

# CLOUDBURST

Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

September, 1997

Quarterly Newsletter

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## WHO ARE WE!

Alberni Valley Outdoor Club  
Alpine Club of Canada - Vancouver Section  
Alpine Club of Canada - Vancouver Island Section  
B.C. Mountaineering Club  
Caledonia Ramblers  
Chilliwack Outdoor Club  
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Valley Outdoor Association  
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## CLOUDBURST

**Articles:** We welcome, and space permitting, will print articles which inform our readers about mountain conservation/recreation issues or activities in B.C.

Word limit: 500.

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

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### Membership

The Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia (FMCBC) is the official sport-governing body for mountaineering in BC, representing the interests of hiking, climbing and outdoor clubs in the province. The FMCBC is a non-profit organization addressing mountain conservation and access issues, promoting safety and education through courses of instruction, building and maintaining hiking trails throughout BC.

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

**Club membership:** Please contact the office to receive a free list of clubs that belong to the FMCBC.

**Individual Membership:** Call the office at 737-3053 (Vancouver) with your VISA or MASTERCARD number or send \$25 with your name and address to: FMCBC #336 - 1367 W. Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V6H 4A9.

### Board of Directors:

**President:** Pat Harrison, VOA member  
**Vice-President:** Chris Mills, Individual member  
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**Secretary:** Jim Craig, BCMC member  
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#### Recreation and Conservation:

Roger Freeman and  
Jay MacArthur

**Trails:** John Otava and  
Bill Meyer

#### Safety and Education:

Chris Mills

Volume 7 Number 3

### FMCBC Meetings

For all meeting locations please contact FMCBC office at 737-3053.

#### Recreation and Conservation Committee:

Contact office for information

#### Safety and Education Committee:

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#### Trails Committee:

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#### Board of Directors:

October 22

#### Lower Mainland Delegates:

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#### Island Delegates:

Contact office for information

## PRESIDENTS REPORT

by Pat Harrison

I hope all FMCBCers have had a reasonable amount of time enjoying the outdoors this summer.

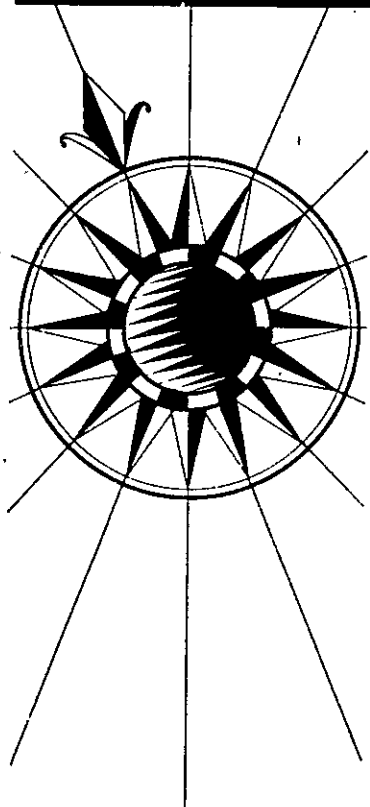
Welcome to our new board of directors: Shane Kocielniak of the Klister Club and Wayne Gray of the Richmond Outdoor Club. Shane has agreed to become the Chairperson for the Lower Mainland Delegates' Committee. Welcome back for another year: Markus Kellerhals (Lillooet LMRP representative), Marilyn Noort (returning this fall), Lesley Bohm (ORC representative), Jim Craig (Secretary), Chris Mills (Vice President), Andrea Agnoloni (Treasurer), and Darlene Anderson.

Backcountry user conflicts and access to traditional hiking areas appeared to be two main concerns of our club members at the A.G.M. and at our July and August board of directors meetings. These are tough issues to resolve. The backcountry user conflicts will certainly increase as snowmobilers and heliskiers penetrate deeper and deeper into wilderness areas traditionally used by

non-mechanized backcountry users. The mechanized users have the economic backing of their industries and the power of television ads doesn't help. We think there should be an active exchange of ideas on conflict resolution between these two groups as a first step. Secondly, we believe there must be responsible usage of these powerful machines. How one accomplishes this is currently being investigated by the Federation.

We continue to be concerned about the number of gates being put up without notice on backcountry roads without consultation. We urge licensees to contact the Federation so we can warn our members about changes in access. The other side of the issue is the deactivation of roads without sufficient warning. Again, it is essential that government and licensees let us know in sufficient time about deactivation of roads. This is particularly critical in the case of a rescue of backcountry users. A rescue crew should not be caught off guard by either a new gate or a newly deactivated road.

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## EDUCATION AND SAFETY

### TREKKING POLES AND HEADLAMPS

By Chris Mills, Chair Education and Safety Committee, Vice-President

This issue's safety article comments on two items of equipment that contribute significantly to mountaineering safety in many situations. Neither is carried or used as extensively as they might be, and both are often viewed as rather "specialized" equipment.

Trekking, or mountaineering, poles look very much like ski poles (from which, of course, they were developed), except that they are telescoping within three sections for compactness when not being used, and usually have less pronounced baskets. Their uses are many, as any mountaineer will quickly discover, but their contribution to safety stems mainly from their contribution to balance and stability over rough alpine ground (and low-angled snow-covered ground), and their reduction of weight and stress on knees during steep descents (particularly with a moderate or larger pack). This reduction of knee wear and tear is not insignificant. In an article in *Mountain* 139 (1991) it is reported that a European study found that the placement of a trekking pole takes between 5 and 8 kg of weight off the lower part of the body, and that this was equivalent to a total of 13 tonnes during a one hour walk on flat ground and 34 tonnes when descending a mountain. Similarly, *High Mountain Sports* 176 (July 1997) reports that 20% of weight can be transferred to the upper body by the two-pole user. Shelley and I started using trekking poles in 1992 and noticed immediately the beneficial effect when descending steep Coast Mountains trails. These poles have a remarkable number of other uses for the creative mountaineer, such as supporting a tarp, and "fishing" for water (with an attached water bottle) from an otherwise dangerously inaccessible creek. Expensive? yes, but then Christmas is coming. *High Mountain Sports* 175 (June 1997) has an excellent review of available trekking poles.

Alpine mountaineers will need no reminder of the desirability, and even necessity, of a headlamp (or head torch) over a hand-held flashlight. While a flashlight may be satisfactory for foraging for a lost item in a tent, it is difficult to undertake any form of night travel that may require the use of hands without a headlamp. A headlight should be considered a necessity for those planning overnight backcountry travel during the dark days of winter, and may be a lifesaver for those in risk of benightment on day trips. A headlamp is also much easier to use when reading a book or writing a diary. Depending upon the seriousness of your mountain

activities, your battery-type, when using a headlamp (or flashlight), is an important consideration. Lithium batteries have far superior cold-weather performance to alkalines, and alkalines outperform rechargeables (Ni-Cds). Some headlamps have separate battery packs that can be worn inside clothing, and this, because it keeps the battery warm, will also give better cold weather performance. Hard-core ice climbers may consider both a lithium battery and a separate battery pack a sensible precaution. There are a large variety of headlamps available, and not all will accept an external battery pack or lithium batteries, so please choose with care, and according to your intended use. Carrying both a spare bulb and battery may keep you out of embarrassing difficulty. And yes, lithium batteries are quite expensive (\$20 or more for a 'D' cell).

