

BC. MOUNTAINEERING CLUB NEWSLETTER



MARCH, 2005

VOL. 83, NO. 3

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.

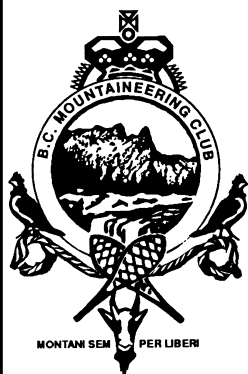
Tuesday, 8 March - Entertainment will be a slide show by Tom Kuczmierowski on skiing and climbing in Ecuador.

Tuesday, 12 April - Entertainment will be a slide show by Chris Cooper on a 105 day canoe trip down the Alaska and B.C. coast.

Skiing off Duke.



Chimborazo from Riobamba. Photo - E. Feller.



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

PRESIDENT -	KIT GRIFFIN	604-736-8462	CABIN/TRAILS -	DAVID SCANLON	604-572-5051
PAST-PRESIDENT -	DAVE HUGHES	604-980-6484		PETER WOODSWORTH	604-254-7076
VICE-PRESIDENT -	MONIKA BITTEL	604-983-3097	CONSERVATION -	MONIKA BITTEL	604-983-3097
SECRETARY -	ALICE PURDEY	604-293-2951	SUMMER CAMP -		
	ANDERS OUROM	604-228-1798		PETER WOODSWORTH	604-254-7076
TREASURER -	TODD PONZINI	604-340-9653	FMCBC REP -	MIKE PEEL	604-444-4068
MEMBERSHIP/MAILING -		604-268-9502	WEBMASTER -	KEVIN SWANSON	604-943-4364
	JULIA BORCHARDT	604-204-0726	EDITOR -	MICHAEL FELLER	604-270-4050
	STEVE TATE	604-737-3608			
SOCIALS -	DERRICK JOHNSTONE	604-505-6250	EQUIPMENT -	PAUL KUBIK	604-876-0764
	PAUL HAWMAN	604-924-1235	SAFETY EQUIPMENT -	KIT GRIFFIN	604-736-8462
CLIMBING -	JOS VAN DER BURG	604-463-7582	LIBRARY -	JOAN FORD	604-876-4255
	EMANUELE PORRA	604-533-7723			

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

EMAIL ADDRESS: info@bcmc.ca or bcmc@bivouac.com

INTERNET SITE: www.bcmc.ca

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

March 5: Mt. Seymour-DePencier Bluffs (ski/snowshoe) B3	Justin Bennett	604-813-4666
First meeting and training day for those interested in climbing Atwell Pk. in late April/early May.		
March 5-6: Tetrahedron area (ski/snowshoe) B2	Alfred Menninga	1-604-886-0775
Touring the cabins, in the Sechelt area.		
March 5-6: Buck Mtn, Zig-Zag Pk. & Mt. Storey C2-3/2290 m	Monika Bittel	604-983-3097
Skiing the Mt. Wood Group on the Ashlu-Squamish Divide.		
March 12: Spearhead Traverse D3	Ryan Bougie	604-937-7949
Very extended skiing near Whistler in Garibaldi park.		
March 12-13: Golden Ears (snowshoe) C2-3/1716 m	Emanuele Porra	604-533-7723
Snowshoeing in the Lower Fraser valley.		
March 12-13: Mt. Rohr B3/2440 m	Liz Ball	604-879-4648
Skiing off the Duffey Lake road.		
March 12-14: Garibaldi N�v� Traverse B3	Justin Bennett	604-813-4666
Skiing in Garibaldi park around Mt. Garibaldi.		
March 19-20: Mt. Outram C3/2461 m	Greg Iuzzolino	604-584-9689
Skiing near the west entrance to Manning Park.		
March 19-23: Battleship Lakes area B2-3	Dave Scanlon	604-572-5051
Skiing in the North Lizzie Ck. area, checking out potential locations for a new hut.		
March 20: Tonic Pk. B3/1844 m	Karl Ricker	1-604-938-1107
Skiing opposite Whistler, approaching via 21 Mile Ck.		
March 25-27: Snowspider Mtn. C3/2494 m	Margaret Hanson	604-341-5961
Skiing east of Lillooet Lake.		
March 25-28: N. Joffre Ck. traverse B-C2-3	Mike Peel	604-444-4068
Skiing off the Duffey Lake road.		
March 26: Musical Bumps - Whistler area. B2	Martin Cook	604-733-5452
Skiing beyond the Whistler ski area.		
March 26-27: Mt. Seymour climbing practice (ski/snowshoe) B3	Justin Bennett	604-813-4666
Practising climbing techniques and traversing steep slopes on the second training session for those interested in climbing Atwell. Pk.		
April 2: Mt. Northgraves B2-3/2103 m	Jos van der Burg	604-463-7582
Skiing south of Hope.		
April 2-3: Castle Towers Mtn. C3/2676 m	Todd Ponzini	604-340-9653
Skiing and climbing above Garibaldi Lake in Garibaldi park.		
April 9-10: North Ck. or Railroad Pass area. C3	David Hughes	604-980-6484
Skiing in the upper Lillooet valley area.		
April 9-10: Mt. Baker C3/3286 m	Irek Jasiak	604-930-8541
Skiing in northern Washington.		
April 9-10: Rainbow Mtn. C3/2314 m	Tony Knight	604-873-2276
Skiing opposite Whistler.		
April 9-10: Little Diamond Head (ski/snowshoe) B3	Justin Bennett	604-813-4666
Conditioning and recce trip as the third training session for those interested in climbing Atwell Pk.		

