charles Helm and Mike Murtha; foreword by Robert Sandford; Rocky Mountain Books; November 2009; Softcover: ISBN: 978-1-897522-55-4; 320 pages, \$29.95; Hardcover: ISBN: 978-1-897522-56-1; \$79.95. Charles Helm is also the author four books on the Tumbler Ridge area, including *Exploring Tumbler Ridge* (2008) and *Daniel's Dinosaurs—A True Story of Discovery*. Also by Charles Helm and Mike Murtha, *Early Exploration in the Neglected Mountains*; Canadian Alpine Journal (2004), pages 61-65.



Where The Clouds Can Go

by Conrad Kain, Rocky Mountain Books (2009)

Review by Mike Nash (Caledonia Ramblers)

2009 was the hundredth anniversary of Conrad Kain's arrival in Canada, and, in recognition of that event, Rocky Mountain Books republished the 1935 classic, *Where The Clouds Can Go*. A valuable reference in any mountain literature library, Kain's book is also a page-turner, but not in the usual sense of a gripping plot that's impossible to put down. Rather, the book insidiously gets into the reader's soul - enlightening, entertaining, drawing you back again and again, inspiring as it unfolds, and leaving this reader with only one word at the end of its mammoth 560 pages: WOW!!

Nearly half of the book is set in Europe, in the Austrian, Swiss, French, Italian and Corsican mountains between 1902 and 1909, because that was where Kain developed as a mountain guide and did most of his writing. Arriving in Canada in 1909, he quickly made his reputation here, interspersed with a trip to the Altai Mountains in Siberia in 1912, and three full climbing seasons in the New Zealand Alps between 1913 and 1916, where he left similar impacts on his chosen field. In his disparate writings, Kain audaciously shares his experiences and philosophies towards life and the mountains, despite qualifying in the Preface to the 1935 first edition, "*I beg of the reader one indulgence. An unlettered fellow, a former breaker of stones has written this book.*"

His early narrative come across as naively simple as the young Kain strides out on his own, giving the impression of a medieval folk tale rather than the start of a Twentieth Century mountaineering epic. But in just seven years, the still-young Kain made a stellar reputation in Europe, and was invited to travel to Canada to become the first professional mountain guide for the recently formed Alpine Club of Canada. His rapid maturation into a confident, top-flight guide penetrates the reader's imagination and draws you into the text almost without being aware of what is happening. Despite his lack of formal education, Kain developed profound philosophies of life drawn from personal experience, and was a masterful storyteller, renowned as a raconteur, both around the campfire and back in town over the inevitable beer and wine. He kept his journal for seven years in Europe, and continued until the end of his first year in Canada, when growing demands on his time and energies curtailed his writings to select events, ad hoc musings, and correspondence. Not all of Kain's writings have survived. But in 1934, in the year of Kain's death, long-time client and friend, J. Monroe Thorington, translated, compiled and edited the writings that had endured into the first edition of this book, which was published the following year.

Unknowingly, Conrad Kain began his guiding career as a youngster when he delighted in helping out-of-work tramps find their way over a pass near his home village of Nasswald in lower Austria. From an early age he harboured aspirations to travel, and since he couldn't afford the train, he assumed it would largely be on foot. Thus, steeped in the lore and culture of the mountains of Nasswald, imbued with a deep love of Nature, and having adopted walking as a mode of travel, his course was set.

Films and Literature of Interest

I found the book highly engaging, a ‘coming of age’ story replete with amusing anecdotes, fascinating history, and a powerful underlying outdoor ethic. Kain also brings out the differences in class structure in the early 20th Century between Europe and Canada, and the disparity between mountain and city people. Kain’s self-ascribed weakness as a mountain guide was that he liked to spend hours on a summit, just looking around and enjoying the beauty. It was not unusual for him to dally on an ascent to enjoy his surrounds, and to spend up to three hours on a summit, alone or with a client, sometimes lingering to watch the sunset. He had little time for, or understanding of those who climbed solely to break records or to make names for themselves, especially if they didn’t take the time to appreciate what was around them. Yet, despite writing “*I was never interested in making or breaking records of any kind in connection with mountaineering...*” he left an amazing record of achievements on several continents, most notably in the mountains of western Canada and British Columbia.

