

# B.G. MOUNTAINEERING CLUB NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER, 2004

VOL. 82, NO. 8

## **EVENING SOCIAL MEETINGS**

Evening socials are usually held in the ANZA club, upstairs room (corner of 8th Ave. and Ontario, Vancouver) starting at 7:30 p.m. Cookies, tea, and coffee are provided.

**Tuesday, 12 October** - Entertainment will be a show by Warren Macdonald, who lost both legs in a rockfall accident in 1997. He has gone on to climb many mountains and rock walls, including El Capitan. He will show slides and videos of his climbs and discuss his new book "A test of will."

**Tuesday, 9 November** - The Annual General Meeting. Entertainment will be provided by your executive as well as by Ravil Chamgoulov, who will give a slide show on a solo ascent of Mt. McKinley in spring, 2004

Autumn in Cathedral Park



Autumn below No doubt Pk.



**HONORARY PRESIDENTS - Esther and Martin Kafer  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND CLUB OFFICERS**

|                             |                   |              |                           |                  |              |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------|---------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| <b>PRESIDENT -</b>          | KIT GRIFFIN       | 604-736-8462 | <b>CABIN / TRAILS -</b>   | DAVID SCANLON    | 604-572-5051 |
| <b>PAST-PRESIDENT -</b>     | DAVE HUGHES       | 604-980-6484 |                           | PETER WOODSWORTH | 604-254-7076 |
| <b>VICE-PRESIDENT -</b>     | MONIKA BITTEL     | 604-983-3097 | <b>CONSERVATION -</b>     | MONIKA BITTEL    | 604-983-3097 |
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| <b>CLIMBING -</b>           | JOS VAN DER BURG  | 604-463-7582 |                           |                  |              |
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The **BC MOUNTAINEERING CLUB NEWSLETTER** is an official publication of the B.C. Mountaineering Club and is published 10 times per year (every month except July and September). All material within this newsletter is copyright © British Columbia Mountaineering Club.

**Submissions** - of any written, drawn, or photographic material relevant to the B.C. Mountaineering Club are welcome. If possible, submissions should be sent to the editor by email or on a diskette. Deadline for submissions is the first Tuesday of the month preceding the publication month. Send submissions to Michael Feller (email - feller@interchg.ubc.ca, ph. 604-270-4050).

**Editorial policy** - All submitted written material relevant to the B.C. Mountaineering Club will be published unless the club executive decides otherwise. Submitted material may be edited for clarity or brevity, or for consistency with club policies.

**Opinions and comments expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the B.C. Mountaineering Club.**

**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. The club has avalanche transceivers and snow shovels available for hire. These may be obtained by contacting Kit Griffin at 604-736-8462 at least 2 days prior to the day they are wanted. 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 a satellite phone available for hire. This may be obtained by also contacting Kit Griffin at 604-736-8462 at least 2 days prior to the day it is 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.

If you are given a ride, please remember to pay the driver your portion of the car costs. If you decide not to go on a trip for which you have previously registered, please be courteous and inform the trip organizer.

## ORGANIZER

|  |             |                  |                |
|--|-------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>October 2:</b> Chimai Mtn. ridge<br>Hiking and scrambling in the Ashlu valley.  | B2          | Peter Oostlander | 604-451-4585   |
| <b>October 2-3:</b> Portia Pk.<br>Karl's annual fall hiking and scrambling trip in the Coquihalla area.                        | B2-3        | Karl Ricker      | 1-604-938-1107 |
| <b>October 2-3:</b> Saxifrage Mtn.<br>Hiking and scrambling east of Pemberton.   | B-C3/2500 m | Mike Peel        | 604-444-4068   |
| <b>October 2-3:</b> Snowspider Mtn.<br>Hiking and scrambling south of the Duffey Lake road.                                    | B2/2540 m   | Evelyn Feller    | 604-270-4050   |
| <b>October 2-3:</b> Custer Ridge<br>Hiking and scrambling on the Skagit-Chilliwack divide, approaching from Maselpanik Ck.     | B2-3        | Mark Burgoyne    | 604-951-0788   |
| <b>October 3:</b> Mt. Urquhart<br>Scrambling in the Fraser Canyon area.  | B3/2100 m   | Jos van der Burg | 604-463-7582   |
| <b>October 9-10:</b> Indian Arm trail<br>Hiking and scrambling along the east side of Indian Arm.                              | C2-3        | Emanuele Porra   | 604-533-7723   |
| <b>October 9-11:</b> Cathedral park<br>Hiking and scrambling east of Manning Park.   | B2          | Ellen Woodd      | 1-250-494-0527 |
| <b>October 17:</b> Mt. Gillespie<br>Extended scrambling.   | C3          | Todd Ponzini     | 604-340-9653   |
| <b>October 23:</b> Mt. Moriarty<br>Hiking on Vancouver Island.   | B2/1603 m   | Ralph Hutchinson | 1-250-756-1916 |
| <b>October 30-31:</b> Mt. Bishop<br>Hiking and scrambling in Vancouver's North Shore mountains.                                | C2-3/1480 m | Peter Gumplinger | 604-733-8264   |
| <b>October 31:</b> Crown Mtn.<br>More hiking in Vancouver's North shore mountains.   | B2/1503 m   | Andrzej Jarzabek | 604-419-4492   |
| <b>November 6:</b> Mt. McGuire<br>Hiking in the Chilliwack valley.   | B2/2032 m   | Emanuele Porra   | 604-533-7723   |
| <b>November 6-7:</b> Place Glacier trail<br>Trail clearing east of Pemberton. Do your bit to help maintain the trails you use. | B2          | David Scanlon    | 604-572-5051   |
| <b>November 11-14:</b> Frenchman Coulee (rock)<br>Rock climbing in a drier environment.  | A5          | Margaret Hanson  | 604-341-5961   |

