

CLOUDBURST

Sigurd Creek Bridge Update

Things are getting crowded in the backcountry

Mt Logan Adventures

Ruthie Oltmann: Baroness of Kananaskis Country



FEDERATION OF MOUNTAIN CLUBS OF BC

Spring/Summer 2013



The Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia (FMCBC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of and the accessibility to British Columbia's backcountry wilderness and mountain areas

Membership in the FMCBC is open to any club or individual who supports our vision, mission and purpose. Member fees go towards furthering our work to protect and preserve the backcountry for non-motorized recreation users. Member benefits include a subscription to our *Cloudburst* newsletter, monthly updates through our FMCBC E-News, and access to an inexpensive third-party liability insurance program.

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Cover Photo by Jay MacArthur

This shot, from close to the top of Bugaboo Spire (Kain route), shows Julio Velandio, from the ACC Vancouver Section camp, on the last tricky 5.7 lead. Another group who had climbed the NE ridge was getting ready to rap down.

Articles and Advertising

Articles should not exceed 1000 words. Photos should be at least 4x6 inches at 150-300 DPI resolution. We only accept PNG, TIF, EPS and JPEG file format for photos and advertisements. For photos, please include photographer, location, names and a description to be included with the photo. For articles please include the author and a title. For advertisements please include a web link.

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The Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

Working on your behalf

The Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC) is a democratic, grassroots organization dedicated to the conservation of and the accessibility to British Columbia's backcountry wilderness and mountain areas. As our name indicates we are a federation of outdoor clubs with a membership of approximately 3800 people from 27 clubs across the province. Our membership is comprised of a diverse group of non-motorized mountain recreationists including hikers, climbers, mountaineers, trail runners, backcountry skiers and snowshoers. The FMCBC also has several individual members who are not affiliated with any club, but share our concerns and interests.

The FMCBC recognizes backcountry hikers, mountaineers and ski-tourers to be a traditional user group of BC's wilderness and mountain areas and represents their rights province-wide to freely access and enjoy a high quality experience. As an organization, we believe that the enjoyment of these pursuits in an unspoiled environment is a vital component to the quality of life for British Columbians and by acting under the policy of "talk, understand and persuade" the FMCBC advocates for these interests.

Membership in the FMCBC is open to any club or individual who supports our vision, mission and purpose as outlined below and includes benefits such as a subscription to the FMCBC newsletter *Cloudburst*, monthly updates through the FMCBC E-News, and access to an inexpensive Third-Party Liability insurance program.

FMCBC's **vision** is that British Columbia's backcountry is shared amongst all recreational users in a way that self-propelled users have reasonable access to an enjoyable experience.

FMCBC's **mission** is to advocate for safe, self-propelled activities (such as hiking, mountaineering, backcountry skiing, snowshoeing, trail running and other backcountry activities) and the protection of BC's backcountry for current and future generations to experience.

FMCBC's **purpose** is:

- To represent clubs and the public interested in non-motorized backcountry recreation in BC, and to advise and take action on their behalf in matters which may impact their backcountry recreation experiences.
- To make recommendations to government and non-government organizations regarding the protection of and access to BC's backcountry and trails.
- To encourage self-propelled backcountry recreation, and to promote low-impact and safe practices.
- To promote the development and maintenance of a system of trails in BC.
- To promote the sound management and preservation of BC's backcountry recreation resources.

The FMCBC fulfills its purpose with a comprehensive approach to mountain recreation and conservation by:

- Participating in provincial land use decision processes
- Working to positively change government agency policies so that self-propelled outdoor recreation opportunities are recognized and protected
- Representing wilderness as a legitimate land use and a resource of identifiable value to society
- Advocating for new parks and wilderness resources, and working to maintain the integrity of existing parks and wilderness resources
- Advocating for improved access to existing recreational resources
- Supporting the building, maintaining and protecting of hiking and mountain access trails
- Promoting non-motorized and self-propelled recreation activities in BC's mountains and wilderness
- Educating its member and the public on mountain and backcountry safety issues and working with member clubs to address risk management issues
- Promoting membership within our member clubs
- Negotiating with insurance brokers to provide extensive liability insurance coverage for our members clubs

At the core of FMCBC's projects, issues and successes are the countless hours donated by dedicated volunteers from our member clubs across the province. Much of the FMCBC's work is done through committees including our Trails Committee and Recreation and Conservation Committee. With the exception of part-time assistance provided by the FMCBC's Program and Administration Manager, work on these programs is done mainly by volunteers. Without these volunteers the FMCBC would not exist and we appreciate all those who have volunteered in the past or are current volunteers and we encourage others to join us to help us reach our vision. ■

President Report

Scott Webster (FMCBC President, UBC Varsity Outdoor Club Member)

There are a few important updates I'd like to bring to your attention as we head towards the summer of 2013. First, I'm happy to report that the random survey of BC residents regarding non-motorized recreation has been completed by SFU. There is now an opportunity for club members to complete the survey to give complementary data to the random sampling. [Click here](#) to participate. We look forward to receiving some of the results at our AGM in June.

Speaking of the AGM, we are currently looking for candidates to run for the positions of Treasurer and Vice-President. If you have ideas about where the FMCBC should be headed or are looking to get more involved, this is an excellent opportunity to contribute to the future of non-motorized recreation in BC. Please contact Jodi or myself for more information at fmcbc@mountainclubs.org.

The FMCBC has recently released a policy document containing our views on roofed accommodations in BC Parks titled [FMCBC Policy on Huts, Cabins and Lodges in BC Provincial Parks](#). Take a look! Publications like this one allow us to collect our thoughts into a concrete form that we can easily distribute to government, commercial operators, and the public. ■



Anne Webster

Scott with his son Joel in Manning Park

FMCBC News

FMCBC News

Jodi Appleton (FMCBC Program and Administration Manager)

The FMCBC has been up to lots of good work over the past six months. So much of our work is done by volunteers that I hope you'll take a moment and read over page 22 which acknowledges just some of the work that our board members, committee chairs and members have done for us over the past couple years. I would encourage anyone who is interested in helping to protect the backcountry for non-motorized recreation to think about volunteering with the FMCBC. Even a few hours on a committee for a year can help further our work.

I am happy to say that we have recently had five new clubs join the FMCBC. These include the Varsity Outdoor Club Okanagan, South Okanagan Trail Alliance, Bulkley Backcountry Ski Society, Quadra Island Outdoor Club and Victoria Outdoor Club Meetup. It's great to see some new clubs join which increases our voice and reaches us across additional regions of BC. I hope that some of your members will get involved with our committee work.

Our Provincial Advocacy Committee (AC) has been meeting on a regular basis to discuss, debate and offer feedback to Dr. Wolfgang Haider and Stephen Kux of SFU who are conducting research on the FMCBC's behalf. They are currently analyzing a random sampling of the data from their BC Mountain Recreation Survey and are also working on writing up a report for us on the health benefits of outdoor non-motorized recreation. We hope to have some of this data and reporting ready for the AGM in June, but we might miss that date by a bit and will have to report out in the next issue of Cloudburst. We are looking for people from across the province to join this committee so if you are interested visit the volunteer section on our [website](#) to learn more about the AC.

My focus over the past several months has been working with our insurers to have our policies all lined up for May, working with Monika Bittel on our universal waiver and a best practices document to go along with it, and designing a new website which will be easier to use and will include a forum for members to discuss issues, ideas, successes etc. These projects are all close to completion which I'm happy to say and soon after the AGM I hope that we can switch over to our new website.

So that's the latest news from the FMCBC. If you'd like to get involved you can contact me at fmcbc@mountainclubs.org or by phone at 604-873-6096. ■

Southwest BC Recreation and Conservation Report

Brian Wood and Monika Bittel (SW BC Recreation and Conservation Committee Co-Chairs)

Snowmobiles and other Off-Road Vehicles

As usual most of the issues that have arisen in the last six months relate to snowmobiles and their ever increasing intrusion into the local backcountry in spite of our attempts over the last few years to try to have some restrictions placed on their activities. We are hoping that some of the proposals of the Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Management Framework will shortly be passed into law which should then reduce problems relating to tracking ownership of all ORV's, not just snowmobiles. We hope that the proposed mandatory registration of all ORV's to carry adequately sized ID decals will reduce ORV identification problems. Details of current and new vehicle owners will eventually be recorded in the digital record systems of ICBC. This will be a big improvement over the present manual paper system which applies only to snowmobiles. We are assuming there will be adequate funding for implementation and enforcement of this new system, however, funding shortages might account for the current delays of passing the proposed legislation into law. The three main local areas of conflicts with snowmobiles are discussed briefly below.

21 Mile Creek, Sproatt Mountain and Rainbow Lake Wildlands Area

Over the last few years this area has occupied much volunteer time in accumulating data on snowmobile trespassing in this popular non-motorized area, and reporting the data to various government agencies and the local press. After many years of trying to educate the snowmobilers of the situation, and even getting some help from the Resort Municipality of Whistler, we have still not found a satisfactory method of dealing with the endless conflicts. There are problems with defining the boundaries of the non-motorized zones, as well as restricting main forest road access and parking. While parking restrictions or a Section 58 designation might be appropriate, others, including some ORV operators, feel that nothing less than impounding the vehicles of offenders will work, as less aggressive methods have consistently failed. We will continue negotiating with stakeholders for a solution.

Duffey Lake Corridor

Over the last two decades this area has seen a steady increase in use by backcountry skiers, and more recently by snowmobilers. On good weather weekends the ploughed parking areas from Joffre Lakes east are filled up and cars and truck/trailers are often seen parked along snow banks on the roadside which can be dangerous. This corridor straddles the LRMP boundaries of Squamish and Lillooet, and because the Lillooet LRMP was never properly finalised, areas on the eastern side of the divide (Cayoosh Pass) do not have designated non-motorized zones. The heli-skiers used to be the main threat to a peaceful weekend in the Duffey area; however, more powerful snowmobiles and organised fuel caches are changing this, as well as impacting the experiences of heli-skiers. Popular drainages are becoming crowded and snowmobiles, some carrying skiers or boarders, are used more frequently for access and recreation. Most of the huts are "trespass" huts, i.e. built without permits. As parking, user conflicts, and human waste problems continue to increase, government agencies will have to address these problems sooner rather than later. One solution might be a multi-stakeholder committee, similar to the Sea-to-Sky Backcountry Forum. The FMC has initiated correspondence with the appropriate government agencies.

Tricouni/Cloudburst and Roe Creek Areas

Powder Mountain Cat Skiing holds the tenure for most of this popular area and they now propose charging fees for snowmobilers to use their groomed trail in the hope that this might discourage snowmobilers from using this trail and thus solve the conflict problem for skiers accessing the Brew Hut, owned by the VOC. We have difficulty in seeing how this proposal will help skiers as there will still be snowmobilers in the general area. We feel the best solution would be to provide a non-motorized zone which keeps the snowmobiles away from the skiers' access trail to the Brew Hut, for example by designating the Chance/Roe Creek road system as non-motorized. Zoning of this whole area was never resolved by the Sea-to-Sky LRMP, and thus for many years we have been asking for a non-motorized route to the Brew hut. At one stage a possible solution was abandoned when the government representative working on this issue was transferred and the area defaulted to "multi-use" –i.e., motorized, and thus unsuitable for skiers.

Mount Sproatt Mountain Biking Trail

The Whistler Trails Planning Working Group is managing trails in the Whistler area and we are concerned about mountain bikers establishing a trail which could traverse the high ridges of Mt. Sproatt. While the bikers suggest that this trail could be a multi-use trail for hikers and bikers, we are concerned that the bikers might be inclined to leave the main trail to initiate downhill runs through the delicate alpine area. Hikers are also concerned about bikers descending too quickly on steep trails that are also used by hikers, as has been previously discussed in this publication and many others. We will continue to monitor this area which seems to be attracting more attention from incompatible user groups.