Trekking poles and headlamps may be considered expensive luxuries by some, but their contribution to safety is proven in many mountaineering situations. As usual, please enjoy your activities safely.

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## BEARS, BLISTERS AND RIVERS, OH MY....

By Nicola Lambrechts

The group met on a cold, rainy pseudo -summer evening for our backpacking pre-trip. Everyone looked a bit nervous, including the instructor, as we waited for the last person to arrive. For the next three hours our small group sat like eager students on the first day of school: nervous, excited and eager to absorb the information given to us. We organized our food, equipment, safety and logistical needs, and left at the end of the evening with shopping lists, phone numbers and a sense of anticipation for the weekend to come.

We arrived at Golden Ears ready to go, or so we thought. Some of us had piles of clothes, tents, stoves and food and no space to put it. Others, fully packed, were asking themselves if 120 lbs. was too much to carry? Once the packs were ready to go, our group of one guide and 6 strangers began our trek into the wilderness. Our parking lot instruction would be the first of the many practical lessons we would learn over the course of the following two days...

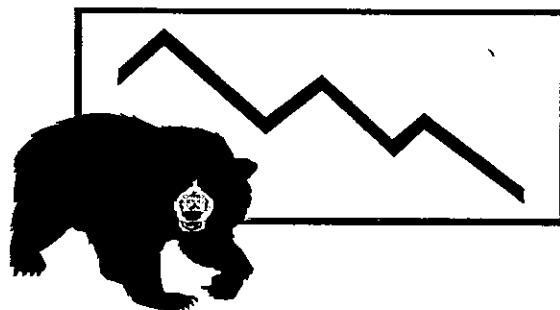
Perhaps the most interesting lesson was our introduction to the world of bears. Initially, the word evoked fear and apprehension in everyone's face. However, by the end of our trip I felt we would at least be able to *react* to a confrontation with a bear, as opposed to *freezing*, panic stricken. Following our lesson to warn the bears about our presence in the area, the direction to make noise quickly evolved into bellows of Daaaaay Ooooh through the forest. We kept them away, but was it because we were driving them nuts?

On Day 2 we took turns leading the group as our skills developed. Passing the bear spray to each new leader become an important symbol of responsibility and leadership. Needless to say, although I almost tripped as I practiced aiming at my imaginary attackers, without looking at them directly, I quickly regained my composure and successfully navigated the group along the trail.

Our instructor/guru was a wealth of information. This became increasingly evident by individuals jockeying for positions along our procession to be close enough to hear his words of advice and tales of caution. We learnt that packing light is a delicate balance between bringing enough to stay warm and satisfied, but not so much that you're always close to doing an upside-down turtle imitation. We learnt that navigation is more than holding out the string and staring intently at a nearby peak - you actually have to turn the dial. We learnt that the crossing a river can be extremely dangerous, but teamwork and cooperation make it a lot easier. That the river may look like a raging rapid, but just upstream it

probably a lot calmer. That the cold water numbs your toes, but eases the throbbing of on-coming blisters. In other words, as we said good-bye to six new friends, some with sore feet and others a bit hungry, we all knew we had the basic skills to enjoy our future outdoor adventures.

Next summer? Mountaineering...



*Note from Editor: Nicola Lambrechts attended her first Canada West Mountain School course this past summer. We thank her for taking the time to relay her experience to the Cloudburst readers. Good luck with your backpacking and mountaineering Nicola!*

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## TEAMWORK AND SAFETY IN THE BACKCOUNTRY

By Chris Ludwig, Vice-President BCMC

There is one simple trend that will influence mountaineering, rock climbing, and hiking in the approaching century more than any other...people, people, and more people. Why these people stream from the cities to punish themselves in the inhospitable backcountry of British Columbia I am not entirely sure. Perhaps it is the television commercials featuring existence. Socially, climbing and trekking fits conveniently in the modern business work ethic: reach your goals at any cost, be better than the rest, and stand alone on the summit. The maddening and self-centered cry of business philosophy and material possession resounds in all those who have become dysfunctional in our tragically disconnected society. Those who don't know the outdoors often bring this burden into the backcountry. In the media climbers are portrayed as sporty, young, ideal, and immortal. If you are not climbing at least 5.12c and don't drive and expensive four-wheel-drive to the crag, you must be worthless wisened old hiker. Unfortunately, human companionship and teamwork have been replaced with the shallows of spectacle and rampant individualism. After all, rarely does one see any climber with a rope hanging uselessly into the void below. We call these people the "me me's" of the world. I see them in the mountains all the time, but I wonder if they notice anyone but themselves. Perhaps it is these attitudes that are causing more people to get hurt or killed in the backcountry. Perhaps these are the reasons many are perpetually dissatisfied.

The mountains don't care how much money you have, nor do they care how strong or good you are. Expensive equipment and climbing textbooks are of course equally as useless. For these reasons, some people should never become mountaineers. The common way these days to learn about climbing/hiking is to find a friend or partner - learn as you go. Unfortunately, beginning climbers (and often times 'expert' climbers) do not know all of what can kill or injure them. Over the years, the signs have become more obvious to me: a cornice here, a glacier here, here a rock, there a serac, everywhere a possible attack. Yet it stuns me every season seeing mountaineers on glaciers unroped, hikers with only a shopping bag and climbers without helmets. These are but a drop in the bucket of the growing insanity that is out there every day. Contrary to popular belief, it is not macho to be without a rope or helmet, nor is it cool to climb what you are not prepared or trained for. That is called stupid. There is no other word for it. I have seen time and time again tragedy or the unexpected. I would suggest finding

another way to express your freedom, independence, self-worth, and so on and so forth...

Almost daily I hear the words "I am going with someone who is experienced". These dangerous words almost always give rise to the horrible spectra of false security. My usual response is to ask "How do you know they are experienced?". Perhaps one should be aware that 'experts' die as easily as do the brainless wonders. After all, a falling rock does not know the difference between the two. Furthermore, experts often place their faith in security systems and techniques that amount to little more than fantasy and thoughtless procedure.

I have seen these safety systems crumble wholly when confronted with the unpredictable power of nature. A few examples are the climbers who have little or no first-aid skills, roped travel without knowledge of crevasse rescue, and winter travel without knowledge of avalanches. In practice I do not know any experts, nor do I even trust myself entirely. Any climber who claims total control is either ignorant, or destined for mishap. Now ask yourself again whether or not you want to rely on someone else for your safety?