## MEMBERSHIP

### 2004/2005 Membership fees are due -

Membership fees of 2004/2005 are now due. If you do not pay your dues, **THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER WILL BE THE LAST ONE YOU WILL RECEIVE.** You should fill out the yellow renewal form accompanying this newsletter, indicate if you would like to receive the newsletter by email, read and sign the waiver on the reverse side, then send the form with the appropriate dues to the club.

### Membership dues are -

|        |      |        |       |
|--------|------|--------|-------|
| Single | \$45 | Junior | \$20  |
| Couple | \$68 | Life   | \$800 |

**New Members** - The club welcomes the following new Associate Members: Peter Alfred, Karin Albert, Iris Chot, Rory Heath, Michael Kelley, David Li, Brian Stachniak, Bob Trydal, and Brock Wilson.

**What Club members are doing** - Pam Jenkins has pointed out an error in our published obituary for Dennis Sims (BCMC June-July, 2004, Newsletter). Dennis had climbed Mt. Bowlen, not Mt. Baker, behind Moraine Lake.

## BCMC NEWS

**Do you want to serve on the club executive?** - All executive positions will become

available at the Annual General Meeting in November, at which time you can volunteer to serve

the club in any executive position. If you wish to serve the club, please contact Kit Griffin (604-736-8462) or any other member of the club executive.

## HISTORICAL NOTE

Alice Eaton came across the website of our membership co-chair, Julia Borchardt, and emailed Julia the following:

“Quite by accident found your website. Before I continue must tell you that my name is Alice Eaton and that the lake, peak, brook and park were named in honour of my husband Bruce’s two brothers, both killed in the second world war. You can imagine how happy we were to find your wonderful write-up and pictures. As Bruce is 85 and I am 83 we have not been able to go up the trail very far so you can imagine how happy we were to see the pictures in your gallery.

***Interested in climbing Mt. Cook, 3754 m, New Zealand*** - I am considering climbing Mt. Cook on my upcoming vacation to New Zealand in the first week of February 2005. We may have to use a guide given the length of time available. Route, etc. will depend on party and conditions, but even easier routes are moderately difficult and require good glacier and alpine snow experience. If interested, contact David Hughes, 604-980-6484.

Bruce’s youngest brother Bligh was a pathfinder and was shot down over Hannover, Germany in October of 1943 and his older brother Doug was killed in August 1944 in Italy near Monte Casino during the Italian campaign just recently featured in the news.

Should you be interested, our email address is gbaeaton@telus.net or phone at 604-943-3097.”

## NEWS

### **B.C.’s government increases its assault on our parks and wilderness**

Our provincial parks are increasingly being trashed by what, in your editor’s opinion, is the absolute worst government he has experienced. Following are some recent news announcements.

1. **Spruce Lake provincial park** - In July the government announced that the south Chilcotins park would be reduced in size by 20%, thus accommodating the mining industry. In addition, 5 of the 13 other protected areas proposed in the final Lillooet LRMP were eliminated.

Bill Wareham, in a letter published in the Vancouver Sun, stated -

“Having participated in the Lillooet land use planning process for four years, I can say that Sustainable Resources Minister George Abbott is seriously misrepresenting history by stating that the Liberal government had to revise the Lillooet land use plan and the South Chilcotin Park boundary because there was no consensus reached by the planning process.

In fact, there was a consensus reached in 2001.

The agreement was to deliver two final land use options to government for consideration and to live by government’s decision.