Garibaldi Provincial Park Management Plan Amendment and the Spearhead Huts Proposal

Our members attended the open house where comments submitted as a result of the amendment plan were reviewed. Notwithstanding that comments submitted against heli-skiing in the park were nearly twice as many as those in favour of heli-skiing, BC

Parks indicated that there were no plans to discontinue heli-skiing in the Spearhead after the present 5-year term expires. This was because the comments received were not to be considered as a “vote”. It appeared to many folks that the decision to continue with the status quo was essentially political, driven by revenue. In view of this result, the FMC is looking to develop a sample heli-ski “conflict avoidance protocol” which should be stipulated in the park management plan and in the park use permit. We believe a good avoidance protocol would allow the heli-ski operator to be held accountable for its management of conflicts and to minimize conflicts with non-motorized backcountry users. In addition we anticipate that there will be a large increase of backcountry skiers using the proposed huts on the Spearhead Range, so that much of the area will not be suitable for heli-skiers due to expected increasing conflicts with the backcountry skiers. We understand that BC Parks is still reviewing the current Spearhead Huts proposal, but we are concerned that this is the only proposal submitted so far, and we would prefer to see alternative proposals so that BC Parks has more than one huts plan to review before making any final decision on this important backcountry area.

Callaghan Valley Backcountry Recreation Area

Following the dogged persistence of some of our members, many of the earlier backcountry access problems have been largely resolved. While there continues to be some inconveniences relating to day-use and overnight parking, skiers using this area have adapted to the current fees for parking and some groomed and track-set trail use.

Golden Ears Provincial Park Management Plan

Perhaps in response to numerous submissions from the FMCBC and others regarding the poor state of trails in the Park, the government recently announced \$500,000 in funding for trails in Golden Ears over the next three years. While this is a good first step, the plans still leave out several key maintenance issues that need to be addressed. Hopefully the final management plan will put continued emphasis on these heavily used trails. Another topic of interest in the proposed management plan is increasing year-round use of the park, which essentially means increasing winter use as summer use is already heavy. We would normally approve measures to improve winter access to the park if this meant that the access roads which are normally gated during winter would be opened to permit driving to trailheads, conditions permitting. However there was mention of providing winter accommodation within the park itself, but details were vague as to the type of accommodation. Any permanent hotel-style accommodation would be counter to the public’s strong recommendations in the 1990’s Park Legacy Project. Such accommodation would also be in competition with the existing privately-run accommodation located in local communities outside the park. Alternative “yurt style” accommodation, probably run by BC Parks, may remove funding which could otherwise be used for trail work and thus is also not recommended. We stated these concerns in our written submission and at the follow-up open house.

Mount Seymour and Cypress Parks Parking Issues

Both parks have parking problems on the few weekends with good weather. This is the time when the ski areas make good money which helps cover operating losses which occur more frequently on bad weather days during the season. In the past, on the few good weather days when the parking lots fill up quickly, many paying lift users are forced to park a long way from the ski lifts. In both parks the ski area operators are blaming “early-bird” non-paying backcountry snowshoers and backcountry skiers on filling the lots and taking those parking slots closest to the ski lifts away from paying guests. Both ski areas are trying to force non-paying backcountry users to park further away from the lifts to make it a shorter walk for the fee-paying customers. This rule is not rigorously enforced on bad weather days. The FMCBC continues to negotiate with the commercial operators and BC Parks on these issues.

FMCBC Lands in Smoke Bluffs Park

The FMC Board of Directors is considering a proposal whereby the District of Squamish will purchase the FMC lands and provide the FMC with an option to re-purchase the lands for a nominal amount, should certain conditions not be met. The conditions would protect climbers’ access to the crags and climbing on the crags. The proposal and conditions are a work in progress. Before any decision is made, the FMC clubs and the climbing community will be consulted by the FMC. The FMC is working and consulting with the Squamish Access Society and Climbers’ Access Society on this proposal. The goal is to incorporate the FMCBC lands into a park while protecting climbers interests in perpetuity.

List of Accomplishments of the FMCBC

Over the years we have received many questions, but a persistent question is something like, “What has the FMCBC done for me in return for my annual membership fee?” Well, to answer this question we are compiling a list of the FMCBC’s accomplishments over the years relating to recreation and conservation matters. As we are a province-wide organisation we have asked member clubs in regions of the province other than SW BC (i.e. Metro Vancouver) to contribute to the list of accomplishments. The accomplishments can be those of the FMCBC, the member clubs or individual members of the clubs. Many successful accomplishments in conservation or recreation advocacy often require help from other like-minded organisations and members of the general public, and we would like to acknowledge the work of these organisations, member clubs and individuals. ■

Southwest BC Trails Committee Report

Alex Wallace (Committee Co-Chair)

Volunteer Liability in BC Parks

The liability issue for volunteers in BC Parks has finally seen some progress as Government has put together a package of trail agreements and insurance that directors of clubs across the province will have to scrutinize in order to see if these are workable. These have been distributed to Directors for review. It appears that they will only apply to clubs, i.e. legal entities, not individuals. Detailed documents are available by email from FMCBC. Visit their [How to Volunteer with BC Parks](#) page for more info.

BC Parks Staffing

There still is a problem with lack of staffing within BC Parks, with a total of 9 Full-time rangers and a pool of 70 or 80 auxiliaries who are hired on a seasonal basis (i.e. for four or five months at a time) and this is not likely to change in the near future, despite there now being 1,019 Parks and Protected areas in B.C. A suggestion was made to BC Parks that possibly fundraising could be organized by FMCBC Trails Committee with the intent specifically of having backcountry camps with additional auxiliary rangers working on those trails that are remote and do not get needed maintenance, however this was rejected on the basis that there are a set number of FTE's and this cannot be changed, even with outside funds. In other words, this would be adding staff and "growing government", which is against policy and cannot be contemplated.

Trail Projects

The first section of the Howe Sound Crest Trail has now reached completion, and the crew and machinery has completed a section on the approach to St. Marks, past the new bridges that we installed at Strachan Meadows, with the bad switchbacks ahead due to be decommissioned and replaced. However we now are told that the \$450,000 that FMCBC and Friends of Cypress raised from VANOC and the NTC (i.e. Federal Government funding sources) has now been spent. BC Parks has also spent some \$11,000 of their funds and has committed valuable staff time, however we now have pointed out that we have provided all of our available funds and volunteer time, and it is now BC Parks' responsibility to put in matching funds to upgrade their trail, as 80% of the trail has yet to be upgraded - even if this is modest amount on a year by year basis. So far we have not made much progress in negotiations, and it would be unfortunate if the experienced and capable contractor who has taken on this project has to take on other work, as we are approaching the start of the short construction season at this elevation, which only lasts from July to Mid-October, i.e. less than four months.

In contrast, we understand that \$120,000 has been approved by BC Parks to repair Mountain Bike damage on the Old Buck Trail on Mt Seymour, a low elevation shared-use trail, and possibly not a project that many would classify as their highest priority, given the dire state of many high-elevation hiking trails in the Lower Mainland. Our current estimate is still that Garibaldi Park has a \$6.3 million maintenance backlog, and with Cypress and Seymour both in need of maintenance in the region of \$3.5 million, this is \$13.3 million for just three Provincial Parks.

Golden Ears

\$500,000 has now been committed by Minister Lake for needed the trail loop and bridge work that was outlined in the BC Parks management plan process for Golden Ears. This [Golden Ears planning process](#) itself is expected to be completed and signed off this summer, the same time that the much-anticipated Garibaldi Park management plan amendment is completed [the planning process largely related to the Spearhead Huts project and the Fitzsimmons Creek access]. The Pinecone-Burke Park Management planning process is now under way, although at this time only First Nations is in talks with BC Parks, and the full Open House public process with a draft plan will not start till the fall of 2013.

Lions Bay Hiking Access

This problem has been one that FMCBC has tried to find a solution for over the past 23 years, including at least one abandoned attempt to build an MoF funded parking lot on Crown land at the trailhead (i.e. abandoned by MoF after a few residents objected). The solution of using the Elementary School parking during holidays and weekends has worked well in the eight years since Pat Harrison negotiated it on behalf of FMCBC, but we still get complaints from North Shore residents who are unable to find hiker parking in Lions Bay during the week ...and of course if you park "in the wrong place", - which is just about anywhere, your vehicle will get towed away to North Vancouver. We have now explicitly suggested to these residents that they need to work with their West Vancouver and North Vancouver municipalities to negotiate a better solution, as Lions Bay residents clearly depend on those neighbouring communities for hospital, library, community centre, recreation, etc. and so a more reciprocal and "neighbourly" arrangement needs to be worked out.

Cypress and Seymour Winter Access

For a second year, Non-paying visitors to Mt Seymour were again banned from using the ski area parking lots within the controlled recreation area from November to April (i.e. during the ski season in their contract, six months of the year). Despite several meetings on the subject and on-site evaluations, it appears that this will be in place at least until the Mount Seymour Park management plan process this fall of 2013, and possibly beyond.

The Mount Seymour ski operation (which also runs most Provincial Park facilities in the Lower Mainland though its PFO arm “Sea to Sky Parks”, for example the Porteau Cove Park, campsite and cabins) has the right to restrict parking in their Park Use Permit of 1984, when the Seymour, Cypress and Manning ski operations were simultaneously privatized. A trial of restricted parking was put in place at Cypress for several weeks, 670 m. from the trailhead, but as it was both unsafe and not under threat of enforcement (and so was ignored), this trial has been suspended while negotiations proceed: the alternative proposal by the ski operation is for the Winter Access trails at Cypress to be put under control of the ski hill, and a fee paid, basically to restrict numbers and give the ski hill compensation. In both cases, the root cause is the ski hills’ perception that the increasing number of snowshoers each winter is affecting their business, particularly on the 32 days of the year when they are at, or near, full capacity and “make money”. In other words, the snowshoers are now taking up parking spots that would others be used by paying customers, and both Nordic and Downhill revenue has seen a drop of roughly 30%. It has been put to the ski hills that there are possibly other factors at play, and that they themselves have promoted snowshoeing as the alternate ‘easy’ winter sport for boomers who do not wish to risk the groomed slopes, however when BC Parks installed people meters on backcountry trails this winter to gather hard data, their numbers closely match those reported by ski hill staff (for example at Cypress there are up to 1,000 snowshoers per day on Hollyburn and 500 per day in Cypress Bowl. At My Seymour the proposal to expand the park into the Seymour Conservation reserve in order to pave a sizeable forested area 100m West of the existing main parking lot (Lot 4) and adjacent wetlands in order to make a dedicated “backcountry only” parking and access area has been put forward, although it remains to be seen how this is to be approved (clearing old-growth forest) or funded (cost of at least \$800,000 for the parking lot and 500m of access road.)

As noted above, a full public process will be held by BC Parks this fall before this could be approved as part of the new Mount Seymour Park Management Plan. We hope to see active FMCBC members there..!

Trail Markers

Turning to some good news, the Trails Committee, after due discussion, is requesting that the FMCBC approve in its budget another bulk order of orange reflective trail markers, given that the first 5,000 were reasonably priced [\$1 each] and popular with clubs. The sum proposed for approval is \$5,000, on the same basis as the previous purchase. The Trails Committee would also like to recommend that the FMCBC cover a portion of the cost for the trail markers in order to offer them at a further discount to our member clubs. ■



Perry Kulak

Newly built Olesen Creek bridge on Upper Shannon Falls trail with North Vancouver Outdoor Club hikers.

Sigurd Creek Bridge Project Update

Paul Kubik (BCMC)



The footbridge completed. Left to right: Paul Kubik (BCMC), Andrew Wong (NSH), Peter Malacarne (BCMC).

after the massive snow year the winter of 1999. Evidence of an avalanche down an infrequently running path suggests an ice and snow dam blocked the creek above the footbridge. When the dam burst it swept away everything in its path. How else does a one metre thick tree and massive root ball get swept downstream 200 metres?

The creek is significant enough that a footbridge is required except at all but very low water. In 2002, the BCMC was able to get another tree in place. Unfortunately, the log was not cedar and a bit of rot and another high snow year in winter 2011 cracked the log in the middle. Around this time, we were also gaining some certainty that the trail would never be logged as it gained protected status as a conservancy. Largely due to the prodding of Andrew Wong of North Shore Hikers, I got motivated in 2012 to replace the sagging structure. This time we planned to build the bridge higher than high water. The BCMC came through with a grant for \$1000 and shortly afterwards the FMCBC donated a further \$2100. The grant enabled us to get people and heavy tools into the area along with overnight gear so there was sufficient time and resources to do a proper job. At this point I have to thank Wulf Pirang of Mission for loaning us all the heavy tools like come alongs, jack, donation of coils of wire rope and fabrication of special hangers and structural supports. I don't think the project would have been such a success without his help.

