

CLOUDBURST



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

- 1) addresses mountain access, recreation, and conservation issues
- 2) coordinates, builds, and maintains hiking and mountain access trails throughout B.C. through its member clubs
- 3) 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.

Board of Directors

President: Brian Wood (BCMC)
Vice President: Peter Rothermel (IMR)
Secretary: Pat Harrison (VOA)
Treasurer: Don Morton (ACC-VI)

Directors

Rob Gunn (AVOC), Dave King (ACC-PG, CR), Antje Wahl (ACC-Van), John Young (ACC-VI), Dean Pollack (BOC), Ken Rodonets (CDMC), Roy Howard (FHA), Bill Perry (IMR), Dave Grant (KMC), Matt Gunn (NSH), Travis Carter (MRBS), Eleanor A. Acker (NVOC), David Lavery (OCV), Mike Stewart (VOA), John Harris (VITIS), Scott Webster (VOC), Paul Chatterton (Ind.)

Committee Co-Chairs

Recreation and Conservation: Sandra Nichol, Antje Wahl
Trails: Pat Harrison, Alex Wallace

Staff

Bookkeeper: Kathy Flood
Administrative Manager: Jodi Appleton

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Editors: Bill Perry and Jay MacArthur
Production: Jodi Appleton

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Cover Photograph taken by
Scott Webster



Featuring VOC Members Scott Nelson, Krystil Koethler,
and Anne Webster on Telemagique Ridge between
Callaghan and Madeley Creeks

Articles

We welcome articles which inform our readers about mountain access, recreation, and conservation issues or activities in B.C. Don't limit yourself to prose: photographs and poems are also accepted. Pieces should not exceed 1,000 words. Photos should be 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

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

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

For More Information on the FMCBC:

www.mountainclubs.org
PO Box 19673 Vancouver BC V5T 4E7
Tel: 604-873-6096
Email: FMCBC@mountainclubs.org

The Federation of Mountain Clubs

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 clubs around the province. Our membership is comprised of a diverse group of non-motorized mountain recreation users including hikers, climbers, mountaineers, skiers, snowshoers, kayakers, canoeists and mountain bikers 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.

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 non-motorized outdoor recreation opportunities are recognized and protected.
- Representing wilderness as a legitimate land use and a resource of identifiable value to society.
- Advocating new parks and wilderness resources, and working to maintain the integrity of existing parks and wilderness resources.
- Advocating for continues access to existing recreational resources.
- Building, maintaining and protecting hiking and mountain access trails.
- Promoting hiking, rock climbing, mountaineering, ski touring and other no-motorized mountain activities.
- Educating the public on conservation issues, related to outdoor recreation.
- Education 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 two main committees: Trails Committee, and the Recreation and Conservation Committee. With the exception of the Executive Director who helps coordinate Committee work and advocates on their behalf, the work on these programs is done 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 area. 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. Through our committees, club advocates and general membership we have much to hope for on the trail ahead.■

New President's Report - April 2009

Brian Wood



For many years, I felt that the FMCBC was only the Recreation and Conservation and Trail Committees, and the Board of Directors (BOD) was something I heard about only during the AGM, assuming I attended that auspicious event. However, over the last five years or so, much against my innate desire to avoid bureaucracy, I became more entangled in internal workings of this organization, and eventually my time had come to be president. Like many other backcountry recreationists, I

believe the FMCBC is needed to collect and disseminate information for helping non-motorized outdoor clubs tackle the ever-increasing threats to over-use and over-exploitation of the backcountry. We believe that we are the only provincially-based organization that represents the interests of non-motorized backcountry recreationists for dealing in a coordinated and balanced manner with government agencies and corporations.

Some of these threats come from many relatively new sources, such as commercial recreation (CR) companies providing motorized activities which include snowmobile, snowcat and ATV tours, as well as heli-skiing, heli-hiking and heli-biking. The companies obtain land tenure to operate within a licensed area which can cover a huge amount of land, and the cumulative effect of these CR tenures is that now most of southern BC's accessible wilderness is exposed to the roar and smell of engines. Another threat is the ever increasing numbers of wilderness-based resorts which can include ski lifts and golf courses, and are often (or usually) an excuse for condominium developments. The old resource extractive industries such as logging and mining still exist, and are now joined by hundreds of "run of the river" or Independent Power Producers (IPP's) electrical generation projects which involve, among many other things, diversion of river flows into pipes, and logging of forests to provide corridors for access roads and electrical transmission lines. Other threats to the backcountry include the huge increase in the general public's use of off-road vehicles (ORV's) which include some of those listed above for the CR companies. In the past, rough and/or steep terrain prevented most ORV's from accessing alpine areas, but modern ORV's have amazing abilities in wild country which was previously inaccessible to them. While CR companies using ORV's tend to operate only in their licensed areas, the public drives ORV's almost anywhere there is an access corridor, some of which lead to alpine areas resulting in disturbances to terrain and wildlife. Some might feel that the threats of logging and mining in the mid 20th century were relatively minor when compared with these modern threats, and so now there is an even stronger need for the FMCBC than when it was transformed in 1970's from its founding organization, the Mountain Access Committee.

Pat Harrison, our past President, has been our President for two three-year terms separated by a stint as an underpaid and over-worked Executive Director, and for the time-being he is the FMCBC Secretary. During his tenures, Pat introduced many innovations which were mostly related to improving communication between our member clubs using new technology, and I was amazed at Pat's energy and enthusiasm for carrying out these innovations. These innovations included setting up several listserves and arranging regular telephone conferencing to ensure committee and BOD members can function efficiently even when scattered across the province. In our recently-approved governance restructuring program, each club can provide its own director to contribute ideas and to discuss options at the quarterly BOD meetings held by telephone conferencing. In these times of broadband connections, listserves and email, the old fashioned regular "snail mail" assumes less importance, but regular telephones are still helpful, especially for the older generation who never mastered fast typing or text messaging. So, if you have a problem, do not forget there are many ways of contacting us. Even distance can become essentially immaterial with voice-over-internet telephone conferencing using services such as Skype which has recently been adopted for our BOD meetings. Our new website, www.mountainclubs.org now provides options to review members' ideas, and to contribute your ideas on current issues, as well as providing access to other media publications on backcountry recreation matters, and some old issues of Cloudburst newsletters.

As always, we are primarily a volunteer organization, and since Evan Loveless resigned as our Executive Director, we do not have a paid Executive Director. The BOD feels it would be very difficult to find someone to fill this task adequately, certainly in our present financial position. Consequently, more duties will have to be done by volunteers. Your club director will be able to tell you of these duties, which are not too onerous if distributed throughout the membership. As many of our volunteers are often out of town for extended periods, the BOD feels it is best if there were "co-" directors for each club, ie two persons being essentially in the same position to represent each club so as to provide a back-up when one of them is away. So, even if your club presently has a FMCBC director, there could be room for another co-director, which also helps in providing continuity when one director retires. For other tasks, eg, Cloudburst production, fundraising, etc. two volunteers even from different clubs could serve in a "co-position" to provide back-up for each other. So, please think about helping out the FMCBC, because as a province-wide organization of about 3500 individuals I would hope we have some credibility and political influence. As many of you know, we have two paid part-time employees: our long serving bookkeeper, Kathy Flood, and our administrative manager, Jodi Appleton. Jodi will probably be able to answer most initial enquiries about club dues, insurance premiums and your cheques that might have gone astray.

Over the last three decades the FMCBC has had periods of great activity and successes, which were often associated with adequate funding and an energetic and imaginative membership. Looking back, it is clear that the FMCBC has seen better days than now, but we hope that new ideas and enthusiasm will help us to improve on our earlier successes. I will try to follow Pat's example of ensuring the FMCBC is a democratic, "grass roots" organization where clubs can regularly contribute to ideas, and to assist the broader outdoor community to maintain access to true wilderness. ■

Message from the Editor

Decisions and Directions

Bill Perry (IMR)

The following is not an "Editorial" in the usual sense. It is not a statement of opinion – Mine or the Federation's, but rather a situation report and a request for your opinion on a couple of topics. This will help the Directors in making decisions for the present and finding the direction for the future which best represents the desires of the members.

2009 has so far been a time of changes for the Federation of Mountain Clubs. First, there has been the implementation of the reorganization plan approved last year. Now the voting members (directors) all represent clubs. The delegates have become directors and most have jobs to do in committees or to help run the Federation in other ways.

Also, there has been need for a decision whether to publish *Cloudburst* on-line, continue with the paper format or both. For the present issue we have elected to continue with the paper version, mailed to all members except those who have requested to receive it electronically only. It will be available to all on the FMCBC web site as well. Extra paper copies will be printed for public distribution. Your opinion on this subject is welcome.

Now I believe there is need to decide what direction to take in correspondence with government, industry, and other outside agencies. Lately, there has been a lot of discussion among the directors about whether to stay with the traditional role of the FMCBC in promoting wilderness preservation for its own sake and for the use of the non-motorized recreation sector. The alternative is to branch out and criticize perceived flaws in forest management which may have detrimental environmental effects.

The argument on one side is that we should challenge the "experts" who make the forestry-related decisions, since these other issues are directly related to wilderness protection. An example would be the

effects of clear-cutting on other resources such as hydrology, wildlife, soil stability, and so forth.

The other viewpoint is that we weaken our position by becoming involved in these other issues. By making statements which may at best be debatable or supporting organizations which do so, we become vulnerable to those who have access to professionals (like government and industry), and this can damage our credibility.

We are, in fact experts in wilderness values and what is important to wilderness users. The Federation of Mountain Clubs has earned its solid reputation for this knowledge through years of delivering facts needed by decision makers and through responsible negotiation.

Here is another decision point:

From time to time the Federation is invited to support or join a coalition with other groups whose aims may coincide with ours, but whose methods are of a more aggressive nature. In the past we have avoided such alliances and pursued the same or similar goals by different means

The Federation's web page, as well as every issue of *Cloudburst*, contains the following in its summary: "Acting under the policy of 'talk, understand and persuade', rather than 'confront and force', the FMCBC lobbies for the interests of its members." There is an impressive list of successes, also on the web site, which, I believe, is a result of this approach.

Perhaps now is the time to confirm this policy. Or do you believe these turbulent times demand more of "confront and force" approach, employing the more flamboyant, headline-grabbing tactics of certain other environmental groups.

What do you think – about either or both of these topics? Write a letter to *Cloudburst* or talk to your club's director. This is, after all, a democratic organization, and **we need your involvement.** ■

Letters of Interest

Horses in Strathcona Park and

Bedwell River Valley

Written on April 15, 2009

To: The Honorable Minister Penner



Re: Horses in Strathcona Park, Bedwell River Valley area.

Dear Minister Penner,

As a representative for the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC), I have been very much involved with the issues around the Bedwell River Valley, in Strathcona Provincial Park and the proposal to allow horses into the lower valley. I have attended most of the Strathcona Provincial Park Advisory Committee (SPPAC) meetings that are pertinent to the issue. As well, I was a participant on the BC Parks sponsored, on ground inspection of the Bedwell route in the fall of 2007 and I have participated in all of the round table discussions between the stake holders and have attended several of the public forum meetings.

I have written several articles to garner response and opinions from our FMCBC membership and the public, regarding the possibility of horses in the lower Bedwell, in order for me to form an opinion for the FMCBC. The response to my articles has not been large enough in numbers, for my satisfaction and about equally divided. Therefore, I do not feel I can give you an official opinion from the FMCBC.

I can however share my personal opinion with you. First of all I have to say that I have not seen any real proof that horse traffic would be harmful to the lower Bedwell Valley. That said, I have also not

seen conclusive proof that horses would not harm the Bedwell area either, in spite of an extensive level 2 environmental assessment of the area. Proof is lacking due to a dearth of horse impact studies done in this same type of coastal rainforest environment. I believe we should err on the side of caution and permission should not be granted to allow horses into the Bedwell area of Strathcona Park.

