



# CLOUDBURST

The Newsletter of the Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C.

Fall/Winter 2003/2004

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Hiking on the Dunster Trail, FMCBC AGM 2003  
*Richard Keltie*

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# CLOUDBURST

**Articles:** We welcome articles which inform our readers about mountain access, recreation, and conservation issues or activities in B.C.

**Advertising:** The FMCBC invites advertising or classified advertising that would be useful to our members. Please contact the FMCBC office for a rate sheet at:

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V5T 4E3

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## MEMBERSHIP

The Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia (FMCBC) is a non-profit organization representing the interests of non-mechanized hikers and climbers, and outdoor clubs throughout British Columbia. The FMCBC 1) addresses mountain access, recreation, and conservation issues; 2) promotes outdoor education and safety through courses of instruction and Cloudburst articles; and 3) builds and maintains hiking trails throughout B.C. by its member clubs.

**Membership** in the FMCBC is open to any individual or group interested in non-mechanized outdoor activities, and access, recreational, and conservation concerns. Those interested in joining the FMCBC have two options:

### **Club Membership:**

Please contact the FMCBC office to receive a list of clubs that belong to the FMCBC (See back cover). Membership is \$15 per annum per membership when a member of a FMCBC Club.

### **Individual Membership:**

Call the FMCBC office at 604 873 6069  
Membership for individuals is \$20 per year.  
The FMCBC accepts VISA and MasterCard for payment.  
You may also send \$20 along with your name and address to the FMCBC at the above address.

### **The FMCBC Office Has Moved!**

Our new mailing address is:  
Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC  
P.O. Box 19673  
Vancouver BC  
V5T 4E3

### **New Phone Numbers**

604-873-6069 office (this # will be in service by mid-December)  
604-876-6590 fax

Thank you very much to the Mountain Equipment Co-op for providing office space for the FMCBC.

### **Board of Directors and Committees**

#### **President**

Manrico Scremin (Acc-Van)

#### **Vice President/Secretary**

Mike Peel (BCMC)

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Don Morton

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#### **Committees**

Recreation and Conservation  
Committee

Trails Committee

Education and Safety Committee

CWMS Committee

#### **Cloudburst**

Mike Peel, Manrico Scremin, article  
wranglers

Meg Stanley, editorial and layout  
Eileen Mak, copy-editing

## President's Column

Manrico Scremin

The past year has been something of a difficult and challenging one for the FMCBC. The single big event was the sale of Canada West Mountain School (CWMS). Last winter was lacking in snow and, therefore, lacking in CMWS course and trip participants. December is normally CWMS' most profitable month but last year we had zero courses that month. We took a significant financial hit as a result. In spring the FMCBC Directors decided that:

- We couldn't take any more losses like that.
- We didn't have the resources to invest in CWMS to grow it to its potential.
- Providing training was no longer something the FMCBC needed to do. (This was a key role for the FMCBC in the 1980's when there was very little in the way of training opportunities available.)

Having reached these three conclusions, there was really no choice except to sell CWMS. We went through a process of soliciting bids and ended up selling it to the CMWS Manager, Brian Jones. Making this sale happen took an extraordinary amount of time and effort. Thank you very much to Ken Legg, Peter Woodsworth, Jay Straith, and Ron Royston for helping out with various aspects of it.

As a result of the CWMS sale we are now in the process of moving office locations. The Mountain Equipment Co-op has kindly offered to provide us with office space in their "employee only" area at the back of their store on Broadway, a block from where we are currently located.

When things looked shaky financially last year we made two other decisions: hold off on hiring an Executive Director, and not to produce a printed *Cloudburst*. Now that the financial situation is stabilized, we can move forward to hire an Executive Director—see the Help Wanted ad below—and we have printed this edition of *Cloudburst*.

From a financial perspective, things are now going to be very simple for the FMCBC going forward. At a high level, our annual budget is probably going to look something like:

### Revenue

Member dues	\$40,000
Grants	\$15,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>

### Expenses

Salaries	\$40,000
Cloudburst	\$10,000
Other Expenses	\$5,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>

Note that this does not include liability insurance or project grants for specific programs which are "flow through".

I sometimes hear the question "what is the FMCBC doing for us/me?" which is for many people a polite way of saying "the FMCBC is not doing enough for us/me." My response is to tell people that, at the basic level, the FMCBC is made up of only two components:

- Volunteers from our member clubs,
- Two part-time staff: an Executive Director (vacant position) and an assistant.

This is my polite way of saying that if you don't think the FMCBC is doing enough, perhaps you should consider putting in some volunteer time to do what you think needs to get done. I never hear the "what are you doing for me" question from the volunteers who are actually doing things for their fellow FMCBC members.

I hear a lot of questions about liability insurance. The FMCBC does a bulk purchase of liability insurance on behalf of several of our member clubs totaling 900 members. Rates have gone up significantly over the last three years.

Some people are raising very legitimate questions:

- Do we have the right coverage?
- Are we getting the best deal?
- Are the FMCBC and the clubs in compliance with respect to the policy? (i.e., is there any chance of getting a nasty surprise when one of the clubs makes a claim?)

I don't know the answers to those questions and, frankly, I don't personally want to spend the time to find out. This would be a good task for an Executive Director to take on but that is a vacant position. By the time we hire one, there probably will not be enough time to sort this out properly before the insurance is renewed on April 30. Our other staff member, Emma Russell could do at least some of the research but it's going to take a volunteer to drive the process. Any suggestions? If we don't get a volunteer to take this on we will simply renew the policy at the quoted rate.



WEP Photo

WEP at Gilmore Elementary School

## FMCBC Notices

### New Website

Check out the new FMCBC website at: <http://www.mountainclubs.bc.ca>. One area you should watch is the "Hot Issues" page. This contains the list of issues the FMCBC is working on. By clicking on any one of the issues you will be able to get a description of the issue, the FMCBC position, what we are doing about it, and what you as an individual can do about it. Many thanks to Mark Stewart for developing our new website.

### Help Wanted: Executive Director

The FMCBC is now in the process of searching for a new Executive Director (ED). This is a paid staff position which will likely be part-time (e.g., three days a week). The ED will have four key roles:

1. Represent the FMCBC. The ED must be able to handle themselves well in public and in working with government and other people whose objectives do not necessarily coincide with those of the FMCBC. The ED must be very knowledgeable in the areas of interest to the FMCBC: non-motorized, mountain oriented backcountry recreation. The ED must also have excellent communication skills, both written and oral.
2. Support and help manage the efforts of FMCBC volunteers and staff. The FMCBC will continue to be a volunteer driven organization. The ED will work with FMCBC volunteers and the two part-time staff to help them achieve their objectives. The ED must work well with volunteers and the other FMCBC staff.
3. Manage the business affairs of the FMCBC. This includes having a grasp of the financial situation and keeping proper records.
4. Play a leading role in fund raising. We do not expect this to be the major focus for the ED. However they should be able to produce successful grant applications.

The ED will be expected to attend meetings in Vancouver and Victoria. If you know of anyone who might be interested in this position please have them e-mail a cover letter and resume to Richard Keltie. If they have any questions they can contact Richard Keltie directly. All applications and correspondence will be kept confidential.

Richard Keltie, ED Search Committee Chair  
604-738-4583 (office)  
richardkeltie@telus.net.

### **Environment Fund of BC**

Probably very few of you know that the FMCBC is a member of the Environment Fund of BC (EFBC). The EFBC is Canada's first charitable environmental federation. Established in 1995, it represents BC's most effective environmental groups, raising much-needed core funding for them through workplace giving (payroll deductions), and fostering greater environmental awareness through entertaining and informative workplace presentations.

The EFBC works in a similar way to the United Way. (The United Way does not support any conservation/environmental organizations; that's why the EFBC is needed.) Campaigns are run in the fall at a workplace.