Some answers are found by looking into the past for insight. Few would dispute that our predecessors were truly remarkable. They climbed and explored mountains that are difficult even by today's standards with primitive equipment and techniques. There are countless routes in guidebooks that give the climber the impression that safe technical routes have been established all throughout the coast range. Pictures of perfect equipment and perfect people climbing perfect routes on the pages of perfect store catalogues are a grotesque deception. Nothing could be further from reality. Do you not think that these pioneering/expert climbers experienced fear, injury, and death? Are you sure that the route you climb today is in the same conditions and shape as when it was first climbed? How many of these routes were climbed in unsafe conditions risking accident or death? I am not saying that one should never venture beyond Stanley Park, however, each climber must choose their own level of risk and manage it to the best of his/her ability. Unfortunately, many simply never give these issues a passing thought. I am convinced that such climbers/hikers are a danger to themselves and their partners. Quite frankly, I am sick of having friends needlessly killed and injured in the mountains. It is an

*Continued on page 15*

## RECREATION AND CONSERVATION UPDATE

### THE NOOTKA ISLAND PROJECT

By Markus Kellerhals, Director

The Federation has recently received funding from the Mountain Equipment Co-op's Environment Fund to produce an educational brochure, providing information on and promoting the Nootka Trail. The Nootka Trail is a wilderness hiking route on the West Coast of Vancouver Island. It is currently threatened by private road building and by logging operations near the coast.

For those of you that haven't heard of this area: Nootka Island is situated along the west side of Vancouver Island, due west of Campbell River. The Nootka Trail runs down the west side of the island from Louie Bay at the north end to Friendly Cove at the south end. Although logging has taken place on much of Nootka Island, there is still a fringe of wilderness on the island's west side, protected till now by remoteness and low timber values. The trail traverses this coastal wilderness, across sandy beaches, intertidal rock shelves and several creek mouths. In places the trail cuts inland, through old growth forests of cedar and hemlock. Because the trail is still so rugged and undeveloped it takes 4 to 6 days to hike, even though the distance covered is only just over 30 km.

The coastline here is as spectacular and unspoiled as the West Coast Trail. Highlights of the hike include sea cliffs and caves at Maquinna Point, Calvin Falls - a waterfall that spills six metres onto a sandy beach, rich intertidal life, old growth forests, and abundant wildlife such as grey whales, sea otters and black bear. An additional highlight is the rich native

heritage of the area. At Bajo Point there is a long abandoned native village. Observant hikers will see a number of culturally modified trees along the trail. Friendly Cove, once a thriving village, is still inhabited by a few native families.

So far, few people have hiked the Nootka Trail, but as word gets out the number of parties is increasing. Coastal hiking is incredibly popular in B.C., as demonstrated by the hordes of backpackers that visit Cape Scott and the West Coast Trail. However, for a province so richly endowed with coastline, B.C. actually has very few coastal hiking routes. It makes sense to protect and manage an existing route such as the Nootka Trail. Protecting Cape Scott and the West Coast Trail has benefited local economies and provided destinations for thousands of hikers. Protecting the Nootka Trail should be no different.

Incredibly, this area was bypassed for protection by the Vancouver Island CORE process. Instead it was designated a Special Management Zone (SMZ) in recognition of its recreational value. The SMZ designation offers only limited protection to the trail. It will take intense lobbying to properly protect this area.

Markus Kellerhals is coordinating the Nootka Project. If you have information on the area, or are interested in the area, call him at 734-0010.

### LILLOOET UPDATE

By Markus Kellerhals, Director

The FMCBC continues to participate in the Land and Resource Management Planning (LRMP) process for the Lillooet Forest District. The LRMP table, made up of representatives from the local communities, from government ministries, and from provincial organizations such as the FMCBC, is supposed to decide land-use issues in the Lillooet District.

The Lillooet Forest District encompasses the Southern Chilcotins, the Cayoosh, Bendor and Shulaps Ranges, and other areas near and dear to mountaineer's hearts. In the current political climate it is difficult to be optimistic about

protecting a significant fraction of these areas. However, failing to participate in the LRMP would guarantee that our interests would be ignored.

As well as participating in the LRMP, the Federation is co-operating with several other groups to start public education about this area. In the next issue I'll provide some specifics about areas of interest in the Lillooet district.

For information about the LRMP contact Markus Kellerhals (734-0010) or Jay Macarthur (987-1232)

## NORTHERN PERSPECTIVE

### KAKWA ACCESS

By Mike Nash, Caledonia Ramblers

The question of access is one of the key issues facing backcountry users in BC. On the one hand, we in the FMCBC have fought to maintain free public access to the mountain backcountry and its established trails. And on the other side, we worry about increased opportunities for motorized access to the alpine environment, with the attendant disturbance and long lasting impacts. Yet, we all use vehicles to access the trailheads, and often follow the industrial roads to explore new areas. So, where is that fine line between appropriate and inappropriate access? And whose vision of appropriate is right?

This all came to a head in Prince George recently when the Caledonia Ramblers became embroiled in a debate over the closure of a mining road into the proposed Kakwa protected area. The restriction was instigated by BC Parks at the urging of the Prince George Land and Resource Management Planning (LRMP) team. This interim measure was taken to protect the park from uncontrolled ATV use, and was strongly endorsed by club members at the LRMP table. It would allow the completion of a park management plan and park resources to be put in place before potentially reopening the road to public vehicle use. The closure would not affect winter snowmobile use, which is already being managed by BC Parks.

Other club members were more concerned about what they saw as an overriding principle of loss of public access rights. This concern extended to the legality of the gate that was installed and the perceived discrimination against those who could not afford aircraft access and weren't prepared to walk 20 km up a muddy mining road. This was countered by the view that the need to protect the environment was paramount, with one

individual declaring firmly that there were many times he couldn't afford to fly into the remote backcountry but that it never stopped him from walking in!

*The issue was hotly debated at the club's Spring general meeting in the presence of the BC Parks Manager who had gated the road. A record number of people attended the meeting, and after an intense discussion, a large majority of those present supported the closure.*

In the mean time, letters were written to and from cabinet ministers, and other groups such as the BC Wildlife Federation were enjoined in the fight. The result was that newspaper advertisements are being placed locally in August and September asking for public input on the issue. An independent decision will be made by the District Forests Manager in October.

It was disappointing to see the club split on this issue and so much energy poured into a debate that might better have been spent in other areas. And it was disappointing to see members opposing those who had spent 4 years representing them in the development of the protected area strategy.

Yet, there was a measure of satisfaction in seeing the passion that was generated by the prospect of losing backcountry access. It was good to see the juices flowing, and new people getting involved. I do not agree with their objective of having the gate removed in this case, but I applaud them for following their convictions. It augurs well for a new generation of backcountry watchdogs!

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### SKI DEPARTMENT, COAST MOUNTAIN SPORTS

Coast Mountain Sports is looking for backcountry enthusiasts to work in our ski shops in West Vancouver and in Kitsilano. We are looking for people with telemark, alpine touring, backcountry skiing, and/or backcountry snowboarding experience.