Over the years, I've had dozens of volunteers from the BCMC, NSH and other unaffiliated people help on the Sigurd Trail. I long ago lost count of the number of work parties in the last twenty years but my guess is that we've had well over 100 and more likely 200 person days of volunteer effort directly working on the trail. At present the trail is the principal access point for climbing and skiing Pelion and Ossa Mountains and Sigurd Peak. Some people are using the trail for the first or last leg of the Tantalus Range traverse – a multi-day adventure with Lake Lovely Water at the other end.

In summer 2013, the plan is to extend the trail to create a horseshoe traverse connecting Sigurd headwaters with Pokosha Creek and a hiking route to Sigurd Lake. Long term, the route will be extended down the west side of the Tantalus Range to Jim Haberl hut but more as a mountaineering route than a trail.

To view more photos from the Sigurd Creek footbridge project visit Andrew's [project page](#). ■

Mountaineers have accessed the northern Tantalus Range from Sigurd Creek since around 1968. John Clarke approached from Madden Creek to the south but the Swiss branch of the BCMC (Gernot Walter, Manfred Putz and Max Lustenberger) along with Clarke recorded some first route ascents and descents from Sigurd Creek. My first foray was in 1981 but there was no trail. It was quite an impressive bushwhack at the time. Around 1990, myself and others in the BCMC (Sev Heiberg, Blair Mitten) began surveying a route which eventually became the Sigurd Trail. To date, we have only found reason to relocate a few short sections of the trail from the original route we laid out.

A key element of the trail is the crossing of Sigurd Creek near the six km mark at 3300 feet ASL. The original crossing used a convenient log. This log was relocated downstream 200 metres by the forces of nature



Crowding Problems in Popular Backcountry Recreation Areas

Brian Wood (BCMC)

In my opinion many of Canada's national and provincial parks are victims of their own success and are losing their original feelings of wilderness in their backcountry areas. In general, the most used or front country areas of parks and their surfaced roads, their easily accessible campsites and their shorter day-use trails are managed adequately, but it seems that more people than ever are visiting backcountry areas which, when combined with decreasing funding to manage parks, results in deterioration of these backcountry areas. However, I feel it is the backcountry areas of parks that are the important areas for many social and environmental reasons, such as refreshing the physical and mental health of those who visit these more remote areas. Most of my comments below relate to the self-propelled backcountry visitor, and are an attempt to start discussions on this tricky subject, not to provide answers.

For decades our parks successfully restricted or eliminated commercial exploitation of the natural resources within the boundaries of the parks, e.g., the trees, minerals, water, etc, and thus effectively protected the relatively unspoiled scenic areas of the park. Nowadays, the parks have a second problem of excessive numbers of people visiting the park, and I feel this second problem is not being dealt with as well as the first problem. The [Spearhead Huts Proposal](#) is one suggestion, among other things, to manage the increasing popularity of the Spearhead Traverse, a spectacular backcountry alpine ski route through what is arguably one of the most scenic and most easily accessible "wilderness" areas of Garibaldi Provincial Park. The proposal relates to building three huts along the alpine ski route, which should help to manage increasing human impacts from unlimited numbers of visitors, unregulated camping, human waste disposal, safety issues, etc. The presence of huts will doubtless increase the numbers visiting the area, which has some folks discussing the "carrying capacity (CC)" of this superb natural area itself, not the actual proposed huts, and so I thought I would investigate what CC means.

Wikipedia has several definitions for the broad term CC, and while it states that the term is now antiquated, it refers to "Tourism Carrying Capacity (TCC)", which the World Tourism Organization defines as:

"The maximum number of people that may visit a tourist destination at the same time, without causing destruction of the physical, economic, socio-cultural environment and an unacceptable decrease in the quality of visitors' satisfaction."

UNESCO (the international organization responsible for administering the World Heritage list) also has concerns about use of the general term CC, and some academics cannot agree with the TCC definition, so let us forego the definition. Probably most visitors would prefer to limit numbers visiting a site at any one time (provided it was not them!) as this would raise visitor satisfaction and perhaps help to protect the site from over-use so that it can be enjoyed in the future. Many famous tourist sites have UNESCO's prestigious World Heritage Site designations, but this does not provide any physical protection for the site except that the designation can be withdrawn if the site deteriorates, perhaps by exceeding the CC and/or by commercial exploitation. This designation attracts tourists and, consequently, there is a big incentive to properly manage the heritage site, but even the highly scientifically managed Galapagos Islands of Ecuador recently lost their UNESCO designation. Perhaps UNESCO thought they had exceeded this nebulous CC, but I also heard that commercial fishing around the islands had depleted the food stocks that the many famous animals needed to survive.

Countries with famous tourism destinations usually encourage tourism because of the revenue it generates, but the "more is better" philosophy often results in excessive numbers of visitors (whatever "excessive" means). Excessive numbers of visitors require intrusive tourism infrastructure, e.g., roads, hotels etc, which can spoil the experience for some visitors. This suggests that the CC has been exceeded even though the numbers of visitors can be handled efficiently by the infrastructure.

Canada has many spectacular natural scenic areas which are advertised and frequently visited and thus are becoming more famous. Thankfully, many of these areas are already protected within our parks, but natural areas usually have fragile ground cover, which can be severely damaged by large numbers of visitors. Most Canadian natural areas also include wildlife, which usually requires undisturbed habitat and minimal or no visitors. With very few exceptions, the ground cover and wildlife in our parks are deteriorating, probably due in part to the numbers of visitors. We now know that most parks have insufficient funding to build additional infrastructure, e.g., hardened trails, improved signage, etc. and insufficient numbers of park rangers to protect their areas from this increase in visitors. The so-called "infrastructure deficit" of our parks is estimated by some observers to be in the tens of millions of dollars, and we cannot expect that amount of funding to be available from governments for many years, if ever. Also, I believe that relying on volunteers and public donors to fill the funding gap is wishful thinking, and corporate funding may involve too many unacceptable conditions.

I feel Canada can improve the protection of its parks' natural features by better management of the numbers of visitors to keep below the CC, which cannot be accurately assessed and would have to be a judgment call by park managers and public volunteers

using baseline photographs and scientific data. I would hope that managing visitor numbers would serve as interim protection until improved protecting infrastructure is available, which might not happen for a long time. I feel that providing fixed roof accommodation in parks such as the Spearhead Huts Proposal is too costly for most areas, and would be inappropriate in many of our large area wilderness parks.

There are many ways to manage the numbers of visitors to an area, ranging from the low budget extreme of zero management of numbers (or a “free for all”) to the high budget extreme of a government supervised lottery system, with many variations in between. The zero-management approach is typical of parks in many countries, including some of Canada’s backcountry parks, as it is less costly initially, but it is risky if the area becomes popular, as is the case with the Spearhead Traverse. The lottery system is used in some very popular areas, particularly in the USA, but it is costly as it requires many personnel and some monitoring of the lucky few who won the lottery.

I feel that neither of these extremes provide a good solution for many parks, and thankfully some Canadian parks have taken a middle course by restricting numbers, usually only at the peak visitor times, e.g., the Bowron Lakes Provincial Park, the West Coast Trail of the Pacific Rim National Park etc. Clearly, limiting visitor numbers requires additional park personnel for enforcement of regulations at the popular park entry points and also in the backcountry. I feel we must increase the number of park rangers, not for park entry duties but for patrolling the backcountry for a multitude of well known reasons that are beyond this discussion. Regulation enforcement provides additional employment, which increases operating costs but is probably much less costly than some alternatives involving major capital costs such as road improvements etc. to handle extra visitors to the area.

Most of the parks that restrict numbers at park entry points use a reservation system for each entry point, often issue camping/wilderness permits, and put limits on individual numbers and group sizes entering on any particular day. To be effective for controlling visitor activities, this requires patrollers in the backcountry to check permits, camping behaviour, trail conditions, etc. Hikers using some long distance hiking trails in the USA do not require camping site reservations, e.g., the Pacific Crest Trail, whereas others areas require reservations for specific camping areas, e.g. the Wonderland Trail in Mount Rainier National Park. To allow for some limited flexibility for “last minute” visitors who show up at the entry points, some spare places are usually available for visitors without reservations on a first come-first served basis. In addition, for safety and environmental reasons, some backcountry parks often require visitors to attend a short orientation talk on personal safety, environment protection, “no trace camping” etc, before starting on their trip. The reservation system, trip planning, route finding and survival skills can be a challenge to beginners, and it is often recommended that they use licensed guides. Licensed guides can probably reduce the work of park managers, as the guides are responsible for their guests' safety and maintaining environmental standards in order to keep their licenses. The use of licensed guides is mandatory in some parks and on long distance trails in some countries, which probably protects the area better than independent tourists guiding themselves. Also, the mandatory use of licensed guides provides additional jobs for the locals and reduces safety issues for foreign visitors, but I hope that this does not happen in Canada, as many of us prefer to run our own trips at our own pace. ■

Mountain Matters

COMMITMENT

Dave Scanlon (BCMC Past President)

What is it? By definition it means an obligation, a promise, a pledge, a moral obligation, a social obligation.

And where is this question leading you ask? It is leading to questionable trip participants; to those participants who for different reasons sign up to more than one trip at any given time. I won’t try to get into why this happens, but it does and it does with some regularity.

It is easy for someone to look ahead to the clubs schedule, check out what trips are scheduled for a certain weekend and then to sign up online to one, two, or three of them. Then wait to pick and choose which one to go on at the last minute.

This is occurring a lot of late and the following is what happened to one of my recent trips.

The trip was on the schedule for some weeks ahead of time and filled up quite quickly, 9 prospective participants in total confirmed, and I ended up with 8 on the waiting list for a total of 17 in all. As the weekend approached, I had calls from, and spoke with, a couple of people on the waiting list and I told them that no one had cancelled, so what then happened was that those on the waiting list took their names off of the waiting list and made other plans. Wouldn’t you?

So the waiting list started getting smaller as those on the waiting list made their other plans, right?

On the Wednesday prior to the trip leaving, 72 hours prior to leaving, the cancellations started coming in. In that last 72 hours there were 9 cancellations! 4 on Friday alone!

So of the 17 who wanted to come originally there were now just **two left**! So read that again. Of the original 17 there were just two left!

The end result was that those on the waiting list who wanted to come had made their other plans. At 9:30 that Friday evening I checked other trips for that particular weekend and found many names were on other trips that had just cancelled at the last minute from mine. And lo and behold there was **one** person who had cancelled from my trip and was still listed on **two** other trips for that weekend, and get this, there was **one** person still listed on **three** other trips!

So where is the commitment? Where is the moral, social obligation in all of this? Those persons who put their names on more than one trip at a time are taking away the opportunity of others who want to go on the trip. And this over subscribing on trips is without mentioning the frustration of the trip organizer. When speaking to other trip organizers about this matter, one organizer told me that he had a person sign up for four of his trips but he has never met that person because that person always cancelled at the last minute!

Possible solutions are.

#1 Not allow the participants to sign up until the weekend prior to the departure date.

#2 Allow twice the number to sign up and let the cancellations trim the final numbers down to what the trip organizer leader wanted in the first place. { not my suggestion }

#3 Have the trip organizer keep a personal list of those who cancel out at the last minute and not let them sign up again for future trips. [again, not my idea].

#4 Hope that club members read this article and be more considerate in the future.

#5 Send out a group email one week prior to the departure date and take those who don't confirm their commitment off the list. ■

Ascent for Alzheimer's –The annual ascent of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Africa

Brian Wood (BC Mountaineering Club)

Ascent for Alzheimer's (AFA), now in its 16th year, is a signature fundraising event benefiting the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

As many of you know, last year Martin and Esther Kafer, joint Honorary Presidents of the BC Mountaineering Club, joined the 2012 AFA Team and in late September hiked up Mt.Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in Africa and the highest "free standing" peak in the world. They were then entered in the Guinness Book of World Records as the oldest man and woman (85 and 84 years respectively) to complete the ascent -quite an achievement!