The government chose the option presented by the conservation, tourism and recreation sectors. This included a 71,000-hectare South Chilcotin Park, 13 other protected areas and management provisions to ensure protection of critical wildlife habitat. Other important protected area proposals were dropped to accommodate a large South Chilcotin Park designation.

What the Campbell government has now done is reduce South Chilcotin Mountains Park by 20 per cent and eliminate five other protected areas that were part of the plan.

Science analysis presented during the land use process determined that at least 30 per cent of the Lillooet landscape should be protected to maintain wildlife diversity and abundance. The Liberals have given us 17 per cent. They said they would establish land use plans based on science. They have failed miserably.

Their decision is the result of pandering to the mining and forest industry lobby that greased their election campaign in 2001. This is pure

politics and has little to do with science or sustainability.

So the miners and the loggers get more and our wildlife suffers, again.”

**Mt. Robson park to be logged** - Extracts from Fraser Headwaters Alliance press release in August, state -

“According to a government report obtained by the Fraser Headwaters Alliance (FHA), as many as 6,000 truckloads of logs will be removed from Mount Robson Provincial Park, starting this fall. The scheme, complete with cost/revenue assumptions and cash flow analyses, is part of a larger plan to reduce forest fire fuel and control the mountain pine beetle in the province’s flagship park.

“What they’ve done is figure out what they’d like to burn in terms of prescribed fire, calculated the cost of doing it, then worked backwards to see how many trees they’ll need to cut and sell to pay for it,” said wildlife biologist and FHA president Karsten Heuer. “It reminds me of the shady practices I witnessed while working in Africa, Slovakia, and other countries with corrupt governments. It isn’t conservation in the North American sense of the word; it’s greed. And it’s coming to a UNESCO World Heritage Site courtesy of the BC Liberals.”

“People have expectations when they visit a provincial park,” said Roy Howard, FHA’s Executive Director, “and the half-million tourists that arrive in Robson every year are no exception. They’re not here to see the logging trucks and stumps that, blanket the rest of the province.”

“What’s most upsetting about this scheme is that there is no environmental assessment planned, and no opportunity for public comment,” said Heuer. “It’s as if the Campbell government has forgotten that this is public, not private land, and that the trees, grizzly and black bears, elk, moose, wolves, lynx, wolverines, rare birds, salmon, and endangered amphibians within it aren’t owned by the government, but are simply in its trust. Mount Robson Park was established in 1929 to protect everything wild in the headwaters of the Fraser River, including the trees.”

When I read this report I get angry,” said Howard. “It’s long on economics but short on science. In fact there’s absolutely no scientific justification for what they’re proposing. Where’s the proof that this will even work to control the mountain pine beetle? And where is the discussion about whether or not such drastic measures are appropriate to combat what everyone agrees is a natural process in a provincial park?”

“There’s a real lack of professionalism in BC government right now,” continued Howard. To prove his point, he compared Robson’s 20-page economic analysis to an in-depth 81-page environmental screening for a much smaller thinning program in neighboring Jasper National Park.

“The feds used peer-reviewed research. They brought in outside scientists to review their draft plan. They held open houses seeking public comment. And the area they were thinning was only a quarter of what’s proposed in Robson, and involved logging only 1/30th of the trees!”

For more information contact:

Roy Howard, Executive Director, Fraser Headwaters Alliance

Phone: (250) 968-4490

Email: roy@fraserheadwaters.org

### **Garibaldi park backcountry threatened**

- There are strong rumours that Intrawest is currently planning on building a series of backcountry cabins/lodges on the Spearhead traverse in Garibaldi Park. We can expect more machinery, more people, more costs, and more loss of backcountry recreation opportunities if this happens.

### **Stawamus Chief park threatened by a gondola**

- An access alert in August, from the Climber’s Access Society of B.C., which has been spearheading attempts to maintain opportunities for climbers, states -

“The Stawamus Chief, and surrounding cliffs, are an outstanding landmark and natural feature, only 50 km north of Vancouver. They offer world-class rock climbing, some of the most heavily-used trails in B.C., excellent camping, and superb vantage points. There are tens of thousands of

annual climber-days at the Chief. It is B.C.'s home crag, and a 2004 estimate is that recreation at the Chief contributes \$20 million annually to the area. Many climbers have moved to Squamish because of the Chief, and it has an important role in the culture and economy of the area. The Chief is largely old-growth forest, apart from the highway/powerline swath in front.

A proposal has been made to the B.C. government, to build a gondola to the second summit of the Chief. It would be based at the gravel pit between Stawamus Chief and Shannon Falls provincial parks, and would ascend via numerous towers to the Bulletheads, the top of Tantalus Wall, the upper backside of the first summit, to a terminal on the second summit. About a hectare on the second summit would be enclosed, with an observation deck and various facilities. Gondola capacity would be 880 passengers/hour. The proposal appears well-financed and serious, and is consistent with government plans for economic development and tourism in the area.