I originally expressed an opinion, to BC Parks, that horses might be allowed into the lower Bedwell area of the Park, just up to the crossing known as the "Living Bridge" and only then, if that area were to be used as a temporary test area, with no tenure, or expectations of tenure attached. I expressed this exception, as an area to obtain true test results. The subsequent environmental impact study only addressed ways to mitigate damage done by horses and gave me no confidence that horse damage would not occur in the first place. Since these inspections and studies, were taken, I have also come to the realization that the horse issue will likely continue to crop up in the future and probably in other parts of the Park as well. The horse issue needs to be addressed and put to rest.

With respect to the Park Master Plan and the wording regarding horses in Strathcona Park, I feel that the wording is vague and needs clarification. Therefore, I believe that an amendment needs to be made, pertaining to horses in the Master Plan. From the round table discussions and SPPAC meetings that I have attended, I have come to the understanding that the originators of the Master Plan had meant to have a complete ban of horses in Strathcona Park. Unfortunately they bent to a minority to allow a small concession, otherwise this Bedwell issue would have been an open and shut case. Still, I think we need to show respect to the intended objective of the Master Plan authors.

Of the public forum meetings that I have attended, there has been a

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large majority in attendance that is very vocal in opposition to allowing horses into the lower Bedwell. Unfortunately this has stymied calm discussion, yet at the same time, those very same people, in opposition, are all Strathcona Park users and many are stewards of the Park, doing much of the needed work that BC Parks can not afford to do any more. While not a democratic representation of the entire BC population, they do represent a very large portion of the population that truly should count when it comes to the decisions pertaining to this park.

The early SPPAC meetings that I attended were somewhat divided in their opinions on horses in the Bedwell, but in time and with public opinion taken into count and much debate, the SPPAC has become of one mind and that is to not allow a tenure for horses into the lower Bedwell Valley. These are the citizens and professionals that have been appointed to advise you, Minister Penner, and in my opinion, you should be bound by their advice. Otherwise, why have an advisory committee?

If a total ban of horses were stated by the originators of the Master Plan, in the first place, then none of this debate and all of the very costly meetings, studies and inspections would have ever happened. All of this wasted funding could have rather gone into park infrastructure, in the way of trail maintenance or public information sharing. Let us not draw this out into a long and costly process, any more than it has already become.

As someone that has looked at every aspect of this issue, with what I feel as an open mind to any group, committee or private interest, I feel that my personal opinion should carry some weight with your decision.

I recommend to you, that you make an amendment to the Strathcona Park Master Plan and word it so that horses are not allowed anywhere in Strathcona Park.

In the year 2011 Strathcona Park will celebrate a hundred years of existence as the first B.C. Provincial Park. I would like to propose a partnership between the Ministry of Environment, the Friends Of Strathcona Park, Clayoquot Wilderness Resort, Strathcona Park Lodge and the Federation of Mountain Clubs, to work together and remake the Bedwell River Valley trail a through hiking route, from tidewater to alpine and to pool our resources to see this vision come to reality for the Park's 100 year celebration. This would be a win for every group involved.

Thank you for your attention and I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Peter Rothermel
Qualicum Beach B.C.

Snowmobiles Taking Over the Sea to Sky Mountains

Written on April 8, 2009
To: Premier Gordon Campbell

Dear Sir:

On Sunday 5 April our party of seven skiers, who had heeded the high avalanche risk at Mt. Baker, went instead to investigate the possibilities in the Callaghan Valley. We got our free parking passes, recently made available by the 2010 cross country area, and headed up the hill to Hanging Lake on the way to Rainbow Lake. After climbing 2000' of forested hillside, some at 40-plus degrees with Saturday's avalanche debris covering the slope, we emerged into the alpine at Hanging Lake and continued up to the divide. We sat at the ridgeline overlooking Rainbow Lake where we were serenaded by the angry

whine of snowmobiles desecrating our beautiful alpine with noise and stink, the whole upper slope to Gin and Tonic rendered unskiable by their frozen tracks. As I sat in the sunshine I looked across to Brandywine and Metaldome, areas that we used to ski regularly in the past, and thought how we have been pushed into the marginal, and in icy conditions as it was that day, almost unskiable terrain of lower, steep, treed slopes, with no access to snowmobile-free alpine in the Sea to Sky forest land at all.

The reason snowmobiles are overrunning Rainbow Mountain, Hanging Lake, Gin and Tonic, and Sproatt is because they have been allowed passage in from Callaghan Valley against the recommendations of the Sea to Sky Winter Backcountry Forum. Rainbow Lake and 21 Mile Creek, which are supposed to be non-motorized areas, provide drinking water for Whistler. We saw many snowmobiles parked on the lake for lunch and tracks all over it. This is a lake where public camping has been removed as a water quality issue.

Diamond Head in Garibaldi Park has become the only ski access in the Sea to Sky accessible by intermediate and older skiers on one-day trips who do not wish to risk broken bones on steep, icy, forest descents like Black Tusk.

For a government that trumpets fairness between recreational groups, we have seen no support for non-motorized users. Not only that, now snowmobilers are invading the Three Brothers area of Manning Park, which we use regularly. There is no enforcement to counter this illegal use. It is time for a change!

Photographs of snowmobiles at Rainbow Lake, courtesy of Carol MacMillan, trip leader, to be sent separately.

Lesley Bohm (Mrs.) Member for North Shore Hikers on the Sea to Sky Forum

Logging on the Arrowsmith Massif



Snowmobilers at Rainbow Lake

Written on March 25, 2009
To: Brookfield Asset Management
Island Timberlands
West Island Woodlands Advisory Group

Re: Mt Arrowsmith

I would like to address some of the recent logging practices that have taken place on the Arrowsmith Massif and how they impact on wildlife, watershed and recreational values.

In the Fall of 2004, Island Timberlands Forester Chris Vukovick contacted the Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C. through me, expressing the company's interest in preserving the recreational trails on Arrowsmith. If there was to be any logging in the area, buffers were to be placed on the trails. We met with Chris and General Manager, Bill Waugh and provided topographic & GPS maps showing the established trails and routes. Later, we hiked some of the area with Chris and identified some of the trails and routes on the ground.

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As well, to the south of the area that Chris had hiked with us, we identified on the provided maps some hiking routes that ran through the ridges. Since the routes followed meandering elk trails, that crisscrossed both broad ridges, we went back and more compactly rerouted the routes to the North sides of both ridges. These routes were flagged with yellow ribbon, marked "trail" and Chris was made aware of the flagging.

Later, in the Spring of 2005, I wrote Chris Vucovick and Wayne French and asked if we could meet and go over future logging plans, but nothing came of this request.

In 2007, two large clear cuts appeared on the mountain's southern slopes, above a thousand metres elevation. Contrary to the practices that were discussed in the Fall of 2004, there were no variable retention plots in the blocks and on closer inspection, no buffers on the trails. In fact the trail approaches were obliterated and among the slash, we found pieces of our yellow "trail" tape.

In June 2008, I was at a West Island Woodlands Advisory Group meeting and Tony Norris, the site engineer for the aforementioned clear cuts, was in attendance. When asked why the hiking routes were not taken into account and buffered, his reply was, "What trails?" It appeared that the trail maps shared with Chris and Bill were not incorporated as a planning layer and that communication regarding recreational features was nonexistent between the foresters, management and the site engineer. What was particularly disconcerting though, was when Tony stated that Island Timberlands made marginal profits on the blocks and could have made about the same profits by single stem harvesting, rather than clear cutting. The destruction of the routes was therefore completely without justification or rationalization.

This is forest above 1,000 metres, of marginal quality timber and most of it could have been left standing with the forest left mostly intact. This high elevation forest is extremely valuable as ungulate winter range. It protects the snowpack, which is an integral part of the local water sheds for maintaining summer stream flows. As well, it is an approach to what is arguably the most important noncommercial mountain for recreational hikers, climbers and backcountry skiers, on all of Vancouver Island. Personally, I am appalled at the lack of understanding that Island Timberlands has shown towards this unique area. We understand that Island Timberlands subscribes to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. SFI policy states, "Program participants shall have a written policy to implement and achieve the following principles..." The first principle is Sustainable Forestry, so a written policy is required re: "conservation of soil, air and water quality, biological diversity, wildlife and aquatic habitat, recreation and aesthetics."

As a private landowner, does not one automatically take on a stewardship role and have a fiduciary duty to see that certain land values are not compromised past a state of no return? We believe Island Timberlands has a unique opportunity to show that they can maintain wildlife, watershed and recreational values and still make a profit.

We highly recommend that Island Timberlands treat the Arrowsmith massif as a "special management zone". This might include a management approach that only utilized single stem harvest, above a thousand metres and would maintain the integrity of the routes, trails, access and wildlife corridors on the whole massif. This method of care given to the forest lands surrounding the Arrowsmith Massif could be used as a best practice example of an old growth management strategy, if done properly.

If any representative from Brookfield Asset Management, Island Timberlands or West Island Woodlands Advisory Group would like to meet with us to discuss this further, we would be interested in meeting.

Enclosed are two photographs, before and after cut block.

Thank you for your attention,

Peter Rothermel

Recreation and Conservation

Recreation and Conservation Report

Scott Webster (VOC)

Over the past year I have been representing the VOC on the Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia (FMCBC) Board of Directors and Recreation and Conservation committee. This has been my primary responsibility as the FMCBC/ACC (Alpine Club of Canada) Representative on the VOC executive. The following are updates on selected issues we have been dealing with recently.



Garibaldi at Squamish

Over the past several decades there have been various proposals to develop a ski resort on Brohm Ridge (near Squamish and Garibaldi Provincial Park). There are even relic ski lift towers to be found in the area from a failed development. The issue has come back up again with a new proposal. The VOC and FMCBC have been involved in discussions with the developer and have provided feedback to the government through the Environmental Assessment (EA) process. We have several concerns with the project. Both restriction of access to the backcountry and Garibaldi Provincial Park as well as overly simplified access to the Garibaldi Neve area are issues. (Hordes of skiers from the resort entering the park at that point may not be ideal). There are also questions about the possibility of future expansions into the park. The developer claims that they have no such plans, but refuses to guarantee that they won't raise the idea in the future. There are other environmental concerns as well. The project's trip through the EA process has not been smooth. There have been several delays and the process remains incomplete, with more information required from the developer. This is definitely an issue to watch as things move forward.

Knight Inlet Helisports

An application to operate a heliskiing business in the Mt. Waddington area was made in 2007. This set off a major letter writing campaign from skiers and mountaineers who objected to motorized recreation in the pristine Waddington area. The application was granted by the government, permitting heliskiing in three zones, but requiring further consultation with the non-motorized community before operations could begin in a fourth zone directly around Mt. Waddington itself. Again the VOC has participated in these discussions and we are currently negotiating a no-fly zone where heliskiing will not be permitted (but traditional helicopter access for mountaineers will be preserved).

Brew Hut Parking

The usual access to the Brew Hut these days is via the Roe Creek ski route. Parking in the winter is usually somewhere along the Chance Creek Forest Service Road between Highway 99 and the junction with the Roe Creek Road (3 km from the highway). Last year there were increasing parking conflicts between snowmobilers, skiers, and Powder Mountain Catskiing (PMC, a commercial operator in the area with a base area 1.6 km from the highway). There are two main problems: insufficient parking along the road due to snow accumulation, and parking restrictions on the lower part of the road due to the Barrier landslide hazard (the Barrier is the prominent crumbling cliff at the head of Rubble Creek, near Garibaldi Lake). This year the VOC negotiated with PMC and have secured access to park in a plowed area behind their gate at their base area. A lockbox has been installed on the gate and you can call in advance to get the combination. This area is of great interest to both skiers and snowmobilers as there are numerous destinations accessed from the road. There is continuing discussion about possibilities for expanded parking in the area in the future.