Two quotes by Kain stand out in the book, describing what it meant to him to summit a mountain as a guide, and his wonderfully succinct principles of leadership:

“There are two points about a first ascent which gave me pleasure as a guide. The first is to bring a Nature lover up a summit which no human foot has trod, and from which height Nature’s work was never seen before. The second point, which is almost more important, is that I love to be able to have the opportunity to see the impression this grandeur makes on my companion.”

“It was in the early days of my career as a guide that I learned that the leader on any climb must hold the confidence of the party. This is not always so simple. Having 30 climbing seasons to look back on, I could write columns on this subject. To mention a few of the points a guide should bear in mind will not be amiss. First he should never show fear. Second, he should be courteous to all, and always give special attention to the weakest member in the party. Third, he should be witty, and able to make up a white lie if necessary, on short notice, and tell it in a convincing manner. Fourth, he should know when and how to show authority, and when the situation demands it, should be able to give a good scolding to whomsoever deserves it.”

A bonus to FMCBC members who also belong to ACC is that the endnotes make extensive references to the *Canadian Alpine Journal*, allowing readers to take full advantage of “*Ever Upward*”, the ACC’s searchable DVD of a century of the CAJ from 1907-2007. An added bonus for B.C. readers is the extensive referencing of our mountain geography.

Conrad Kain lived from 1883 to 1934, when he died at the young age of 50, allegedly from *encephalitis lethargica* and perhaps in part from loneliness following the death of his wife, Hetta, a year before. He left a grieving mother in his home village of Nasswald in Austria. He had not seen her for 22 years, since his only visit home following his 1912 Siberian trip. It was not so easy in those days for New World immigrants to visit family left behind in Europe. In terms of his life experiences, however, he lived the equivalent of many normal life-spans and is regarded as one of the greatest mountain guides in the world in the early twentieth century. Given his huge record of safe ascents, his long list of first ascents, the esteem in which he was held by clients and others alike who respected his leadership and enjoyed his company, the limitations of equipment available to him in his day, and his philosophy of life and the mountains, one may be excused for regarding him as perhaps the greatest mountain guide ever. ■

Where The Clouds Can Go by Conrad Kain with original Forewords by J. Monroe Thorington and Hans Gmoser, and new Foreword by Pat Morrow; Rocky Mountain Books, 2009; ISBN: 978-1-897522-45-5; \$29.95. For more information about Conrad Kain, visit: <http://www.conradkain.com/>

Mike Nash is the author of three books, *The Mountain Knows No Expert* (the story of George Evanoff), Toronto: Natural Heritage Books / Dundurn (2009); *Exploring Prince George — A Guide to North Central B.C. Outdoors*, Rocky Mountain Books (2007, 2004); and *Outdoor Safety and Survival in British Columbia's Backcountry* distributed by Sandhill Books (2007). In 2001 he authored a background report on Kakwa for BC Parks.

Announcements



We are looking for volunteers!

Outreach/Membership Committee—Chair: Patrick Harrison

We need members for this committee

- recruit new member clubs
- educate non-member clubs about the work that the FMCBC does
- help develop educational materials for clubs
- build better connection with member clubs
- help develop promotional materials

Useful Skills/Experience: knowledge about the FMCBC, writing, public speaking, video editing, PowerPoint

Communications Committee – We need a Chair for this committee

We need members/writers for this committee

- improve communications between the FMCBC, its member clubs and interested non-members
- find current news articles of interest from across BC
- make sure contents of website and wiki are up to date
- contribute articles to FMCBC monthly newsletter and Cloudburst

Useful Skills/Experience: writing, research, editing, social media, graphic design

Strategic Planning Committee – Chair: Brian Wood (BCMC)

