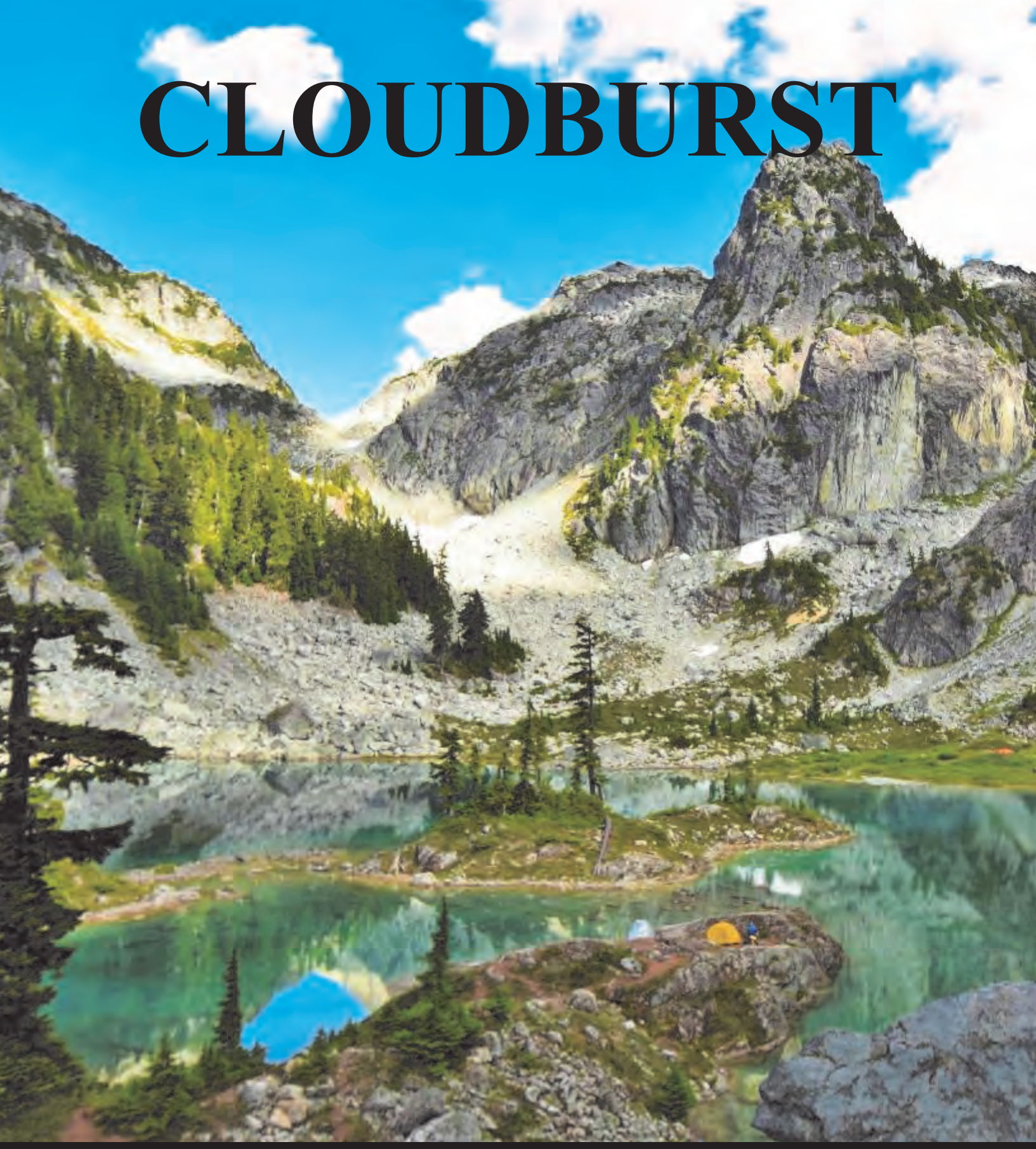
CLOUDBURST



Meet FMCBC's New Executive Director | The Latest on the Rainbow Lake Non-Motorized Zone
Social Media and the Backcountry | Update on the BC Parks' Future Strategy | Woodbury Traverse

Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

Accessing the backcountry one step at a time

Spring/Summer 2017

CLOUDBURST

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Cover Photo
John Ward took this picture last year at Watersprite Lake, near Squamish. You can see his group's two tents at the end of the little peninsula in the lake. The mountain in the background is Watersprite Tower.

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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 protecting and maintaining access to quality non-motorized backcountry recreation in British Columbia's mountains and wilderness areas. As our name indicates we are a federation of outdoor clubs with a membership of over 5000 people from across BC. Our membership is comprised of a diverse group of non-motorized backcountry recreationists including hikers, rock climbers, mountaineers, trail runners, kayakers, mountain bikers, backcountry skiers and snowshoers. 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" we advocate 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 our semi-annual newsletter *Cloudburst*, monthly updates through our FMCBC E-News, and access to Third-Party Liability insurance. In addition, member clubs are eligible to apply for project funding through our Member Club Grant Program which supports trail building and upgrading initiatives.

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. Without these volunteers the FMCBC would not exist and we appreciate all those who have volunteered in the past or are current volunteers. We encourage others to join us to help us reach our vision. ■

President's Message

Dave Wharton

Dave backpacking Golden Ears on New Years Day, 2017.

Thank you to all FMCBC members, and all others, for taking the time to read my first President's Message. Please take the time to read all other contributions that FMCBC members have volunteered their time to write.

As many of you will know by now, the FMCBC has recently hired a new Executive Director. Please join me in extending a warm welcome to Mr. Barry Janyk. Barry began his employment as Executive Director on March 22nd and is currently orienting himself to the issues and culture of our Federation. Barry brings with him a wealth of relevant career experience that will help him make a solid transition into this demanding position!

Prior to posting this vacancy, your Executive revised the Executive Director's job description by adding language that speaks directly to the responsibility for advocacy, following a thorough review of the position, and listening to feedback from various member clubs and individuals. The strong message received was that advocacy is an area of priority for the FMCBC and should help guide us as we build and maintain relationships with all levels of government, industry, and other backcountry user groups.

By the time you are reading this, the May 9th provincial election will be behind us. I hope everyone took the time to vote for the party and candidate of their choice. One has only to look at certain other countries or regimes to understand how valuable this democratic right is! I know that I speak for everyone on both the FMCBC Executive and Board in stating with confidence that we will work with whichever party is in power for the next 4 years, and that a fresh mandate will motivate the government to bring to resolution the outstanding issues important to the FMCBC membership.

And now, a few thank-yous. To the Executive and Board of Directors for their vote of confidence as I stepped up from the Vice-President's position. To those who assisted with the Executive Director hiring process. And to the many who have offered their criticism, support, and expertise on any number of issues. Thank you!!

And thank you, Jodi, for your work as the previous Executive Director, and for your ongoing help and assistance! ■

Executive Director's Message

Barry Janyk

Barry Janyk, FMCBC's new Executive Director

After being on the job for just a couple of weeks, I might have finally found a slender toehold. It's been a crazy, busy time coming up to speed on the issues, projects, policies, and people of the Fed. This is a very active organisation; there's a lot going on! And that's a good thing.

As I'm learning the background and history, I'd like to meet and talk with you all and seek your thoughts, ideas, and advice, and hear about your club's top issues—and how I may best assist.

My key goal this year—in addition to dealing with the Fed's critical and immediate crises—is basic: attain the resources to strengthen the FMCBC. I want to reinvigorate our vision by organising an entertaining and dynamic strategic planning session late next fall and then set to work to help the Fed implement its mutual goals and objectives. I'll need your support on this critical piece and will be elaborating at the AGM. I'm a great believer in the wisdom of Yogi, in particular: "If you don't know where you're goin' you might wind up someplace else…"

As I write this in April, none of us can accurately predict the provincial election. Regardless of the result, we know that we will have challenges. Politicians won't save the backcountry. But we might.

Looking forward to meeting you all. Thanks! ■

Recreation and Conservation

Southwest BC Recreation and Conservation Committee Report

By Brian Wood and Monika Bittel, Committee Co-Chairs

Garibaldi Provincial Park and Singing Pass Trailhead – Public Motorized Access

As many of you know, in 1991, the old access road on the south side of Fitzsimmons Creek which led from Whistler parking lots to the Singing Pass trailhead (SPTH) slumped. The slump damaged portions of the old road bed and since then it has not been possible to drive to the old SPTH. This means that hikers have to walk an extra 5 km to the start of the SPTH, adding an extra 10 km to the return hike. The extra 10 km in hiking distance means that the once popular and scenic hike is now over 25 km and no longer feasible for most people as a day trip.

In the Spring/Summer 2016 issue of Cloudburst, Rupert Merer's article on the History of Vehicle Access to the Spearhead Region covers the long history of Whistler Blackcomb's (WB) relationship with Garibaldi Park. The decades-long expansion of WB resort operations complicates the options for restoring unrestricted public motorized access to the SPTH as it was before the slump. Other stakeholders associated with this problem include the Mountain Resorts Branch of the provincial government, BC Parks, the Whistler Sports Legacies Sliding Centre, and Innergex, the operator of the "Run of the River" hydropower system. Innergex built a small dam on Fitzsimmons Creek to feed water into feeder pipes (penstocks) for hydro power generation. There have been discussions and correspondence between the various stakeholders, the FMCBC, and a number of the member clubs on restoring public motorized access in the summer to the SPTH. However, to date, the stakeholders have not been open to finding a mutually acceptable solution.

A couple of factors may influence development of a solution this year. First, the building of the new Russet Lake Hut, the first of three huts of the Spearhead Range Huts Project, which is scheduled to start this summer. We anticipate that the construction and use of the hut once completed will really increase the demand to restore easier access to the SPTH. Second is the change of ownership of WB. Vail Resorts Inc. now owns WB. We do not know if this will result in WB becoming more helpful in reinstating motorized public access to the SPTH or more entrenched in its refusal to do so.

Several potential options to restore motorized public access to the SPTH are being explored. Two options, which would provide motorized public access are summarized below.

In the summer of 2016, BC Rec Sites & Trails built the slump bypass on the Singing Pass trail. Shortly after completing the bypass, the eastern most section slid again, as shown in the two photos.

Get Involved—Volunteer with the FMCBC!

Help us protect the backcountry for non-motorized users by volunteering a little or a lot—every bit helps!

We are looking for individuals with skills and/or experience in many different areas including social media, communications, grant writing and more. Contact us for more info at info@mountainclubs.org or 604-873-6096 or talk to your club's FMCBC Director.

(a) Repairing the old access road on the south side of the creek is limited by the unstable geology of the hillside traversed by the old road. Non-official cost estimates for a suitable repair to provide safe, long-term vehicle access vary considerably, in part because of the lack of a complete professional engineering assessment of the stability of the hillside, which the road will have to traverse. While a mini-excavator was used last summer to provide easier and safer foot travel across the slump area, thereby maintaining a continuous safer "escape route" for lost, out-of-bounds resort skiers and boarders, this repair did not last very long before it too slumped. WB has stated that this escape route is important for their customers' safety and for reducing the demand for rescues.