Where the EFBC could use your help is in gaining access to more workplaces. If you are employed at an organization that you think would consider allowing the EFBC to run a workplace campaign, we would very much like to hear from you. Please contact the FMCBC directly and we will put you in touch with the right people at the EFBC. For your information, the other EFBC members are:

Better Environmentally Sound Transportation  
BC Environmental Network Education Foundation  
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society  
Evergreen  
Federation of BC Naturalists  
Northwest Wildlife Preservation Society  
Outdoor Recreation Council of BC  
Sierra Club of BC  
Society Promoting Environmental Conservation  
West Coast Environmental Law

## **BC Mountain Clubs Meet in Robson Valley**

Mike Nash

The FMCBC's annual general meeting was held this year in the Rocky Mountain Trench community of Dunster. Traditionally held in the lower mainland or Vancouver Island, twice in the past decade the AGM was brought to the interior by the Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Club of Prince George. This year, two of the Federation's newest member organizations located in the Robson Valley, the Ozalenka Outdoor Club and the Fraser Headwaters Alliance hosted the meeting in Dunster in an event timed to coincide with that community's big fundraiser, the 27th annual Dunster Ice Cream Social. Among local groups participating, there were the three mentioned above, plus the Prince George Section of the Alpine Club of Canada and the Prince George Backcountry Recreation Society.

The three-day event began on Friday evening with a potluck dinner and slide show at the Dunster Community Hall. Tables were dressed with generous arrangements of wildflowers freshly picked from surrounding meadows, and the food and desserts hinted at what to expect the following night. The after-dinner speaker was the well-known McBride mountaineer, Glen Stanley. Now in his sixties and still hard to keep up with in the mountains, Stanley showed stunning slides of two of his climbs of Mount Robson. After nearly failing to retrieve a rope during his second descent after it became frozen in the ice during a rappel, Glen observed with casual understatement that it was much more comfortable leaping across 8-foot crevasses with a rope on. Meeting organizer, Roy Howard, ended the evening with slides of the historic Goat River Trail, now part of Canada's National Hiking Trail.

The main challenge on Saturday was keeping up with the food that was served all day long at the meeting venue, the Motherland B&B in Dunster. Situated on a narrow peninsula-like meander of the Fraser River, this beautifully decorated all wood and log structure has no electricity. This adds considerably to its charm, but caused some consternation to the meeting secretary who had to put his

notebook computer aside and resort to pen and paper. Through the picture windows we could see fresh strawberries and salad greens being picked from the lush riverbank gardens for our snacks, lunch and dinner, while fresh bread dough was rising in the summer kitchen nearby. The sun shone warmly on the generous lawns, while the still snow-capped mountains of the Rocky Mountain Trench above Dunster provided a stunning backdrop and an invitation to the next day's hikes. For partners who were not attending Saturday's meeting, Ernie Romanow, co-owner of a new hiking venture in Valemount called Hike Inc., led a walk to Kinney Lake in Mount Robson Park. Hike Inc. offers half-day hikes to full backpacking trips, and more information can be found on their website: [www.hikeinc.ca](http://www.hikeinc.ca)

Soon after dinner, we headed over to the Dunster Ice Cream Social, where some five hundred people of all ages from infants to great grandparents, and from places as far away as Scotland, enjoyed all the country-baked pie and ice cream that they could eat. This was followed by a country-dance where folk young and old tried to wear off the calories they had consumed. Meeting participants enjoyed more local hospitality by being billeted with people living near Dunster. This is always a good way to meet new people and get to know an area.

On Sunday, there were three much-needed hikes to choose from: the National Hiking Trail along the Goat River west of McBride; a vehicle accessible alpine walk in McBride; and the Dunster trail, east of McBride. I led the latter, which entails a nearly one and a half vertical kilometer climb from a trailhead near the Dunster Store to a snowy peak giving fabulous views into the Raush Valley and across the Premier Range on the south side of the Rocky Mountain Trench. The origin of the name Raush is not, as I had supposed for many years, that of a Germanic pioneer. Rather, according to a resident of Dunster, it is an old abbreviation of Rivière au Shuswap, named after the plateau located 150 kilometers to the south.

Looking north across the Trench, the elevation also affords views of the forbidding 2,700-meter peaks between the Holmes and Fraser Rivers that are hid-

den from sight at valley level. The twelve participants of this trip included the newly re-elected President and Vice-President of the Federation, Manrico Scremin and Mike Peel, who used the opportunity to chat with others who had not attended the AGM, but who had driven out from Prince George for the ice cream social and the hike. The Dunster Trail is in great shape with a mostly easy grade, provided that one doesn't miss the trailhead and spend the first half-hour bushwhacking as we did!

This was a successful event that allowed residents of the Robson Valley to showcase their interesting communities and way of life, and reminded participants that whatever else brings them together each year, having fun in the outdoors is at the top of the agenda.



Richard Kelie

On the Dunster Trail, FMCBC AGM 2003



# Trails Committee Report

Alex Wallace

## Lions Bay Trail Access

Following the acrimonious trail closures and parking restrictions in 2003, FMCBC Trails Committee met with the Lions Bay Mayor and Council, starting a process which we hope will lead to a comprehensive resolution to this longstanding conflict. FMCBC was, some fifteen years ago, close to a solution on two occasions, with funding and volunteers in place to construct a parking lot on Crown Land, but a few unhappy and articulate residents objected. As a result the Mayor and Council rejected the project.

Our recent information is that most Lions Bay residents, including the new Mayor and Council, are not opposed to hiking. Those who were opposed in past years cited noise and water supply protection as their rationale for restricting parking and threatening a complete closure of Lions hiking trails. However, ten years ago, a similar trail closure was fended off by then E.D. Anders Ourom. He was able to produce evidence from the North Shore Health Officer that hikers did not endanger the Lions Bay water supply. The Trails Committee is bringing to the table FMCBC's long history of trying to resolve these issues reasonably, and is working to get the current impasse resolved by Spring 2004.

## Indian Arm Trail

This trail could become the first long wilderness hiking trail to be established on the North Shore for many years. BC Parks rangers hiked the flagged route in October 2002, first tackling the low elevation 17km to Elsay Lake from the Mt. Seymour Road corner, and back. The second section from Elsay Lake to Indian River took four days: when they got high up on the ridges, the weather changed and they spent quite a bit of time working with map and compass. They didn't have time to finish the Eastern section (from Indian River to Dilly Dally trail) and it also is not clear whether the route is complete at the Indian River crossing, due to land tenure issues near the RVYC Wigwam Inn.

For the trail to be officially recognized, it will have to be incorporated into the Indian Arm Provincial Park Master Plan. Anything going in to this Master Plan has to be agreed to by the Tsleil-Waututh Nation (Burrard Band) and is subject to environmental and safety assessments. The section going north from Elsay Lake enters the Seymour watershed and the GVWD is not happy about this. Also, there is the question of future maintenance of the trail. BC Parks will be holding a stakeholder meeting in January to discuss the trail, including Tsleil-Waututh representatives. The Indian Arm Master Plan process could take some time to complete.

## Grouse Grind Trail

GVRD plans to redirect the Grouse Grind trail, which is on GVWD land. FMCBC Trails has had meetings with the GVRD and spoken at North Vancouver District Council. As of this time, the re-alignment on to a trail built unofficially by GMR some years ago has not gone ahead, and we have requested a public process. It is still not clear what plans there are to sell the land. We will be following up on this in 2004.

## Cypress Provincial Park

In 1992 we were faced with Hollyburn and Mt. Strachan being logged for ski runs, parking and restaurants, with considerable destruction of hiking trails. Now, the 1960's clearcut on Black Mtn will be the new expansion site. We are still working with BC Parks and CBRL on the Amended Cypress Master Plan, with on-site meetings to re-route the Baden-Powell trail around the 2010 Snowboard and Freestyle Skiing venues. If the Master Plan isn't completed, the construction of facilities for 2010 cannot go ahead (the Cypress 2010 venues must be completed by October 2006).