"Out of Bounds" Skiing

This winter there have been several high-profile reports of "out of bounds" skiers getting into trouble in British Columbia. A few skiers died in avalanches near Whistler-Blackcomb while skiing outside of the ski area boundary. Another case involved skiers "ducking the ropes" at Grouse Mountain, resulting in a helicopter investigating their actions (these skiers were subsequently banned from Grouse Mountain). There has been public outcry on this issue, much of which has been rather uninformed, calling for financial and criminal penalties for ignoring warnings and skiing "out of bounds."

From an access point of view this is a disturbing development. Just what is "out of bounds" skiing exactly? Restrictions could certainly come very close to closing off access to the backcountry and crown land. The VOC and FMCBC sent letters to the Solicitor General expressing our concern and received replies that it is not their intention to limit access to the backcountry, but that they are encouraging resort operators to impose penalties for breaking the rules (it is unclear whether it can be against the rules to go "out of bounds" and enter the backcountry).

It has become increasingly apparent that the general public does not have a good understanding of what backcountry skiing is. Efforts have begun (including the production of a backcountry skiing brochure) in order to provide further education on the topic.

Sea to Sky Land and Resource Management Plan

Last but definitely not least is some news regarding land use planning in the Sea to Sky corridor. This is a follow up from an article Sandra Nicol wrote last year in VOCJ50 (page reference?). Since then the final version of the Land and Resource Management Plan has been released, but unfortunately it did not contain specifics on public recreation zoning. The mediation process between the motorized and non-motorized sides was also concluded and the mediator, Gordon Erlandson released his report titled "Recommendations for the Management of Winter Backcountry Recreation in the Lillooet River Drainage and the Sea-to-Sky LRMP Area."

Unfortunately the mediator's report recommends that the lower portion of the Phelix Creek Road (access to the Brian Waddington Hut near D'Arcy) be shared between skiers and snowmobilers. This represents a loss for the non-motorized community as our position was that this had previously been designated as non-motorized. Thankfully the non-motorized area around the hut itself has been preserved. The report is not all negative though. It retains the recommendation for recreational zoning, an idea that had once been seen as a given that had fallen back into uncertainty.

The Callaghan Valley rezoning (to mostly non-motorized) has continued to cause problems with displaced snowmobilers, with many now visiting the Chance Creek/Tricouni area (see Brew Hut update above). New non-motorized opportunities exist in the Callaghan area thanks to the plowed road to the Whistler Olympic Park. Parking and access policies are mostly sorted out; instructions and directions to some key destinations are available on the VOCWiki (http://www.ubc-voc.com/wiki/Whistler_Nordic_Centre_-_Callaghan_Valley). Get out there and explore!

The LRMP and mediator's report don't actually introduce legally binding restrictions on recreational use, only zoning guidelines. In order to be enforceable, government legislation is required. The VOC and FMCBC are collecting information on conflict areas that may be used in the future to create such legislation. The struggle continues. ■

Motorized and Non-motorized Trail User Conflicts

Brian Wood (BCMC)

Please note that the following article expresses my personal views, and do not necessarily represent those of the FMCBC.

The FMCBC has a broad mandate to protect and improve access to the backcountry and to facilitate non-motorized or self-propelled backcountry recreation. Providing access to the backcountry includes building and maintaining trails. This work is carried out by volunteers from the member clubs of the FMCBC. Some of our member clubs participate in the FMCBC "Adopt-a-Trail" program and this has been fairly successful but needs volunteers from the clubs to help maintain their particular trails. In BC, particularly in the wet zones, trails can quickly become overgrown with brush, eroded due to water or heavy use, or made difficult to use due to deadfalls, rock slides etc.

Many of these trails were originally used only by hikers, and sometimes backcountry skiers or snowshoers, but nowadays some of the old hikers' trails are being used by motorized recreationists riding off-road vehicles (ORV's) such as snowmobiles, trail-bikes or all terrain vehicles (quads or ATV's) which spoil the experience for non-motorized recreationists, such as hikers and skiers. In addition, motorized users on these types of trails increase risks of accidents, as well as aggravating trail bed erosion and causing other environmental impacts such as oil and fuel pollution and disturbing wildlife. A situation is sometimes reached where the experience for the non-motorized users has deteriorated to such an extent that the non-motorized users stop using the trails for accessing an area, and thus have been displaced from what was once their traditional recreational area. There are many examples where motorized recreation is displacing or has



North Shore Hikers enjoying one of their weekly hikes

Courtesy of Ye Chu

already displaced non-motorized users from their traditional areas, for example on sections of the relatively remote National Hiking Trail which contains sections of historical trails which are now seriously threatened due to heavy mud generation from ATV's. Some trails were established as multi-use trails, such as many (or most?) sections of the Trans-Canada Trail (TCT), but non-motorized users see many problems with these multi-use trails. As motorized use increases on these multi-use trails, there is a corresponding displacement of non-motorized users, for example in the Kettle Valley Railway section and some sections in the Chilliwack Valley in BC. Similar displacement of hikers and backcountry skiers etc has occurred in many areas of the

Recreation and Conservation

Sea-to-Sky Corridor extending from Squamish to Pemberton.

There are many other organizations of non-motorized backcountry users that visit the backcountry for a wide variety of recreational activities, such as horseback riding, trail running, mountain biking, natural history observation, photography etc. These organizations have similar concerns to the FMCBC about inevitable conflicts that arise when motorized recreationists use trails originally built for non-motorized use. I expect that these conflicts over trail use will increase as they did on public lands in the USA until government agencies passed and enforced strong zoning laws which restricted certain activities in particular areas.

Without land use restrictions, there is nothing to stop motorized recreation on Crown lands and many of us feel that there is a need for legislation in Canada that is generally similar to that in the USA and other jurisdictions. This type of legislation will only come to pass if government agencies are persuaded to enact such legislation, and this will require a lot of public pressure backed up by overwhelming and persuasive data. To collect and collate sufficient data will require good organization and cooperation between various backcountry organizations to protect the interests of non-motorized backcountry recreationists. Apart from recreational management in some parks, I believe the government does not monitor backcountry activities on Crown Land. There is some rarely used new legislation (such as Sections 56-58 of the Forest and Range Practices Act) that restricts motorized activity on Crown Land and there are some existing land use restrictions such as existing land use tenures in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor. Clearly, it is up to the non-motorized users to document conflicts between the different user groups, and to report infractions that occur in parks and other restricted areas, and to bring them to the government's attention. It is important to educate the government agencies of these conflicts so that the government will understand the need to create and enforce recreation zoning legislation to reduce or eliminate these types of conflicts. Canada, and BC in particular, has

"Clearly, it is up to the non-motorized users to document conflicts between the different user groups, and to report infractions ..."

hopefully a convincing case can be made to government to introduce the necessary legislation that will more fairly distribute recreational activities across the landscape. At present there are two organizations that provide a section of their websites to permit the public to post reports of incidents where one group of recreationists has routinely, and not necessarily deliberately, spoilt the experience of another group through incompatible activities taking place too closely to each other. For simplicity, these incidents can be referred to as "user conflicts", which refer to basic incompatibility of activities, not persons coming to physical blows. This is a fairly broad definition, and it may need to be narrowed in the future, and it is important that these reports are reliable and credible. To reduce the chances of exaggerated reports, or worse, fabricated or spurious reports, we feel that each report should be well documented by multiple witnesses, and should provide dates and time frames, specific locations such as map references, numbers and types of ORV's, etc. Clear photographs of the vehicles

and persons driving them are required because most ORV's do not carry registration plates. Some ORV's carry small decals but these are not easily visible, nor do they require updating to reflect current ownership. In general, the more evidence that is recorded the easier it will be to prove details of these incidents.

The FMCBC is one organization which has a website www.mountainclubs.org where members and non-members can post reports of these incidents by sending them to: FMCBC@mountainclubs.org. The

other organization is Bivouac, website of the Canadian Mountain Encyclopedia and is found at www.bivouac.com. While Bivouac has a nominal membership fee for full access to the website, there is publicly accessible page for freely and automatically recording these incidents. If one is not a bivouac member, just click the "login/Subscribe" link on the front page, and then click "New Member (free)". This brings up a page on which there is a link called "New Member Form".

Click that and fill in the form, then click the "Insert" button in the upper left corner. If you have any problems, click the "Contact Us" link and send an email to Robin Tivy, who will answer your email. To view the posted reports, from the homepage of Bivouac, select the "Index", then "#3 Campaigns". Eventually Bivouac will produce a map of mountain areas where incidents took place so it will be easy to find the areas where infractions take place.

When sufficient data had been collected, one or more representatives of the non-motorized recreationists will present a report the appropriate government agency and attempt to get a commitment from the government for some timely action on this problem which likely will only get worse. We feel it would be to our advantage to engage a representative who has experience in dealing with government agencies on a personal or face-to-face basis, as in the past we have noted in some contentious issues that correspondence, by itself, does not seem to be very effective in getting things changed. We suspect that there is a strong representation from the ORV industry dealing with some agencies, and some of us feel that the non-motorized recreation groups are not well-equipped or experienced in dealing with strong and well-financed adversaries of this type.

For this strategy to be effective, the public should be vigilant and conscientious in reporting these incidents, which requires a relatively small effort on its part, with the chance of a worthwhile outcome. ■



Snowmobilers at Rainbow Lake—This is the second photo taken by Carol MacMillan which was included with Lesley Bohm's letter to Premier Gordon Campbell on April 8, 2009 which is featured on page 5.

vast expanses of undeveloped landscape, and it seems reasonable that there is sufficient space for all types of recreationists to enjoy themselves without spoiling the experiences of other recreationists.

There are now opportunities to record and report these conflicting activities on line so that, when there is sufficient documentation,

Trails



NATIONAL HIKING TRAIL UPDATE

Pat Harrison (VOA)

The National Hiking Trail was conceived in 1969 and legally incorporated as the National Trails Association in 1971. Since that time, most of the trail building has been done by volunteers. The NHT has moved along slowly, but steadily. It is the only national trail dedicated to the non-motorized recreational user from coast to coast in the backcountry. Other national trails have portions of their trails for multiple-use or are tailored for the urban community in many areas.

The Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC) represented the National Hiking Trail in the 1980s and in the late 1990s. In 2000, it was decided to create Hike BC because some of the hiking clubs involved were not members of the FMCBC and it was important to have a single focus of developing the National Hiking Trail in British Columbia. The FMCBC and its associated clubs continue to be involved on Vancouver Island and in the interior of BC. The latest addition is the proposed Vancouver Island Spine Trail from Victoria to Port Hardy, a project headed up by Gil Parker of Victoria. Some of the Vancouver Island Spine Trail has been developed by the Alberni Valley Outdoor Club and the Log Train Trail Association.

The Comox District Mountaineering Club has been involved in the planning around the Comox-Courtenay area.