(b) Innergex has a well-maintained access road running on the north side of the creek from the Sliding Centre to intakes for the penstocks at the small dam. Initially, the Sliding Center and WB did not want the public to be able to drive this road, claiming the road was too dangerous for public use and that their facilities would be vulnerable to vandalism. These are not legitimate concerns, particularly when the road is compared to others, such as the Duffey Lake road, which are regularly used by the public. Although the WB and the Sliding Center have not changed their positions, Innergex seems to be open to discussions about the public use of their access road, if some traffic management protocols are implemented and a larger parking lot near the dam was put into place. This north side road option has generated much discussion, and would require construction of a footbridge across Fitzsimmons Creek near the dam. This bridge would connect with an old abandoned road and trails on the south side of the creek, leading to the SPTH.

Although some have suggested a shuttle that would run between the WB and Innergex parking lots, this option has many time and cost constraints. The same applies to using the WB lift system to access the Musical Bumps and Singing Pass area. While these may provide additional access options, they are not a substitute for motorized public access to the SPTH.

Pinecone Burke Provincial Park Planning Process

This provincial park was officially designated decades ago and BC Parks is now in the process of developing a management plan for this little known and relatively undeveloped recreation area. This park is close to the population centres in the Lower Mainland and will help disperse some of the hikers, snowshoers and backcountry skiers from the over-crowded North Shore provincial parks. Pinecone Burke Provincial Park is about 38,000 hectares and extends from the southwest corner of Garibaldi Provincial Park to the west of Pitt Lake and the Pitt River. The park's highest peak is Pinecone Peak at 2027 metres and there is a fine alpine ridge, 'The Five Fingers,' along with other ridges, which provide several mountaineering opportunities.

Members of the public, as well as the FMCBC, the BCMC and other member clubs, have presented some backcountry recreation ideas for consideration by BC Parks for the Pinecone Burke Park Management Plan. BC Parks will continue to accept additional thoughts and input beyond that which have already been provided. So, if you have not yet presented your ideas, it would be best to present them soon, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will be considered before the draft plan is available for review by the public at the open houses. While the open houses will provide a final opportunity for additional input, it is best to submit ideas for consideration before publication of the draft plan.

For those folks wanting more information on this provincial park, you can check out the following Maps and Guidebook:

1) Natural Resources Canada Map. Scale: 1:50,000. 92-G/10 Pitt River. The map includes some northern sections of the park.

2) Coquitlam Port Moody Hiking/Biking Topographical Trail Map. Scale: 1:20,000. It includes Anmore/Belcarra/Buntzen/Burke Mountain, by Steve Chapman and published by Canadian Map Makers. The older version of the map includes some southern sections of the park. Newer editions may be available with more park details.

3) Hiker's guide book, *Burke and Widgeon* by Lyle Litzenberger, and published by Pebblestone Publishing. The guide book includes 28 trail descriptions with accompanying simplified maps.

Long-standing Backcountry Issues

Previous issues of Cloudburst included reports from the SW BC Recreation and Conservation Committee covered a number of backcountry issues which have resulted in the loss of access and diminished experiences of non-motorized backcountry recreation community. While it would be great to report that some of these issues have been resolved, work continues on most of them. Government continues to show lack of interest in resolving incompatible user conflicts, favours multi-use trails and areas (which in essence means motorized use) and targets its resources on commercial backcountry issues. We are hopeful that with the assistance, expertise and energies of our new Executive Director, the volunteers working on the various long-standing backcountry issues will make positive progress for the benefit of the non-motorized backcountry community. ■

Correction from Spring/Summer 2016
Mike Nash

In my review of *Prelude to Everest: Alexander Kellas, Himalayan Mountaineer* by Ian R. Mitchell and George W. Rodway in the Spring/Summer 2016 issue of Cloudburst, I incorrectly stated that ACC co-founder Arthur Oliver Wheeler makes an appearance in the book. In fact, it was his son, Edward Oliver Wheeler, who joined Mallory and Keller on the first exploratory expedition to Mount Everest in 1921. I caught this error after reading the obituary of Edward's son, John Oliver Wheeler, in the 2016 Canadian Alpine Journal. It is significant, if confusing to consider the impact that so many generations of Oliver Wheelers have had on Canadian mountaineering!

Rainbow Lake Non-Motorized Zone and Twentyone Mile Creek RMOW Water Supply Area

By Bryce Leigh, ACC-Whistler Section

On March 12, 2009, the BC Government amended the Sea to Sky LRMP to include Non-Commercial Winter Recreation Zones. One of these zones is a non-motorized zone surrounding Rainbow Lake. Prior to this date, the BC Government had put in place an order under Section 58 of the Forest and Range Practices Act establishing a large portion of the Callaghan Valley as non-motorized. The area surrounding Rainbow Lake was included in this Section 58 order. This Section 58 order is still in effect.

Initially, non-motorized backcountry skiers and snowshoers were told to be patient as it would take time for the snowmobilers to become familiar with the boundaries of the non-motorized area. On October 14, 2011, as part of the effort to educate the snowmobilers, three non-motorized signs with maps were installed on the Callaghan FSR which is the only road access to the area. In the fall of 2012, three more signs with maps were installed on Sproatt Ridge. Concerned that despite these efforts snowmobilers continued to frequently enter the Rainbow Lake non-motorized zone, the non-motorized backcountry skiers contacted Mike Furey of the RMOW to express their frustration over the lack of compliance. As a result, there was a stakeholders meeting on February 7, 2013 with Mike Furey to discuss the issue and enforcement options.

On July 16, 2013 the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC) sent a letter to Steve Thompson, Minister of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations, requesting an additional Section 58 closure under the Forest and Range act covering the entire area east of the Callaghan River to the top of the ridge along Sproatt, where it would meet the existing Section 58 Callaghan non-motorized area. This would be an easily enforceable solution as all the areas accessible by road east of the Callaghan River would be non-motorized.

As a result, Alistair McCrone, Recreation Officer with Recreation Sites and Trails BC, convened a meeting in Whistler on September 4, 2013 of all the stakeholders involved, including BC Parks, RMOW, FMCBC, Alpine Club of Canada, the Powder Mountain, Pemberton Valley and Black Tusk Snowmobile Clubs, Whistler Olympic Park, Callaghan Country, Canadian Wilderness Adventures, and the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC. Alistair McCrone stated that complete closures by the Province could only be considered once all other voluntary compliance options have been fully explored.

Therefore, the objective of the meeting was to institute whatever other voluntary measures could be put in place to elicit compliance to the non-motorized zone from the snowmobilers. It was decided to relocate some of the existing signs and add some new ones. The Province appointed Canadian Wilderness Adventures (CWA), which has a commercial tenure on the south and west sides of Sproatt Mountain, to collect fees of $20 per snowmobile for entry into the approved motorized areas. As part of the agreement, the money would also go toward trail maintenance and grooming.

Signs posted along the Callaghan FSR (4 x 8 feet).

Signs posted along the ridge on Sproatt.

Close up of signs along the ridge on Sproatt.

Bryce Leigh

Snowmobile tracks in the Rainbow Lake non-motorized area on April 18, 2009 just after the LRMP non-motorized zone went into effect.

Bill Maurer

Snowmobile tracks in the Rainbow Lake non-motorized area on January 28, 2017.

For the record, the FMCBC and all non-motorized users were adamantly opposed to the fee for service snowmobile trail management plan as it would legitimize snowmobile access leading to a non-motorized area and its aim was to merely reduce snowmobile use and not to eliminate it. Trespassers in the non-motorized area could be fined and have their snowmobiles seized, according the province. Representatives were advised that if the government didn't see greater compliance by the end of the year, the entire area could be shut down to motorized vehicles. The representatives from the snowmobile clubs agreed to use their best efforts to make sure the boundaries are respected. Both the snowmobile clubs and the FMCBC contributed financially to the new signage. As part of this initiative, new metal boundary marker poles were installed in September 2013 along the ridge between Gin Peak and Sproatt Mountain.

In summary, the current efforts to get snowmobilers to comply with the Rainbow Lake non-motorized zone include: large format signs along the Callaghan FSR, several large format signs along the ridge between Sproatt and Gin Peak, and a series of tall metal poles marking the non-motorized boundary along the ridge between Sproatt and Gin Peak. This isn't a difficult boundary to define. After snowmobiling uphill for several kilometers, if you are going downhill you are in the non-motorized zone. This isn't a difficult concept. Even with minimal navigation skills it is virtually impossible to be unaware that you have crossed into the non-motorized area. For those that don't know how to read a map or even have a map, every GPS or smart phone has an app that can tell you within metres where you are. So there isn't any legitimate reason for snowmobilers to claim they do not know where the non-motorized boundary is.

It is abundantly clear that more than reasonable efforts have been made to make snowmobilers respect the non-motorized zone surrounding Rainbow Lake. Despite these efforts, snowmobilers continue to blatantly disregard the non-motorized zone surrounding Rainbow Lake. After eight years of non-compliance, clearly the current strategy is not working. It is evident that having a non-motorized boundary along a 6–7 km long ridge is not something that snowmobilers are either capable of or willing to recognize. After eight years of being patient, the time has come to implement a workable solution that the snowmobilers will be able to understand. The entire area between the Callaghan River and the ridge between Sproatt and Gin Peak needs to be non-motorized. This includes the entire Callaghan FSR. This will be an easily defined boundary, as the only road access to this area is the Callaghan FSR east of the Callaghan River. Closing both the southern access at the cul-de-sac on the west side of the highway at the bottom of Powerline Hill and the northern access just east of where the paved road to the Callaghan Valley crosses the Callaghan River (the access to Canadian Wilderness Adventures) to public snowmobiling is the best solution. Implementing this closure would mean that after suffering through eight frustrating years of non-compliance by snowmobilers, backcountry skiers would finally have a peaceful and safe area to ski.

Photos illustrate that there haven't been any improvements in eight years. If anything, the situation has become worse. ■

Social Media and the Backcountry

By Steve Jones, ACC-Vancouver Section

There is no doubt that social media is having an impact on how visitors learn about backcountry destinations. It can be a very effective and useful tool but it also has the potential to create problems.

In the past, visitors would learn about destinations through a guidebook. Books could shine attention on specific areas but the crowds were spread out over time and over all of the destinations in the book. The books were also able to provide detailed information on responsible practices.

Today, many visitors get their information over social media. It's an effective tool for inspiring people but it can create a number of challenges:

1) With messages often limited to a single picture or 140 characters, it's hard to convey all of the required information for visitors to responsibly and safely visit destinations.

2) The real-time nature of the medium can create dramatic spikes in visitor patterns and cause specific locations to be overrun.

3) Most photos shared through social media are very recent but sometimes old photos are shared and they are not always labeled as such. This can lead to people being surprised by current conditions and arriving unprepared.

4) An emphasis on getting "Likes" may be prioritized over safe and responsible use of the backcountry.