## Trails Day 2003/2004

Mountain Equipment Co-op asked us to help put together a joint 'Trails Day' event for the public, but unfortunately there are limits to volunteer time, with a lot of logistics and waiver stuff to do. This year, the MOF forest fire travel ban finally made

scheduling it impossible. One part of the Trails Day project that went ahead was MEC's Trail Maintenance window display. The window inspired many volunteers. There has always been an expectation that the BC Trails Committee could be a clearing house for "off the street" volunteers on trails projects, but this has never been feasible. In future, we will try to direct volunteers to the clubs to sign up and work on projects. In 2004 we hope to do Trails Day projects on Mt. Seymour and Mt. Silverdaisy (Manning) and in other locations.

## Letter

### The Russians Love Their Children Too

The Cold War. A period when it was perfectly reasonable to fear that nuclear annihilation might occur at any time. Towards its end, Sting wrote a song which expressed the hope that "the Russians love their children too." Can a person who loves his or her children destroy their world?

It is often much easier to demonize one's enemies than it is to search out the common ground which unites us. It is easy to demonize. It requires no thought. "They" are the enemy. Ergo "they" are evil.

Before continuing with an article which may seem to be critical of Pat Harrison and Manrico Scremin, I would like to express my gratitude as a relatively new (3 years) member of the Federation for the work which these gentlemen have done. From what I have seen, both have worked tirelessly to further the interests of the Federation and we owe them our thanks. In spite of the views expressed below, I support their efforts.

What then is my concern? My fear is that both gentlemen, and by extension the Federation, have adopted in their public pronouncements about the government a tone which is far too politically adversarial.

In the May, 2001 issue of *Cloudburst*, I was dismayed by the generally inflammatory tone of Mr.

Harrison's editorial. To take but one example, I cite the following, "I am outraged that this government believes that public crown land is a private reserve for the wealthy." Is that truly what the "government believes"? Those on the right of the political spectrum would probably say no. Those on the left would probably say yes. And therein lies the problem. The statement quoted is political and, in my opinion, has no place in an editorial written by the executive director of the Federation. Let him keep his political views to himself and confine the analysis to facts and figures. In my view, the Federation should be apolitical.

Then on February 3, 2003, I was again dismayed – this time to read Mr. Scremin's letter to the editor of the *Vancouver Sun* - written not in his personal capacity but as "President, Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC." With the tragedy of the avalanche deaths fresh in everyone's mind, Mr. Scremin found " ... it very interesting that Premier Gordon Campbell would now be expressing concern about avalanche safety in the backcountry." Mr. Scremin went on to opine that "[Mr. Campbell] and his government didn't seem very concerned about a year ago when, with short notice, they cut off all government funding for the Avalanche Bulletin."

What was the purpose of Mr. Scremin's letter? It was apparently written to express the hope that "Mr. Campbell will see fit to restore the Bulletin, which is published by the Canadian Avalanche Association." A laudable purpose tarnished by a totally unnecessary and potentially counterproductive speculation as to the motives and attitudes of the premier and his government.

As we all knew by the time Sting had finished singing, the Russians do love their children. The premier has children. So, I'm sure, do many members of his government. So do many of the executives who manage the various resource sector companies operating in this province. So do the employees of these same companies. Has it ever occurred to the leaders of the Federation that many of these people use and love the backcountry just as much as they do?



And how often have you been trudging down a mountain trail only to realize that in the distant and sometimes not so distant past the trail had been a road - probably built to facilitate logging operations or to obtain access to a mine site? How many of the roads which we use to get to the trailhead somewhere were built by the resource industry?

What if we stopped being adversarial? What if we tried to search for the common ground which unites us all? What if we tried working with government and industry instead of against them? Of course we wouldn't get everything we want but that would be no different than the present situation. It's not because we scream and yell and cast aspersions on the motives of government and industry that we get our own way. On the contrary, our screams of anguish serve only to alienate us from the decision-makers. Instead of engaging in fruitful dialogue, we lose their attention completely, we marginalize ourselves.

In short, I would suggest that it's time we tried a different approach.

Douglas E. Dent

November 2, 2003

## Updates

### Sea to Sky Backcountry Recreation Forums

Pat Harrison, Chair, Sea to Sky Summer and Winter Backcountry Recreation Forums

After two years of negotiations between the non-motorized, motorized, and commercial winter recreation users of the Sea to Sky Corridor, it was obvious that the equivalent summer process was needed. It has been more difficult to get the summer groups together as there are many more types of users than in winter, as well as far less time in which to accomplish the task. We now have a core group of users that is meeting regularly. We have had five meetings since June 2003 and have an additional three meetings left to resolve any user overlaps that may be incompatible.

Both the winter and summer recreation backcountry forum recommendations will be forwarded to the current Sea to Sky Land Resource Management Process, due to wrap up this December. We would like to have had the government extend the LRMP process until the end of March 2004, but the government has stated there will be no extensions to the current Sea to Sky LRMP. It is extremely important to get our recommendations into the LRMP process as it will lend legal status to the recommendations. In January and March, First Nations will have their say regarding the LRMP recommendations. The final LRMP document is scheduled to go to Cabinet in late March.

For further information visit:

### Signs of Progress, Signs of Peace

Mary Henderson, Sea to Sky Winter Backcountry Forum

This fall the signs for the designated recreational zones set out by the Sea to Sky Backcountry Winter Forum will be going up in the major valleys of the corridor marking the beginning of an intense three year education plan. For many recreationists, the signs will be their first encounter with the new zoning.

Maps on the signs will set out areas for motorized and non-motorized recreation. Non-compliance with the zones can be reported to the local compliance officer. In this way, we can all play a role in encouraging the public to allow everyone in the corridor to make a space for all recreationists to have a good experience in the backcountry.



Mike Nash

Hiking on the Dunster Trail, FMCBC AGM

## **Greetings from Canada West Mountain School!**

Ron M. Ford

At Canada West Mountain School, we are excited about our upcoming winter schedule and are looking forward to a great season with a deep snow pack and plenty of bluebird days. Get a headstart planning your winter activities by checking out our website at [www.themountainschool.com](http://www.themountainschool.com) for a complete listing of our 2003-04 course and trip offerings.

Along with our usual range of recreational avalanche courses, ski tours and winter destination expeditions (Panthorns and Mt. Waddington), we are once again offering the always popular ice climbing essentials, winter snow camping and a newly extended 4-day winter mountaineering course.

Participation on our international expeditions continues to grow and this season CWMS is leading return trips to Aconcagua in Argentina, Mt. Elbrus in Russia and a spectacular Haute Route hut-to-hut ski tour in the European Alps.

Our website, always being upgraded, offers expanded services to all our clients including comprehensive details on all programs, course itineraries, equipment lists, training tips and more. Changes and additions will be made regularly so bookmark our What's New page, [www.themountainschool.com/new.html](http://www.themountainschool.com/new.html) and visit often!

If you have any questions regarding our courses, are interested in discussing a customized program for yourself and some friends, or would like to register for one of our scheduled courses, please contact our office and ask for Brian Jones or myself and we'll be happy to help you out!

Phone	604-878-7007
Fax	604-876-7047
Toll Free	1-888-892-2266



### **The Wilderness Education Program: A Legacy for John Clarke and the Young People of British Columbia**

Lisa Baile, WEP Director

In mid-November of 2002 John Clarke, BC's legendary explorer and mountaineer, watched with obvious delight and emotion as some 200 students flocked into the high school auditorium to hear him talk about the wonders of BC's wilderness. John loved talking to young people about our backcountry almost as much as he enjoyed going on his trips. Tragically, this was to be John's last presentation, and I think he must have known it. He passed away in January 2003 after battling for almost a year with brain cancer. John knew, however, that the school program that he and I had initiated in 1996 would continue. In the last weeks of his life, he was an enthusiastic supporter of the revised Wilderness Education Program (WEP) and its plans for the future.