The Stawamus Chief became a Class A provincial park in 1995. For the gondola proposal to proceed, the government would have to overrule the 1997 park master plan, which after two years of community consultation affirmed that the Chief is a natural and unique landmark of cultural importance to British Columbians. The master plan prohibited mechanical lift access, but the government made changes to the Park Act in 2003 which allow it to override the plan if it wishes.

Representatives of the Squamish Access Society, an informal, organized group of Squamish climbers affiliated with the Access Society, met with the gondola proponents several months ago, received a great deal of information about the project, discussed it, and then wrote to the government to express concerns. It was then hoped that, having been giving a fair hearing, the proposal would quietly die. However, the eventual reply from the Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection was as follows:

"The management plan for Stawamus Chief Provincial Park was completed in 1997 following extensive public input. Mechanized access to the Chief is not consistent with the plan, and

therefore, under the current management plan, a gondola could not be permitted. The ministry has informed the proponents that they may choose to seek community support for an amendment to the management plan. In order to do so, the proponent will be required to consult in an open and transparent manner with the local community, First Nations, interested or affected public agencies, users and stakeholder groups. The proponent has indicated that they are interested in pursuing this option. It is expected that public consultations may occur in the fall of this year, in which case I encourage you to participate in the process to ensure your perspectives are brought forward. Should those consultations demonstrate broad community support for a continuation of the park's management plan to restrict mechanized access on the Chief, then we would reflect those wishes."

The nature of the consultative process is not yet known, and the Access Society believes that the government should manage the process and ensure it is impartial. The gondola proposal is being given serious consideration, and community opinion will be an important factor in the government decision. The Access Society will work, particularly with the Squamish Access Society and the Friends of the Chief ([friendsofthechief@yahoo.ca](mailto:friendsofthechief@yahoo.ca)), to ensure climbers' interests and views are represented. We will also publicize developments through our website, broadcast e-mails, and the autumn edition of Access News. It seems likely that information about the proposal will be published, and there will be public meetings, but more is not yet known.

For now, you can write, phone or e-mail and express your views on the project. The concerned officials:

Bill Barisoff, Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection  
P.O. Box 9047, St'n. Prov. Gov't., Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 9E2  
Phone(250)387-1187,or  
[WLAP.Minister@gems9.gov.bc.ca](mailto:WLAP.Minister@gems9.gov.bc.ca)

Gordon Campbell, Premier  
P.O. Box 9041, St'n. Prov. Gov't., Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 9E1  
Phone (250) 387-1715, or [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca)

Ian Sutherland, Mayor  
District of Squamish  
P.O. Box 310, Squamish, B.C., Canada V0N 3G0  
Phone 1-877-892-5217, or  
isutherland@squamish.ca

Please write or call! A written letter counts for significantly more than an e-mail, and an e-mail for significantly more than a phone call - very simply, the more effort you put into whatever you send/say, the more impact it has. Please:

- a) cc the Access Society (see 'contact us' on the website) with anything you send;
- b) be polite, and brief;
- c) identify who you are, where you live, who you represent (if anyone besides yourself), your interest in the area and issue, your views on the gondola proposal, and the reasons for them;
- d) be as reasonable and constructive as you can - there are many aspects to this issue; and
- e) be clear about what you support, or oppose.

The Access Society particularly encourages climbers, and climbers' organizations, from outside B.C. to write and express their concerns.

There are also petitions in Squamish-area climbing stores, and petitions may appear elsewhere. Other actions - website information, meetings, broadcast e-mails, attending public meetings - will occur as the occasion demands.

The Access Society's position with respect to the Stawamus Chief gondola proposal is that a gondola of this kind would be appropriate somewhere in the Squamish area, if well planned and designed, and if supported by First Peoples, governments, affected interest groups, and the public. A gondola within Stawamus Chief provincial park is not appropriate. It would:

- a) be contrary to the master plan,
- b) significantly conflict with existing low-impact users (climbers, hikers, campers, viewers),
- c) mar a geological, visual and cultural landmark, and
- d) negatively affect the Chief's standing as a

national and international landmark and recreational resource.

The proposal also seems likely to generate substantial public comment, and may affect the peregrine falcons which nest on the Chief. There are alternative sites in the Squamish area that would not conflict with existing uses, or have such high environmental, community and visual impacts.

