

Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

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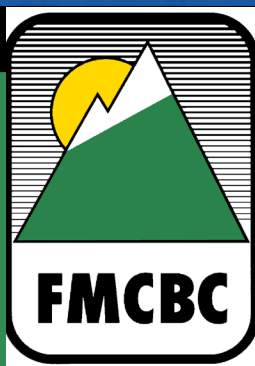
Spring/ Summer 2020

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Singing Pass Trail Project

Crossing
Garibaldi Lake
Wearing Sneakers

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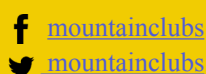
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Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia

Working on your behalf

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

Dave Wharton

Valley Outdoor Association and Board President, FMCBC

It is already June (and 100+ days since the start of the Coronavirus). I have been waiting as late as reasonably possible to write this message, due to the ongoing and rapidly changing conditions brought about by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

I am fortunate - my income has not been impacted, I am in good health, and I can follow all Public Health Authority guidelines without undue hardship. I know that many of you are likely not as fortunate in your present circumstances. There has been reduced income, lost employment, children not able to attend school, and perhaps you, your family, or friends may have suffered with or lost someone due to COVID-19. Whatever impacts this pandemic is having on you and your families - my thoughts are with you - and I truly hope you'll be able to return to a life free from the current uncertainties, as soon as it is safe to do so.

Presently, we are advised to enjoy outdoor recreation and stay physically active. As a retired Mental Health professional, I know that doing so provides

numerous mental and physical health benefits.

If you are planning to hike at a local or nearby trail, please note these important recommendations:

- It is essential that we all maintain a physical distance of at least 2 metres (approx. the length of two hiking poles) from others.
- We should stay connected to those important to us (at least virtually if it is not possible in person) and pursue outdoor recreation as close to home as possible.
- If you are planning a hike with others, this is not the time for car-pooling or sharing food or drink containers.
- Nor is it time for those personal "first ascents," we must all stay within our personal comfort zones, so we do not take undue risk that may require the services of first responders.

Recently, some of our favourite B.C. parks have reopened, although not all parks or trails are open yet. Rec. Sites and Trails BC has also closed or restricted access to many of its managed trails and recreation sites.



For those parks or trails that have not reopened yet, or have experienced access restrictions, I personally believe that this action may be counterproductive. We increasingly need to engage in outdoor activity, yet on a smaller footprint of land - potentially making it more difficult to maintain a safe distance, and some people may be tempted to travel further from home to find uncrowded spaces.

As the FMCBC representative on the Board of the Outdoor Recreation Council [ORC], at the April ORC Board meeting, I introduced a motion to write a letter to the respective Ministers asking them to reconsider their decisions and review each park closure or regional closures independently, find alternatives to reduce the pressures of high usage areas, and find ways for residents to enjoy local parks and trails in a safe way. This motion passed, with a strong majority in favour, and a letter has been sent. Additionally, interviews with media have been conducted and [a report on alternative strategies have been released by RC Strategies.](#)

Continued on next page.



FMCBC President, Dave Wharton, near a sign at Cliff Falls that showcases the approximate distance to exercise physical distancing.



President's Message Continued

I must stress that if these closures remain in effect or should further restrictions arise that restrict access to trails or other outdoor recreation opportunities, we must comply with these restrictions. Neither I, FMCBC employees, or your Board of Directors in any way condones not following provincial guidelines. Nonetheless, I believe it is appropriate to advocate on your behalf where it is warranted.

On behalf of all FMCBC members, I extend a very big thank you and vote of confidence to all levels of government and provincial and national health authorities for their leadership and hard work, including Dr. Bonnie Henry, the Provincial Health Officer and Dr. Theresa Tam, the Chief Public Health Officer for Canada. I would also like to recognize the dedication and commitment of health care providers, grocery store employees, transportation workers, and all those workers who provide essential services.

And finally, thank you to Stacey Santos for her dedication and hard work on behalf of the FMCBC. Stacey worked her last day with the FMCBC at the end of April and resigned from the FMCBC to accept other work opportunities. I know I am not the only one who will miss her expertise and dedication.

Please join me in welcoming Chandra Matlock as Stacey's replacement in the Communications & Administration Manager role. I have every confidence Chandra will do just as well in her new position. ■



An example aluminum roofing nail alongside a trail marker (Photo: A. Wallace)

Installing Trail Markers

Alex Wallace

SW Trails Committee Co-Chair, FMCBC

Your trail markers are in! But what is the best way to safely install trail markers that will not pose risks to others?

Sawmill workers or a park ranger may need to cut down the tree at some point, especially if it becomes hazardous. It's true that rangers will use an axe to remove a ring of bark to double-check for old, rusty and hidden nails where they are going to cut the tree. And that sawmill workers have metal detectors to save saws from damage, but it's still recommended to have safe practices in place.

We've put some tips and best practices together based on advice from the Ministry of Forestry and B.C. Parks on how volunteers can properly and safely install your new trail markers:

1. Use aluminum roofing nails or thin drywall nails. They are made of soft metal or are thin enough to not damage

a sawblade or harm others. BC Parks has directed volunteers not to install markers using screws.

2. Do not use coated deck screws or stainless-steel screws – both can be drawn into the tree as the tree grows and the layer of cambium just below the bark constantly expands. Trail markers will fold or push off – and, over a period of years, the nails or screws inexorably disappear into the tree bark. [My uncle, a sawmiller in Scotland, used to curse when he sawed into old musket balls in oak or beech trees; despite these being lead, they would dull his saw, which would require sharpening].

3. Carry a couple extra items in your backpack to avoid crumpling up or bending aluminum roofing nails when installing markers into higher elevation trees that have hard, dense wood.

Continued on page 6.

'Installing Trail Markers' continued from page 5

Bring these items in your backpack to help avoid crumpling or bending nails when installing trail markers:

- o Take along a couple of deck screws and a Robertson screwdriver (or ratchet screwdriver) and drive the deck screw in at a downward angle, and then remove it. Next, carefully tap the roofing nail down into the handy hole that you created to secure the trail marker firmly.

- o The downward angle allows the trail marker to slide down against the tree when ice and snow pull on it, rather than the marker folding outward. Usually, a gap of about 5mm is left between the head of the nail and marker to allow for incremental tree growth in the next five to ten years. Most trail makers are designed to hold up and be visible for a decade or more.

- o Although this may mean extra weight in your backpack, at least the aluminum roofing nails are almost weightless compared to a bag of steel common nails. ■

See an example aluminum roofing nail alongside a trail marker on page 5. As shown below, trail markers can also be useful as directional signage.



Did you know trail markers can be transformed into a directional arrow with your next-door neighbour's sheet metal snips? (Photo: Alex Wallace)

TRAIL NEWS

Southwest BC Trails and Access Committee Report

Alex Wallace

Committee Co-Chair, FMCBC

The FMCBC works to ensure British Columbia's hiking and climbing access trails are recognized, protected and maintained. FMCBC Committees play an integral role in supporting trails across the province. Join a Committee at mountainclubs.org/volunteer

Members of the Southwest BC Trails and Access Committee and other FMCBC members have worked on a range of issues over the past several months.

Here are some highlights of our work to improve and protect trails and increase access to non-motorized recreation in southwest BC.

A new route to the backcountry at Mount Seymour

Just before the Provincial parks closed in March, ironically, a new backcountry trail for snowshoers opened at Mount Seymour provincial park, thanks to the FMCBC Southwest BC Trails and Access Committee. So, as you unpack your snowshoes this winter, try this new backcountry winter trail.

How to get there:

1. Park at Parking Lot 5A designated for snowshoers in Mount Seymour. (the west-side shoulder of the road that's restricted to winter access only).
2. The trail leads north from the parking lot through natural corridors in the forest and heads to the Dog Mountain trail.

The trail has been flagged and marked with poles, but no signage has been installed yet (pictured on page 7).

Continued on next page.



Snowshoers! You can now access the backcountry at Mount Seymour in the winter via Parking Lot 5A. The trail is temporarily flagged with poles (pictured). Get directions on page 6. Special thanks to the FMCBC SWBC Trails and Access Committee. (Photo: Alex Wallace)

Public Consultations with BC Parks

Extensive developments underway at Cypress Provincial Park

Over the past 20 years, Cypress Provincial Park has seen continuous and ongoing construction. In recent years, developments in and around Cypress Provincial Park has been more extensive and includes:

- New 12-storey (now rezoned to 16-storey) towers on KM 4 of the Cypress Bowl Road.
- Several other smaller projects creating additional traffic on an already busy provincial park access road.
- To prepare for future developments, the areas along the road are still being blasted.
- A proposal for a four-season Cypress Mountain Resort in the Controlled Recreation Area ski area providing:

o Summer activities

- World's Longest Peak to Peak double zipline, from Mount Strachan across Cypress Bowl to Black Mountain, at a

height of roughly 300 metres (similar height as Paris' Eiffel Tower, except visitors are dangling from a harness) - over the east part of the Yew Lake wetland trails.

- Two lift-assisted mountain bike areas

o Winter activities

- Two Austrian Coasters installed on ski runs (similar to bobsleds running on temporary rails) on Black and Strachan
- with restaurants and snack bars at several viewpoints.

Whether this development proposal will come to fruition in the current economic climate is unknown.

The FMCBC has enquired about a CRA Master Plan Amendment process for Cypress provincial park and submitted a letter to BC Parks when they were drafting the 2014 Ski Resort Policy.

Some highlighted points from our letter to BC Parks include:

- o A 60-year lease is excessively long

for providing certainty to the operator.

- o Roles and responsibilities for capacity and visitor management must be clearly set out.
- o The policy does not adequately address the maintenance of traditional and low-impact use of parks, but instead concentrates on commercial use and development of parks.
- o For existing ski resort plans, the policy provides considerable changes to public use and park access and possible long-term impacts on natural and cultural aspects of parks.

However, our efforts have fallen on deaf ears and all enquiries have been redirected to the Ski Resort Policy, which you can review on the B.C. Parks website: <http://bcparks.ca/permits/consultation/ski-resort-policy.html>

B.C. Parks indicates this policy was undertaken to provide guidance on aspects of ski resort and permit management not addressed through other policies or legislation. ■



RECREATION & CONSERVATION

Southwest BC Recreation and Conservation Committee Report

Monika Bittel

Committee Co-Chair, FMCBC

Members of the Southwest BC Recreation and Conservation Committee and other FMCBC members have worked on a range of issues over the past several months.

Here are some highlights of our work to advocate for, protect, and increase access to non-motorized recreation in southwest BC.

Summer Access and Parking at Singing Pass Trail in Garibaldi Provincial Park

The Alpine Club of Canada (Vancouver and Whistler sections) and the FMCBC BC Recreation & Conservation Committee continue work to resolve ongoing summer access and parking problems at Singing Pass.

Special thanks to Jay MacArthur (ACC-Vancouver) and Bryce Leigh (ACC-Whistler) for spearheading this work! See the sidebar where Jay provides a more detailed update on how we're aiming to improve summer access at the Singing Pass trail near Whistler.

Over the past several months, the team has sought approval from: First Nations, Whistler/Blackcomb (use of Lot 8 for parking), Whistler Sliding Center (use of access road), Innergex (use of the right of way at the IPP) and Recreation Sites and Trails BC (section 57 approval). Options for winter overnight parking needs further discussion with Whistler/Blackcomb and the Resort Municipality of Whistler.

Continued on page 10.

Improved summer access at Singing Pass will be music to hikers' ears

Jay MacArthur

Project Coordinator, FMCBC Board of Director, and ACC-Vancouver Director

Hiking near Singing Pass provides magnificent views of the Fitzsimmons and Spearhead Mountain ranges and Cheakamus Glacier, especially in summertime when the slopes of the Pass are sprinkled with wild flowers. However, this popular trail near Whistler is difficult to access in summer since the old logging access road has been slumping since the 90s.