WEP is now a core program of BC Spaces for Nature - a wilderness conservation organization with decades of experience in protecting BC's wild lands. BC Spaces has played a leadership role in successful conservation campaigns spanning 30 years which have led to the protection of more than 6.5 million acres, in places such as: Tatshenshini, Nitinat Triangle of Pacific Rim National Park and the Spatsizi. BC Spaces is now turning its expertise to fostering a passion for wilderness in future generations. Together BC Spaces and WEP are creating and expanding the WEP team, providing support with program development, strategic planning, and training new WEP educators and volunteers.

Since the Fall of 2002, WEP's three professional educators, Becky Macoun, Tim Turner and Mark Lebbell have been following in John's footsteps, providing in-school presentations and workshops for teachers' conferences and professional development days. Like John, they bring wilderness live to the classroom, showing spectacular images of BC's wild places, conjuring up a variety of fascinating wilderness artifacts (a beaver-gnawed tree trunk, a whale vertebra, the flattened, punctured tuna can a hungry grizzly bear had popped into its mouth). Often a tent is set up in the classroom or schoolyard and students delve into the backpack and learn about the essentials of a backcountry trip. Sounds of nature, music and games are also a popular part of the program.

The transition has been challenging and rewarding. WEP has recently been successful in obtaining significant funding from the Vancouver Foundation and Van City to support the expansion and development of the program.

We have also been focusing on program development and creating a model of wilderness education that will eventually spread throughout BC. A critical and exciting step in the expansion and development of WEP is the addition of Katy Holm to the WEP team. It became evident this past year that in order to develop the program effectively we would need to have someone working on a permanent basis for WEP. I have been volunteering my time as program coordinator, director, fundraiser etc, etc, since the conception of WEP. It's high time to let someone else share some of this fun – and get paid for it! Katy starts her new position as program coordinator/educator in January 2004. Katy is a professional educator with an undergraduate degree in Biology. Her outdoor and wilderness experience is exemplary; she is skilled in river and ocean kayaking, rock climbing, ice climbing, and mountaineering.

On behalf of everyone connected with WEP, I would like to thank all of the members of the Federation of Mountain Clubs who have generously supported WEP over the years – without your incredible generosity, WEP would not be where it is today. Also, huge thanks to the Federation and

staff, who took WEP under their fiscal wing way back in 1996. Their support and encouragement over our 6-year association was awesome.

Often, when John and I would talk about the future of WEP, John would say "I'm in this for life!" We are delighted that you are a part of John's legacy.

For information about WEP visit: [www.wepbc.ca](http://www.wepbc.ca)

To book a WEP school presentation or for more information, phone Lisa: 604 732 0509.

To make a tax-deductible donation write a cheque to:  
BC Spaces for Nature: WEP and mail it to: WEP,  
3116 West Third Ave, Vancouver, BC, V6K 1N3.

Or to make a donation visit: [www.wepbc.ca/donations](http://www.wepbc.ca/donations)



WEP Photo

WEP at Gilmore Elementary School

## Hike Canada *En Marche* and National Hiking Trail Update

Pat Harrison, Vice-President  
Hike Canada *En Marche*

On 4 October 2003, Hike Canada *En Marche* held its second AGM in as many years. Directors from across Canada converged on Moncton, NB. Moncton was chosen as the site for the AGM because there was a week long celebration of hiking going on at that location and it seemed appropriate to join in that celebration with our AGM.

Directors finalized the name of the national trail as the National Hiking Trail/*Sentier National* and have finalized the logo for the National Hiking Trail. All ten provincial delegations will now have a unified name and logo to promote the trail.

During the week of the AGM of the HCEM, an announcement was made in Parliament supporting Hike Canada *En Marche* week. We were delighted. Pierre Berton, Canadian historian, has lent his support to the National Hiking Trail as well.

Two meetings were held last spring in Dunster and Quesnel, B.C., to bring together all the groups working on the BC section of the National Hiking Trail. In all, 35 people attended these meetings from across BC. There will be similar meetings this spring in Dunster and Quesnel.

Roy Howard and members of the Fraser Headwaters Alliance have been actively working on the NHT this summer. They have been working from the East Twin River east of McBride, BC, to the top of the ridge that runs towards Jasper National Park. In October, Roy and several others hiked approximately 35 kilometres on this new route. While not ready for the public, this is a major step forward. We are hoping on pushing the last 48 kilometres to the Alberta border next summer. Dwight Dodge of the Telegraph Trail Society has been working hard on the Telegraph Trail west of Quesnel. The Friends of Barkerville continue to maintain the 1869 Gold Rush Park Trail from Keithley to Barkerville.

We still need to finalize the National Hiking Trail route along the Quesnel River area and a small portion from Barkerville to the start of the Goat River Historic Trail north of Bowron Provincial Park.

If you would like to contribute funds to the National Hiking Trail, please send your contributions to the Treasurer, Hike Canada *En Marche*, 16520 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Surrey, BC, V3S 0L2.

## Book Review

### *Island Alpine:* **A Guide to Vancouver Island's Mountains**

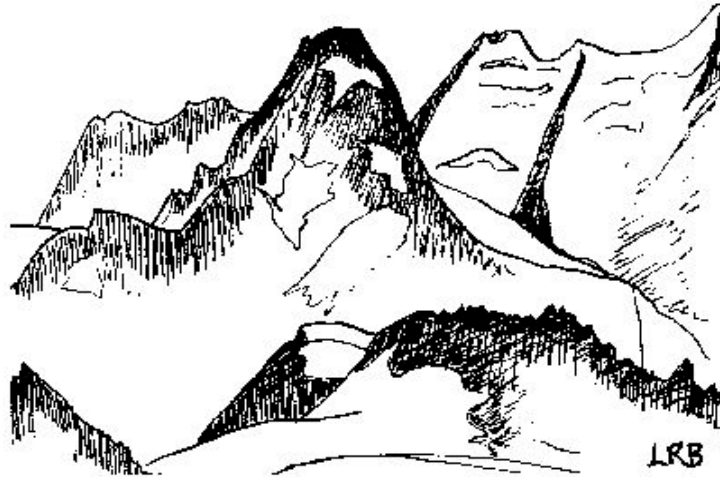
Wild Isle Publications, ISBN 0-9680766-5-3  
Reviewed by Peter Rothermel

Not since Bruce Fairly came out with his *Climbing & Hiking In Southwestern British Columbia*, in 1986, have there been any guide books written about mountaineering on Vancouver Island. Now there is *Island Alpine*, a definitive 476 page tome on Vancouver Island mountains, by Phillip Stone.

Stone's guide is an exhaustive description of the Island's summits and their routes, with 264 mountains and peaks featured. As well, there is, in the forward, introduction, and history, a taste of what Island climbing, with its bushwhacks and Scottish conditions, is all about.

The author, Phillip Stone, is an accomplished mountaineer who has quietly helped set the standard for difficult routes on most of the Island's classics. It took him fifteen years to compile this mountaineering "bible" for Vancouver Island.

For more information write Wild Isle Publications, Box 482, Heriot Bay, BC, VOP 1H0 or log on at [www.wildisle.ca/islandalpine](http://www.wildisle.ca/islandalpine). The suggested price is \$45.00.



Mt. Dawson  
Leslie Bohm

## Appreciations

### Roger Freeman Retires

Michael Feller

Dr. Roger Freeman has served the FMCBC for over 30 years. Roger Freeman came to Vancouver from the U.S. to work as Assistant Professor in the UBC Faculty of Medicine. His background and experience in child psychiatry gave him a unique perspective in dealing with people - after all some of us have barely grown up! His interest in conservation and the outdoors had him a member of the Sierra Club, through which he not only became a member of the FMCBC, but became the first chair of its recreation and conservation committee - a position at which he worked extremely hard from the early 1970's until 2002.

