

BC. MOUNTAINEERING CLUB NEWSLETTER



FEBRUARY, 2005

VOL. 83, NO. 2

Skiing off Duke.

EVENING SOCIAL MEETINGS

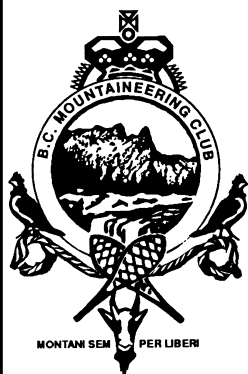
Evening socials are usually held in the ANZA club, upstairs room (corner of 8th Ave. and Ontario, Vancouver) starting at 7:30 p.m. Cookies, tea, and coffee are provided.

Tuesday, 8 February - Entertainment will be a presentation by Michael Koehle on high altitude medicine, and Himalayan rescue.

Tuesday, 8 March - Entertainment will be a slide show by Tom Kuczmirowski on skiing and climbing in Ecuador.



Will the person who took this photo near the summit of Mt. Etna require a rescue as a result of CO₂ and H₂S? Photo - P. Gumplinger.



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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. Please note that images should be at least 60 pixels/cm (150 pixels/inch) for successful printing. Images with a lesser resolution will probably not be printed. 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.

All trips are ski trips, unless otherwise indicated

		ORGANIZER	
February 5: Whistler-Blackcomb area Skiing near a well known ski resort.	B2-3	Ilze Rupners	604-222-3720
February 5-6: Knight Pk. Skiing and snowshoeing in the Chilliwack valley area.	B3/2237 m	Justin Bennett	604-813-4666
February 5-6: Caspar Pk. Skiing off the Duffey Lake road.	C3/2402 m	Greg Stoltmann	604-926-6496
February 6: Mt. Sproatt Skiing opposite Whistler in the Cheakamus valley.	B3/1834 m	Monika Bittel	604-983-3097
February 6: Mt. Seymour Skiing in Vancouver's North Shore mountains, with another run up John Clarke's variation.	B2-3/1449 m	Blair Mitten	604-922-0470
February 12: Hollyburn Mtn. (snowshoe) Skiing in Vancouver's North Shore mountains.	A2/1326 m	Kim and Paul Talbot	604-222-9227
February 12: Dinky Pk. - Mt. Seymour area Another practice day in Vancouver's North Shore mountains, suitable for anyone going on the Spearhead Traverse.	B2-3	Justin Bennett	604-813-4666
February 12: Mt. Crickmer (ski/snowshoe) Skiing or snowshoeing in the lower Fraser valley.	B2/1340 m	Reinhard Fabische	604-462-9638
February 12-13: Snass Mtn. Skiing at the edge of Manning Park.	B-C3/2310 m	Jos van der Burg	604-463-7582
February 18-20: Spearhead Traverse Classic ski traverse near Whistler in Garibaldi park.	B-C2-3	Justin Bennett	604-813-4666
February 19: Howe Sound Crest Trail Skiing above Howe Sound.	C2	Mike Peel	604-444-4068
February 19-20: Caspar Ck. area Skiing off the Duffey Lake road. Joint trip with the ACC.	B2	Julien Henley	604-990-9224
February 19-20: Tetrahedron area Skiing near Sechelt.	B2-3	Michael Feller	604-270-4050
February 25-27: Prospector Peaks Skiing in the Birkenhead Lake area.	B3/2455 m	Dave Scanlon	604-572-5051
February 26: Manning Park Cross country skiing in flat areas.	A1	Dave Morriss	604-732-9895
February 26-27: Cirque Pk. Skiing off the Duffey Lake road.	B2-3/2531 m	Brian Wood	604-222-1541
February 26-27: Joffre Pk. Skiing and climbing via the Aussie Couloir, also off the Duffey Lake road.	C4/2721 m	Ryan Bougie	604-937-7949
February 26-27: Sphinx hut area. Skiing to the far side of Garibaldi Lake in Garibaldi park.	B-C3	Greg Hamilton	604-949-0770
March 5-6: Tetrahedron area (ski/snowshoe) Touring the cabins, in the Sechelt area.	B2	Alfred Menninga	1-604-886-0775
March 5-6: Buck Mtn, Zig-Zag Pk. & Mt. Storey Skiing the Mt. Wood Group on the Ashlu-Squamish Divide.	C2-3/2290 m	Monika Bittel	604-983-3097
March 6: Tonic Pk. - Mt. Sproatt Skiing opposite Whistler, approaching via 21 Mile Ck.	B3/1844 m	Karl Ricker	1-604-938-1107
March 12: Spearhead Traverse Very extended skiing near Whistler in Garibaldi park.	D3	Ryan Bougie	604-937-7949
March 12-13: Golden Ears (snowshoe) Snowshoeing in the Lower Fraser valley.	C2-3/1716 m	Emanuele Porra	604-533-7723
March 12-13: Mt. Rohr Skiing off the Duffey Lake road.	B3/2440 m	Liz Ball	604-879-4648