The Alpine Club of Canada (Vancouver and Whistler sections) and the FMCBC Southwest BC Recreation and Conservation Committee are working to resolve ongoing access and parking problems at Singing Pass trail near Whistler. The plan to improve access involves developing a new route on the north-side of Fitzsimmons Creek to rejoin the old Singing Pass trail on the south-side of the Creek.

Here's the route for the proposed trail:

1. Park at Lot 8 near the Whistler Sliding Center,
2. Take the marked trail just south of the Sliding Centre and head towards the Innergex IPP on Fitzsimmons Creek,
3. Cross a new 24-metre footbridge
4. Hike another 1 km to the old Singing Pass parking lot.

See the trail map on page 9.

If you're looking for a shorter hike, a potential shuttle service is being assessed that would take hikers to the proposed new bridge and cut about an hour off your trip.

Special thanks to Peter Taylor (ACC-Vancouver) for designing the new footbridge!

The project is currently awaiting approval and agreements with our partners are in the works. Once approved, we hope that construction can start in 2020, but we may need to delay the project until 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

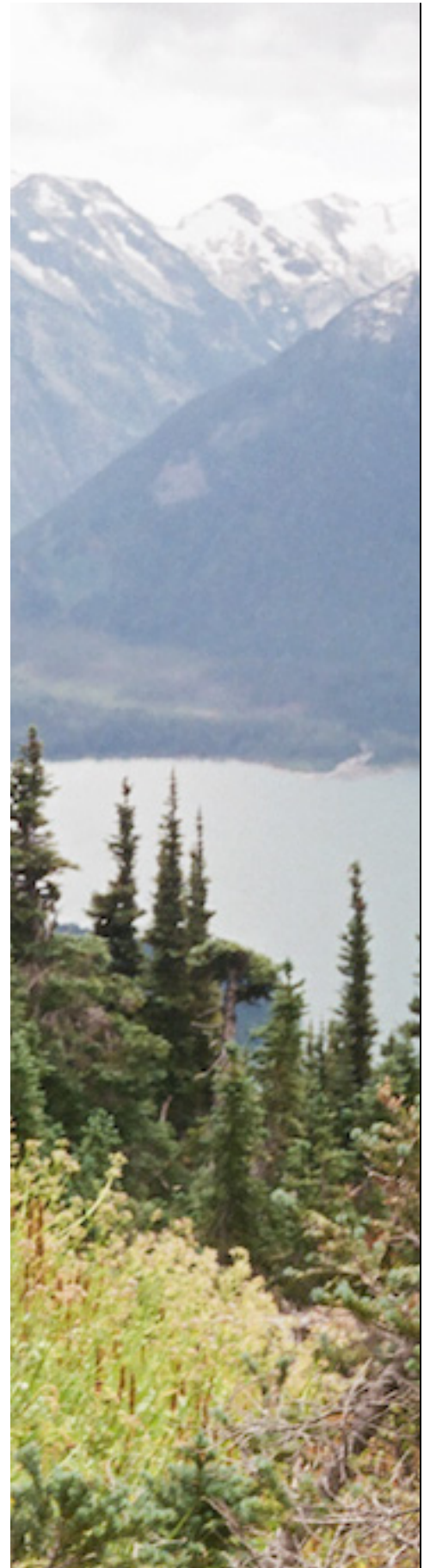
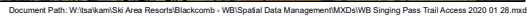
Although the group has made progress in improving summer access, they will also have further discussions to review options for winter overnight parking with Whistler/Blackcomb and the Resort Municipality of Whistler.

Support improved summer access at the Singing Pass

Help fundraise for or provide a tax-deductible donation to this project. The estimated cost is between \$50,000 to \$70,000. The FMCBC is currently seeking project funders as we make progress on improving Singing Pass access with our partners.

Email fmcbc@mountainclubs.org to indicate how you can help.

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Long-Term Planning for Sea-to-Sky Corridor

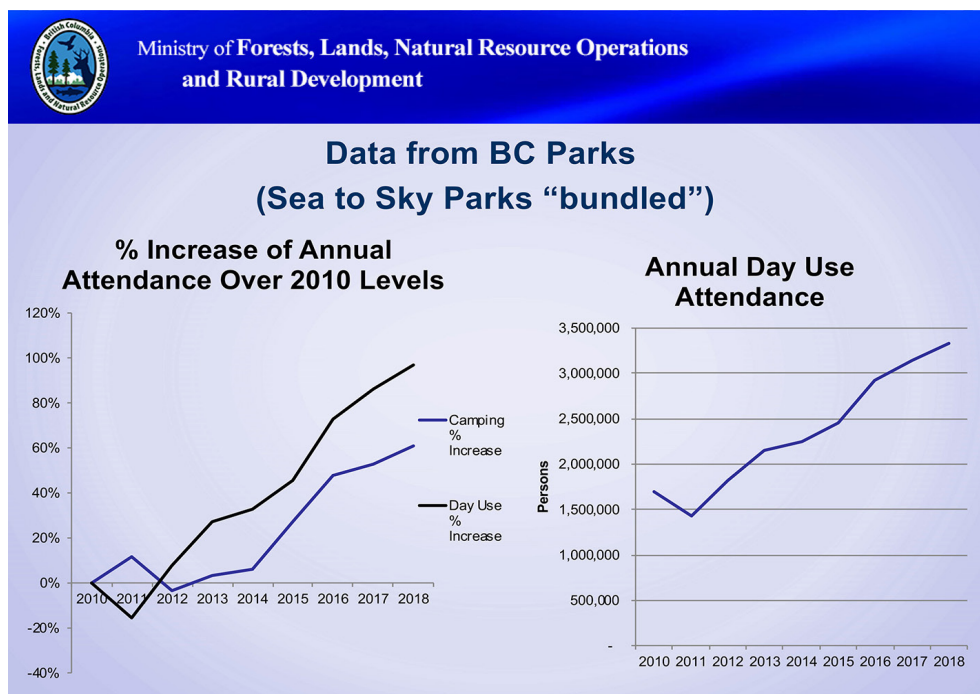
To learn about the strategic planning being undertaken in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor, in December 2019, several members from the Recreation & Conservation Committee met with Susan Dain-Owens, a Land and Resource Specialist for the Sea-to-Sky Natural Resource District at the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (Ministry of FLNRO).

The group reviewed visitor statistics for the Corridor, which has risen considerably over the past several years [see sidebar]. Afterwards, Dain-Owens gave an overview of the US Interagency Visitor Use Management Framework, one of the pilot planning tools being used by the Ministry of FLNRO and BC Parks. The Framework will be tested at the Shannon Basin, Tenquille-Owl Lakes, Joffre Lakes, and Key Hole and Meagre Hot Springs.

If successful, the Framework will guide future recreation authorizations in the Corridor, including motorized/non-motorized zones and recreation infrastructure, such as outhouses and campsites. Although we encourage long-term planning being undertaken in the Corridor, the Rubble Creek access road closure demonstrates we have a long way to go.

Funding for BC Parks

The FMCBC continues to advocate for increased funding for BC Parks. In November 2019, representatives from the FMCBC, Outdoor Recreation Council of BC [ORC], and the BC Parks Elders Council met with Minister Heyman, Deputy Minister Zacharias, and Assistant Deputy Minister Standen regarding the state of our provincial parks.



BC Parks displays considerable increases in visitors at Sea-to-Sky parks from 2010-2018. (Source: BC Parks)

Although Minister Heyman remained non-committal because of the government's focus on health, education, and social programs, it was evident that our presentation, which included photos of deteriorated trails and infrastructure in various provincial parks - including South Chilcotin, Granby, Squamish, Cypress, Mt. Seymour, Strathcona, Manning and Kokanee - made an impression. The Minister asked his staff how these areas could be prioritized for maintenance. Unfortunately, the 20 minutes allocated for our meeting was not enough to delve into how BC Parks prioritizes maintenance with such limited resources. See the photo on page 12 of deteriorating infrastructure at BC provincial parks.

However, in the South Coast, BC Parks advised that ongoing planning processes are taking place for Pinecone Burke Provincial Park and the planning process has started for Mt. Seymour

Provincial Park, with First Nations' consultations being the first step. While in Victoria, we also met with Liberal MLA, Jordan Sturdy, to discuss Sea-to-Sky issues, including access to the Singing Pass, as well as ongoing issues at BC Parks and RSTBC.

Mr. Sturdy was more engaged and supportive on these issues than 18 months ago.

We also met with MLA, Peter Milobar, the Liberal Critic for the Environment, and, from our meetings, it was not evident how the Liberals would change their approach to BC Parks funding should they be elected.

Continued on page 11.

Protecting the Upper Skagit River Watershed

We've been advocating with other partners to protect the Upper Skagit River Watershed (aka "the Donut Hole"), an unprotected area, sandwiched between Manning and Skagit Provincial Parks.

Ken Farquharson and Tom Perry have advocated for the end of commercial logging in the Watershed and acquiring Giant Copper mining claims so that the Donut Hole could be returned to our provincial park system. Their efforts are supported by CPAWS, the ORC, the Western Wilderness Committee, Nature BC, BC Sierra Club, BC Wildlife, and the FMCBC.

In November 2019, Farquharson, Perry, and these partners met with Minister Heyman. Shortly after the meeting, we learnt we could expect some "good news."

On December 4, 2019, the Province announced there would be no more logging in the Donut Hole. However, our efforts to find a solution with respect to mineral claims would continue. Should the Donut Hole be saved, it is anticipated that the area will become some form of protected area, involving the First Nations who have some connection with the area.

Conserving Old Growth through Public Consultations

In January 2020, the FMCBC made written submissions to the Old-growth Strategic Review Panel, consisting of Garry Merkel, a professional forester and member of the Tahltan Nation, and Al Gorley, a professional forester and former chair of the Forest Practices Board. The FMCBC's submissions highlighted the importance of BC's "old-growth," which was particularly



Photo submitted to the #FundBCParks campaign.

valuable for biodiversity, and providing recreational, environmental, and aesthetic values.

To conserve the remaining, fragmented areas of old-growth, we recommended:

1. Legislated protection of old-growth, with an immediate moratorium on the harvesting of endangered old-growth.
2. Preservation of sufficient areas to protect the diverse types of old-growth ecosystems and the wildlife dependent on them, such as the marbled murrelet, spotted owl, and mountain caribou.

These areas are determined by studies lead by independent scientists who are not affiliated with industry or government.

3. A transition away from industrial harvest of our remaining old-growth to community-based forestry and selective logging practices, focusing on second growth, forest rehabilitation, and reducing fire risks.

The Old-growth Strategic Review Panel is scheduled to report to government in spring 2020 with recommendations that are expected to inform a new approach to old-growth management in BC.

Submissions on Forest Stewardship Plans

In November and December 2019, the Committee sent written submissions on Forest Stewardship Plans from Hillcore Lakeside Pacific Forest Products Ltd. (Big Silver, Chehalis, East Harrison, Tretheway and West Harrison landscape units) and Probyn Log Ltd. (Anderson, Big Silver, Chehalis, Chilliwack, Coquihalla, East Harrison, Fraser Valley South, Hatzic, Manning, Silverhope, Spuzzam, Stave, Tretheway, West Harrison, Yale landscape units). While both plans recognized trails with section 57 approval (i.e. the HBC Brigade Trail, Mt. Grainger Trail, Baby Munday, Elk-Thurston, Ford Mountain, Ling Lake, Mt. Cheam, Mt. McGuire, Mt. Rexford, Pierce Lake, Slesse Memorial, Slesse Mountain, Vedder Mountain,

'Recreation & Conservation' update cont. from page 11

Williams Peak, and Williamson Lake), there are many other hiking trails that provide recreation values within the landscape units.

