

THE B.C. MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2001

VOL. 79 NO. 2

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 2674 Vancouver, B.C., V6B 3W8

INTERNET SITE: <http://www.bcmc.ca>

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EQUIPMENT - PAUL KUBIK	876-0764
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LIBRARY CUSTODIAN -	
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GEORGE HAMILTON	988-1888
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South side of Mt. Shuksan. Photo – B. Hansen

EVENING SOCIALS

Evening socials are usually held in the ANZA club, upstairs room (corner of 8th Ave. and Ontario, Vancouver) starting at 7:30 p.m. Please bring your own cups to socials if you wish to drink the free tea or coffee provided.

Tuesday, 13 February – Entertainment will be a slide show by Chris Cooper on skiing, hiking, and kayaking on and near Ellesmere Island in Canada's arctic.

Tuesday, 13 March – Entertainment will be a slide show by Robert Nugent on rock climbing at Yosemite, Squamish, and possibly Scotland.

SCHEDULED TRIPS

Participation on club trips is open to any person with adequate skills and experience, subject to the approval of the trip organizer. All non-member participants must sign a disclosure and waiver form relieving the club and all other participants on the trip from any liability. A trip organizer is not a certified guide. The function of the organizer is to organize the trip, ensure that it gets underway, know the access to the area, and know a route or routes on the climb.

It is expected that each person on a club trip has the necessary skills, experience, fitness, and equipment. The organizer may specify certain equipment mandatory for participation in a trip. Any person who attempts to participate in a club trip without such mandatory equipment, may be requested to withdraw from the trip. The club has avalanche transceivers and snow shovels available for hire. These may be obtained by contacting Greg Hamilton at 739-7555 prior to the Thursday before the weekend the transceivers are wanted. Each person on a club trip is responsible for his or her own safety and for checking the equipment used. Please be considerate and call the trip organizer by Thursday evening for weekend trips, and by Friday for Sunday trips.

All trips are ski trips unless indicated otherwise.

		ORGANIZER	
February 3: Cloudburst Mtn. More extended skiing on the Squamish-Cheakamus Divide.	C3/1870 m	Ian McGillivray	988-3618
February 3-4: Mt. Duke Skiing south of the Duffey Lake road.	B3/2380 m	Monika Bittel	983-3097
February 3-4: Lillooet ice climbing Ice climbing east of the Coast Mountains.	A5	Colin Wooldridge	512-6930
February 4: Mt. Seymour Skiing in Vancouver's North Shore mountains.	A2/1450 m	Julian Lash	687-0350
February 10: Needle Pk. Skiing in the Coquihalla area.	B2-3(4)/2075 m	Grant Oughton	942-1176
February 10: Hollyburn Mtn. Easy skiing above West Vancouver.	A2/1324 m	Julian Lash	687-0350
February 10-11: Saxifrage Mtn. Skiing northeast of Pemberton.	B3/2500 m	Jeff Oh	708-9191
February 11: Mt. Seymour Easy skiing above North Vancouver.	A2/1450 m	Pat Crean	986-5622
February 17: Mt. Alpen Skiing east of Squamish.	B2/1703 m	Mike Peel	444-4068
February 17-18: South Ck. area Skiing in the upper Lillooet valley area, road conditions permitting.	B3	Paul Kubik	876-0764
February 17-18: Golden Ears (snowshoe) Extended trip in the Lower Fraser valley.	C	Emanuele Porra	533-7723
February 17-18: Mt. Sedgwick Extended skiing on the west side of Howe Sound.	C2/2077 m	Jordan Peters	987-0635
February 18: Frosty Mtn. Extended skiing in Manning Park.	C3/2423 m	Murray Lashmar	732-8184
February 18: Mt. Crickmer Yet another longer ski trip in the Lower Fraser valley.	C2/1340 m	Reinhard Fabische	462-9638
February 24-25: Overlord Mtn. Skiing in Garibaldi park, beyond Singing Pass.	B/C2-3/2634 m	Rhys Gibb	294-3792
February 24-25: Organizer's choice (snowshoe)	B	Michele Davidson	254-4212