MEMBERSHIP

New Members - The club welcomes the following new Associate Members: Martin Bliemel, Nathan Chase, Pat Craig, Ron Groom, Steve

Horovitz, Miranda Meyer, Paul Needham, Tom Pietrzak, Rebecca Robertson, Mary Thomson, and Robyn Wark.

SUMMER CAMPS

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 this?

SPRING SKI CAMP WITH THE KOOTENAY MOUNTAINEERS

Homathko Icefield ski traverse/ climbing camp - late April-early May

The Kootenay Mountaineering Club will be organizing this ski camp which will fly in and out by ski plane. The party intends to traverse

across the icefield with 2 extended and several short camps, climbing peaks along the way. Estimated cost is approx. \$600.

For further information, contact Sandra McGuinness at dog_house@shaw.ca or 250-352-3545.

BCMC NEWS

A club flag?

The executive at their February meeting decided that it would be nice to have club flags which could accompany members on various trips. On the back page of this newsletter are some possible designs, produced by Dave Scanlon. Do you think one of these is appropriate, or do you have another design you prefer? Please let your executive know.

decided our objective was to leave a lasting legacy for the Club. To some extent, projects were divided up into 2 categories - What needed to be started now, and what could be done later. Some projects take much longer to work on and finish than others.

So, the "now" list contains: A written photo display of the Club, a special Centennial Mountaineer edition, a yearly calendar, a club video in the way of a documentary of the club's history; another hiking-climbing book, along the line of Bruce Fairley's book, only smaller; another hut or huts, and a written history of the club.

Tsunami Relief Fund - At the January social evening, a modest collection was taken and donated to the Tsunami Relief Fund.

The "we can put this off to later" list consists of: Centennial shirts, caps, badges, pins; a club flag; camps (summer and winter; Re-enacting Mt. Garibaldi's 1st ascent in period gear; raising the club's profile in the media – Cable 4 T.V.; an archival exhibit in the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Photos required for a BCMC calendar

The club intends to produce a calendar for next year to help raise awareness of and funds for our centennial in 2007. If you have any photographs that you think would be suitable for a calendar, please contact Monika Bittel (604-983-3097), Julia Borchardt (604-204-0726) or Alice Purdey (604-293-2951).

The New Hut Project: This seemed to go on forever. Early on it was decided any new hut would have to be within a reasonable distance, ideally close enough for a weekend trip. Each time an idea came up, it was discarded – a couple because they were too far away. We also wanted an area that was reasonable for an average club member so any new hut would see a lot of use. We narrowed this list to two places. Then there was one. We abandoned our #2 choice after a spring ski outing when a snowmobile came within 1½ km of the site. Scratch that one too.

BCMC Centennial Committee Report

- by Dave Scanlon

To begin with, I have to say that I made a mistake! In early 2003, I suggested at a meeting that we (B.C.M.C.) should form a committee to organize - come up with ideas - explore different projects for the club's centenary. The answer was: "Sounds great Dave – Go ahead, do it!