SUMMER CAMPS

8th Annual Lake Lovely Water Summer Camp - 9-17 July, 2005

Eight days of mountaineering in the glorious Tantalus Range (1:50,000 mapsheet 92 G/14). Accommodation is in the luxurious A.C.C. cabin with swimming and boating at the door. We will also be running a mountaineering school for several entry level participants.

This is a self guided camp for club members; \$375. (+/-) covers chopper and hut rental.

For further information, contact Peter Woodsworth at 604-254-7076.

Interested in organizing a camp?

If you are leading a camp, could you let Peter Woodsworth (604-254-7076) know so that we can co-ordinate dates to maximize membership choice. If you are considering a camp, feel free to ask for assistance.

One interesting idea that has come up was a family camp based at the Mountain Lake Cabin; easy approach, moderate terrain, swimming and generally great for kids. Any one like to pick up on

SPRING SKI CAMP WITH THE KOOTENAY MOUNTAINEERS

The KMC is organising a ski camp/traverse in the Homathko Icefield this spring. BCMC

members are welcome to attend. If you are interested contact Sandra McGuinness at 250-352-3545.

VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL & HOW YOU CAN HELP THE BCMC

The Vancouver International Mountain Film Festival will be held on 20-27 February. If you intend to go, you can buy advance tickets at Mountain Equipment Coop. If you buy an advance ticket at MEC and mention that you are a member of the BCMC, MEC will give the club \$2 for every advance ticket so purchased. MEC wishes to help clubs raise funds for themselves - a worthy cause, so participate.

FOR SALE - Telemark bindings. G3 Roxy. Will fit shoe size 34-36. Still sealed in box. \$160. Contact Leonie Knaus if interested at - leonieknaus@hotmail.com; cell: 604-723-0366.

TRIP REPORTS

BCMC Barbecue – 10 August , 2004 (Rated as B2 Trip to those commuting from Vancouver) We had another great BCMC Barbecue this year, as the Barbecue team is becoming more adept at assembling the right equipment – this year we even had a tablecloth! With the help of a high-powered barbecue - courtesy of MEC - we were able to fry our veggie dogs, and kill the mad in the mad cow burgers. The weather was perfect: an azure blue sky, warm sunny weather, surrounded by women (and men) in bikinis, and with a picnic table that was right on the beachfront allowing us easy access to swimming, showers, and an expansive view of Vancouver.

The crowd gradually arrived, some by bike, some by foot, others by bus, and then of course those who we just can't seem to separate from their automobiles. The number who commuted by bike has exploded over the past year, mainly due to everyone's concern for the amount of money Alberta is making from the high price of gas. Kit and Julia were able to pick up the barbecue from Mountain Equipment Co-op and Pam Krannitz provided condiments, watermelon and stolen tomatoes (from her neighbour's garden). We seemed to have more attendees than last year, and this is either due to the fact that more BCMC members are becoming fruitful and multiplying or more BCMC members are becoming

homeless and destitute and just looking for a free meal. I kind of assume it's the former. We had an endless supply of high quality potato chips, Soya veggie dogs and fruit punch. The MEC propane barbecue was a vast improvement over the previous year where the charcoal barbecue was not only insufficient to kill the bacteria, but the resulting charcoal pollution was compromising the air quality in Kitsilano.

Next years event may include prizes for the best suntans, and best non-suntans, and also free bus tickets for those who are in love with their cars.

See you next year! (and don't forget your swim trunks)

Mike and the BCMC Barbecue team.

Shawatum Mountain, 25 September, 2004

Shawatum Mountain? Where in the heck is Shawatum Mountain is a common response when people are told where you have been. Now Shawatum Mountain is on the border of Skagit / Manning Provincial Park north of the Hozomeen group. It can be reached from both parks but the fastest is from the Silver Skagit forest service road which takes you to the north end of Ross Lake at the southern end of the Skagit Valley park.

