

B.C. Mountaineering Club Newsletter



March, 2007. Vol. 85, No. 3

Skiing in the Cariboo Mountains on the Adams - North Thompson divide.

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, 13 March - Entertainment will be a multi-media presentation by Chris Cooper called "WILD, in search of wild places". This is a history of expeditions undertaken by ski, kayak and by big canoe to some of the most remote regions in Canada.

Tuesday, 10 April - Entertainment will be a presentation by Johannes Koch on changes in vegetation and glaciers in Garibaldi park in response to climate change.



On Baffin Island. Photo - C. MacMillan.

HONORARY PRESIDENTS

Esther and Martin Kafer

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND CLUB OFFICERS

PRESIDENT -	DAVE HUGHES	604-980-6484
PAST-PRESIDENT -	KIT GRIFFIN	604-736-8462
VICE-PRESIDENT -	TODD PONZINI	604-340-9653
SECRETARY -	ALICE PURDEY	604-293-2951
	JANE WELLER	604-988-3618
TREASURER -	TODD PONZINI	604-340-9653
MEMBERSHIP/MAILING -		
	DERRICK JOHNSTONE	604-505-6250
	PAUL HAWMAN	604-924-1235
SOCIALS -	DONNA SCANLON	604-572-5051
	ROBERT WOODHOUSE	604-730-0371
CLIMBING -	JOS VAN DER BURG	604-463-7582
	EMANUELE PORRA	604-533-7723
CABIN/TRAILS -	DAVID SCANLON	604-572-5051
	PETER WOODSWORTH	604-254-7076
CONSERVATION -	MONIKA BITTEL	604-983-3097
SUMMER CAMP -		
	PETER WOODSWORTH	604-254-7076
FMCBC REP -	BRIAN WOOD	604-222-1541
WEBMASTER -	KEVIN SWANSON	604-943-4364
EDITOR -	MICHAEL FELLER	604-270-4050

EQUIPMENT -	PAUL KUBIK	604-876-0764
SAFETY EQUIPMENT -	KIT GRIFFIN	604-736-8462
LIBRARY -	JOAN FORD	604-876-4255

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

EMAIL ADDRESS: info@bcmc.ca

INTERNET SITE: www.bcmc.ca

CLUB EQUIPMENT FOR HIRE

Avalanche transceivers - First day - \$5 per day for members, \$7 for non-members then \$3 per subsequent day .

Snow shovels - \$3 per day.

Avalanche probes - \$3 per day.

VHF radios - \$8 per day, \$40 per week

Satellite phone - \$60 per week or \$10 per day plus \$300 refundable deposit, all payable in advance, then \$2 per minute use.

If the phone is returned damaged, the renter will be responsible for repair costs. If the phone is lost or damaged beyond repair, the renter will be responsible for reimbursing the club the \$2000 cost of the phone. Trip organizers should request a deposit from trip participants to cover this cost.

First priority for equipment rental is club camps and trips.

Equipment is rented from Kit Griffin at 604-736-8462, who should be contacted at least 2 days prior to the day the equipment is wanted, except for the satellite phone, which should be arranged at least 2 weeks prior to the day it is wanted.

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 (ph. 604-270-4050, email - feller@interchg.ubc.ca).

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. Any person who attempts to participate in a club trip without such mandatory equipment, may be requested to withdraw from the trip. 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 more than 1 day prior to the trip.

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
2 courteous and inform the trip organizer.