The National Trails Association decided in 2005 to assume the operating name of Hike Canada en Marche. The Board of HCEM currently is meeting monthly from across Canada via Skype. The HCEM has received interest from Saskatchewan and PEI in recent months to join. HCEM has two directors from each Province. Below is a list of the trail sections of the National Hiking Trail System with the approximate distance completed. ■

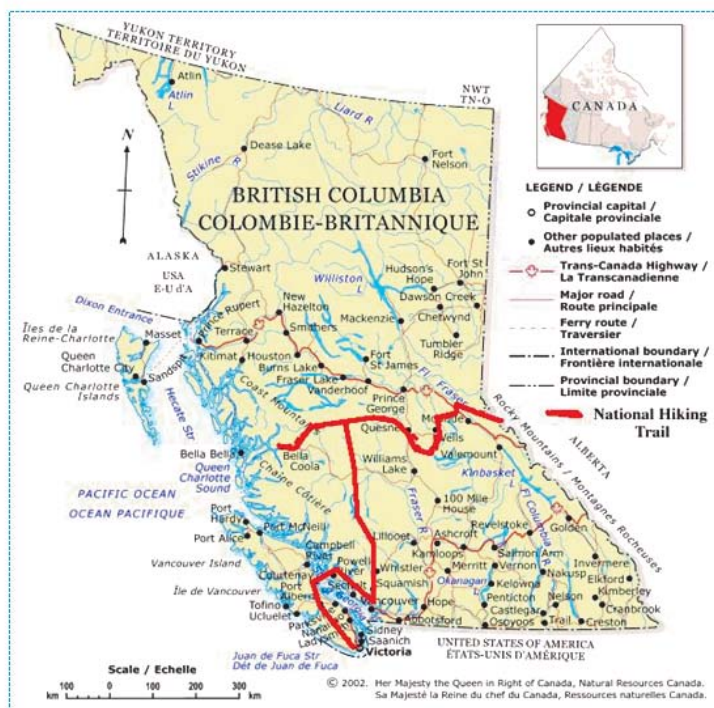
PROVINCE	TRAIL	LENGTH (KM)	COMMENTS
British Columbia	Vancouver Island Spine Trail (2008)	800	When completed
	Sunshine Coast Trail	70	
	Bella Coola to Nuxall-Carrier Grease Trail	90	On road
	Nuxall-Carrier Grease Trail (AMHT) to		(AMHT = Alexander MacKenzie Historic Tr.)
	Collins Telegraph Trail	290	
	Collins Telegraph Trail	96	
	Collins-Telegraph Trail to Quesnel	15	
	Quesnel to Likely	35	On trails and roads
	Likely to Keithley	20	On road
	1861 Gold Rush Pack Trail	42	
	Barkerville to Bowron Lakes	30	On roads
	Historic Goat River Trail	95	
	East Twin to Jasper National Park	130	
Alberta	Banff National Park	10	
	Town of Canmore	3	
	Canmore Nordic Centre	7	
	Kananaskis Country	33	
	City of Medicine Hat	25	
	Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park	32	
	Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park	15	
Saskatchewan	Four Small Sections are now built	100	
Manitoba	Voyageur Hiking Trail	465	
	Bruce Trail	398	
	Ganaraska Trail	400	
Ontario	Rideau Trail	300	
	Gatineau Park	55	
	Reserve provinciale de Papineau	90	
	Region Laurentides	65	
	Region Lanaudiere	140	
	Region Maricie	45	
	Region Quebec	45	
	Parc de conservation de la Jacques-Cartier	65	
	Region Charlevoix	70	
	Region Manicouagan	10	
	Region Bas-Saint-Laurent	172	
	(Trois-Pistoles-Edmundston, N.B.)		
New Brunswick	Dobson Trail	142	About 10 km added each year
	Appalachian Trail Connection		
Nova Scotia	Hike Nova Scotia initiated in 2007		
Newfoundland-Labrador	East Coast Trail	216	

PROVINCIAL TRAIL STRATEGY

Pat Harrison (VOA)

Provincial Trail Strategy Committee

The Province of British Columbia has been developing a comprehensive plan for all its trails. In the process, the Province has asked for and received hundreds of written submissions from a variety of recreational users, including hikers, skiers, snowmobilers, ATVers, bicyclists, motorbikers, etc. After receiving the submissions, the government, and the consultants they hired, held public hearings around the Province (eleven locations). First Nations were given considerable consultation in the process and were included in all the open houses. After the eleven hearings, a final meeting was held to finalize the process. There will be a public release of the recommendations within the next few months. The number one issue remains how to solve the motorized / non-motorized conflicts in the backcountry, and the asymmetrical experience between the two recreational groups. *'Asymmetrical experience' means that the non-motorized recreationists do not impact the experience of the motorized recreationists on shared trails, but that the experience of the non-motorized is greatly impacted by motorized recreation.* Currently the government is counting on peer pressure to regulate the conflicts in the backcountry as money is not available for hiring compliance and enforcement personnel.■



Highlights from the last meeting can be seen on the FMCBC website at www.mountainclubs.org

Vancouver Island Spine

Gil Parker (ACC-Vancouver Island)

A wilderness hiking trail from Victoria to Cape Scott



The appeal of the long-distance trail was the idea behind the Appalachian Trail, the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) from Mexico to Manning Park, and many other linear trails worldwide. It is the prospect of hiking a different scene every day, and having a long-term goal that you whittle away a day at a time. The challenge is there, and the meditative appeal of an adventure that takes more than a weekend to complete!

The Vancouver Island "Spine" (www.vispine.ca) is the result of long ruminations along the PCT; wondering why the wilderness paradise of Vancouver Island had no continuous trail. So, for the last year, a task force of committed hikers and planners has put together the project, a trail from Victoria to Cape Scott, one that any hiker can follow, given conditioning and planning. VISTA, the Vancouver Island Spine Trail Association, has joined with Hike BC, the BC wing of the National Hiking Trail, to shepherd the project into reality. As part of Hike BC, the provincial component of the National Hiking Trail of Canada, VI Spine will connect to the NHT via ferry from Port Hardy to Bella Coola where the traditional "grease trail" progresses east to Quesnel.

The advantages of the VI Spine will accrue to more than just the long-distance hikers. It will provide access to some parts of the backcountry for climbers, fishers, and perhaps skiers.

In other long-distance trails, communities along the way "buy into" the trails, providing material support and accommodation, a commercial benefit to the towns that the trail periodically passes by. Volunteer clubs and individuals assist with trail maintenance and act as "trail angels," becoming part of the mobile community formed by trail users.

During my personal experience with the PCT, I have met volunteer crews who happily spend their holidays at a trail improvement camps. People living near the trail have left water caches for hikers in dry areas, boxes of fruit and, nailed to trees, mailboxes full of chocolate bars. I've been offered a bed, a shower (!), an Email connection, and a burly contractor once bought me breakfast in a town on route. Everyone is into the PCT, whether they hike it or not.

While our route has not been finalized, there is about 188 km built or committed, and about 550 km still to go. In the southern Island, the

Trails

Spine will follow the Trans Canada Trail, a non-motorized, multi-use connection from Victoria to Lake Cowichan. From there, the Spine will connect to Port Alberni, partly along the 1913 railway grade that still exists in places. North of Port Alberni the Log Train Trail heads up the valley, and some part of the incredible ridge of the Beaufort Range will be included. After skirting Comox Lake to the east, the Spine will traverse a small part of Strathcona

Park, (where cyclists and horse travel are prohibited) but will avoid the heavy snowpack of higher ranges and technical terrain where climbing skills are needed. Farther north, the Spine will connect to the North Coast Trail (opened in 2008) and the trail to Cape Scott.

The Vancouver Island Spine will be a single trail through backcountry, sometimes mountainous, but periodically coming near to villages and towns where hikers can resupply, or get a meal or a shower. The popularity of similar trails in the United States and Europe is an indication of the commercial and social advantages the Spine will bring to Vancouver Island. The VI Spine will bring tourism and local recreation dollars to communities that are currently searching for ways to diversify their economies. Current plans comply with the current draft of the Trails Strategy of BC, of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, of the BC Government.

Local outdoor clubs have been asked to endorse the concept of VI Spine. Most of the regional districts have been contacted and are co-operating with the initial planning. During 2009, the task force hopes to have the route walked and located in detail by GPS. Construction is already progressing in some sections, but there is a long way to go.

How can you contribute? Seed money would be nice! Currently there is a dedicated bank account solely for VI Spine. Failing that, if you have knowledge or skills in land negotiations, route finding, backcountry navigation, First Nation issues, or you envision other aspects of the Trail we need to consider, please contact us. ■



1913 culvert on the railway grade built from Victoria to Port Alberni, which will be part of the VI Spine.

Photo taken by Tawney Lem

Gil Parker

Head of Task Force, VISTA and Hike BC Director

250-370-9349
gparker@telus.net
www.vispine.ca



Club Activities Around the Province

North Shore Hikers 50th Anniversary Celebration Mary Tainsh and Donna Nyberg



Donna Nyberg

On November 8, 2008, The North Shore Hikers had a party – and what a party it was! Now the North Shore Hikers have never been known to be party people, however, on this day it was indeed a time to celebrate. Yes, we turned

50 years old on November of 2008 – 50 years of hiking, cycling, back country skiing, backpacking, car camping and even a few canoe trips. This was our night to celebrate those years of growth! At one time we had over one thousand members; now on weekends there are usually three hikes of different levels, ski trips in the winter and a strong cycling contingent. Wednesday hikes, which are usually rated as a B, are organized more informally and at the eleventh-hour, but go rain or shine. Our club, of course, was not always this large, but we have changed over the years and are still evolving to reconcile needs of people hiking in the 21st century and the shifting BC “landscape”.

The celebration was held at the Ukrainian Orthodox Centre at 154 East 10th Avenue – 168 people attended and many, many more were extremely disappointed that they did not book well in advance, as the tickets sold very quickly. People came from all over the province to help celebrate the occasion and meet their old friends and hiking friends whom they perhaps had not seen in a very long time.

The Ukrainian Hall was tastefully decorated for this auspicious occasion as well as a beautiful head table – a power point presentation was ongoing of pictures from as far back as the 60's and on up to the present. Not only was it interesting to see your friends of many years ago but also to notice how equipment, hiking clothing and yes, even hair styles have changed over the years. Music from each era was played depicting the year that was being shown.



Donna Nyberg

Our M.C.s, Gordon and Sandra, plus Jack Bryceland

“The Butler Did It” (our guest speaker)

ably catered the evening. Their food was deliciously presented with an autumn theme. Edna Lunden ceremoniously cut a large excellent carrot cake decorated with the NSH logo. Art Alexander and Alan Banwell honored Edna's husband, Halvor, when tributes to outstanding members were featured. Because of our tight schedule, there

Club Activities Around the Province



Original North Shore Hiker Sylvia Stirland

Donna Nyberg

were many contributors to the club who could not be highlighted, but I am sure their names came up at tables as friends thought back on many memorable experiences enjoyed together over the years.

Our Keynote Speaker was Jack Bryceland, co-author of 103 Hikes in Southwestern British Columbia and whose topic was "The Future of Hiking". Jack thinks the future of hiking is at a cross roads in BC

however the silver lining of

fossil fuel shortages may be that many more people will be walking. He spoke about a society based on growth, and because of that, we are running out of wilderness. Other related dilemma problems were discussed, as well as, the solutions. It was suggested that perhaps the positive side of the recent financial meltdown will be a return to valuing things upon which economists have not but put a dollar figure.

Gian Ward led us all in singing "The North Shore Hikers Song" – yes, we do have our own song, which was penned by Wally Griffiths many years ago. Wally was a very active member with the club who had a way with words and composed countless rhymes.



Original North Shore Hiker back in 1958!
Alfred Temmel

Donna Nyberg

After the door prizes were given out to those lucky ones, our president and MCs ended the evening with a few closing remarks and gently ushered the crowd into the cold night air. - A wonderful celebration of the past concluded with inevitable thoughts of our future to contemplate.■

Caledonia Ramblers Club

Trip to Sol Mountain

Hilary Crowley

Ten back-country skiers from Prince George headed down to South Eastern BC. There we enjoyed a 12 minute helicopter ride from Sugar Lake, near Lumby, over the Monashee Mountains to Sol Mountain Lodge, nestled adjacent to the Monashee Mountain Provincial Park. It was snowing lightly as we waited in an isolated barn for the helicopter, but at tree-line, where the lodge is situated, it cleared somewhat, and the 8cm accumulation of fresh powder snow was enough to provide us with excellent skiing conditions for the whole week. We had chosen to hire guides, which turned out to be a wise decision, as they not only found terrain suitable for our group but they also lead us to

pristine slopes each day, so we never skied the same area twice and the chosen aspects ensured us silky conditions rather than wind or sun-crusted snow.