Fourteen people ended signing up for this obscure peak climbed by an obscure route through coastal forest. I tried to be as truthful as possible without scaring people away from this interesting area. Luckily only a handful decided to give it a pass. The beautiful weather helped a lot as well. After meeting in Abbotsford at 7 am we were on our way to the start of the Skyline west trail. We reached it at 9:15 am, 15 minutes behind schedule. After hiking up the trail for about half a kilometer we turned left up the Centennial trail and headed north toward Nepopekum creek. That took almost a full hour and it was our last chance to fill up on water. After another 15 minutes it was time for the true test. We left the trail and started up the west ridge. First not too steeply through forest and vine maple but it wasn't long before the incline steepened and the forest opened up. It was steep enough for the front leaders to knock down rocks. They tumbled through the forest unnerving a few of us. Something I hadn't thought of. Everybody seemed to enjoy the travel through the open forest, rocky bluffs with great views and the plateau at 1100 m with a mossy forest and lots of rhododendrons.

From the plateau we headed up steeply again but after another hour the meadows appeared and we decided at that point that some people should head for the summit. The rest could lounge in the meadows. The turn around time was set for 3 pm. At 2 pm the first group reached the 2158 m summit after some minor scrambling. It was then that the muscle cramps started for some. The leader was one of them. The last half hour to the summit was completed with moderate cramps. At 2:45 pm eleven of the group had reached the summit. Three had decided to do the lounging in the meadows. We were treated to great views in all directions and 3 mountain goats. The Hozomeen group, Silvertip, Ross Lake, and the Mt Rahm-Spickard-Redoubt group were particularly striking. Lunch and drinks were consumed to regain strength for the way down. It became clear that there was a shortage of the latter

It was time to head down after watching the goats doing some amazing mountaineering, putting us to shame. On our way down the leader developed severe muscle cramps. As I was grimacing on the mountain everybody was waiting patiently. It was definitely a low point for me to be in that state and it was the first time that my gear had to be divided amongst the group to take the weight of my legs. After recovery we headed down slowly, with cramps returning every once in a while. We made good progress with gravity doing its thing going down the steep slopes. It was amazing how many loose rocks there were on that slope. It was shortly after 6 pm when we reached the trail back to the car. But first it was time to load up on water in Nepopekum creek. So much so that some developed a stomach ache. Then the last hour back to the cars, most of which was in the dark. At 8:15 pm the last party reached the cars.

It had been a tough day but rewarding and I would like to thank Carolyn, Klaus and Rhys for helping me out and the rest for being so patient. Too bad there was no time left for dinner because of the late hour.

Participants: John Halliday, Michael Fuhrman, Klaus Tetzlaff, Carolyn Goluza, John Sapac, Jenny Faulkner, Dan Lord, Jens Krause, Chris Kubinski, Darlene Anderson, Rhys Gibb, Tim Martiniuk, Mark Burgoyne and Jos van der Burg (Organizer and reporter)

Cathedral Caper 2-3 October, 2004

Our Indian Summer weather of late September/early October was perfect for climbing a mountain. I had previously scheduled a group trip up Mt. Cathedral but had to cancel due to rain, so this was it. On short notice Bob Price was convinced that this was a good idea and noon Saturday we biked up the paved trail that goes to the Seymour dam. Our large, over-night packs must have looked suspicious and a park ranger asked what we were doing, as camping in the Park is forbidden. Bob, being quick of wit, said we were just trying out our new packs. This was not really a lie, since my pack was a new Serratus Alpinelite, fresh from the MEC emporium. The ranger allowed us to continue and at about 9 km we ditched the bikes and hiked up a steep trail to Coliseum mountain and hence over to Burwell, where we bivied. Although there is plenty of fresh water on the top of Burwell, we had brought along canned libations (emergency rations) and used one of the tarns to cool them off.

When the morning sun finally rose from behind Judge Howie to the east we were on our way, dropping down to the Burwell-Cathedral col, then following the obvious ridge that leads up to the Cathedral summit. It took three hours to arrive there from the Burwell bivy. Although the top of Cathedral sports two microwave towers, a Telus cell phone does not work there so if you want to order fresh pizza, you are out of luck. Bob ate a large burrito that supplied us with music for the rest of the day. If anyone is missing a yellow sleeping pad there's one rolled up and resting at the bottom of a deep gully on the NW side of Cathedral.

Three hours later we were back at base-camp. A raven, endowed with a most incredible collection of melodious sounds, finally managed to extract part of a bagel from us. Later we tried to skirt around the south end of Coliseum, rather than up and over it, to get to the col between Coliseum and the north Needle. This was not a good idea, as it resulted in some very steep and serious bush thrashing. It was just getting dark when we finally arrived down at the bottom of the Seymour River valley and retrieved our bikes from the bushes. Evening twilight illuminated the trail winding forever through the dense Seymour forest and an eternity later we finally arrived at our car and hence were conveyed to

the Black Bear pub for sustenance and rejuvenation.

Thank God for these Indian Summers!!

