

# CLOUDBURST

— FALL/WINTER 2022 —



**In Appreciation - Jay MacArthur | A Call for Volunteers | Biking Vancouver Island  
The Rich History of the Swiss Guides | Climbing and Avalanche Reads**

**Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia**

*Accessing the backcountry one step at a time*



# CLOUDBURST

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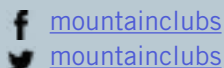
The Federation of Mountain  
Clubs of British Columbia



236 Superior Street  
Victoria, BC  
V8V 1T3

[mountainclubs.org](http://mountainclubs.org)

[info@mountainclubs.org](mailto:info@mountainclubs.org)



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President: Liz Bicknell  
Treasurer: Paula McGahon  
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Cristina Jacob, Dave King, Monika Bittel,

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See page [29](#) for details.

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## Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia

The Federation of Mountain Clubs of British  
Columbia (FMCBC) is a province-wide umbrella  
organization dedicated to protecting and maintaining  
access to BC's backcountry.

Since 1972, we have represented the interests of  
outdoor clubs from every corner of the province and  
have provided a united voice on issues related to  
non-motorized backcountry recreation.

Our membership is comprised of a diverse group of  
thousands of non-motorized backcountry recreationists  
including hikers, rock climbers, mountaineers,  
mountain bikers, trail runners, kayakers, backcountry  
skiers and snowshoers.

As an organization, we believe the enjoyment of these  
pursuits in an unspoiled environment is a vital  
component of the quality of life for British Columbians,  
and by acting under the policy of "talk, understand and  
persuade" we advocate for these interests.

# President's Message Fall/Winter 2022

**Liz Bicknell, President**

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It is with deep sadness that I let you know that Jay MacArthur passed away over Thanksgiving weekend. We have much to be thankful to Jay for, not least of which was his energetic and enthusiastic service to the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC.

I have known Jay for seven years while both of us were involved with non-motorized trails in BC. Jay, through his work with the Alpine Club of Canada (Vancouver) and Director of the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC; and, I, as former President of the Outdoor Club of Victoria, President of Vancouver Island Trail Association and President of the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC.

Jay's love for climbing led him to explore the Coast Range and advocate for protection of, and public access to, our wilderness. Jay introduced many to our mountains through trips, climbing camps and skill workshops to develop their competencies. Jay's passion for the Chilcotin started in the 1980s, when mountaineering ventures took him to Chilko Lake. In 1991, Jay joined the Chilko Lake Study Team to develop land use recommendations for Chilko Lake. After two years of gathering information and negotiations, the Team produced a consensus report, recommending protection for much of the area. In 1994, Ts'il'kos Provincial Park was declared. The Team received the Minister of Environment award in 1994 for their contributions.

In 1979, Dennis Perry and Jay formed the South Chilcotin Mountains Wilderness Society to protect the expansive Southern Chilcotin-Spruce Lake Wilderness. Through lengthy processes, significant portions were protected. The northern half became part of the Cariboo-Chilcotin Commission on Resources and the Environment (CORE) negotiations in the early 1990s. Jay represented the Society and the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC in the CORE process. Big Creek Provincial Park was created in 1995 at the completion of the process. The southern half became a central issue in the Lillooet Land and Resource Management Plan (Lillooet LRMP). For over 5 years, Jay represented the Federation at the Lillooet LRMP Table of stakeholders. Unable to reach consensus, the LRMP Table presented two options to the government. In 2001, the government selected the option leading to the creation of Spruce Lake Protected Area, which became South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park. During the park management planning process, Jay advocated for protection of the park's intrinsic wilderness values and measures to mitigate conflicts among recreation users.

Jay has worked tirelessly to improve access to wilderness recreation



opportunities, particularly in heavily populated southwest BC. Projects include obtaining federal funds to construct the popular Howe Sound Crest Trail (Cypress Provincial Park), efforts to restore access to Singing Pass (Garibaldi Provincial Park) via a new access trail and bridge; advocating for more resources for BC Parks; and auditing trails in provincial parks to prioritize repairs. Jay's efforts to restore access to Singing Pass and protect the Chilcotin reflect Jay's commitment to building relationships and engaging respectfully with volunteers, First Nations, civil servants, elected representatives and commercial and resource interests.

Even after his terminal cancer diagnosis in October 2021, Jay continued his advocacy efforts. He created BC Trail Tracker, a trail database to collect trail condition reports from the public to help volunteers focus on repairs and identify trail champions.



Since the 1970s, Jay has shared his love of BC's mountains by leading climbing and ski touring trips. He has introduced people to BC's wilderness to learn about and value their natural heritage. He has also taught essential skills to allow others to safely explore BC's wilderness.

In recognition of his service, Jay received the Alpine Club of Canada's Distinguished Service Award (2001) and Silver Rope Leadership Award (2021); the Tim Jones Community Service Award and Honorary Membership in the BC Mountaineering Club (2022). I'm sure there will be more awards for Jay, to be presented posthumously.

Should anyone wish to make a donation in his name, Jay's family asks that it be made to the Alpine Club of Canada, Lions Gate Hospital Foundation or the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC.

Please join me in extending our sincere condolences to Jay's wife Lucy and his family. Thank you for sharing this incredible man with us. Jay, you will be missed.

Liz Bicknell

FMCBC President

# 6 Reasons

TO JOIN THE FMCBC

## Show Your Support

Connect with 5,000 people across BC to protect and maintain backcountry access for non-motorized recreation — together our voices are louder!



## Be Heard

You are the eyes and ears in the backcountry – let us know what's happening on YOUR trails, lakes and mountains



## Receive Funding

Apply for project funding through our annual FMCBC Member Club Grant Program

## Get Informed

Receive E-News and Cloudburst Magazine: club and committee updates, hot topics and adventure tales

## Promote Your Club

Contribute to FMCBC publications, share your stories and elevate the influence of your club

## Secure Insurance

Protect your club, volunteers, trip leaders and members through our liability insurance program



mountainclubs.org



### We Need You!

By Paula McGahon

Chair, Risk Management Committee

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Are you knowledgeable about liability insurance and the insurance industry?

The FMCBC is seeking members with an interest in liability insurance and knowledge about the insurance industry to join the Risk Management Committee.

The Risk Management Committee is responsible for the FMCBC's general comprehensive liability group insurance offered to member clubs. The comprehensive liability insurance is important as it allows clubs to schedule trips and host club events, protects clubs, trip organizers and trip participants in the event of an accident on a club trip or club event and ensures members can continue to access some lands (i.e., Private Managed Forest Lands on Vancouver Island).

The FMCBC's comprehensive liability group insurance must take into consideration the wide variety of outdoor recreation activities offered by our clubs, the recommended coverage for both general comprehensive liability and Directors and Officers insurance and the minimum coverage



requirements to access and recreate on private managed forest lands.

With significant increases in insurance premiums for many organizations last year (an increase of 60% for the FMCBC!), the FMCBC needs to assess our insurance requirements and options to ensure the best coverage and value for our member clubs for the 23/24 insurance year.

We are seeking volunteers with a background in insurance to help us with this process. The majority of Committee meetings will be via videoconference.

To volunteer please contact paula.mcgahon@gmail.com.