We were joined by a group of six young and fit skiers from Quebec, most of whom were doctors. Both of our groups had opted for guided but self-catered weeks. Our full complement, with lodge staff, was twenty and we were very comfortable with two people to a room. The lodge actually has enough accommodation for thirty people and with five bathrooms, including three showers is quite luxurious. There is an ample kitchen with two large stoves, a wood burning stove in the living room, two large dining tables and plenty of comfortable seating for relaxation. There is also the inevitable sauna.

The area is expansive with a variety of terrain for all calibre of skier. I was only one of two with leather boots and cable bindings. This combined with weak telemark skills and fear resulted in a stressful first couple of days. Fortunately I had borrowed a friend's parabolic skis having been warned against taking my older style, narrow straight telemark sticks. As the sunshine increased and the group gelled and the delightful guide encouraged, I was eventually able to successfully telemark down the mellow slopes and manage, ungracefully, down the steeper pitches.

Several of the skiers used alpine touring equipment. These skiers and all the other tele skiers wore light-weight but rigid plastic boots supporting the ankles for more effective turns. The Quebec group, who were several decades younger than us, bagged some major peaks but was exposed to wind-slab and some tough conditions. One of them was using a split board. They all seemed to suffer injuries and placed ice-packs on sore knees and ankles by the fifth day. Our guides found us wonderful snow. We averaged three or four long runs each day, donning our skins and shedding jackets for the climb up and reversing the process for the ski down. From some of the ridges, we could look down on Arrow Lakes and even over to Nakusp.

We set off from the lodge by 9a.m. each morning and often didn't return until 5p.m. exhausted but exhilarated. After removing our avalanche safety equipment and changing out of our ski clothes, we were then treated to appetizers followed by a hearty meal. We organized the



Hilary Crowley

Skiers on Sol Mountain, Monashees

Club Activities Around the Province

cooking in pairs so were only responsible for one full meal each. We ate like kings and although it wasn't orchestrated, we enjoyed a different menu each night ranging from Burmese ginger elk to Tamale Pie and always followed by delectable desserts, enjoying camaraderie and exchanging travel tales and ski stories. We were fortunate with great weather and snow conditions. After a week of fifty hours of skiing and



Hilary Crowley

great food, it is difficult to transition back into chores and work. Sol Mountain Lodge is recommended for all back-country ski lovers, who don't mind the extravagance of a helicopter trip and luxurious accommodation. The average age of our group of ten, ranging from 49 – 70 years old, was 60 and we all loved it. ■

Caledonia Ramblers Trip Last Summer

Hilary Crowley

We woke up to snow – a good twelve centimetres of it. The first thing we knew was when the weight on the tent squashed our heads. It was heavy and wet so we had to keep hitting the tent to make it slide off. It then accumulated in a wall all around the perimeter.

This was the second night of a nine day alpine hike from East Twin Creek to the Blueberry River, east of McBride. The route largely followed the BC/Alberta border, along the continental divide, adjacent to the Willmore Wilderness Area. The first day was mostly sunny and the route took us through alpine meadows covered in flowers with panoramic views of high snow-capped mountains in every direction. We camped the first night in a beautiful basin overlooking the Cushing Creek valley with a pretty waterfall coming down opposite camp.

There were twelve participants on this hike with the Caledonia Ramblers, led by Dave King. We followed the National Hiking Trail for the first couple of days following cairns that had been mapped and marked by Roy Howard and his crew from the Fraser Headwaters Alliance. The route took us through stunning scenery, rambling over wide expansive meadows with new vistas appearing over each ridge.



Dave King on ridge above Blueberry Lake

Hilary Crowley

The area around Mt Reynolds is a popular winter destination for snowmobilers and we were dismayed to find a total of two dozen beer cans, numerous plastic bottles and many broken down tracks and parts of snowmobiles along the route. We packed most of this stuff out in our packs but we wondered why someone on a motorized vehicle wouldn't pack out their own garbage. We did however also find a large Tupperware container full of chocolate bars, abandoned on a hillside, which we immediately shared and enjoyed.

On the first night there was a thunderstorm followed by rain and strong wind but the next day it cleared with just the occasional shower. The day started with a steep climb zigzagging up a rock face then up a long snow gully to the top of the pass. From there we descended a little and traversed meadows around Mt Renshaw, the dominating peak in the area. We made camp early at the base of Mt Renshaw. Five of the group then climbed up to the peak. The rest of us took a more leisurely hike across lush meadows to a ridge offering views over the Chalco Valley. We met back at camp for supper as the weather changed. It started raining heavily and cooled down. That was the night that it started snowing, keeping us camp-bound the whole of the next day.

Luckily we could make a fire and put up a tarp for some shelter. The snow eventually turned to sleet then rain. There was too much snow for safe hiking and route finding but during a short break in the weather some of the group decided to walk down to the lake for some exercise. One member started towards the ridge behind camp but turned back when he encountered fresh grizzly tracks in the snow. A few of us just stayed huddled round the fire all day drinking cups of tea.

We retired early to bed and were overjoyed in the morning when we woke to bright sunny skies. The views were spectacular as the mountains were sharp, bathed in the early pink light of dawn. We enjoyed a

simple breakfast on the rocks warmed by the sun and once the tents had dried out we packed up and continued on our trek.

The route took us through lush meadows full of alpine flowers including unique lemon-lavender paintbrush, white pin orchids, brilliant pink monkey flowers, delicate white fringe grass of Parnassus and tall purple gentians. We crossed

many creeks, some of which necessitated the removal of our hiking boots before crossing the cold, calf deep waters. We climbed high passes, necessitating climbing up scree, large boulders and snow fields. Each pass and ridge afforded fantastic views of more mountains including Mount Pauline, Resthaven Perseverance, Horsey Glacier and Mount Robson.

Club Activities Around the Province

At one point the preferred route was deemed too steep and dangerous to traverse so we climbed down 300 metres before climbing up again through a boulder strewn gulley and snow field to the top of a rocky ridge. Another time we climbed up a rock face using hand and foot holds only to find that there was no safe route on the other side so we had to descend again, all with our heavy packs on our backs. We eventually found a safe route which took us up to a 2400 metre pass with splendid views of Mount Robson to the South East and Kakwa to the North-West. From there we hiked down to a beautiful alpine lake where we could take a much needed bath and make camp. The mountains were reflected perfectly in the clear lake. That night the full moon rose be-



Left to Right: Ric Mlynarczyk, Mitch Olineck, Bruce Blashill, Uta Schuler

hind the mountains, bathed in a unique pink/mauve glow.

The following day included some steep climbing and rocky traversing around vertical waterfalls, large boulders and more snow pitches up and over more ridges and passes. We descended down a long snow field then grassy ridge to a tributary of Blueberry Creek under Jackpine Mountain. That evening a few of us climbed up to a ridge above camp where we witnessed a phenomenal sunset over the mountains as the

peaks became bathed in alpine glow and the gathering storm clouds changed from orange to mauve to crimson. As we returned to camp, the first rumble of thunder was heard and shortly after we had nestled down in our tents the storm hit. Bright orange sheets of lightning lit the sky. Thunder crashed all around us and howling winds hurled at the tent straining it against the fragile poles and stakes. Extended arms tried to restrain the tent and after an hour, as the electrical storm subsided, it was a relief to find that this flimsy contraption had once again sheltered us against the elements.

The following morning, we were again blessed by sunshine and we continued the short distance to Blueberry Lake. Two members chose to climb Jackpine Mountain while the rest of us enjoyed a more leisurely walk over grassy ridges with wonderful views of Chown Glacier, Bess Mountain and Mount Robson. The following morning we descended over 1,000 metres down the Blueberry trail to the Holmes River road, where our nine day alpine adventure ended as we returned to our hectic lives in civilization. ■



Alpine Lake camp on E Twin Creek to Blueberry hike

Club Ramblings



Mountaineering trip to the Skihist Region (area between Nahatlatch and Stein Rivers)

Gerry Kollmuss (BCMC)

July 26 to August 2, 2008

The inspiration for this trip came from viewing Kwoiek Needle on the 'Google Earth' website. Examining the map, I saw that a 'horseshoe' traverse of ridges and mountains could be done around Kwoiek Creek. With that knowledge, I convinced Silvia Bakovic and Ramsay Dyer into joining me in a ten day exploratory trip.

In preparation for the trip we did two things: first, an aerial flight of the area with Silke Gumplinger and second, a successful climb of Kwoiek Needle on July 13. We settled on a route starting from Log Creek on the Nahatlatch side to access the alpine. We would then follow glaciers and ridges in a clockwise direction around Kwoiek Creek climbing as many peaks along the way as possible. The attraction about this 'horseshoe' route was the possibility to exit at a number of different spots along the way by dropping down into the

Kwoiek Creek drainage and hiking out on the logging roads. However, it would mean a long walk (25 km) if we left the route early. Back in May, Ramsay and I did a Kwoiek Needle reconnaissance trip and we found the Kwoiek Creek Forest Service Road (FSR) blocked by boulders and slide debris 2 km from the start of the road.

Because this was going to be a traverse we needed transportation to our starting point. Lucky for us, Bob Woodhouse volunteered to drop



Kwoiek Needle

Gerry Kollmuss

Club Ramblings

us off at the Log Creek road after we arranged to leave my Toyota with local residents Mark and Audrey de Koning. Audrey would pick



Tiara Tower

Gerry Kollmuss

us up in ten days at the start of the Kwoiek Creek FSR where the road was impassable.

Covered in bugs, we laid our gear over the logging road doing some last minute sorting and packing. In horror, I realized that I had left the GPS in the front seat of my Toyota! After much discussion, we felt confident that we could navigate the “old school” way, using our maps and compasses.

The first day went as expected. We crossed Log Creek, walked to the end of the road and bashed through slide alder and bush for a few hours before setting up camp. The second day brought more bushwhacking, ending when we started gaining elevation up the east ridge of Longslog Mountain. The weather forecast for the week was for a few days of cloud and showers and then it was to get better, but at the moment it was whiteout. We were hoping to traverse around Longslog Mountain, however, we went straight up and over the aptly name Longslog Mountain. It was now only a short descent to reach the Chochiwa Glacier, but we decided to set up camp to escape the weather.

We were happy to wake up the next day to clearing skies and a gorgeous view of a snow arête on Tachewana Peak. The trip was progressing as planned and after two days of travel we were now in position to climb some rarely visited peaks. After ditching most of our gear in the middle of the Chochiwa Glacier, we climbed the arête to the summit where we found the register with the first ascent entry by BCMC members Roy Mason, Ralph Hutchison, Dick Chambers and Dick Culbert dated July 1st 1958. The other entries were from BCMC parties in 1971, a VOC entry in 1972 and the last entry was from a BCMC party in 1991. From here we continued across the Chochiwa Glacier and onto the Kwoiek Glacier. The wind had picked up considerably and we found some protection next to a rocky knoll between Kumkan and Kwoiek Peaks. With Mehatl Peak and Tiara Tower nearby, we were right where we wanted to be, but would the weather cooperate?