As a follow up to the Kafers' achievement, I think it would be very fitting if each year in the future at least one member of a member club of the FMCBC would agree to join the AFA in their annual event. In this way there would be some continuity of our members not only supporting the very worthwhile cause of the Alzheimer's Society of BC, but also ascending this special mountain. As we now have about 4000 individual members, is this such an impossible goal to achieve? In order to "practice what I preach", this year I decided to join the 2013 AFA team, and so the participation of an FMCBC member in the AFA project is assured for another year.

I suspect that many of our members will have already exceeded the summit altitude of 19,340 feet /5895 meters, and many will have climbed more technically challenging peaks, but this trip has an extra challenge which I think could inspire some of our members. This challenge is that each team member agrees to raise a minimum of \$10,000 in donations –100% of which goes to support the work of the Alzheimer Society of B.C. The team members also agree to pay all their own costs to travel to Africa in order to participate in the Ascent for Alzheimer's. Details are found at on their [website](#).

We know there are many worthwhile organisations that ask for support by way of a cash donation and/or volunteering, and so what is special about this project and the Alzheimer Society? For one thing, the journey is designed to reflect the mountainous struggle faced by those impacted by Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. Alzheimer's disease is the third most feared disease among British Columbians and is a fatal disease with no known cure. Unless we act now, the prevalence of dementia in B.C. is projected to more than double within one generation. In BC, there are currently over 70,000 people living with dementia, nearly

10,000 of those are less than 65 years old, and 15,000 new cases are diagnosed each year. Significant medical advances in the Alzheimer's field have been made in the last 10 years, but research into this disease remains significantly underfunded, especially when compared with other more well-known diseases. Today, the combined direct (medical) and indirect (lost earnings) cost of dementia in Canada is \$33 billion. If nothing changes, this number will skyrocket to \$293 billion a year by 2040 and so more support is needed both for those persons in need and for more research.

To encourage persons to participate in this program, the Society provides assistance for fundraising and fitness training. Martin and Esther were initially very concerned about raising \$20,000 between them but in the end, with a lot of help from mountaineering friends, they raised a total of over \$25,000-also quite an achievement. Fundraising is made easier by using the internet, and for those interested in supporting this project please check out the [webpage](#) the society made for me.

If you have your plastic handy, you can find out how easy it is to make a secure on-line donation to the Society, and if you do, thank you very much for your generosity to help me attain my funding goal in aid of an important and worthy cause.

Also, please inform your friends and club members so we can maintain the momentum of this project into the future.■

Howser in British Columbia

Paul and Marion Howser

Overall conclusions following research over a period of 8 years into the Howser place names in British Columbia.

Various geographical features in the Kootenay Region of British Columbia are named Howser, which include a Locality, Creek, Ridge, Peak and Spire. It appears that the name was derived from that of a prospector named Howser who travelled up from the USA to the BC gold fields in the 1860s. This conclusion is based mainly on extensive evidence gathered during three, two month, trips around Canada and the USA. Over 150 organisations were contacted and more than 500 maps and other documents were studied, while searching for references to the name Howser.

During this research, three important items of evidence were discovered. The first was a reference to Howser Creek in the Geological Survey Report of 1887-88 by George Mercer Dawson.¹ The second reference was to Howser Lake in William Simpson's and Shirley Keeling's pre-emption papers of 1892, where Howser Lake was mentioned in the text and also shown and named on a sketch map.² The third item was the 1893 map by Retallack which shows and names both Howser Creek and Howser Lake.³

Over the period up to 1900, at least 28 references to Howser appeared on maps of the region.

These discoveries were reported to the BC Provincial Toponymist in 2004 and 2005, and they were added to the British Columbia Geographical Names Index System data base.

When this research program started, it was observed that there was considerable disagreement in the literature, including in various place name books, regarding the origin of the name Howser in BC. However, there appeared to be a general belief that Howser was a misspelling of the more common Hauser form.⁴ It was observed however, that this theory did not appear to be supported by evidence in view of the discovery that Howser had been documented in the 1880s and shown extensively on maps for the Creek and Lake since 1892. The new Hauser spelling was not seen to appear on a map of BC until 1900.

Our research then concentrated on a detailed examination of the materials on which the misspelling theory was based. This analysis has shown that the confusion appears to have been caused by a few instances where, since 1900, the name Howser has been misspelled as Hauser.

The first misspelling appears on William Simpson's "Plan of Hauser" map dated 1900.⁵ This shows Howser Lake renamed as Hauser. Simpson had used the original Howser spelling for the Lake 8 years previously on his pre-emption papers. None of the 12 references to the Lake on other maps up to 1900 had used the incorrect Hauser form.

A further misspelling appears in William Simpson's 1905 letter where he misspells Howser Creek as Hauser.⁶ All of the 21 maps showing the Creek up to this time had called it Howser. No maps have been found where the Creek has been named Hauser.

Another misspelling occurs in Atkins's 1922 "Columbia River Chronicles" newspaper article where he refers to the Lake as Hauser.⁷ Perhaps Atkins's error was based on Simpson's misspellings. Up to 1922 Howser Creek and Howser Lake had been shown as Howser at least 58 times on maps and only once as Hauser on Simpson's "Plan of Hauser".

The three incorrect Hauser spellings can be seen as only minor aberrations in an otherwise continuous and very consistent use of the Howser form on maps and other official documents. However, these misspellings appear to have had a major influence by giving rise to the long lasting idea that Howser was a misspelling of Hauser. This incorrect conclusion has continued to be quoted until the present day and a BC place names book, published in 2010, propagates the belief by saying, in connection with the place name Howser, “It all began with Fred Hauser”.⁸

The name Fred Hauser appears to have been introduced by the historian, Martin Lynch. Much weight has been placed on the claims made in his 1997 letter to the BC Provincial Toponymist that Howser was a misspelling of Hauser.⁹ However, a letter written by Lynch in 1991 indicated that he did not know if Fred’s family name was Hauser or Houser.¹⁰ He also appears to have accepted Simpson’s and Atkins’s use of Hauser, for the Lake and Creek, which our research has shown to be inconsistent with cartographical evidence..

Some of the confusion over the spellings could have been caused by the use of Hauser, since the 1880s, for several features in the Kootenay County of North Idaho, about 200 miles to the south of Howser in BC. These have included a City, Creek, Lake, Post Office and a Railway Station, all named Hauser.¹¹

The documental and cartographical evidence examined during this investigation has indicated that the highly educated Doctor G M Dawson spelt the name of Howser Creek correctly in the 1880s. Howser Creek then gave rise to the use of Howser, for the other geographical features in the Kootenay Region of British Columbia.

These conclusions are based on research carried out by Paul and Marion Howser over the period 2004 to 2012. ■

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Club Ramblings

Conrad Kain and Lake O’Hara: Alpine Club of Canada’s 1909 Annual Camp Ron Dart (ACC-Vancouver)

Lake O’Hara has a reputation for being impossible to visit just once.

~ Lisa Christensen

A Hiker’s Guide to the Rocky Mountain Art of Lawren Harris p.87

In 1909, at the invitation of the fledgling Alpine Club of Canada, the 25-year-old Austrian guide left his village of Nasswald for Banff...Over the next 20 years, Kain achieved re-known as the outstanding mountaineer during the Golden Age of mountaineering in this country: “the prince of Canadian Guides”, in the estimation of historian Esther Fraser.

~Pat Morrow

Where The Clouds Can Go p. XV

There were many significant painters that turned to Lake O’Hara as their fount of inspiration. There is the tale of the building up of the O’Hara mountain Mecca so insightfully told by Jon Whyte in *Tommy and Lawrence: The Ways of the Trails of Lake O’Hara*. But, before the coming of the creative artists and Tommy and Lawrence to Lake O’Hara, there was Conrad Kain and the

1909 Alpine Club of Canada's mountaineering camp at Lake O'Hara. This missive on Conrad Kain and Lake O'Hara will, in brief, fill in a gap in the history of Lake O'Hara that has not yet been fully told. Needless to say, a booklet could quite easily be written on Kain and O'Hara both in 1909 and afterwards.

There is little doubt that Conrad Kain (1883-1934) was the finest and fittest mountaineer in the first generation of mountaineering within Canada. The Swiss Guides are often given their rightful nod and due, but none of the Swiss Guides did the challenging peaks or took their clients on the questionable climbs that Kain did. Kain was brought to Canada in 1909 by the Alpine Club of Canada, and the republication of Kain's edited autobiography, *Where the Clouds Can Go* (with the original Foreword by Monroe Thorington, an updated Foreword by Hans Gmoser and new Foreword by Pat Morrow) in 2009 signalled, yet once again, the abiding significance and relevance of Kain. Kain was the Canadian pioneer of mountaineering that rose, like Mount Robson, above the lesser peaks of the Swiss Guides.

There remains some lingering dispute about whether Kain was the first to climb Mount Robson in 1913, but in 2013 (100 years after Kain reached the snow packed summit of Robson), many in the ascent planned to commemorate his historic standing on the roof of the highest peak in the Rockies. Kain tends to hold the imagination of many, and the myth and lore of Kain is fated to continue. The publication of *Raising Kain: The adventurous life of Conrad Kain, Canada's greater mountaineer* (2012) unpacks the drama of Kain's life in a "A historical Novel" form just as the about to be published *Your Friend From the Western Woods: Conrad Kain: Letters from a Wandering Mountain Guide (1906-1933)* charms the reader with Kain's all too human correspondence with Amelie Malek (from Austria).

What, though, is the relationship of Kain to the Lake O'Hara area? I mentioned above the Alpine Club of Canada (founded in 1906) brought Conrad Kain from Austria to Canada in 1909. The Swiss Guides were hired by the CPR, whereas Kain was the first mountain guide hired by the Alpine Club of Canada (Arthur Wheeler---1st President of the Alpine Club of Canada hired Kain). Lillian Gest, in her somewhat dated yet suggestive missive, *History of Lake O'Hara*, had this to say: "This club (Alpine Club of Canada) held 13 camps at or near Lake O'Hara. The first camp was in 1909 in the Alpine meadow with 190 persons ... The veteran, world-famed mountaineer, Edward Whymper attended the 1909 camp. He brought greetings from a number of the most famous English mountain climbers of the day" (p.34.). It is significant to note that Conrad Kain was one of the main guides for the first Alpine Club annual camp at Lake O'Hara in 1909---so, the 1909 annual camp at O'Hara was a first for both Kain and the ACC.

Kain wrote a lengthy (one of his longest) letters to Amelie Malek after the 1909 camp at O'Hara, and in the letter (September 8 1909: Glacier House) he described, in varied detail, the many events that occurred at the camp and his participation in them. The letter should be part of the Lake O'Hara Trails Club archives and posted at Le Relais Shelter for interested tourists. Lake O'Hara historians have not yet dealt with Conrad Kain and Lake O'Hara---he was there before Tommy and Lawrence.

The content of Kain's letter to Amelie is more than worth the reading and pondering---much is said about the 1909 ACC camp at Lake O'Hara.

Kain mentioned, in the letter, how he arrived at O'Hara on July 23rd after a two hour train ride from Banff, then a day long horseback ride to the potential camp. Most of the following week was spent setting up camp which began August 1st. Kain was a guide most days, and Mount Huber (11,049 ft) was the peak of choice for most at the 1909 ACC Lake O'Hara camp. Kain also mentioned leading a few at the camp to the summit of Huber and down on a rather nasty snow thick day when others had turned back. The group Kain led returned safely to camp, but Kain wondered how Wheeler would greet the tardy but safe climbers. Wheeler was amply delighted by Kain's leadership, but Kain made it abundantly clear, the Swiss Guide (rented from the CPR for the 1909 camp) were somewhat miffed by all the attention Kain was getting. In fact, Kain mentioned a couple of times in the letter how the Swiss Guides were none too pleased with all the attention he was getting from many at the camp---needless to say, the Swiss and Austrian guides had many a tension point.