Trip Schedule

All trips are ski trips unless indicated otherwise

March

- 3: Mt. Seymour** **A2/1449 m**
Justin Bennett 604-813-4666
A meet and greet training trip in Vancouver's North Shore mountains for the Spearhead traverse the following week.
- 3-4: Bagpipe Pk.** **C3/1657 m**
Greg Stoltmann 604-926-6496
Extended skiing east of the Mountain Lake area above Howe Sound.
- 9-11: Spearhead Traverse** **C3**
Justin Bennett 604-813-4666
Classic ski traverse in Garibaldi park near Whistler-Blackcomb. Participants must have gone on the previous weeks meet and greet training trip. The trip may take 4 days and will go only if weather and avalanche conditions are favourable.
- 10: Border Peaks area** **B3**
Jos van der Burg 604-463-7582
Skiing up Tamahi Ck. in the Chilliwack valley to the area between the Border Peaks.
- 10-11: Saxifrage Mtn.** **B3/2501 m**
Jeff Rabinovitch 778-846-2546
Skiing east of Pemberton.
- 10-11: Mt. Duke** **B3/2501 m**
Helen Habgood 604-357-3094
Skiing off the Duffey Lake road.
- 10-17: North Ck. (snowshoe)** **B3**
David Scanlon 604-572-5051
A week of snowshoeing at the club cabin in the upper Lillooet valley area.
- 17-18: Cayoosh Mtn.** **B3/2561 m**
Margaret Hanson 604-873-2276
Skiing off the Duffey Lake road.
- 17-25: North Ck.** **B3**
David Scanlon 604-572-5051
A week of skiing at the club cabin in the upper Lillooet valley area.
- 24: Mt. Outram** **C3/2461 m**
Jos van der Burg 604-463-4582
Skiing at the western edge of Manning park.
- 24-25: Mt. Breakenridge** **C3/2395 m**
Greg Stoltmann 604-926-6496
Skiing NE of Harrison Lake in the lower Fraser valley.
- 24-25: Cayoosh Mtn.** **B3/2561 m**
Peter Gumplinger 604-733-8264

- Another chance to ski this fine peak off the Duffey Lake road.
- 31: Rainbow Mtn.** **B3/2314 m**
Evelyn Feller 604-270-4050
Skiing opposite Whistler in the Cheakamus valley.
- 31-April 1: Mt. Spickard** **C3/2737 m**
Marcus Dell 604-274-9511
Skiing in the Chilliwack valley to a height substantially less than 8000 m.
- 31-April 1: Garibaldi Névé traverse** **B-C3**
Justin Bennett 604-813-4666
The 3rd annual powder cow traverse. Will proceed only if weather is fair to good and the avalanche hazard is not too high.

April

- 6-9: Mt. Fee area ski camp** **B2-3/2162 m**
David Scanlon 604-572-5051
Mini ski camp on the Squamish-Cheakamus Divide. Suitable for beginners.
- 7-8: Elfin Lakes (snowshoe/ski)** **A2**
Justin Bennett 604-813-4666
A meet and greet training trip for those interested in Atwell 1 week later, as well as anyone else interested in visiting this popular area in Garibaldi park. Participants will demonstrate avalanche and crevasse rescue skills, as well as snow and glacier climbing skills.
- 7-9: Ossa and Pelion Mtns.** **C3/2312 m**
Todd Ponzini 604-340-9653
Skiing in the North Tantalus Range, out of Ashlu Ck.
- 14: Garibaldi Névé traverse** **D+3**
Jane Weller 604-988-3618
Only for the very seriously fit and strong skiers.
- 14-15: Elusive Pk.** **C3/2777 m**
Greg Stoltmann 604-926-6496
Skiing south of the Duffey Lake road.
- 14-16: Atwell Pk.** **C-D3(4)/2655 m**
Justin Bennett 604-813-4666
Limited to 6 climbers although others wanting to camp on the Diamond Glacier are welcome. Those wanting to go on this trip should go on the preceding weekend trip to Elfin Lakes. Ski or snowshoe approach, ascending via the N ridge.

BCMC Summer Camps

1. Tantalus area, 21-29 July

A week of excellent climbing based out of the new, posh Haberl Hut. \$490 gets you choppered in and out and covers hut fees. This is a self guided mountaineering camp with routes typically Class 3 and above. This is not hiking terrain. For further information, contact Peter Woodsworth at 604-254-7076.

2. Valhallas area, one week during the 21 July - 19 August period.

A one week hiking camp for about 10 people. The actual date will be determined later. The plan is to hike in/hike out with supplies, either camping in one place the whole time, or moving to a second camp after a few days. Mainly hiking, but a light rope will be available. For further information contact Peter or Brian Wood at 604-222-1541.

Membership

New members - The club welcomes the following new associate members:

Erez Avramov, Kristina Becanovic, Joe Blakeman, Rita Ciammaichella, Merula De Wit, Timea Fellner, Fred Diegel, Emily Hicks, Emilia Jeskova, Taizo Komori, Rebecca Jacqueline Krenz, Ken Laing, Wade Lander, Lindsey Laycock, Martijn Lunneker, Leif Marmolejo, Tanya Martens, Thomas Mazalek, Katie McLean, Lowell Morris, Bill Noble, Tania Ostman, Howard Palliser, Karen

Quine, Pierre Rainville, Fabrice Retiere, Amber Ringers, Thomas Schroeder, Adam Sloan, Sergiu Stambolian, Svetlana Tkacova, Sandra Tonn, Yorie Yoshinari

The Rucksack - activities of club members

The club wishes to congratulate **Margaret Hanson** and **Tony Knight** on their recent engagement, which happened recently down under.