There have now been 7 meetings held with about 15 Club members attending on and off. We

Our main problem was snowmobilers. Each and every time a potential site came up,

snowmobilers could get to it. It seemed that this project might not fly. At one meeting, Michael Feller mentioned Battleship Lakes. It was looked at on maps. Then Donna and I scouted out the road. It was passable. So be it, Battleship Lakes or bust! On the last Labour Day long weekend, I had a trip into the area with 11 Club members (see trip report). I've since marked in a trail and checked out 2 sites for a cabin. The road access was 4WD to within 2½ km of the lakes. The whole idea is looking very promising.

At the risk of being repetitive and boring, the Centennial Committee has talked about:

1. Hut

- Using B.C. Parks facilities at the Pemberton airport to build a new cabin/hut
- Discussing with Terminal Forest Products the feasibility of flying a pre-built new hut from the Pemberton airport to its site.
 - S-64 Aircrane 16,000 to 18,000 lb load limit
 - Chinook 28,000lb load limit
- Pick cabin site and maybe get foundation in this year. (with appropriate permits of course)
- Cabin to be the same size as North Creek Cabin

2. Club video documentary
3. Beginning 2006: A yearly calendar
4. Michael Feller and Martin & Esther Kafer to the Provincial Archives in Victoria for archival/history work – to obtain material for Club History, special centennial Journal
5. T-shirts, caps, sweaters, and pins
6. A club flag and logo
7. Funding – Grants: Hugh Kellas & J.P. Shason to research

By the time this is printed, we'll have had another meeting. We've split up into small groups, each working primarily on their own project. That way, no one gets too much to do. We're looking for volunteers. Anybody wanna' help? Remember, many hands make for lighter work. Any thoughts or ideas? Anything! Share them with us no matter how trivial.

Your Centennial Committee is currently Hugh Kellas, Martin Kafer, Michael Feller, Jos van der Burg, Donna Scanlon, J.P. Shason, Emanuele Porra, Monika Bittel, David Hughes, Todd Ponzini, Anders Ourom, Kit Griffin, Pat Crean, Gerry Kollmus, Ian McGillivray, Brian Wood, Brian Steeves, and David Scanlon, organizer.

AN ARTICLE OR NOTE FOR THE AMERICAN ALPINE JOURNAL?

"In your (BCMC) editor's opinion, the American Alpine Journal is the world's foremost alpine journal and the one upon which BCMC journals have been modelled. It deserves your support, so we print the following with pleasure.

"Welcome to 2005! We wish you white mountains, blue sky, dry rock, and a light heart.

We also wish to receive reports about your new routes in 2004. As you know, the American Alpine Journal tries to publish all the world's new mountain and bigwall routes each year. We can only succeed if we hear from you.

Historically, all the world for the AAJ meant every place except the Alps, Scotland, and New Zealand. This year we will begin including those mountains via summaries of regional activity. We won't likely catch all regions immediately, but eventually we will.

Our official deadline was December 31, 2004. But we will accept all reports that arrive early in 2005, and will try to accommodate occasional latecomers, especially climbs from the Southern

Hemisphere's summer season and from the Northern Hemisphere's winter season.

For more information on the American Alpine Club, please visit www.AmericanAlpineClub.org. For a complete index to the AAJ from 1929-2004, for some of the AAJ's most important recent articles, and for an online copy of the submission guidelines, please see www.americanalpineclub.org/knowledge/aaj.asp.

In other news, we are thrilled to report that late this winter you should be able to find 75 years of AAJ content online, and soon it will be available on DVD. Thank you for your time, and have a passionate year in the hills."

John Harlin III

Editor, American Alpine Journal

2912 Dee Highway

Hood River, OR 97031 USA

johnharlin@gorge.net; aaj@americanalpineclub.org

phone: 541-354-6142 fax: 541-354-6143

CLUB MEMBER CLIMBS TO ASSIST A CURE FOR CANCER

Club member - Ravil Chamgoulov - who works for the BC Cancer Research Centre, is organizing a special event "Climbing for Cancer Cure" to raise funds for cancer research and care in British Columbia. The pledges from this event will go to support cancer research and care through the BC Cancer Foundation:

www.bccancer.bc.ca/DON/EventListing/default.htm

The event includes a series of solo climbs of the highest summits of the seven continents on behalf of the BC Cancer Foundation. Ravil is a very experienced mountaineer, who has climbed numerous mountains and has been awarded the title "Snow Leopard" in Russia - the ultimate Russian accolade by high-altitude mountaineers. Ravil has already successfully climbed solo the highest peaks of Europe and North America.