Destination BC runs some of the most influential social media accounts in the province for people who wish to visit the backcountry. The Hello BC Instagram account has over 300,000 followers at the time of writing. The FMCBC is currently engaged in a productive dialogue with Destination BC to provide a number of recommendations on how the channel can be used to effectively promote outdoor destinations without creating unintended negative side effects.

Some of our recommendations include:

1) Make sure people are pictured wearing the appropriate safety gear and taking other normal precautions.

2) Be careful about characterizing a trip as "simple" or "easy." These are relative terms and there are more useful ways to describe the difficulty associated with a destination.

3) If photos are not recent, they should be clearly labelled as such. This is particularly important if the trail may currently be under snow but the picture is from a time of year when there was no snow.

4) Use the channel to promote safety resources such as Avalanche.ca and AdventureSmart.ca.

5) Use the channel to help educate tourists that SAR is a free service in BC so that they do not delay calling for help if they become injured. Delayed calls put the visitors and the SAR volunteers at greater risk.

6) Care must be taken when choosing what destinations to promote. In general, official trails should be promoted. Unofficial destinations should not be promoted until they can be turned into official trails with appropriate signage and facilities.

7) Attempt to distribute crowds by promoting larger regions—such as an entire provincial park—instead of promoting a specific trail. Inspiring 300,000 people to visit the same trail on the same weekend can create a traffic jam at the trailhead.

8) Promote leave-no-trace principles proactively and ensure all pictures are consistent with these principles.

If you have any additional recommendations, please send them to us at info@mountainclubs.org. ■

Backcountry Camping Management

By Brian Wood, BC Mountaineering Club

Backcountry camping in Southwestern BC is growing in popularity faster than new camping sites for tents are being developed. This is causing overcrowding, environmental damage and many disgruntled visitors.

There are two issues related to this problem: lack of current usage data for popular areas and lack of carrying capacity analysis for current and potential camping areas. Without such information, our current backcountry areas are vulnerable to overuse, as can be seen in many popular areas in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor. The situation is now so bad (as was well-documented in the media in 2016) that the present government has announced funding for additional camping sites throughout the province, in and outside of provincial parks, improving the registration system for booking campsites, and increased funding, as well as rangers, for the provincial park system. While the government talks about increasing funding, we do not know yet how much effect this increased funding will have and whether it will merely replace some of which was removed years ago. One aspect that is now talked about refers to "dispersed camping," which I suspect is an attempt to increase the number of backcountry camping areas with minimal costs to supplement and to relieve the load on the limited number of currently available backcountry campsites. While it appears that fees will be collected for "dispersed camping," there will be none of the usual facilities (i.e., outhouses and tent platforms).

For simplicity, I will consider only Garibaldi Provincial Park, where all official backcountry campsites require a reservation for the summer hiking season. Reservations are made online and are open well before the summer season starts. As they fill up quickly, campers are encouraged to grab a reservation early if they are planning a multi-day trip to Garibaldi Park. When the official campgrounds are fully booked, some campers will still go to the campsites hoping that the reservations will not be taken thus leaving a vacant site for them, while others will try to camp in areas remote from the official backcountry campgrounds. Some might call this unofficial site usage as "dispersed wilderness camping," which was widely practiced many decades ago when there were few, if any, official backcountry campsites in BC Parks or on other Crown land.

My recent experience with the dispersed camping occurred on the weekend of February 25/26, 2017 when I helped to organize a BCMC snowshelter building course. Most students of the course wanted our campsite to be easily accessible on skis or snowshoes to provide more time for shelter building. So, following previous practice, we decided to camp close to Paul Ridge and well above the Red Heather shelter, which is easily accessible via the Diamond Head/Elfin Lakes road. I would classify our camping as "dispersed wilderness camping," as we were not using official campsites.

I tried to do this properly by paying $10/person/night and using the online camping reservation system for Garibaldi Park, even though it was off-season. I was soon lost on the BC Park's website. A very helpful Park Ranger lead me through the reservation process. The website only permitted campsite reservations at the Elfin Lakes Hut and the Elfin Lakes Campground, which in my opinion is not true dispersed camping and would not work well for our party. The online system however did not envisage true dispersed camping for where we wanted to camp and I had to reserve sites for 12 folks at the Elfin Lakes Campground. Clearly our reservation would distort statistics for dispersed camping in this area of the park.

I have not tried reserving camp sites legally on the very popular winter traverses, such as the Spearhead Range, the MacBride Range or the Garibaldi Neve, and wonder how well that works for collecting reliable data or the reservation fees. How does one reserve a campsite in the middle of a glacier when there are no actual tent sites? It would be useful for BC Parks to collect overnight stopover data on these longer trips. However, at current funding levels, I suspect that BC Parks would be unable to collect off-season camping data and fees for any dispersed backcountry camping.

I understand that BC parks is planning to do more work on dispersed camping policies and probably could use some help in drafting these policies from experienced members of the FMCBC clubs. I should add that managing dispersed backcountry camping is not an impossible task as it has been solved in other jurisdictions with far greater usage and areas than BC Parks. However, managing dispersed activities requires adequate funding and good management policies which, with the current BC Park's funding levels, can be a problem.

To help me, Mike Feller kindly summarized the general dispersed camping policies in the USA, where camping is usually allowed except in some critical areas. Such camping is usually free, but there are restrictions on maximum party size (often 5 or 12), how long one can camp in a given area (variable), how far one must be from a trail, trailhead, or water body (often at least 30 m), garbage disposal, and campfires. Permits (free) may be required. Good behaviour or leave-no-trace camping guidelines apply.

Evelyn Feller also kindly summarized the Canadian federal government's policies for the Rocky Mountain Parks and Glacier National Park for backcountry camping. A daily ($9.80) or annual ($67.70) entrance pass is usually required, but this is free for 2017 to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary! A backcountry permit ($9.80) or annual ($68.70) wilderness pass must be purchased for people of all ages. Thus a single overnight trip costs at least $19.60, making annual passes more economical if spending more than 7 days in the national parks. To reserve established backcountry campsites during the peak periods, it is best to book 3 months in advance by paying a non-refundable $11.70 booking fee. Evelyn noted that camping in established sites was preferred but bivouacking was tolerated for climbing objectives. The internet provides current data on rules relating to access, camping and reservation systems, and to avoid disappointment and possible fines these rules should be followed. It seems that the Canadian system requires more fee collecting than the US systems, as discussed above, and my concern is that fee avoidance can distort usage data.

While well-designed dispersed backcountry camping management policies are a good start, how do they work in practice? Backcountry camping areas in poorly controlled parks are very difficult to monitor, but in parks with properly controlled access and a paid campsite reservation system, management is easier. Examples of the latter parks are the Bowron Lakes Canoe Circuit (Provincial), or the West Coast Trail (Federal). With these controlled systems, the data is relatively easy to collect and the funding helps with monitoring and facility maintenance. For Garibaldi Park, where there are five official access points, an unknown number of unofficial access points, and very few field personnel for monitoring backcountry activities, collecting data and managing dispersed camping presents many problems.

So how do the well-designed systems work? I have backpacked over several years on some of the extended traverses managed by the US National Parks Service (NPS) and the US National Forest Service (NFS). In general, I have been very impressed with the apparent success of these two US agencies in managing dispersed backcountry camping over huge areas of public lands, which are visited by thousands of hikers annually. To me, it seems that both agencies control the number of visitors within their jurisdictions by limiting the numbers who enter and exit through official access points, as well as the timing of their particular itineraries. If your time is limited and is during the high season, it is best not to risk using a "first come-first served basis" for either NPS or NFS trips. Preferably, request a Wilderness Permit well ahead of time for a specific trip itinerary. If your requested itinerary is available, you will receive an official

Wilderness Permit showing your specific day-by-day itinerary. If your itinerary is not available, it can be negotiated with the rangers by telephone, and when accepted, you will be given your permit at the appropriate agency office close to your start place and start date. The permit must be carried at all times while on the trip, and is even affixed to your tent if you are away from your tent so that the ranger knows who is camping there.

One example is Mount Rainier National Park, which provides two different types of backcountry camping trips. As the trips are entirely within a National Park, the reservation request for the Wilderness Permit costs a reservation fee ($20 in 2010). One type of experience is backpacking the Wonderland Trail (WT), which is a very popular 93-mile trail that circumnavigates the mountain. Spaced at convenient hiking distances along the WT are 23 "designated" or trailside campsites, mostly with basic camping facilities, e.g. toilets, picnic tables etc. These campsites have limited numbers of tent sites and most are fully reserved shortly after campsite reservations start being accepted. While a small number of designated trailside campsites are available on a first-come basis, this is risky as one may have to wait a long time for suitable site vacancies. The other backpacking experience is for camping in the remaining area of the mountain, most of which is divided into many Cross Country (XC) wilderness zones, where limited numbers of campers are permitted to set up their tents. These tents must be more than half a mile from the WT and also out of sight of the WT. They are undeveloped and thus are more like wilderness camping. To prevent "unintended" use of these XC campsites, it is not legal to complete the circumnavigation of the mountain on the WT using only XC wilderness campsites as they are for campers who have other mountaineering plans. In this very well managed park, one can encounter park rangers who seem to have reliable radio contact to their headquarters and can even change your itinerary if needed.

Another example of well-managed dispersed camping is the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT), which extends about 2,650 miles between the Mexican and Canadian borders and traverses a wide range of primitive and often rugged terrain, managed by several land managing agencies. Many portions of the PCT are accessible by road and these portions often have official entrance and exit points, with campsites nearby with some basic facilities. Sometimes there are places to obtain basic food supplies. However, the majority of the trail has only primitive tent sites which are effectively backcountry-style tent sites. These sites are spaced along and close to the trail at convenient distances and are usually located near a water source but have few other facilities. In "bear country," metal food boxes are sometimes provided for safety. Usually the tent sites are "user maintained" and I found most of them to be essentially litter free, and human waste was generally well hidden. In some mountainous areas, e.g. the Mount Whitney zone in California, the NPS supplies plastic "doggie" bags for packing out human waste, which seems to be followed quite well.

In my opinion, there is no need for BC Parks to re-invent the wheel for drafting policies for dispersed backcountry camping because they could learn a lot from the US agencies. While the US seems to have adequate resources for implementing their good policies, Canadian parks might have to be a little more economical due to less funding. I have faith that if the provincial and federal park systems can establish good management systems and educate backcountry users as to the importance of following park procedures, this type of dispersed camping will increase the carrying capacity of park camping and improve the wilderness experience of park users. I also expect and hope that most users can be educated in responsible camping etiquette and "leave no trace" principles, both of which need to be more widely published on backcountry websites and publications. ■

Update on the BC Parks' Future Strategy

By Steve Jones, ACC-Vancouver Section

In November of 2016, the government launched the BC Parks' Future Strategy.

The document can be found here.

It's a far reaching document that lays out many priority areas for the park system and also explains some of the tools the government plans to use to help fund the parks.

The strategy has been out for a number of months now and there are some early indications about what it means and how it is being executed.

The following comments on the strategy are the opinions of the author and not an official statement from the FMCBC.