We need members for this committee

- attend strategic planning sessions
- think creatively and critically to decide on short term and long term goals for the FMCBC

Useful Skills/Experience: planning, creative and critical thinking, brainstorming, priority setting

Recreation and Conservation Committee (Southwest BC) - Chair: Scott Webster

We need members for this committee

- attend monthly meetings
- develop strategies for protection of key recreational areas and creation and maintenance of parks in BC
- write letters to government, land and resource industries and commercial recreation to resolve conflicts

Useful Skills/Experience: liaising with government and commercial operators as well as other user groups (e.g. motorized) -knowledge of local backcountry areas, letter writing, policy making

Trails Committee (Southwest BC) – Co-chairs: Patrick Harrison and Alex Wallace

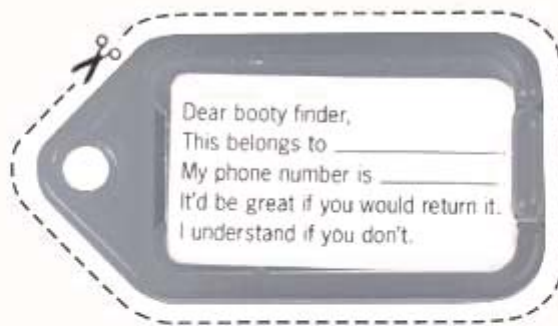
We need members for this committee

- trail access, trail building and maintenance
- advocate for new trail projects
- network with BC Parks, Ministry of Forests and Range and Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

Useful Skills/Experience: knowledge of local trails, experience with trail building (hiking or otherwise)

Please contact Jodi Appleton admin.manager@mountainclubs.org for more information.

Announcements



back-off gear tag



Mountain Equipment Co-op is happy to provide office space for FMCBC.

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CLOUDBURST

Cover Photo Contest

We are always in search of backcountry or historical mountaineering photos for our covers.

If you have a photo that you think would make a great cover please email it to us at admin.manager@mountainclubs.org with the subject line: Cloudburst Photo Contest

Congratulations and thank you to Martin Naroznik whose great photo made the cover of our Fall/Winter 2010 Issue.

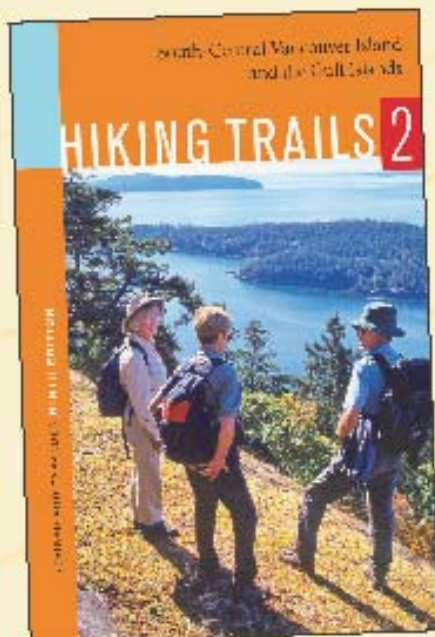
Please submit photos for our next issue by March 31, 2011

Announcements

Hiking Trails 2

Completely revised
and updated 9th edition

Your guide to South-Central Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands



Hiking Trails 2

South-Central Vancouver Island & Gulf Islands—9th edition

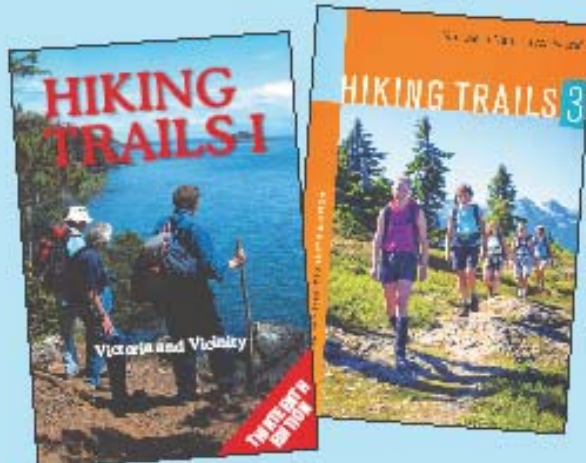
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The Vancouver Island Trails Information Society (VTIS) is a non-profit society dedicated to providing accurate information to the public about parks and trails on Vancouver Island. The society has produced unique hiking books in 32 editions since 1972. See www.hikingtrailsbooks.com for further information about VTIS.