Snowshoeing somewhere. Contact the organizer for more details.			
February 24-25: Saxifrage Mtn.	B3/2500 m	Chris Trautman	924-6896
Skiing northeast of Pemberton.			
February 24-25: Caspar Ck.	B3/2380 m	David Scanlon	464-3730
Skiing off the Duffey Lake road.			
February 25: Mt. Seymour	A2/1450 m	Pat Crean	986-5622
Easy skiing above North Vancouver.			
March 3-4: Sky Pilot Mtn.	B3(4)/2025 m	Monika Bittel	983-3097
Skiing and rock climbing above Howe Sound.			
March 3-4: Duffey Lake area	B2	Liz Ball	879-4648
Easy skiing off the Duffey Lake road. Joint trip with the ACC.			
March 3-4: Ipsoot Mtn.	C3/2590 m	Nana Zolbrod	904-7570
Fine extended skiing west of Pemberton.			
March 3-4: Cirque Pk. area	B3	Eric Hughes	980-6484
Skiing north of the Duffey Lake road.			
March 10: Cloudburst Mtn.	C3/1870 m	Bill Wright	985-1279
Extended skiing on the Squamish-Cheakamus divide.			
March 10: Mt. Rohr	C2-3/2440 m	Margaret and Brian Ellis	266-6591
Skiing off the Duffey Lake road.			
March 10-11: Squamish-Whistler area	C3	Anders Ourom	228-1798
Skiing somewhere. Contact the organizer for more details.			
March 11: Knight Pk.	C3/2237 m	Phil Kubik	266-5873
Extended skiing in the Chilliwack valley area.			
March 11: Mt. Seymour	A2/1450 m	Pat Crean	986-5622
Easy skiing above North Vancouver.			

MEMBERSHIP

New members

The club welcomes the following new associate members:

Greg Adams, Trevor Baker, Kevin Boyle, Brad Braun, Ron Caves, Kevin Cunningham, Mathieu Dorion, Susan Fritz, David Hamilton, Walter Hardy, Wendy Johnstone, Matt Kidd, Evert Kuijpers, Chris Lambeck, Cameron Long, Harry Long, Carl van Maarseveen, Andrzej Malek, Glen McCallum, B. Kelly McNeil, Laurent Mingo, Elena Ouliankina, James Ram, Tanya Scharbach, Cynthia and Howard Siemens, Vicki Doreen Skye May, Charmaine Smeeth, Jesse South, James Selkirk Stewart, Kevin Swanson, Doug Swystun, Kim Thompson, Paula Vera, George Wartak, Rob West, and Dean Wutke

What club members are doing – The Rucksack

The club wishes to congratulate **Alice Obermajer** and **Jake Filusz** on the recent birth of their son, Nicholas Fraser.

INTRODUCTION TO WINTER SKI TRAVEL COURSE

Objectives: To develop skills, knowledge, and confidence to safely participate in overnight ski trips.

For whom: Strong novice or newly proficient backcountry skiers.

Prerequisites: Open to all BCMC members in good physical health and fitness who are able to ski with an overnight (15kg) pack.

Course topics: Clothing and equipment, trip planning, snow camping and snow shelters, route and snowpack evaluation, avalanche awareness, transceiver use and self-rescue, winter mountain travel and weather. Course does not include glacier travel or first aid.

Dates: The course will be offered over 4 weekends in February and March by 4 different instructors (noted below in square brackets). Ski trips on the weekends of Feb. 3-4 [Trevor Lumley], Feb. 24-25 [Marcus Dell], March 3-4 [Brian Wood], and March 10-11 [Darren Quist] will be preceded by Thursday evening discussions on Feb. 1, 22, March 1, and 8.

Registration: The course is limited to 15 participants and costs \$200. To register – contact Colin Wooldridge at 512-6930.

WINTER LEADERSHIP SKILLS COURSE

Bruce Wilson from Canada West Mountain School will be teaching a winter leadership skills course for BCMC members. The course will be limited to 8 active BCMC members, with priority given to members who (1) organize winter club trips and (2) teach winter club courses. The course will cost \$130 and include one Thursday evening of instruction (Feb. 15) and two day trips in the field (Feb. 17-18).

Course instruction will be split between (1) soft skills and (2) hard skills. The soft skills portion of the course will include topics such as leadership techniques involving group management, risk management, communication, decision making and other such skills. The hard skills component will focus on avalanche safety techniques involving terrain evaluation, snowpack structure, weather, safe routefinding and rescue techniques. recognizing, and avoiding avalanche hazards.

For registration and more information contact Kit Griffin at 736-8462 or kitgriffin@telus.net

RESTRICTIONS ON BACKCOUNTRY ACCESS IN MT. SEYMOUR PARK?