Campsites

A large challenge for locals and tourists in BC is finding a place to camp in the frontcountry or the backcountry. In early April, at the time this article was written, the Garibaldi Lake campground was already fully reserved for July 1st—a time when it is very likely it will still be partially covered in snow.

Government numbers show that total visits to the park system jumped by 2.4 million between the 14/15 and 15/16 seasons and the overcrowding of existing facilities was well documented by the media in the summer of 2016. The strategy calls for over 1900 new campsites to be built across the province, which is a very positive step in the right direction but probably not enough to fully overcome the shortfall.

One concern is that most or all of the campsites appear to be frontcountry campsites in BC Parks and Rec Sites. A frustration is that the government announced in the spring of 2017 that there would be 20 new backcountry sites in Garibaldi Provincial Park but it was then discovered that they were actually refer-

ring to 20 sites that had already been constructed in a previous year before the new strategy was announced. Going forward, I hope BC Parks will be as transparent as possible about the timing and location of new sites and that there will be additional backcountry sites in parks across the province.

Sponsorships
Corporate sponsorships and private donations are a cornerstone of the new parks strategy. We don't have a lot of information yet on how this will be implemented. I feel strongly that we must be careful about corporations having a direct or indirect influence on park management decisions through their sponsorships. I will be looking for clear indications that appropriate measures are put in place to ensure that sponsorships are not able to influence park management decisions. I am also concerned about the potential impact that sponsorships may have on the visitor experience. Today, parks are one of the last remaining places that can be visited without being exposed to corporate advertising.

BC Parks Foundation
As a part of the strategy, a new non-profit foundation was formed with the goal of attracting donations that will be used to fund the park system. BC Parks helps to fuel a $16 billion tourism industry and I would prefer to see the park system fully funded out of the tax revenue generated by that industry. Failing that, this new foundation has the potential to raise a meaningful amount of money. In the coming year, I will be looking for evidence that the foundation is independent of government and transparent to the public.

Rangers
It is no secret that BC Parks are dramatically understaffed. The strategy calls for an increase of about 25 new rangers which is a good first step in the right direction. I look forward to seeing more rangers in the parks.

License Plates
One of the ways that the BC Parks Future Strategy will be funded is by selling vanity licence plates featuring pictures from BC Parks. There was some initial confusion on how much of the proceeds would go to the park system. The numbers have now been clarified. In the first year, the cost to the customer is $50 and $15 is put into the Park Enhancement Fund while $18 goes to the government. In future years, the renewal fee is $40 and the full $40 will be put into the Park Enhancement Fund.

Engagement
The parks strategy promised increased opportunities for the public to be engaged with the park system. I encourage everyone to read the strategy and to find ways to get involved. ■

FMCBC Trails Committee Report

By Alex Wallace, Committee Co-Chair

The BC Parks ranger staffing and funding increase announcement on February 2nd came completely out of the blue (in fact, a planning meeting at the BC Parks Mount Seymour office was cancelled to accommodate it) and given that there have been only seven full-time senior rangers working in BC Parks for the last several years, this was something of a surprise. The trend over the last 15 years has been to gradually reduce staffing for what are now more than 1,030 Provincial Parks and Protected Areas. And, the bizarre decision to do away with funding for the auxiliary rangers in 2015/2016 was only reversed after BC Parks management negotiated internally with government for weeks to retain the 55 part-time auxiliary rangers who are hired each summer.

The announcement by Minister Polak still remains somewhat puzzling in the context of the BC Budget announced in March by Mike de Jong. These new full-time staff positions being filled in April are not included as part of the BC Parks Operating Budget, which remains at $31 Million annually as forecast last year—the same as 20 years ago, when there were some 430 Provincial Parks. This is odd, as most businesses would count salaries and wages as part of their operating costs. Further to this, adding 28 full-time staff salaries and benefits at short notice would only take up roughly $3 Million of the $9 million announced as "additional funding" for the 2017/18 fiscal year, so we do not know where the rest of these funds for park ranger staff is going. This also applies to the new money in 2018 and

Over the last 7 or 8 years, this section of the Baden-Powell trail on Black Mountain has eroded due to heavy usage and has actually become a picturesque creek. The trail has "disappeared" without a trace, puzzling many hikers including myself. A small lake now flows out on to it—and merrily down it. I can recall working on this B-P trail section many years ago, before it was a creek. We will likely have to create a new trail section with BC Parks in order to detour around this (new) scenic creek.

MacGyver lives! This impromptu bridge at a muddy creek crossing, built from boardwalk scraps, is a good effort. But given the doubling of hiker traffic and perhaps doubled rainfall, having funding donated to build a more permanent bridge structure could well help prevent an awkward fall and injury at dusk (and the ensuing NS Rescue effort). These two photos show just two of a wide array of basic trail problems that need repairs or improvements in just 1.6 km of this increasingly popular trail to Eagle Bluffs on Black Mountain.

2019, $8 million annually, in total an announced increase of "$25 million for ranger staff over three years."

The hiring of 28 full-time rangers is going to be a big boost, although the BC government has not announced it to the media as a shocking 400% increase in staffing, as might be expected in an election year. It is our understanding that the additional full-time staff will be equitably distributed throughout the province of BC, and in most cases this will, for example in the Lower Mainland and Sea to Sky, where pressures on parks and campgrounds have been particularly fierce), mean just one more senior ranger per parks office. Nonetheless, this is welcome news and a step in the right direction.

Given the increase in the number of parks, the annual inflation since 2001, and an increase in the population of BC since then (about 800,000 people, mostly in urban areas like the Lower Mainland), the BC Parks budget would have to be $150 million annually to keep pace (i.e. just to maintain the status quo and reach somewhere near to 1997 levels). It's a big improvement on 2015/2016, where three full-time ranger positions (e.g. Golden Ears) were left vacant, and the money saved by the BC government was then announced as a puny $130,000 "increase" for BC Parks' operating budget, while it in fact only represented a quarter of inflation. So, in fact it was another funding and staffing cutback presented as an increase of $130 per park!

One positive result of the 2017 increase to BC Parks ranger staff numbers is that some repair and upgrade projects which have been on hold indefinitely will now stand a chance of going forward. One example is a trail upgrade project on the Black Mountain plateau, funded via Friends of Cypress Provincial Park with an initial $40,000 from the Halvor and Edna Lunden Foundation. Halvor was a prominent and irrepressible trail builder for decades, right into his eighties, starting with the popular High Falls Creek trail north of Cloudburst Mountain. Like many trails in the Lower Mainland which have a viewpoint, the Baden-Powell trail across the Black Mountain Plateau has seen a doubling and tripling of hiker numbers in recent years, as measured by BC Parks' trail counters. This is clear evidence of the public's increasing appetite for [non-motorized] outdoor activities. ■

Welcome to our newest FMCBC Member Clubs

Central Okanagan Climbing Society
Mountain Mentors
Bear Mountain Trail Society

Thank you to the following people for their service as FMCBC Directors

Devon Campbell (VOC-UBC)
Robie MacDonald (ACC-VI)
Viire Daniels (VOA)

Welcome to our newest FMCBC Directors

Rob Mudie (VOA)
Birgit Rogalla (VOC-UBC)
Caroline Tansley (ACC-VI)
Ross Collicutt (VISTA)
Cailan Libby (COCA)
Brett Trainor (MM)

Mountain Matters

Metro Vancouver's Newest Regional Park

By Alex Wallace, Trails Committee Co-Chair

A rebuilt section of the Grouse Grind with rock work, stairs, a handrail, and a bench. There's another 2 km completed like this.

Hikers will no doubt have seen the many reports of the new 'Grouse' Regional Park being created by Metro Vancouver Parks. A consultation and planning process will follow the May 1st opening, and we hope to see an open house this summer. There are strong indications from local mayors that the provision of much-needed regular trail maintenance and appropriate funding will follow the planning process*.

The six or seven month seasonal closure of the Grouse Grind (or more specifically the gate and fence closing off the Baden-Powell trail access) is likely to remain in place, and there are actually three reasons for this closure:

The first is the geotechnical hazard that underlies the start of the Grind and BCMC Trail, in the form of a debris pile that could become a debris flow when it is saturated with rainwater or runoff—particularly destructive if this is simultaneous to the expected major Cascadia earthquake event. This may seem like an arcane concern, but for years GVWD has employed a consultant who measures rainfall and soil saturation at this one specific site, and this in fact triggers closures.

The second issue is snow and ice. Many visitors get their information from websites and may have absolutely no idea of trail conditions at higher elevations, where crampons and an ice axe may be useful in winter and spring. Given the several hundred thousand visitors attempting to ascend the Grouse Grind each year, the number of rescues could be significantly higher if these closures were not implemented.

The third reason is that each spring in recent years, an experienced local trail crew has been at work rebuilding the entire Grouse Grind, including numerous steep sections rebuilt as wooden stairways with landings (and this has to be seen to be believed). The start of the Grind has also been rerouted 100 metres west, almost to the gate at the start of the Baden-Powell trail, so the trailhead is no longer adjacent to the BCMC trail (again, possibly to avoid the unstable debris pile issue). It is possible that as the construction is finished and is replaced by annual maintenance, the extent of this seasonal closure will be reviewed and changed in future years. However, with a little effort it is also possible for experienced hikers to access the extensive trail system from the east on the existing Baden-Powell trail.

** Note: Metro Vancouver is funded and managed by 21 Lower Mainland municipalities, so local hikers will most likely have a councillor representing them on Metro Vancouver Regional Parks that they now can thank, and perhaps encourage to be proactive on these trail-related issues at Grouse.* ■

Canine Dental Care

By Andrew Drouin, South Okanagan Trail Alliance

Like most dog owners, I spend a great deal of time on the trail with my best canine pal, Coda, and I'm constantly looking out for her wellbeing. Cactus, stags, cliffs, cougars and bears come to mind immediately. I also do my level best to feed her right and provide loads of exercise. One of the most important aspects of dog ownership, however, slips through the cracks without concerted effort: canine dental health.

It turns out that one in three Canadians own a dog, but only a small fraction of them provide their pet with dental care at home, preferring instead to bring their pooch into the veterinarian office for dentistry issues.

Drouin's dog Coda showing off his pearly whites.

Unfortunately, the gaps between dental office cleanings mean that fido builds up quite a bit of plaque and tartar between checkups, and this lack of attention brings tooth decay. Home canine dental care is one of the best ways to help keep your dog's teeth and gums healthy. Start as early as possible in your dog's life so they become accustomed to the feel of you handling their mouth on a regular basis.

What should I use to brush my dog's teeth?

Brush: A large-head, soft-bristled toothbrush, which doesn't need to be canine-specific. Disinfect the brush between use by lightly spritzing it with 99.9% isopropyl alcohol (not rubbing alcohol!) or double-strength vinegar. Rinse the bristles well before the next use.

Toothpaste: Never use human toothpaste! Most pet-specific toothpastes fall into three categories: 1) freshens breath, 2) helps reduce tartar and plaque buildup, 3) a mix of the two. In our home, we've tried several brands and flavours, including home-made recipes, and have settled on poultry-flavoured Sentry Petrodex enzymatic toothpaste for dogs. Tactics to bring down the price include purchasing multipacks online from outlets such as Amazon. The more your dog likes the flavor, the easier the process of brushing becomes.