Left to Right - Tim Auger, Klaus Exner and Ron Dart at Lake O'Hara

Ron Dart

There is a lovely section in the letter in which Kain described, in poignant and evocative detail, the sheer delight and pleasure he had in being in the O'Hara area. He mentioned how it so reminded him of the Swiss or Tyrol mountains. He commented on how he took a gun into his tent when bedding down for the night and the charm of Oesa, the "Ice Lake". Porcupines occasionally came into his tent, but there can be no doubt, the serenity and grand beauty of O'Hara charmed Kain. Kain then described the trek taken after the ACC camp into the Little Yoho Valley. The fuller description of the 1909 ACC Lake O'Hara trip can be accessed in A. Wheeler's "Report of the 1909 Camp".

It is significant to note that Kain's letter was written from Glacier House at Rogers Pass. Glacier House in 1909 was in its heyday. Glacier House was opened in 1897, and by 1906 it was the destination place in the Rockies and had a spacious ninety rooms and much else. Glacier House has been called the "birthplace of Canadian mountaineering" and many have suggested it was the birthplace of mountaineering in North America. The rerouting of trains at a lower level in 1916 with the building of the Connaught Tunnel meant Glacier House's days were numbered, though. Glacier House was finally closed in 1925 and taken down in 1929. The telling of the rise and fall of Glacier House is amply recounted in William Lowell Putnam's *The Great Glacier and its House: The Story of the First Center of Alpinism in North America 1885-1925* (1982). The point to note, though, is that Kain was at Glacier House (when the busyness of the guiding and mountaineering season was over) after his O'Hara trip and at a period of time when Glacier House was the hub and centre of mountaineering.

There is much more to the Glacier House letter of September 8 1909 by Kain to Amelie Malek, but the lengthy letter tells us a great deal about Kain, Lake O'Hara and much else. There has not yet been a Lake O'Hara historian that has described and discussed Conrad Kain and the 1909 ACC Lake O'Hara annual mountaineering camp. Perhaps, in the future, Lake O'Hara historians will include this significant aspect of their early history---needless to say, there is a fuller tale yet to be told, and Kain was a significant actor in the unfolding history of the Lake O'Hara drama. ■

Lead on...

Nowell Senior (Caledonia Ramblers)

Over the Christmas Holiday, Ric and I spent four days in the Grizzly Den/Raven Lake area, and amongst a background of the usual misadventures-adventures, I must tell you about those in connection with navigation. You see, we had a rather long, demanding snowshoe trek of 13 hours to reach Raven Lake Cabin from 8 Mile Cabin. On the way, I had begun to distrust the GPS for any guidance in finding the cabin in the dark. I would stare at the GPS compass arrow, and it seemed to be pointing to a variety of directions. It was probably due to exhaustion - not the GPS, but me. Eventually, we reached the cabin, and went to bed puzzled as to how we could have become lost between Raven Peak and the cabin.

Next day, we went back to the Peak to find out how we had gotten lost - and got lost again! Now, agreeing on a direction to aim for is sometimes a sensitive issue for me and Ric. You see, I prefer going north when lost, whereas he prefers south. We each carry a compass, but are very subjective in our interpretation of what it is saying to us. However, there's always a solution to these little dilemmas, and so we have a "compass showdown". We face off, and on the count of "Three!" whoever draws his compass, and calls out a direction first - well, that's where we go. This may seem unorthodox, and it is if you follow the logic of it, but experience has had its own rewards for me and Ric, so we don't confuse ourselves with logic. Although, I have to say, that we do become lost half the time no matter what we do, so the "compass showdown" approach gives us roughly a fifty-fifty chance of going in the right direction. It also has the advantage of dispensing with tense debate, while fostering a satisfying sense of participation in a game of chance.

So, we were a little lost, and although Ric won the showdown that would have taken us south, he compromised with my inclination to go north - so we headed north-east, and became lost once again! How did we know that we were lost? Well, invariably we find ourselves in a deep, steep and formidable gully that takes hours to climb out of; it's always a gully that doesn't exist on our map, and it's usually dark when we end up in it. Still, I found something re-assuring about being in this gully - perhaps for no other reason than that it was, well, you know - sort of familiar, like an old friend's face.

Ric's patience was a tiny bit strained because I had told him that it was impossible for us to end up in a gully in this particular area. I quickly tried to make amends; I pulled out my map, compass and GPS, indicating to Ric a strong urge to take charge, and navigate our way without further delay, to the cabin. Ric's face, in the shadow of his headlight, took on a "Mad - Trapper - Of - Rat - River" look, and I felt a tremor of alarm, but his tolerance for my frailties was stronger than his contempt for them; to my relief, Ric smiled and nodded, "Lead on." This usually means that I point, and he leads - and for three hours Ric, grabbed, kneed, stepped, tugged and grunted a way out of that gully. We reached the cabin as a blizzard blew in; it howled at us all night, but we were warm and cozy in our sturdy cabin - a perfect time for reflection.

While the thirteen-hours of snowshoeing to reach Raven Cabin was hard work, it was worth every step we took. It was beautiful on Leprecaun Ridge; with dusk closing in, the last rays of light illuminated the array of snow-capped mountains in the east. Later, at 10:30pm, as we made our way, for the second time, down from Raven Peak, everywhere we looked was lit up by a big yellow moon, hanging like a pendant on the breast of a star-laden sky. This night-time sky, the snow, and the air around us was crystallized with millions of eyes sparkling out at us. And, best of all - Ric and I were no longer lost; well, not right at that moment, but there was always tomorrow...

Adieu, with a hand-shake in thought. ■

Moby

By Andrea Gardner
(Kootenay Mountaineering Club)

This painting is titled 'Moby showing the way to the Battleships'. The Battleships, in Kokanee Glacier Park were the goal for that days hike.' Moby appeared later'

Typical of hikes on the bare bones of rock in the high mountains around here, the well marked and well worn trails disappear to become mere 'routes'. Having to deal with a bit of vertigo as I venture into those high remote places, I would be inclined to turn around if I hadn't 'acclimatised' to the heights yet. But there was always the desire to challenge myself and go a little bit further, and see over the next ridge or maybe just see past the next whale sized boulder. I started to notice that if I could see a little cairn nestled on top of a boulder a bit further up the mountainside my courage would get a boost. 'Ahhh! Someone else has been there, maybe I can go there too!' It was those little cairns carefully balanced on the rocks by people of the mountains who took the time to mark their routes to the high places, that showed me the way to those high places too. This painting is a grateful, Thank You to the cairn builders of the mountains.



ps. Having recently read Moby Dick for the umpteenth time, I was not surprised when I stepped back from the painting to see the great whale in the large boulder in the foreground, balancing a cairn on his great forehead, showing the way to the Battleships.

CLOUDBURST Cover Photo Contest

If you have a photo that you think would make a great cover please email it to us at fmcbbc@mountainclubs.org

Please submit photos for our next issue by October 1, 2013.

My name is Andrea Gardner. An artist first, with a love for the landscape that surrounds my home in the Kootenays. After spending an awesome summer last year hiking to some of the high places around here (each time a bit further!) I spent the winter months re-experiencing those places through my art.

I currently have paintings showing at Fair Realty in Nelson and teach painting at my [studio](#) in Balfour, B.C. ■

Gwillam Lakes, Black Prince

August 11/12, 2012

(the most stimulating trip ever - Val)

Peter Oostlander (KMC)



Megan Lazaruk

Left to Right: Ken Budyk, Peter Jordan, Valerie Evans, Jenny Wild, Elena Cigala-Fulgosi, Peter Oostlander, Corinne Knox, Matty Walton, Dustin Rippengale

Elena scheduled her first KMC trip to Gwillam lakes with an ascent of Black Prince on a perfect warm and sunny weekend this past August. I signed up as co-leader which basically means that Elena did all the organizing work. I helped out with guiding the group up the mountain and this is a great way to get some new talent on board to organize club trips.

And what a great trip it turned out to be! We gathered at the meeting place at 2pm on the Saturday; no early alpine start for this group! After the usual 50km dirt road slog, doing the chicken-wire dance and checking out the view of Mt Gregorio from the outhouse window, we were underway by 5pm. (Oh yes, during the long car trip various wine pairings were discussed for future trip dinners; the 2008 Merlot from a *Trail*, BC winery receiving high praise)

A pleasant hike followed past scenic Drinnon and Wicka lakes, and by the time we arrived at the premier camping Gwillam lake area, our group had bonded nicely. Once dusk settled over our tents, falling meteorites painted the darkening sky with bright streaks. Some of us got up after midnight, albeit by necessity, to be treated to a great show.

The group started up the ridge trail shortly after 8am, and reached the Col after about 45 minutes where we stopped for photos and the naming of the various neighbouring peaks by Peter Jordan. Midway along the ridge is the little Hillary step that everyone negotiated cautiously, with good results. Then we pushed up to the final summit and with a bit of hand and foot coordinated effort we were on top. From our 9000ft perch, the views were breathtaking to Mt Lucifer right across, Mt Bohr and Urd Peaks to the North, and Gregorio dominating the Southern view.

The summit register included enthusiastic entries of various kids, as young as six years old as well as a Nepalese rupee from a solo peak bagger of great fortitude.

We returned via a different route to the hanging lakes where we observed a strange phenomenon: a crater size hole in the lake bottom. Various photos were taken and Val swam up close to do an inspection. All this evidence will be forwarded by Peter Jordan to a lake sediment expert.

Hopefully he can report on the expert's findings in a future issue of this newsletter.

After arriving at camp, we enjoyed some sun bathing and alpine lake swimming or more accurately "polar bear dipping" comes to mind. We reluctantly packed up camp and walked out after this multi faceted excursion into Valhalla Provincial Park. We made some new friends and had a great time!

Participants: Elena Cigala-fulgosi (coordinator), Jenny Wild, Valerie Evans, Megan Lazaruk, Ken Budyk, Dustin Rippengale, Peter Jordan, Corinne Knox, Matty Walton, Peter Oostlander (reporter) ■

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Mt. Logan

Madeleine Martin-Preney (Former VOC Member)

We had been playing the ‘waiting game’ for almost two weeks, as weather systems assaulted the Logan Massif and shrouded the landing area in clouds, making it impossible for the plane to get near enough to drop anyone off. Meanwhile, just a mountain range away we were in spring like conditions with seemingly endless visibility. As the days went by, we witnessed a mass exodus of hopeful climbers from the Kluane Lake base camp. One group of four had waited 13 days before pulling the plug and changing objectives to a more southern ski traverse that could be accessed by foot rather than plane, while another group of six bailed altogether, forfeiting their plans to head into the Ogilvie range, and instead flying back home to return to work and other projects.

Finally, our day arrived, and we were informed that the other half of our group had landed safely on the glacier. We quickly threw on the rest of our ski clothes, moved our ridiculously massive pile of gear and food closer to the landing strip and waited with nervous excitement for the plane to land.

Soon we were in the air, and my first time in a fixed wing aircraft was memorable to say the least as we flew over some of the largest glaciers and mountains I will likely ever see in my life. It is not surprising that the St. Elias range has captured the hearts and imagination of almost everyone who sees it, as it is a truly awe inspiring place that will humble even the most seasoned of mountaineers.

Our journey up the King’s Trench was straightforward and uneventful as we carried loads, camped and rested. It was hard to adjust to this seemingly glacial pace, but we were assured that taking our time was going to give us the best acclimatization, and the best attempt at the summit.

After about two weeks on the mountain, we were at our high camp, where after being pinned down in a storm and enduring bouts of altitude sickness, we were poised to attempt the summit. Our alpine start was foiled by a thick bank of valley fog that rose up

and enveloped us in creamy white-out, but by noon it had burned off, and we set out. The weather was unbelievably perfect, with bright sun, endless views and *no wind!* When we arrived at the final 200m to the summit, we left our skis in favour of crampons, and very slowly made our way up and along the ridge to the summit pinnacle. With each ragged breath and dizzy spell, all I had to do was look around and remember why it is that I love to do things like this—the beauty and serenity that surrounds you in such a remote and astounding place is truly unique, and it makes all the effort worthwhile.