After being approached by Roy Mason of the BC Mountaineering Club, Roger became very interested in the Stein Valley and was one of the key players in its ultimate protection. He helped form the Save the Stein coalition in the mid 70's, and was heavily involved in the Stein Public Liaison Committee, then the Stein Advisory Committee, on behalf of the FMCBC. This committee met frequently from the late 70's through much of the 80's, usually in Lillooet. Roger attended most meetings and, through this committee, helped pre-

vent logging of the Stein. Roger was probably the person most instrumental in getting the Stein valley considered for protection by the government's Wilderness Advisory Committee (WAY) in 1989. He was greatly assisted in this by David Thompson, also working for the FMCBC. This WAC process empowered the Lytton Band, leading to the Stein's eventual designation, if not protection, as a provincial park. Roger spent much time in the Stein Valley and wrote, with David Thompson, its first guidebook *Exploring the Stein River Valley*. The original edition is out of print but the book has been re-written.

In addition to the various Stein committees, Roger represented the FMCBC on numerous and onerous government and NGO committees, such as the Forest Land Use Liaison Committee in the late 70's - 80's. He made numerous presentations on behalf of the FMCBC to different government departments, industry groups, and other organizations. He contributed to all these groups countless letters and submissions on a myriad of issues, such as government policies, Parks and Wilderness for the 90's, Protected Areas Strategy, park management plans, trails, logging proposals, snowmobiles, mining, Skagit flooding, Powder Mtn. development proposals, Cypress Bowl sagas, Coquihalla highway, Callaghan valley sagas, Valhallas - the list contains all the important conservation issues confronting the FMCBC (and the Province) during the 1970's, 80's, 90's, and early 00's.

He chaired, or co-chaired the FMCBC Recreation and Conservation Committee for 30 years! Rec and Con meetings will be remembered by many, as places where we could discuss the many threats to our favorite outdoor places. Very early on, Roger decided that education was a very important component in attempts to protect the FMCBC's interests, so he began inviting relevant people, such as government and industry officials, to Rec and Con meetings. Thanks to Roger, many people have been informed and inspired to protect our trails and wilderness. The minutes of all these Rec and Con committee meetings were mostly meticulously prepared by Roger, who often censored the more outrageous comments of the more cynical in his midst to protect the interests of the FMCBC. Rec and Con meetings, with the assistance of subcommittees, also produced numerous policy statements for the FMCBC, many of which have survived the passage of time. Roger's wife, Ethel, also made a major contribution to the enjoyment and success of the Rec and Con meetings, through the many cakes and goodies she prepared!

Roger's conviction that education is a key ingredient in protecting the interests of the non-motorized group, is reflected not only in his Rec and Con meetings, but also in his production of guidebooks for the self-propelled. In addition to his Stein guide, he produced an excellent guide to hiking on the North Shore and to hiking near Phoenix, Arizona. We wish Roger all the best as he works on new projects!

**Pat Harrison**  
Monika Bittel

After nearly a decade of heavy involvement with the Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C. ("FMCBC"), Pat Harrison resigned as Executive Director in August 2002. Before Pat resigned, he had mentioned in passing that he wanted to spend more time working on his heritage organic blueberry farm. Fortunately for the FMCBC membership, Pat was not prepared to leave a trail of unfinished projects behind him, and he continues to volunteer his valuable skills and knowledge on specific FMCBC projects.

Most people in the local outdoor recreation community know Pat from his dedication to the FMCBC, which relies primarily on volunteers to protect the interests of non-motorized backcountry recreationists. In the early 1990's, as a member of the Valley Outdoors Association, Pat started volunteering for the FMCBC. Over the next decade he served as a Director, Treasurer, President and finally Executive Director. His previous experience as a park ranger with the US National Park Service and his volunteer work on several wilderness conservation projects in the US came in useful in these positions.

Pat's direct contributions to the FMCBC have been unique and, hopefully, will be long lasting. In many members' views, Pat managed to overcome some of the previous criticisms of the FMCBC by his consultative management style and innovative ideas. Pat actively solicited input from member clubs and committee members about FMCBC activities, encouraged participation by member clubs in the various committees and strove to obtain consensus at the committee level by fostering dialogue and the sharing of ideas and opinions. Pat improved communication between the FMCBC Board and the member clubs, particularly those outside the Lower Mainland, by instituting telephone conferencing for Board meetings and committee meetings and making an effort to visit clubs based outside the Lower Mainland. He also persuaded many "non-techies" to join the cyberworld by setting up the FMCBC List Server to provide a forum for a rapid exchange of ideas among members. Pat increased club membership in the FMCBC, introduced clubs to the activities of the FMCBC, and linked the FMCBC to organizations with similar goals and objectives through the concept of associate membership. These innovations have enabled the FMCBC to draw on the expertise, knowledge and ideas of our large and geographically dispersed membership.

On behalf of the FMCBC, Pat served and continues to serve on many committees, many of which include government representatives. As a result of his work on such committees, Pat raised the profile of the FMCBC as a voice for the non-motorized backcountry recreationists, with government in-



creasingly seeking feedback from FMCBC on government initiatives. Pat was often contacted by the local media when a balanced view on some outdoor recreation issue was required.

Pat was the Executive Director for much of the time that the FMCBC was evolving from an organization that received core funding from the government to an organization that received none. Through a lot of hard work and creative solutions, Pat managed to stretch every dollar of the FMCBC's limited funds to get the maximum benefit for the FMCBC. Pat's commitment to non-motorized recreation and B.C.'s mountain environment was amply demonstrated by his many unpaid hours of work for the FMCBC. Although Pat received a nominal Executive Director's salary for 3 days per week, he usually worked 5 or 6 days per week for the FMCBC. In light of the FMCBC's limited financial means Pat refused to accept a salary raise for a long time and often did not charge the FMCBC for many of his expenses, including travel expenses.

Pat was probably one of the first to appreciate the importance of the FMCBC as the only province-wide lobbying organization devoted exclusively to self-propelled backcountry recreation. This is becoming more important because of the increasing pressures on the backcountry, resulting in conflicts primarily due to incompatibility between motorized and non-motorized recreational activities. In the last decade or so, there has been an explosive increase in the number of people using the backcountry for public and commercial, motorized and non-motorized backcountry recreation. Even government has recognized these conflicts and has responded by encouraging a stakeholder led forum in the Lower Mainland, known as the Sea-to-Sky Winter Backcountry Recreation Forum (the "Forum"), consisting of motorized and non-motorized, public and commercial backcountry winter recreation users. Pat was one of the initiators of the Forum. It is a reflection of Pat's stature in the local backcountry recreation community and his consultative, non-confrontational leadership style that he was unanimously appointed Chair of the Forum by the diverse stakeholder participants. After 18 months of work, in April 2003, the Forum

signed off on a Sharing Accord, which attempts to ensure that all winter recreation users in the Squamish Forest District have an enjoyable experience in the backcountry.

Pat is continuing to represent the interests of the FMCBC membership as chair of the Forum and as the public, non-motorized representative at the Sea-to-Sky LRMP. Both these groups meet at least monthly, with the LRMP meetings lasting two days and LRMP committee meetings taking up another two days per month. Since neither group meets in Vancouver, Pat spends many hours travelling as far as Pemberton to attend meetings. Pat sends numerous e-mails to organize activities for both groups and spends exceptional amounts of time dealing with government bureaucrats to get maps produced, encourage representatives of recreational interests to attend meetings, and generally organizing the Forum and the public, non-motorized recreation response to the LRMP. Pat continues to devote many days per month, unpaid, working on behalf of the FMCBC membership, to ensure that our interests are taken into account at these two land use processes. Pat has been very effective at what he does. He has the confidence of all winter backcountry recreation groups, both public and commercial, to lead the Forum and to deal with government ministers and departments on behalf of the Forum – something few representatives of any one particular group have achieved.