Therefore, we sought strategies for these trails which would maintain unique recreational experiences, minimize damage and impacts on trails, avoid access roads being built across trails, and prevent motorized use on the trails.

The submissions also identified a number of logging roads, which we would like to see maintained in some form (rather than deactivated) to preserve access to prime hiking and climbing areas.

In response, the proponents advised that if forest development activities would be proposed in close proximity to the trails identified, the FMCBC would receive a future site-specific Information Sharing Referral to gather additional comments and identify possible management strategies.

Winter access and parking at Rubble Creek in Garibaldi Provincial Park

In February 2020, the Varsity Outdoors Club (VOC) encountered new “no parking” signs at the Rubble Creek access road, where people normally park in winter to access Garibaldi Lake.

The loss of this access road and parking leaves only two winter access points for Garibaldi Provincial Park, namely, Diamond Head and Singing Pass, both of which are at capacity. It also makes it virtually impossible to access Garibaldi Lake, the VOC's Burton Hut, the traditional and popular Garibaldi Neve Traverse, and surrounding terrain, including Mt. Price, Guard Mountain, Deception Peak, The Sphinx, The Bookworms, Mt. Carr, and Castle Towers.

After BC Parks advised they have no money to plow Rubble Creek, the VOC spearheaded efforts to find a solution. While there were several offers to plow the road, the compact, accumulated snow made plowing impossible for this winter season. Undeterred, the VOC organized a Rubble Creek Trailhead dig-out party.

On March 7, about 50 volunteers shoveled 20-24 parking spots and a turn-around area just past a road that branches off to the Sea-to-Sky Retreat.

BC Parks' policy of not plowing access roads to provincial parks and parking lots needs to be revisited, particularly in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor.

The ever-growing populations in the lower Mainland and Sea-to-Sky communities has shown an increased interest in snowshoeing, winter camping, and ski touring, and any loss of access to non-motorized, backcountry recreation opportunities in the Corridor will simply compound over-capacity issues in other backcountry areas.

Further, we simply cannot afford to lose access to Garibaldi Provincial Park because it is the *one* predictable place where the public will not encounter snowmobiles or helicopters (excluding the Spearhead). The FMCBC will continue to work with VOC and others to find a long-term solution to winter parking at Rubble Creek.



50 volunteers at a dig-out party shoveled 20-24 parking spots and a turn-around area at Rubble Creek. (Photo: M Bittel)

Auditing & Funding Trails at BC Parks

Jay MacArthur

Director, FMCBC and Director, Alpine Club of Canada-Vancouver

For the past five years, the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC) and other groups have been lobbying the Province of B.C. to increase funding for provincial parks. BC Parks has chronically underfunded parks and trails for over 20 years - and the trails we love need some TLC.

Four years ago, the Province announced plans to increase the number of campsites after input from many user groups and the public. We are seeking to get action again by focusing on trails and showing the need to increase funding.

Trail audits and condition reports

When provincial parks open this summer, we aim to perform trail audits on many popular trails at BC provincial parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC.

Here's what we are looking to find through these trail audits:

1. Document the state of each trail including existing trail infrastructure, such as bridges and boardwalks. Include washed-out or blocked drainage pipes and locations that need drainage or boardwalks.
2. Detail places where trail braiding and erosion is occurring. For example, many trails near Vancouver have eroded down to tree roots, making hiking hazardous.
3. Take photos to support and showcase trail conditions.

Based on these trail audits, a detailed report will be created and presented to



Photo submitted to #FundBCParks campaign. Numerous photos were sent to illustrate the increased need for funding to BC parks.

BC Parks and elected officials. These audits and the consolidated report will assist FMCBC in advocating for increased funding for BC Parks.

In turn, BC Parks will be able to prioritize trail work, identify complex work to be completed by student work groups, and define less onerous work that can be undertaken by volunteers. Note: we are not proposing that clubs take on trail work.

Take a hike! Trek new or favourite trails and monitor trail conditions

We require volunteers from across BC to learn how to use perform and document trail audits based on BC Parks standards. [Sign-up to be notified about an upcoming webinar/ workshop.](#)

Even if you do not have time to complete an official trail audit, you can still assist by taking photos of trail conditions and reporting what you encounter.

After completing the training, submit your trail audit here at mountainclubs.org/trails-audit-survey/.

Make sure to send the trail location and a description of noted issues when submitting photos.

Questions? Send them to info@mountainclubs.org



MOUNTAIN TRIPS

Arnold Shives with Mount Price, a volcano, in the background. (Photo credit: All photos courtesy of Paul Adam)

Crossing Garibaldi Lake Wearing Sneakers

An Adventure by Paul Adam

As I've aged, my hobbies have become stranger and stranger. I have to admit that I have an obsession with getting pictures and samples of all minor volcanic vents in southwestern BC. I collect these for universities and the Geological Survey of Canada. As a side benefit, it forces me to explore the backcountry, away from standard hiking areas.

Planning another adventure

If you're pondering a visit the Sphinx Moraine volcanics in the summertime, you'll be presented with an interesting challenge. The Sphinx Moraine volcanics are located on the eastern side of Garibaldi Lake. Of course, in warmer months, getting from the west side to

the east side involves going around the lake. Unfortunately, the lack of a shoreline trail means a substantial detour - with a couple of substantial ups and downs - making the trip into a long day, even for the young and fit.

Travelling along this route in the winter is more straight-forward; you could ski across the lake. The journey up the Black Tusk trail is difficult. It is not pleasant to ascend because it is usually hard-packed with snow on a very uneven surface created by travelling walkers, snowshoers, and skiers. The descent is even worse, especially for skiers, as the trail's narrowness makes speed control non-existent.

I had given up hope for a visit in the summer. I have not put on my skis in a decade and I was not prepared to put in two hard days to reach the volcanics.

Then, while cruising climbing websites, I came across a trip route online, describing an ascent of the Sphinx. The report said there was no snow until the junction and the lake was snow-free. In other words, summer-like travel to the lake. The problem of skiing the trail had been eliminated as there was no snow. And the summer problem of crossing the lake had been solved as it was frozen and "dry."

Summer footwear on the winter route. Perfect!

With those problems solved, there was one more issue that had to be addressed on how long I would encounter these conditions. The forecast indicated snow on Thursday.

On Sunday, I called Arnold Shives and I had a partner for Tuesday. Arnold had

climbed with Culbert and Woodworth in the sixties. His resume includes early and first ascents on the Chief (the classic Caramba Crag amongst them!) – as well as an ascent of Raleigh and peaks in the Howson Range.

An early departure from Vancouver had us starting up the trail at seven in the morning. The lack of snow had saved us walking up the road and allowed fast progress up to the junction.

It was just after nine when we arrived at Battleship Islands and a coffee stop. Now, there were three things we had to worry about. The first was getting onto the lake from the shore. The second getting off the ice on the other side. Lastly,

the possibility of uncrossable cracks in the ice - somewhere in the middle of the lake.

The first ten metres were quite thick and solid, an indicator we probably wouldn't have a problem on the far side. The surface of the lake was virtually skateable. In-step crampons would have been handy, but as old timers we didn't have any. Fortunately, the freezing and thawing of the surface had created a crunchy layer and allowed us to walk with relative ease most of the time.

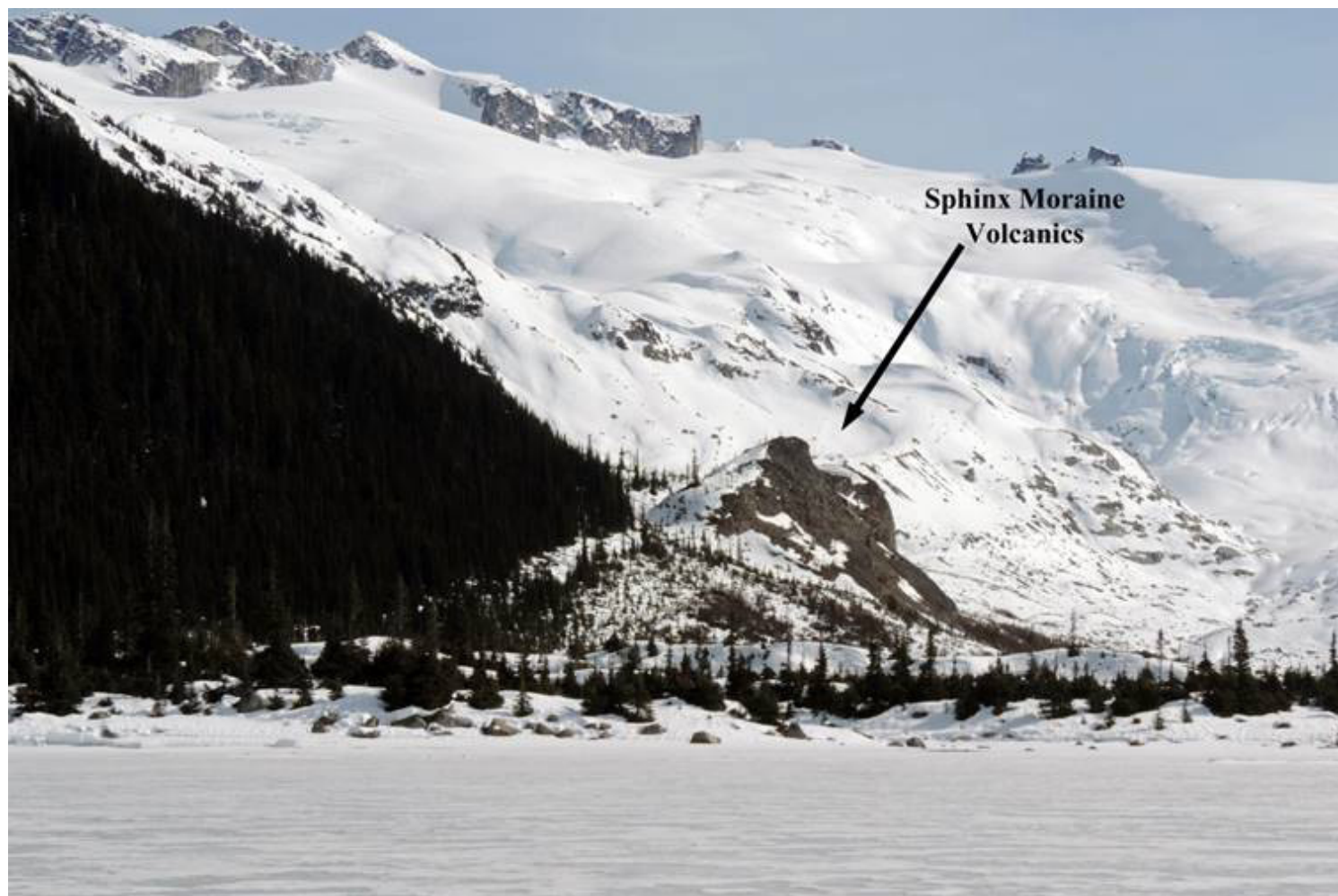
As we made our way to the centre of the lake and beyond, no 'trip-ending' cracks appeared. In fact, we were more than three-quarters of the way across before

a problem-causing crack emerged. With a small diversion and a small step, we were quickly passed it. And as it turned out, it was the only crack in our trip.

One last challenge

The final concern was getting back on land. The open water at the mouth of Sphinx Creek forced us slightly northward from the direct line to the Sphinx Hut. But barely. An hour after leaving our coffee stop, we were having a very early lunch at the Hut.