As you read this newsletter, Ravil is currently climbing Mt. Aconcagua (6962 m), the highest peak of South America and the highest point in the Earth outside of Asia. With such climbs we are trying to attract new fundraisers and sponsors in order to collect much needed funds for cancer research and care. The BC Mountaineering Club is the informational sponsor of this event.

Please help us 'climb towards a cure...'

Thank you for your support

How to make a pledge

1. You may make your donation **by cheque** (payable to "Climbing for Cancer Cure").

Please forward your donation to the following address:

Dr. Ravil Chamgoulov
Cancer Imaging Department
BC Cancer Research Centre
601 W. 10th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Z 1L3

2. OR deposit to:

"Climbing for Cancer Cure"
TD CANADA TRUST

Branch # 05680

Account # 8418-5203981

3. OR using your Visa or Mastercard

(Please follow the instructions at the BC Cancer Foundation website: www.bccancer.bc.ca/DON/DonateOnline/default.htm)

A tax receipt will be issued for all donations of \$20 and more.

For information please contact:

Dr. Ravil Chamgoulov
BC Cancer Research Centre
Tel: 604-708-4278
rchamgou@bccrc.ca

OR:

Sylvia Perry
BC Cancer Foundation
Special Events Officer
Tel: 604-707-5904
sperry@bccancer.bc.ca

SERRATUS - A SAD FAREWELL

As many of you know, the local company Serratus has been designing and manufacturing outdoor recreational gear since 1980 when it was established in partnership with Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC). The name Serratus quickly became recognised as THE standard for high quality manufacturing and sensible but innovative design of backpacks, bike bags, etc. Many of its early products are still in use today. In 1986 MEC became the sole owner of Serratus but the products were still designed and manufactured locally, thus assuring members that Serratus products continued to have "Made in Canada" quality. One of the stated criteria of MEC's purchasing philosophy was to buy locally-made products wherever practical.

However, it seems that this bedrock principle has shifted in the name of efficiency and lower prices (and lower quality?).

In view of the high unit costs of making Serratus products in Canada compared with buying similar products made in Asia, in June 2004 the MEC directors were asked to consider closing down Serratus. In early September the decision to close down Serratus was agreed to by all directors except one, Chris McNeill, who resigned in disgust. I was told it was a difficult decision for many of the directors. For all intents and purposes, by 31 January 2005, Serratus has ceased to exist. Apparently, all employees will receive, or have already received, generous severance packages, which is unusual

for this type of industry. Also, many of the employees were not surprised by this decision and are trying to view this positively as a new chapter in their lives.

Many MEC members feel that business decisions for a not-for-profit co-op do not necessarily have to follow the “bottom-line driven” decisions of the for-profit corporate sector. In the last few years corporations have come under increasing attacks for chasing and exploiting low wages around the world, and not all of these attacks have come from the usual left-wing sources. But, in general, co-ops are subject to the same economic forces as corporations, with a possible exception relating to share dividend/redemption expectations. So perhaps closing down Serratus was just a matter of time. Some local observers feel that a similar fate awaits other local outdoor gear manufacturers, such as Taiga and Arc'teryx, who operate manufacturing plants here in town, at least for the moment.

Perhaps this type of closure is inevitable, but is this the direction you want to see the directors taking MEC? It is difficult for those of us on the outside to understand the directors' decision without having all the facts. There were rumours of declining market share for Serratus products, “subsidies” from MEC (Serratus's owner) to keep Serratus afloat over the last few years, stiff competition from much larger enterprises abroad which have economies of scale and lower labour costs, and difficulties of obtaining suitable material from North American sources.

Apparently MEC will be commenting publicly on this difficult decision in the near future, and likely will assure us that most previous Serratus products will be made abroad to prevailing standards under the MEC brandname.

As an MEC member, which of the following options would you prefer:

- 1) receive a larger share redemption cheque,
- 2) pay off interest and principal on MEC's loans to finance further store expansion, or
- 3) try to keep a small local manufacturer in business?

Tax-payer financed subsidies to help maintain local industries in town are surprisingly common, and usually we, as taxpayers, have little say in these highly political decisions. Also, it is not unusual for some less profitable divisions of a large enterprise to be helped, at least temporarily, by more profitable divisions of the enterprise. Could this have been the case with Serratus?