After what seemed like a very long time of ragged breaths and baby steps, we were standing on the highest point in Canada, seeing views that are afforded only to the persistent and lucky. We may have only been on top of Canada, but I definitely felt on top of the world. My watch read 8p.m., and although the sun was still a few hours



Madeleine Martin-Preney

King’s Trench—the journey begins



Madeleine Martin-Preney

Summit Ridge of Mount Logan, looking towards King’s Peak

from setting, the temperature started to drop noticeably. We headed back down the ridge, descending to where we had cached our skis as the winds started to pick up significantly. The ski down was somewhat sporty, over hard sastrugi and with the winds threatening to knock us over if we had a moment of inattention. A couple members in our group were moving fairly slowly, the effects of the days' efforts, altitude and cold settling in and increasing their fatigue and diminishing their mental state. By the time we were out of the more crevassed areas, darkness had fallen, the clouds and fog started to roll in, and it looked as if we were just ahead of a storm that was brewing. Two members of our party decided that they didn't want to keep going, they were too tired and cold to make it back to camp without a rest, and preferred to set up the sil tarp in order to make some hot water and try to warm up. I was not convinced that four of us could comfortably rest and get warm in the small sil tarp, and I was concerned about getting back to camp while we still had some visibility before the storm, as it was probably only another hour and half of skiing. We debated a bit more, and finally decided that myself and another party member were going to continue to camp, while the other two would rest in the sil tarp and follow behind us in a few hours. We helped set up the tarp, made sure they had fuel, stove and pots to get things going, and then we started on our way back to camp.

We collapsed into the tent at about 1:30 a.m., noticing that an Albertan crew had made it over Prospector col and camped next to us. Crawling into the sleeping bags, I was the most exhausted and cold I think I have ever been, shivering violently and trying hard to calm my body and mind into a state of rest. I kept thinking that I heard our other party members arriving in the night, and needless to say it was a fitful and restless sleep as the wind grew stronger.

By about 8 a.m., the wind was still howling, and looking outside it was a severe whiteout. We got up, and saw that our teammates had not made it back. We boiled water and filled thermoses, intending to head out and retrace our steps back to where our group had split up. The weather was not in our favour, and after realizing how exhausted we still were, we resigned ourselves to the fact that we would become a liability if we were to try and search for them in a whiteout. We concentrated on rehydrating ourselves and resting, waiting until the weather got better to head out. The worst case scenarios of what we may or may not find when looking for our trip partners started to play out in my mind, and anxiety settled into the pit of my stomach like a brick.

The Albertans came over to congratulate us on getting to the summit, but quickly realized that half our group was missing. They offered right away to assist us in any sort of search that we would attempt, and having that support brought a surprising amount of relief. Finally, around 3p.m., the weather began to clear enough that we felt safe to go and look for our two partners. We packed our bags with first aid kits, hot packs, thermoses, food and a sleeping bag, prepared for whatever we might find. As I made a bee line for the spot we had left them at, I noticed a dark shape on the glacier, several hundred metres away from the area we had last seen them. I kept my trajectory, but eventually veered towards the dark shape, as it had most definitely not been there before. As we got closer, I could see it was indeed the sil tarp, and soon a smiling face emerged, and immediately I felt a wave of relief wash over me.

They had tried to get the stoves going where we had left them, but the fuel was too cold for any sort of ignition, and they eventually packed up and started moving. Soon after, the weather completely closed in and they realized they didn't know where they were going, so they decided to set up the tarp once again and wait until visibility was better before continuing. They warmed the fuel in their jackets and eventually were able to use the stove to make some water, and after consuming the last of their Snickers bars, were able to fall asleep.

We left the next morning, packing up camp and waving good bye and good luck to the Albertans who were attempting the summit. Soon we were on our way back up and over Prospector col, and then retracing our steps back through all our old camps and food caches. We made remarkably good time, and it was noticeable how much our bodies were responding positively to the increase in oxygen as we descended. At King's col, we recuperated our sleds, and then loaded them up and skied them down patrol-style, certain duos succeeding more gracefully than others in descending the slopes without incident.

We were moving so efficiently and quickly, that we decided to call Kluane and see if we could get a flight out that same evening, as the weather seemed to be holding, and we were going to make it to basecamp within a couple hours. Fortunately, they said it would be possible, so we wasted no time in getting down as quickly as we could, passing a few more parties that were on their way up the trench after having waited several days to fly in with the previous storm cycle.

Back at basecamp, we dug up our very first food cache, and then waited in nervous anticipation for the plane. Soon we heard its familiar drone, and then Donjek the pilot flew in beside us, helping us load our gear into the plane to fly back to Kluane Lake. It was quite surreal getting back into that small aircraft, being lifted into the air, and then flying by all the mountains we had just spent that last two and a half weeks ogling. The flight was incredibly gorgeous, and of course, the beginnings of other trip plans start formulating with the bird's eye view of the endless glaciers and peaks. ■

The Black Cone

Paul Geddes (ACC-Vancouver)

The lure of unclimbed peaks in the Cariboo Mountains led us to plan a July 2012 trip into the northeast corner of British Columbia's Wells Gray Provincial Park. This wilderness park was created in 1939 and is B.C.'s fourth largest park covering 1.3 million acres.

A heli-port in Valemount provided us with the only access option for our remote mountaineering camp. Our destination was a small glacial pond located in a pass just outside the northeast park boundary. (No mechanized transportation is allowed within this remote area of the park.) Two spectacular flights over the Premier Range (2004 camp) and the Raush River valley brought our Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) group of six onto the shores of *Turquoise Lake* elv. 2130m (NTS 83D/12, GR975482). Below us, in the distance to the west, we could see beyond the Clearwater River to 35km long Hobson Lake. Three of our group had explored the Wells Gray Group of mountains before, in 2005 and 2006, but there was still some unfinished business.

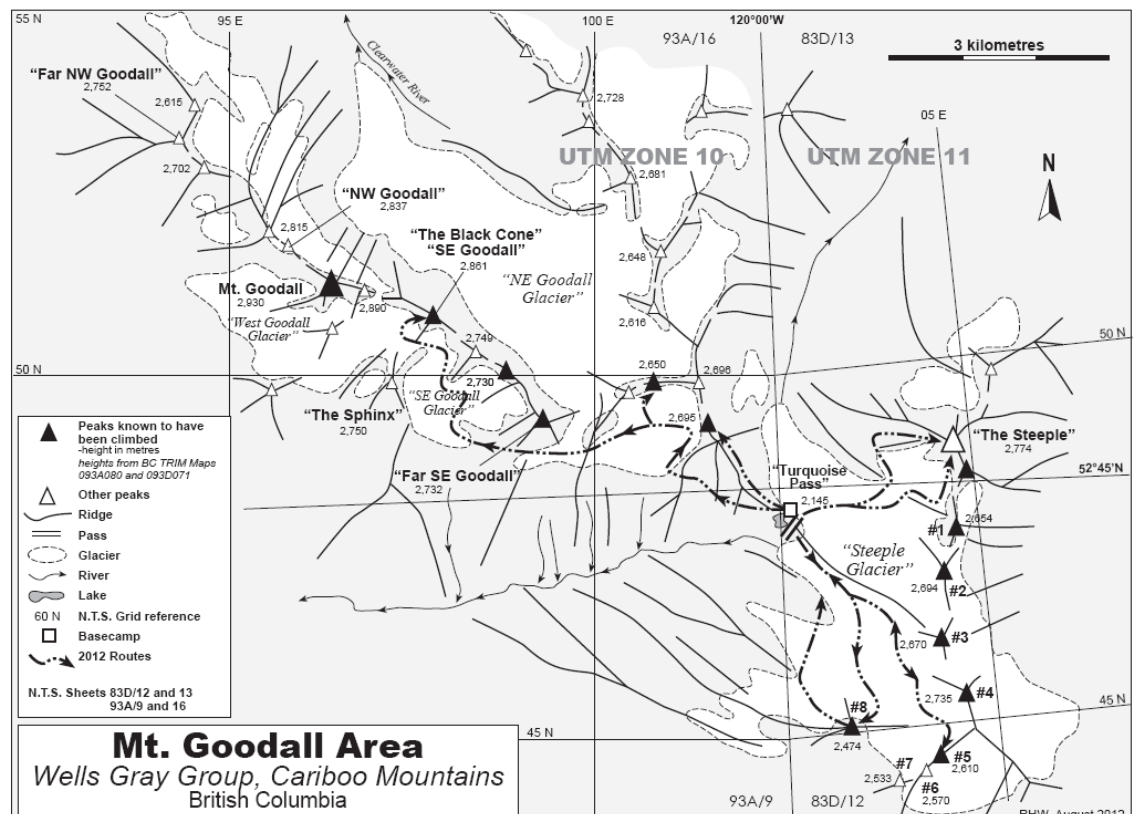
Before our friends first discovered this beautiful campsite in 2005, it is unlikely that anyone had been through this area in the summer for at least 65 years. The last person to walk through *Turquoise Pass* could well have been a licensed trapper named Ella Frye. Today only Canadian Mountain Holidays (CMH) helicopters pass through the area with their heli-ski clients on-board, in the winter months.

This location afforded us climbing opportunities in all directions. Over the length of our stay, when time allowed, we were able to wander off towards a line of eight minor snow summits jutting out of the *Steeple Glacier*. Four first ascents of these peaks had been documented from the 2005 and 2006 trips and we were able to add Peaks #5 2610m and #8 2474m to the list. Though not very serious climbing they were rather fun days out enjoying the spectacular landscapes southwest of our camp.

Immediately above camp and outside of the park boundary jutted a spectacular looking peak which we had tagged *The Steeple*,¹ an unclimbed 2774m peak, not high but unclimbed. And this mountain did not even show up on earlier Federal NTS maps! As a group we explored its approaches via the *Steeple Glacier* on three separate outings. Its steep north face was Eiger-like in appearance and the visual impact was stunning. The south ridge looked promising and Bill and I gave it a go on a day when we thought the weather might hold. An airy 5th Class scramble led us to a tall quartz pinnacle at the end of the long ridge. This was an amazing and worthwhile photo-op but the 70 metre headwall beyond proved too steep for our preferred style of climbing, un-roped and with ice axe in hand.

The next major objective we turned our attention to was Mount Goodall,² a 2930m peak with an intriguing history. It was located many kilometres from our camp, inside the park. The first mountaineer to realize that Goodall was the highest mountain wholly within Wells Gray Park was our mountaineering mentor and climbing companion on this trip, Roger Wallis.

The Federal Government's 1:50,000 scale Mount Winder map 93A/16 1st edition 1974 and 2nd edition 1982 distributed into the late 1990's had labelled the elevation of the very prominent *Black Cone*, a subsidiary summit of the



Mount Goodall massif, and its elevation at 2861m,³ is 15m lower than Garnet Peak 2876m, located to the southwest in the relatively easy to access area of the park. The *Black Cone* was simply a more precise landmark as well as being more central on the ridge which the Dominion Survey crew used during their 1960 field surveys for their resecting work from the triangulation site on Mount Hobson, now Mount Hugh Neave. With this elevation marked so conspicuously on the Federal maps no one bothered to carefully study the contour lines of the Mount Goodall ridge. This oversight by earlier climbers meant that no one recognized that Mount Goodall's main summit is in fact higher than that of Garnet Peak.



Roger Wallis

Garnet Peak was first climbed on August 29, 1974 by Hugh Neave, Tor Schmid and Barb Hargreaves from the shores of Azure Lake, after several attempts over a number of climbing seasons starting in 1966.⁴ Garnet Peak continues to get a few mountaineering ascents but due to its remoteness Mount Goodall's many summits had been ignored all these years until the ACC Toronto Section arrived in 2005.

For clarity, one must have an understanding of the geography of Mount Goodall. It is a high isolated ridge some 8km in length with eleven defined sub-summits and up to 1300m of relief. Its northeast face rises above the expanse of Goodall Glacier in an unbroken rock wall plastered with snow and ice. The Goodall Glacier, a remnant of the Fraser Glaciation of the last ice age, is the source of the Clearwater River which eventually flows under the Yellowhead Highway #5 at the town of Clearwater enroute to the North Thompson River.