Gordon Esplin

Portering to Portentous Portia, 2-3 October, 2004

In Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice", Portia was the heroine. Along the Coquihalla railroad the whistle stops were given names taken from several of the Bard's plays, "Portia" marking an abrupt hairpin turn on the railway leading out of Boston Bar Creek valley into the Coquihalla Canyon. This name has since been preserved by the Highways Ministry at the same spot, which is now a gated side road intersection, but some other names, unfortunately, have been mislocated (e.g. Iago) or have disappeared and now are forgotten. Yet others that did not exist along the railway have now appeared at the roadside and are out of context (e.g. Falstaff and Shylock). The mountain lying 4 km southwest of Needle Peak is the southernmost of any significance between Boston Bar Creek and the Coquihalla Canyon, and it is about 5 km northeast of the Portia whistle stop. So seeking to preserve the heroine's name, "Portia Peak" seems to be the logical name for the mountain. I've had my eye on it for several years and it was a logical ascent from the railway tunnel now used by oil pipeline vehicles on the old Coquihalla rail bed. But alas, the pipeline gurus locked the road once the highway was tolled for use, and so the project festered until I got around to reviewing alternatives on maps. The evolution of the Needle Pk. trail from Coquihalla Pass, coupled with a developing tributary spur that leads to an artificial phallic-adorned flat-topped summit 2 km S.W. of Needle, was the impetus to get on with it.

Twelve of the fourteen intended participants showed up at Hope's Home Restaurant. Two from the north cancelled out in the final hours before departure on Saturday. Reassembly at the Yak – Needle Pk. parking area saw the procession on the trail by 4:30. The objective was to camp at the first pond of water that was out of highway earshot. It turned out to be at tree line (1700 m) close to the north face of Needle Peak, which we reached at 6 pm. However, Ed Zenger's "sub-party" elected to move on to the small lake

under the above-noted flat-topped summit, because they wanted a pristine water source. The rest of us stayed put under a “boil water advisory”, because my recently re-habbed knee was not tolerating any more backpacking for the day. The site proved to have a spectacular sunset, moonrise, and sunrise with comfy heather to camp on.

The following morning we pushed on to Ed's encampment in 45 minutes, which was found on the small tarn located above tree line on the side of the above-noted unnamed flat-topped summit. Several years ago Phil Kubik and I tried to apply the name of “Ironing Board Mtn.” for it, to go with Needle Pk. and a suggested adjacent “Thimble Peak” to the northeast. The geographic nomenclature authorities were not amused with either suggestion, preferring our lot of Himalayan beasts of burden suggestions which they approved for peaks to the north. So to carry the theme onward perhaps “Thimble” should be a “Markhor” (an ibex of the Hindu Kush with twisted antlers, *Capri falconeri*) and the flat-topped peak with plastic phallus could be a “Bharal” (wild Himalayan “blue” sheep, endangered goat-like bovine and sure-footed, *Pseudois nayaur*). On the smooth sloping slabs of the latter abrasive footwear is definitely an asset. At Ed's encampment the group was split into team “A” and team “B”. The latter elected to visit the plastic protuberance on “Bharal” and then climb Needle, while the “A” team carried on with project “Portia”.

So, while Ed and his party climbed directly to the summit of “Bharal” on its beautiful sloping granitic slabs, Team “A” traversed along its southwest ridge, which has three minor summits, at the end of which is a steep 200 metre drop to a significant col separating it from “Portia” Peak. The steep heather slopes below the ridge top appeared to offer a direct descending easy diagonal shortcut to the same col, but adventuresome John soon found himself cliffed-out and actually arrived a few minutes later than those who stuck with the ridgeline and did the direct descent. The col has a minor hump on it with several small picturesque tarns to embellish the surrounding autumn colours. A convenient game trail lead us through the maze of krummholz and minor bluffs to the base of “Portia”; steep heather slabs somewhat greasy

and sloping with the slope, and krummholz-adorned ledges rose above us. Yet as we climbed up through it, an opening to the right always appeared to eliminate any undue flailing. The skyline crest was reached slightly south of the summit which hangs over the Coquihalla valley far below. This trek took exactly 3 hours from the campsite, located northwest of Needle Pk. A lot of sweat, but worth the effort.