At-home teeth cleaning tips

Keep the following tips in mind to make the process easier for you and more comfortable for your pet.

Provide your dog with a small sample of the toothpaste to introduce the taste. You need not even brush their teeth the first couple of times. Merely introduce them to the flavoured toothpaste on a toothbrush and watch your dog become keen to taste it again! This helps to associate a taste that they enjoy with the toothbrush.

Lift the lip to expose the outside surfaces of your dog's gums and teeth. Brush with gentle motions to clean the teeth and gums, as you would your own teeth, cleaning all surfaces, with special attention paid to the rear/upper molar surfaces. The more you brush your dog's teeth, the more it becomes comfortable with you handling its muzzle/teeth.

I generally conduct the process in eight stages: Upper-outside, left. Pause a moment to let the dog swallow and breathe calmly. Upper outside, right. Pause a moment to allow the dog to swallow and breathe calmly, etc., for all upper/lower, inside/outside teeth.

Wear a Petzl headlamp and eyeglasses (if needed) in order to really see how your pet's teeth are laid out and what condition they are currently in. It's important that you become acquainted with the status of its dental hygiene.

Reward your dog with play, petting, or its favourite activity to positively reinforce the brushing process.
How often should I brush my dog's teeth at home?

Your dog's teeth should be brushed as often as possible, ideally every evening, but three times per week as a minimum.

How often should I have my dog's teeth professionally cleaned?

Even with a diligent home dental care routine, dogs should have their teeth professionally cleaned at least once per year. These appointments allow veterinarians to assess your dog's oral health and address possible tartar buildup, gingivitis, and gum disease.

At-home doggie dental care will improve dog breath and help keep your dog healthy. If you brush your dog's teeth at least 3 times a week, the American Animal Hospital Association says it could add up to five years to your dog's life! Infections from periodontal disease have been linked to canine diabetes, heart-attacks, strokes, kidney disease, and tooth loss.

Without brushing, plaque builds up on your dog's teeth. Portions of this plaque eventually break off and are absorbed into the bloodstream. This can lead to blockage of minor arteries, which causes heart disease and kidney problems.
Excuses

1) "I provide my pet with dry dog food so I don't need to brush its teeth": Most dry dog foods have high starch content. Sugar and starches combine with the bacteria in the mouth and produce acids. These acids can eat away at the enamel on the tooth in addition to causing plaque build-up.

2. "My dog doesn't like it": Kids often don't favour brushing their teeth either, but it's not a choice if you wish them to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. Don't allow your dog to make health and welfare decisions…

3. "I don't need to, as I provide them bones and chew toys": You won't find a dentist that recommends this approach. It's a nice addition but can't get the job done efficiently, as there are simply too many facets of a canine tooth which won't receive the abrasive effect of bone-on-bone, plaque-removing friction.

4. "I put an additive in their water, or spray their mouths with same": This is an equivalent approach to only using a mouth rinse for dental hygiene, except not even as efficient as your dog cannot gargle and rinse.

I hope this article gets more people thinking about their pet's dental hygiene, as it's an overwhelmingly overlooked aspect of your trail-partner's physical wellbeing! ■

Woodbury Traverse – Kokanee Glacier Provincial Park

By Jeremy Markel, Kamloops Hiking Club

In August of 2016, my wife Raegan and I decided that we would celebrate our 5th wedding anniversary at a back-country hut, which we would use as a basecamp to hike from for a few days. Unfortunately, our first plan fell apart at the last minute and we found ourselves scrambling to find an available hut mere days before our road trip was to start. After some searching and putting together a new plan, we decided to head to the West Kootenays and Nelson and were able to book the Woodbury Cabin in Kokanee Glacier Provincial Park for two nights, as the other two huts in the park were already fully booked. The Woodbury Cabin was also considered to be quieter and more rustic than the other cabin in the area, Silver Spray, so that suited us as well. As per our original plans, we would pack in, spend two nights, and pack out the same way. That was before we had heard of the Woodbury Traverse.

The access road to the trailhead is slightly north of Ainsworth Hot Springs and while a high clearance vehicle is recommended to make it all the way to the parking lot, a 4x4 is probably not necessary most of the time. While the road was not always clearly marked, we found our way by just following the roads that appeared to be the most traveled on. Once at the trail-head, we found that chicken wire and mesh had been left for use to keep critters from ravaging your vehicle while it's unat-tended. We didn't have any particular concern about that but since there was plenty of wire available, we took advantage of it and fenced in our truck.

Shortly before we were ready to hit the trail, a group of six arrived and coincidentally, one of them was the mother of a friend of Raegan's. After meeting the whole group, from the Kootenay Mountaineering Club as it turned out (all of whom were in their 60s, 70s or 80s), they informed us that they were heading to Silver Spray for the first night and then traversing over to the Woodbury Cabin for the second night, where we would see them again. We all wished each other luck and headed on our ways up the trail.

Much of the early part of the trail is fairly unremarkable and is a mix of living and dead trees. A large fire had raged through at some point and as we got further along the trail, much of the forest was just dead grey and white trees. Aside from some brief light rain, we had an almost perfect day to hike in with temperatures in the low 20s. Later we were to read in the log-book at the cabin about people whom the week prior had hiked up to the cabin in 30 degree plus weather.

This is a park that could use some serious attention from BC Parks as well as there were missing signs and many broken or damaged bridges along the way. Overall, though, the trail was

Woodbury and Kokanee Glaciers.

in good condition, and maintained a steady climb as we made our way to the cabin in the alpine.

It's about eight kilometers to the cabin, which is situated in a relatively flat area below a slide path. For that reason, the cabin is shaped in such a fashion to allow snow to slide over it as it gets hit by avalanches quite regularly, which is probably why it's closed during the winter.

As we didn't really get an early start, we arrived at the cabin at mid-afternoon but found that we had it to ourselves for a few hours until another couple arrived. After some jaunts after dinner, we all spent much of the evening just sitting around and talking before retiring for the night.

The entrance to an old silver mine.

This cabin is not tightly sealed so be prepared to spend any nights at the cabin sharing it with the resident pack rats and mice. And inside the cabin itself, it was really quite gloomy as there are only fairly small windows and although there are propane lights, they are to be used sparingly as replacing the propane tank is quite an ordeal for the caretakers. Even so, it was nice to just throw down a pad in the upstairs loft to sleep on and to have a stove and all the pots and utensils to cook with.

With no real plans for our second day out, we randomly hiked up and around the many peaks that were nearby. There were a few well-defined trails and more than a few vague tracks throughout the area where it's obvious people were scrambling and hiking, so finding a route was never really a problem.

There is a long history of mining in the mountains of the West Kootenays, and on several maps at the cabin we could see clearly marked symbols showing some of the locations. As we were quite close to an old silver mine, one of our hikes took us to it for a quick look. Surprisingly it was not blocked off, so we took a quick look inside with our headlamps but didn't venture more than a few meters in. Old mines are not safe places to wander around in, especially in remote mountain ranges.

Woodbury cabin.

Several of the peaks near the cabin were also quite easy to scramble which gave us some great opportunities to look over the various ranges in the area and check out the Kokanee Glacier to the south of us.

Overall we had an enjoyable second day roaming around and it felt like we had the mountains to ourselves for most of the day since our cabin companions from overnight had left fairly early. By mid-afternoon, the group we had met the day before doing the traverse starting rolling in, bringing their stories of the trek across the mountains from the Silver Spray to the Woodbury Cabin. It was remarkable how many bruises, cuts, scrapes, and other small injuries they had but as tired as they were, they were all in good spirits and encouraged us to do the traverse as well. Needless to say, they were all in bed pretty early that night.

We were up early on our third day as we had planned to just book it back down the trail and head on our way to Kaslo for a shower and a nice meal to celebrate our anniversary. That was the original plan but after talking with the other group, they convinced us that we should do the traverse and exit via the Silver Spray Trail. Since it takes about eight hours to do the traverse and three more hours from the other cabin to the parking lot, we knew we had a long day ahead.

It should be noted that there is no trail to follow if doing the traverse. You will need to know how to find a route on your own around the mountains and over the passes between the cabins. There were several hand drawn maps in the cabin so we took some photos of them to act to supplements to our GPS device maps to assist in the navigation. On paper, it's only about 3.5 kilometers in a straight line but once on the traverse, it was a lot longer than that.

Of course the traverse started by going right up a slide path above the cabin as it was the only safe place to get across the first range of mountains. Needless to say, it was nothing but boulders and scree for a good part of the traverse. There are many

opportunities to slip and fall and with some of the slopes being seriously steep, a slip would probably have resulted in a long roll down down the mountain.

The weather held for us and we saw no one else for hours until we passed a group going west at an unnamed lake that was about a third of the way along the traverse. At this point, we stopped for a while to take break and rest a bit. This little lake would be an excellent place to spend a night if one were to do the traverse over two days instead of one as there were many great places to set up a tent along its shore.

We continued on our way as the day wound on until we made a bit of a mistake. The map we were using showing a high route and a low route. As we had just come down from a pass, we were reluctant to lose more elevation at this point and decided to stick to the high route. It was encouraging as there were fresh footprints to be found along the way, but after a while we found ourselves high up on a ridge looking down a very steep slope that we had to descend. Suddenly that low route that avoided the ridge seemed like it may have been a good idea. That said, we pressed on where we're sure a slip and a fall would have meant death or serious injury at the least. We'd recommend that anyone using the maps from the cabins take the low route as it was likely a lot less dangerous.

It took us a couple of hours to wind back down into the valley and work our way back up the other side. It was exhausting and bloody hard on the ankles walking over the large boulder fields, and walking on the few patches of grass and softer ground was always a welcome relief.

By this time, it was getting late in the afternoon as we pushed through the last couple of kilometers to Silver Spray and we ended up arriving well after 6pm. We'll have to say one thing about this route: It's relentless right up to the cabins.

It was with relief when we finally reached the Silver Spray Cabin, where there were quite a lot of people and tents. However, we had to continue on and so with a break and some well-needed food, we hoisted our packs and started on our way down to the parking lot.

This is the kind of trail that is a real knee grinder, as we dropped over 1000 meters over the next four kilometers as we descended back into the valley. It wasn't long after we left the cabin that it got dark so we did much of this leg by headlamp, which is kind of a fun experience all on its own. Luckily, there was a real trail at this point so we were able to make pretty good time but we still found ourselves arriving back at our truck around 10 pm. It had been long, hard day. By 11 pm, we were in touch with our hosts in Kaslo but unfortunately, our nice anniversary dinner wasn't going to happen that night being as late as it was. We pretty well showered and crashed.