Is Mt. Seymour going to turn into another Cypress Bowl? Will we lose access rights there during the ski season? Pat Crean will be organizing backcountry day ski trips to Mt. Seymour each month this ski season, beginning on 28 January. On one of these trips, probably in April or May, he would like to get the FMCBC and representatives from other clubs involved, possibly setting up an information display to inform the public of the valuable contribution by Vancouver's mountain clubs to the recreational use of the North Shore Mountains. Do you have any ideas about this, or would you like to assist? If so, contact Pat at 986-5622.

SUMMER CLIMBING CAMPS, 2001

Two summer climbing camps for club members have been organized. These are –

1. 4th Annual Lake Lovely Water Summer Camp, 14-21 July

Seven days of mountaineering in the glorious Tantalus Range (map 92G14) with routes to charm the beginner to the advanced. Accommodation is in the luxurious Alpine Club cabin with swimming and boating at the doorstep. \$275 covers helicopter in and out and hut rental. Participants must be club members at time of application, physically fit and have ice axe and basic rope skills. This is a self-guided camp. For information and registration contact Peter Woodsworth at 254-7076.

2. Bendor Range-Mt. Truax area, 11-19 August

This is a minimal cost hike in and out camp offering a variety of hiking and climbing possibilities, with lots for everyone. Participants must be club members at the time of application and must be physically fit. For information and registration, contact David Scanlon at 464-3930.

COMMERCIAL RECREATION – IS IT LEGAL?

B.C. Crown Assets and Lands (BCAL) has finally decided to do something about all the illegal unlicensed commercial recreation occurring in the Whistler-Pemberton region. They have hired an enforcement officer who lives at Whistler. His name is Bob and he can be contacted at 604-905-1039.

If you encounter any commercial operation you think is not licensed (the only licensed ones in winter are Whistler Heliski (Spearheads-Rainbow-Callaghan-Ipsoot mainly), Blackcomb snowmobiles (Brandywine), Mad River Nordic (Callaghan), and a snowmobile operation in the Soo valley), please report them to Bob. There are no licensed operations for the Duffey Lake or Darcy corridors.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS FOR WINTER

Weather – Lower Mainland 664-9010 or www.weatheroffice.com

B.C. Extended forecast: www.tor.ec.gc.ca/text/fpcn54.wvr.htm

Snow and avalanche conditions –

BC – 1-800-667-1105 or www.avalanche.ca

Washington – 1-206-526-6677 or www.nwac.noaa.gov

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Past President's report at the AGM – recreation vs environment

John Knight writes –

I have great trouble following the logic and direction laid out by Anders Ourom in the Past-president's report (BCMC newsletter December 2000). On the one hand he writes that there is no question that "...we must always try to minimize our impact on the environment". On the other hand he states that we should be careful of alliances with environmentalists ("moderate conservation groups" excepted) on the grounds that their agenda is very different from ours. In fact, he says that the alliance between mountaineers and environmentalists is dead. If we are not on the same side then I can't decide if he means that the BCMC should only try to work with environmental groups whose idea of minimizing environmental impact ("genuine environmental impacts") is the same as the club's, or whether he means that recreation in the mountains has precedence over environmental concerns. In both cases the language and logic he uses to present his argument seem to be the same as that used by corporate concerns and motorized recreation organizations in the drive to justify their behaviour. To me the issue is quite simple. In the debate over recreation versus environment we have to act for the environment first, even in cases of doubt. Mr. Ourom stated that it matters not how a logging road is closed, the result to BCMC members is the same. True, it means that we are going to have to change our behaviour and include self-propelled access as part of our self-propelled recreation toolbox. Perhaps a new dimension to mountaineering will be rediscovered. Is this what Mr. Ourom was trying to say?

NEWS

First continuous ski descent of Everest

Slovenian Davo Karnicar has become the first person to make an uninterrupted ski descent of Mt. Everest. In September, 2000, Karnicar summited Everest, spent a few minutes on top, and then embarked on his descent, reaching Base Camp in a little over five hours, without removing his skis once. Karnicar was wearing ordinary ski boots, at the risk of his toes, in order to have the control he needed.

"Extreme skiing is my sport, my thinking and life itself," he says. Karnicar, a ski instructor, has also skied Mont Blanc, the Matterhorn, the Eiger and Mt. Annapurna. "I felt this was my life's calling. Skiing down mountains is what I'm good at – so why not ski the highest one in the world? I feel I was born with this talent and felt a duty to use it".

From The Independent

NON-MOTORIZED VS MOTORIZED RECREATION IN THE SQUAMISH FOREST DISTRICT – IS THIS YEAR THE MOMENT OF TRUTH?