These are tricky questions but, as an MEC member, what do you want? Let the directors know by writing a letter.

Brian Wood

Your editor comments - MEC appears to have an admirable stance on ethical purchasing. Its a pity this stance did not extend to the principal of supporting local enterprise. This rigid adherence to the economic bottom line is not always desirable. When you have the choice you can still purchase outdoor gear made locally by Taiga or Arc'teryx.

Michael Feller

NEWS

Garibaldi park update – Chris Platz, from B.C. Parks, attended the February BCMC executive meeting and provided the following update for Garibaldi Park:

1. Observations suggest the expansion of Whistler to Flute has slightly increased use of Russet Lake.
2. The Elfin Lakes cabin heater is now working again.
3. Rangers will be in Garibaldi park this winter. The number of rangers dropped from 2 to 0, then increased to 1 last year and is back to 2 this year.

4. Snowmobilers have been in to Taylor meadows and Panorama Ridge this winter, and some have been ticketed.
5. The microwave road gate is now much lower on the road, not too far from the river crossing. This should help to protect the Black Tusk area from the intrusion of snowmobiles.
6. Currently, no parks in the Squamish-Pemberton region are being looked at as a location for a commercial lodge. However, there has been a proposal to replace the Himmelsbach hut at Russet Lake. B.C. Parks is still assessing this proposal.

7. Wedgemount hut now has a new outhouse. There are plans to upgrade the trail and put in a new campsite beyond the hut.
8. Road access to the Singing Pass trailhead is being investigated.

New system for describing avalanche conditions and new rules by Parks Canada for winter backcountry travel by custodial groups

The newly formed Canadian Avalanche Centre (CAC) has a new website – www.avalanche.ca – which uses a new system to provide avalanche information.

The CAC and Parks Canada have created the Backcountry Avalanche Advisory (BAA). The system uses simple, easily identified green, yellow and red icons designed to accompany TV, newspaper and Internet weather maps, with avalanche conditions in a particular region rated as Good, Serious, Poor or Variable, with corresponding travel advice calling for Normal Caution, Extra Caution, Not Recommended and Extra Caution. The new BAA is meant as a starting point for people seeking avalanche information, with the international five-scale danger rating system still available to those who seek more detailed information.

Parks Canada has also developed an Avalanche Terrain Exposure Scale (ATES) which has been applied to over 250 trails in the Rocky and Columbia Mountain national parks. These trails are classified using familiar ski hill style green, blue and black icons as Simple – Class 1, Challenging – Class 2 and Complex – Class 3.

Parks Canada has now altered its Custodial Group Backcountry Travel Policies by using the ATES and BAA. Custodial groups are now permitted access to Class 1 ATES routes without leadership by a professional guide, and access to terrain rated as Class 2 only when led by a mountain guide or ski guide certified through the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides or the International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations. It is illegal for custodial groups to access Class 3 terrain. The policy also recommends that custodial groups avoid backcountry travel entirely during times when avalanche conditions are rated Poor according to the BAA.

UIAA undertakes environmental initiatives

The International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation, which uses its French acronym – UIAA – has recently introduced a type of environmental certification (a label) for climbing schools and commercial trekking and expedition companies. So far, 17 organisations from different parts of the world have applied to use this environment label.

The UIAA has also introduced a “partner” status for outdoor equipment/clothing manufacturers which support the UIAA’s environmental work and demonstrate that they are environmentally friendly. So far 3 companies – Grivel of Italy, Entre Prises climbing walls of the U.K., and Bask (clothing) of Russia – are such partners.

Further information is available at the UIAA website – www.uiaa.ch.

Commercial backcountry recreation and other activity applications are proliferating at a n exponential rate

Comment by M. Feller.