And we had dry feet. The last time I crossed the lake, in the nineties, heavy overnight rain meant that the tips of my skis were underwater most of the way back to Battleship Islands.



The Crux



Story Continued

See page 14 to start reading:

‘Crossing Garibaldi Lake Wearing Sneakers’

Exploring volcanic vents

After recovering from our three and half hour journey, I took my gear and went to explore the geology of the area. That gave Arnold, my hiking partner and the professional artist, a chance to pull out his drawing kit and sketch away.

I disappeared. The snow was frozen enough that I only put a foot through the ice crust occasionally.

I made numerous stops to capture photos and whack rocks. After forty-five minutes, I sat atop the volcano. I headed off eastward - with more rocks and one less GPS.

Corkscrewing clockwise, I headed for the Hut. The cliff that faced south was a phenomenon of beauty, volcanically speaking. [See next page for detailed trip photos].

I arrived at the Hut an hour and half later. After another bite to eat, we started to head home. The return trip wasn't all that much faster; it was after three when we arrived at the car.

On the journey home, we glowed in ecstasy. A sunny day with spring temperatures, good views and company and, best of all, a lack of snow, providing ideal conditions for walking on water. A perfect trip!

We smiled even more on Thursday when we experienced a good dump of snow. ■

Send us your backcountry mountain trip stories!

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Thanks for your support!

'Crossing Garibaldi Lake Wearing Sneakers'

Continued: Some volcanic terms explained from the story,

Lava mounds

Volcanoes that erupt under ice can take on a number of differing shapes. When the lava is confined by ice, it can form dome like shapes. These "domes" are often built up of layers of "pillows" or "tubes." Often a lot of breccia (broken pieces of lava) is formed as the lava cools against the ice. These pillows and tubes have characteristic radial patterns of jointing.

Columnar jointing are features formed by cooling lava. The lava shrinks and forms cracks perpendicular to the cooling surface. Columnar jointing is commonly seen in basaltic lava flows, but can form in most kinds of lava.

Radial jointing occurs when the lava is cooled on all the sides close to the same time. This occurs when the lava is surrounded by water or ice. Or even when the lava forces itself between breccia layers that are cold, but not yet compacted. The small-scaled formations are called pillows because of their shape. In cross-section, the radial jointing can be seen.

Large diameter radial jointing features, such as the example on Sphinx Moraine, are formed as the lava cooled in a tube of ice or already cooled pillows in the ice (It looks like an onion that has been sliced in half!). The joints that are perpendicular to the columnar joints are also formed by rapid cooling.

Breccias are small angular fragments of rocks that are cemented together by volcanic sand to form larger rocks. They are the igneous version of a conglomerate rock.

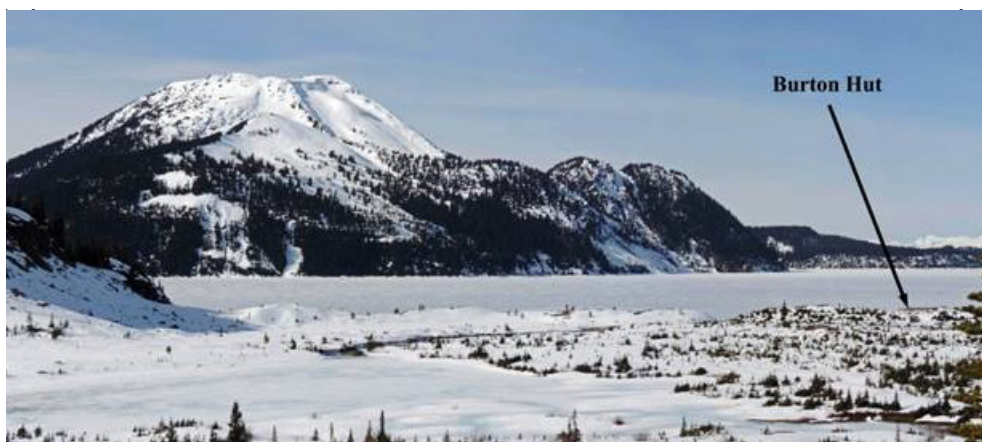
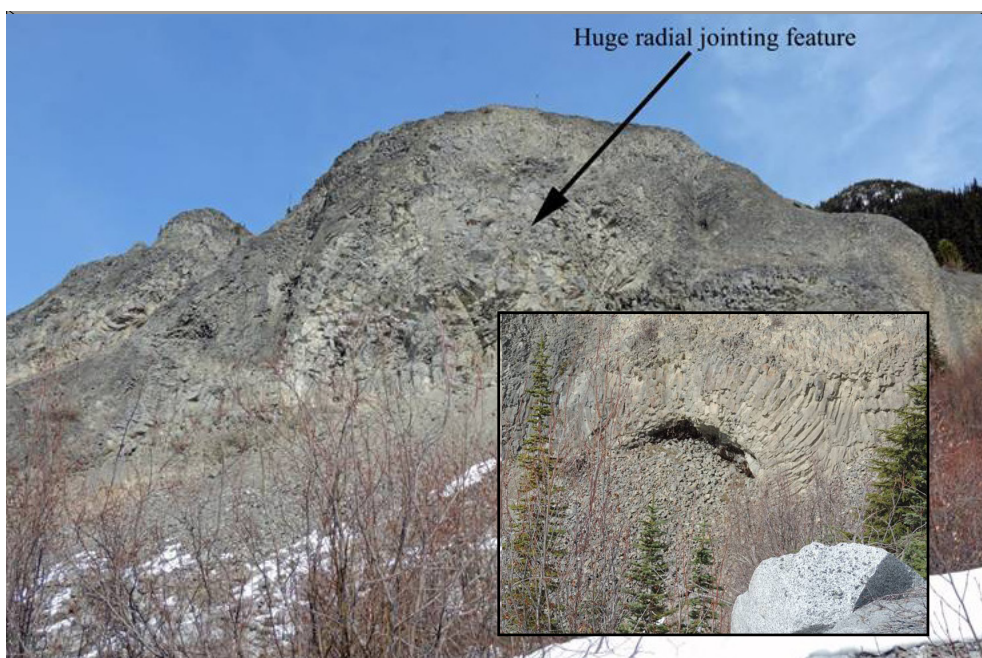


Photo credit: All photos courtesy of Paul Adam



A Story Which Never Rings Hollow

Andrew Drouin

South Okanagan Trail Alliance

A recent stint of trail-maintenance by the South Okanagan Trail Alliance included hiring a professional faller to clear a number of danger-trees along a popular trail on Campbell Mountain. This found me counting tree-rings on the stump of one particular mammoth which was standing dead and leaning hard over the trail.

Not only were the number of rings

The massive stump that I was examining displayed these growth rings fanning out in irregular shapes in horizontal spacing, telling its story of life.

Pines like that which I sat upon can occasionally skip production of their annual rings, or double-up for two yearly rings, while oaks reliably create rings which showcase their age.

in that timeframe.

Dendrochronology also works on live trees, where an increment borer is used to drill a half-inch core-sample from the tree. From this sample, ring patterns are plotted by year, providing a history of growth conditions.

Chronologies can present a fibrous map of time stretching back thousands of



impressive for a Ponderosa Pine, but the spacing of same told a wealth of stories.

Dendrochronology; the dating of tree-rings, not only determines the age of a tree, but reveals among other things - the climatic conditions in the plant's lifetime and even assists in archaeologically dating projects. Factors which affect a tree's growth, be it precipitation, temperature, soil nutrients, fire and physical injuries often appear as a story laid out in rings.

Most of us learned early that tree-trunks add growth-rings each year, building new layers in order to create strong trunks that support countless branches and leaves, no matter the weather.

Likewise, some trees that grow near a stream can present either enhanced or stunted growth rings. A singular ring's width, whether thick or thin, offers clues about the growing conditions a tree encountered that year. Generally speaking, during good growing years, trees add a thick ring, while challenging years are reflected as narrow and sometimes darker rings.

Researchers specializing in dendrochronology may use tree-rings to determine the era a tree was harvested, and even the geographical area that it was felled, as all of the same species of trees in a particular area will usually add rings at the same pace (thickness) if all other growth factors remain constant

years through employing samples from ancient wood.

If one were seeking to discern when a fallen tree toppled in the forest, they simply need to cross-date (match) its ring patterns to the master chronology for that area. If its rings line up for years 1790 through 1902 for example, you know that's exactly when it lived and died.

Trees might be considered as massive organic recording devices, containing information about past climate, civilizations, ecosystems and even galactic events; much of it many thousands of years old. Techniques for extracting information from tree rings has been

honed and expanded, and new technologies and techniques are able to extract a wider range of information from rings.

The Tree Ring Lab was founded in the 1930s by A.E. Douglass, an astronomer who used trees and their rings to better understand the connection between sunspots and climate. The Lab has helped to establish others like it worldwide, which has in turn greatly increased the number of trees studied.

A dozen laboratories now exist worldwide, holding data from more than four thousands study sites on every continent except Antarctica.

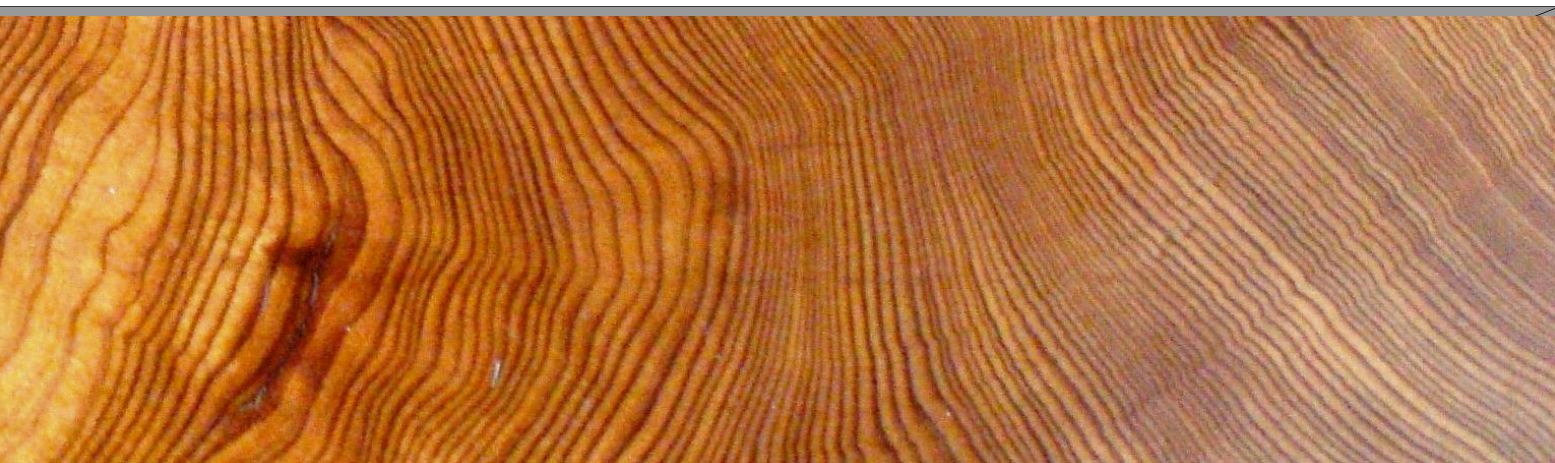
The most common tree rings studied are bristlecone pine, fir and spruce.

An example of how dendroclimatology has presented environmental data lies in a recent two-decade-long drought along a section of the Colorado River - the longest experienced since medieval times when a drought there lasted 62 years. Both the recent and historic lack of moisture was recorded in the rings of trees throughout the area.