## THE HISTORY OF THE FMCBC

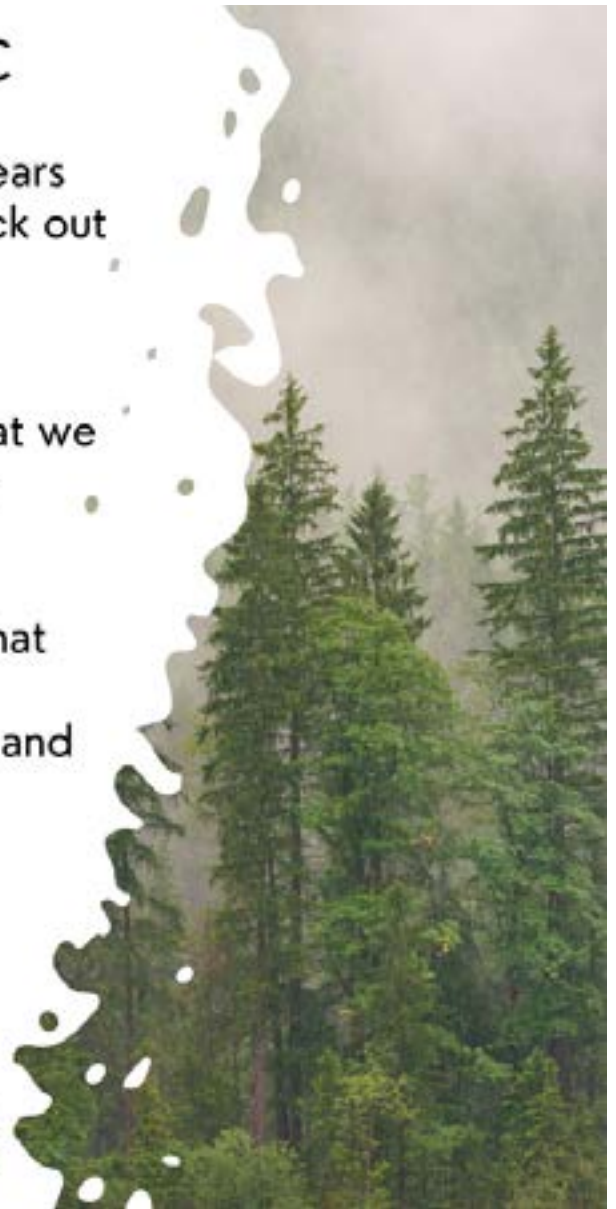
The many issues of Cloudburst over the years represent the history of the FMCBC. Check out our [Past Issues](#) page to view Cloudburst magazine going back to 1974.

Unfortunately, there are some gaps in what we have available - the largest gap being the years 1976 to 1979.

If you have any old issues of Cloudburst that we are missing, we would appreciate borrowing them just long enough to scan and upload them to the website.

For more info contact Mike Stewart at [mnd.stewart@telus.net](mailto:mnd.stewart@telus.net)

Additionally, if you have other FMCBC documentation (hard copy or digital) you would like to donate - let Mike know.



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## FMCBC Insurance Fees 2023/2024

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Due to an increase in insurance premiums, the FMCBC insurance fees for 2023/2024 (starting June 01, 2023) will be \$14/member. FMCBC membership fees will remain at \$8/member.

Total fees for insured membership will be **\$22/member.**

For more information please contact [info@mountainclubs.org](mailto:info@mountainclubs.org).

# Gi♥ing Tuesday

November 29, 2022



For 50 years, the FMCBC has partnered with outdoor recreation enthusiasts — like you! — to protect backcountry and improve trail conditions and access.

Please consider donating to FMCBC this Giving Day - every penny helps!

[mountainclubs.org/donate](https://mountainclubs.org/donate)

Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC





## IN REMEMBRANCE - JAY MACARTHUR

### Tribute to Jay MacArthur, 1957 - 2022

By Monika Bittel, FMCBC Director and friend to Jay

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On October 12, 2022, we lost long-standing FMCBC member, Jay MacArthur, to cancer. Almost one year earlier, Jay was diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer and given a few short weeks to live. Amazingly, after some treatment and interventions, Jay improved and in typical Jay-fashion, managed to pack an impressive amount of living into his last 10 months.

Jay enjoyed time with family and friends, met his new grandson and spent time outdoors whenever he could. When his health kept him indoors, Jay pursued trail projects, developed the BC Trail Tracker and continued to advocate for non-motorized recreation (i.e., Chilliwack Forest Stewardship Plans, BC Parks Day-Use Program and Bridal Falls Gondola).

Jay has been an integral member of the Federation's Recreation and Conservation Committee for over 40 years, attending his first meeting in 1979. Jay chaired or co-chaired the Committee with Roger Freeman from about the mid 1980s to the mid 2000s. I first met Jay at one of these monthly Committee meetings. Being relatively new to backcountry recreation, I was initially overwhelmed by the diverse issues and the extensive knowledge that Jay and other Committee members had about BC's mountains, access roads, trails and routes. I remained involved with the Committee because of the respectful nature of the meetings, the collegiality of the group and the dedication and commitment of Jay and several others to the preservation of BC's wilderness and securing public access to it for non-motorized recreation. Several decades later, I chair the Committee and have collaborated with Jay on many, many access and trail projects.

Jay worked relentlessly on access and conservation issues for over 40 years. His long



Jay MacArthur rides the Grouse Mountain Skyride after hiking the BCMC Trail with his granddaughter (Photo from [insidevancouver.ca](https://www.insidevancouver.ca), 2022)

history of volunteer engagement demonstrates that it often takes vision and persistent effort to protect our wilderness and public access to it. Highlights from Jay's decades of volunteerism include:

- *Advocacy work, leading to the creation of several provincial parks: Ts'il?os Provincial Park, Big Creek Provincial Park and South Chilcotin Mountains Provincial Park.* Each park preserves unique ecosystems, consisting of intact watersheds or significant portions thereof, alpine meadows, lakes, mountain terrain, glaciers and wildlife. These parks provide opportunities for hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, fishing and ski touring.
- *Advocating for much needed resources (funding and staff) for BC Parks to expand*

recreation opportunities (campsites, trails and day-use sites) to meet the needs of British Columbians and to repair long-neglected trails and park infrastructure.

- *Improving access to backcountry recreation opportunities, particularly in heavily populated southwestern BC:*

- o Obtaining federal funding to construct the Howe Sound Crest Trail in Cypress Provincial Park. With multiple access points, this 29km trail remains popular with hikers and trail runners and provides opportunities for 2-3 day wilderness treks.

- o Efforts to restore summer access to Singing Pass in Garibaldi Provincial Park via a new summer hiking trail that will take park visitors from Whistler/Blackcomb's Lot 8 to a new footbridge across Fitzsimmons Creek, after which the new trail will rejoin the old Singing Pass trail. This past June, on one of Jay's good days, Peter Taylor, Bryce Leigh and I accompanied Jay to Fitzsimmons Creek, where we surveyed the crossing and marked the footings. On our return to the village, we followed Jay and flagged and measured a proposed route through the forest. With the province close to finalizing documentation with Whistler/Blackcomb, the FMCBC hopes to be able to start trail and bridge construction in August 2023.

- o Restoring long-neglected trail in BC Parks: About two years ago, Jay began auditing popular provincial park trails to identify hazards, failing bridges, clogged water bars, missing or misleading signage, and detailed the nature and extent of repairs required. These audit reports



Jay auditing the Mt Seymour Main Trail on August 13, 2020 (Photo by M. Bittel).