## **Public input and environmental protection in B.C.?**

Forget it, say the West Coast Environmental Law Association. In their 2004 annual report, the following statements appear:

"In 2001, the new BC government embarked on a massive initiative to rewrite BC's forestry laws. A new "results-based" Code unveiled in the Fall of 2002 rolled back citizen and government oversight of corporate forest management and reduced statutory environmental protections while providing significant new exemptions to forest companies."

"Changes to the landscape became abundantly clear in August 2001 when the BC government eliminated laws aimed at protecting the public's right to speak out and announced plans to cut regulations by one-third. They also began reviewing the laws that are central to protecting BC's land, air and water.

West Coast offered to assist the government by identifying regulations that had outlived their usefulness, but asked for an open, accountable process that safeguarded the environmental safety net. We received no such commitment. While a process of watering down environmental protections had begun several years earlier, it accelerated rapidly in 2001. This new era posed a fundamental challenge to West Coast: how to protect the air, water and communities of BC in this new environment.

We were no longer working with government to develop better laws, but instead focussed on defending existing environmental protections."

## **TRIP REPORTS**

### **Shawatum Creek area - Mt Andrews**

Timing is everything for this ski trip. Silver-Skagit Road is used for access but is not normally

plowed until late-April. By that time, the snow will have retreated so far up Shawatum Creek to make it not worthwhile. As it was, we still had to carry

the skis for about 4 km.

The last day of winter was clear and cold. There was still a fair bit of snow on Silver-Skagit Road but it was packed and frozen hard, which allowed us to get to Shawatum Creek road with a convoy of three 4WD vehicles. Fortunately, it didn't warm up too much during the day or else the cold air remained trapped in the valley bottom because we were able to drive back out after sunset.

We skinned up the first 500m of roadbed along the Shawatum Creek road but then the snow disappeared. Reports in Fairley (1985) of this road being overgrown must have been a comment on the upper end because the road was pleasant going and completely free of bush. After an hour we reached continuous snow near 900m, just before Antimony Creek. Snow was only on the road at this elevation, the forest was completely snow-free.

Around Pyrrhotite Creek, there's a bit of a canyon through which Shawatum Creek runs. The road had slumped away here and we had to traverse a muddy, rock-strewn sidehill for 200m. Beyond that, a switchback got up above the canyon and the road travel improved again. We stayed on the main road past a spur on the right and left. Just before the burn up the east ridge of Mount Andrews we headed up into an unregenerated clearcut. The snow was badly isothermal here.

We were continually improvising as we went. The original destination was to be Shawatum Mountain. With the road travel going so well we were now more interested in Mount Brice because none of us had done it yet. The only feasible access to Shawatum looked like it was up the main gully between the east and west summits. The avalanche PAF wasn't favorable for north and east facing slopes and cornices, however. The lower section of the gully had also received recent debris so it was an easy choice for us to remain on the sunny south-facing slopes of Mount Andrews.

Above the clearcut, we gained the delightful open burn that we had spied from Shawatum the previous fall. This was gonna be one helluva run. Hard sun crust with fresh sun-

## **Leadership Development Weekend Oct. 23-24, 2004**

*If you are interested in developing leadership skills, whether as a trip leader or participant, this will be a great workshop weekend for you (hosted by the ACC Vancouver Section).*

*Highlights include: a **leadership assessment** tool where you will learn more about your leadership style and identify areas that can be improved; **role-playing** to practise decision making and communication in tough situations while on a hike; and an opportunity to **meet other club members, learn, and have fun--all at the same time!***

*Cost: for ACC members: \$25.00 (please give membership number when registering); for non-ACC members: \$30.00; for Varsity Outdoor Club members, UBC: \$20.00.*

*Pre-registration and pre-payment are required. To register, contact Zoran Vasic at 604-438-9066; email: zvasic@telus.net, before Monday, Oct. 18.*

*Location: learning facility in the North Shore mountains.*

warmed powder. We reached the ridgecrest of Mount Andrews that lies above 28 Mile Creek. Just more and more ski terrain lay below us in its drainage- a huge northwest-facing powder bowl. There was a forested saddle that connected to the very skiable SW slopes of Mount Brice. But Brice was going to be too far for a day trip.

We headed higher up the ridge to the west to bag the summit. It wasn't until I looked at the ZoomMap on Bivouac that I realized our nameless bump was called Mount Andrews. It was on this ridge that Erich took the picture of Shawatum's north-facing gully.

There was no question, we had to ski the great line through the burn. Expectations were high, slopes were wide open and throttles were gunned to the max. It was only when we hit the isothermal band in the clearcut that we could pause for breath. What a run! Exhilaration was only slightly deflated by the isothermal crud and the odd collapse into a stump hole here and there.