An example of how dendroarchaeology has shown societal wisdom (or folly) is exemplified in understanding that tree rings show water in the Colorado River was apportioned to regional states based

Indonesia, the global climate cooled considerably for several years thereafter, as evidenced in narrow tree rings. This was cross-referenced with numerous other sources, including lake sediments, ice core samples, coral and the shells of long-dead geoducks.

Even the universe's countless stars offer their secrets through trees. Our sun and all other stars emit a form of radiation called cosmic rays; high-energy protons and atomic nuclei which move through space at nearly the speed of light. These energy particles react in the atmosphere with nitrogen and change the levels of carbon 14, which is taken up by every living thing and becomes a



Their work - consisting of more than a half-million samples - cumulates in The Tree Ring Data Bank; a Dendrochronology library open to all tree and tree-ring researchers. Each addition to this database forms a deeper understanding of past climate, ecosystems, and human civilization.

Technically speaking, research involving tree rings is divided into three categories:

- 1) dendroclimatology: analysis of tree rings for past climate data;
- 2) dendroarchaeology: the study of tree rings to understand how past climate affected human societies; and
- 3) dendroecology: reconstruction of past forest ecosystems.

on flow from 1905 to 1922, some of the wettest years in the last 12 centuries, an era known as a pluvial period.

Tree-ring data presents environmental information in surprising ways; oxygen isotope analysis has unlocked the source of the water that trees drew up through their roots centuries ago, allowing determination of whether an abundance of moisture reflected in the rings was from a hurricane or a severe thunderstorm.

Rings analyzed from ancient trees in multiple locations worldwide demonstrate that after the massive 1568 volcanic eruption of Mount Kelud in

tracer for cosmic ray levels.

An extreme cosmic-ray event – likely a large solar-flare, in the year 775, first found in Japanese cedar trees and since, globally, is the strongest cosmic ray event in the tree ring record, with a magnitude larger than the Carrington event, a well-documented solar storm in 1859.

So the next time that you find yourself wandering the forest, and happen upon a stump with clearly delineated tree-rings (which isn't too difficult in BC these days), ponder not only the number of rings, but also the bigger picture that is laid out before you. ■

An Insider Look: The Tragic Climb of Denali

An Interview of Jeffrey Babcock by Ron Dart

Alpine Club of Canada-Vancouver

Jeffrey Babcock was on the ill fated and tragic climb of Denali of 1967 (one of the worst climbing disasters in North American mountaineering history).

Needless to say, Jeffrey can tell the story from an insiders perspectives, and he has done so well and wisely in his book, “Should I Not Return”. (2012).

The book begins this way: “Most of this happened when I was a young man and very naive.”

I really was member of a rescue team that searched for seven missing climbers on the top of Denali in the summer of 1967”.

Jeffrey, also, has a most informative DVD on a history of climbs of Denali, varied interpretations of the tragedy of 1967 and his story within such a historic moment: “Death on Denali: Climbing Disasters on Mount McKinley.”

I have known Jeffrey for many a fond year and, hopefully, this brief reflection by him will whet your appetite for the book and DVD.



Finishing the climb: Babcock finally tells his story of Denali tragedy (Photo submitted by Ron Dart)

Can you discuss, in some detail, what it was like to be on Denali in the fateful 1967 expedition?

Bad weather enshrouded Denali in clouds, providing drizzling rain for the first week of our journey. At Wonder Lake, we met Park Ranger, Wayne Merry, who told us of the Joseph Wilcox Expedition, a 12-man team that would be a week or so ahead of us on the same route.

He expressed concern regarding the competence of some of the Wilcox climbers. But, he, like many others within the Park, had heard about expert Bradford Washburn’s early criticism of Joe Wilcox, the leader of the expedition. At the time, I feared Merry might have viewed me in a similar light.

After the others arrived, we forged our

way across the McKinley River, the beginning of a 15-mile trek over the tundra to reach McGonagall Pass. Our team endured ‘three relays,’ back and forth, in the fog, across the tundra, as we would do, again on the mountain itself.

My brother surprised everyone when he led us up the wrong valley? This error in judgment, however, ended up being a ‘saving grace’ for us later on the mountain.

Once on the glacier, the hardship of snowshoe travel, rope teams, crevasses, and avalanches quickly got everyone’s attention. Because of this, two of our climbers ‘opted-out’ and decided to return home. A huge Grizzly had also charged these men while relaying gear in the overcast tundra a few days earlier.



The Upper slopes of Denali (Mount McKinley) showing the early pioneer routes of 1912, 1913, and 1920. (Source: *GV News*)

So, now we were six.

The beginning of the disaster began as we established a camp, not at the standard 12,100-foot plateau on Karstens Ridge, where most climbers camp, but on a small shelf 800 feet below.

That night what Wilcox called “the worst storm ever to hit Denali,” raged down upon us from above. It would last, on and off, for the next nine days. Freight train winds flattened out tents that night, as we dug into the snow and ice to survive.

A few days later, on a steep, icy ridge above the 12,100-foot camp, we met the five survivors from the Wilcox team, tattered and beaten by the raging storm. The five, Joe Wilcox, among them, descended the following day, taking with them Grace Hoeman, the one female climber from our team. She had been coughing up blood-streaked sputum for the past two days.

Seven of the Wilcox men remained high on the mountain. They had radioed the

Park from the summit a week earlier. The five survivors had dropped down to a lower camp for more supplies, while the seven left above made their summit bid. Wilcox and three others had already been to the top. A fifth climber at their 17,900-foot camp, like Grace Hoeman, was suffering from AMS. So, he chose to descend with Wilcox and the others.

What was all this like to be on Denali in the fateful 1967 expedition?

It was terrifying, overwhelming, and the greatest challenge of my life to date.

I remember telling myself, “You’re going to die. You should have gone down with Grace and the others.”

To prevent a déjà vu of the tragic trip, we’ve put together some lessons learned from the story and safety survival tips (gathered from BC Adventure Smart safety webinar and website at www.adventuresmart.ca/tripplanning).

See the tips in the sidebar.

Tips on how to prevent future climbing tragedies

- Ensure effective communication with the Park (Plan your trip and route, grab appropriate safety gear, and stay on course so rescue teams can locate your hiking group). Before you head out, try the BC Adventure Smart app.
- Check weather and river forecasts (The violent force and magnitude of the nine-day storm amplified the situation).
- Be sure to carry tools to call for help (e.g. flare, satellite phone).
- Know the strengths and limits of team members and work together. Try not to split up, if possible. (The ‘last-minute’ merging of the two teams and leaders decreased the chance of survival; Instead of working together, they judged and criticized each other’s actions).
- Find warm, protected shelter (the climber’s trekked out of their comfort zone - and did not stay on the plateau).
- Plan for the worst - and stay calm.



Members from Chilliwack Outdoor Club (Photo: Christine Camilleri)

The Magic of Storytelling

An Adventure by Christine Camilleri
Chilliwack Outdoor Club

One of the most active clubs in the Lower Mainland is the Chilliwack Outdoor Club. Sandwiched between Vancouver and Hope, we enjoy and have easy access to local trails from the interior to the Mt. Baker area in the US.

This past year, we worked on many projects, including participant and trip leader trips, member socials, safety courses, trail maintenance, a photo contest, and welcome packages for new members. We've posted most of our trips on social media!

At the end of many multi-day trips, we often end up sitting in a circle. We're tired at the end of the day, but still share the day's adventures, and talk about the next day's plans. Night after night, this can become routine and a tradition. Of course, there is no other entertainment like our own stories and jokes.

On day #7 of a 14-day trip last summer, our stories were becoming shorter with more pauses in between and quieter talk. I remember thinking "Maybe it's time for bed? I mean it's only 8:30, but good enough?"

Then Dave spoke:

"There are strange things done in the midnight sun.

*By the men who toil for gold;
The Arctic trails have their secret tales,
That would make your blood run cold."*

We turned our heads, sat up a little straighter, and waited with bated breath as our storyteller continued:

"The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,

*But the queerest they ever did see
Was that night on the marge of Lake Lebarge,
I cremated Sam McGee."*

Dave recited the entire Robert Service poem to 11 attentive and delighted adults under the stars that night. What a feat!

He challenged himself to memorize it and thought it would be a good share at the end of a day's hike.

Now, some of us are doing the same thing and recite different poems and stories.

We never know when someone will stand up and regale us with a performance of the Charge of the Light Brigade, The Big Rock Candy Mountains, or a legend of how the fox got its tail. It's a magical experience - often followed by enthusiastic clapping.

Not to mention, no one ventures off to bed too early anymore!



Mount Becher Near Courtenay, BC
(Photo credit: Bob St. John)

Support the Member Grant Program

We'd like to thank Back Forty Lifestyle Co. for donating 5% of all house-brand sales to the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC!

Their donations go directly into our Member Club Grant fund, which supports club-initiated projects like trail & hut upgrades, education & safety training, and so much more.

Visit the Back Forty Lifestyle Co. website at <https://backfortylifestyleco.ca> for outdoor attire and make a purchase. 5% of all Back Forty Lifestyle Co. brand attire and gear goes towards projects that enhance trails & backcountry recreation!

Do you have a story to tell? Would like to share tips with other backcountry clubs?

Share your tips, trips, and other helpful information with other member clubs.

We invite member clubs to exchange ideas and information about successes. These could include promotional materials and suggestions, safety tips, leadership trips, and more. If you have any ideas, stories, or tips to share, send them to fmcbbc@mountainclubs.org



An epic day of slush skiing on handmade skis on Mt. Hays in Prince Rupert BC - on the North Coast!
(Photo: Robert Rushton - Prince Rupert Backcountry Society)

GOOD READS

Popular Day Hikes Book Series (2019)

Book review by Ron Dart

Alpine Club of Canada-Vancouver

Searching for breathtaking hikes worth exploring

Rocky Mountain Books recently published a superb series that highlights five areas worth trekking and mentions trails that are better to hike in comparison to others. The series contains five books with authors that have extensive knowledge of the regions covered. You'll want to add each book to your collection; the combination of the text, maps, and photos in each book makes ownership worthwhile.

This popular hiking series is updated regularly to provide up-to-date information, maps, and terrain. You'll find the latest information and directions when planning a new hiking destination.

The five books in the updated 2019 "Popular Day Hikes" series include:

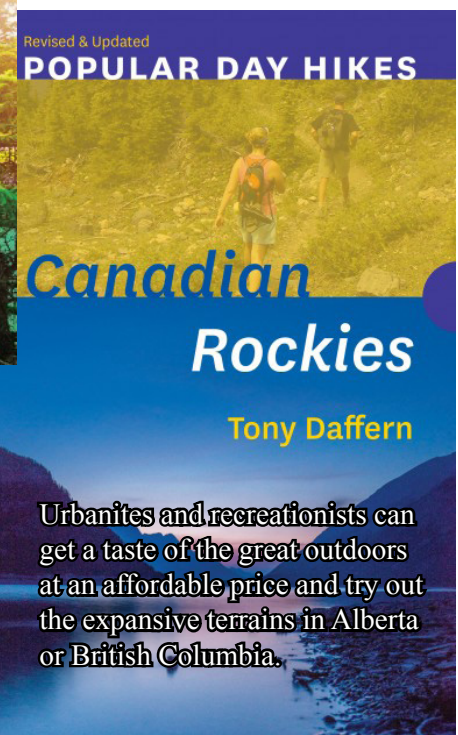
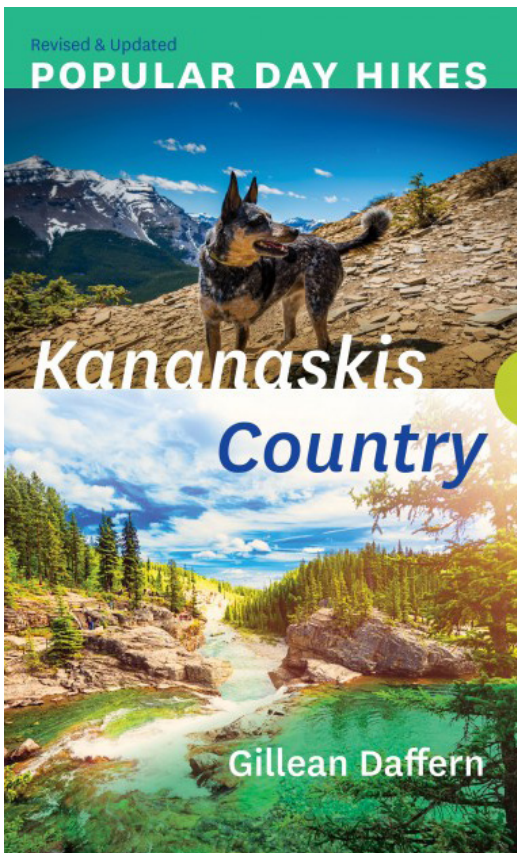
Canadian Rockies by Tony Daffern
Kananaskis Country by Gillean Daffern
Northern Okanagan: Vernon, Shuswap, Lumby by Gerry Shea
South-Central Okanagan: Kelowna, Penticton, Oliver by Gerry Shea
Vancouver Island by Theo Dombrowski

Take a hike!