The cancer that is commercial use of backcountry crown land for revenue generation continues to expand at a rapid rate. Currently we are aware of –

1. **Juliet Ck. Ski resort development** – a massive 9000 ha ski resort has been proposed for the upper Coldwater, Juliet Ck., and eastern Anderson River areas. If this development were successful, it would do to the Coquihalla region what Whistler has done to the Cheakamus valley. Wilderness backcountry skiing opportunities in the area would essentially disappear and snowmobiler-skier conflicts would be exacerbated.
2. **Independent power project proposal for Lost Valley Creek** – Lost Valley Ck., flowing into Anderson Lake, is the last major unroaded wilderness valley in the Squamish-Pemberton region. Construction of a road and IPP infrastructure to almost 800 m in the valley would destroy the wilderness value of the lower valley and provide a stepping stone for additional access to the upper valley.
3. **Kwoiek Ck. Lodge** – an expensive commercial lodge proposed for the Kwoiek Ck. area will destroy wilderness values of the nearby mountains and the adjacent Stein valley.
4. **Bear Paw heliskiing proposal for the country east of Prince George** – A huge area east and

northeast of Prince George, containing nearly all of the land from Monkman provincial park through the Rocky Mountains into the western portion of Kakwa provincial park, including most of the McGregor River drainage, has been requested by Bear Paw Heliskiing. If the tenure is given, it would be the end of winter wilderness in this region, including the eastern portion of Kakwa provincial park.

Further information about the Bear Paw Heliskiing application, its impact on endangered mountain caribou, and how you can comment, is available at

www.wildcanada.net/caribou.

All these applications, and dozens more, are available on the Land and Water B.C. website of

doom – www.lwbc.bc.ca. Details are usually given on www2.lwbc.ca/applicationposting/.

5. Commercial snowmobile expansion to include Mt. Sproatt and upper Madley valley –

Canadian Snowmobile Adventures has a commercial snowmobiling licence for a portion of the Callaghan valley, up to the Northair Mine area. Claiming that poor snow is causing them difficulties they recently requested a “temporary” expansion of their tenure area to include the summit of Mt. Sproatt (which they claimed no one was using because it could only be accessed by helicopter!), as well as the upper Madley valley – both areas zoned as non-motorized by the Winter Backcountry Recreation Forum, whose zoning has been accepted by the Sea to Sky LRMP and the Whistler 2010 Olympic planners.

DISTRICT OF SQUAMISH SMOKE BLUFFS MUNICIPAL PARK PROPOSAL

In December 2004, the District of Squamish approved the concept of creating the Smoke Bluffs Municipal Park. The proposed park would consolidate various parcels of land owned by the District of Squamish (containing significant components of the Smoke Bluffs) and the three parcels of land owned by the Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C. (FMCBC) located in the Smoke Bluffs area. The current park proposal envisions the FMCBC transferring (donating) the three parcels of land to the District of Squamish. The FMCBC acquired the three parcels of land in the Smoke Bluffs area in 1987, as development of surrounding lands started to restrict access to the Smoke Bluffs and after both BC Parks and the District of Squamish rejected a proposal from the climbing community to establish a park at the Smoke Bluffs or to provide some other form of protective land use designation. The purchase price for the three parcels of land was approx. \$75,000. The purchase by the FMCBC was largely financed by Mountain Equipment Co-op, and through fund-raising efforts by the climbing community and mountaineering clubs, including the BCMC, ACC (Vancouver), Varsity Outdoors Club and the Squamish Rockclimbing Association. The FMCBC has been paying the annual property taxes on the three parcels of land

from money raised in the initial campaign. There are currently sufficient funds to pay the property taxes for a few more years. The property taxes were approximately \$1,200 last year. Beginning in the fall of 2004, the District of Squamish and representatives from various recreational user groups have been meeting regularly to develop a park development plan for the proposed Smoke Bluffs Municipal Park. The FMCBC (Manrico Scremin, president, and Evan Loveless, executive director) and Climbers’ Access Society of B.C. are participants in the park planning team. Representatives of other user groups, e.g., walkers and mountain bikers, are also participating. With the assistance of Confluence Environmental Consulting, the park planning team prepared a report titled, “Smoke Bluffs Municipal Park: A Concept and Framework for Park Development”, which was submitted to the Squamish Council on December 14, 2004, and approved. The current Council appears to be keen to have the park concept implemented before the municipal elections scheduled for November 2005. The park plan envisions the transfer of the three parcels of land owned by the FMCBC to the District of Squamish by April 2005. The report lists some interesting statistics about the Smoke Bluffs:

- i) Rock climbing became increasingly popular in the Squamish region in the early 1960's with the first ascent of the "Grand Wall" of the Chief.
- ii) The first climbing routes on the Smoke Bluffs were established in the early 1970's.
- iii) The Smoke Bluffs now have over 500 climbing routes.
- iv) The Smoke Bluffs see an estimated 20,000 climber days per year.
- v) The Smoke Bluffs are the busiest climbing area in Canada.
- vi) The number of donut shops and fast food outlets in Squamish has increased dramatically too (not in the consultants report, but an observation by the writer).