Party: Paul Kubik, Erich Hinze, Jos van der Burg, Larry (Stitches) Kost, Sharom, Alex, Dana, Thomas, Marta.



E and W summits of Shawatum Mtn. from the N.  
Photo - E. Hinze.

### **Rhododendron Mtn., 3-4 April, 2004**

It was spring skiing time, and appropriately enough, Rhododendron Mtn. was listed in the schedule for the upcoming sunny weekend. Greg Stoltmann was asked to organize the trip, so he enthusiastically took on the duties and assembled a group of 11 hard-core telemarkers, snowboarders and plastic booted alpinists. Naturally the Telemark skiers were in the lead the whole trip, but that's another story. We set out from the Church on Saturday morning at 7 am as a convoy of four low eco -footprint SUV's, and 2.5 hours later we had passed Pemberton and turned off onto the Old Ryan River road. We were able to travel about 6 km along this relatively smooth road (water bars started after 4 km) and then we parked amongst a sea of old pickups that had recently dumped their load of snowmobiles - so far the trip was looking smelly and noisy. At that time, the sledders weren't around so were able to gasp enough fresh air to get us out of cars and start walking. The weather was unusually warm for

April - evidence that global warming has come to Pemberton (probably God's wrath against Pemberton for its high proportion of snowmobiles, ATV's and lack of bicycle racks). While skiing up the road, we had great views into and across the Pemberton Valley, and after the road ended at about km 12 (1500m), we then headed west along a ridge above Miller Creek meadows.

As we progressed along the meadows, the K2 snowboard team of Greg and Vince, were experiencing equipment problems. The other skiers continued ahead while I hung back with the snowboard team - feeling that my assortment of hose clamps would help them. After a bit of bailing wire, hose clamps, and duct tape, we continued along the ridge, and then gradually descended about 200 m to Miller Creek meadows. Once in the meadows, we picked up the snowmobile highway tracks, and we even met a few on their way back from a day of boarding. Seemed like nice enough guys, but like Noam Chomsky said in the film "The Corporation", some people can be outwardly friendly, but their actual day to day activity in life could be extremely monstrous (he was referring to people who run large Corporations like the President of Interfor or the CEO of Shell Oil). Anyway, after we had an agreeable conversation with the sledders, we continued on as it was getting dark, and we still hadn't met up with the rest of our group whose tracks we could faintly make out amongst the sledder tracks. Greg was pushing Vince and I along so Vince pulled out a sugar coated Power Bar that gave us a boost for the next 45 minutes until we met the lead team camped near a creek by a ridge on Rhododendron.

After camp was setup and we had dinner, intense negotiations began with regards to the following day's wake up time. Greg as usual proposed 5 am, and this was met with groans and sobbing since we had just had a 9-hour ski in. Some of us counter proposed a 6 am time, with the argument that it wouldn't take us long to reach the summit, and we could ski out quicker than the ski in. After further arguing and negotiating Greg was beginning to agree on 6 am, but then he threw down his "ace of spades": 6 am it was, but then because this was the weekend to adjust the clocks for Daylight Savings we had to obey the

new time change and lose that hour of sleep! Many of us felt as though we had been tricked, others questioned the meaning of it all: long days, early mornings, wiping your bum with snow, and then some of us came to the conclusion: yes, this is what it's all about!

The next day we woke up groggy and in darkness, but the twilight sky looked fairly clear. After the morning breakfast ritual, and assembling our gear, we set out across the lake and up the glacier to the east of Rhododendron, up its small icefall. The weather was clearing nicely, and then we started to ascend the gentle ridge north of Rhododendron, and after further following the snowmobile tracks (!) we were soon on the summit. The views were expansive: Ipsoot Mtn., logged out valleys in Rutherford Creek, and Mt Miller. After a 30-minute union lunch break in the cool wind and sun, we skied down – the snow was a bit wind blown and crusty in areas, but it was softening up on the glacier. We continued down the glacier, across the lake and were back at camp at about noon.

After a short break, a flurry of activity ensued as people were anxious to begin the ski out. We broke camp, and headed down Miller Creek meadows and put our skins on again to climb the 200 m to the ridge top – where we met up with the end of the logging road. Skiing down the logging road was challenging as the snow was becoming very heavy and slushy, but we finally made it back to the cars by about 6 pm. After a stop along the way at the Pemberton Hotel for veggie pasta (no veggie burgers on the menu), we were all soon back home in front of our televisions watching NHL hockey (boring!)

Participants: Rob Trost, Greg Jones, Karsten Ruf, Tania Zulkoskey, Ilze Rupners, Doug Sage, Vince Haugland, Todd Pretty, Greg Stoltmann (organizer), and Mike Peel (reporter and hose clamp supplier).

