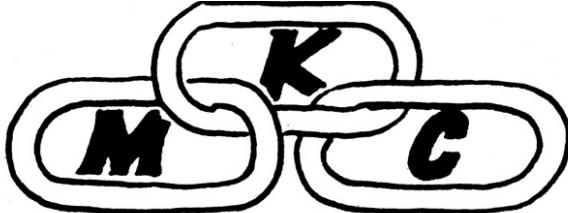


# KOOTENAY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

## AUTUMN 1982 VOLUME 25





## KOOTENAY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

### KMC EXECUTIVE 1982

CHAIRMAN - Ken Holmes, Rossland, 362-7723

SECRETARY - Jim McLaren, Box 653, Nelson, 353-7170

TREASURER - Bob Dean, Crescent Valley, Box 38, 359-7759

KARABINER - Ian Hamilton, 995-7th Ave., Castlegar, 365-6749

TRIPS - Carl Johnson, R.R. #1, Nelson, 354-4075

SUMMER CAMPS - Fred Thiessen, 167-B Trevor St., Nelson, 352-6140  
Julie Norton, Box 1553, Rossland, 362-5804

SOCIAL - Dave Adams, 1312 Grosvenor Pl., Castlegar, 365-6430

ROCK SCHOOL - John Wurflinger, 535-1st Str., Fruitvale, 367-6229

CABINS & TRAILS - Dennis Herman, Box 764, Nelson, 357-2102

CONSERVATION - Derek Willans, 1704 Topping St., Trail, 368-3772

NEWSLETTER - Anne Dean, Crescent Valley, Box 38, 359-7759

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## I N D E X

	PAGE
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT by Ken Holmes	1
MULVEY MEADOWS by Peter Wood	3
WHERE TO HIKE WITH CHILDREN by L. Martin & S. Port	6
BACKPACKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN by Libby Martin	8
RETURN TO DEVILS DOME by Ian Hamilton	10
ONE MAN'S VIEW OF THE SLOCAN VALLEY by Derek Willans	11
AVALANCHE PRECAUTIONS & SELF HELP by Dave Adams	15
BOOK REVIEW by Ian Hamilton	15
NEPAL NUGGETS by Peter McIver	16
EQUIPMENT REVIEW by Ian Hamilton	19
KMC BACKPACKING TRIP TO MT. ASSINIBOINE by I. Hamilton	20
KMC SUMMER CAMP 81 - WALDORF TOWER by Fred Thiessen	21
WINTER ASCENT OF MT. COOPER by Ian Hamilton	22
KMC CLIMBING CAMP 82 - THE LEANING TOWER by S. Walters	24
WALL TOWER - SOUTH FACE by Steve Horvath	27
ATHABASCA PASS TRAIL by Barb Patterson	30
THE FOUR SQUATTERS by Fred Thiessen	31
TWO NEAR MISSES ON BAFFIN ISLAND by Howie Ridge	32

CHAIRMANS REPORT

By: Ken Holmes

In trying to think what to write, my thoughts are: "where has the 1982 season gone?" The year seems to have passed too quickly. Anyway, what has been done in the club in 1982?

The Mountaineering School was its usual success with a full class of keen students and the usual bunch of instructors. It followed the pattern of the last few years with classroom sessions, rock climbing at Kinnaird, snow and ice at Ymir and Glacier Creek. Unfortunately the weather prevented us from getting students to the top of any peaks at Glacier creek, however the weekend was enjoyable as it usually is.

The Climbing and Hiking Camps were held in July, both being successful even though fewer people than usual attended the climbing camp in the leaning Tower group.

Financially we seem to be holding our own, although the purchase of a new typewriter and the club radio reduced the bank balance. It's amazing how we stay solvent in these inflationary days, since the membership fees have remained static. Perhaps we should take over the government!

Newsletters have been published at the usual monthly intervals to keep the scattered membership informed of the clubs activities. Increasing postage costs have not affected its regularity. (Sounds like a Beechams pills advert).

The clubs activities in the Conservation field are largely due to the efforts of Derek Willans rather than the membership as a whole. Dereks active involvement in the Val-halla issue is to be commended.

On the Social scene we had the Christmas party, the spring dinner, slide shows, the Columbia canoe trip and the Syringa picnic. Attendance was mixed but all were enjoyed by those who participated.