IN MEMORIAM: John Holmes (BCMC club member – 1952 to 2006)

Esther and I got to know John in the mid sixties when he no longer climbed very much, but lent his exceptional wit and rugged charm to many social occasions. I well remember one of John's sayings which is most appropriate to this "In Memoriam" and it goes as follows: —"OLD MOUNTAINEERS NEVER DIE, THEY JUST CLIMB UP TO HEAVEN" —

We asked some club members and mountaineering friends to send us their memories of John and their contributions are presented below — Martin Kafer

R. (Rafe) Hutchinson - The John I knew was a stalwart club member. He was on many weekend trips and summer camps, as well as work parties at the club cabins on Grouse and Seymour. I first met him in 1954 when I joined the club; as an older member (since 1952) he welcomed this newcomer and made me feel comfortable. I came to enjoy his quiet, dry but considerable wit. He was always the same person, thoughtful of others with impeccable manners. In the mountains he exuded a tangible delight at being there and made every trip fun: even bushwhacking in the rain would draw out his humour.

In those days the BCMC was a smaller club and it had a constitution that prohibited alcohol in its cabins, on trips and at social events. John seldom drank alcohol but he joined the other immigrants in an assault to change this relic from the days of prohibition. This started with skits in the Grouse cabin with a group that called themselves Theatre under the Stairs. John was roped in and wore a wry, bemused smile as he sang the lyrics that encouraged the club to change its constitution.

The BCMC then was also known as the "BC Matrimonial Club" as many members found their spouses among other members. John resisted the temptations to which lesser mortals succumbed and remained a confirmed bachelor all his life.

John had a gruelling time in the Second World War. He was captured by the Japanese and was put to work on the Burma Railway. I knew him for 30 years before he mentioned it to me. The last time Dorothy and I saw him, about 18 months ago, he spoke of it more freely and even showed us photographs of a reunion he had attended on the site. He also said he had lived too long, so we knew he thought it was time to go.

Those of us who knew John well were privileged to enjoy a friendship that was enhanced by his gentle, amused and amusing presence.

Manrico Scremin - I first met John in the summer of 1972 when we were both working at Sigurdson Millwork after I had graduated from high school. John was a few years from retirement after having spent close to 20 years working there as a high end cabinet maker. I can't remember how we first got on the topic of mountains; maybe it was in the lunch room over our sandwiches. Once we discovered our mutual interest we became great friends.

From that point forward we had lots of talks about the mountains and mountain travel. My wife Liz also participated in those discussions for the 20 years that we have been together. John's mountain experiences started with pre World War 2 climbing in Britain and the Alps. He had many great stories to tell of those days along with climbing in the Coast Range in the 50's and 60's and his many trekking trips to Nepal after he retired. John always enjoyed it when Liz and I showed him slides of recent trips that we had done. We often debated climbing ethics, techniques, and the like. We even debated, on more than one occasion, the relative merits of our mutual climbing clubs. He was a long time member of the BCMC while Liz and I are long time members of "the other club".

John always kept his love for the mountains, even for the last seven years or so when his legs wouldn't let him hike any more. His enthusiasm was infectious. Liz and I came away with renewed enthusiasm for the mountains every time we saw him. John was a real gentleman in the English tradition. We will miss him.

Joan Ford - I met John soon after coming to Canada in 1953. At that time a few members had cars and would spend winter weekends at the Mt. Seymour cabin. John was there most weekends and kept us entertained with his lively sense of humour and bantering. He was a carpenter by trade, and kept the cabin in good repair, and in the winter would shovel the snow off the roof and keep the access clear while we would ski.

In the summer he would be active in club trips. As he got older he stopped going on club trips and went hiking the N. Shore Mountains with Dick Chambers and Hughie Aiken. He had at least 2 hip replacements and gradually had to give up hiking, so he spent his weekends enjoying his other passion, cricket, and was to be found at Brockton Oval.