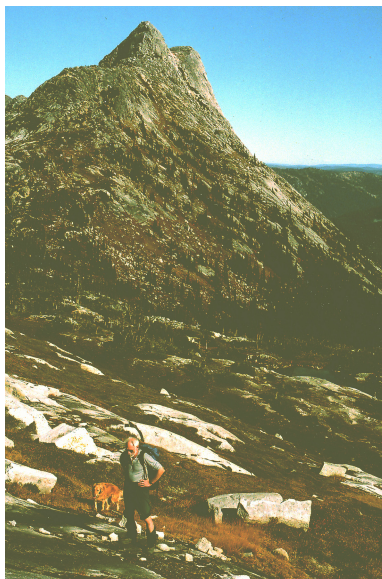
There was a well-constructed old cairn located just off the highest point, positioned to be seen from the valley floor. It was probably built for the railway survey in the 1910 – 1920 period, or for the topographic mapping that soon followed that was to be used by C.E. Cairnes in his geologic mapping of the rocks of the railway belt. There was no sign of any recent visits to the summit, and on the highest point we built our own cairn, leaving a message to welcome other ridge wanderers to “Portia Peak”. An hour was drained to admire the 360° view and to check on the “B” team's ascent of Needle Pk.

The descent went smoothly; no blind leads or dead-ends, and the col was regained without undue delay. Here team “A” re-charged the water bottles before taking on the sweaty re-ascent to “Bharal's” southwest ridge. This time we all stayed on the crest until its main summit was in sight. Ziff was the first to short-cut his way around the last minor peak to reach the highest point, which resembled a flat stone slab promenade. The plastic “dorque” on it was the familiar design, but also had an elaborate circular web of wire around it to ground any lightning strikes. While soaking in the heat of the day with a second lunch break, a small flock of horned larks flew in – our first of this species for any Coquihalla mission. Otherwise wildlife in general was scarce on the day; a raven squawked over Needle Pk. and a sole Gray jay chirped during departure from camp which was reached at about 3 pm. Team “B” was already there awaiting our arrival along with a long-forgotten former BCMCer, Manfred Putz and spouse. All had bagged Needle while team “A” was meandering the ridges.

Descent to the cars was relatively quick, although this man's re-built knee protested with every step down through the labyrinth of roots on the steep drop through the forest. The parking lot was reached at 4:30, none too soon, with departures

compromised by Dave Hughes' 6 pm dinner engagement. So, the traditional wind-up stop at the Home Restaurant was skipped, with Dave being only 1½ hours behind schedule. His spouse, a BCMCer, was not impressed.

The Needle Pk. area is underlain by a relatively young (46-48 million years) granodiorite batholith. Ice age erosion of this pluton has produced a variety of outstanding glacial features. Polished slabs, streamlined hummocks, scattered loose rock debris perched on smoothed rock tables and benches, chattermarks and crescent-shaped gouges are seen everywhere. Certainly, "Portia" (1863 m) and "Bharal" (1898 m) were over-ridden by the ice sheet(s), although the summit of Needle (2090 m) may have protruded through the ice as a very small nunatak. Above tree line, abundant striations etched on the granitic slabs indicate an ice sheet moving southwesterly, roughly, parallel to the trend of the Coquihalla valley itself. West of and below "Bharal" a valley tributary to Boston Bar Creek reveals a "dry waterfall" - a spectacular box canyon valley, akin to the Niagara gorge, indicating a once terrific discharge from the melting ice sheet which directed melt water outflow from the Anderson River valley into Boston Bar and Coquihalla valleys. An "ice plug" in the lower Fraser canyon



Needle Pk. from E side of "Bharal Mtn."
Erich in foreground. Photo - K. Ricker.

Moreover, the Coquihalla is a major fault zone of shattered rock which lends itself to rapid erosion by any unusual discharge of water.

However, on this beautiful warm autumn weekend, water was a scarce commodity, but only a few days later the autumn deluge began. Another Coquihalla trip just managed to beat the weather!

Participants: Jenny Faulkner, Jean Lederer, Ziff House, Dave and Caley Hughes, Barry Berto, Ed and Peter Zenger, John Sapac, Erich Hinze, Brian and Conrad Jansen, and Karl Ricker.

Ascents and Coordinates (NAD, 1927):

Needle Peak 635625 E, 5492450 N, el 2090 m (TRIM) – 2104* m

"Bharal Mtn." 633550 E, 5491700 N, el 1898 m (TRIM)

"Portia Peak" 633725 E, 5489350 N, el 1862-1863 m (GPS)

* 6900' (= 2104 m) as shown on NTS 1:50,000 topo sheet

Reference Peak (not ascended):

"Markhor Mtn." 636350 E, 5493275 N, el 1994 m (TRIM)



Jenny on the summit of "Portia Pk."
with Bharal Mtn. behind her. Photo - K. Ricker.

was blocking discharge, with the backed up water using the Anderson River valleys to redirect outflow around the obstruction, reaching the lower Fraser Valley by way of the Coquihalla.