Some of the clubs "old timers" spent a masodistic month in Baffin Island in June. We're looking forward to seeing their slides. (not all 2000 though). Other members went as far afield as Kenya and Nepal.

The clubs schedule of trips covered almost every weekend of the year. Once again attendance varied according to the weather and popularity of the area with some trips being extremely well attended whilst others had to be cancelled

or adjourned to a suitable pub.

Perhaps the most contentious issue we are faced with, is the affair "The Gates"! This refers to the infamous gates which prevent access to Bannock Burn and Mulvey Basin. It is an absolute disgrace that easy access to one of the best mountain areas of B.C. should be prohibited by a private landowner. Letters from the club to various government departments produced no action except a response which indicates they can't or won't do anything about it.

The responsibility rests with the Ministry of Forests for resolving the issue. The landowner is non-retractable and will not let us have access. The Ministry of Forests say access for recreation is not their concern and since the logging company is being allowed through they see no resolution in the near future. Recent complaints to the local MLA have produced no response.

I would ask all members to write letters of complaint to put pressure on the bureaucrats to resolve this matter.

Finally I would like to express thanks on behalf of the membership to the executive of your club for the work done in keeping the club alive and informed.

P.S. Knowledge of the club has spread far!

We received a letter from Argentina to inform us of guided climbing tours in the Andes run by a former Chief of Police (Andes Division) Postage cost was 12600 pesos!! As one member remarked: if it costs that much to post a letter - how much to run a war?

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MULVEY MEADOWS - AUG. 28/29 1982

By: Peter Wood

The trip, advertised in the Newsletter for the Gwillim Lakes, was redirected into the Mulvey Meadows on the initiative of Club President Ken Holmes. Ken had been talking by phone with Klaus Streichert of Slocan, who for the last 2 years has closed the section of the Little Slocan Valley that allows access into Mulvey basin in 4 hrs from the car. (The old route into Mulvey basin via the Mulvey Creek trail is still accessible but takes a strong hiker 12 hrs from the carparking area. Since the Bannock Burn road was finished, 4 or so years ago, the Mulvey trail has been neglected and is heavily overgrown and obstructed by recent blow-down and avalanche debris).

Mr. Streichert agreed, under Ken's persuasive powers, to personally let us through his northern gate at 7.00 pm on Friday, Aug. 27, and when summoned by us on Sunday night, to let us out at our convenience, Streichert said: "it was for this time only, and please don't ever call me again."

Part of the reason for his strict stance is that his gates have repeatedly been physically damaged by people with trucks pushing and pulling them and by sledge hammer damage! Those gates are not popular with many local people who have traditionally had free access north - south right through the valley of the Little Slocan Lakes!

The reasons for the gates in place - now for about 2 years - are not exactly clear to me, but Mr. Streichert was very careful to point out to all of us this weekend, that we were using both the Bannock Burn and the Little Slocan Valley roads on his property entirely at our own risk! (Don't we always assume that risk on any back country road? Even Park's access roads are rough. Travelling on them or any forestry road is surely at the user's own risk?)

More relevant reasons, I suspect, are that the Ministry of Forests in approving road improvements and development by Slocan Forest Products, Triangle Pacific Forest Co. etc, and in granting stumpage allowances (taxpayer's money really) to the development of those roads over the past 10-15 years had failed to ascertain that there was a legal easement or purchased right-of-way across Mr. Streichert's land.

Streichert is now in the strong position of having a largely publicly funded, high quality gravel road across his property - due to mismanagement by government agencies - and is holding to ransom the Government of B.C., the local people and also out-of-Province outdoors people, tourists, who would like to continue unrestricted use of those publicly funded back-country roads.

It seems to me that only a large amount of public pressure can make the B.C. Government and Streichert actively pursue a settlement which will again allow public access unrestrictedly right through the valley of the Little Slocan Lakes. A letter writing campaign by all individuals and groups interested in hiking, climbing and in promoting these activities in the southern Valhallas is what is needed.

Interest in the Mulvey trip was high and up to 28 people inquired about the trip. 14 people attended: Peter Wood Ken Holmes, Robert Thompson, Roy & Gary Staples, John Palmer, Peter McIver, Julie Norton, Neville Jordison, Earl Jorgensen, Allan & Mary Baker, Janice Isaac and Lorna B.