John spent many holidays climbing in N. Wales, the Lake District and the Island of Skye. In later years he went to Nepal and with a Sherpa trekked in the Annapurna region.

He was a very private man and it was only in his last years he talked about his experiences as a prisoner of war of the Japanese. He was in a camp involved in building the Burmese railroad. It must have been devastating to a young man.

Marylyn Dutton - When I joined the BCMC in 1952 I soon recognized John as one who would quickly extend a hand to help me over a difficult spot. I also learned what a tease he was. He was really great fun around the Seymour cabin and at campsites. By trade John was a skilful cabinet maker and after his retirement made a number of pieces for his apartment which were truly beautiful. I am glad to have had John as a friend.

IN MEMORIAM – June Binkert

Knowing that hospital walls are often bare and that June probably wouldn't have seen our new club calendar, I bought one to her. In spite of her illness she was absorbed in the photos, recalling trips and people. I was surprised when she mentioned she had climbed Mt. Carr in Garibaldi Park. I had known June as a hiker, great trails clearing organiser and tenacious environmental advocate but not someone who had been out on glaciers climbing peaks. A review of BCMC newsletters in the 60's and 70's confirmed that she had been a very active club member participating in and leading many club trips to areas such as Mt. Outram and Three Brothers and had been on a number of more technical trips with Paul, her husband. However, as trail clearers and builders the Binkerts were relentless working on trails such as the Rexford trail, the Chief trail, the Fitzsimmons Ck. trail and of course the Lions Binkert trail. June organized many of the work parties herself and the Binkerts were still doing trail work when Paul was in his eighties.

But it was June the environmental activist, that I probably knew best. Appearances can be very deceptive. Small, grey-headed women do not seem to be a threat to determined developers or dismissive bureaucrats but June could make such people splutter or squirm with her

pointed, incisive questions or well researched briefs. June was active in the Community Forum against Airport Development where she lead an impressive nearly 20 year fight against the third runway, with the Fraser River Coalition, Save Our Parkland Association and the West Southland Rate-payers. She lobbied politicians, wrote many letters, appeared at many council meetings and environmental hearings and participated in public involvement processes such as the GVRD Liveable Regional Strategy, the Fraser River Estuary Management Plan, the North Fraser Port Plan and the Sea Island Conservation Area Advisory Committee. None of this is glamorous work and certainly doesn't make the headlines but the fact we have many local Fraser River parks and better environmental policies is through the hard work of June. A week before she became ill she was planning to produce a new version of a map she had previously produced showing the huge cumulative impacts of proposed and current developments in the Fraser River Estuary.

This spring the environmental community will honour June with the Spirit of the Cranes award from the Burns Bog Conservation Society. June was delighted to know she would be the recipient of this year's award. The environment has lost a tireless and strong advocate.

Evelyn Feller

BCMC Summer Climbing and Mountaineering programs

The BC Mountaineering is pleased to offer club-based, mentor organized climbing programs for new and current members. These programs are offered ONCE per year.

Please visit www.bcmc.ca for an application form and fill out one form per program (if you are interested in attending more than one activity).

Mail your completed and signed forms to:
Monica Durigon
4127 Cambridge St., Burnaby BC V5C 1G8

If you are not a current member you may include a completed membership form as well (also available at bcmc.ca). Please include cheques

for payment made out to the "BC Mountaineering Club".

For further information contact -

Rock climbing programs - Paul Miller & Kit Griffin at climbingprograms@bcmc.ca

Mountaineering – Todd Ponzini at 604-340-9653.

Basic Outdoor Top-roping (maximum 8 participants, cost \$60)

Dates: Eve Tues Apr 25, 1 Day of Apr 29/30

This program is aimed at those who have done some indoor gym climbing, and want to try it outside. This program, or an equivalent, is a prerequisite for Essential Rockclimbing. The program will cover - safety, environmental issues,

basic equipment, basic climbing skills and techniques, and the elements of top-roping (tying in, belaying, lowering, etc.). It will be a one-day program (plus one planning evening). The program will not cover setting up top-rope anchors, rappelling, or belaying from above.

To participate, you must have a sit harness, rock shoes, a belay device (no figure 8s), two locking karabiners (Ds or ovals), plus one large pear/Münter-biner, and a helmet. (Some items can be rented from area retailers.) Program mentors or the BCMC will provide other needed equipment.