This proposal was presented at the January 11, BCMC Social, and as a result the following comments/suggestions were raised:

- Two BCMC directors publicly stated that they would like to see the FMCBC get more than a token fee for the land: if the three parcels of land are transferred to the District of Squamish, should the FMCBC transfer the three parcels of land for something more than nominal value?
- The current park development plan envisions a municipal park, owned by the District of Squamish and ultimately administered by the Squamish Council, which is accountable to the residents of Squamish, who elect it. Are the interests of the climbing community better served by a municipal park or provincial park? Does it make a difference? Is there an option?
- The creation of the park seems somewhat rushed. The current Squamish Council has been quite responsive to recreational interests compared to those in the past 20 years. However, municipal elections are scheduled for November 2005. As a municipal park, it is the community of Squamish that determines what will happen to the park. Although the current Council has demonstrated an interest in recreation, what will happen after the November 2005 election? Is the interest in recreation a passing fad or an established trend in Squamish? Is it in the climbing community's interest to transfer the land now or to hold on to it for the foreseeable future and monitor developments in Squamish?
- Will the District of Squamish start charging parking fees for access to the Smoke Bluffs Municipal Park?

- Given how the three parcels of land were acquired, should the decision about what happens to the lands be left to the FMCBC Board of Directors? The local climbing community and the local mountaineering clubs were instrumental in acquiring the land, with the assistance of the Mountain Equipment Co-op, and they should be consulted and heard.
- Leasing the three parcels of land to the District of Squamish may be an option to consider, at least until such time as the FMCBC and the climbing community are confident in the long term commitment of Squamish to the Smoke Bluffs as a rock climbing area. A leasing arrangement would allow the FMCBC to retain the lands and ensure the use of the lands for the purposes intended. A leasing arrangement would not hamper the development of the Smoke Bluffs as a park.
- There are tax implications with any land transfers which may determine if, how and when the land is transferred. The tax implications need to be fully investigated to ensure the FMCBC is not left with a financial debt it cannot afford.
- Sell, donate, lease or maintain the status quo? The current park proposal envisages the FMCBC transferring the three parcels of land to the District of Squamish. But is maintaining the status quo a better option? By retaining ownership, does the FMCBC enhance or diminish the concept of the park? Does it enhance or diminish the climbers' ability to monitor and guide the development of the park and the intended uses of the park? By retaining ownership is the FMCBC in a better position to protect the Smoke Bluffs from competing and potentially conflicting interests?

Almost 20 years ago the climbing community envisioned a park for the Smoke Bluffs as a means to preserve the Smoke Bluffs for its recreational opportunities. Over the years the climbing community has invested a lot of time, effort, money and resources in the Smoke Bluffs to develop it as a climbing area. The current Squamish Council and the park planning team are to be commended for their efforts to date. However, while this may be the opportunity that the climbing community has been waiting for, it is important to critically examine any proposal to ensure that it meets the needs of

the climbing community today and in the future. Given the importance of the Smoke Bluffs to climbers, as the FMCBC representative for the

BCMC, the BCMC directors invite comments, suggestions and ideas from members.

TRIP REPORTS

Mt. Urquhart, 3 October, 2004

After turning down a half dozen people, 14 ended up meeting at my place Sunday morning. Always a difficult decision to make because you are never sure how many will show up on the morning of the climb. At the same time you are trying to keep the numbers manageable.

In this case everybody was there and at 7:30 am. we were on our way to Harrison Hot Springs. After a quick stop there we started the long and tedious drive up the east Harrison Forest Service road. It was rough, and slow travel was a must. After about 22 km just past the logging camp we turned right up the Cogburn logging road whose gate was then unlocked. We had picked up Mark at the Bear Creek forestry campsite along the way. He had a flat tire and his spare was flat as well – which we were going to have to deal with on the way back. After 15 km on the Cogburn the logging road turns left onto the Charles Creek forest road. Another 3 km took us to the west fork with the main road continuing up the east fork to below Fagervik Mountain. We drove the west fork as far as possible. Ian's truck with only rear wheel drive had difficulties making it through the water bars. We decided to park 500m short of the end of the road while Rhys drove to the end. By 11:15 we were all ready to start the assault on the mountain. Again I hoped I had been truthful about the difficulties on this trip.