We really enjoyed this trip into this remote area of Kokanee Park. While we would have had a great time even if we hadn't done the traverse, it was interesting to do this challenging and scenic mountain traverse that we hadn't heard of prior to the trip. We would recommend it to anyone looking for a rougher backcountry experience who has the skills and endurance to get off of the beaten path. ■

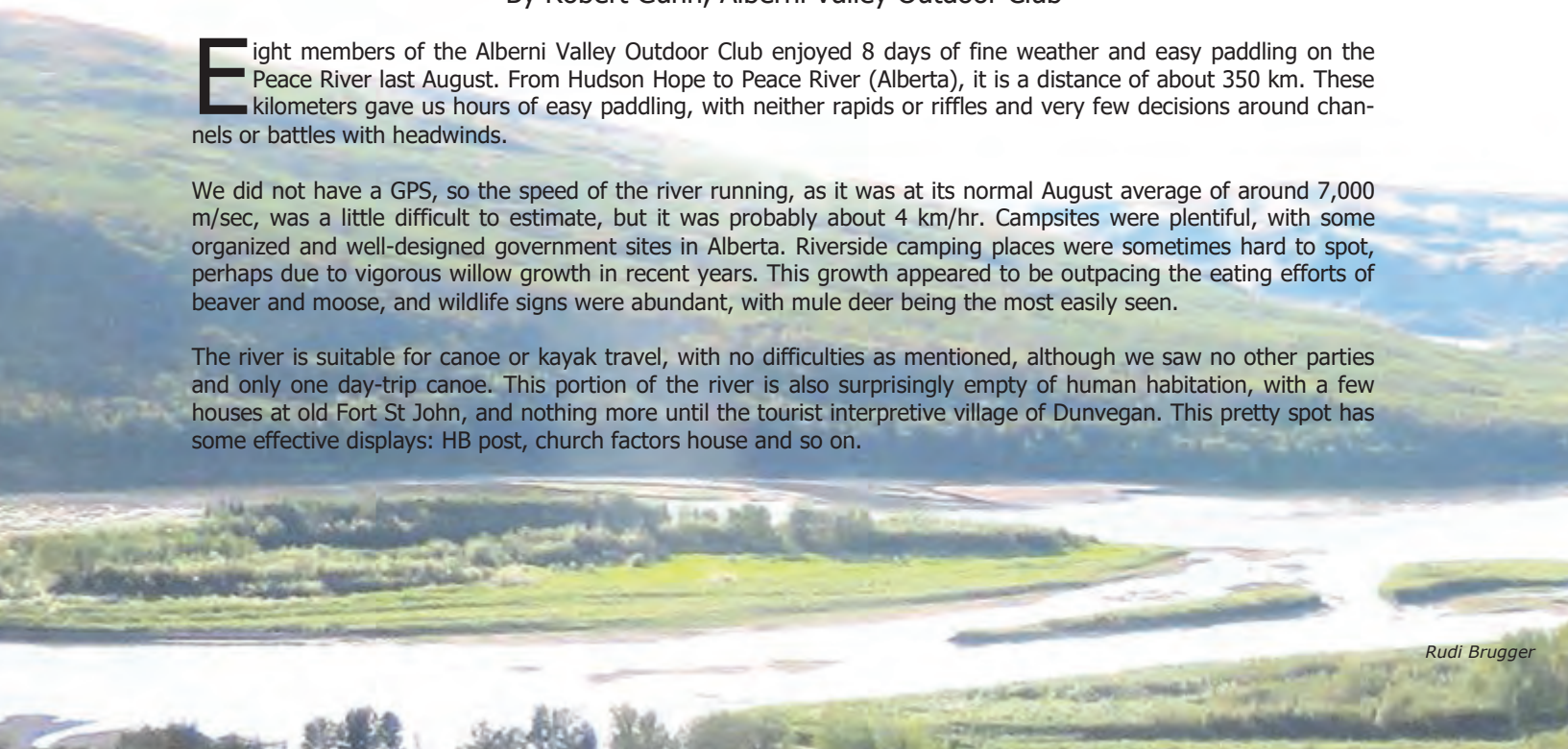
Paddling the Peace River in August

By Robert Gunn, Alberni Valley Outdoor Club

Eight members of the Alberni Valley Outdoor Club enjoyed 8 days of fine weather and easy paddling on the Peace River last August. From Hudson Hope to Peace River (Alberta), it is a distance of about 350 km. These kilometers gave us hours of easy paddling, with neither rapids or riffles and very few decisions around channels or battles with headwinds.

We did not have a GPS, so the speed of the river running, as it was at its normal August average of around 7,000 m/sec, was a little difficult to estimate, but it was probably about 4 km/hr. Campsites were plentiful, with some organized and well-designed government sites in Alberta. Riverside camping places were sometimes hard to spot, perhaps due to vigorous willow growth in recent years. This growth appeared to be outpacing the eating efforts of beaver and moose, and wildlife signs were abundant, with mule deer being the most easily seen.

The river is suitable for canoe or kayak travel, with no difficulties as mentioned, although we saw no other parties and only one day-trip canoe. This portion of the river is also surprisingly empty of human habitation, with a few houses at old Fort St John, and nothing more until the tourist interpretive village of Dunvegan. This pretty spot has some effective displays: HB post, church factors house and so on.



Rudi Brugger

Just before Fort St John, the beginnings of the work on Site C were quite obvious. There is a new road down to the river, a new bridge and much soil being moved about on the south side. It was quite eye opening to have paddled for 2.5 days on that portion of the river that will be flooded to a pretty significant height, although we did not pass much that could be considered agricultural land. Presumably most of it is the side valleys.

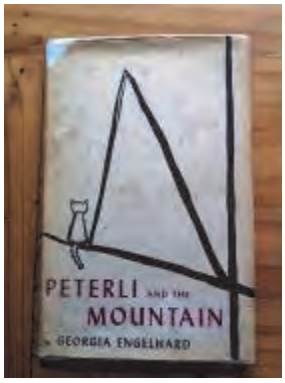
Our idyllic time on the river was bug free, warm, and sunny with refreshing dips and much laughter. It really is a trip to be recommended, at least while the BC stretch has some paddling left. ■

A leisurely paddle on the Peace River.

Club Ramblings

Georgia Engelhard and Peterli and the Mountain

By Ron Dart, ACC-Vancouver Section



In the early decades of Rocky Mountain ascents, Georgia Engelhard (1906-1985) had a stellar career as one of the most talented climbers. She spent 15 summers in the Rockies from 1926–1956, and in 1931, climbed 38 peaks in the Rockies and Selkirks—quite an accomplishment. Georgia climbed Mt. Victoria 8 times in one summer when She Climbs to Conquer was being filmed. In 1947, she married the much respected English climber, Eaton "Tony" Cromwell, and shortly thereafter, the couple moved to Switzerland, where they spent the final decades of their lives together.

Georgia was also the niece of the innovative American modernist painter, Georgia O'Keefe, and many of Georgia Engelhard's early paintings have obvious affinities with her aunt's compelling style. But Georgia Engelhard's mountain paintings are crème de menthe beauties that, in some ways, exceed that of her famous aunt. Sadly so, many of Engelhard's paintings exist no more and those that do reflect a gifted mountain painter that could have had quite future if she had followed such a pathway.

Most know Georgia Engelhard because of her energetic mountain accomplishments and exquisite paintings (and also photography). I might add a biography is yet to be written on Engelhard. But, what is often not discussed in this Renaissance mountain woman's life is her fine tale, Peterli and the Mountain (published in 1954). The short book is recommended for ages 6 -10, but it has perennial appeal to it.

Peterli was a cat who lived in Zermatt with Herr and Frau Seiler. Peterli enjoyed the comforts of her chalet home, chasing mice and Zermatt existence. Emil Perrin was a mountain guide in Zermatt who led many a client to the summit of the Matterhorn. The summer of the missive, the weather was excessively hot and dry in Zermatt and many of the tasty mice had scampered to higher climes. Peterli was eager for a catch and Emil was leading a client to the summit of the Matterhorn. Peterli followed his guide friend higher and higher, from the first hut (Hornli) to, eventually, the summit of the Matterhorn. The climb to the peak was arduous for Peterli, but the descent down the Italian side was death defying (in the midst of the whiteout snow storm). Emil tucked Peterli in his knapsack, and after many a nimble move, Emil, Peterli and the lady client made it safely back home to Zermatt.

The experience for Peterli was one the cat would never forget and the tale is a genuine one. As Engelhard states in her brief

introduction, "Peterli's adventures are based on a true story of a cat who really climbed the Matterhorn." A large party was held in Zermatt to celebrate Peterli's safe return, and years later, as the story is brought to a close, Peterli is more than content to bask in the glow of what was once done but the comforts of hearth and home win the day. It's a there and back again missive that ends with the thinning out of Peterli's energy and aging and mortality taking its inevitable toll—in many ways, a summary of the early life and autumn years of Georgia Engelhard and Eaton Cromwell. I have a fine 1st edition of Peterli and the Mountain (amply and simply illustrated by Madeleine Gekiere), and I read this charmer of a beauty regularly (having spent many a pleasant hour in Zermatt when younger). Each reread, some new line or paragraph whispers insights to me about cycle and seasons of life. ■

Thunderstruck

By Nowell Senior, Caledonia Ramblers

Around 1950, when I was 8 years old, I went into foster care while Mother was being cared for in hospital for tuberculosis. It was two years before I saw her again, and it was during this period that hiking became a part of my life. Well, maybe wandering would be a better description. You see, I'd be unhappy in a foster home and run away and hide in the woods and fields to avoid social service people. In those days, milk was delivered very early to the doorsteps of the homes, and I would leave my hiding place in the woods and take a bottle of milk from a different house each day that I was on the run. I ended up in a series of foster homes during those two years, but they couldn't hold onto me, and off I would go again. I never felt completely alone when in the fields, meadows and woodlands that gave me shelter and comfort. Something—I don't know what—gave me hope that my life would get better.

Anyway, Mother eventually recovered and we were together again, but my wandering ways remained and I would leave and not tell Mother or anyone else where I was going. The only thing that would deter me when I had the urge to head for the countryside was the threat of a thunderstorm.

I must have acquired my fear of thunderstorms from Mother when I was very young, before she went into hospital. We used to huddle together under the table during storms—she trembled and cried with fear, and I inherited this fear. She told me that during the Second World War, when the sirens warned of a bombing raid, her crippled leg prevented her from reaching the shelters before the bombs fell. My older brother—all 10 years of him—made it his mission to get me to the shelter. Years later, neighbors would tell me how unforgettable it was to see my brother running like Hell, with me in his arms, shrieking my head off, and the air-raid sirens howling. Anyway, Mother was often alone in the house during these raids, crouching terrified under the table.

After the war, thunderstorms seemed to have had a flashback effect on Mother, and she re-lived those terrible moments when death fell from the skies. Later, during my long, solitary walks in the English countryside, I made sure there was some kind of cover nearby that I could hide in if the storms I dreaded blew in. One calm but cloudy day, I decided to try to find the hamlet of Edale in the Peak District. I took the bus from my home in Hyde, Cheshire to Glossop in Derbyshire, and headed for the bleak moors leading to Snake Pass at which point I sensed a storm. These moors provide little shelter from storms; they are like a giant sponge soaking up the rain and moisture, and make a marvelous target for spears of lightning—especially when there is an excellent conductor of electricity staggering around on two shaky legs. Suffice to say, I was nervous. Moors are dark and desolate regions to pass through at night, especially when the inevitable veils of mist envelop the solitary traveler.
The storm hit. A complete blackout lit up only by the flashes of forked lightning forced me, terror-stricken, to my hands and knees in search of shelter. The thunder raged. I was soaked by the torrential rain and shivering from the cold, and had to get on my feet and move to stay warm. The storm shook the earth, and I shuddered with it.