The first ground exploration of Mount Goodall took place in 2005 and resulted in the first ascent of *Far South Goodall* 2710m, by Don Chiasson, Bill McKenzie and Roger Wallis. But finding a route to Goodall's main summit required a return trip in 2006. Even with a helicopter fly-by it took three experienced mountaineers four days (with one day's worth of food) to bag the highest summit and return to the base camp at *Turquoise Lake*. First ascent, 4th Class, SW slopes Mount Goodall, Don Chiasson, Jim Lundy, Roger Wallis. See Canadian Alpine Journal, 2006 p.152 and CAJ, 2008 p. 116-119.

We garnered much information from Roger's previous experiences in the Wells Gray Group of mountains and, over the course of several days familiarizing ourselves with the area, we pieced together our plan for the first ascent of the *Black Cone*. We desperately wanted to avoid a bivi as during many of the previous nights we had experienced violent thunderstorms which shook our camp. An afternoon's scramble familiarized us with the initial route out of camp and upslope to the first snowfield. A large cairn still standing from their 2005 trip confirmed this leg. We studied the route beyond as far as we could see.

July 30 – up at 3:00 am and out of camp by 4:00. Bill, Norm and I, travelled north across the landscape executing our memorized route plan. We contoured around a glaciated cirque and at the base of the cliff bands we knew to just follow the goats' tracks to turn the corner. And there they were: the mountain goats high on the ledges of the southeast end of Mount Goodall. We followed the prominent snow ramp for a couple of more clicks. But we are in the mountains and nothing is flat: it was an up/down cycle on repeat. The next glacial cirque is guarded to the west by the *Sphinx*. We stayed to the east, cutting the corner, and followed a steep snow gully through cliff bands in order to save some time. From the top of the gully we could see several of Mount Goodall's summits in front of us. And the unclimbed *Black Cone* towered directly above us a short distance away.

A couple of kilometres of undulating terrain further on, stood the main summit of Mount Goodall. Though it is the highest mountain entirely inside Wells Gray Park we decided to leave it with only the one 2006 ascent. The unclimbed *Black Cone* of Mount Goodall, the reference point marked on the NTS 1:50,000 maps for all these years was reward enough for us. We wrapped around the shoulder of the *Black Cone* and climbed the 4th Class edge of the northwest ridge. By 09:00 am we were standing in sunshine on the 2861m summit. We studied the terrain - there are so many climbing and skiing options in the Cariboo Range. We could clearly see Garnet and its adjacent high peaks in the central area of the park. If access was easier the northern park could become a popular spot. But Wells Gray Provincial Park is doing an excellent job of fulfilling its mandate of protecting this area. After taking various photographs of ourselves playing around the melting summit cornice and building a cairn, we headed down at 10:00. We knew that lower down the snow was getting softer and the crevasse bridges would be starting to weaken. The way up is not always the best return route and we raced down an untracked section of the glacier after we tied into our mountaineering rope for the first time that day.

We continued our tramp along the shelf with no tracks to follow as the morning snow surface had been too firm to leave any imprint of our earlier passage. By more or less following our ascent route we reached the grassy meadows leading down to *Turquoise Pass* and our base camp. Happy with our first ascent we were back to our camp cooking shelter by 2:30 in time for afternoon tea and more importantly before the afternoon rain storms arrived. Our camp mates, Willa Geddes, Gary Norton, Roger Wallis, who were out exploring new terrain would not be so fortunate! But they were able to add Peak 2650m to the climbed list for the area.

The *Black Cone* was a memorable climb with my good friends Bill McKenzie and Norm Greene. The guidebooks will catch up eventually and invite climbers to come and experience this remarkable area. ■

¹ Google Earth: Pivot Peak

² Named in memory of Trooper W.H. Goodall of McAlister, B.C., killed in action April 1, 1945

³ Elevations from the 1:20,000 scale B.C. Government TRIM map, 093A080, published in 2005

⁴ Exploring Wells Gray Park, 5th Edition 2004, Roland Neave, p.188-194

Literature and Films of Interest

John Clarke: Explorer of the Coast Mountains

Lisa Baile, 2012

Review by Ron Dart (ACC-Vancouver)

I have memories of the clearest crystal mountain days imaginable, when we fortunates in the heights seemed to be sky people living in light alone.

~J.E.H. Macdonald 1928

John Clarke (1945-2003) was, when alive, a living mountain legend of sorts---a mythical white mountain goat that was more at home on the high ridges and rocky terrain than in the drudgery of city life. There was no doubt that a biography of Clarke was in the offing and had to be written---the question always was when would the research/writing be done and who would take up the mantle? Lisa Baile was perfectly positioned and poised to write the unfolding tale of Clarke's mountain journey. Lisa had worked with Clarke on many a trek and she has both a probing touch and a journalist's ready pen. Both were, in some ways, sky people who knew what it meant to live in light alone.

John Clarke: Explorer of the Coast Mountain tells, in touching depth and detail, the life journey of Clarke as a young man and mountain novice to a master of the ancient sentinels. The tome, rightly so, lingers at the final phase of Clarke's life when illness overtook him and he went into the west. Clarke's life, in some ways, can be divided into four overlapping seasons: 1) the longing to leave city behind and live the mountain life---Clarke did his apprenticeship with many of the west coast mountain elders in those days, 2) his maturing life and long trips in the diverse Coast Mountains, 3) his turn and commitment to teaching a new generation about the mountains and ecological lore, and 4) the last phase of his journey when his body was wracked with incurable illness and his death in 2003.

I found some of the sections in *John Clarke* most instructive and insightful. Clarke's many trips with John Baldwin are more than worth many a reread. The anecdotes on Clarke and Baldwin both in the mountains and on skis in the mountains tell us much about Clarke's limited ski abilities and the reason's Baldwin has become an icon of West Coast skiing. The death of Randy Stoltmann in 1994 (and the chapter in the book-14-on Stoltmann) was a definite turning point in Clarke's life. There can be no doubt that Clarke was shaken and reshaped by Stoltmann's death---he was there when it happened. It was after 1994 that Clarke, in a more serious and focussed way, became more and more the educational and political activist for the environment, working closely with ecological groups, 1st Nations, governments and schools. Clark became, after 1994, mountaineer turned mountain prophet---a sort of Coast Mountains John Muir. The man of the sky and light brought such sky light to those in the city.

Lisa Baile should be lauded for her exquisite and evocative biography on John Clarke. The photographs used in the book illustrate wisely and suggestively Clarke's life, Clarke's publications are duly noted and Clarke's varied and complicated life amply revealed. *John Clarke: Explorer of the Coast Mountains* is burnished gold---so much said, and there is so much yet to be said. Clarke was one of those sky people who knew what it meant to live in light alone and such sky people have still much to teach us.

■

Ruthie Oltmann: Baroness of Kananaskis Country

by Ron Dart (ACC-Vancouver)



John Laframboise, Ruthie Oltmann and Ron Dart at the edge of Kananaskis Village

I lived in the Crowsnest Pass area (on the border of BC-Alberta) from 1975-1976 where I had a cabin and did plenty of mountaineering. There were two ways to Calgary in those years: the highway east to Fort Macleod, then north to Calgary or the shorter yet more precarious rough gravel road up the Kananaskis to Canmore, then east to Calgary. Kananaskis Country was still in a rough and raw state in the 1970s, but definite change was afoot.

Ruthie Oltmann came west from Toronto to Calgary in the mid-1960s, and from 1970-1972, Ruthie worked at both Spray Lake and Eisenhower Hostels. It was in 1972, though, that Ruthie began a longer stint (1972-1978) at Ribbon Creek Hostel in what was going to be called Kananaskis Country. Ruthie was positioned and poised at the right place and the right time. Plans were afoot to create a hiking, skiing, camping and mountaineering Mecca in the alluring valley and mountain ranges. Ruthie had hiked and climbed many of the undeveloped trails

and mountains in the Kananaskis area in the 1970s, and as interest waxed, Ruthie was the mountain lady on the spot to point to many an untried trek, trail, mountain ridge and summit.

Ruthie did a great deal of on the path sleuth work while working at Ribbon Creek Hostel, and by 1978 two of her Kananaskis classics left the publishing press: *The Valley of Rumours....the Kananaskis* and *The Kananaskis Valley and Hikers' & X-C Skiers' Guide*. Both of these books became best sellers and sold, within a few years, 8,000 copies. Ruthie was definitely at the forefront and a pioneer in bringing to the broader public the mountain plenty that the Kananaskis had to offer. Many is the vivid memory of these published missives and the way both of them opened up the Kananaskis as a new place to venture into for mountain beauty and many a challenge in each season of the year.

The Valley of Rumours.....The Kananaskis remains a must read archive as a guide book for those in the 1970s –published in 1978)) who were interested in exploring terrain rarely entered. The more in depth trail and guide books by Gillean Daffern on Kananaskis Country (now in a 4th edition and five meticulous volumes—originally published in 1979) has bypassed and replaced Ruthie's book, but there can be no doubt Ruthie's is a book worth having in the mountaineering library on the Kananaskis.

Ruthie's research and writing on the Kananaskis was to mature, deepen and broaden as the years unfolded, but her other ramblings in the Rockies did much to stir and awaken in her an interest in Lizzie Rummel. Ruthie had initially miss-met Lizzie in 1967 when at Assiniboine, but by the early 1970s a budding relationship was bearing much fruit. Lizzie took over Ruthie's job at the hostel in 1972 when she was working for Hans Gmoser at Bugaboo Lodge, and in the summers of 1971-1972, Ruthie worked at Skoki Lodge (following in the foot paths of Lizzie Rummel). Ruthie became close friends with Lizzie Rummel in the 1970s, and when Lizzie died in 1980, many urged Ruthie to write Lizzie's biography---Ruthie did the deed and did it well: *Lizzie Rummel: Baroness of the Canadian Rockies* has gone into three editions (1983, 1995 & 2002), and is Ruthie doing biography at her sensitive and probing best.

Ruthie could not stay far from her beloved Kananaskis Country, much development had occurred in the area in preparation for the 1988 Winter Olympics, and the 1997 publication of *My Valley-the Kananaskis* was Ruthie at her historic best telling the tale of the Kananaskis. The affection for the place cannot be missed, and the "My" speaks much about Ruthie's affinity, life journey and soul connection to the Kananaskis. *My Valley- the Kananaskis* is a well written, researched and comprehensive overview of Kananaskis Country. If Lizzie Rummel was the Baroness of the Canadian Rockies, Ruthie Oltmann is the Baroness of Kananaskis Country---*My Valley-the Kananaskis* makes it abundantly clear why this is the obvious case.

Ruthie's Trails: A Lifetime of Adventure (2011) is part biography, part trail guide, part history of Youth Hostels in the Rockies and Kananaskis, part history of the Kananaskis and the Alpine Club of Canada and part mountain tips and tales about information centres---it's a delight and charmer of a book more than worth the purchase and many a reread.

I was fortunate, when in the Nakiska-Kananaskis Village mountain region with John Laframboise in April 2013, to spend some leisurely time with Ruthie---she reflected on a life and journey well spent in the service of mountains and people---indeed, she is a generous and gracious lady---the baroness of Kananaskis Country---she gave me 1st edition copies of *The Kananaskis Valley: Hikers' and K-C Skiers' Guide* and *The Valley of Rumours... the Kananaskis*---both booklets are now mountaineering collectors' items from when the Kananaskis was being opened up for rambling and climbing.

The Chilliwack Outdoor Club (COC) will be spending a week in July in the Kananaskis (and we will join Ruthie for a day), and in August, the COC will spend a week with Ruthie at Assiniboine. Needless to say, we will learn much more about Lizzie Rummel, Baroness of Assiniboine and the Rockies and Ruthie Oltmann, Baroness of Kananaskis. ■

A Life Ascending

2010

Review by Ron Dart (ACC-Vancouver)

There are those who are knit soul to rock, spirit to summit, sky to alpine---such is Ruedi Beglinger. Swiss Guides have played a significant role in the history of Canadian mountaineering, but few Swiss Guides have attained the demanding excellence of Beglinger. *A Life Ascending* is a superb docu-drama that tells the tale of Beglinger's birth and early years in Switzerland, his move to Canada and the life he has lived (with his wife and two daughters) as a guide in the interior mountains of British Columbia. Beglinger has made Selkirk Mountain Experience into one of the finest backcountry challenges and immortalized Durand Glacier as a Mecca for those who long to see grand sights and hone ski skills.