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# CANADA WEST MOUNTAIN SCHOOL

By Brian Jones, Manager of Operations

Ah, yes... summer seems to be over. Both the calendar and the weather are convincing enough. Blueberries are starting to wither in the alpine, and between breaks in the clouds fresh snow can be seen on local mountains. While many will mourn the end of the long days and warm weather, the oncoming winter has the rest of us thinking of snow. Of wandering through a silent forest of trees shrouded in mantles of white, knowing that there is no possible way to capture or explain the feeling. Visions of surreal tracks snaking along the ridge lines, tempting us to explore "just one more bowl...". Bottomless snow on a north facing slope, with the crystal clear blue sky highlighting the crisp horizon of endless mountains. The color of the sky that you never remember seeing in the summer. Face shots of cold, breathtaking powder. Working up a sweat while breaking trail in - 20 temperatures, just to be the first to carve down the line you've been dreaming about since last year. Summer may have long days and warm weather, but winter....

But winter in the mountains, while it holds an irresistible attraction to many of us, has a power and force that share equal billing with all of the attractions. For every day of cold, feather light powder under clear skies, there is a day (or two, or three...) of quad pulling, knee straining, expletive prompting mashed-potatoes-passing-for-snow blending with a gray/black sky of wind driven sleet. Add to this, of course, the prospect that on the powder days *and* on the slush-fest days, the snow just may not behave as you would have it in your dreams. The darker side of winter sports in the mountains is, of course, the prospect of avalanches.

Every year more and more effort is spent educating backcountry users about the perils of unstable snow slopes. And every year statistics, reports, articles, gear purchases and personal accounts indicate that this education is working. More people than ever before are aware of avalanche dangers. More skiers, snowmobilers and snowboarders wear transceivers and know how to use them. More articles are written in magazines and newspapers warning of the hazards, and how to avoid them. Yet, the unavoidable and tragic fact is more people are still being caught and killed in avalanches every year. Tragic, because of the pain and sorrow that is caused with the loss of each victim of an avalanche, but tragic also in that many avalanche accidents can be avoided.

This season, when you're making the decision to ski a slope, or cross an avalanche path, when you decide to

commit to the mountain - stop and ask yourself a simple question:

"What process have I gone through that makes me believe this slope is safe?" Have you dug a pit? If so, do you have the skills to assess what you saw in that pit? Have you analyzed the past weather influences on the snow pack in that *specific* area? Have you observed any warning signals indicating an instability? If so, are you paying attention to them? In short, have you collected enough data, and have you objectively analyzed it to the point that you can ensure the slope you are entering onto is safe?

No one will argue that understanding snow stability is anything more than a blend of science and calculated judgment based on experience. If asking these questions leaves you feeling unsure of the safety of that slope, stay away from it. Even if someone else skis the same slope without incident, it may only mean that they were lucky, and luck can turn both ways. Only through our personal decisions on the slopes can we make our mountains safer. Let us all strive to make this year, and every one after this, a year when no one gets killed in an avalanche.

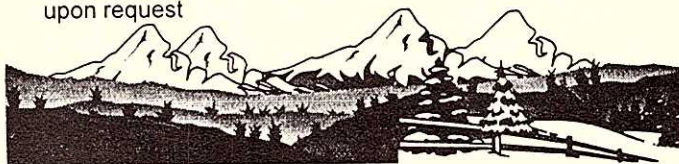
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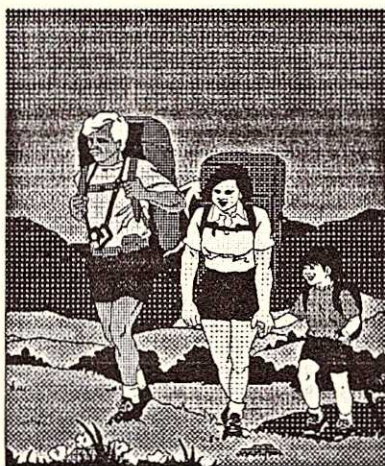


## CLUB NEWS AND REVIEWS

### BC MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

By Kit Griffin, BCMC Climbing Chair

Greetings from the BC Mountaineering Club! I must say we are having a busy 1997. We've increased membership, inquiries, refreshers and courses for spicing climbers and mountaineers. The most remarkable aspect of the club structure is that it's strictly volunteer - consequently maintaining negligible costs to attendees. The Summer Mountaineering Course was a large undertaking of both time and effort. Well done everyone. A special thanks to Pat Crean for running the Spring Ski Camp on the South Edmunds Glacier - the word from Pat is that only two days in two weeks were lost due to bad weather. Other than that, everyone skied in crisp conditions under blue skies. As for the regular trip list of activities: ninety trips were assembled this summer and fall, from family hikes such as Goldie Lake to serious undertakings such as a Mt. Rainier Traverse. We really do live in a remarkable area! Finally I'd like to thank Robin Tivy at [www.bivouac.com](http://www.bivouac.com) for his remarkable effort in "posting" trip information on his web site. If you haven't checked out this new way of finding information, you are missing out on a remarkable medium. Well, that is it for now, see you at the bluffs!



### KLISTER OUTDOOR KLUB

The major trip of summer was a week in Spruce Lake. After a summer break of two months, Klister Outdoor Klub is back to the usual monthly schedule of meetings, every second Thursday of the month in Shadbolt Centre for Arts in Burnaby.

### RICHMOND OUTDOOR CLUB

The Richmond Outdoor Club's summer trip was backpacking in Spruce Lake.

### NORTH SHORE HIKERS

The North Shore Hikers will be holding a workshop for leaders in late fall/early winter. The club has been kept

### CHILLIWACK OUTDOOR CLUB

The Chilliwack Outdoor Club started over 20 years ago and we have about 125 members. We have some dedicated long time members that are more than willing to share their knowledge and teach people about hiking, cycling, canoeing, ocean kayaking, glacier travel, mountaineering and all types of skiing. We also have some new and enthusiastic members that are eager to get out and see what's off the beaten track. This is what makes the club a great group to be associated with.

We are fortunate to own equipment that is available to members so they may try a different activity to see if they like it before they purchase their own equipment. We meet the last Monday of each month at the Slesse School on Tyson road at 7:30 pm - everyone is welcome.

busy doing trail clearing in the Squaw, Brunswick and Beth Lake areas.

### VARSITY OUTDOOR CLUB

The Varsity Outdoor Club will be hosting a Glacier school in Cerise Creek, this will be coming up in a few weeks. The VOA will also be setting up several trips for the near future.

### ALPINE CLUB OF CANADA - VANCOUVER SECTION

The ACC Vancouver Section will be meeting every fourth Tuesday of the month (except December) at Van Dusen Gardens, everyone is welcome. The ACC will be hosting Galen Rowell at the Ridge on Monday October 20<sup>th</sup> at 8:00pm, tickets are \$10.00.

### NORTH VANCOUVER RECREATION COMMISSION OUTDOOR CLUB

The NVRCC had various activities over the summer, shorter backpack trips, a cycle trip along Kettle Valley Railway (including Myra Canyon trestles).



## PROFILE: JOHN CLARKE MOUNTAINEER, EXPLORER AND WILDERNESS EDUCATOR

*"I've never seen anyone set everything else aside to the degree I have, I just completely wipe out anything that comes towards me that looks like it might compromise my (skiing and climbing) season. It gets blown out of the water before it gets within a mile of me"* said John Clarke, British Columbia's premier mountaineer and explorer of the Coast Ranges, in an interview for the Georgia Straight, spring of '94. So what on earth, you might well ask, has induced John to give up three 'seasons' in a row? Something of astronomical proportions must have happened. Indeed it has!