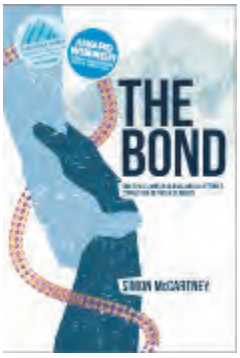
Alone on the moors in the worst of all possible thunderstorms, my fears reached a sort of climax—it was as though the rain, thunder and lightning had collectively struck me and released me from the fear I had of them. The storm still raged, but I walked on feeling as if I was accompanied by orchestral music washing over me, and I wept with relief to be free from the fear of the storm. Only that moment mattered: the mist and rain; the night and storm; the solitude and music, and no more fear. It didn't matter that I had missed the last train home. I walked all night until the sky cleared, day dawned, and the hamlet in the valley appeared. I took the morning train, and relaxed with the marvelous feelings of freedom I had found in the storm. I was so absorbed that I gave no thought to my poor mother at home, worried sick about her strange fifteen-year-old son once again wandering around alone in the woods, hills, meadows, and moorlands.

Fortunately my mother's capacity for forgiveness outweighed her initial anger at my rather self-centered pursuit of peace and joy in the English countryside—and I lived to hike another day! ■

The air raid shelter Nowell's brother carried him to during WW2.

Some Good Reads

The Bond: Two epic climbs in Alaska and a lifetime's connection between climbers
By Simon McCartney
Reviewed by Mike Nash, Caledonia Ramblers



The Bond: Two epic climbs in Alaska and a lifetime's connection between climbers by Simon McCartney appeared in August 2016 with a hint of becoming a classic. Three months later it began to realize that potential by winning both the Mountain & Wilderness Literature Non-Fiction Award at the Banff Mountain Book Festival in Canada and the 2016 Boardman Tasker Award for Mountain Literature at the Kendal Mountain Festival in the UK.

The Bond is the story of two epic first ascents in Alaska by a British-American climbing partnership, and the lifetime ties that bound climbers after a near-calamity high on the previously unscaled southwest face of North America's highest peak. After coming perilously close to death from high altitude cerebral edema, capped by a complex retreat and rescue operation, Simon McCartney abandoned contact with the climbing community for 30 years. Knowing that he had reached a pinnacle of personal achievement, he put aside climbing and the community that had previously defined him as he sought a new personal and professional life in Southeast Asia. He turned his risk-taking spirit to other on-the-edge recreational pursuits such as cave diving in Australia, and to becoming a successful business entrepreneur in China. Meanwhile, his erstwhile climbing partner, Californian Jack Roberts, went on to make climbing his life's work, never ceasing to speak of McCartney as the strongest and best climbing partner he ever had.

It was inevitable that McCartney's deep-felt mountaineering experiences would resurface, and a series of chance events in Hong Kong in 2009 and 2012 caused him to reconnect with many of the people he had been involved with during his climbing days and in his rescue on Denali. He was to be consistently surprised by the immediate bond that he found with climbers he had known so many years before, as well as with others in the climbing community he had never met. With their help he began the challenging and cathartic work of researching and writing the account that became *The Bond*.

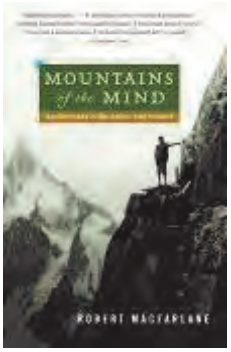
Published in hardcover with many original and contemporary photographs, *The Bond* is a beautifully designed and compelling page-turner with a strong and positive message. There has evidently been much good research, as well as unique editorial and artistic design put into this work, which draws not only on McCartney's narrative but on the journals and photographs of others involved in his climbs and his rescue. I suspect this remarkable book will become required reading for those interested in mountain adventure. ■

The Bond: Two epic climbs in Alaska and a lifetime's connection between climbers by Simon McCartney; Vertebrate Publishing, July 2016; ISBN: 978-1-910240-66-3; Hardback, 352 pages + two 16-page colour sections.

Mountains of the Mind: How Desolate and Forbidding Heights were Transformed into Experiences of Indomitable Spirit
By Robert Macfarlane
Reviewed by Ron Dart, ACC-Vancouver Section

O the mind, mind has mountains
- Gerard Manley Hopkins

From death in valleys preserve me, O Lord
- Robert Macfarlane (p. 9)



Have men and women, throughout the long stretches of human history, taken to the mountains the way we do in our time and ethos? Have white-crowned peaks, rock diadems and spear spires always drawn the curious, energetic, skilled and interested? Have mountains always been a place of allure, delight, charm and attraction? Or, is the passion for the mountains and out of doors hiking, climbing and glacier traverses more a product of the last few centuries? If this is the case, why is it? And, deeper yet, what are the reasons (complicated and diverse though they might be) that women and men take to the mountains, challenging rock rims and high perched peaks?

Mountains of the Mind attempts, in a variety of ways, to answer these questions. Such abiding questions, though, are not merely answered from the safe confines of the academic and library chair. Robert Macfarlane, to his credit, attempts to scale the peaks of such answers from a variety of routes. Macfarlane is Scottish, a climber and international in experience and interest. He has taken to many peaks, and his answers to the questions raised above emerge both from within himself and the multiple voices from those who have taken to the peaks in the past. *Mountains of the Mind* is as much about the internal ascents, hard places, difficult routes, worrisome crevasses, long trails, and fears and insecurities that dog one and all as it is about the external and hard realities of real mountains and packed snow places.

Mountains of the Mind is divided into 9 compact and enticing chapters: 1) Possession, 2) The Great Stone Book, 3) The Pursuit of Fear, 4) Glaciers and Ice: The Streams of Time, 5) Altitude: The Summit and the View, 6) Walking off the Map, 7) A New Heaven and a New Earth, 8) Everest and 9) The Snow Hare. Each of these compelling chapters, story told well, draws the reader more and more into the world of mountain lore and legend and the reasons why many turn to such places.

Macfarlane is never shy about telling his tale and trips to the high regions, his conscious and subconscious reasons for turning to such alluring and evocative places, and what other mountains have taught him about such a journey. *Mountains of the Mind* is also about cultural shifts that began in the 17th–18th centuries in the west, and how such cultural shifts have

converted still and silent rocks into places of peak bagging and spiritual pilgrimages.

Macfarlane, to some degree, follows the earlier thesis of Marjorie Hope Nicolson's *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite* (1959), in tracking and tracing the interest in mountaineering to the 17th–18th centuries. Many of the literary clues that Nicolson has provided in her classic work were followed by Macfarlane in *Mountains of the Mind*. Both Nicolson and Macfarlane are aware that mountains have played a substantive role in classical cultures, but the general and widespread fascination with mountains and the environment that holds and draws many today is a new phenomenon. It is this broader interest in the mountains (and what it means for new cultural ways of seeing and being) that interests Nicolson and Macfarlane. The difference between these two, though, is that Nicolson in *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory* studied this shift from an academic, historic and literary perspective, whereas Macfarlane is interested in these areas, but he is equally interested from the perspective of the mountaineer, also.

The final 2 chapters in *Mountains of the Mind* draw this fine book together in a suggestive way. Macfarlane ponders, in chapter 8 (Everest) why George Mallory was drawn so irresistibly and fatally to Everest. Each of the three trips is discussed in some detail, and Macfarlane amply illustrates that he has read most of Mallory's letters and journals well. Why would Mallory leave his wife and three young children for some barren rocks and hard ice and snow peaks? What was the fatal attraction? What was the draw and history of those who had gone before Mallory that prepared this young Galahad to give his life to an unforgiving and ancient slab of frigid and frozen white at the very crest of the world? 'Everest' is a fine chapter. Macfarlane probes and probes the mind of Mallory, and, by doing so, the minds of all those who turn to the peaks to discover the reasons for the drive to such isolated and barren places.

Why did this become both an addiction and tragic attraction for Mallory? Why did he need to be the first to stand on the peak of Everest, and what were the more important things he sacrificed in the process? Macfarlane attempts to answer these sorts of questions in the penultimate chapter in *Mountains of the Mind*. It is these inner mountains of the mind, in the end, that are the most interesting to traverse, and Macfarlane, roped well, does take to such heights, the dead Mallory his guide.

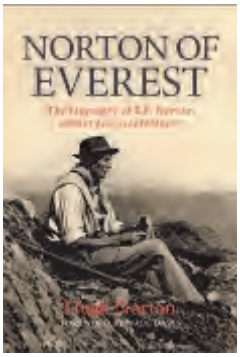
The final chapter, 'The Snow Hare', is the most illusive and compelling. Macfarlane, on the peaks of a whiteout summit, meets a snow hare. Needless to say, such a meeting has all sorts of mythic meanings. Macfarlane allows the reader to unpack the metaphor from such an occurrence. It reminds me of the time I was sitting on a mountainside, and two white deer momentarily appeared, approached me, then disappeared. Such moments are quite magical, and rare is the experience.

If some concerns might be raised about this book, and there are some to be pondered, the primary one might be the way Marfarlane, like Nicolson before him, has tended to see the substantial shift in the way we see mountains in the 17th and 18th centuries. Both Nicolson and Macfarlane offer a fleeting nod to the Classical western tradition (albeit in a spotty and questionable way), but neither delve into the deeper and older attitudes towards the mountains in both the western and eastern traditions. This much older line and lineage can be corrected by a read of *Sacred Mountains of the World* (1990), by Edwin Bernbaum. *Sacred Mountains of the World* is a stunning visual tour with an insightful text as a hiking companion. In short, the larger cultural shifts in the way we see mountains that Nicolson and Macfarlane linger so long at do need to be checked and corrected by the more compelling, older and convincing work of Bernbaum in *Sacred Mountains of the World*.

Mountains of the Mind is a must read, and for those of us who are Canadians and belong to the Alpine Club of Canada, there are some interesting comments from Mallory about Edward Wheeler and the 1921 attempt to climb Everest. ■

Mountains of the Mind: How Desolate and Forbidding Heights were Transformed into Experiences of Indomitable Spirit by Robert Macfarlane; Pantheon Books, 2003; ISBN 978-0-375-42180-8; paperback, 320 pages.

Norton of Everest: The biography of E.F. Norton, soldier and mountaineer
By Hugh Norton
Reviewed by Mike Nash, Caledonia Ramblers



E. F. 'Teddy' Norton had achieved the rank of Lieutenant General when he was retired in 1942. His first posting had been in Ireland in 1903, and four years later he was off to India where he spent much of his later career. In Europe during World War 1 he served with distinction as an artillery officer, and was awarded both the Military Cross and Distinguished Service Order. For 18 months during the war, he was attached to the Canadian army and later received a letter of commendation from the Canadian Prime Minister. In 1929 he returned to India, and in 1940 he was appointed acting governor of Hong Kong where, with a Japanese invasion looming, he was credited with saving many lives.