### **Phalanx Mtn. , Spearhead Range, 25 April, 2004**

Last year this mountain was on the schedule but deferred a couple of weeks because of avalanche conditions. Only one participant showed up, and a sudden change back to extreme avalanche conditions was enforced by Blackcomb's ski patrol, closing off all access to the mountain using

their lift system. So we had to settle for an ascent of Blackcomb Peak using "Body Bay Bowl" as the approach. This year it was a different story. Excellent success by the Spearhead traversers on Easter weekend whetted their appetites for a chaser, and Phalanx Mountain was missed on their cruise through the peaks. The only problem was the leader; it was his first touring trip of the year because a collarbone was broken in February; and the doctor gave clearance to ski again only five days before the event!

Thirteen skiers out of the sixteen queries showed up at Blackcomb base on time for the trip. Those with gold pass cards easily got onto the lifts without hassle or inspection for \$25; those who had to buy the back country pass for the exorbitant \$32 + GST also had to have their avalanche rescue gear inspected! Reaching the Horstman Hut in cloudless weather, the gang traversed to the top of the Showcase T-bar to gain access to Blackcomb Glacier.

The debate was the route to follow: (1) over Spearhead Peak and then descend to Spearhead Glacier and do a ski ascent from the northeast or a 1200 steps route on foot directly up a gully between the two summits, or (2) descend Blackcomb Glacier to the outwash flats and then ascend the Poop Shute on the southwest flank of the peak. As it was likely to be an early morning icy crust the former scared me; I've always had trouble skiing off the back side of Spearhead Mtn., and a fall on a tender collar bone was not the way to go. So, the easier way was the run down the Blackcomb Glacier on a soft skiable surface, and then ascend the Poop Shute which was neither ice nor an avalanche volley of death cookies. Some skinned up its entire length, but Erich led a parade of those who reverted to an on-foot brigade, after climbing half of it on skis.

At its top, a traverse of sloping shelves, easterly, put us on the ridge top about 10-15 minutes shy of the summit. Those at the rear of the line fell farther behind because snow was sticking to their skins. A physical explanation as to why the rear-enders were being inconvenienced was not forthcoming, other than sociological discrimination. After a long rest in the hot sun, it was an easy ascent to the summit using some one else's track. Time 12:30, and a long lunch

stop followed to watch some daring antics of other hot shot skiers on a back country binge.

From the summit the descent was a run northwest down Phalanx Glacier on more soft slab snow. The original plan was to drop to tree line from there and then contour around the northwest ridge and back to the Blackcomb Glacier ski-out trail. We wilted in favour of a quick re-ascent to ridge crest and then a direct ski descent to the top of the Poop Shute. We caught the quickly softening snow just in time – Ed leading the descent but breaking his 20-year old Iser binding plate in the process. The leader crashed twice on the shute below when spinning out of his 23-year old Marker touring bindings. The others on their shorter parabolic skis and state-of-the-art bindings made beautiful descents, laughing at we “retros” while doing so. A quick shuss down the ski-out to the top of the “Gondola-to-Nowhere” saw three elect to ski a few runs late in the afternoon on the piste, while the rest of us called it a great day and rode the lift to the village. The snow had already melted off the lower runs three weeks ahead of usual time. It was a rewarding day, though quite hot, and a fitting way to commemorate my first traverse of the Spearhead Range some 40 years ago. Needless to say when back at home the Marker bindings were removed from the skis, and all 205 cm of the latter were taken to the village compactor the next day! It’s 185 cm or less next year, and perhaps a route directly up the 1200 steps – stay tuned.

Participants: Erich and Ehleen Hinze, Adrienne and Dave Hughes, Ove Albinsson, Ilse Rupners, Ed Smith, Martin Cook, Marta Fechete, Thomas Cutter, Phil Kubik, Ingrid Gutzmann, Ed Zenger and the out-of-shape organizer, Karl Ricker.

### **Blanchard Needle , 12 June, 2004**

I hear the shouting coming from above. “Rock, rock”. Bruce and I are on the exposed slopes above the first pitch on Blanchard Needle. We have nowhere to go. Through the corner of my eye I see Bruce letting go of his handholds and he starts sliding down the rock. Oh my God. I shout out to Bruce. Expecting the worst I am afraid to look down. When I do I see a tree has stopped him. I seem to be more disturbed by the incident than Bruce. He climbs happily on like nothing

happened. My nerves are shot. The weather isn’t helping. A misty overcast sky with increasing rain is making the rock slimy and slippery. The route is dirty at the best of times. With rain it becomes downright muddy. We end up making it to the summit.