Every book lists and describes between 35-40 hikes in each region - with attractive and evocative colours and photographs. And, to make each trip even more enticing and convincing, for those with different skill and strength levels, each trip description lists distance, height gain, challenge level,

high point, and best time of the year to make the trip. You'll also find an area map at the beginning of each section.

There is no doubt Rocky Mountain Books should be warmly commended on publishing these series for those keen to take to the hills and mountain terrain.



Surveying the 120th Meridian and the Great Divide: The Alberta-BC Survey, 1918-1924

Author: Jay Sherwood
Published by Caitlin Press,
Halfmoon Bay, BC, 2019

*Reviewed by Mike Nash
Caledonia Ramblers*



‘Surveying the Great Divide: The Alberta/BC Boundary Survey, 1913-1917’ by Jay Sherwood (reviewed in the Spring/Summer 2019 issue of Cloudburst), details the first five years of the survey of Canada’s longest interprovincial boundary. This second volume covers the period 1918 to 1924 and relates the completion of the Great Divide Survey and much of the 120th Meridian Survey. In it, the founding president of the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC), Arthur Oliver Wheeler continues to lead the BC crew responsible for surveying along the mountains of the Great Divide using a combination of triangulation and phototopographic surveying. R.W. Cautley continues to lead the Alberta crew responsible for surveying the economically important mountain passes through the Rockies. The Alberta and BC teams worked closely during the 1913-1917 phase as their surveys often intersect. By 1917, they have completed the survey from the U.S. border north to Howse Pass and have jumped ahead to survey the Yellowhead Pass.

In this second phase, the BC and Alberta crews continue to work together to survey six more mountain passes, namely: Fortress, Athabasca, Whirlpool, Tonquin, Miette, and Robson. Otherwise, their work diverges as Wheeler continues the Great Divide Survey and Cautley focuses on the 120th Meridian. Field seasons are short, typically three months between July and September, and both men’s work takes on new dimensions:

Cautley is now surveying a geographically fixed straight line through an entirely different landscape. To facilitate this work, the Dominion Observatory first establishes an accurate longitude near the BC community of Pouce Coupe using the telegraph line to give a precise time signal. From there, Cautley accurately measures some 8.3 kilometres east to pinpoint the 120th Meridian, and then south towards the intersection with the Great Divide and north through the agricultural land of the Peace. His work is complicated by the need to cut long sightlines through forest, and by the relative lack of gravel in the lowlands with which to construct monuments.

Wheeler has fewer surveyed mountain passes to tie into north of the Jasper area, and so Canada’s Surveyor General, Édouard-Gaston Deville arranges for H. F. Lambart of the Dominion Geodetic Survey to assist him for the last three years of the survey by establishing a triangulation network and series of survey stations between the Yellowhead Pass and the 120th Meridian to which Wheeler can connect. Wheeler’s task is to locate the Continental Divide, and thus the general location of the interprovincial boundary, and then to survey it. To accomplish this, he uses both triangulation and photography, a side benefit of which is a large number of precisely located and dated historic photographs. These are now being used to track vegetation and glacial change over 100 years by UVIC’s Mountain Legacy Project. The survey work is arduous and often dangerous, carrying a 45 pound (20 kg) instrument kit across glaciers and to the top of many mountains, sometimes in the midst of extreme electrical hazard.

SURVEYING THE 120TH MERIDIAN AND THE GREAT DIVIDE

The Alberta/BC Boundary Survey, 1918–1924



JAY SHERWOOD

The book opens by re-introducing the boundary survey's main protagonists: Deville, representing the Dominion Land Survey, Cautley representing Alberta, Wheeler representing British Columbia, and A. J. Campbell, BC assistant in charge while Wheeler is away attending ACC summer camps. Next is a review of the respective surveying methods, followed by chapters detailing each of the survey seasons from 1918 to 1924. The book ends with chapters on the 1950s completion of the 120th Meridian Survey and geographical naming issues.

The 1918 season is especially hard for both Wheeler and Cautley as money and experienced men are in short supply in the last year of the war. As well, the weather is unusually wet, limiting surveying and making stream and river crossings difficult. Spanish flu shuts down Cautley's season early, and Wheeler has to deal with increasingly

hard-to-access terrain as he works north from Howse Pass along a "very erratic" watershed. In the first month of Wheeler's season, he slips on an ice slope and slides a considerable distance to fall into a crevasse. His crew has a narrow escape from falling ice, braves electrical storms at high survey stations, and Wheeler has a close encounter with a grizzly bear that "ran like blazes." Then, while Wheeler is away at the ACC camp in Paradise Valley, one of the crew who is inexperienced in mountain climbing loses a precious book of field notes into a glacial stream, requiring many of the earlier survey stations to be reoccupied.

The 1919 season is better staffed with Conrad Kain and A. S. Thomson rejoining Wheeler's crew, but it also has challenges with the death of a pack-horse, a concussion suffered by Thomson, and a serious knee injury experienced by Campbell. Both the

1918 and 1919 surveys are affected by wildfire smoke.

Thomson has an unusual experience while surveying on the edge of a steep wall near Mount Columbia. A Golden eagle tries to knock him off the cliff during a windstorm, a hunting technique that has been observed being employed successfully against wildlife. Despite these setbacks, many now familiar features of the Rockies are climbed and surveyed around the Columbia Icefields.

On Fortress Lake, they build a raft in order to transport gear, a vessel they grandly name *The Fortress Queen*. I was interested to read of their stay at Camp Parker above Nigel Creek, as it was almost exactly 100 years later that I was there for the first time last July.

Wheeler continues as boundary commissioner for British Columbia for the remaining years of the survey, but from 1920 onwards he starts to devolve responsibility for much of the actual surveying to Campbell.

Wheeler has reached the age of 60 and is finding mountain climbing harder; however, he continues to contribute a fair amount of field work each year. As well, he turns his attention to developing a commercial walking tour between Banff and Mount Assiniboine.

To that end, he leases land from the BC government for a seasonal camp at Mount Assiniboine and petitions for the establishment of a provincial park to protect the area (achieved in 1922). One significant addition to the crew that year is Wheeler's son, Oliver, who is seeking surveying and climbing experience in the Rockies to bolster his forthcoming survey work for the British government in India and for a subsequent bid for Everest.

The Boundary Survey progresses

slowly northwards through Jasper National Park towards the 120th Meridian. At Lambart's instigation, 1921 sees the start of the first aerial flights over the Northern Rockies and both he and Wheeler are quick to see the benefits. Although it would be a while before aircraft would be regularly employed for aerial photogrammetry, their reconnaissance flights over the 1922 survey areas save them considerable time that would otherwise have been lost on the ground. Later that season, while surveying down the Smoky River to Bess Pass, Wheeler is able to tie into his ACC-sponsored 1911 survey around Mount Robson that was instrumental in the establishment of Mount Robson Provincial Park in 1913. I enjoyed their accounts of the country north of Robson to Bess and Jackpine Passes and on to Mounts Sir Alexander and Ida and the Narrows River, as I have researched and backpacked through many of those areas.

1924 is the 12th and final year of the survey, except for the northernmost section of the 120th Meridian that would not be needed until 1950 for oil and gas development. New technology in the form of radio telegraphy now makes it possible to determine the precise longitude at any location using telegraphic time signals.

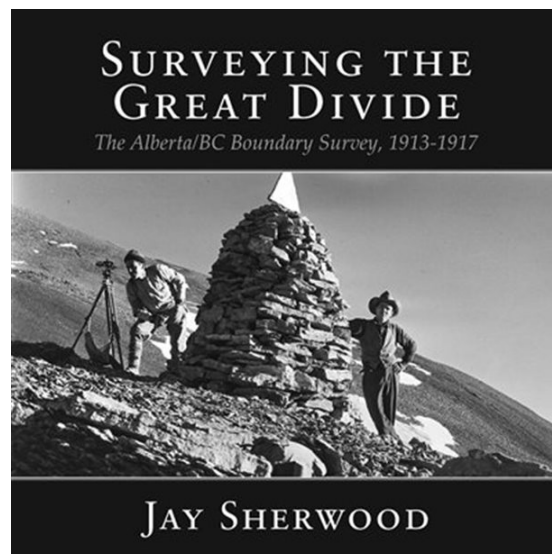
Official approval is required from the BC, Alberta and Federal governments to conclude the survey, and as part of that process a ceremony is held at Robson Pass. This was coincident with the 1924 ACC summer camp that saw the first female ascents of Mount Robson by BC's Phyllis Munday and American, Annette Buck. There is a fine photograph in the book of Wheeler and

Cautley standing next to their commemorative monument at Robson Pass, near where the ACC fittingly proposes to build a new mountain hut a century later.

The book ends with a plea to continue the Mountain Legacy Project, as much of the area north of the Kicking Horse Pass has yet to be re-photographed. This could be hugely beneficial today with the rapid glacial and watershed changes that are taking place, as well as providing an invaluable research legacy for the next century.

Both books in the series are well-researched and worthwhile reads, and are essential elements of anyone's Canadian mountain library. Lavishly illustrated with historic photographs and maps, each is a large-format, soft-covered book in the tradition of Sherwood's earlier photo-journal works about 20th Century BC surveyors. They are great value at under \$30 each and provide a unique look at the surveying of Canada's Rockies and the young Alpine Club.

'Surveying the 120th Meridian and the Great Divide: The Alberta-BC Boundary Survey, 1918-1924' by Jay Sherwood; Caitlin Press, Halfmoon Bay, BC, 2019; ISBN 978-1-773860-09-1; softcover, 192 pages, illustrations, maps, portraits, 26 cm; \$29.95.



Get Involved with the Federation

Join us! We're seeking nominations for new Board of Directors or Committee members. If you or someone else are interested, email fmcdbc@mountainclubs.org

Here's how you can get involved:

1. Help fundraise to raise funds to support advocacy efforts, including protecting and increasing access to non-motorized trails.

2. Join a Committee to discuss issues or provide a stronger voice to protect key recreational areas, and develop strategies for the recreation and maintenance of parks in BC.

Sign up at
mountainclubs.org/volunteer

3. Donate to the FMCBC and support advocacy efforts or help fund trail projects under the Club Member Grant Program at mountainclubs.org/donate



The Last Blue Mountain: The Great Karakoram Climbing Tragedy

Author: Ralph Barker
2020 edition published by
Vertebrate Publishing,
Sheffield, UK, March 2020

Reviewed by Mike Nash
Caledonia Ramblers

I came across *'The Last Blue Mountain'* ten years ago as I was researching lessons of history for a new book on outdoor safety and survival.