Notwithstanding his star military career, and despite taking part in only two climbing expeditions, Teddy Norton is best remembered today for mountaineering. He had only moderate climbing experience when he was accepted into the 1922 Everest expedition. It was the first serious attempt to climb the mountain and Norton performed well at altitude, reaching 27,000 feet (8,230 m); plus he impressed other team members with his climbing judgement. Accordingly, in 1924 Norton was appointed second-in-command and climbing leader for another Everest attempt. During the approach march, General Bruce became ill and had to withdraw as leader, asking Norton to take over. Norton in turn chose George Mallory to be both his second-in-command and climbing leader, and the two worked closely together until the latter's disappearance and presumed death on the summit ridge towards the end of the expedition.

Despite demands on his time as expedition leader, and also having to take over duties as *Times* correspondent, Norton led from the front with two significant personal achievements on the mountain. In the first, he organized and led what he and his companions firmly believed would be a suicide mission to rescue four Sherpas trapped by heavy snowfall and dwindling food supplies on the North Col. Determined not to have a repeat of the 1922 disaster when seven Sherpas died in an avalanche while attempting to descend from the North Col, they succeeded against all odds, with no loss of life. Norton was later partnered with Howard Somervell for a second summit bid after Mallory's first attempt had failed. As they climbed towards a gully known as the great couloir, Somervell's cough forced him to stop. Norton went on alone, without oxygen to reach 28,126 feet (8,573 m), just 902 feet (275 m) below the summit.

The exposed gully leading to the summit pyramid that Norton crossed alone is today known as the Norton Couloir, and his high altitude record without oxygen held for 54 years until 1978 when Reinhold Messner and Peter Habeler summited Everest without oxygen. Messner later made a solo ascent without oxygen via the Norton Couloir, again inspired by Norton. Despite the 1924 expedition's tragic ending with the loss of Mallory and Irvine, Norton was credited with exceptional leadership in the face of adversity, and was felt by some to be the best of all Everest leaders. In 1927 Norton and Somervell, who became lifelong friends, were recognized in Canada by the naming of two peaks over 10,000 feet (3,048 m) in British Columbia's Rockies. And there is a third connection to Canada in the book in that its foreword was written by Canadian and BC anthropologist Wade Davis.

Universally recognized as an outstanding leader and mentor, Teddy Norton was also a renowned naturalist with particular interests in bird watching and wildflowers. He was a talented artist, horseman, sportsman, and an accomplished linguist, the latter helping him relate to local people during his overseas postings and expeditions. He was a devoted family man who took the time to imbue his learning and interests in his three sons, the youngest of whom, Hugh Norton, has now produced this warm and inspirational biography of his father, one of the 20th Century's great mountaineers. ■

Norton of Everest: The biography of E.F. Norton, soldier and mountaineer by Hugh Norton with a foreword by Wade Davis; Vertebrate Publishing, May 2017; ISBN 978-1-910240-92-2; paperback, 204 pages + 16-page colour section.

On the Highest Hill
By Roderick Haig-Brown
Reviewed by Ron Dart, ACC-Vancouver Section

When the issue of conservation and preservation is raised, there is a direct line and lineage between Roderick Haig-Brown, the Honorable John Fraser (Minister of the Environment in 1979 and Speaker of the House of Commons from 1986-1995), David Suzuki, and Elizabeth May. But, such is an essay for another day and time.

Roderick Haig-Brown (1908-1976) is, without much doubt, one of the most significant and substantive pioneers of the green movement and deep ecology in British Columbia. Although Haig-Brown tends to be known, mostly, at a popular level, for his work on fly fishing (with a decided philosophical bent), many of his novels delve deep and ever deeper into the emerging environmental crises we now encounter on our all too human journey.

On the Highest Hill was originally published in 1949 and is one of Haig-Brown's earliest novels. Laurie Ricou, in his introduction to *On the Highest Hill* suggests that "*On the Highest Hill* is a novel that reaches for the meaning of places—especially of the forest, the mountains and wilderness valleys of Vancouver Island—and then veers towards a tract on environmental politics." Haig-Brown had initially thought of calling the book the "Wild Man novel." Colin Ensley is the major actor in this dra-

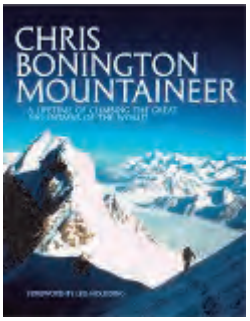
matic novel that pits Colin's passion for wilderness and the wild against many of the civilizational forces that threaten such a human and humane existence. Colin, in the various phases and stages of this compelling tome of a read, attempts to find his compromised way to some sort of accommodation between civilization and nature, but each attempt gives way to dissatisfaction.

On the Highest Hill is not the sort of novel with a Walt Disney happy ending and resolution to the struggle of Colin with his various antagonists. The dominant realism anticipates, in many ways, the emerging ecological battles that were to surface, in a poignant way, in the 1960s-1970s (and that are very much the reality we live with in our era). The novel also has the bite of tragic realism to it that reflects Thomas Hardy's later novels. This makes sense, to some degree, given Haig-Brown's roots in Dorset and the family connection with Hardy. *On the Highest Hill* is one of Haig-Brown's rare adult novels (Timber being the other one) and in these novels the dominant themes of humanity and nature are faced into and not flinched from, and the setting is, for the most part, the west coast of Canada.

Did Colin best handle the civilization-nature clash and tension or is the tragedy of the novel about how not to live into the dilemma? There can be no doubt, though, that Haig-Brown brought the major issues to the front stage in this late 1940s novel and his various answers embody various ways of wisely (or not) dealing with such perennial issues. There can be no doubt, though, that *On the Highest Hill* is a classic Canadian novel that anticipates the future and offers paths worth the taking or not worthy of the trek when dealing with corporations and environmental issues (certainly worthy of many a read). ■

On the Highest Hill (1994 Edition) by Roderick Haig-Brown; Oregon State University Press, ISBN 9780870715181; paperback, 319 pages.

Chris Bonington Mountaineer: A lifetime of climbing the great mountains of the world
By Chris Bonington
Reviewed by Mike Nash, Caledonia Ramblers



A new edition of Chris Bonington's sweeping autobiography was released in November 2016. First appearing in 1989, the updated version is an attractive large-format paperback with 256 full-colour pages and several new chapters covering Bonington's last quarter century. The book's subtitle, *A lifetime of climbing the great mountains of the world*, fairly sums up what is mainly a photo journal of the author's life of adventure in far-flung places.

From the English crags of his youth to the world's great mountain ranges, Chris Bonington astutely combined climbing, writing, lecturing, media, and expedition organizing and leadership to forge himself into a household name for mountaineering. Such was his public standing that, when Air Canada was considering sponsoring what became the first successful Canadian Everest expedition (Laurie Skreslet, Pat Morrow and four Sherpas summiting in October 1982), they retained Chris Bonington to vet the expedition before committing.

Bonington has also had to deal with a daunting reputation involving death and other casualties on a high proportion of the major expeditions that he led. He addresses this in Chapter 5, Himalayan Big Walls, where he discusses two distinct categories of accidents: objective hazards that could entrap anyone, and calculated risks that have contributed to the death toll on high mountains, both factors in his big ventures.

Re-reading Bonington's account of the 1975 Everest Southwest Face expedition that he led took me back to hosting one of that expedition's summiteers, Doug Scott, in Prince George. Several of Scott's firsthand accounts of his high mountain adventures overlapped Bonington's story, with the most notable being their shared experience after their 1977 first ascent of the 7,285-metre Ogre in Pakistan. Soon after the two of them had summited and begun their descent, Scott slipped on verglas and broke both of his lower legs in a 30-metre pendulum. Later, Bonington rappelled off the end of a rope and broke two ribs. The tale of their epic weeklong retreat down the storm-ravaged mountain is one of the great survival stories, rivaling Joe Simpson's 1985 epic escape from Siula Grande in the Peruvian Andes.

Chris Bonington is still active, having refocused the most recent decade of his life on more moderate treks and family climbs. In 2014, at the age of 80, he repeated his televised 1966 first ascent of the Old Man of Hoy, this time led by Leo Houlding, who also wrote the foreword for this new edition. A strong public persona and media-focus has facilitated Bonington's extraordinary lifestyle, so to add tension to a man who hadn't climbed or even walked much during the previous year, his 48th anniversary sea stack climb was again televised. The broadcast was used as a fundraiser for research into motor neurone disease which had claimed his wife one month earlier.

Chris Bonington Mountaineer is an easy and visually stimulating read and a fitting memoir for an adventure-driven man whom time and life experience has both made celebrity and ultimately mellowed. ■

Chris Bonington Mountaineer: A lifetime of climbing the great mountains of the world (2016 Edition) by Chris Bonington; Vertebrate Publishing, November 2016; ISBN 978-1-910240-77-9; paperback with flaps, 256 pages, full colour throughout.

Cover Photo Contest

We're looking for winter shots for our next cover of Cloudburst. Email your entries to us at cloudburst@mountainclubs.org
Please submit photos by October 1st

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FRASER VALLEY
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Bear Mountain Trail Society bearmountaintrailsociety.blogspot.ca
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Alpine Club of Canada – Whistler accwhistler.ca
BC Mountaineering Club bcmc.ca
Friends of Garibaldi Park friendsofgaribaldipark.org
Mountain Mentors mountainmentors.org
Hike BC hike-bc.org
North Shore Hikers northshorehikers.org
North Vancouver Outdoors Club northvanoutdoorsclub.ca
Outsetters Club of Vancouver outsetters.org
SFU Outdoor Club sfuoutdoors.wikidot.com
Vancouver Rock Climbing Group vrcg.ca
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SOUTHERN INTERIOR
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Kamloops Hiking Club kamloopshikingclub.net
Kootenay Mountaineering Club kootenaymountaineering.bc.ca
Penticton Outdoors Club pentictonoutdoorsclub.ca
Skaha Bluffs Park Watch Society skahabluffsparkwatch.com
South Okanagan Trail Alliance southokanagantrailalliance.com
Varsity Outdoor Club Okanagan ubco-voco.com

SUNSHINE COAST - NORTH COAST
Mount Remo Backcountry Society mtremo.ca
Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society sunshinecoast-trail.com
Tetrahedron Outdoor Club tetoutdoor.ca

VANCOUVER ISLAND & ISLANDS
Alberni Valley Outdoor Club albernivalleyoutdoorclub.wordpress.com
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Comox District Mountaineering Club comoxhiking.com
Friends of Strathcona Park friendsofstrathcona.org
Island Mountain Ramblers islandmountainramblers.com
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At the junction to the peak of Mount Frosty in Manning Park.
Cindy Waslewsky with dog Denali, and Kathy Chisholm.

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