Jay and his family (photo from North Shore News, 2014).



Photo from Jay's Twitter profile.



have helped highlight the extensive repairs needed to restore provincial park trails and prioritize maintenance work.

As recently as September 8, Jay recruited Alex Wallace to hike the Black Mountain Plateau trail to scope out the condition of the trail. Carrying Jay's folding chair, Alex accompanied Jay on a slow and leisurely hike along the trail, with Jay measuring the trail and making notes from his chair. When a passing hiker asked Jay if he



Jay auditing the Black Mountain Trail on September 8, 2022 (Photo by A Wallace).

was one of those trail angels, Jay just beamed. Jay rode the Coaster down, complaining it was a sedate ride because he got stuck behind a slowpoke.

o Creating BC Trail Tracker, a trail database that serves as an inventory of public trails, a register of volunteers associated with each trail and a register of trails that still need volunteers. Trail users can submit reports on the condition of trails and access. The [BC Trail Tracker](https://mountainclubs.org/resources/bc-trail-tracker/) (<https://mountainclubs.org/resources/bc-trail-tracker/>) helps volunteers prioritize trail work and informs trail management agencies about safety and access issues. The goal is to provide safe and accessible trails for public use.

Jay's volunteerism is legendary. He has left some pretty big shoes to fill within the Federation. Jay's efforts to restore access to Singing Pass, protect the Chilcotin wilderness and improve trails within BC Parks reflect his love for the outdoors, his energy, integrity, optimism, belief in people and focus on constructive problem-solving. Jay is a great example of how to nurture new generations of explorers, leaders and volunteers. Jay will be greatly missed.



Jay MacArthur, 1957-2022 (Photo from [insidevan-couver.ca](http://insidevan-couver.ca)).



## SWBC Recreation & Conservation Committee Report

By Monika Bittel, Chair

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The SWBC Recreation and Conservation Committee, FMCBC clubs and members have worked on a range of issues since our spring Cloudburst update. The following highlights some advocacy projects from the past several months:

### **1. Advocating for more operational funding for BC Parks and RSTBC**

In June, the FMCBC made submissions to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services for more funding in the 2023 budget for both BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC). Similar to other recreation organizations, including the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC and Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Club, we advocated for an increase in the operational budgets for BC Parks and RSTBC to allow them to expand public recreation opportunities (i.e., trails, day-use sites and backcountry campsites), maintain long-neglected backcountry recreation facilities and trails and support volunteer groups that develop and maintain recreation trails and sites. We also advocated for funding to allow RSTBC to maintain primary service roads to access trailheads, recreation sites and provincial parks. RSTBC's lack of funds

to maintain access roads means that we will continue to lose access to popular recreations sites and trails and see overcrowding and overuse of the remaining accessible sites and trails.

The Select Standing Committee issued their 2023 Budget Consultation Report in August. The Committee acknowledged that while the use of BC's parks has increased significantly, the budget for parks and recreation has not kept pace, leaving many parks and trails underfunded and understaffed. The Select Standing Committee recommended the following in support of parks and recreation:

*97. Continue to invest in BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC to address gaps in maintenance and staff, including dedicated funding to community-based organizations for trail maintenance and development.*

*98. Build the capacity of volunteers by establishing discretionary funding to ensure that BC's volunteer trail and park maintenance groups have the resources they need to continue to improve the accessibility of outdoor recreation.*

We will see if the next provincial budget provides better

support for RSTBC and BC Parks.

### **2. Submissions on commercial tenures that will impact public recreation interests**

a. *She Shreds Mountain Adventures Inc. - Lands File No 2411829: She Shreds applied for a commercial snowmobile tenure in the Pemberton Ice Cap and Hurley areas, including Face, Lone Goat, and Hope Creek Forest Service Road to provide primarily women-focused day and multi-day snowmobile clinics, courses and guided tours. Since the proposed tenure areas already have commercial snowmobile tenures, we did not oppose the application. Rather, we took the opportunity to highlight how the proponent could educate clients about recreation zoning, provincial parks that limit or exclude motorized activities and wildlife closures. With the rapidly increasing number of all types of winter backcountry users, mountain safety and compliance with zoning is crucial to minimize conflicts among user groups. While electric snowmobiles may reduce the impacts of carbon emissions, other impacts will persist. This includes risks associated with high-speed snowmobiles, hardened*

snowmobile tracks and the practice of high-marking, the ability for snowmobiles to quickly track up an entire area and differences in managing avalanche risks. To increase our mutual enjoyment of shared backcountry areas, the FMCBC believes the development and promotion of best practices among user groups would help reduce conflicts; for example, best practices for motorized and non-motorized users sharing an access road, minimum spacing between snowmobiles and non-motorized users, maximum travel speed for snowmobiles operating within proximity of non-motorized users, and best practices in managing avalanche risks in shared use areas.

*b. Forest Stewardship Plans – Chilliwack Natural Forest District:* Together with the Trails Committee and input from clubs in the Fraser Valley and Chilliwack area, the FMCBC commented on two Forest Stewardship Plans: NFP Timber Solutions Ltd. (Ainslie and Coquihalla Forest Development Units ) and Ts'elxwéyeqw Forestry Limited Partnership (Forest Development Units within the Chilliwack, Fraser Valley South, Silverhope, Harrison – East and Yale Landscape Units). The FMCBC's submissions identified many trails important to our clubs and the general public, including Baby Munday, Gloria-Elk-Thurston, Mount McGuire, Pierce Lake, Slease Memorial, Mount Rexford, Vedder Mountain, Mt Mercer, Lucky Four Mine,

Williams Peak and Williamson Lake. The FMCBC made specific recommendations with respect to several trails and outlined more general strategies to protect recreation trails and resources:

- 1) preserve the unique recreational experience of hiking through forested and subalpine settings by maintaining a 50m buffer of forest on both sides of the trail;
- 2) minimize damage and impacts on these recreation trails and resources from primary forest activities;
- 3) avoid building access roads over established recreation trails, where possible; and,
- 4) prevent motorized use of established non-motorized recreation trails.

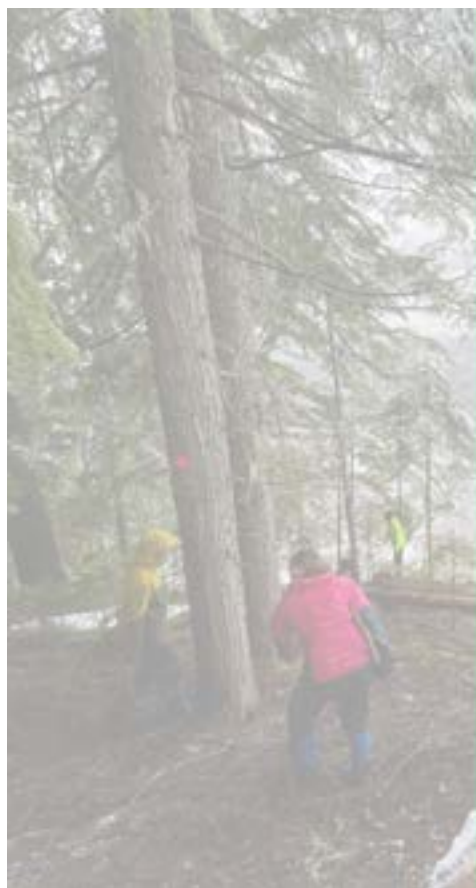
In response to our submissions, the proponent advised that should forestry operations be proposed in close proximity to the trails where established objectives do not exist, the Plan Holders would communicate with our organization for input where warranted.