B.C. Ministry of Forests releases its proposed recreation plan for zoning of motorized and non-motorized recreation in the Squamish Forest District

Comment by M. Feller

In late December, the Squamish Forest District released for public comment, its "Public recreation study of the Squamish Forest District". This report, prepared by the Outdoor Recreation Council, with guidance from the Squamish Forest District, considered current outdoor recreation use and conflicts with the district, and has put forward a zoning scheme to be finalized after public comment, which is supposed to be solicited this winter.

This long-awaited report comes approximately 30 years after the FMCBC first requested it. During this 30 year period, opportunities for non-motorized recreation, such as wilderness mountaineering and back-country skiing, have steadily declined. Within the last 2 years the situation has been at a crisis point, mainly due to large numbers of commercial motorized recreation operations doing whatever they wanted wherever they wanted, all illegally without a permit, together with increased numbers of snowmobilers with more powerful machines. Non-motorized recreationists have been displaced to varying degrees from many areas which once offered non-motorized experiences. Examples are Brandywine valley, Callaghan Lake, The Spearheads, and Pemberton Icecap.

The intense (one-way) conflict between back country skiers and snowmobilers is explicitly noted in the report. The report lists only 8 day trips for skiers where snowmobiles are not encountered. However, for only 3 of these (Diamond Head, Singing Pass and Black Tusk trail – 2 trips) are snowmobiles banned. Of these 8, 4 are long making them not very feasible in winter (Cassiope area, Mt. Price, Mt. Jimmy-Jimmy, and Wood Group) and 3 are only possible if roads are plowed (Cloudburst via Squamish., Mt. Jimmy-Jimmy, and Wood Group) so that in reality, there are usually only 3 possible day trips where the absence of snowmobiles can be guaranteed (the 3 trails into Garibaldi Park). In general, there is also no mountain that can be ascended in a day in winter where the absence of snowmobiles can be guaranteed.

Weekend trips are little better. Only 6 weekend backcountry skiing trips in the absence of snowmobiles are listed. I would add a 7th – to Singing Pass area. Of these 7 trips, for only 4, (again – 4 trails into Garibaldi park – Diamond Head, Black Tusk, Singing Pass, and Wedgemount) can the absence of snowmobiles be guaranteed. The others (Saxifrage via Joffre or Spetch Cks, Ipsoot via Miller Ck.) may have snowmobiles on their approaches or heliskiers higher up (Whistler Heliski uses Ipsoot, Cayoosh Helisports has started using Saxifrage this winter).

Extended backcountry skiing trips are the worst. Only 4 such trips in the absence of snowmobiles are listed. These 4 are all in Garibaldi park, once again, and one of these is the Spearhead traverse used heavily by heliskiers while another is Wedge Mtn. to Mt. Currie, which has no really good finish and Mt. Currie has become a more popular helicopter destination in recent years. No less than 2 companies – Cayoosh Helisports and Blackcomb Helicopters – have applied for commercial licences to use it. Thus, extended non-motorized trips reduce to 2¾, again all in Garibaldi park.

In the entire Squamish Forest District, then, we have 3 day trips, 4 weekend trips, and 2-3 extended trips, absolutely all in Garibaldi park, where backcountry skiers can be guaranteed to avoid motorized recreationists. For a historical perspective, consider that in the 1970's there was no heliskiing and snowmobiles were restricted to a few popular areas, such as Brohm Ridge. We could be guaranteed not to meet motorized recreationists on more than 90% of our trips anywhere in the Squamish Forest District. Now we can say this for only a pathetically few areas restricted almost entirely to the west side of Garibaldi park.

So, how will the proposed zoning change the current situation?

The FMCBC's proposal, described in our April 2000 newsletter, would have protected a reasonable area outside of Garibaldi park for non-motorized recreation, while still conceding large areas, such as most of the Pemberton icecap, and Brandywine, Callaghan, Soo, Rutherford, and Ryan valleys, and the Tenquille Lake-Owl Ck. area, to motorized recreationists. The Ministry of Forest's proposed plan, while an improvement on the status quo, still concedes relatively little to non-motorized recreationists in winter.