The start of the trip in the logging slash was not a great beginning. Logs, branches, thorn bushes and weeds made for tough travel. After 20 minutes we were through it and the old growth started. That was a lot more pleasant but steep. It was surprisingly warm for this time of year. Less than an hour later we left the old growth and started following the south ridge proper. This was a bit more bushy in places with rocky outcroppings. But it was not long before travel was on open slopes which took us right into the alpine below Mt. Urquhart's south face. Here, to split up the group somewhat, it was decided that part of the group would take the Southeast Ridge and the rest the West Ridge. The Southeast

Ridge would be more of a challenge in the class 4 range while the West Ridge was class 3.

The group on the Southeast Ridge reached the summit just after 2 pm and the West Ridge party 5 minutes later. It had taken us 3 hrs to reach the summit. A group of 5 decided to lounge in the sun below the west ridge which was far enough for them. The rest took in the view from the summit and relaxed for the next 45 minutes. What a glorious day for early October. We had good views of the Old Settler, Harrison Lake, the Chehalis Group, Mount Breakenridge and many other peaks in the Fraser Canyon / Fraser Valley area.

But all great things must come to an end. It was time to head down. We picked up the party of five on the way down and cut below the South Face to pick up the South Ridge for the descent. This was much easier now that gravity took over and at 5:15 pm everybody was down by the car. A 6 hour round trip for a peak that had been notoriously hard to reach.

Now the tedious drive back down the logging roads. The problem with this trip is that you spent more time driving than climbing but I believe it is worth it. Lucky for Mark, Dan had, in his car, a can of Gunk which is blown into the tire and seals the hole (hopefully) and pumps it up at the same time. Believe it or not it worked and at least gave him a chance to get out. He needed to pump up the tire once he got back to Harrison but it got him home. A stop at the Old Settler pub completed the day.

Participants: Alice Purdey, Fred Douglas, Helen Habgood, Lesli Cowan, Jennifer Nageli, Ian Smith, Iris Choi, Melodie Birkenbach, Rhys Gibb, Blake Drummond, Dan Friedmann, Marilyn Cox, Mark Burgoyne and Jos van der Burg (Organizer and reporter).

The Cathedrals, 9-11 October, 2004

Despite weather predictions, 12 keen hikers set off for Cathedral Park early Saturday morning. Eight of us took the vehicles from the staging area and four more intrepid individuals walked up. After our campsites had been established

and lunch completed, we headed towards the Rim and a climb of Scout Mtn. Whiteout conditions and blowing snow hastened our retreat from the Rim and we were soon back at camp preparing the evening meal. The four hikers - Ev, Mike, Alice and Fred - arrived around 4 pm. After dinner, we gathered around a pathetic fire until we gave up and went to bed. Woke to clear skies! We left for Boxcar via Goat Lake and although we hiked through a few centimeters of snow, we found enough bare patches on the summit to sit and eat our lunch. The next objective was to traverse Lakeview, the highest peak in the park, from the south to the north. This we did easily, although I had forgotten that it was such a long descent into the valley and then a long up-hill back to camp.

We bought some wood from the ranger and after our Thanksgiving dinners, the burnmeister, Dr. Michael Fire, got a good blaze going. We were soon circled around the blaze telling stories well into the night.

We all vacated the area just after noon. The hikers had to get down to their cars and most of the party needed to return to Vancouver.

A good trip enjoyed by all.

The party consisted of BCMT members except for Doug and Christie...hopefully future members.

Participants were Anne Lavergne, Jack Bryceland, Marilyn Cram, Melodie Birkenbach, Samuel Sigaud, Ev and Mike Feller, Alice Purdey and Fred Douglas, Doug Treadgold and Christie McCormick, and Ellen Woodd (Organizer and reporter).

THOUGHTS ON DESIGNS FOR A CLUB FLAG

David Scanlon and the club's centennial committee are interested in your thoughts on an appropriate design for a club flag. Below are a couple of designs put forward by Dave. They are

1. With original club crest



2. With more recent club emblem



based on the traditional club colours of gold and green, as used in previous club badges, and either part of the original club crest or a more recent club emblem.

Below is another club emblem that has been used in the past. Do you prefer it or could it be incorporated into a flag?



If you have any thoughts about these or any other possible designs for a flag, please contact Dave Scanlon at 604-572-5051.