Essential Rockclimbing

(maximum 8 participants, cost \$130)

Dates: Eve Thurs May 11, Weekend of May 13/14

Essential Rockclimbing consists of an evening lecture/practice, and two weekend days at Squamish. At the end of the program, you should be able to set up and use a simple top-rope, rappel, set basic anchors, belay and follow a lead climber.

You must provide rock shoes, a sit harness, a helmet, four locking (Ds or ovals) karabiners, plus one large pear/Münter-biner, a belay device (no figure 8s), and two slings of 7mm accessory cord (1.5 m and 5 m in length). Program mentors and the BCMC will provide other needed equipment. Prerequisite - Basic Outdoor Top-roping or equivalent. You are required to be able to "tie-in" to a climbing harness and belay. This program (or equivalent) is a prerequisite for the Mountaineering Program. Fees and schedule do not include Basic Outdoor Top-roping.

Lead Climbing

(maximum 6 participants, cost \$220)

Dates: Eve Tues Apr 18, Weekends of Apr 22/23, May 6/7, and May 27/28

This is for those who have solid outdoor top-roping skills plus a season's experience. Participants will be asked to demonstrate a basic top-rope system on the first day. The program will include three weekends and at least one evening.

Equipment notes

Avalanche probe failure – Peter Rothermel sent the following email to the FMCBC concerning

Participants may be asked to help with other programs, and are expected to climb regularly together on evenings and free weekends. By the end of the program, participants should be comfortable leading 5.7 rock climbs and moderately technical mountain routes. This program covers: placing and using anchors, equipment selection and use, safety and environmental issues, leading, training, and related issues.

Participants must have all basic climbing equipment, and must be prepared to invest in all equipment needed for leading, likely several hundred dollars. Organizer's equipment is also used. Note that members joining the club, specifically to take Lead and Essential Rock program will be required to register for next year's club membership at the same time. This is to encourage participants to continue to "give back" to the club, in time and effort, in the future.

Mountaineering

(maximum 9 participants)

Cost and dates are not yet available but the program will include evening lectures/practices and overnight practice/training sessions:

Essential Rockclimbing or equivalent is a prerequisite.

This program covers mountain travel and navigation, safety and environmental issues, snow travel, glacier travel, crevasse rescue, self arrest, and ascent of a moderate peak. By the end of the program you should be able safely to undertake most club trips up to the B4 level.

To participate you must -

- be a current member of the BCMC;
- be able to attend all theory and practical sessions comprising the program;
- have solid experience in backcountry hiking and overnight camping;
- have completed the Essential Rock program, or equivalent, and understand basic rockclimbing techniques and ropework;
- be willing and eager to participate in future club activities, including leading club trips and providing mentorship to less experienced members in the future.

a recent experience with an avalanche probe: "While assisting on an ACC backcountry

ski intro, I went to use my probe and when I pulled the tensioning cord, it just fell apart and I was left with a bunch of tubes lying on the snow. It left me with the sobering thought, that if this had been a real avalanche rescue and not just a demonstration, I would have lost maybe 50% of my search capability. With transceiver flux lines and false maximums coming into play, I might dig forever and never find a victim without the use of a probe. I hate to think how the scenario would play out if I were the only one left on the surface. This is a Black Diamond Quick Draw Tour 235 probe that I bought about three or four years ago. As I am involved with my Alpine Club Section's educational offerings, I have used this probe a lot in demonstrations and in assessing the snow pack. A year or so ago I upgraded to a G3, 320, as I realized the need for longer probes on the coast. Still, the B D probe saw about a dozen days of use by avalanche course participants in this past year alone. That said, the tubing and point are barely scratched and it has not been abused.

When I had a chance to have a closer look at the failure point, It turned out to be the loop in the wire, inside the tubing, where it attached to the point tip. It had rusted through. It appears that the wire is galvanized steel, swaged with a copper crimp and that the loop had no plastic sheath. That coupled with it being housed in an aluminium tube and connected to an aluminium point, created prime conditions for galvanic action. Still I thought it odd that it would rust out, given that it was always stored in a warm dry place, when not in use. Then I noted that my probes are stored standing up, point down. When I turned my G3 probe upside down, a few drops of water, from the previous day's practice, ran out. Zinc-steel-copper-aluminum-water-warm temperature...It's surprising that it didn't rot out long ago. Mixing these metals for use in a damp environment is just plain bad engineering. This kind of poor design in a safety related product needs to be addressed immediately.