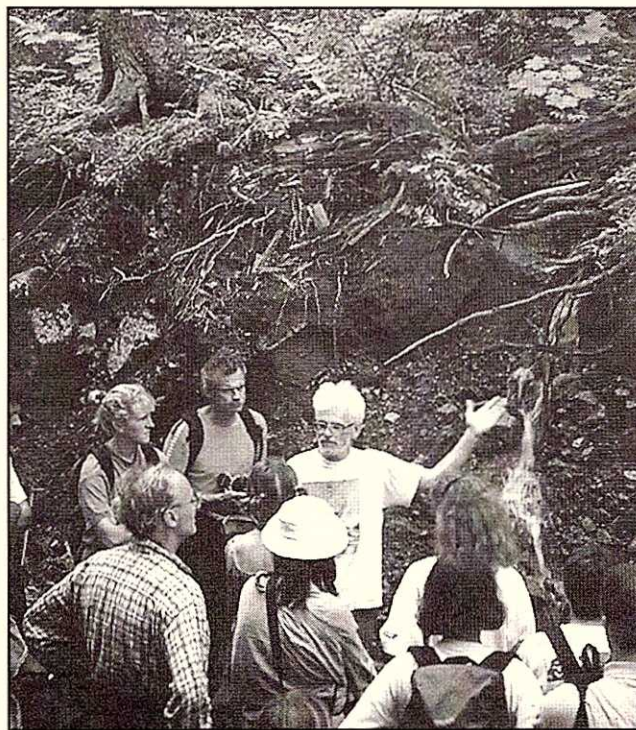
During his more than 30 years of exploration John observed the rapid inroads of the logging industry - as one pristine valley after another was converted into ubiquitous 2x4's! For many years he had taken these green, lush valley bottoms for granted, and as they disappeared imagined that this continued exploitation would stop. Eventually, realizing that it never would, he felt compelled to do something about it. Undoubtedly the catalyst for John was the death of conservationist and mountaineering friend, Randy Stoltmann. Randy was killed in an avalanche in the spring of '94, while on a 3-week ski trip with John in the remote mid-coast of BC. That summer John put away his ice axe, hung up his boots and crampons; he hit the urban trail, armed with brief case and slide projector, informing people about these vanishing wilderness areas through slide shows and wilderness tours. This marked the conception of his unique wilderness education program. As he describes it: *"There're a lot of skills out there in the conservation movement but the hole that needed to be filled was somebody who had been to all these places, was familiar with them, familiar with the politics, and someone who had photographs of it. It was so easy just to slide into it that I'm thinking now I should have done it years ago."*

Three years later, with his incredible drive and undiminished enthusiasm, John, and the program, are still going strong.

A unique aspect of the Wilderness Education Program is that it focuses on the general public, particularly the young. The reason for this, John will tell you, is that most of the debate over the conservation or "use" of the few remaining wilderness areas in the Coast Ranges has been confined to industry, government and conservation lobby groups. Although the general public have expressed the opinion that preservation of wilderness and undisturbed wildlife habitat is a priority they are often

left out of the increasingly complex and technical discussions.

John's initial slide presentations and wilderness tours soon expanded to include a program for the schools, colleges and universities of the Lower Mainland. The Program was designed to give students and teachers, as well as the general public, a deeper understanding of the importance of wilderness. The Wilderness Education Program consists of 4 interrelated parts: The first 3 parts take place from Sept-June, and the 4th from April to October.



1. Classroom-based lectures and slide presentations for elementary, secondary and post-secondary students. The presentation is illustrated liberally with slides of places John has explored over the last 30 years. John's presentation is fundamentally a celebration of wilderness. He demonstrates the incredible beauty and magic engendered by pristine landscapes; landscapes that still have their original community of animals, plants insects, birds and fish. He shows that these landscapes are the product of a series of natural events that have been unfolding for hundreds of thousands of years.

*Continued on page 12*



2. Follow-up field trips to a wilderness area. This experiential aspect of the program adds an important dimension, giving substance and reality to what students have learned and observed in the class room. The combination of classroom lectures and follow-up field trips gives students an opportunity to learn more about their wilderness heritage and to experience it first hand.

3. Workshops for teachers: These workshops are suitable for teachers' Professional Development Days. They provide an opportunity for teachers to learn about the Wilderness Education Program, and how it may be easily integrated into existing school curricula.

4. Guided hiking and camping trips to a wilderness area for city folks and their families. During the summer and fall of the last 3 years John, and a small group of volunteers, have been providing (free) guided hiking and camping trips into the Stoltmann Wilderness every weekend from April to the end of October. This is mainly for people from Vancouver who would otherwise never know about this area or go there. People gather early every Saturday morning at a pre-arranged meeting place in Vancouver, arrange car pooling on the spot, and then, guided by John, make their way up to a beautiful sandbar on Sims Creek in the Stoltmann Wilderness.

This year, through the initiative of photographer Nancy Bleck and collaboration of the Squamish First Nations (who include the Stoltmann Wilderness within their traditional territory) the weekend program has expanded into the *Witness* Program. Being called to "witness" in the Coast Salish tradition is a sacred honor. Participants now leave from the Roundhouse Community Centre, downtown Vancouver at 8:00 am Saturday mornings. In addition to the camping and hiking opportunities they can participate in the witness ceremony and learn to be "the eyes and ears of the land". Each weekend there is a different workshop, such as geology, natural history, photography, mountaineering or native healing. A public art exhibit will be held in the fall at the Roundhouse Community Centre in downtown Vancouver to exhibit the art created over the summer by participants in the *Witness* Program, in addition to the other activities such as the carving of a native dugout canoe.

For more information and/or to book a class, workshop or field trip call 732 0509. See also the internet site: [www.bivouac.com/jcwild](http://www.bivouac.com/jcwild). For the *Witness* Program call the Roundhouse Community Centre at 713-1800.

## Highlights of The Wilderness Education Program

**July-Oct '95:** Camping and hiking trips for public in Stoltmann Wilderness. About 170 people participated

**Sept 95-April 96:** Over 40 slide presentations given, advocating the completion of the parks process (RPAC) in BC and the conservation of the Stoltmann Wilderness. A total of 3053 people attended these presentations.


**April-Oct 96:** Over 500 people attended the hiking and camping weekends in the Stoltmann Wilderness.

**July 1996:** Reconnaissance of the route from Princess Louisa Inlet to Sims Creek. This route is only 7 miles, as the crow flies, but has all the components of a great traverse: spectacular scenery, low elevation antique forests, peaks, lakes and tarns, and traverse of a small glacier. A great route for an introduction to all aspects of mountaineering. For the purists can be done as a "boat-hike-and-bike trip".

**Sept 96-June 97:** More than 8000 students and 400 teachers participated in the Wilderness Education Program.

**July 1997- :** The camping and hiking weekend trips have been incorporated into a new initiative called the *Witness* program. Over 90 people attended the first weekend.