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Varsity Outdoor Club – Vancouver (UBC)

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NORTH COAST

Mount Remo Backcountry Society

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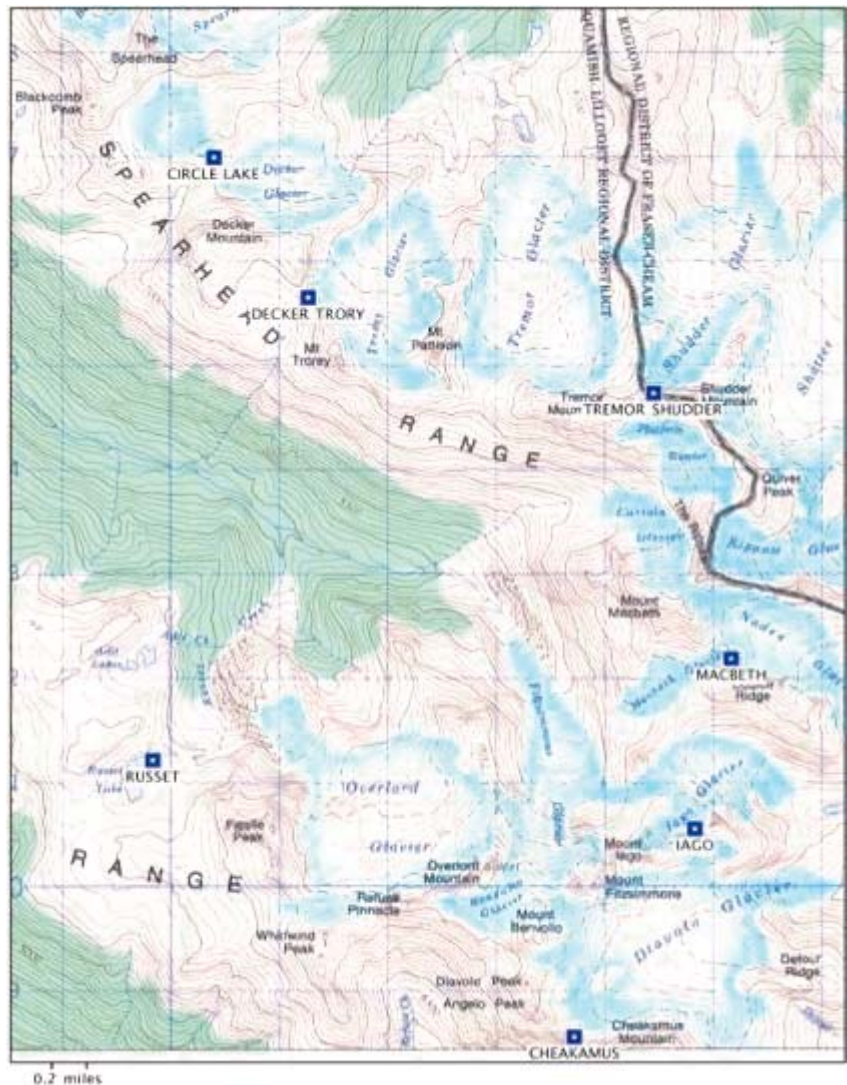
<http://sites.google.com/site/islandmountainramblers/>

Vancouver Island Spine Trail Association

<http://www.vispine.ca/>

Vancouver Island Trails Information Society

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Draft Map showing Spearhead Traverse and tentative hut locations