*c. Bridal Falls Gondola (aka Cascade Skyline Gondola) - Crown Land File No 2412430:* The proponent is seeking a tenure to construct a multi-passenger gondola, which will take passengers from its base near the Bridal Falls Golf Course lands, near Chilliwack, to the Summit Station near Mt Archibald. There will be a variety of facilities at the Base, Mid and Summit Stations. A summit area trail network will be designed to link up with other

existing trails in the area, including the Fraser Valley Regional District Elk Mountain and Mt Thurston Trail Network. Based on our review of the project documents, comments and responses from the proponent's representative, and feedback from members and member clubs, in particular the Chilliwack Outdoor Club and Chilliwack Park Society, the FMCBC believes the proposed gondola project is an overall positive development because it will improve access and expand non-motorized, self-propelled backcountry recreation opportunities in southwestern BC. The FMCBC's overall positive assessment is contingent on public access for non-mechanized activities being preserved and enhanced, as outlined in the applicant's project documents. For more information about the Bridal Falls Gondola project and our comments to Lands Branch, please see [our blog](#) posted September 19, 2022 about the Bridal Falls Gondola project.

### **3. BC Parks Survey on Day-Use Pass Program - 2022**

From mid-August to October 31, 2022, BC Parks conducted a survey about their Day-Use Pass Program in 2022. In 2022, the program was limited to selected trails and parking lots in Garibaldi, Joffre and Golden Ears provincial parks. While the increase in the recreational use of parks is positive, BC Parks maintains the "unprecedented increase in visitors" risks negatively impacting ecological integrity



## Want to know more about Member Club Grants?

In 2012, the FMCBC began a grant program to support projects initiated by our member clubs.

Your donation provides a direct way for organizations and individuals to give back to our trails and the outdoor recreation community.

The FMCBC grants funds to upgrade trails, install bridges, improve huts, purchase tools and run community events. Join us today!

**MOUNTAINCLUBS.ORG/DONATE**

and Indigenous people's way of life in protected areas and overwhelming park services and infrastructure, which can lead to crowded parks, a less enjoyable visitor experience and impacts on natural and cultural features and fragile ecosystems. In their [recent blog](#) about the evolution of BC Parks Day-Use Pass Program, many long-standing issues (for example, trail braiding and vegetation trampling and safety concerns caused when people park along highways where demand exceeds the limited parking available) are attributed to excessive crowding, while ignoring the fact that for more than 25 years, there has been little trail and infrastructure maintenance and very limited expansion

of outdoor recreation opportunities in provincial parks, particular those that are in close proximity to the ever-growing population centers in the Lower Mainland and the Fraser Valley. To complicate matters further, with washouts, loss of bridges and infrastructure on popular forest service or resource roads used to access trails, routes and backcountry recreation areas outside of parks (i.e., Ashlu, Downtown and Elaho), the public relies more and more on the parks, trails and recreation sites that remain accessible. To resolve the overcrowding and over-use of our parks and accessible wilderness areas, government must focus greater effort, planning and resources to develop new recreation

opportunities (i.e., trails, day-use picnic areas, parking and backcountry campsites) and enhance existing opportunities inside and outside parks. Restricting access to parks, without reciprocal expansion of opportunities elsewhere, simply means overcrowding and over-use of unmanaged wilderness areas, provincial parks without or dated management plans (i.e., Callaghan, Pinecone Burke and Mt Seymour), or regional and municipal parks. For more information about the survey and FMCBC's concerns about the Day-Use Pass Program, please [see our blog](#) posted on September 22, 2022 about BC Parks survey on the Day-Use Pass Program.



## Trails Update

By Jay MacArthur, published posthumously  
FMCBC Trails Committee Chair  
ACC Vancouver Section

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*The following trails update was submitted by Jay MacArthur, as Chair of the Trails Committee, a few weeks before he died. Jay was committed to improving trails and access in our provincial parks. Anyone who is interested in the Trails Committee or helping move these projects forward, please contact [info@mountainclubs.org](mailto:info@mountainclubs.org).*

The FMCBC released the BC Trail Tracker in late June at the annual general meeting. Since then about 50 trails have been added to the trail tracker. We need a lot more volunteers to write excellent trail descriptions.

Once the trail is in the system, other users can add trail maintenance reports to allow volunteers in the Trails Committee to contact the Trail Champion (a volunteer responsible for one or more trails). The Trail Champion will contact the appropriate agency to fix the issue, or if it is an issue that can be fixed by volunteers they will organize a work party.

The trails committee has a list of about 10 people who are interested in trail repair work in the Lower Mainland (SW BC). We could use at least 10 more volunteers just for SWBC. What trail would you like to adopt?

Some current projects are listed below:

- Peter Taylor, Ian McGillivray and I did a trail audit on the Mount Seymour Main trail

to figure out the scope and cost of a project to rebuild about 2 km of the trail.

- Jordan Labun did a trail inspection report on the East and West Canyon Loop in Golden Ears Park. Thanks Jordan! - for getting involved. The loop in Golden Ears is in pretty good shape. We think the Ridge Meadows Outdoor Club has been helping BC Parks with that trail.

- Alex Wallace from the Friends of Cypress and I checked out a trail at the top of Black Mountain which is in pretty good shape.

- Ania Dziewonski checked out the Dog Mountain trail beside Mount Seymour Park and found a few issues that need some maintenance and improvement.

I have been trying to negotiate a partnership agreement with BC Parks so we can assist BC Parks with actual trail work. That is going very slowly, but hopefully will be concluded by next spring.

The Singing Pass project is still waiting for approval from Recreation Sites and Trails but unofficially they tell me that the approval could be soon.

Please search for your favourite trail in our [BC Trail Tracker](#). If it hasn't been added yet, please add the trail!

## Best practices for trails on private land

The Outdoor Recreation Council of BC had a webinar on September 28th with presenters Magi Scallion, McElhanney and Stewart Spooner, Kootenay Columbia Trails Society. The subject “Best Practices for Trails on Private Land” is a topic that our clubs on Vancouver Island have been dealing with for a long time.

Main points include:

- Understand who owns the land and what the owner’s or manager’s rights and responsibilities are
- Consider Indigenous cultural, spiritual, and archaeological values
- Have flexibility, patience and understanding

The presentation provided an overview of some of the applicable legislation such as the Occupiers Liability Act. [View the webinar](#) in full for more information.

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### Swiss Edelweiss Village: To Be or Not to Be

Ron Dart

Chilliwack Outdoor Club, Alpine Club of Canada

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There is no doubt that in the origins and development of mountaineering and mountain culture in Western Canada, the Swiss Guides were front and centre. The fact that much of their work was divided between Lake Louise and Rogers Pass meant Golden BC became their place of residence. The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) brought a few Swiss Guides to Canada after a fatal death in 1896, and as more and more became keen on mountaineering and mountain treks, the CPR realized more Swiss Guides were desperately needed to fulfill a growing interest and need. So, between 1910-1912 the CPR built a variety of chalets on an upper ridge in Golden to provide homes for the Swiss Guides and their growing families. The forested area on the hillside came to be known as Swiss Edelweiss Village.