**Sept 1997:** Eleven parties completed the "Stoltmann Wilderness Trail" from Princess Louisa to Sims Creek. The first group, lead by John Clarke in June, consisted of six school children (aged 11-14) and six adults (age indeterminate). A trail has been constructed from Sims Creek to Bug Lake at 4000 ft, and the route is 'flagged' to the ridge.

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# PICTURES SAY A THOUSAND WORDS...

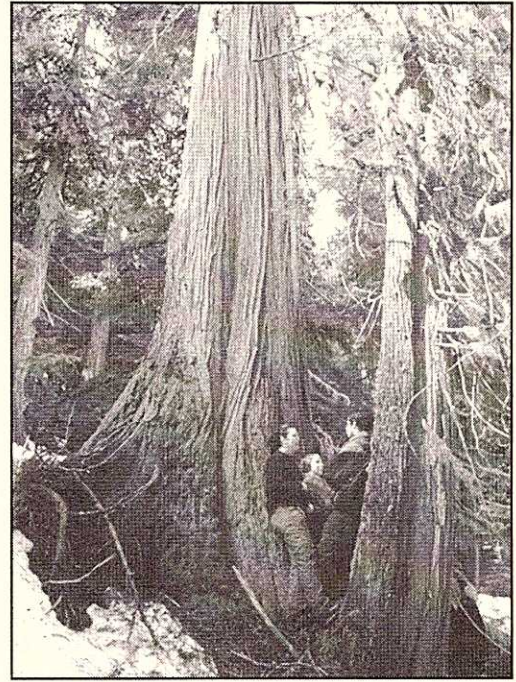
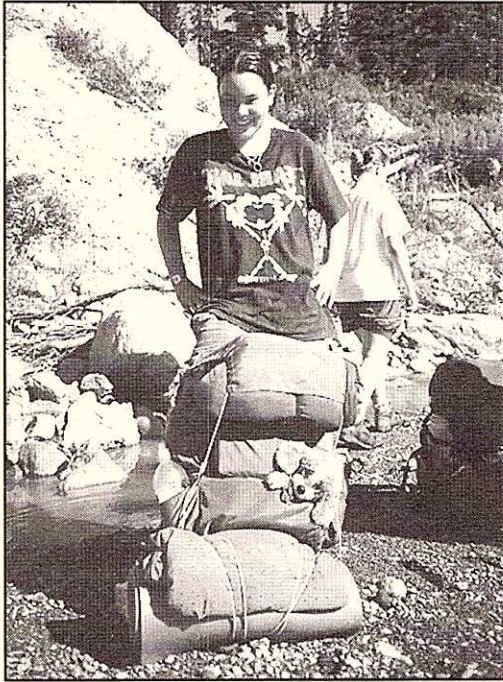


Photo credit: Lisa Baile



## FMCBC's COMMITTEES

So...interested in joining a committee? Not to sure what one? Let us help you, here is a list of the FMCBC new and always present committees for you to choose from:

**Climbers Committee:** This committe was newly formed this summer and deals with access issues concerning climbers.

### National Hiking Trail Association

**Committee:** (not to be confused with Trans Canada Trail) Newly formed this summer to focus on completion of BC section of trail.

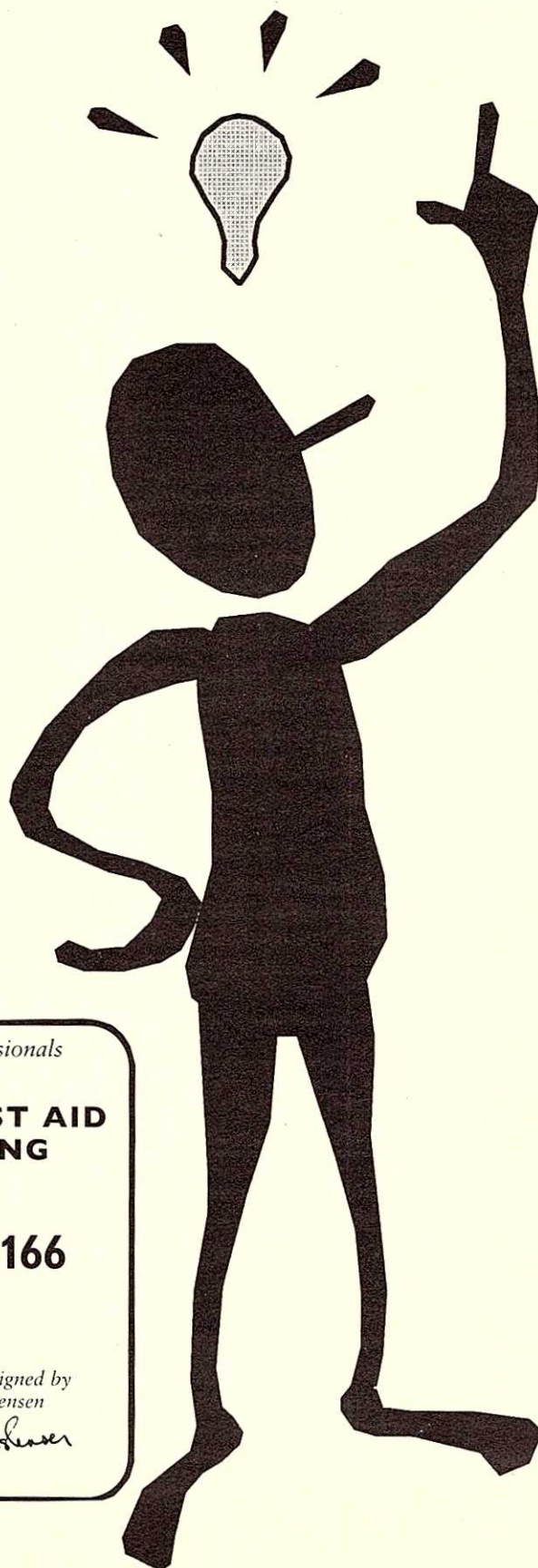
**Trails Committee:** Works to have BC's hiking trails recognized, protected and maintained. The Adopt-A-Trail program was developed and ran by the Trails Committee.

### Recreation and Conservation Committee:

Provides a forum for the discussion of conservation and policy issues. The committee workes with representatives from provincial government, land use resource industries and commercial recreation to resolve conflicts with heli-skiing, snowmobile use, logging operations and loss of access to Crown land.

**Education and Safety Committee:** Reviewing public and members mountain safety issues.

If interested in any of the above committees, please give Alana a call at the FMCBC office at 737-3053 or e-mail at [fmcbc@istar.ca](mailto:fmcbc@istar.ca)





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unnecessary tragedy, which hurts friends, family and our society in general. Get a grip and bring your ego back down to earth – no mountain is worth dying over.