I have sent this information on to Mountain Equipment Co-op, where I bought the probe and to Black Diamond, the manufacture of the probe, asking them to do a recall as well. The word of warning is... if you have a probe, store it point up, to insure moisture drains out from the vulnerable point connection, inspect any visible part of the

tensioning cable and if there is a break showing rust, don't trust your life or any others on it, then contact the store you bought it from or the company that manufactured it and ask them to correct the problem.

If you are looking to buy a probe, research just how they are manufactured and with what materials. Some newer probes are made with aluminium tubes and stainless steel tensioning cords and some others with carbon fibre tubes and kevlar tensioning cords, with very little metal in the makeup. Although, note that carbon fibre won't withstand gross cross abrasion very well and is not perfect in it self... nothing is. Aluminium tubing is strong, light and abrasion resistant, yet mixed with dissimilar metals, can set up galvanic action, that will degrade less noble metals and render them near useless for the strength application that they were meant for. “

Further comments and discussion about these probes can be found at www.telemarktips.com

Recycling of used empty LP fuel canisters

Peter Rothermel further informed the FMCBC – that the Vancouver and Victoria Mountain Equipment Co-op stores will recycle these canisters. They will gladly accept any brand of canister that they sell and will even take the odd one that they don't sell, as long as not too many rogue canisters are in your return bag. MEC has to pay a pound rate cost to do this service. However, the canisters must be completely empty for MEC to accept them.

Karen Asp informed the FMCBC that the BC Product Care program for household hazardous waste takes back “camp fuels” along with other products marked as “flammable”, so if you have some LP fuel left over, locate a HHW/Product Care depot near you. For more information contact www.productcare.org/BCaccept.html



Sketch by
Paul Binkert

News

B.C. government starves B.C. Parks despite huge budget.

According to a recent (February 8) press release from the Western Canada Wilderness committee -

“Provincial government documents recently obtained through a Freedom of Information (FOI) request submitted by the Wilderness Committee show that a 2005 British Columbia government promise to hire up to 50 park rangers has resulted in the addition of just 11 full-time equivalent (FTE) ranger positions.

- FOI documents show that in 2007 BC had 37% fewer provincial park rangers than in 2001. In 2001 there were 101 full-time equivalent ranger positions, however, in 2007 there were just 64 ranger positions despite a BC government promise in a 2005 news release to hire “up to 50 more park rangers.”
- FOI documents also reveal that there are currently only 10 permanent rangers in BC, a decline of 62% from 2001, when 27 permanent full-time rangers were employed. Currently, there is just one permanent full-time ranger responsible for every 1,300,000 hectares of protected areas in the province, or, conversely one permanent ranger for every 85 parks.
- Government documents also show that staffing for BC Parks is 50% lower than a decade ago. In 1996, when the park system was smaller (8,266,000 hectares protected), there were 356 FTE employees. Currently, there are just 175 FTE BC Parks employees responsible for 13,000,000 hectares.

“In 2005 the BC government promised to reinvigorate our park system, which included hiring up to 50 new park rangers. However, their own documents show they have broken that promise,” commented Gwen Barlee, policy director with the Wilderness Committee. “The fact is, in 2007, we have far fewer rangers and staff with BC Parks than we had in 2001.”

The provincial government has been under increasing pressure to restore funding to the park system in BC. After dramatically cutting parks staff and budget in their first term, the Campbell gov-

ernment has repeatedly pledged to commit more funding to parks citing public concern and the booming provincial economy.

“We have one of the finest park systems in North America, one which provides \$10 in visitor expenditures for every \$1 of government funding, and yet our government is starving it of funding,” said Barlee. “On a per-hectare and per visitor basis, we are now one of the worst-funded park systems in North America. I can’t for the life of me understand why our Minister of the Environment, who used to be a BC park ranger, won’t stand up for our park system.”

Further information can be obtained from - Gwen Barlee, WCWC policy director, at 604-202-0322 (c) or 604-683-8220(w).

For additional information on the economic benefits of BC Parks visit:

www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/planning/research/economic_benefits_bcparks_sept_2001_report.pdf.

Gas your car in an environmentally and socially responsible fashion.