I have been fortunate over the years to spend time at Edelweiss Village on various mountaineering treks in the area. Sadly, this heritage site and decades long centre of Canadian mountaineering is potentially being sold to a buyer solely interested in demolition and new development. If this does occur (hopefully it will not), a significant part of Canadian and Canadian mountaineering history will disappear---Canada and Golden would be the lesser for it.

Dr. Ilona Spaar and Dr. Johann Roduit (both from Switzerland, Roduit lives in Abbotsford, Spaar in Vancouver) have taken leadership in preserving Swiss Edelweiss Village from being sold and potentially demolished—their Swiss-Canadian line and lineage positions them well for such a commitment. I was fortunate to live in Switzerland from 1972-1974. Because I'm

Canadian, I have a decided fondness and affinity with the Swiss-Canadian love of the mountains and mountain culture. Swiss Edelweiss Village is but a portal into the larger cathedral of Swiss-Canadian mountain life.

The recent publication of Edward Feuz Jr.: A Story of Enchantment (2021) by D.L. Stephen builds on and develops yet further the earlier The Guiding Spirit (1986) by Andrew Kauffman/William Putnam and nestled nicely between these beauties and bookends is Ilona Spaar's fine primer Swiss Guides: Shaping Mountain Culture in Western Canada.

I have, in various editions of Cloudburst, lightly landed on such topics and issues: "The Canadian Alpine Tradition: Swiss Guides and Conrad Kain (Fall/Winter 2009) and "Swiss Guides: Shaping Mountain Culture in Western Canada" (Fall/Winter 2010). The photos taken in Golden (Alpine Mural) and at Edelweiss Village (with Jean Feuz-Vaughan) reflect the significance of Golden, the Swiss Guides and Swiss Edelweiss Village as icons that must be protected as a vital part of the Canadian mountaineering tradition—such a mother lode lost if consumed by developers.

I have been fortunate to do a lingering zoom call with Ilona Spaar and listen in on the heroic effort to preserve both Swiss Edelweiss Village but also the much grander and fuller Swiss-Canadian mountaineering culture and ethos.

Those who are interested in delving much deeper into the unfolding project can do so at [www.swissvillage.ca](http://www.swissvillage.ca).





Edelweiss Village, Golden BC (Photo from <https://goldenbcmuseums.com/cpr-swiss-guides/>)



Georgia Engelhard & CPR guide Edward Feuz climbing Pinnacle Peak above Moraine Lake in 1926.  
Image courtesy of CP Archives – Ref: NS85



The author in front of the icon sculpture of the Swiss Guides in Lake Louise (Photo by Ron Dart).

## A Letter from a Female Mountain Mentor...

To Deserving (but not self-proclaimed) Mountain Mentors,

You are not alone in the struggle of becoming a mentor. I have also experienced the struggle to become a mentor along with countless other women and non-binary folx that have participated in the Mountain Mentor program. I had serious doubts about the qualifications I *\*should\** have and the skill level I *\*should\** offer to a mentee. In my head, during my seven years of climbing and five years of skiing I hadn't picked up enough skills to play the mentor role. And even when I decided to become a mentor, I wondered, "am I enough?". What I have worked through – and am still working through – is that mentorship might not be so cut-and-dried.

In formal mentorship programs like Mountain Mentors, the mentor/mentee relationship is straightforward. Some seasons you are a mentee, and others you are a mentor. In our everyday relationships this line between mentee and mentor fades. Mentee/mentorship becomes more of an instance in time rather than a label to carry forever. It's like a teacher/student relationship where students enroll in a course to learn from their teacher but outside the classroom continue to learn from people around them. Rarely do we have established teacher/student roles.

What is being a mentor about anyway? Mentorship looks different for each pair. Mentees come with different knowledge, backgrounds, and challenges they are working through. I see mentorship as being a coach, a way to help people work through these challenges. This is especially true in a sports context because in the end no one can ski, climb, hike or snowshoe for us. Mentorship is giving people the confidence to use the skills they already have – offering a positive voice to win over a negative voice in their head. It could be skill sharing to unlock new aspects of the sport or offering a different perspective or way to relate to the sport. Mentorship is not a one-way street where all the benefits of the relationship go to the mentee. It is having a good relationship with mentees and being open to the idea that people prefer to learn in different ways and are open to instruction.

Many people who are socialized as women, and have the capacity to be mentors, lack the confidence to adopt the title even though they already operate as mentors in the outdoor community.

Outdoor guides play a big role in leadership and, in Canada, only 18% are women. There is no further data breakdown of those who identify as a person of colour, and zero statistics on non-binary people. The model is not there for us, and it seeps into our subconscious because of who we see leading groups most often. We also see this pattern occurring in the workplace where self-identified men are 18% more likely to be hired for a senior role and hold 82% of the executive office positions in Canada (statistic from 2020). This may be why my male counterparts are more confident stepping into leadership positions and more trusted when people are seeking guidance in the outdoors. I am not the only one overshadowed by a man who said the same exact thing as me.

There is a systemic issue that needs correction. We must work together to give women and non-binary folx the confidence to step into a mentorship role. This is for the good of future mentees and the community at large. They will benefit by having more women and non-binary people in leadership roles.

To future and current mentors, know that imposter syndrome is normal (I find myself in this cycle regularly!). Together as a community, we can work through these feelings. We can learn from one another with good communication and an open mind. I'm so grateful to take part in a program like Mountain Mentors. It helps me build the confidence to step up as a leader in the outdoor community, in my career, and my everyday life.

Thank you to Mountain Mentors for providing this space for all of us.

Sincerely,

Christina Radvak (she/her)

Mexican-Canadian, queer climbing Mountain Mentor



### Why Didn't I Do This Before? – Exploring Vancouver Island by Bike

Words and images by Ye Chu  
North Shore Hikers

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Life is a wonderful adventure. The more you nudge outside of your comfort zone, the more you think, “Why didn’t I do this before?”.

Our three-day bike trip was spectacular in every way imaginable, and it never rained on us. We brought rain gear, waterproof gloves, spats, and hand warmers expecting the worst. Somehow the clouds always parted, and we got sunshine and warm weather.

I did weeks of research on biking in this area as I had never been. I plotted the waypoints on my GPS until my eyes turned red – I tried to figure out the logistics late into the night. As such, all three bike rides went without a hitch.

A fellow cyclist recommended we stay in the Best Western hotel in Chemainus – not Duncan. That advice was wonderful as the hotel had a hot tub, swimming pool and all you can eat buffet breakfast. The rooms were quiet, spacious with a living room, dining area and full kitchen. It was also a stones throw from a cute town, a tasty Thai restaurant and live theatre (I heard it costs \$200 per person including dinner!).

#### **Day 1 Cowichan Valley Trail (CVT) Cross-over bike ride 80 km**

We left one car in Duncan at 10 am and biked gently uphill for 14.5 km on bullet proof gravel. We descended to Cowichan Lake, the largest freshwater lake on the island. We had lunch on a picnic table next to the lake and WC.

From there, we continued downhill to see the



Trestle bridges — Holt and Kinsol. The west sun was shining on the 7-degree curved Kinsol trestle and gave it a golden glow (a great photographer’s moment!). It is one of the world’s largest wood trestle bridges – beautiful and an engineering wonder. Construction started in 1909 by local farmers with a structural engineer. It went into disuse in 1979 but is now restored for recreational purposes.