Early climbers did have one advantage over many modern climbers however – comradery. They also experienced a sense of working as a team, and the rewards of trust. Many of today's experienced climbers/outdoors people have become so insular as to miss out on this joy almost entirely. We often savor our experiences and time outdoors for only ourselves, and sometimes they guy on the other end of the rope if he/she is lucky. Who can blame us with so many "me me's" around? Climbing with the same three partners, although intimate, has its limitations. In the old days, a group of thirty was a symbol of group spirit and strength. One's own desire for success was secondary to the safety of the rest of the group.

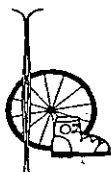
In today's club trips, helping a beginning climber reach the summit safely with the rest of the group is considered archaic and a nuisance. Many climbers behave in manner that reflects the philosophy: "as long as I make the summit who cares?" Here, beginners are left to struggle on their own, resources are hoarded, and lives are endangered pointlessly. It is a sinking feeling to watch a shower of rocks or ice spray down from 'experi-

enced' climbers above onto the hapless novices below. Some even find amusement over a hiker/climber who struggles behind the main group. This is a growing trend, which undoubtedly will lead to needless tragedy in the future. I see little reason for this behaviour. It all seems an oddity to me.

So, if your mind is open and you choose to embrace the outdoors for what they are, then you must first understand yourself and the human condition. There is a strong history in this province of apprenticeship in climbing and hiking. It takes a considerable length of time for anyone to become even remotely near competent (leadership in particular) in the backcountry. The clubs have always given their time and energy freely to preparing people for 'safe' experience in the mountains. Mountaineering schools and guides are also excellent avenues for learning from some of the best climbers in the mountaineering community. Take the time to get to know your partners and take responsibility for each other. The rewards of climbing are always much greater when shared with people you believe in and trust. Think carefully about the consequences of your climbing style on other people. Could you live with the guilt of killing a friend or even a faceless stranger? I know I couldn't. And if you don't know what the stakes are, are not prepared to live with the consequences of stupidity or arrogance, stay home for your own sake.

## OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT

- Ski Equipment
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- Sleeping Bags
- Tents
- Hiking Boots
- Canoe & Accessories
- Cotton Shorts, Shirts
- Bikes
- Climbing Equipment



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### CARLETON RECREATIONAL EQUIPMENT

3201 Kingsway, Vancouver, B.C. V5R 5K3 (438-6371)

## WORDS FROM THE READERS

Dear Editor

Re. Use of Baden Powel Trail by Mountain Bikes

I note from the last issue of "Cloudburst" that the Mountain Biking community are suggesting increased use of the trail and on behalf of the Federation you are proposing to resist this use.

I am not a Mountain Biker, but I do have some sympathy for their request.

I do a lot of hiking on the North Shore mountains and on any weekend I meet more mountain bikers than hikers. They are always friendly and show courtesy and consideration to other trail users.

Although it is undoubtedly true that they do damage the trails, I think we should consider the following points:

-As an organization, we should be encouraging use of the mountain, not discouraging it. Better 10 mountain bikers and 2 hikers, rather than just 3 hikers!

-Mountain biking is a new activity, it may not last (I recall the moto cross riders with their smell and noise - them I do object!)

-Mountain bikers tend to do their own thing and create new trails for their use.

-It's difficult to police the trails, do we need to and what will we do anyway?

In summary, I think we have to be careful about which "dragons" to go after. Human powered bikes I am in favour of, but I do believe in restricted areas for motor bikes, or in wither, ski-doo's.

Yours Truly,

R.B. Silvester

P.S. We should note the significant upgrading of the old buck trail and Baden Powel trail from Mt. Seymour road to Indian River. Did hikers achieve this?



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# THE FMCBC BULLETIN

## SURF THE WEB! WHAT'S UP

COAST MAGAZINE: <http://www.vanmag.com/outside/coast.html>

WASHINGTON TRAILS: <http://www.wta.org/wta/>

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB: <http://www.thebmc.co.uk>

NORTH SHORE RESCUE: <http://www.district.north-van.bc.ca/home/nsrescue.html>

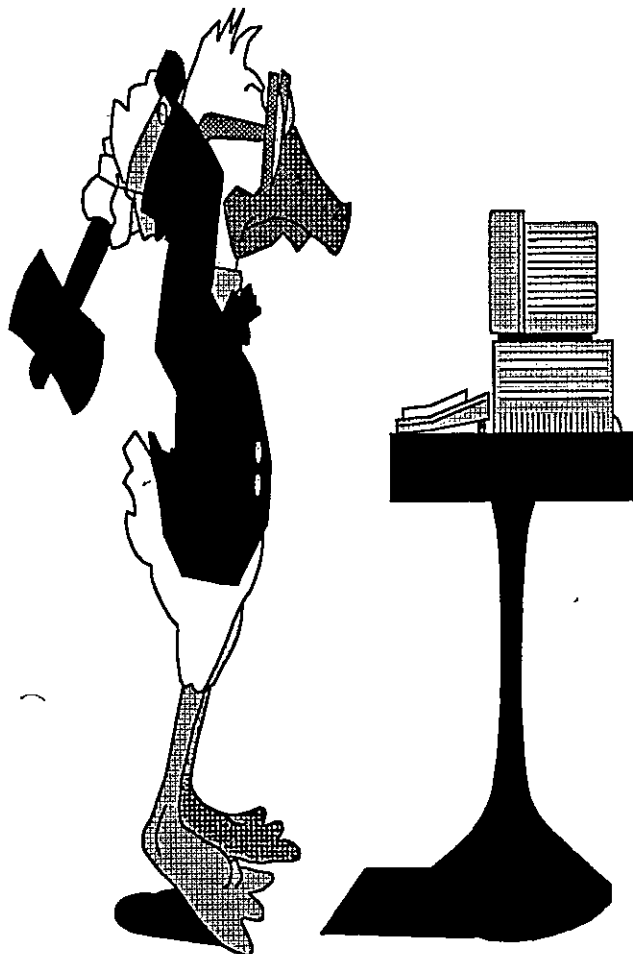
JOHN CLARKES ENVIRONMENTAL PAGE: <http://bivouac.com/jcwild/>

SQUAMISH CHIEF ONLINE ROCK CLIMBER'S GUIDE: [http://mindlink.bc.ca/David\\_Woodsworth/](http://mindlink.bc.ca/David_Woodsworth/)

Since the last issue of Cloudburst in July the office has replaced the stolen computer. The police had no luck locating the stolen computer. Chris Mills the FMCBC's Vice-President has donated much of his time in the past months helping the office select a replacement computer and upgrade our systems to Windows 95. Chris has also installed a back up system, which you will all be happy to know is working very well and backing up our systems weekly. The office thanks Chris for all his time and effort.

Chris is also the person to thank for the amazing upgrade of the FMCBC website, take a look at: <http://home.istar.ca/~fmcbc/fmcbc.htm>

The FMCBC office is hoping to get a marketing student in for their practicum to conduct a survey on the FMCBC members. This person will be telephoning about 1000 members with questions regarding FMCBC, CWMS and IWFA. Please help us out by answering the questions.