The wind buffeted the tent all night and in the morning it was a complete whiteout. We figured it would pass quickly, but by the end of the day, it was still snowing and blowing - the tent vestibule filling up with snow. The next morning was the same and we managed to entertain ourselves with a deck of cards. Our climbing days were numbered. We were perched on a heavily crevassed glacier at 2500m (8200') - trapped. We decided to call Bob Woodhouse, our contact person, for a weather update. Bob told us two things: the weather forecast was deteriorating and secondly that our families and friends were worried. We had to make the decision - leave as soon as possible or wait out the storm.

We decided to leave and discussed our ‘exit’ plan. We had two options: return the way we came or descend through the crevasse field towards Stukolait Lake. We choose the latter.

We needed some visibility before we would be able to descend. After two full days of being tent bound, the clouds lifted and we could see all the way to Mount Baker. It was windy and cold with six inches of fresh snow. But before our descent, we wanted to scramble up the knoll and take some pictures of Tiara Tower and Mehatl Peak. With Kumkan Peak only 153m (500') above us, we decided we would bag that peak. From the summit we could see that the bad weather was returning and descended quickly to pack up camp. As soon as we got off the glacier and were in view the lake, the weather closed in and it started snowing again. It was if the ‘*Weather Gods*’ were saying “get out and stay out!” From there we traversed high above the lake and then descended through the worse bush I have ever experienced. Spir-

its were getting low yet morale improved greatly when Silvia found a nice spot to make camp amidst the slide alder and devils club.

The following day brought more bushwhacking and creek crossings. The creek crossings were challenging as they required either crawling across logs or wading in thigh deep water. We ended the day with a 15 km FSR walk and we camped at Kwoiek Lake. Ironically, this is when the weather began to clear up.

The next morning, we walked the final two hours of our trip to meet Audrey. It turned out the blockage we saw in May had been cleared up. Audrey could have picked us up +/-15 km earlier!

This was my first big trip that I planned into a remote location and almost everything went as planned except the weather. Although we did not get to climb as many mountains as we wanted, we still had a great time exploring a rarely visited area and I would not hesitate to do it again.

Special thanks to Silke Gumplinger, Bob Woodhouse, Audrey and Mark de Koning, Outboundcommunications.com for the Satellite phone rental, and Ye Chu for editing this trip report.■



Ramsay on a slippery log crossing

Gerry Kollmuss

The Risk of Going Light and Fast in the Mountains

Lindsay Elms (ACC-Vancouver Island)

Going light and going fast in the mountains is not a new phenomenon. Even back in the 1930's fit and confident local mountaineers on Vancouver Island were out pushing the limits and, as with their latter counterparts, having fun. However, although there are many differences between then and now, there is one thing that they all have in common, and that is the need to "risk" attempting something new and to feel alive in doing so. The debate on the ramifications of undertaking these apparent dangerous sports continues today and a lot of soul-searching is done. When there is an accident and the media pick-up on it there is a huge public outcry as to why these people should be allowed to do this and why the tax payer should foot the bill for the rescue. This is a separate discussion not dealt with here.

Today we have operative contingency plans in place if something goes awry: precise GPS's, satellite personal tracking messengers (SPOT), accurate topographical maps, cell and satellite phones, PEP (the Provincial Emergency Program), effective locally trained Search and Rescue teams, well equipped and highly maneuverable helicopters with skilled pilots, and long range weather forecasters. With all this information and back-up services available it's a wonder that we need to think at all before heading out into the mountains! In the 1930's they were a lot more self reliant: local knowledge was acquired by hands-on travel in the area, as there were few maps available and no guide books. They were reliant on their own knowledge of weather conditions and predictions, there were no emergency phones and they couldn't expect to come across someone else out there carrying a cell phone; in fact coming across others for help was highly improbable. And then who would come in and help an injured person? And how long would that take to get in and then get them out safely? It was highly unlikely that they would be whisked off the mountain within a few hours of the accident occurring. And what did their first aid kits look like back then? A few rags as bandages and some strong medicinal compound to calm nerves and relieve belly aches. Why would you even consider going into the mountains!

From the *Comox Argus*, August 1, 1931

Peak-a-thon

Newest craze

Scampering around the mountain peaks here is mere amusement to two local youths who made a record ascension of Mount Albert Edward, 6,100 [6,867] feet altitude; set out for new worlds to conquer, scaled a new peak, Mount Regan, then another peak, Mount Arthur, [Jutland] all in ten hours. Jack Gregson and Len Rossiter bested the previous record of two hours forty minutes by climbing Mount Albert Edward in one hour fifty-five minutes.

They went down the North Face of the peak by a rope, chopped steps on quarter of a mile across a snowfield, had lunch, climbed Mount Regan which had never before had been climbed and built a cairn. Descending, they climbed Mount Arthur then rejoined witnesses on Mount Albert Edward. The three peaks are all over 6,000 feet and the feat of the mountaineers is without parallel, say members of the local mountain club.

Depart Circlet Lake - 8:15

Mount Albert Edward summit - 10:10

Mount Regan summit - 12:35

Mount Arthur [Jutland] summit - 4:45

Return Circlet Lake - 6:00

From the *Comox Argus*, August 1932

Marathon Hike

Courtenay hikers take 24 hour jaunt

To promote circulation and by way of a little exercise, Sid Williams, Jack Bowbrick and Roy Harrison undertook a marathon twenty-four hour hike round the hills and home again. They left the end of Dove Creek Road at midnight on Saturday, and arrived at Croteau's camp at 6:15, where they were warmly received by Mr. Croteau and Len Rossiter and given a bumper breakfast. They reached the top of Mount Albert Edward at noon and followed the range south to the Castle [Castlecrag Mountain] which they reached at three o'clock. They came down to Moat Lake and went through to the junction of the Dove Creek and Mount Becher trails together. Sid then struck off for Mount Becher, while the other two came home by Dove Creek. Sid arrived back at Bevan at half past eleven having been on the trail for twenty-four hours. He confessed that his feet were a little sore next morning. ■



Mount Albert Edward

Lindsay Elms



Fallen Giants: A History of Himalayan Mountaineering from the Age of Empire to the Age of Extremes

by Maurice Isserman and Stewart Weaver;

ISBN: 978-0-300-11501-7; Yale University Press, 2008.

Review by Mike Nash, March 2009

I first came across this work at the Banff Mountain Book Festival in November 2008. According to its cover notes it is “the first comprehensive history of Himalayan mountaineering in fifty years”, and later during the festival it won the James Monroe Thorington Award for the Best Work of Mountaineering History. At first, I was a bit daunted by the size and academic appearance of the book, and I thought that I might read it selectively and otherwise use it as a reference. Instead I was pleasantly surprised to find myself hooked on a near page-turner from the start.

Fallen Giants is an engaging book that struck me as being both familiar, yet managed to bring a fresh approach to its subject. Both authors are professors of history, and they are enthusiastic hikers and mountain climbers but are not, apparently, mountaineering superstars. These attributes allowed them to bring both professorial expertise and passion to the work, with an objectivity that is not always evident in first-hand accounts of mountain adventures.

After an initial foray into the geology of the Himalayas, the book opens with the geopolitical and mountaineering history of the region going back to the second millennium B.C. It continues with an insightful background from the “Great Game” of the nineteenth century, to the contemporary political tensions of a part of the world bordered by China, India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. This sets the stage for the book’s main purpose, relating the mountaineering history of Central Asia.

I was already familiar with many of the big Himalayan stories from having read first-hand accounts of such pioneers as Eric Shipton, Bill Tillman, John Hunt, Maurice Herzog, and others; and while these great adventures are retold in *Fallen Giants* in just a few pages each, they do not lack in essential detail. Indeed, the book adds elements that I was not as aware of, such as the strikingly different perspectives of Tenzing Norgay, the man who was likely the strongest and the most experienced Everest climber on the mountain in 1953 when he summited with Ed Hillary. Somehow I have missed reading Tenzing Norgay’s biography, an omission that I intend to redress.

After an engrossing first two thirds, and as the book seems set to get lost in the plethora of post-1953 Himalayan expeditions, it refocuses with a lively portrayal of the British working class ‘hard men’ who burst onto the scene. These include tradesmen such as Joe Brown and Don Whillans who learned to climb on local crags using clothes lines. I remember them as TV personalities in my youth in the UK with live televised climbs of Welsh crags, and in one instance of the outside of the Eiffel Tower with early radio cameras. From there, the book continues to grip reader interest as 8,000-metre peaks are climbed in rapid succession with ever-increasing arrays of innovative

firsts. Among these is the 1963 ascent by the first American to summit Everest, Jim Whittaker, that was capped just a few days later by a do-or-die (no return rappel option) traverse of the summit via the West Ridge and down via South Col by team mates Willi Unsoeld and Tom Hornbein.

Nothing quite prepares the reader for the bizarre ill-fated attempt by the CIA to put a nuclear-powered spy device on the summit of Nanda Devi in the days before spy satellites. No wonder the famous Sanctuary that was first explored by Shipton and Tillman in the 1930s was put off limits, as the device disappeared during its first winter cached on the side of the mountain, and people worried that its plutonium might make its way into a river supplying drinking water to millions. As far as anyone knows, it has never been found, and some impressive mountaineering feats related to this sorry affair apparently remain under a veil of secrecy. I could go on, but the hundreds of stories in the book are best experienced by reading *Fallen Giants* as it closes in on the present era.

A failing for Canadian readers is that the book lacks Canadian content, focusing as it does on British, European, American and Asian efforts in the Himalayas. This wasn’t too noticeable until near the end when the authors document the first Everest ascents by women as being Indian Bachendri Pal in 1984, American Stacy Allison in 1988, and Brit Rebecca Stephens in 1993, oblivious to the fact that the first woman from the entire Western Hemisphere to reach the summit was Canadian Sharon Wood in 1986. This left me wondering what other Canadian influences had been left out. There was, at least, last year’s Canadian connection through Banff, where many legendary figures of twentieth century Himalayan mountaineering that appear in the book have surfaced at recent Banff Mountain Book Festivals, along with more than a few lingering controversies between them.

The other difficulty with the book, perhaps unavoidable given the vast array of contemporary undertakings in the Himalayas, is the superficial treatments of the closing chapter as it races over a few choice topics including, sadly, the 1996 debacle on Everest. The book does manage a positive rally with its closing retrospective, *Gather Courage*, and I found it easy to forgive an otherwise weak ending and Canadian faux pas.

If you are interested in mountaineering and/or Himalayan history, or just like good stories, I recommend this book as a keeper that will undoubtedly be re-read and used for reference. It is unlikely to be surpassed as a historical tome of its chosen topic any time soon, except, perhaps, for its coverage of the last two decades. ■



Expeditions to the Edge: Stories of Worldwide Adventure

Lynn Martel

Vancouver: Rocky Mountain Books, 2008

Review by Ron Dart (BCMC)

There are plenty of books by authors about their outdoor adventures or their treks with a few others to challenging places. The focus tends to

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be compact and isolated to the few on the trips. There are also libraries of books about hiking, scrambling, walking and climbing. The other approach to the out of doors is the more aerial and comprehensive overview that draws together the broader family that often does many an adventure. Needless to say, thousands take to the mountains, deserts, water and sky each year, and we know little about such expeditions to the edge.

Expeditions to the Edge is a wide ranging, comprehensive and entertaining read of the many men, women and some children that have nudged, pushed themselves and gone to places their souls and bodies have not gone before. Lynn Martel has done her homework well, and the short but poignant tales she recovers and tells to the curious are must reads. We meet many a crazy Canuck and those from other countries that have braved significant challenges and returned home, memory intact, to relish a deed well done.

Expeditions to the Edge is divided into six readable sections: 1) Fun Seekers, 2) Explorers, 3) On the Job, 4) Storytellers, 5) Adventurepreneurs and 6) Walk the Walk. Each of these adventure packed sections is further subdivided into a vast array of Canadian outdoor legends and icons that have not flinched from going to the edge when each and every nerve and sinew would compel a turning back.