The plan provides 2 zonings – one for winter and one for summer. The summer plan is generally quite reasonable, differing from the FMCBC's proposal only in the following way: The plan proposes 1) less non-motorized area in the SW portion of the Pemberton icecap (near Exodus Pk.) and in the N portion of the icecap near the head of Ryan R., but more non-motorized area in the upper Elaho – upper Sims Ck. areas adjacent to the Clendenning Park; 2) less non-motorized east of Lillooet Lake around Lizzie and Twin 1 and 2 Cks, but more non-motorized in the mountains above Douglas Ck. 3) Non-motorized in the Tenquille-Owl-Fowl area (the FMCBC proposal had none here) 4) More non-motorized in the mountains south of the Ryan R. near Longspur Pk. 5) More non-motorized in the upper Callaghan valley but less non-motorized in the Chance-Roe-High Falls Cks-Cloudburst area.

On balance, the pluses of the FMCBC proposal seem balanced by the pluses of the MoF plan.

In winter, however, the story is considerably different. The plan differs from the FMCBC proposal in that it (the plan) proposes substantially less non-motorized area in the following locations:

- 1) Lions to Sky Pilot area,
- 2) SW Pemberton Icecap near Exodus Pk.,
- 3) N Pemberton Icecap in the South Ck.-Overseer area,
- 4) the entire upper Lillooet drainage area from Manatee-Lillooet Glacier-Salal Ck.-Boulder Ck.-North Ck.-Railroad Pass (within this large area, the only proposed non-motorized areas are a small portion of the lower Lillooet Glacier and some land to the east and the lower North Ck. valley, neither of which are that suitable for snowmobiles or heliskiing anyway).
- 5) Wasp Ck.-Miller Ck. area,
- 6) Upper Birkenhead-Sockeye Ck. area,

7) Joffre Lakes-Lizzie Lake area.

The plan proposes more non-motorized area in the following locations:

- 1) Upper Sims and upper Elaho areas
- 2) Mid elevations in the upper Callaghan valley (below the glaciers and not particularly valuable for ski trips)
- 3) Mountains above Douglas Ck.

The net result of this would be increase the number of motor-free ski trips as follows:

Day trips - ~ 6 (addition of Tricouni area, Rainbow area, Mt. Sproat, Roe-Chance Ck area)

Weekend trips - ~ 6 (addition of Exodus, Miller Ck, Roe-Chance Ck. area, Place Gl. From Joffre Ck.)

Extended trips - none.

There are several areas in the plan where snowmobiles could be encountered on approaches but not at a campsite. E.g. Ashlu Ck. valley, Mt. Brew from Brandywine valley, Saxifrage from Spetch Ck. Particularly noteworthy is the absence of any trip in the upper Lillooet valley area where snowmobiles are guaranteed to be able to be avoided. Although the area around Overseer and Capricorn-Meager are zoned non-motorized, the Meager Ck. valley road system is not. The non-motorized zone near the Overseer cabin only appears to extend to the height of land around the cabin. The situation in North Ck. is equally deplorable. The valley to the cabin and headwalls beyond are zoned non-motorized but the mountains and glaciers above are zoned to allow snowmobiles. North Ck. valley is the only small non-motorized area on the entire NE side of the Lillooet from Salal Ck to Mt. Currie and Sockeye Ck.

The absence of any additional possibilities for extended ski trips is also a noteworthy deficiency of the plan. Two obvious possibilities would be the Lillooet Glacier-Manatee (zoned to allow motorized recreation) - upper Clendenning-Princess Louisa and the Railroad Pass-North Ck-Boulder Ck-Salal Ck. (zoned in its entirety to allow motorized recreation) routes.

This current winter, zoning is intolerable for several reasons -

1. There are more backcountry skiers than snowmobilers in B.C. Every survey has shown this. The most recent that appears to be available was conducted in 1996 and published in "The importance of nature to Canadians" (Federal-Provincial-Territorial Task Force 1999). This found 1.0% of B.C. residents went snowmobiling vs. 2.9% who went cross-country skiing or snowshoeing (vs. 6.7% who went outdoor climbing, or 23.4% who went hiking/backpacking).
2. Once adopted, it will be very hard to change due to the inherent difficulty in changing the status quo. Unless we change it now before it is adopted, we will be condemning future non-motorized recreationists to limited and highly crowded opportunities to experience our form of recreation.
3. The proposed plan was developed after a preliminary plan had been shown to a variety of user groups to get their feedback. The preliminary plan was superior to the proposed plan, in that a substantially greater area was zoned non-motorized. This non-motorized area included most of the land for the 2 extended ski trips described above. The preliminary plan would have protected the approach to the Overseer cabin (no snowmobiles on the logging roads) and the mountains above North Ck., providing 2 extra motor-free weekend trips to important backcountry skiing destinations. The preliminary plan, however, did not protect the Chance-Roe Ck. area. That backcountry skiers lost out in the transition from the preliminary to the proposed plan suggests that our voices were given less weight than those of the motorized lobby. We absolutely must reverse this in the transition from the proposed to the final plan. Public input is being sought by the Squamish Forest District on the proposed plan. This is happening **NOW**. **YOUR** voice is needed. It is essential to protect opportunities for our form of recreation.