Pat has been an exceptional asset to the FMCBC. We thank Pat for his exceptional contributions over the past years and for his continued work on behalf of the FMCBC. Although we don't begrudge Pat devoting time to his other interests, we hope he will continue to volunteer his skills and talents to the FMCBC. We wish Pat all the best in his future endeavours, including his heritage organic blueberry farm and his "pet" recreational project, the Sentier National Trail, the coast-to-coast hiking trail, of which the B.C. section is almost complete.





Courtesy Tami Knight

## Ramblings

### What's in a helmet?

Peter Rothermel

Often on club trips, there are times when helmets should be worn, yet aren't and I'm as guilty as the next in forsaking this simple, light weight piece of insurance. If I'm leading a trip and others don't have helmets, I often won't wear mine, as it makes me feel like I'm just looking out for myself. If I'm on someone else's trip and that leader isn't wearing their helmet, I usually won't, in deference to them. You can often find us tramping up some rock pocked snowfield, below some choss head wall and the helmets stay strapped to our packs, until the rope comes out and harnesses are donned. Pretty stupid, eh?, but I'll bet you're just as guilty. How many of us wear a helmet when we sport climb and risk being seen as geeks? The image of a young rock star hanging by one hand on an overhang, while dipping the other hand into their chalk bag, just wouldn't have the same visual impact if they were wearing a helmet.

More often than not, you'll see people skate boarding and snow boarding (though not often at skiing) wearing head protection and how rare is to see someone on a bike without one? So why the aversion to helmets in the hills? Maybe it harks back to when helmets were heavy and clunky... maybe it's

just a macho attitude, but it's all too common for folks being bare headed, when they should have their noggin covered.

Helmets have come a long way since the fiberglass motorcycle type and the newest ones are so light and comfortable, that there's just no reason not to wear one. These new styles differ from the older types in the same manner that newer climbing styles differ from past attitudes. In the past, the rule was "the leader never falls". This was due to the limits of equipment, especially ropes. Helmets, even until fairly recent times, relied on a suspension system that kept the outer shell off of the head and was designed to absorb an impact as from above, such as would be result from a rock fall. The newer generation of helmet reflect the new standard in climbing that says that, "if you're not falling, you're not pushing your limits." These helmets are foam filled, with a thinner shell, and are designed to give better side impact protection than the older styles.

What ever style of climbing you do or which ever type of helmet you choose, it's a fact: helmets reduce the incident of head injuries. Studies show that, in cycling, the number deaths from head injuries relative to the number of cyclists have declined with increasing use of helmets. Even seemingly minor head injuries can have lasting effects. Months and even years later symptoms such as loss of memory or aggressive behavior may manifest themselves, even though the initial trauma did not seem severe.

Probably on most club trips, wearing helmets should be the rule, not the exception, maybe for no other reason than for liability. I think a good lawyer could get quite a bit of mileage from "Your Honor, this club is clearly negligent in not providing proper protection and guidance for my client. Even people on bikes wear helmets! "

Maybe if the clubs set the standard, helmets in the hills will be as common place as they are on the streets.

So what's in a helmet?... hopefully your head, safe and sound!



Mike Peel

Greg Stoltman, Paradise Valley

### **Golden Ears Park Trails Going Downhill**

Michael Hall, *Metrovalley News*

Hiking trails in Golden Ears Provincial Park are falling apart. The new emergency shelter on Golden Ears mountain is being abused. And the volunteer group which built up and maintained both has disbanded.

The Golden Ears Trail Preservation and Restoration Club (GETPARC) ceased operations last month after almost 12 years of non-profit work in the local provincial park. Ron Paley, former GETPARC trailmaster, said a lack of volunteers and the imposition of new provincial parking fees led the group to fold. "We had about 20% of the people doing about 80% of the work," Paley said. He and others now worry: who will take care of the backcountry?

Since 1992, GETPARC and its 450 members - hikers, equestrian riders, mountain bikers, field naturalists - raised thousands of dollars for backcountry trails and spent countless hours improving them. Most recently the group identified 28 sections of Golden Ears trail that needed of repair, ones that

had been washed out or were eroding. "Some sections had been neglected for years," and posed a risk to hikers, Paley said.

GETPARC raised \$16,000 and upgraded about 19 of those sections - adding steps to some and redirecting others. "We didn't have enough money to complete it," Paley said of the trail upgrade project. "So hopefully that will get done in the next year under B.C. Parks." Once parking fees were introduced at provincial parks in May, fund-raising for GETPARC became difficult, Paley said. "People would say, 'If parking money is going to the backcountry, why donate?'"

In the past year GETPARC widened three bridges along West Canyon trail so that search and rescue team ATVs could cross them instead of driving through creeks. It re-decked bridges and created new paths along the East Canyon trail in May and June. The group took down a dilapidated emergency shelter near Panorama Ridge in August. It had been replaced by a new A-frame structure the year before.

GETPARC raised \$47,000 for the new shelter, meant as refuge for injured hikers or those caught in poor weather. But some have been treating it like an abandoned house. Rick Laing, manager of the local rescue team, visited the shelter last weekend while on a rescue mission and was appalled at what he saw. Hikers have scribbled messages in black pen on shelter walls, carved in others, left equipment, supplies and garbage inside, as well as excrement beside and around the front door. "Literally, you had to watch where you stepped," Laing said.

He was also disturbed to find a fire pit in the centre of the helipad landing atop the mountain, and that the wooden helipad sign was missing. More so, Laing is concerned about the state of Golden Ears Trail. "Some sections are downright dangerous, to the public and searchers," he said. They are eroding, mainly from hikers straying from the switchback paths and heading straight down the mountain. Laing said the water course follows where the ground has eroded and makes a mess of the trail, reducing it to nothing more than a goat path. "Unless B.C. Parks gets some more money and stuff in there, things are going to get worse," Laing said.

Paley said he will continue to do volunteer work in Golden Ears park. But he can't do everything that needs to be done alone. "Another \$50,000 of work needs to be done on the backcountry trails in Golden Ears," Paley said. GETPARC gave the \$1,500 it had leftover to the Haney Horseman. Paley only hopes that revenue from parking fees will go towards park maintenance as promised. It is unknown how much revenue has been generated, or how that money has or will be spent. "I do not have an answer for that," local MLA Randy Hawes said. However, he added a review of the parking-fee program is to be conducted this winter.

Gibson Pass Resorts, which operates Golden Ears, Rolley Lake, Cultus Lake and several other provincial parks, was unable to provide parking-fee revenue figures for local parks. The company retains 15% of the fees it collects.

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## **Access and Environment on Vancouver Island: The Double-Edged Sword**

Peter Rothermel

On Vancouver Island there are some unique aspects regarding access and the environment.

Where I'm from, on the east side of Vancouver Island, there is very little Crown Land from Victoria to Campbell River and east of Port Alberni. This is due to the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway Land Grant (in the late nineteenth century virtually the whole east side of the island was given to the E&N Railway, by the Government then in power, and, in return, the railway company built a rail line and established passenger service along the east side of the Island.) Since then, most of the granted land has been resold and belongs to logging companies, hence the unique environment and access issues in my neck of the woods.

Since these lands are privately-owned, they are exempt from provincial forest practice codes and the Ministry of Forests has little say over how they are managed. Access is at the whim of the companies that own them. Recreation, since it does not provide revenue to the logging industry, is usually of little importance.

In recent times, the environmental movement and the European embargoes on B.C. lumber have helped to sustain access to private and Crown lands. In order for the timber companies to be able to market their lumber to certain European countries, they have to meet certain criteria to become certified. One of the criteria is that the companies must consult and receive approval from the recreational sector, showing that the companies are working with and allowing access to outdoor recreationists.