It was Lynn's task to draw together the diverse writers and adventurers in this book and unite their tales in an attractive but compelling way. She planned the route, belayed each and all along and made sure the book reached the published summit. The vistas from the reading perch are well worth the purchase and evocative reads. Each small chapter offers the reader a sample and feel for what it means to be on an expedition to the edge both in Canada and the much larger world of adventures worldwide.

I found the final section, 'Walk the Walk', the most touching and telling for the simple reason that, at the deepest level, the real expedition to the edge is the extending of the hand of compassion, kindness and justice in Canada and the world to others, and 'Walk the Walk', treks to this challenging edge.

This book is a must purchase and read. It will allure, tantalize and, hopefully, awaken and inspire the interested and curious to trek to the edge within Canada and beyond. The introduction to the book explains how the mountains awoke in Lynn such a longing and desire, and I'm sure the many soul friends that Lynn has brought together in this missive will do the same. ■



Dick Culbert

***The Coast Mountains Trilogy:
Mountain Poems 1957-1971***

Illustrations by Arnold Shives

(Vancouver: Tricouni Press, 2009)

Review by Ron Dart (BCMC)

There is no doubt that Dick Culbert is a mountaineering legend and pioneer on the West Coast. *Canadian Mountaineering Anthology*:

Stories from 100 years on the edge (1994) suggests that 1960-1975 is 'The Culbert Era in the Coast Mountains'. *Pushing the Limits: The Story of Canadian Mountaineering* (2000), by Chic Scott, concurs with Bruce Fairley's

position in *Canadian Mountaineering Anthology*. Scott unpacked the significance of 'Culbert's Decade' in visual detail in *Pushing the Limits*.

There are those who know about the mountaineer, Dick Culbert, and there are others who have found his informative book, *A Climber's Guide to the Coastal Ranges of British Columbia* (published by the Alpine Club of Canada in 1965), the first book to describe, in meticulous detail, the various peaks and routes worthy of ascent in the Coast Mountains. Culbert had become such a climbing legend in the 1960s-1970s that he was lionized in Phil Dowling's *The Mountaineers: Famous Climbers in Canada* (1979).

There is, therefore, Dick Culbert the mountaineer and author of a book that went into a couple of editions on the Coast Mountains. But, there is also Dick Culbert the poet. *The Coast Mountain Trilogy: Mountain Poems, 1957-1971* threads together some of Dick's most challenging, evocative and insightful poetry in the years that the mountains were his hearth, home and cathedral.

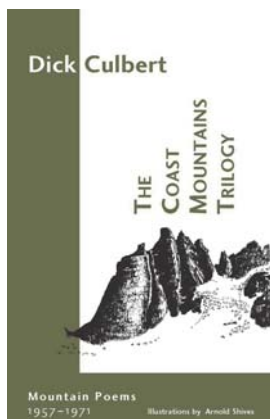
The Coast Mountain Trilogy is divided into three sections: 1) The Coast Mountain Trilogy, 2) Early Poems and 3) Late Poems. The Coast Mountain Trilogy is just that: 3 poems ("Land of Lichen", "Land of Ice" and "Land of Lakes"). Early Poems is the largest section in the missive, and has many an evocative and compelling tale to tell with images and metaphors that hold the attention and imagination for lingering moments well after the read. Late Poems is the shortest section in the book, and there is a decided sense that Culbert is bidding adieu to the mountains and the reasons for such a nod to the fading past.

Glenn Woodsworth has written a fine 'Introduction' to *The Coast Mountain Trilogy*. Glenn places the poems in both a chronological and thematic context. He also makes more than clear where Dick's poetry fits into the larger genre of mountaineering poetry within the Canadian alpine tradition.

Robert Service, Earle Birney and E.J. Pratt are held high as models that Culbert drew from both in style and content. Arnold Shives, a trekking companion of Culbert and Woodsworth from the early 1960s, adds to the charm and allure of *The Coast Mountain Trilogy* with his

unique and rare black/white sketches of the Coastal Mountains.

The publication of *The Coast Mountain Trilogy* should be welcomed at a variety of levels. Culbert's poetry is celebrated, West Coast mountaineering history is recounted and recalled, mountaineering literature is revived, and Culbert, Woodsworth and Shives team up again to celebrate an era of Coastal Mountain mountaineering culture. This is a book that should be read, digested and reread many times. It will become part of



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the archives of Coastal Mountain lore and legend.

Conrad Kain: BC Mountaineering Icon

by Ron Dart (BCMC)

Conrad Kain (1883-1935) was born in the small Austrian town of Nasswald near the famous rock face, Raxalpe, where most of the best climbers cut their teeth and learn their demanding scrambling skills. Kain did not have an easy life. His father died when he was a young boy, and he, in his early teens, had to become the bread and butter provider for his family. He took jobs as a goat herder, worked in a quarry and even poached animals to feed his hungry siblings and mother. He managed to find his real passion, though, in his late teens: mountaineering and mountain guiding. He received his Austrian mountain guiding certificate ('FuhrerBuch') in 1906, and his reputation as a mountain guide in Austria soared with each led trip.

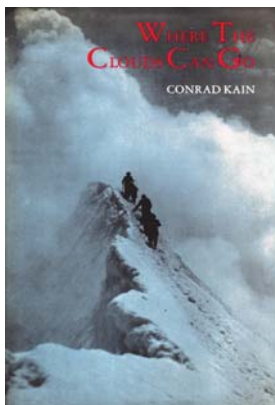
Kain was keen to see the larger world, though, and his restless longings soon opened up new guiding possibilities. Kain applied in 1909 to be a CPR mountain guide, like many Swiss guides, in the Canadian Rockies. There were no openings for the eager Kain with the CPR. He was welcomed by Arthur Wheeler (president of the Alpine Club of Canada) to be the first paid mountain guide for the fledgling Alpine Club of Canada (founded in 1906).

So, Kain arrived in Banff in 1909, and his initial job was to assist in the building of the Alpine Clubhouse on Sulphur Mountain in Banff. Kain became the lead guide at the annual Alpine Club's summer camp in the summer of 1909 at Lake O'Hara. Many a peak was scaled, and Kain's reputation was in the ascendant.

The mountaineering community is celebrating this year the hundredth anniversary of Kain's arrival in Canada. Kain established himself, within a few years of being in BC, as one of the foremost mountaineers and mountain guides. He initiated the first ski hill and jump in Banff in 1911, and he was the first to climb the highest peak in the BC Rockies (Mt. Robson) in 1913. The Northeast face of Robson is called Kain Face. Kain did many of the first ascents in BC, and his climbing record has rarely been matched or equaled. Kain had a fondness for the Bugaboo Group in the Purcell Range, and he did most of the first ascents of the spires in the area.

The life of a mountain guide in the early decades of the 20th century was a precarious one. When the mountaineering season was over, guides often had to find other sources of income. Kain became a trapper and hunter to top up his meager income. He would often spend many a winter night under the stars, living off roasted squirrel, whisky-jack or soup made from the carcass of a discarded marten. It was not uncommon for Kain to trek 40-50 kilometers day as a trapper and hunter. But, his real passion was climbing the peaks in BC and guiding others to such paradise places.

Kain had become such a legend and icon in the BC mountaineering community by the 1920s-1930s that many of his climbing



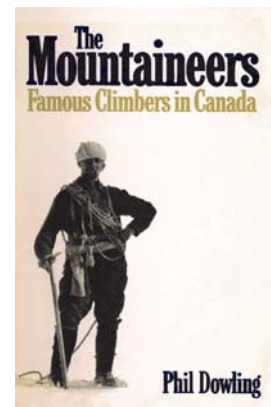
clients wanted to know more about their trusted guide. Kain's biography, *Where The Clouds Can Go*, was initially published in 1935. It was republished again in 1954 and 1979. The biography is a solid keeper and charmer. The tale told opens up British Columbia outdoor history in an appealing and alluring manner. It's hard to put the book down. Much is evoked in the reading.

Kain spent his final and waning years in Wilmer, British Columbia. The depression years were hard on many, and Kain knew the demands of the time well. He was aging, and his strength was not what it once was. His wife, Hetta, died in 1933, and Kain followed her in 1934 at the early age of 50 years of age.

2009 is an important year for those that see Conrad Kain as a model, mentor and mountaineering icon of BC. The Alpine Club of Canada is doing a special Kain week that will retrace and climb many of the peaks that Kain ascended. Many are the pilgrimages planned to Kain Hut to soak in the memory of a BC mountaineering pioneer. Mount Conrad in the Purcells celebrates Kain's many climbing accomplishments as did Earle Birney's well crafted poem, 'Conrad Kain' (1949). Kain's significance is well recounted in Phil Dowling's *The Mountaineers: Famous Climbers in Canada* (1979).

BC outdoor history would be leaner and thinner were it not for Conrad Kain, and many is the memento that remains to remind those that turn to the mountains that some of the early mountaineers in BC were pure gold. The Conrad Kain Climbing Wall at J.A. Laird School in Invermere has recently been constructed to honour the life and many climbs of Kain.

There is no doubt that Conrad Kain is a BC mountaineering legend and icon, and 2009 is a fitting year to celebrate the 100th anniversary of his coming to Canada and BC. ■



The Mountain Knows No Expert: George Evanoff: Outdoorsman and Contemporary Hero

Mike Nash

Natural Heritage Books: Toronto, 2009

Review by Ron Dart (BCMC)

George Evanoff (1932-1998) has too long waited for someone to tell the tale of his well lived mountain life. He is a mountaineering mentor and icon to many. There has been a need for a thoughtful, curious and probing biographer to unravel the richness of Evanoff's full and challenging mountain life. Nash deserves ample praise for walking the reader into the varied and ever unfolding mountaineering journey of George Evanoff.

The Mountain Knows No Expert opens with an evocative Prologue: "Path of a Hero". This is also the subtitle of the book. Evanoff's life

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unfolds in the mythic hero mould. The hero faces many challenges, and, inch by inch, lessons are learned and character is filled out in greater depth and detail.

Evanoff was a child of an immigrant Macedonian family that sunk deep and deeper roots in the rocky and mountain laden region of northwest Alberta and British Columbia. Evanoff's early mountain years were typical of the time—mountains were places to hunt for game, bring home killed trophy and reel in many a hapless fish.

It was, to Evanoff's credit, that he, like Andy Russell from Alberta, came to see that mountains need not be places for the slaughter of animals that could not defend themselves. A mountain man emerged who became more committed to the roles of ski guide and ski patrol, a mentor in avalanche safety and superb mountain guide in the Prince George area and beyond. Evanoff offered leadership in the Alpine Club of Canada and the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC, and his mountaineering vision brought much needed leadership to the growing industry of ecotourism in the area he called home.

The Mountain Knows No Expert is divided into fifteen chapters, and each chapter, vividly and convincingly, unfolds the heroic life of George Evanoff.

We meet in each chapter many of the men and women whose lives

intersected with Evanoff's (including Nash's), and the impact, for good, that Evanoff had on their lives. Most of the chapters are replete with photographs of Evanoff, friends and the mountains that recount, in a visual manner, the full mountain life lived by Evanoff. The book reaches its inevitable conclusion with about 30 pages that fill in many a gap: "Epilogue: Legacy of a North Rockies Man", "George's Mentor's", "Backcountry Affiliations", "Land and Resource Planning in British Columbia" and "Tributes".