Klaus Streichert arrived promptly at 7.00 pm, opened the gate, cautioned us pointedly about our own liability for any mishap we may incur on his land on the roads, declined to talk about the history of the gates, and told us not to call him again re access. We drove through and he wished us a good trip as raindrops started to settle the dusk on the roads. He escorted us to a cattle grid and gates and waved us through. Three cars were left outside the locked gate, for emergency use.

A Subaru 4x4 station wagon, three 4x4 trucks and a 2x4 truck carried the party up the Bannock Burn creek north fork road with minor bottoming on the waterbar and washout ditches. Heavy rain and increasing darkness made the last km interesting. We car camped on the road for the night.

Saturday, August 28 - After breakfast, breaking camp and 3½ hrs upwards toiling through brush and steep rocky meadows with remains of the customary alpine flower display, we were all lunching at 12.30 pm on the Midgard-Jones col., overlooking the Mulvey Lakes in warm sunshine. Here the party split 4 ways, and between them climbed Midgard, Asgard and Jones Peak.

By 6 o'clock we were all at the hut, cooking supper on stoves on the grass or porch, enjoying warm sunshine, no flies, afternoon light on Dag's walls and perennial hanging snow patch.

Sunday, August 29 - Peter McIver and Ken set off about 7.00 am to climb Gladheim but turned back from the ridge by dizzying heights (!) and back for 10.30 am tea at the hut.

At Earl's suggestion, noting the very full toilet, the remaining menfolk aided and encouraged by the ladies, dug a new 3' deep pit immediately to the north of the biffy and moved the biffy hut over it with much puffing and heaving to level and stabilize it in place over the new hole.

We left the hut at about 11 am in groups taking different routes back to the trucks below Gimly and Midgard.

The Bakers and Lorna had already left in the Subaru to get the gate opened - a little prematurely. Julie & Peter Wood arrived

next at the trucks closely followed by the rest of the party. Roy & Gary from Midgard arrived shortly afterwards. Cold beers all round and down to the gate quickly. But not quickly enough to prevent Streichert's son from an enduring 45 minute wait after letting the Baker's through the gate.

The Valhalla Hut is in very good condition thanks to John Wurflinger and fam., and one other helicopter party who had both flown out garbage, cleaned and fixed up the Hut and area.

Julie has agreed to print a large photo of the Mulvey Meadows to be sent to Mr. Streichert with a covering note from Ken Pointing out the deprivation the locked gates are causing. Others concerned should write to their local MLA, their local Socred/NDP, Candidate to Ministers of Forests, Highways & Tourism in Victoria.

- Note:
1. Only 2 other parties had recorded their visits to the Valhalla Hut this year. Both of these had helicoptered in.
  2. Mnt. Dag now sports a large Canadian flag fluttering on a pole at its summit. This was noted from the Wolf's Ear-Nothing Col. and by people with a spotting scope on the way home. It is also visible from along the main highway at the old tractor display, south of Slocan.

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## WHERE TO HIKE WITH CHILDREN - A FEW IDEAS

By: Libby Martin & Sue Port

There are many hikes suitable for children both locally and elsewhere in B.C. The following are some which Club families have done and enjoyed. For access and detailed trail descriptions, see "Exploring the Southern Selkirks", Exploring the Purcell Wilderness" and "The Canadian Rockies Trail Guide".

### Kokanee Glacier Park

1. The trail from Gibson Lake to Kokanee Lake and beyond is an obvious easy hike for even very young children. Kokanee and Kaslo Lakes make good overnight goals. The latter has yet to fail to provide the kids with fish (this from L.M. - some others of us seem to be quite capable of not catching fish almost anywhere).
2. A good day hike from a camp at Kaslo Lake is from Enterprise Pass up Griffiths Creek to Sapphire, with return down to Garland Lake. Easily done by a 7 year old.
3. Enterprise Creek - slight up hill grade most of the way to Tanal Lake, few creeks to cross, 4 miles, Lake is the best camping area, Tanal Lake to Enterprise Pass is a bit steeper but provides a camping area, good views in all directions. If you can arrange it, swap car keys with a party from Kokanee Creek.
4. Sunset Lake: Short easy hike from the Woodbury Road.