Along the way, we saw a herd of 20 magnificent elk running away from us. Nothing short of wow!

We passed by black and white horned goats and work horses that were clearing the trail from fallen trees. We had 10 fallen trees on the trail and lifting the bikes over and under was a challenge. Big thanks to Mark for the heavy lifting!

We passed a very strong toxic smell and I had no idea what it was. A dog walker said the CVT closed the previous week due to



a forest fire, and we were lucky that it had reopened.

We biked down to Shawnigan lake at about 5 pm (65 km). Then on the road for 15 km, which was a relief after biking on the bumpy gravel road for 40 km. We reached our other car at exactly 5:57 pm at the Park and Ride on Hwy 1. Even though we were tired (no e-bikes on this ride), everyone was happy and thrilled with the crossover.

We looked forward to a well-deserved hot tub waiting for us back at the hotel.





## **Day 2 Chemainus to Ladysmith along the CVT**

Chemainus is a town with 52 murals. You can follow the painted footsteps to see these works of art. The architecture is whimsical and colourful. The style is hard to figure out – Russian influence?

This is a 30 km return trip between the ocean's edge and verdant farm land on the well-marked CVT. Along the way, we stopped at a Hectic's Bike hospital and hostel. One can stay overnight if their bike needs a full transplant. Accommodations cost \$55 for 26" wheels and \$40 for 20" wheels.

In Ladysmith we had lunch at the transfer beach amphitheatre overlooking the ocean. This black beach was an industrial park and the locals transformed it to a park. The name Ladysmith derives from the Boer war when the siege of the town Ladysmith, in South Africa, ended. The town founder, Dunsmuir, named it in honour of this South African town.

From there we biked into town and to the 49th parallel! First Avenue has the famous Old Town Bakery – it won the island competition for the best cinnamon bun. The lineup goes out the door and people drive from Victoria to get these sweet buns.

The town has Edwardian and Boomtown architecture with false fronts and cornices. The lucky Sanskrit swastika – meaning good luck – is in the 1913 Traveler's Hotel brick work.

In the late afternoon, we went to Crofton to walk the boardwalk. We discovered a beautiful black sandy beach, a result of toxic sludge left over from the mining days. The glass slivers can irritate the skin.

## **Day 3 Loop around Duncan and the totem poles along the CVT**

Another dry day for our 10 km bike ride that took 1.75 hours to do. It had a lot of twists and turns – I discovered my group could only remember two directional instructions before

they got lost! We had to go slow as I looked up each way point on my GPS.

Duncan is known for its plethora of totem poles which some chose to tour while I went to Cowichan Bay. I had heard it was quaint with many shops and restaurants. When we arrived, the town was packed with tourists. We could hear a cacophony of barking and went to the end of the street to figure out where it was coming from. We saw 300+/- Stellar and California Sea lions on the Marina dock. We heard from locals that they come here from California every year for 6 weeks to feed on the salmon. They bark all night and locals cannot sleep. A 2000 pound Stellar will jump onto a moored boat and another will follow. With 4000 pounds on a small boat, the boat will tip over and be destroyed. They are both a delight and a curse for the locals.

All in all, Vancouver Island is a gem of a place to explore... "why didn't I do this before?"



Steller sea lions have a distinctive, low frequency roar. Male sea lions seen here use sound to communicate with each other or to defend their territory. (Photo by Eric Marshall via [www.cowichanestuary.ca](http://www.cowichanestuary.ca)).

## Some Good Reads

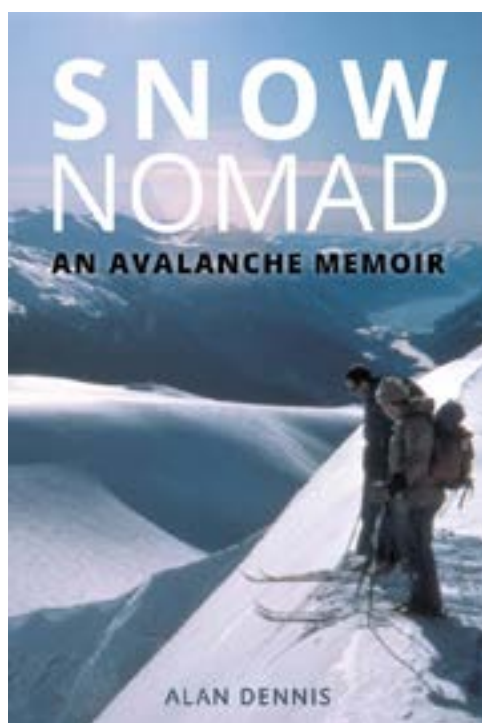
### Snow Nomad: An Avalanche Memoir By Alan Dennis

Published by Rocky Mountain Books, 2021

Reviewed by Ron Dart

Chilliwack Outdoor Club, Alpine Club of Canada

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For the last few decades I've been interested in the life and philosophic vision of Dolores LaChapelle. LaChapelle's early pioneering work with Arne Naess in deep ecology and her deep powder skiing insights were birthed when working with her avalanche legend husband, Ed LaChapelle. A nomad life of sorts, both lived in the snow fields of time. Avalanche research set them apart as much respected avalanche mentors for many. Alan Dennis mentions Ed LaChapelle, with due reverence, in *Snow Nomad: An Avalanche Memoir*.

*Snow Nomad* is a fast paced, quick read of Dennis' early novice journey into the demanding world of more mature avalanche work. He learned hard lessons on the job as he rose the ranks to become an avalanche expert in BC and other parts of the world. The photographs, sketches and text tell an honest and raw tale from the perspective of an insider of the complex world of those who live within the avalanche tribe. As with most families, there exist internal tensions, clashes and betrayals. This is no romanticized view of mountaineering, skiing and avalanche life in Canada. Nor in the various places outside of Canada in which Dennis has lived his avalanche vocation.

Alan's experiences with Outward Bound informed his initial journey into the ethos of mountaineering. I have many fond memories of being with Outward Bound in the mid-1970's. This key in the ignition with Outward Bound took Alan into the larger and fuller world of mountain culture and avalanche safety. He spent time in the Yukon then to the more demanding challenges of Granduc Mine Road and Bear Pass. This moved Alan's avalanche apprenticeship to a higher level. In New Zealand at Milford Road in the early

1980s avalanche conditions were even more perilous and precarious. Alan learned skills, elevated his intuition and heeded local insights which resulted in greater knowledge about the science-art tension of avalanche safety.

The journey back to Canada and Alan's leadership role from Revelstoke with the Canadian Avalanche Association/ Canadian Avalanche Centre from 1991-1998 is worth a read (chapter 19). No punches are pulled here. His time is difficult, the inner dynamics of leadership contested. Alan departs in a trying manner – bureaucrats and consultants offer hair shirts of sorts (chapter 20). Such is often the dilemma when different temperaments and interpretations of avalanche safety collide. A significant number of people in Canada and elsewhere are named in positive and negative ways by Alan as he makes sense of his journey with them in the avalanche clan.

The description of Alan's time with the Scottish Avalanche Information Service (SAIS) from 1999-2004 and 2008-2011 makes for a mesmerizing read (chapter 24). The time spent in Meager Creek, Adanac Moly and Coeur Alaska from 2004-



2007 reveals yet more about the far flung avalanche family. His time in Veladero (chapter 30) on the border of Chile and Argentina (camping at 3800 metres, high point on the road 4800 metres) is a nail biter.