A Life Ascending is about, as expected, many a ski ascent and descent on challenging white packed slopes, but there is a deeper theme at work in the documentary. Most of us remember, in 2003, the news reports from Revelstoke about the seven deaths in an avalanche. It was Beglinger that was guiding the trip, and many were the armchair guides that took Beglinger to task for his perceived incompetence. The deeper and more compelling theme of *A Life Ascending* is how Beglinger, family and friends faced into the tragedy, dared to confront the painful episode and emerged a sadder but wiser community of mountaineers.

There is a probing tenderness, sensitivity and evocative beauty in the way the Beglinger family did not flinch from facing the many inner challenges that inevitably emerge when such unexpected guiding losses occur---the real ascent, therefore, is about the struggle to live through such a confusing emotional time but not allow the pain and public opposition to negate the mountaineering vocation.

A Life Ascending threads together in a judicious and wise manner the harsh realities of the avalanche deaths with a meaningful message about ravens and mountains told so well in Ben Gadd's *Raven's End*. The delicate and well woven blend of apt quotes from *Raven's End* within *A Life Ascending* makes this film a compelling keeper of both high adventure but, more importantly, the deeper adventure of how to face into loss and tragedy and still press on up the mountain to the summit of fuller insight.

It is quite understandable why *A Life Ascending* has won ten international festival awards---the film walks the aware and alert into the very centre and core of the human journey where both aspiration and suffering meet and dwell within the human soul.■

TRAIL MAPS

- ☘ Southern Chilcotin Mountains Trail Map
- ☘ Chilliwack East Recreational Map
- ☘ Chilliwack West Recreational Map
- ☘ **NEW!** North Shore Trail Map

☘ **ACCURATE, DETAILED, GPS-BASED**
☘ **HIKING, MOUNTAINEERING & EXPLORING**

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Thank you!

Jodi Appleton (Program and Admin Manager)

I started with the FMCBC in the fall of 2008 and have been continually impressed by the passion and dedication of FMCBC volunteers. Our outgoing treasurer, Elisa Kreller, recommended allocating some space in Cloudburst to recognize our volunteers and I promptly agreed with her idea. That is, until I started to compile the list and realized we'd never be able to fit everyone into one issue, let alone one page.

Therefore, we've created a new, recurring section in Cloudburst to recognize contributions from our recent and past volunteers. I'm going to get the ball rolling in this issue by recognizing some of the volunteers who I have come to know and count on over the past five years.

For future issues of Cloudburst I will be asking members to contribute their own personal list of noteworthy FMCBC volunteers of the past and present so that we may recognize and celebrate their work. I would also like to request some help expanding upon the longer term contributions of some of the volunteers listed below, because I have only briefly recognized some of their most recent work with the knowledge that several of them have been contributing to the FMCBC for decades.

So here's my list, in no particular order, aside from Brian Wood and Patrick Harrison who get top billing because they hired me back in 2008 and have been strong mentors to me ever since.

Brian Wood, for strongly supporting the FMCBC in his roles as past president on the Board and co-chair on several (most) of our committees, for tirelessly drafting and editing letters and documents, and for pursuing funding from MEC to develop our strategic plan.

Patrick Harrison, for giving us a link to the past with his knowledge and experience, for continually contributing on the Board and SW BC Trails Committee and for determinedly working to build partnerships with municipalities across the province to extend the National Hiking Trail across BC.

Peter Rothermel, for strongly supporting the FMCBC in his past role as Vancouver Island Regional Director, for keeping the FMCBC up-to-date on important issues affecting clubs on the Island and for contributing to the Provincial Advocacy Committee and Insurance Committee on a regular basis.

Scott Webster, for his work as FMCBC president over the past two years, for his many contributions on the Advocacy Committee, SW BC Recreation and Conservation Committee and Insurance Committee and for navigating the FMCBC through our recent decision to reduce membership dues.

Bryce Leigh, for his help writing and editing countless letters on behalf of the SW BC Recreation and Conservation Committee, for driving all the way in from Whistler each month to participate on said committee, and for keeping his ear to the ground to alert us to new developments and potential access issues or conflicts in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor.

Alex Wallace, for his extensive research relating to the parking situations on the north shore ski hills, for his determined efforts to improve the Howe Sound Crest Trail, for his contributions as co-chair for the SW BC Trails Committee and for the background knowledge he offers when new issues and situations arise which often turn out to be old issues and situations just resurfacing.

Dave King, for being a constant supporter and contributor to the FMCBC on the Board and on the Provincial Advocacy Committee, for helping administer our FMCBC Member Club Grant for 2013, for his work on the Ancient Trails Universal Boardwalk and for providing a voice for us in the interior.

Monika Bittel, for her help developing the new FMCBC Universal Waivers, for her work helping us protect access to the Smoke Bluffs and for her continued contributions as co-chair for the SW BC Recreation and Conservation Committee.

Elisa Kreller, for her work as treasurer for the FMCBC, for offering solid financial advice to the Board, and for improving our bookkeeping and invoicing systems.

Jack Bryceland, for representing the FMCBC as a director on the Board of the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC, and for being a voice for us in the Fraser Valley.

Ken Vande Burgt, for his work on the Provincial Advocacy Committee and for informing and educating us on the issues surrounding access to private land on Vancouver Island.

Lesley Bohm, for regularly hosting and providing delicious pies for our monthly SW BC Recreation and Conservation Committee meetings and for continually pursuing protection and improvements for the trails on the North Shore.

Francis St. Pierre, for his work on the Insurance Committee reviewing and making recommendations on our insurance policies, waivers and documents in order to better protect the FMCBC and our member clubs.

Jay MacArthur, for his work on the Provincial Advocacy Committee and for developing the newly released *FMCBC Policy on Huts, Cabins and Lodges in BC Provincial Parks*.

Bill Perry, for his contributions on the Outreach and Communications Committee and for his role as Cloudburst editor.

Ben Singleton-Polster, for his letter writing and editing work for the SW BC Recreation and Conservation Committee and the Provincial Advocacy Committee and for helping administer our 2013 Member Club Grant.

Catheryn Fyfe, Bob St. John, and David Overall, for their work administering our 2013 Member Club Grant.

Gary Guthrie, for his contributions as co-chair for the Provincial Advocacy Committee and for keeping the ball rolling on the various projects being worked on by that committee.

Samantha Harrigan, for her contributions as co-chair of the Outreach and Communications Committee and being a voice for the FMCBC on Club Tread.

Antje Wahl, for her past contributions on the Trails Committee, for continuing to send me articles for the E-News and for creating the current version of our website which we will still be using for at least a little while longer.

Nowell Senior, Ron Dart, and Mike Nash, for the wonderful articles they have written for Cloudburst

Kayla Stevenson, for providing web services and advice to the FMCBC on an ongoing basis.

Thank you to everyone who has and continues to volunteer with the FMCBC! We depend on your support. If you would like to send me a write up about one or several volunteers who you would like to recognize in an upcoming issue please email me at fmcdbc@mountainclubs.org.■

The FMCBC would like to welcome four New Member Clubs:

South Okanagan Trail Alliance
Victoria Outdoor Club Meetup
Bulkley Backcountry Ski Society
Quadra Island Outdoor Club

We would like to thank the following people for their past service as FMCBC Directors:

Andrew Pape-Salmon (VISTA & ACC-VI)
Ben Singleton-Polster (VOC UBC)
Sheila Mitchell (NVOC)
Peter Rothermel (Vancouver Island Region)

We would like to welcome our newest FMCBC Directors:

Andrew Drouin (SOTA)
Ben Heemskerk (BBSS)
Catheryn Fyfe (VOCMU)
Chloe Williams (VOC UBC)
Christopher Causton (VISTA)
Geraldine Meade (NVOC)
Valerie Van Veen (QIOC)

We would like to thank

Mountain Equipment Co-op

for supporting the FMCBC through their generous contribution of office space from which to base our administration.

EDZIZA ADVENTURE

We are looking for two companions to join us for a two week hiking and horseback wilderness trek in NW British Columbia with Tahltan guide Willie Williams.



Discover the unique landscape of Mount Edziza Provincial Park from end to end. Our trip starts at Telegraph Creek. A short flight takes us to Buckley Lake where we meet our guide and wrangler. We complete our 14 day traverse of the park at Little Ball Lake in the spectacular Spectrum Range. Here our trusty pilot Rick will pick us up and return us to Telegraph Creek.

Dates: August 1st to 14th 2013 plus travel time to/from Telegraph Creek.

Costs: approx. \$3000 per person plus food supplies

Contacts: Gaby and Shane, Vancouver B.C.

Phone: 604-733-7101

FMCBC Member Club Grant

Thank you to all those who made a donation to the FMCBC last year. We would like to especially thank the Vancouver Island Trails Information Society for donating \$2000 to go towards supporting projects on Vancouver Island, Tom Hall for his donation of \$500 and Brian Wood for his donation of \$200 to the FMCBC.

Our 2013 Grant Committee is currently reviewing the applications and will announce awards at the FMCBC AGM on June 8th in Kamloops.

The FMCBC is now making an appeal for donations for our **2014 Member Club Grant**. All donations to the FMCBC received between April 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014 will go towards our 2014 grant fund.

Your donation is tax-deductible for the year in which it was made. A charitable tax receipt will be issued automatically and for donations over \$500.00, you and/or your organization have the option to be listed as a supporter on the FMCBC website and in our Cloudburst newsletter.

To make a donation please complete the printable [donation form](#) on our website and mail it along with your cheque to: FMCBC, PO Box 19673, Vancouver BC, V5T 4E7. Please make your cheque payable to FMCBC.



You can also make a secure online donation to the FMCBC via the Canada Helps [website](#). Type in **FMCBC** to find us and make your donation. Canada Helps is a registered charity whose goal is to make giving to charities simple. Their site provides an easy and secure way to make donations. Thank you for your support.

FMCBC Member Clubs

NORTH COAST

Mount Remo Backcountry Society
www.mtremo.ca

SOUTHERN INTERIOR

Kamloops Hiking Club
www.kamloopshikingclub.net
Kootenay Mountaineering Club
www.kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca
South Okanagan Trail Alliance
www.southokanagantrailalliance.com
Varsity Outdoor Club Okanagan
www.ubco-voco.com

VANCOUVER ISLAND AND ISLANDS

Alberni Valley Outdoor Club
www.mountainclubs.org/AVOC.htm
Alpine Club of Canada – Vancouver Island
www.acuvi.ca
Comox District Mountaineering Club
www.comoxhiking.com
Friends of Strathcona Park
www.friendsofstrathcona.org
Island Mountain Ramblers
sites.google.com/site/islandmountainramblers
Quadra Island Outdoor Club
www.qioutdoorclub.org
Vancouver Island Spine Trail Association
www.vispine.ca
Vancouver Island Trails Information Society
www.hikingtrailsbooks.com
Victoria Outdoor Club Meetup
www.meetup.com/Victoria-Outdoor-Club

CENTRAL INTERIOR

Bulkley Backcountry Ski Society
<http://www.bbss.ca/>
Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Club
www.caledoniaramblers.ca
Fraser Headwaters Alliance
www.fraserheadwaters.org

FRASER VALLEY

Backroads Outdoor Club
www.backroadsoutdoor.ca
Chilliwack Outdoor Club
www.chilliwackoutdoorclub.com

METRO VANCOUVER

Alpine Club of Canada – Vancouver
www.accvancouver.ca
BC Mountaineering Club
www.bcmc.ca
Friends of Garibaldi Park
www.friendsofgaribaldipark.org
Hike BC
www.nationalhikingtrail.org
North Shore Hikers
www.northshorehikers.org
North Vancouver Outdoors Club
www.northvanoutdoorsclub.ca
Outsetters Club of Vancouver
www.outsetters.org
SFU Outdoor Club
www.sfuoutdoors.wikidot.com
Valley Outdoor Association
www.valleyoutdoor.org
Varsity Outdoor Club UBC
www.ubc-voc.com



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