The first step is to inform yourself about what is proposed. Digest what is written above. To see the full report and its accompanying maps, visit the website – www.for.gov.bc.ca/vancouver/district/Squamish and click on "public recreation study".

Later on, there may be a public meeting to attend. The club executive will let you know when and where public meetings are to be held.

The second, very important, step is to let the land managers know that there is substantial support for zoning areas for non-motorized use only. Key points to make are –

1. Full support for the proposed summer non-motorized zones. Nothing less than the current proposal would be acceptable. More of the Pemberton Icecap, west of the Ryan River valley, could be zoned non-motorized, however.
2. Full support for the current proposed non-motorized zones for winter.
3. Winter non-motorized zones are completely inadequate. They must be expanded in the upper Lillooet valley where currently no ski trip would be guaranteed to avoid motorized recreationists. In particular, a) road access south of Meager Ck and the Pemberton icecap around South Ck., south to the head of the Ryan River, should be zoned non-motorized to protect the Overseer area.
b) the North Ck-Hurley R. interface area and the adjacent area to the west should be zoned non-motorized to allow for non-motorized skiing in the mountains around North Ck.
c) Lillooet icecap-upper Meager Ck. watershed should be zoned non-motorized to allow one extended ski trip outside Garibaldi park to be done in the absence of motorized recreationists.

Make your points, saying how important these areas are to you, to

- 1) John Crooks, B.C. Ministry of Forests, 42000 Logger's Lane, Squamish, B.C., V0N 3G0 (fax 604-898-2191) (email john.crooks@gems3.gov.bc.ca)
- 2) Peter Jones, Land Use Coordination Office, 2nd Floor, 10470 152 St., Surrey, B.C., V3R 0Y3 (fax 930-7119) (email – peter.jones@gems1.gov.bc.ca).

MEETINGS/EVENTS OF INTEREST

S. Chilcotins – Spruce Lake – adjacent Rainshadow Wilderness areas slide show, 12

February

In MacMillan Planetarium, 1100 Chestnut St., Vancouver, at 7:30 p.m. Organized by Federation of B.C. Naturalists and CPAWS.

Fourth Annual Vancouver International Mountain Film Festival, 16 to 25 February

Feb 16th The Leica Mountain Photography Exhibition Opening' at the Centennial Theatre, 2300 Lonsdale Ave.,

North Vancouver

Feb 17th to 19th at the Pacific Space Centre, Kitsilano

Feb 20th at the Pacific Cinematique, Downtown

Feb 21st at Grouse Mountain

Feb 22nd to 25th at the Centennial Theatre

More than 25 mountain films from around the world will be shown, covering a wide range of topics - mountaineering, rock climbing, mountain biking, skiing, ice climbing and mountain culture. The list of selected films will be finalized in late January 2001. Festival guest speakers will include **Greg Child**, world-class alpinist;

Will Gadd, well-known Canadian ice climber, rock climber and paraglider; **John Clarke**, legendary BC explorer premiering his "Young People and Wild Places" program to students and seniors; **Todd Skinner** and **Ron Kauk**, hot rock climbers, **Chris Holm**, unicyclist extraordinaire; and the **Women Wave Across Canada Cycle Team**.

In addition to the film competition, the Festival will offer a number of special events, such as the *Krankenstein* rock climbing competition at The Edge Climbing Centre, the **Book Festival** with book readings by well known outdoor authors, the **Mountain Photography Competition and Exhibition**, the **Youth and Senior Community Programme** (environmental and outdoor programs for students and seniors), the **Czech and Slovakian Mountain Film Show**, the **Polish Mountain Film Show**, the **Italian Mountain Film Show**, a special screening of two historic and celebrated Italian films, '*Maciste Alpino*' and '*Parla de Kye*', plus an outdoor mini-trade show, and a show shoeing contest, the **Grouse Mountain Dam Bigfoot Challenge**.

Following the major event in Vancouver, the Festival will go on tour, sending its winning films to more than 25 communities across Canada and the United States. Watch for it in your community!