There is much in *Snow Nomad* that is worth sitting with and reflecting on. Few have the sheer breadth and wide range of experiences in avalanche work – of safe skiing, ski touring and high mountain passes avalanche safety as does Alan. The accumulated wisdom of such diverse experiences and lessons learned about avalanches makes this evocative book a definitive primer and must read. This is especially so for those

who ever need to be aware of the ambiguities of avalanche dangers – regardless of the mountain terrain they live in.

The cover of *Snow Nomad* – two skiers on a high mountain ridge gazing down on layered snow dunes – implies that the book is about skiing and avalanche safety---not so! The broad approach taken in *Snow Nomad* covers a variety of places and methods used in different weather conditions to anticipate the deadly nature of avalanches and avoid their tragic consequences.

The style of writing in this charmer of a book is autobiographical. It is honest and raw about people,

organizations and tensions in the leadership of avalanche safety. A sane and sensible breadth permeates each chapter describing mistakes learned from, lessons internalized and insights gained. There is no silver bullet or snake oil here – no conclusive answer on how to absolutely avoid avalanches. This is a beauty and bounty of a book that one and all should own, read and digest. Especially those interested in mountain life and the challenges avalanches present. The rich and varied life of Alan Dennis has upped the level of avalanche work and awareness far beyond that of the pioneering life.



**Rounding the avalanche prone Thar mountain in the Coquihalla  
(Photo by Ron Dart)**

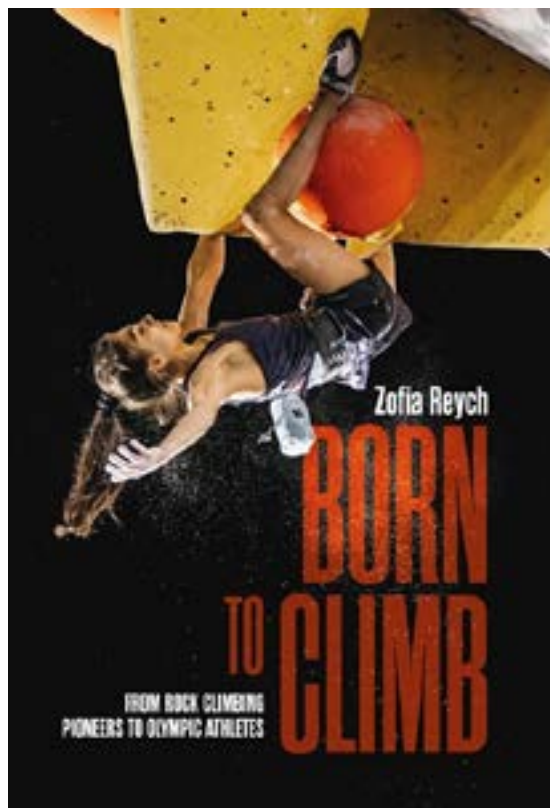
# Born to Climb: From Rock Climbing Pioneers to Olympic Athletes

By Zofia Reyech,

Published by Vertebrate Publishing, 2022

Reviewed by Mike Nash, Caledonia Ramblers

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Zofia Reyech is a Polish climber and Masters-prepared anthropologist, currently based in Fontainebleau, France. Their book, 'Born to Climb' looks at climbing history from fresh perspectives that include heritage, sociology and culture. I learned, for example, that the modern Olympic movement had its roots in the small Shropshire town of Much Wenlock with the egalitarian 1859 Wenlock Olympian Games. The idea was later picked up by a wealthy Frenchman who, after visiting Much Wenlock claimed the idea as his own, and at the 1894 Sorbonne Congress led the formation of the first

modern International Olympic Committee. Reyech weaves this fractured beginning of the modern Olympic Games into the 2020 Olympics (postponed to 2021) when climbing made its first unsettled reappearance since the 1930s.

The author's bio uses pronouns 'they' and 'them' and the adjective 'their,' reflecting Reyech's preference for 'non-binary' identification, which may have stemmed in part from historic gender issues in climbing and organized sports as well as their own gender identification. Here in Canada, 'non-binary' was part of the gender identity rights legislation, Bill C-16, passed in 2017.

I was impressed by the book's general quality and academic style, almost a textbook for sport climbing. A substantial hardback, its end sections include a climbing glossary, acronyms, grade comparison tables, extensive end notes, further reading and an index. The end notes are sufficiently interesting to warrant keeping a second bookmark there, although this does interrupt the reading flow.

'Born to Climb' follows the evolution of climbing, beginning in Europe and the UK. The author lived in Sheffield for a while after completing their Master's degree in London. Sheffield is a city situated on the edge of England's Peak District National Park and is one of the UK's meccas of outdoor pur-

suits.

The book has broader geographic reach, and I found the historic section on Yosemite especially enlightening: specifically, the discussion about the genocide, mistreatment and displacement of Native Americans in the chapter 'On Stolen Land.' Even today, Reyck suggests, climbers rarely move beyond the history of their sport to consider its cultural context. Yosemite's first champion, John Muir, while passionate during his lifetime about Yosemite's natural beauty, and still today universally revered by outdoor, climbing and environmental enthusiasts was, like many other early naturalists according to Reyck, "not interested in the welfare of its original inhabitants."

The book bounces around a fair bit, mixing selective climbing history with the author's personal anecdotes. 'Born to Climb' had its inception during an early Covid lockdown and might have been an accident of the pandemic as much as an intentional work. Part autobiographical and part academic research, it helped fill the unexpected hiatus in Reyck's social climbing activities and their work as founder and organizer of the Fontainebleau Women's Bouldering Festival.

This is far from a detailed history of climbing and mountaineering, there are many more in depth histories available; but it is refreshingly different as it follows the cultural and contextual evolution of rock climbing and bouldering to competitive climbing, especially its discussions about competing factions, ethics, and evolving styles.

I am more of a backcountry and moun-

tain wanderer who generally eschews organized sports, but having agreed to review this book, I found it engaging and different, a worthy addition to climbing literature. As new climbers progress from the gym to the outside world of rock, Reyck hopes to engender a greater realization that they are part of something bigger, with responsibilities to the environment, society, and the future of the sport. The book would be especially interesting for those just starting out in the sports of rock climbing, bouldering and competitive climbing.