## GET ELECTRIC!

Federation's Electronic connections have changed

E-mail : [fmcbc@istar.ca](mailto:fmcbc@istar.ca)

Website:  
<http://home.istar.ca/~fmcbc/fmcbc.htm>

List Server:  
[fmc-bc@unixg.bc.ca](mailto:fmc-bc@unixg.bc.ca)





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*Trail Tales continued from page 20*

.... I arrive breathless at the belay, then take time to enjoy the view before rapping to clean the pitch. The mountains soar before me, a bear munches it's way through the berry patches at the base, and a raven serenades me from nearby hemlock. Why solo? Not so much to be alone in the mountains, but to be alone in the mountains, but to be alone with them .....

*I won't soon forget the looks on Dave and Alexander's faces as the chopper landed. huge eyes, gasping mouths, shutters a clickin'. There is nothing like your first five minutes in the Waddington range.... but a day later they both suffer from second degree burns on their faces and lips. Success on Mt. Shand and a chance to meet Fred Beckey a fifty year old boy and an eleven year old man. Failure on Claw Peak - and yet there is no failure because an experiment yields only results. Paul summed it up like Paul can, "It's the hardest things about guiding, parenting, and being a kid, all rolled into one project. " at Scar Creek it was hot and we were overwhelmed with fragrance and colour. That is also like the first five minutes back from the Waddington range.*

.... Another hook move ! Why do I do this to myself. I remember drilling the bolt I'm nervously lunging for, quick draw in hand, last winter, breaking large icicles from the wall, watching them fall beyond my belayer to explode kaleidoscopically in sunlight near the base of the route. This has become the wall of drilling from hooks....

Mikey and I have been climbing almost every day since I got back. It's been great watching him make quantum leaps in technique and strength. I get to climb all the on sight I've been saving. At Gateway rock I watch Donna finally flash "Equinox", and Paul battle with "Then Play On". Amid smiles and lots of energy. Cragging on long, hot summer days is the perfect foil for the tortured ice falls and chilly alpine winds of the Coast Mountains.

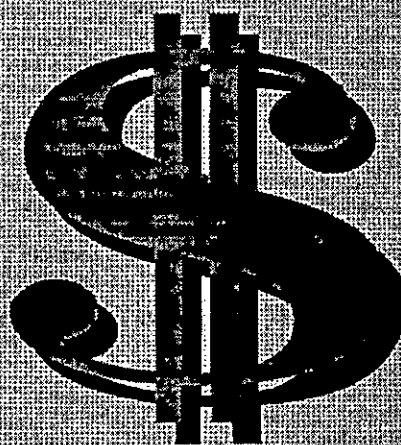
.... I rap down from the rim and winch myself back into the belay. As I'm cleaning, I recollect sliding down the Tantalus Wall on my ass after my ascenders flipped off a fixed line. I tie in short even more frequently now. Near the top, I hang in slings and touch my cheek to the rock. If you'd been nearby you might have heard me whisper 'thank you' to no one in particular.

Why solo? Not so much to be alone. More to spend a day with all those laughing faces; to recall all those amazing scenes and sounds. To pay silent homage to another year graced with the company of fine friends in these beautiful places. To reinherit my past and glance to the future, all in a few moments of precious thought, I open my heart and soul to this climb, and earn the privilege of making and reliving memories under a hot August sunset.

## MT. BAKER NOTICE

If going to Mt. Baker there is a \$5.00 user fee to park at trailheads. Exact change in U.S. dollars is required.

Fees are collected at the Glacier Ranger Station



they are open 8:30am to 4:30pm,  
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## TRAIL TALES: A TIME TO REMEMBER

By Chris Barner, The Heathens Club

After Donna drops me off on her way to Gold River, I drag my gear through lush, emerald vegetation, up the steep trail to the base of the cliff. I will solo today, so hunt for the right combination of saplings and stumps to equalize into an anchor. As I grab my aides and turn towards the first rivet, odd things begin to happen in my mind. I feel every fibre of my being prepare to focus on the task at hand. Adrenaline, I'm thinking, is like an automobile or a chainsaw - a powerful but dangerous tool. Every scrap of advice I've ever heard or read, all the experiences I've had, muster at the forefront of my consciousness like legionnaires readying themselves for battle, and I launch into the climb in the company of memories, images and the quiet echo of my favorite tunes.

The climbing is straight forward and familiar, yet the feelings that anything might happen is omnipresent..... as are the whispering voices that guide me. An old partner that I haven't seen in years reminds me to keep an eye on my clove hitch, and to always back up my fifi hook. My own discipline insists that I test each piece of gear vigorously - preventing a fall being much easier than recovering from one. Relaxation comes more easily once there are seven pieces and a bolt between the ground and I.

As I get into a groove and climbing becomes instinctive, I reach a state in which I can at once focus and forget, and begin to scan watery images of a busy summer...

*At the Alpine Camp there are a hundred laughing faces lit by joy and candle lantern. Kjell, Mike and solo the North ridge of Kings Peak together. The rock is warm to the touch, incredibly textured and colourful, beckoning. they step out bravely onto unfamiliar psychological grand.*

*'Foxpaws' and I bolt his new route. The exfoliating flakes make for fine holds but tough bolting. Hanging in slings, we debate for hours the possible position of each placement, while volunteers of various lengths demonstrate their reach for us. finally, the decisions are all made. Lightning flashes across a rumbling, uncertain sky, and the route becomes "The Delicate Sound of Thunder". We scurry back to camp in the rain.*

*When I get home Thad's leg is in a cast. Visiting from Colorado, for nine days Thad is free and flying in a world of mountains he never expected to find. On the*

*tenth day, he pulls protection and hits the ground hard. The young man sprawled on cushions next to a pile of climbing films is like a caged animal, bars made of plaster and fractured bone. Still, the fall has served a purpose. "I will not repeat this", the animal is thinking. Thad will fly again at the next summer's camp.*

*.... I ask the loose flake I am hooking to "hold please". It rattles and shakes its usual gong reply. I hung on this hook long enough to drill the next anchor early one very cold morning last November, the gong flexing cruelly with hammer swing. Once I am safe on the rivet my daydreaming resumes.....*

*After the camp there are new routes to finish. A fifteen foot finger crack splits thirty-five feet of steep, indifferent rock. I bolt the face sections from jumars and then sort of on sight it. Two falls at the crux satisfy me. I look for route that are easy enough for me to climb with pockets.*

*The anchor at the top is idyllic, set back in an alcove amongst yew and cedar trees. When you are there, there is only the moss-covered rock and tree branches; the ground, the rest of the anchors and the sky are invisible. I sit and gaze into the old growth at the fifty foot level. There are people about but I can't see or hear them, and the route becomes "solitude".*

*Juliano arrives from Brazil. We bask in the joy on his face as he looks at the raging ocean current, and strolls through snow for the first time. Kings Peak and Tom Taylor divulge their secrets to us. Two immense golden eagles glide over as we lounge on the summit before the glissade home. Della falls presides over Juliano's trek to halt frozen Cream Lake. I imagine a close circle of friends and loves ones listening intently as he explains to them how snow can last into summer; that there is jungle in Canada; and what huddleberries taste like.*

*Continued on page 19*