The Festival's main goal is to provide the outdoor communities of British Columbia and the US Pacific North West with films and slide presentations dealing with mountain culture and mountain sports pursued in an environmentally respectful way. The Festival aims to create a platform for the exchange of ideas between film makers, outdoor enthusiasts, athletes and the public, while at the same time encourage the most artistic and effective forms of communicating mountain-related experiences.

**Tickets and Festival passes will be available at
Mountain Equipment Co-op, The Edge Climbing Centre, Coast Mountain Sports and at
the Centennial Theatre (Visa & M/C, tel 984-4484)**

Festival Hotline: 87V-IMFF Website: www.vimff.org

TRIP REPORTS

Stein Valley hiking trail, 9-16 September, 2000

Sept. 9. Deposited at Lizzie Lake parking lot. The Lizzie Creek main is heavily waterbarred and quite rough in places; good clearance (and probably 4 wd) is necessary for access. In low gear, our Tracker made it up with no problems. It's socked-in, raining heavily and near freezing, but we're still excited. At the parking lot we encounter a sodden party returning from Tundra Lake, who inform us of much fresh snow above 1500 m. This is not encouraging. Neither is the B.C. Parks sign informing us that "The Stein Valley Trail is Closed Due to Forest Fire." Up to Lizzie cabin in a couple hours, where inclement conditions necessitate an early stop. All night the rain sounds like gravel on the tin roof.

Sept 10. Rain eases as we set out, but snowline is encountered 150 m above the cabin. At Arrowhead Lake there is 5 cm of fresh snow on the trail; at Heart Lake this has increased to 10 cm. Climbing to the shoulder of Tabletop mountain we are whited out by dense cloud and heavy snow. There is now 30 cm of new snow, with drifts to 1 m, and the trail is indistinct--visibility is 20 m and most cairns are buried. Richard is talking loudly about returning to the warm, dry cabin. We maintain heading and elevation at 2000 m and a break in the clouds allows us to take a bearing on Caltha Lake; altimeter, compass & topo are invaluable through this section. Dropping to Cherry Pip Pass we emerge from the clouds, but snowy boulder fields make for slow going. Finally reach Caltha Lake after 9 hours hiking, and camp in wet snow.

Sept. 11. Plans to reach Tundra Lake via Figure Eight Lake are abandoned. Opting for the direct approach, we gain the Stein Divide in an hour and descend via steep, slippery slopes to the west end of Tundra Lake. Ice axes would be useful here, as the permanent snowpack is covered with fresh snow. Our descent is barely controlled. At the divide, the clouds lift and we have spectacular views of the surrounding summits. Traversing the north side of the lake involves extended scrambling along steep, loose boulderfields. Eventually we ascend to a small tarn above the east end of Tundra lake. Richard informs me he can go no further and collapses, insensible. This is a source of moderate consternation: at the present rate, the traverse will take 12 days; we have food for 9. I gently explain to him that he has become hysterical and that it is imperative we press on; moreover, abandoning him here would be imprudent, as his corpse will attract bears. This thought appears to have a sobering effect. We press on.

Ascending to 2200 m, we cross numerous boulderfields proceeding through snow that is waist-deep in places. Footing is tenuous among the large, loose rocks. At length, we gain the saddle and continue along the ridge. As the light is failing, we find a gravel bench and hastily make camp. Richard retires to the tent and refuses to move or speak; I busy myself with melting snow to prepare dinner. I am satisfied with our progress now that it is too late to turn back—and by my belief that Richard is physically and psychologically incapable of doing so. We've come this far, we have to go on; we must go on.

Sept. 12. Weather has socked in again, but the route along the ridge is obvious—that is, until we descend below the clouds and realize we are dropping to Puppet Lake. Regaining the north fork of the ridge, the route continues along the crest, then begins side-sloping, and abruptly drops 800 m to Stein Lake. The terrain is much drier, and we leave the snow in the alpine; the weather turns sunny and hot (as it will stay for the rest of the trip). The trail is now marked by faded orange diamonds, but is indistinct in places and we have to backtrack several times. Blowdowns are frequent but easily negotiated. Crossing the logjam at the east end of Stein Lake, Richard is nearly overcome by dehydration, but makes it to the pleasant campsite on the opposite side. Our spirits are buoyed by a fresh mushroom and onion curry, a warm driftwood fire, and a flask of single-malt scotch.