Today virtually all BCMC trips involve the use of cars to access the mountains. Cars burn gas which, of course, contributes to global warming. We can decide on ethical grounds not to drive cars, but if we wish to go on most BCMC or other mountaineering trips, then we will have to use a car. We don’t have to abandon all environmental concerns by using cars, however. By using high fuel efficiency cars and maximizing their occupancy we can minimize emissions per person. We can also be selective of the gasoline we use.

The U.S. Sierra Club has recently extensively researched the activities of the 8 largest U.S. oil companies and ranked them according to their environmental record. A full discussion of this ranking, together with reasons, can be found at www.sierraclub.org/sierra/pickyourpoison/index.asp. A summary of this ranking, which you should consider, follows.

Top of the barrel

BP and Sunoco.

Both of these companies have some minuses,

but some impressive pluses as well. Both companies have had oil spills, but both have undertaken several green initiatives. BP is investing large amounts into alternative energy sources. Neither company operates in B.C., although both can be found south of the border.

Middle of the barrel

Shell, Chevron, Valero Energy, and Citgo.

These companies, the first 2 of which operate in B.C., have more minuses and fewer pluses than those in the “top of the barrel” group.

Bottom of the barrel

Exxon Mobil and Conoco Phillips

These companies, particularly Exxon Mobil, have few pluses. Exxon Mobil still refuses to pay punitive damages over the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska, is the 6th worst polluter in the U.S. in 2002, is associated with human rights abuses in

Indonesia and Africa, and is seeking to drill for oil in Alaska’s Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, amongst other black marks.

Conoco Phillips sells gas under the brands 76, Conoco, and Phillips 66. It was ranked the 3rd worst polluter in the U.S. in 2002, and has been fined numerous times by the U.S. EPA, as has been Exxon Mobil.

Quttinirpaaq National Park

There is still space on John Sapac and Jenny Faulkner’s July trip to Quttinirpaaq National Park on Ellesmere Island, in Canada’s High Arctic. This will be a rare opportunity to explore the Tanquary Fjord area and to see musk oxen and the mid-night sun.

For further information contact Jenny at 604-602-1428 or jemf@vcn.bc.ca

Book Review

***Climber* by Robin Mathews** (Queen’s Quarterly 1964)

Robin Mathews is known by most Canadians as an ardent nationalist with intense and passionate convictions, and he is also one of the finest Canadian political poets. Few know that Robin grew up in Powell River. There are even fewer who know that Robin’s brother, Tony Mathews (1926-2005), was an important mountaineer in the Powell River area. Tony was a founder of ‘the BOM Squad’. The BOM Squad (Bloody Old Men) opened up many of the trails in Powell River, and Tony climbed most of the peaks in such a magical and alluring place where ocean and rock meet in an intimate and close way.

Most do not know that one of Robin’s earliest short stories deals with the connection between mountaineering, climbing and politics on the West Coast. ‘Climber’ was published in the prestigious Queen’s Quarterly in 1964. The nationalist debate that emerged with the Massey Commission in the 1950s was about to erupt with greater intensity in the 1960s, and Robin was front and centre in such a lively political ethos.

‘Climber’ is set in the Coastal mountain area, and Garibaldi Park is where this drama will unfold in all its poignancy and flair. The short story is

divided into three sections, and each section folds into the next in a rather predictable and readable way.

Section I opens up the tale. Mountains and mountaineering do not yet enter the story yet. Mathews makes it clear in this short and crisp section that he has serious problems and reservations with Americans. There are Canadians and there are Americans, and Mathews makes it clear in this prologue of sorts that there are distinctive differences that should not be fudged or forgotten. Americans and Canadians might inhabit the same continent, but the cultures are often at substantive odds. This being said upfront, Mathews then moves on to tell the bigger tale about he, Max and their journey into Garibaldi Park.

Part II of ‘Climber’ begins this way. ‘I was planning a trip into the coastal mountain range behind the city of Vancouver with two friends. We promised one another we would climb a glacier in Garibaldi Park to give our trip a focus, a reason for being. We poured over maps and sorted stores as amateurs will do, three Canadians, and then Max. But Max was no amateur. He was an American’. Mathews’ two Canadian friends drop out of the trip, and he is left alone, with Max, to plan and

take the trip. Max takes total control of the planning and organization, the vision and approach. Max seemed to know everything about the coastal mountains, glaciers and mountaineering, and he made sure one and all were aware of his expertise in these matters. It did not take long, though, once Mathews and Max were on the trail to discover that Max knew little about mountains and was not in the physical shape he should have been.