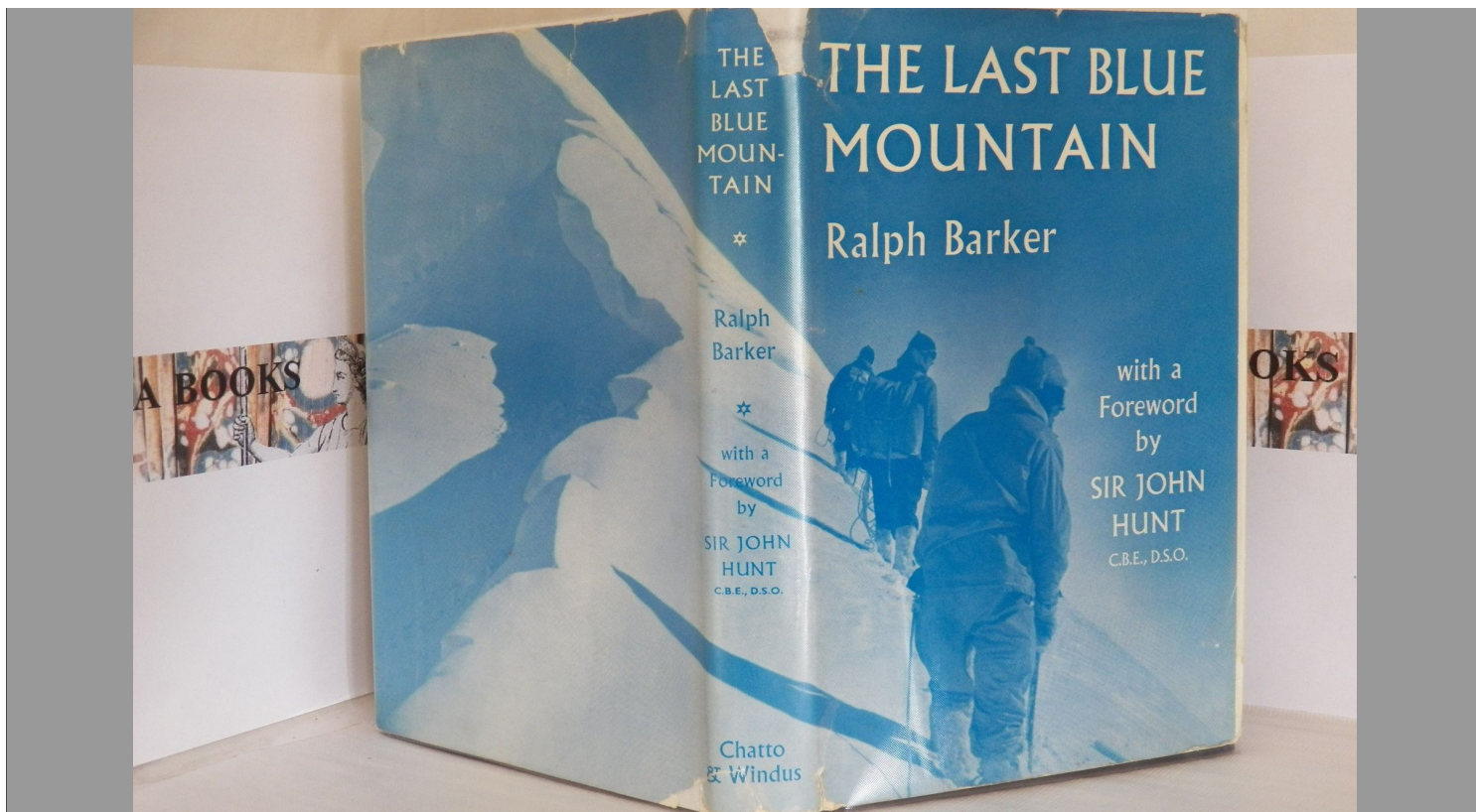
The 1959 edition was titled *'The Last Blue Mountain: The True and Moving Story of the Ill-starred Expedition Against Mount Haramosh'*, and led off with a foreword by Sir John Hunt. I found it through a 50th anniversary feature in the Sunday Times of London, published in September 2007 and titled *'The Friends Who Died at the Top of the*

World.' I discovered that the book was a collector's item, fetching up to \$200 from online booksellers; if you were lucky to find a copy. I was fortunate to locate a single copy in the BC library system which I borrowed through our marvelous interlibrary loan service. Then, in February 2020 the UK's premier mountain literature publisher told me that they were republishing the work and offered me a review copy... I jumped at the chance.

'The Last Blue Mountain' is Ralph Barker's account of the 1957 Oxford University expedition to 7,397 m (24,270 ft) Mount Haramosh in Kashmir's Karakoram Range. One of the world's great survival stories, and a mountaineering classic on a par with *'Touching the Void'*, this is an epic tale of friendship and fortitude in the face of tragedy. Three Brits, an American and

a New Zealander made up the climbing team, and for four of them it was their first high altitude venture. They were supported by six Hunza porters up to their penultimate camp 3, which they established at 5,639 m (18,500 ft).

After extensive periods of bad weather had ended any hope for a summit bid, they settled on their fallback option of a high altitude reconnaissance from a fourth camp. This they achieved when four members of the team reached 6,401 m (21,000 ft) near the top of Haramosh I, from where they could see in detail the final route to Haramosh II. They were relieved to see that the summit ridge was technically very difficult, firmly ending any temptation for a summit dash. Then, just minutes from retreating safely from their final high point, their triumphant reconnaissance turned into a nightmarish disaster when



1959 edition of 'The Last Blue Mountain' (Source: Biblio.com)

two members of the party decided to go a hundred feet farther for a slightly better view. They were instantly swept away by an avalanche into a nearly inaccessible snow bowl.

Having miraculously survived the 1,000-foot fall thanks to the cushioning effect of the avalanche debris, they were mostly uninjured, but they had lost their ice axes and other critical clothing and gear, and were trapped. The expedition doctor suffered a dislocated hip that could have spelled certain death in the circumstances, but it sprang back into place when he made a sudden move.

During three terrible days and nights that followed, the two remaining climbers led by Tony Streather set out to rescue the first two. They eventually succeeded in their effort, only to fall themselves into the same snow trap in an ironic situation reversal, enduring harder falls that lacked the cushioning effects of the earlier avalanche.

Ultimately one of each party — one rescuer and one rescued — died, despite the most heroic efforts. Ironically, were it not for a single lost crampon, all four would likely have survived; but two did make it out alive, and according to Sir John Hunt in his foreword to the first edition, *"The real measure is the success or failure of the climber to triumph, not over a lifeless mountain, but over himself: the true value of the enterprise lies in the example to others of human motive and human conduct."*

Tony Streather was once again thrust into a heroic role, having earlier distinguished himself in rescue efforts on the ill-fated American K2 attempt in 1953 that was described in the book 'K2 The Savage Mountain' by Charles Houston and Robert Bates. He had further established himself as one of the leading Himalayan climbers of the day when he reached the top of Kangchenjunga in 1955.

The two survivors eventually made it

down to camp 3, where the fifth member of the climbing team, American, Scott Hamilton had almost given up hope for them after occupying the camp alone for a week. Less experienced than the others, he had been prevaricating for some time between a dangerous solo descent through the icefall and down steep snow slopes in an almost certainly futile bid to get help, and an even more desperate solo climb to search for his missing companions. As it was, from camp 3 the trio barely made it down alive after another bivouac along the route.

Streather, alive and well in his eighties, was the subject of the 2007 Sunday Times story, in which the writer concluded "At a time when mountaineers are often portrayed as callous egotists, their sacrifice remains a shining example to us all." Streather died in 2018 aged 92.

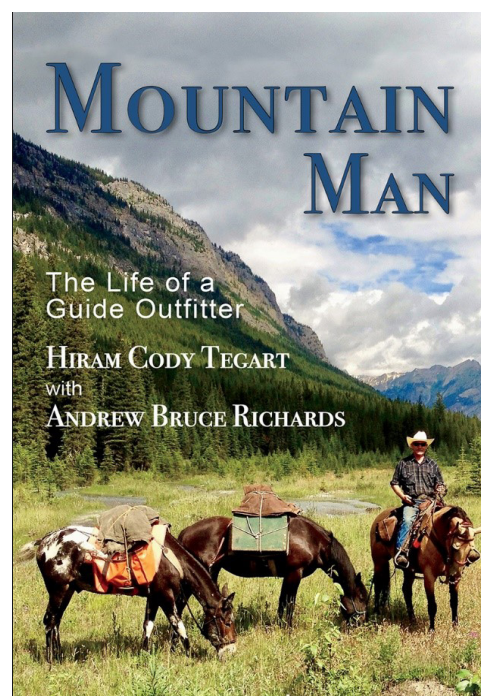
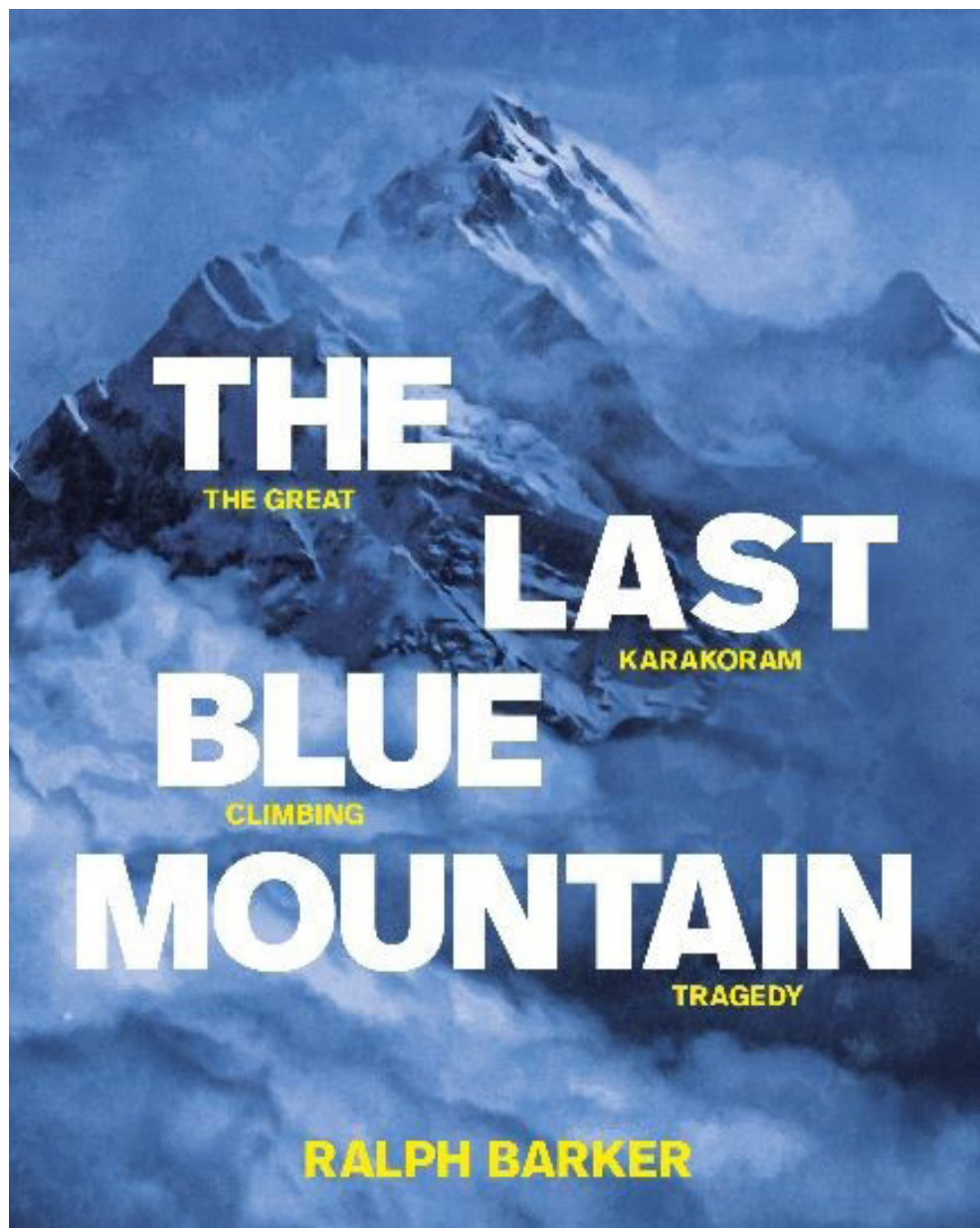
Continued on page 30.