In the fall of 2001, representing the FMCBC, I attended a meeting in Port Alberni with Weyerhaeuser and representatives from the recreational sector and other stakeholders interested in the Western Woodlands. We brought forth our concerns and detailed descriptions of areas of importance to us. Locked gates and the limits they put on access were addressed at this meeting. The timber

companies argue that the gates are locked to prevent vandalism. I countered that locked gates do not stop vandals, but serve to keep out honest people who could witness illegal activities. We, hikers and climbers, are the eyes for the companies.

Another concern I raised was water bars or cross-ditching of deactivated logging roads into areas important to recreation. I asked if these water bars could be put in with enough ease of grade for trucks to pass without scrapping bottom and the Weyerhaeuser Road Manager stated that this could be done. Yet later the next spring, the Nhamint Valley was deactivated and more than fifty water bars were put in, every one a bumper scraper. Then the following fall the access roads to Mt Clifton in the Beaufort Range had all the water bars reworked and the grade eased.

It was noted at the fall 2002 Western Woodlands meeting that a few more deactivated roads had been re-graded for better access, while other deactivations were almost impassable. Clearly, the word of management, along the chain of command, to the machine operators is sporadic at best, but there is hope. It was also noted, at this second meeting, that there were no representatives from the logging companies or the Ministry of Forests present.

Often an area's access is gated and locked. Keys are occasionally issued to responsible organizations, such as outdoor clubs, usually for about a \$50 deposit. Often a club will plan a trip into a gated area, sometimes months in advance, only to find the locks changed and their key will not open the lock. This was brought up at the fall meeting, but finding a satisfactory way of communicating between the clubs and industry remains an ongoing struggle.

Some access to or through private forest lands are gated and manned by a commissionaire. They usually collect a small fee of about two dollars, but more importantly they record license plate numbers of the vehicles passing through the gate. While this allows access to these areas, it does discourage vandals or others from doing unlawful acts. The down side for recreationists is that there is usually a set time when the gates are opened and closed. Miss the closure time and one may find one's vehicle

trapped, and often the emergency phone numbers posted on the gates do not work. As opposed to obtaining a loaner key from a timber company, the staffed gates could pose a safety issue, in case of an accident or during extreme weather.

Logging roads are the most common way to access many trailheads on Vancouver Island. These roads are built for resource extraction, yet sometimes create easier access to unique wilderness areas. The road to ruins or the road to paradise? This is a double-edged sword. When access is created, logs taken, and then access obliterated, the sword is only single-edged. Industry should take note, that when road access is put into an area of importance to recreation, if the company put in and minimally maintained access with sensitivity to the unique characteristics in the area, it would go a long way towards having the recreationists on their side.



Mike Peel

John Ley on Mount Birkenhead

The 2003 summer saw drought and fires across our province and while the Island escaped serious fire damage, we did experience closures and travel restrictions in the back country in August. It was reported in the media that the whole of the province was closed to back country use. Later it was reported that it was only the southern portion of the province that was closed.

Finding out what was closed and what was open proved to be quite a task. The Ministry of Lands, Water and Air web site had sketchy information and a very poor map. Depending on how one read the text, almost all of Strathcona Park was closed or only two trails were closed.

In correspondence with a Senior Park Ranger from Strathcona, I found that they were also in need of clarification. At the "last hour" it turned out that only a small southern portion of the park was affected by the ban.

I had a trip to the north end of the Island planned in an area not restricted. A call to Ministry of Forests confirmed this, yet when the logging company, licensed on the Crown land in this area, was contacted, they tried to discourage us from our climbing trip, due to "fire danger". We went anyway and noted the company logging in the valley below us.

Even though I attempted to get the information, about open areas, out to the Island clubs, several trips were canceled to areas outside the fire ban, due to uncertainty.

The access to the Mt Arrowsmith area was closed a week before the provincial ban and remained closed a week and a half after the provincial ban was lifted. Communicating with Hayes Logging and getting them to open access, long after it was safe, proved to be as hard as pulling teeth.

Obviously the recreational sector will have to be very vocal in order to keep their access to the back country.

Next summer, I'll be contacting government, Parks and the private sector long before any bans are in place and reporting to the Island clubs, to reduce the confusion.



Mike Peel

BCMC Party on Mt. Birkenhead

## **Basic Avalanche Awareness For The West Coast**

Peter Rothermel

Winter season is upon us again and many peoples' thoughts are on avalanche awareness. I'm sending this letter to several Island clubs and avalanche instructors. I would appreciate any feedback.

There is a real need for a basic, affordable, introductory course to avalanche awareness. Many people balk at the time and money commitment of a full-on avalanche course. These people are left with no alternative, but to go into the back country in blissful ignorance.

An informal survey shows that most of the people belonging to our Island clubs have not had any type of avalanche education, yet hike, climb or ski in the winter back country. As well, many very experienced club members have never taken any type of avalanche training.

There is a need for a simple, short, and cheap avalanche awareness course, that requires minimal equipment. The typical participant is a person who thinks of themselves as hiker or climber who is not hard core. They may have just outfitted themselves with ski gear and cannot afford a course. They may snowshoe mostly on the flats and don't think the added \$200.00 for a course is justified. They may climb snow gullies and think having a new technical ice axe is a more important priority than an avalanche beacon. Or it could be a person that just cannot afford a beacon, and rental units are too far away to be practical. It may even be someone who has a shovel, probe and beacon, but has never learned how to properly use the equipment. They may very well be an "old dog" who really does need to learn some new tricks.

All these scenarios have one thing in common, these people all travel into avalanche territory and they all could benefit from any new knowledge regarding avalanche awareness.

If we continue with just the standard two-day two hundred dollar course, there will be a large segment of our outdoor community that will in turn opt not to participate and continue to risk their lives and others' lives, because of a complicated and expensive system of avalanche awareness.

While a basic course should not be considered definitive since a full-on course of two or more days, using the latest technology, is the best way to really begin to understand the problems of avalanche. However, I still see a need for instruction that will reach everybody and could even be a prerequisite for a full course. It might be as simple as an evening class, followed up with a day field trip to practice.

I think the best way to reach these people is to bring it to them and charge them little or nothing. This can be done through our clubs as a feature at their next annual general meeting or a special meeting. If a paid professional is needed for an evening seminar of avalanche awareness, let the club pay the bill: what club doesn't have a hundred dollars in the "kitty" to fund an important event. It could also be used as a draw for enticing new members. If a

day trip of simple instruction is needed, it could be done as a large group, with a small fee to participants, to compensate a professional. Twenty people paying ten dollars each should compensate a guide, very nicely, without having to provide gear, overnight accommodations or lift tickets.

## **Around the Province**

### **UBC Varsity Outdoors Club**

Milena Semproni

The UBC Varsity Outdoors Club has once again awakened from its annual summer semi-hibernation to provide opportunities for about 300 dedicated student members to put off school work and procrastinate on papers in favour of getting some fresh air. Trips so far have included our popular annual events such as Glacier School (Mt. Baker), Longhike, Leavenworth, WA., and Skaha climbing trips, and the Smith Rocks, OR., climbing trip on the November long weekend. Upcoming highlights for this year include a Christmas ski Trip to our Phelix Creek Hut, Telemark School and Winter Longhike (snowcaving) in January, Reading week skiing and climbing trips (February) and anything else our enthusiastic members feel like organizing. Rumoured are November kayaking, Joshua Tree, CA., Christmas climbing and more skiing, no doubt. I'm sure with all these trips, this year will see plenty of hastily written papers and half-finished homework...but it will be worth it!

### **News from the North**

Dave King, Northern Director, FMCBC

The North-Central part of the province has two active clubs: the Prince George Section of the Alpine Club with about 75 members, and the Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Club with about 100 members. Both groups had very successful summer schedules aided by lots of great weather. The Alpine Club had, among other trips, successful climbs of both Mt. Athabasca and Mt. Edith Cavell in Jasper both after several years of unsuccessful attempts (mostly due to poor weather). And the club also had a very



good summer camp based at Lake O'Hara in Yoho with most nearby peaks being climbed. The Caledonia Ramblers, among 30+ trips, had a very interesting trip into the Eagle Glacier area west of McBride, and a superb week-long trip to Mt. Edziza Provincial Park in northwest BC. The Ramblers carried out maintenance work on several trails and re-printed the *Prince George and District Trail Guide*. About 250-300 trail guides are sold each year, which provides monies for activities and operations of the club.