The trip was planned to go to the North Peak of Hozomeen Mountain. The weather forecast changed it to a daytrip close to home. Blanchard Needle seemed to fit the bill and 8 were interested in going. At 9 am we started from the west canyon parking lot in Golden Ears Park. The trail to the Golden Ears was followed for the first 25 minutes until we reached Evans Creek. There we turned left up the route that previously had been cleared by Emanuele Porra and Gerry Kolmus. They did a commendable job. Once we reached the basin we followed the rock and scree along the creek to the start of the gully between Alouette Mountain and Blanchard Needle. We donned our helmets here and used our ice axes on the 30 to 40 degree snow. Once the snow is gone this is not the gully you want to take. But it was in good shape and we reached the top in no time. From there it’s less than another half an hour to the start of the climb.

“Bruce, you want to do the honor of taking the first lead” I ask, not all that willing to do it myself on the wet rock. He climbs it comfortably and belays up the rest. I make up the rear, now completely chilled. We slowly move up together taking our time and at 2.30 pm we reached the summit. A brief opening in the clouds lets the sun provide us some warmth for a snack and a bit of rest. But it’s a sucker hole and the rain comes back as we head down. The rope has to be used in several places, as it’s just too slick to down climb everything with 8 people of different abilities. At 5.30 pm we all make it down safely. Relief sets in. Now just the snow gully. We make it down effortlessly. The rock and scree are tedious and the rest was just wet and muddy. At 7.45 pm we reach the cars, content with having salvaged a good day out of a weekend. The thought of drying out on a Sunday never sounded better.

Participants: John Halliday, Julien Henley, Mark Burgoyne, Bruce Cassels, Greg Iuzzolino, Emanuele Porra, Greg Jones and Jos van der Burg (Organizer and reporter).

### **Elk Mtn. and Mt. Thurston, 20 June, 2004**

The lower mainland was in the throes of a heat wave and there was a lot of interest in this popular early season hike near Chilliwack. Eleven of us gathered at 7 am at the Wendy's and we added Pam at the highway 10 exit and met up at the Prest Road exit before driving to the trailhead where there were already 7 cars at 8:45 am! The trail through the forest was cool and pleasant and the views from the initial viewpoint over Chilliwack and the Fraser Valley were great if somewhat hazy...we could see Golden Ears, Robbie Reid and Judge Howay. The flowers on the south facing ridge were at their peak and Murray, Xavier and Lisa were constantly consulting Pojar and Mackinnon's *Plants of Coastal British Columbia*.

I always have trouble knowing when we've reached the peak of Elk or Thurston along this ridge so this time I took our new GPS and checked it out when we got to the big rock cairn. It turns out that the cairn is about ½ way between the peaks! The views were great to the south and east but looking back toward Vancouver it was obvious that the toxic cloud of NO<sub>2</sub> and O<sub>3</sub> generated by the Sunday traffic was building. Everyone went on to the peak of Thurston and a few beyond toward Mt Mercer.

The descent was pleasant except for the view of the now frightening brown haze into which we

had to drive on the return trip. At the car park Lisa Birke led the group in some Yoga stretches before we all went in search of ice cream.

Participants: Pam Kranitz, Thomas Lee, Lisa Birke, Murray Lashmar, Ian Voboril, Eva Kudlickova, Vladamir Martinak, Bill Tubbs, Darryl Knight, Xavier Bernal, Lisa Baile and Peter Paré (organizer and reporter).

### **Dominion Day picnic, 1 July, 2004**

For some years, the club has held a Dominion Day outing and picnic, on 1st July when that day is on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. Those of us who must work for a living, and who don't have four or even five day weekends in this situation, thus have a patriotic activity for fun on an orphan holiday.

The day may, of course, as accurately be called Dominion Day as Canada Day, although some interfering legislators once tried to impose the latter exclusively. As the Constitution Act (1867) states that Canada is "one dominion", Canada has for long been known as the Dominion of Canada, governed by the Dominion Government. One may note that our southern neighbours have an "Independence Day", not a "U.S.A. Day", while our gallic progenitors have "Bastille Day", not "France Day". Not that Canada attempts to domineer or dominate many, or (perish the thought) is threatened by dominatrixes.

The Dominion Day picnic this year, as always, was in and around Squamish. Participants hiked, climbed, lounged, swam, and even kayaked. Not concurrently, though. Then we met at Murrin Park for a pleasant picnic.

Participants: Jack Pals, Paul Miller, Tony Knight, Margaret Hanson, Dave Morriss, Wendy Holmes, Dan Lord, Wendy Barker & Tony, and Anders Ourom. (Organizer and reporter). (Other members and past members were seen in the vicinity, but only passed by).



Elk - Thurston summit photo- by P. Pare.