**'The Last Blue Mountain...'
continued from page 29**

The VP edition retains Lord Hunt's original foreword, as well as a new introduction by Ed Douglas, former editor of the Alpine Journal. Douglas provides new insights into the protagonists as well as the author, who achieves the difficult goal of telling a riveting tale and bringing out the climbers' personalities and interrelationships, despite not being on the expedition himself.

'The Last Blue Mountain: The Great Karakoram Climbing Tragedy' by Ralph Barker

Paperback, ISBN: 978-1-912560-42-4, 232 pages, Publication date: March 2020, £12.99; Special hardcover edition: £24.00. <https://www.v-publishing.co.uk/books/books-new-and-coming-soon/books-new-and-coming-soon-the-last-blue-mountain/>



**Mountain Man: The Life
of a Guide Outfitter**

Author: Hiram Cody Tegart with
Andrew Bruce Richards
Published by Caitlin Press, BC,
2019

*Reviewed by Mike Nash
Caledonia Ramblers*

Mountain Man is the story of legendary guide outfitter, Cody Tegart, set in the mountains of southeast British Columbia in the late 20th Century.

Tegart died in 2018, aged 68, before the book was finished; and it fell to friend and one-time neighbour, Andy Richards to complete this compilation and editing of stories by Tegart and others. Richards resists the temptation to over-edit the writers' colloquialisms in order to better bring the reader a sense of realism of a fast-disappearing mountain culture. The work is not unlike that of the late

Jack Boudreau, whose books on interior and northern BC pioneers were, for several years, among Caitlin Press' most popular outputs. Given reader appetite for a firsthand, idiomatic style of history telling, this book may also do well.

The real life stories give a good sense of what horse packing and big game hunting in the mountains was, and to some extent still is like. If you backpack in off-the-beaten-track places, you might still run into the occasional horse riders or pack trains as I did several times last year. Even if you are not a fan of guided big game hunting, it's worth recalling that many of our mountain trails (certainly in the Rockies) had their origin as horse trails, and that this is a rich and essential part of our provincial history and rural economy.

As is oft the case with biography, the book began slowly for me, with what seemed like a rather scattered approach to the protagonists' early years. However, I resisted the temptation to put it aside, and by the mid-point my interest level picked up as we got into stories by other guides and clients. These third-party accounts set the stage for the return of Tegart's voice in the later chapters as he pulls no punches in his authentic and incisive narratives.

Tegart, we also learn, was one of a group of people who fought for protection of an area that culminated in the establishment of the *Height of the Rockies Provincial Park* in 1995. The book ends on a political note, protesting what the authors see as mistaken wildlife management practices of successive provincial governments, and challenging some present-day perceptions about predator/prey relationships and grizzly bear hunting.

I thought the book would have benefited from a stronger beginning; but despite my early misgivings I warmed up to it as I got further along, and by the final page I felt that it was a down-to-earth story that was fairly told and worth reading and knowing about.

Mountain Man: The Life of a Guide Outfitter by Hiram Cody Tegart with Andrew Bruce Richards; Caitlin Press, 2019; ISBN: 9781773860060; Paperback; 240 pages, B&W photo throughout: \$24.95.



Mountain Man Hiram Cody Tegart (Source: *The Columbia Valley Pioneer*)



Welcome Burnaby Outdoor Club!

The Burnaby Outdoor Club, our newest club member, plans day and overnight, and multi-day trips (when safe to do so), and coordinates and promotes year-round outdoor activities, including hiking, snowshoeing, walking, cycling, skiing, skating, and more.

Additionally, the club provides hike ratings and trip reports. View more information about the Burnaby Outdoor Club on their website at burnabyoutdoor.com



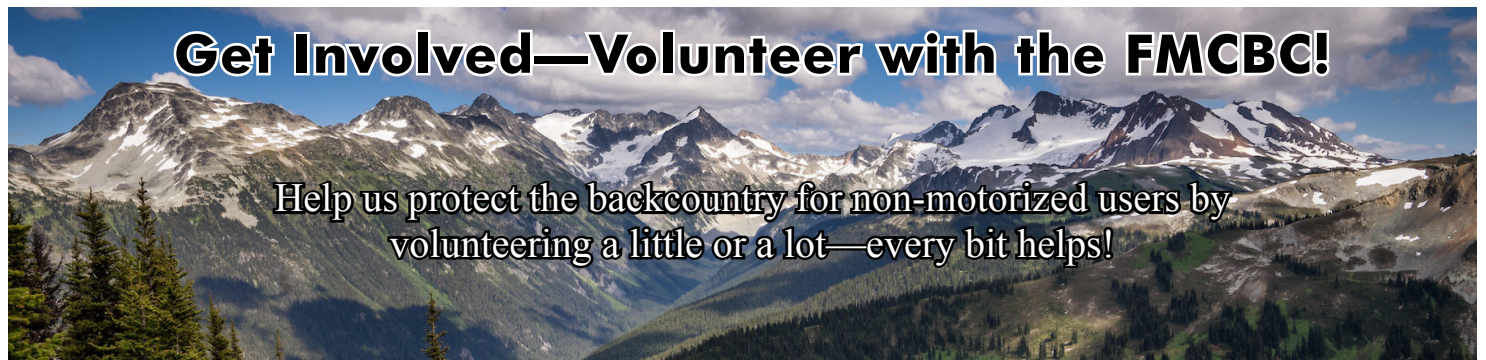
Carpes Lake
Photo credit: Carol Hunter

Trails Society of BC - New Associate Member

The Trails Society of BC assembles and preserves the British Columbian section of The Great Trail (renamed from the Trans Canada Trail) and advocates for the expansion, sustainability, and preservation of greenway trails in B.C.

Visit their website at trailsbc.ca or follow them on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter.


What is an associate member with the FMCBC? Non-profit organizations and federal charities, whose mission/vision statements align closely with our own, can join the FMCBC for reasons of common interest. Learn more about associate and individual memberships at mountainclubs.org/membership



We are looking for individuals with skills and/or experience in many different areas including fundraising, outreach, grant writing, advocacy and more.

Let us know your interests and how you can help.

**Sign up to volunteer at mountainclubs.org/volunteer
or talk to your club's FMCBC Rep.**

A scenic mountain landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground that reflects the surrounding environment. The middle ground shows a rocky shoreline with patches of snow and a dense forest of evergreen trees on a steep slope. In the background, a prominent mountain peak rises against a clear blue sky. The overall scene is bright and clear, suggesting a sunny day.

This issue's cover photo, taken by Maria Christina S. at Upper Pierce Lake. Pierce Lake Trail is a 11.4 kilometre out and back trail located near Fraser Valley that features a lake and is rated as difficult. The trail offers a number of activity options and is best travelled from June until October.

Cloudburst Cover Photo Contest

We're looking for fall/ winter
action shots for our next cover of
Cloudburst!

Email your entries to
cloudburst@mountainclubs.org
by October 1, 2020.

FMCBC MEMBER CLUBS

FRASER VALLEY

Backroads Outdoor Club – facebook.com/backroadsoutdoor
Bear Mountain Trail Society – bearmountaintrailssociety.blogspot.ca
Chilliwack Outdoor Club – chilliwackoutdoorclub.com
Chilliwack Park Society – chilliwackparksociety.ca
Valley Outdoor Association – valleyoutdoor.org

SOUTHERN INTERIOR

Central Okanagan Climbing Association – facebook.com/climbcoca
Columbia Valley Climbing Association – columbiavalleyclimbing.com
Kamloops Hiking Club – kamloopshikingclub.net
Kamloops Outdoor Club – kamloopsoutdoorclub.ca
Kootenay Mountaineering Club – kootenaymountaineeringclub.ca
Penticton Outdoors Club – pentictonoutdoorsclub.ca
Skaha Bluffs Park Watch Society – skahabluffsparkwatch.com
South Okanagan Trail Alliance – southokanagantrailalliance.com
Varsity Outdoors Club Okanagan – ubcsuo.ca/varsity-outdoor-club-okanagan

SOUTHWEST MAINLAND & SEA TO SKY

Alpine Club of Canada (Vancouver Section) – accvancouver.ca
Alpine Club of Canada (Whistler Section) – accwhistler.ca
Bowen Island Trail Society – bowenislandtrailsociety.ca
Burnaby Outdoor Club – bowenislandtrailsociety.ca
Friends of Garibaldi Park
Mountain Mentors – mountainmentors.org
North Shore Hikers Society – northshorehikers.org
North Vancouver Outdoors Club – northvanoutdoorsclub.ca
SFU Outdoors Club – facebook.com/groups/1481048385508320
Vancouver Rock Climbing Group – vrcg.ca
Varsity Outdoor Club (UBC) – ubc-voc.com

PROVINCE-WIDE CLUBS

Hike BC – hike-bc.org

SUNSHINE COAST - NORTH COAST

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

VANCOUVER ISLAND & ISLANDS

Alberni Valley Outdoor Club – alberniavalleyoutdoorclub.wordpress.com
Comox District Mountaineering Club – comoxhiking.com
Friends of Strathcona Park – friendsofstrathcona.org
Island Mountain Ramblers – islandmountainramblers.com
Outdoor Club of Victoria – ocv.ca
Quadra Island Outdoor Club – qioutdoorclub.org
Vancouver Island Trail Association – vi-trail.ca
Victoria Outdoor Club Meetup – meetup.com/Victoria-Outdoor-Club

CENTRAL & NORTHERN INTERIOR

Bulkley Backcountry Ski Society – bbss.ca
Caledonia Ramblers – caledoniarblers.ca
Chetwynd Outdoors Society – chetoutdoors.wordpress.com
Fraser Headwaters Alliance – fraserheadwaters.org
Hickory Wing Ski Touring Club – tmrs.ca/members/hickory-wing-ski-touring-club
Prince Rupert Backcountry Society – facebook.com/Prince-Rupert-Back-country-Society-103142157816742
Ozalenka Alpine Club
Skeena Climbing Society – facebook.com/skeenaclimbingsociety

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

BC Whitewater – bcwhitewater.org
Squamish Access Society – squamishaccess.ca
Trails Society of BC – trailsbc.ca

Get involved. Take action.

By working with outdoor recreation organizations and industry and government agencies, the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC protects and maintains access for quality non-motorized backcountry recreation in British Columbia's mountains and wilderness areas.

There are many ways to show your support and make a difference:

- Join a member club or talk to your current club about becoming a member
- Make a donation to the FMCBC
- Volunteer your time by joining a regional committee
- Show your support by becoming an Individual or Associate Member
- Visit our website to learn about the latest issues affecting BC's backcountry and find out how to help

Learn more at: mountainclubs.org