Sept. 13. Trail conditions deteriorate as we leave camp and climb to a lookout; evasive maneuvers around fallen trees are required. The views of the pristine Upper and North Stein are breathtaking: evidently, none of this area has been touched by fire. Descending to the upper cable crossing, extensive blowdowns impede our progress but the cable car is intact. The hot sandbars east of the crossing make the prospect of a swim irresistible; in a surreal moment, we are swarmed by butterflies while drying off. Below Island Camp, severe blowdowns are encountered, necessitating route-finding and much clambering over and under fallen trees. In some sections, the trail is completely obscured and it is easier to walk on top of the network of fallen logs than on the ground. After several hours of this, Richard acquires a glazed expression then rests his head on a log at chest height and refuses to move, but continues snuffling and muttering to himself. I consider giving another pep talk, but in the end decide to wait him out; after all, his options are limited. Abruptly, during the ascent of a boulder field, we encounter the Burn. Conveniently, all of the blowdowns here were incinerated in the 1996 fire; unfortunately, so was most of the trail. Parts of this section have been re-flagged with pink tape and orange plastic markers, but other parts demand solid route-finding. An altimeter is useful here. Progress is slow through this eerie and desolate landscape; little, apart from fireweed, has regrown. At length, we arrive at Avalanche Creek and make camp in the fading light. This evening's lentil stew will have terrible and far-reaching consequences.

Sept. 14. In a steep, rambling descent, we drop back to Stein River and begin crossing Raven Flats. After another hour hiking through fire-blackened trees, we emerge into intact, verdant forest; it has taken nearly a full day to traverse the Burn. Beyond this, there are bushy sections and blowdowns, but the trail is generally clear and our pace is commensurately faster. Passing Grizzly Creek, we continue to the point where a sizable logjam bridges the

Stein. On the opposite bank, fresh grizzly tracks are evident in the sand. Logjam camp represents a turning point of sorts: below this, most of the trail is manicured and park-like; above it, conditions vary considerably. Presumably, this is as far as most parties coming from Lytton make it. Another couple of hours put us at the Scudamore Creek cable crossing, which is where we spend the night.

Sept 15. In short order, we reach Cottonwood Creek, which is crossed (precariously) on a fallen log. On the east side, B.C. Parks has installed a bear box for storing food and a pit toilet; these amenities are now in place at most of the major campsites in the lower valley. The walk to Ponderosa shelter is long and hot but otherwise unremarkable. Likewise for the section to the lower cable crossing, where we pitch on a pleasant sandbar.

Sept. 16. Up and moving at first light, we are anxious to make the 4:30 bus in Lytton and set a blistering pace. Just past the Devil's Staircase, we encounter a party bound for the cable crossing; these are the first people we've seen in over a week. At the trailhead it's deserted, very hot, and the only sound is the outhouse door creaking in the dry wind. It feels like a scene from a spaghetti western. The absence of traffic necessitates a long walk to the ferry, but from there we hitch a ride into town. Beer has never tasted so good. The ride back to Vancouver has a detached, dream-like quality; this feeling persists for several days.

Epilogue. The Stein trail is in generally good condition, but some sections are obscured by blowdowns and fire. These areas require extra time and a little finesse to negotiate, but are easily passable by experienced parties. Over 8 days, our hiking time averaged 8-10 hours/day, moving at a medium pace; a more leisurely time for the traverse would be 10-12 days. Richard and I are still friends, and we really did have a great time.

Participants: Richard Price, Ernie McEachern. (Reporter).

Mt. MacFarlane, 23-24 September, 2000

After only 4 calls, I ended up with just Greg and myself on this trip.

It was a beautiful day. We took 4½ hours to the upper Pierce Lake and made camp. After lunch we took 45 minutes to the summit of Mt. MacFarlane. We could see 2 climbers on the summits of both the Canadian and American border peaks.

This was one of the absolutely perfect days we dream of a lot, but rarely encounter. Stunning clarity to all points of the compass. Well, we eventually had to leave and quickly made it back to camp. All was very anticlimactic for a time. We looked at our watches, then each other, then to Mt. Pierce. We shrugged our shoulders, put on our packs, and once again off we went. More views. A stupendous first day, ending with supper beside the lake. We were blessed with an alpenglow display just at sunset, the likes of which we'd never seen before.

On Sunday we went over to play on the shoulder of Crossover for a while. On our way back we climbed up two small bumps, just because!

What a weekend! Wow! 3 hours 15 min out and then home. A highly recommended 2 day trip. Next year? We'll see.

Participants: Greg Stoltmann and David Scanlon (Organizer and reporter).