Both clubs are members of the Prince George Backcountry Recreation Society which is composed of 6 local groups that focus on non-motorized backcountry recreational activities. This summer club members, through an agreement the Society has with BC Parks, carried out renovations to the 8-Mile cabin and maintenance of trails in Grizzly/Sugarbowl Provincial Park (renovations to the Grizzly Den and Raven Lake cabins had been done in 2001 and 2002). The Society also provided financial assistance to the Ozalanka Alpine Club (also a FMCBC member club) for renovations to the Ozalanka cabin in West Twin Provincial Park. The Society has also come to an agreement with the local snowmobile club over "sharing" of use of the McGregor Plateau area east of Prince George and sharing of costs for signage. The Society continues to participate on the Public Advisory Group for the [Canadian Standards Association] certification of TFL 30 (Canfor) and represents non-motorized recreational users in other land use issues. Members of the Caledonia Ramblers continue to participate in annual meetings of LRMPs of which two are coming up in the next month.

All in all, it has been a good spring-fall with few major issues. The Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic that is devastating pine stands in the Central Interior has the potential to result in damage to two or three trails from salvage logging. There is concern with two or three pending heli-ski and heli-hiking applications in the Cariboo and the McGregor/Rocky Mtns. as to impacts on non-commercial users and on wildlife. The draft Management Plans for Kakwa and for Pine Le Moray Provincial Parks should also be completed this winter and be put out for public comment.

## Vancouver Island Section, ACC

Don Morton

The Vancouver Island Section of the ACC has continued with scheduled trips almost every weekend, led by our own members. The selection has ranged from day hikes and short ski trips to challenging multi-day rock and snow climbs. Most of our trips are on the Island, but some go to mainland BC or Washington State.

For the second year, Section members also organized a hut week in a popular climbing area. In July 2003, nineteen of us rented the Tantalus Hut on Lake Lovely Water from the Vancouver Section. Four Section members led routes as did the professional guide Lars Andrew, whom we hired. We had teams on the surrounding peaks on all six days, including one that started rather damp. There were multiple ascents of Alpha, Omega, Niobe, Pelops, and Iota from different directions and one ascent of the more distant Ionia. Our hut weeks have been so successful that we have decided to make this an annual event. Next year we have reserved the Elizabeth Parker Hut at Lake O'Hara for the last week of July.

Our primary fund-raising activity is a local hosting of the annual Banff Film Festival. This year it will occur on November 22 and 23, as usual in the University of Victoria Centre Auditorium.



Illecillewaet Glacier  
Leslie Bohm



**Outdoor Club of Victoria**  
Michael (Mick) Phillips, President

There is a rumour that very few hikers on the "Mainland" know very much about what goes on on "the Island"! With that in mind, here is a primer on one of the largest and oldest hiking clubs in this part of the world.

The Outdoor Club of Victoria (OCV) has been active for approximately 60 years. We currently have 230 members, of whom 60 or so are regular hikers. We are based in Victoria so the majority of our hikes take place in the southern part of Vancouver Island. Although the number of regular hikers may seem small, the percentage probably represents what is happening to other similar organizations. Many older members of the OCV have contributed in numerous ways in previous years and still wish to remain on the "active" list, providing guidance and advice gained from many years of experience. They have passed the baton to others who strive to offer the same degree of challenging outdoor activities as our seniors did in their earlier years.

The primary purpose of the Club is to offer a challenging schedule of regular hikes of varying degrees of difficulty. We offer at least 4 hikes per weekend, every weekend of the year. We use a grading system which takes into account the length, altitude gain and trail conditions of the proposed hike. Most hikes seem to fall in the category of B2b - a hike up to 20ks, generally on trail, with up to 600m altitude gain. However, we also provide easier hikes for our more senior members and far more difficult hikes for those seeking more challenge. In addition to the regular weekend hikes, we also make frequent excursions farther afield. So far this year, we have had climbs of Mts. Arrowsmith, Moriarty, and Cokely. We also had a 5-day hiking trip to the Long Beach area plus a 4-day outing to Strathcona Park. In the summer, our 10-day annual campout was held at Lake Louise with over 45 members in attendance. Despite the forest fires and associated trail closures, we provided a full schedule of hikes in all categories, from easy hikes at lower elevations to scrambles up 5 peaks including Mount Temple - a Club first. In addition to these regular Club activities, individual members fre-

quently lead trips to more interesting places around the world. Last year, we had hikers in Utah, the Austrian Alps, the Tatras Mountains in Slovakia and on Kilimanjaro. This year, a group spent a month in the mountains and parks of Northern California and we currently have 2 members in Nepal who have just completed the trek to Everest Base Camp.

So, we are a very active outdoor Club who's efforts are limited only by the experience, availability and vision of our volunteer leaders. On the whole, we have had little difficulty in that area. Members are generous with their time and respect our policy of "no leader, no hike". We are blessed by living in one of the most beautiful areas of the province. There is a superb mix of coastal and mountain hiking. Nothing is flat! Sure, we hike a lot in the trees but a good climb is always rewarded with a spectacular view. And, no, there are no local snow-capped mountains within sight (although views of the Olympics are stunning!) but that just means that we can hike here all year round and drive a short distance "up Island" if we want a taste of the white stuff.

One final note concerns the FMCBC. Those who have visited our Club website will know that we recently reviewed our relationship with the Federation. There were the usual concerns of cost versus benefits, value for money, and so on. In the end, I'm very pleased to say that the OCV unanimously voted to support the FMCBC and, in fact, to become a stronger and more active participant.

So that's us! That's the OCV! Check the hike schedule on our website. If you see anything you like, come and join us for a hike!

## MEMBER CLUBS

Alberni Valley Outdoor Club	250-723-9930
Alpine Club of Canada-Vancouver Section	604-878-5272
Alpine Club of Canada-Vancouver Island Section	250-477-8596
Alpine Club of Canada – Prince George Section	250-964-9853
British Columbia Mountaineering Club	604-268-9502
Caledonia Ramblers	250-564-8887
Chilliwack Outdoor Club	604-858-8510
Club Tread	250-370-0736
Columbia Valley Climbing Association	250-
Comox District Mountaineering Club	250-336-2101
Elaho Trail Society	604-873-4602
Fraser Headwaters Alliance	250-968-4410
Independent Members	604-878-7007
Island Mountain Ramblers	250-247-8868
Klister Outdoor Klub	604-543-8855
Mt. Remo Backcountry Society	250-
North Shore Hikers	604-988-9525
North Vancouver Recreation Commission Outdoor Club	604-983-6543 ext. 2966
Outdoor Club of Victoria	250-727-0824
Outsetters Club	604-525-1959
Ozalenka Outdoor Club	
Richmond Outdoor Club	604-273-6968
Valley Outdoor Association	604-463-2904
Vancouver Island Trails Information Society	250-474-3445
Varsity Outdoor Club	604-822-2228
Wilderness Education Programme	604-732-0509

## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Federation of BC Naturalists  
Environmental Fund of BC  
Friends of Cypress Provincial Park  
Friends of Barkerville  
Heathens  
Kootenay Mountaineering Club  
Prince George Backcountry Recreational Society  
Vernon Outdoor Club  
Save Our Parkland Association  
Blue-Green Coalition

### **Members of More Than One FMCBC Club**

People who have memberships to more than one FMCBC member club are entitled to a \$15 refund for each “extra” membership on request. If you don’t request a refund you are entitled to a tax receipt for the extra membership fees. To request either a refund or a tax receipt please send the request, in writing, to the FMCBC.