*Reyck's MA thesis, 'Climbing Women and Niche Media: Beyond Alternative Femininities' can be downloaded from [https://www.academia.edu/5651891/Climbing\\_Women\\_and\\_Niche\\_Media\\_Beyond\\_Alternative\\_Femininities](https://www.academia.edu/5651891/Climbing_Women_and_Niche_Media_Beyond_Alternative_Femininities). Reyck concedes that the thesis may have become dated by the rapid evolution of social media.*

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# Kangchenjunga: The Himalayan Giant

By Doug Scott CBE

Published by Vertebrate Publishing, July 2021

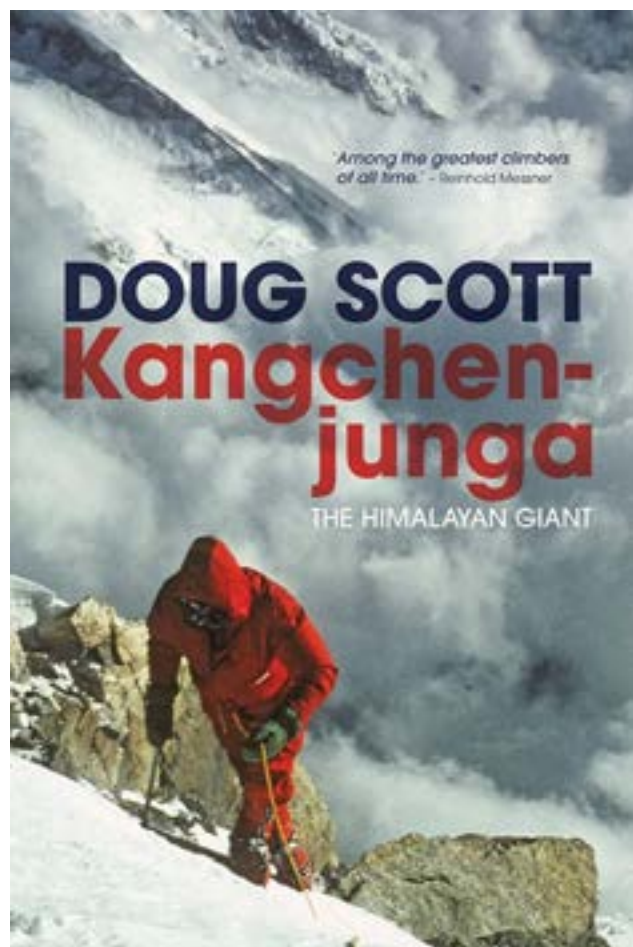
Reviewed by Mike Nash, Caledonia Ramblers

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Kangchenjunga is Doug Scott's last work, completed before he died of cancer in December 2020. It is the second book in a series that he hoped to write in a distinctive style. I reviewed the first, 'The Ogre,' in the Fall/Winter 2018 issue of Cloudburst .

For most readers, Doug Scott needs no introduction. He was an English mountaineer, recognized as one of the World's great Himalayan climbers. He was a recipient of one of mountaineering's highest honours, the Piolet d'Or Lifetime Achievement Award for his personal climbs and style. Described as 'visionary', Scott was no stranger to Canada and to British Columbia and I once had the pleasure of hosting him for two days in Prince George. Two hours before his on-stage presentation at the University of Northern British Columbia, his first words on picking him up at the airport were "Take me to a climbing gym". Climbing was his way of relaxing from the stress of his schedule but – alas! – the gym had just closed for a long weekend.

Scott's creative approach to his last two books reflects his deep appreciation for the places he travelled and climbed and the people there. After experiencing the "spontaneous generosity of people who had so little" he founded the Community Action Nepal charity, to which he devoted much of his energy in his later years. At least half of these final works is a well-researched history of the respective regions, from geological underpinnings through centuries of human history and into the colonial periods with pioneering Western explorers, surveyors, scientists, artists, writers, photographers and



climbers. Only towards the end of each book does Scott indulge in dramatic accounts of his own mountaineering feats. He had hoped to write seven books in the series, the others being Makalu, K2, Nanga Parbat, Everest, and Canada's Baffin Island. While these will not now happen, we are fortunate to have the first two; and perhaps other writers will adopt a similar approach blending natural and human history with their personal stories.

In The Ogre, Scott opened with the history



of the Karakoram Range in Pakistan and Afghanistan before moving on to a gripping account of his ascent and desperate retreat from the mountain with two broken legs. In Kangchenjunga, he begins with the complex history of the Himalayas of northern India, Sikkim, Nepal and Tibet. Again he starts with the geology and natural history of the region around Kanchenjunga. He then moves on to the peoples of Sikkim and eastern Nepal over nearly 3,000 years. We meet the traders and missionaries who appeared from the sixteenth century; and in 'Measuring the Heights,' the early British surveyors and 'pundits' (clandestine surveyors and spies) of the nineteenth century.

From this base, Scott describes the first Western expeditions of the early modern era, beginning with Joseph Hooker in the mid-nineteenth century. He dives into fascinating squabbles among early Himalayan mountaineers over who did what – some of which are still contentious today. Intrigue, for example, swirls around William Graham's claim for his 1883 record-breaking ascent of 7,412m Kabru, south of Kangchenjunga; and culpability is still debated over the deaths that occurred on Aleister Crowley's first attempt to climb Kangchenjunga in 1905. Scott concludes "We see in hindsight that [Crowley] had all the instinct of an incisive great pioneer climber." Scott combines reason and forensic analysis with his personal knowledge of the land to shed light on these actors, who were more often victims of their own arrogance rather than fabricators of their accomplishments.

Many early to mid-twentieth century climbers and expeditions are described in the pages that follow, with three chapters devoted to the period between the world wars, especially the rapid growth of German Himalayan ambitions and the uneasy relationship with German nationalism.

It is not surprising that Kangchenjunga attracted so much attention. It is highly visible from the Indian hill city of Darjeeling, and is the world's third highest mountain after Everest and K2. For a long time it was thought to be the highest. Access to the mountain was a continuing problem in the first half of the 20th Century as complex geopolitics swirled around Britain, India, Sikkim, Nepal, Tibet and China. Nepal to the west of the mountain, and Sikkim to the east variously refused entry to explorers and climbers. After World War 2 however, concern in Nepal and Sikkim over their borders with Tibet and the growing influence of China resulted in a relaxation of travel restrictions for Western countries. Nepal saw itself as like Switzerland, a small mountain state sandwiched between larger entities but with the prospect of increased wealth from its natural amenities through tourism and mountaineering.

Doug Scott's accomplished the third successful climb of the mountain with a small team via a new northwesterly route on the Nepalese side. It was the first ascent of Kangchenjunga (and of almost any 8,000-metre mountain) without supplementary oxygen. Scott, with famed British climbers Joe Tasker and Pete Boardman, reached the top in May 1979, four years after Scott and Dougal Haston became the first British climbers to reach the summit of Everest via a pioneering route on its southwest face.

In my review of *The Ogre*, I described it as a fast read and "...probably the best-illustrated expedition account that I have read." Kangchenjunga is arranged more traditionally, with lengthier text befitting the complex histories of the region, and colour plates grouped into fixed sections instead of placed in-line with the text. It is an historical work, with only the last chapter dedicated to Scott's own ascent of Kangchenjunga. The drama of that ascent doesn't disappoint however, with Scott finding himself at his closest ever to death on a

mountain. He desperately retreats from his first summit attempt, revelling in the intensity of the moment and the drive to go for it. In summary, Kangchenjunga is a fitting legacy for a remarkable man, and I recommend it for anyone interested in Himalayan climbing history.

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## Blogs and Pods

Join these BC adventure bloggers as they share stories and images from their outdoor excursions!

<https://www.wildaboutbc.com>

<https://www.shuswapadventuregirl.ca/blog>

<https://visitprincerupert.com/outdoor-adventure>

<https://thebanffblog.com>

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## COVER PHOTO



***“Taken along the Semaphore Lakes trail in the Pemberton Valley. Locomotive Mountain is front and center.”***

***Photo by Chad Warren,  
ACC Vancouver***

# Cloudburst Cover Photo Contest

We're looking for Spring/Summer  
action shots for our next cover of  
Cloudburst!

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[cloudburst@mountainclubs.org](mailto:cloudburst@mountainclubs.org)  
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