Mike Nash has done an A++ job in recalling and articulating the life of George Evanoff. The title, *The Mountain Knows No Experts*, is a fit and fine guide for the biography. Evanoff was killed by a grizzly bear in 1998. Many other mountaineers with the highest qualifications have died in the mountains from a variety of accidents. The mountains always have the final say and sway, and even experts are not immune from the unpredictable nature of the wild and untamed backcountry—truly a basic lesson one and all should heed. *The Mountain Knows No Experts* is the sort of book that will hold the reader throughout the day and night. It's hard to put down. Do purchase the book, and learn much about George Evanoff, the maturing of mountaineering in northwest British Columbia and the older lessons that the ancient rock guardians have still yet to teach us. ■

The Mountain Knows No Expert by Mike Nash

...the story of former FMCBC Northern Director, George Evanoff

The Mountain Knows No Expert: George Evanoff—Outdoorsman and Contemporary Hero is the story of a man who, in his spare time, became a ski patrol leader, ski guide, avalanche specialist, mountaineer, explorer, conservation advocate, mentor, and pioneer in ecotourism in Canada's northern Rocky Mountains. George Evanoff understood the mountains and nature, knew how to enjoy being there, and could stimulate others to a similar awareness, encouraging them to tread lightly on the land. Widely regarded as an expert in the outdoors, he resisted that label, and ironically lost his life in the mountains in 1998.

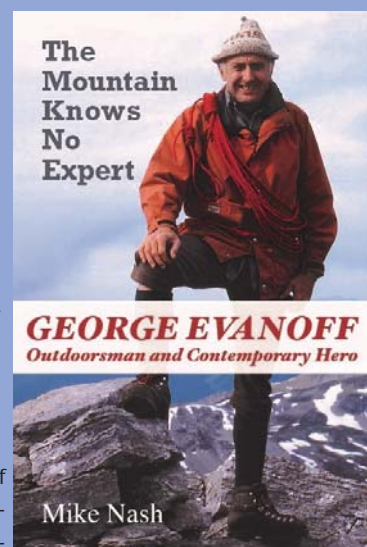
George Evanoff was a long-time member of the Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Club and the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC. He volunteered his time and expertise for many years by organizing and leading hikes, trail clearing works, and several week-long, backcountry hikes to the northern Rockies, notably to an area known as Kakwa. He was also a founding member of the Prince George Section of the Alpine Club of Canada, which also became a member club of the FMCBC; and just two months before his death he led a memorable climbing camp to the vicinity of Mount Ida in Kakwa for the Section. George Evanoff served as Northern Regional Director of the FMCBC and taught avalanche safety courses in North Central B.C. on behalf of the Federation, and in 1995 he received an *Outstanding Contribution* recognition award from the FMCBC. When public land use planning processes got underway in British Columbia, George Evanoff represented the Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Club and the FMCBC in the Prince George Land and Resource Management Plan and the Protected Area Strategy for that district, and was the principle public proponent of Kakwa Provincial Park, and also for an area south of the McGregor River known initially as the Fang Mountain Protected Area, and later named Evanoff Provincial Park in his memory.

The Mountain Knows No Expert was recently published in March 2009 by Natural Heritage Books, a member of the Dundurn Group, in Toronto, Canada.

The book contains notes, bibliographical references, index; 320 pages, 56 photographs, and 6 maps. ISBN: 978-1-55002-868-3. Can \$28.99 — UK £16.99. For booksellers, the Canadian distribution centre is the University of Toronto Press, toll free: 1-800-565-9523

Mike Nash is the author of two prior books, *Exploring Prince George - A Guide to North Central B.C. Outdoors* (Rocky Mountain Books; 2004 and 2007) and *Outdoor Safety and Survival in British Columbia's Backcountry* (2007), which were profiled in the 2008 edition of *Cloudburst*.

The author of nearly 500 published works, Mike got his principle start in writing with a column titled *Northern Perspective* that appeared regularly in *Cloudburst* from 1990 to 2000.



Club Updates

Alberni Valley Outdoor Club

Robert Gunn

The AVOC continues to offer a range of day and some weekend trips from the Alberni Valley. This winter's heavy snow and reduced logging activity, hence fewer roads being ploughed, did restrict areas available, however. Members had an enjoyable weekend on Mt Cain, once again in perfect spring conditions.



Access through private timber lands continues to be an issue, with the result that the Inlet Trail, down an old rail bed and our 'flag prayer' project which we have been strongly supporting, is in trouble. Despite being well funded and having the support of the Regional District, Island Timberlands now appear less willing to sign a lease with the RD, in spite of their earlier letters of support to funders. As they control the lands adjacent to the City, it may be a trail that starts farther away than we wished, closer to the boundaries of the TFL. Stay tuned.

Meanwhile road access to the Nahmint Valley has been re-established following the wash outs of 2006. This makes access to Nahmint, Klitsa and the peaks around 5040 easier. Club members enjoyed some botanizing outings to the seldom visited area last fall.

A full spring and summer schedule has been developed and can be viewed on our page of the FBCMC web site.■

BC Mountaineering Club

Brian Wood

As some of you may remember, the BC Mountaineering Club celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2007. There were many special activities to mark this event, and one of these will be the publishing of the Club's Centennial Journal this summer. The Centennial Journal will be the largest journal published by the Club, containing over 400 pages with many colour photographs, and in a larger format of 8.5 x 11 inches compared with the old smaller format of 8.5 x 7 inches. Most of the articles will be re-published from earlier BCMC publications, some of which were published around the time the Club was founded. Other articles will be published for the first time and many of these will recount the activities of the Centennial year. These activities included the recent ascent of Mount Fairweather, 50 years after it was climbed by the Club to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 1957, and a recent re-enactment of the first ascent of Mt Garibaldi which happened in 1907, the same year the Club was founded. This journal, along with the previously released documentary Centennial Video which was also produced as part of the Centennial celebrations, will be distributed freely to those persons who were Club members in 2007. Copies of the journal and the video will be available to non-members for a nominal charge.

Over its long existence, the Club has acquired many old items of interest (mainly photos and printed materials, plus some old mountaineering gear), and later this year these items will be placed in the archives collection of the North Vancouver Museum and Archives where they have excellent archival storage and display space. In 2007, as part of our Centennial celebrations the Museum provided a good display of

some of the Club's old artifacts (not its members!), and we are optimistic that this venue will be a good home for the Club's archives. It is also close to the core of the Club's early mountaineering activities in the North Shore mountains.

Just in case the reader might be thinking that our Club dwells in the past, we have an excellent website at www.bcmc.ca where Club trip schedules and other announcements can be found. The website provides a wealth of information relating to upcoming instructional courses, social programs, camps etc. The website also provides access to old Club newsletters and journals, and reports from the Recreation and Conservation Committee which deal with issues relating to backcountry access and recreation matters. Following its practice over many decades, the Club puts on trips every weekend, and usually a few summer camps (ie. a trip longer than a long weekend) in various locations throughout the Province. Our membership fluctuates throughout the year, and is typically about 400-450 members.■

Island Mountain Ramblers

Bill Perry

The 2009 Ramblers schedule contains an impressive array of hikes, climbs, ski tours, and training sessions in snow, rock, and avalanche safety techniques. There has also been an exchange of trip schedules with other mid-island clubs to ensure a wide choice of activities.

There is a great deal of interest in the Vancouver Island Spine Trail, following Gil Parker's presentation at the club's AGM in March. Members are involved in planning the trail's location in the Nanaimo – Port Alberni Area.

On a disappointing note, portions of trails adjoining the Judges' Route on Mount Arrowsmith have been destroyed by logging. The club understood that an agreement was in place to protect these trails, and a letter of protest from the FMCBC has been sent.■

Vancouver Island Trails Information Society

John Harris

The Vancouver Island Trails Information Society (VITIS) has printed and revised 3 books describing trails on Vancouver Island since 1972. Book I includes Victoria and Vicinity, Book II includes South-central Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, and Book 3 covers Northern Vancouver Island. Book I (13th Edition), edited by Richard Blier, was last revised in 2007 and Book 3 (10th Edition) was recently revised by Gil Parker in 2008. Book II (8th edition) was last revised in 2000 and a revised edition is actively being worked on by Richard Blier. The revised 9th edition should be available early in 2010. Books should be available in most bookstores and outdoor stores on Vancouver Island and also can be purchased on the website.

We welcome new, up-dated trail information from anywhere on Vancouver Island and this can be submitted through our website www.hikingtrailsbooks.com. We try to include any new information there between book revisions and will acknowledge your assistance which will be greatly appreciated. ■

Announcements

The Vancouver Island Trails Information Society

welcomes new, up-dated trail information from anywhere on Vancouver Island . Please submit your trail information through our website www.hikingtrailsbooks.com .

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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 FMCBC@mountainclubs.org with the subject line: Cloudburst Photo Contest.

Strathcona Park Traverse

for one week in August 2009

Are any members of the Vancouver Island clubs interested in a one week long joint trip in Strathcona Park with some members of the BCMC? We would expect this trip to be on and off trail, but mostly non-technical and limited to class 3 scrambling on the day trips.

The route is flexible, as are the dates, but we feel that somewhere around the middle of August would be good. We would expect to carry in one week's supplies, hopefully along a reasonable access trail to a base camp area where we could stay for 2-3 nights to lighten our loads and try some day trips scrambling up some of the peaks. We would then move on to another area for perhaps two nights, permitting another one day for peak scrambling before finally leaving the park and returning to the cars by a different route. To avoid returning the same way to the cars we would probably need a car shuttle.

If anyone is interested in this type of trip at this short notice, please call me at (604) 222-1541, or email me at:

bjwood@telus.net.

Brian Wood, Vancouver. BCMC Director for FMCBC

Thank you to all the people and clubs who submitted articles and photos for our Spring/Summer 2009 issue of *Cloudburst*. It was very easy to put together because we had great material to work with. Please be sure to think of us when out on your trips this summer and bring your camera. We are always looking for interesting articles for our *Club Ramblings* section so please be sure to send us your funny or enlightening stories, poetry, and anything that might be of interest to your fellow club members. Please contribute so that we can represent many different clubs and areas around the province.

Jodi Appleton, Administrative Manager



back-off gear tag



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Member Clubs

Alberni Valley Outdoor Club

<http://www.mountainclubs.org/AVOC.htm>

Alpine Club of Canada – Vancouver Section

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

Alpine Club of Canada – Vancouver Island Section

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

Alpine Club of Canada – Prince George Section

<http://vts.bc.ca/ACC-PG/>

Backroads Outdoor Club

<http://backroadsoutdoor.ca/>

BC Mountaineering Club

<http://bcmc.ca/index.asp>

Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Club

<http://web.unbc.ca/~ramblers/>

Chilliwack Outdoor Club

<http://www.chilliwackoutdoorclub.com/>

Comox District Mountaineering Club

<http://www.comoxhiking.com>

Fraser Headwaters Alliance

<http://www.fraserheadwaters.org/>

Island Mountain Ramblers

<http://islandmountainramblers.blogspot.com/>

Kootenay Mountaineering Club

<http://www.kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca/>

Mount Remo Backcountry Society

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

North Shore Hikers

<http://www.northshorehikers.org/>

North Vancouver Outdoors Club

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

Outsetters Club of Vancouver

<http://www.outsetters.org/>

Valley Outdoor Association

<http://www.valleyoutdoor.org/>

Vancouver Island Trails Information Society

<http://www.hikingtrailsbooks.com/>

Varsity Outdoor Club – Vancouver (UBC)

<http://www.ubc-voc.com/>



Gordon Dunham

North Shore Hikers posing for a photo on Mount Seymour during one of their weekly Wednesday hikes

Please Return Undeliverable Copies to:

Federation of Mountain Clubs

P.O. Box 19673

Vancouver, BC

V5T 4E7



Dan Carey

Gerry Kollmuss and Silvia Bakovic on the summit of Kwoiek Needle on July 13, 2008 (Gerry's birthday)