Mathews had to take the lead to the alpine meadows, then higher. It was in the higher regions that the problems began. Mathews was a student of Earle Birney in the 1950s at UBC, and the reader gets the feeling that another 'David' is in the making. Mathews takes the lead up over a fragile 'snow shelf in which Max refuses to tie up. Mathews 'made a sortee to the brink, alone. We should have been tied. But he wouldn't hear of it. He was panic stricken. Then it happened...'. The reader gets the sickening feeling that, although this is a different type of mountain tale, the tragic conclusion will be the same as 'David'. But, this is not the case.

Part III begins a month after the accident and fall. Mathews is now out of the hospital, and Max is bragging to a gathered and grateful group of friends, about how he rescued Mathews and

brought him to safety. Max goes on and on about his heroism and nimble ability to come to the aid of the ailing and fallen Mathews. The real story of what actually happened and why it happened is never told. 'Climber' ends with these words, 'I forgive you, Max', I said tonelessly. The shrugging, I said, tonelessly again, 'I forgive you Max, everything'.

Needless to say, 'Climber' is thick with all sorts of political jabs and stabs. Mathews represents the moderate Canadian way and Max the aggressive and unreflective American way. Obviously, these are caricatures of both Canadian-American traditions, but there is some general truth in them. Such insights do have a perennial ring of truth to them.

'Climber', unlike 'David', has a political message and clout to it. Birney would have agreed with many of Mathews' conclusions, but his epic and classic poem on Canadian mountaineering does not go where Mathews has gone in 'Climber'.

'Climber' is as much a classic in Canadian literature as 'David', and perhaps it is time that 'Climber' be placed within the canon of Canadian Literature in the same way that 'David' has. Both the poem and short story speak much about mountains, mountaineering and the Canadian literary and political tradition.

Ron Dart

Trip Reports

Evan's Pk., 17 December, 2006

My first trip as an organizer - a big success! I got 6 people interested but in the end only 4 participated. Of the other two people who didn't come, one person opted for the BCMC trip to Diamond Head and the other one decided not to come because he had been to Golden Ears 3 times and twice had to be rescued by helicopter! I guess he didn't trust my skills as an organizer as well!

When I was talked into organizing a BCMC trip, I had two major concerns. One was that I didn't have a car and I could not easily get to the meeting place and the second was that I didn't know trails well because I have been to different places only once. Nevertheless, I was convinced to organize a winter hiking trip to Evan's Peak.

As Murphy's law dictates, all the participants happened to come from Port Moody, Coquitlam,

Langley and Surrey and of course I live in Vancouver. The skytrain doesn't run on Sunday morning until 8 am. Therefore, I had to struggle a little bit to find my way to the meeting spot. In the end everything went well and I met with the other participants in the IKEA parking lot in Coquitlam. After filling up and signing all the forms, we drove to Golden Ears Park and started hiking at 9:45 am. Soon enough I was chatting with Alena without paying much attention to the trail and I missed the first important turn. I had to be called back to my duty by one of the participants who later confessed that he was tempted to just let me go on the West Canyon trail until I figured something was wrong. It is good he didn't do it! After this first little glitch, I started paying more attention to the trail. I remembered vaguely the second turn and luckily, I didn't miss it. The "route finding" up to the col was quite easy because of

the many flags. Just below the summit the slope becomes quite steep and the snow was quite icy. Since we brought a rope, we decided to set it up. The time we spent on the summit of Evan's Peak was fantastic. The day was forecast to be rainy and stormy but instead it was sunny. The 360° views were fabulous.

After a 20 minute lunch on the top, we headed down and made it back to the parking lot when it was almost dark. It was a successful and exciting

day with interesting learning sessions as well (courtesy of Larry Kost). Now I am ready to organize this trip without supervision and I promise next time, if you come on my trip, I will not lead you all the way to the end of the West Canyon trail!

Participants: Alena Kuca, Rita Ciammaichella, Dean Urquhart, Larry Kost, and Silvia Bakovic (Organizer and reporter).



The happy party on the summit of Evans Pk. Photo - S. Bakovic.

The photographer who took the North Ck cabin photo which appeared on the front page of the last newsletter was **Claire Oldham**. Your editor's apologies for not putting this by the photo.