### Shannon Lake (road conditions permitting)

A good trail leads up to this small lake at the north end of Slocan Lake. The 2 mile hike with a fairly steep start took 5 & 6 year olds, carrying their own gear, about 2 hours. The far end of the lake provides reasonable camping and a "fun" creek.

### Earl Grey Pass Trail (Kootenay Lake side)

Children enjoy the first part of the trail because of the cable car crossings. Probably not suited for children under 6 years.

### Fry Creek Canyon Trail

A spectacular hike. Be prepared to put the very young on a leash in some spots.

### Glacier Creek, south fork

Reasonably easy access up a moraine or loose rock to the edge of the glacier. Young ones may need lots of assistance and good boots are a help.

Mt. Crawford and Plaid Lake

The B.C. Forest Service trail is in good condition (access from Crawford Creek) and offers easy access to the base of Mt. Crawford, which can be climbed by older children. Plaid Lake provides some reasonable fishing and a good wilderness camping area.

Idaho Lookout

Easy, short trail with the lure of a Forestry Lookout.

Old Glory

A long hike for short legs, but younger ones can at least go up onto Unnecessary Ridge, via either Plewman Basin or the logging road.

Lake O'Hara, Yoho National Park

This area is a favourite with our family (L.M. The trails in the area are excellent for even the very young. Although longer hikes can be found, most are a maximum length of 4 to 5 miles and all above treeline, excellent for young children. The big advantage of this area is that one can take a bus into the campground area; no cars allowed, so it is the next best thing to backpacking. Reservations must be made ahead of time.

Cathedral Lakes Park

Hiking here is mainly above treeline, so good for children. Trails are good. It is a long, arduous hike up to the main campsite at Quiniscoe Lake but the Cathedral Lakes Resort located at the lake will, for a fee, transport hikers by Jeep from the road end.

Elk Lakes Provincial Park (recommended by the Andersons)

The first campsite is only 1.6 km from the parking area, so is ideal for a short backpacking trip.

There are many more trails and areas suitable for children in the Kootenays and beyond. If you have suggestions, please pass them on to Libby or Sue.

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## BACK PACKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

By: Libby Martin

After several years of climbing the kitchen walls - redecorating with Z-brick helped - festooning the house with macrame and becoming hooked on gardening I decided enough was enough. It was time to make forays into the mountains as a family.

Several years and many trips have passed since that decision was made. Equipment has been truly tried and routes tested. Hopefully the following tips will help those just embarking on the trail.

Whether one is to go on a day hike or an overnight trip, plan the route for the children, and be prepared to stop short of one's objective. For example reaching the top is not necessarily as important to the youngster as spending more time by the next creek. So prepare for unscheduled stops for play. To get closer to the objective try singing. "One thousand and one bottles of beer" lasts from Lake Oesa to the Lake O'Hara Campsite!

When to try backpacking? Many do so with small babies but we found the "magic" age was 5 years. This was the year we had our first truly enjoyable backpacking trip.

When backpacking, the bodily comfort of the child is all-important to the enjoyment of everyone. A miserable child can make a nightmare for all.

Generally, the equipment required is no different to that which an adult would take, but there are some things that we have found worth packing despite the extra weight, especially when the children are young.

1. Packs - a pear-shaped day pack, large enough to carry sleeping bag or clothing is suitable until the child is large enough to carry a frame pack (usually not until 10 or 11 years old)
2. Sleeping bags - a light-weight warm bag is essential. We opted for the mountaineering half bag (used when bivouacking) This lasted until they simultaneously grew out of it and were also big enough to carry a larger pack, which in turn accommodated a larger bag.
3. Tents - What tent to use depends on the size of the family and preference. Our 2 children opted for their own tent, so we use two 2-man tents. This has disadvantages:
  - a) one has to choose tents carefully so that one doesn't pack more weight than one tent. One usually ends up carrying more.

- b) it is not pleasant getting up at 2 a.m. in the pouring rain to deal with a sick child.
  - c) I did not enjoy the sleepless night spent worrying about what to do if the bear that was nosing around the children's tent actually entered it. At least, I reasoned, if we were all in one tent I wouldn't have to make that kind of decision.  
We still pack with two tents!
4. Clothing - Spend the extra and keep them in boots, preferably with vibram soles. Have them also carry running shoes, not for in camp, as an adult might but as a dry change.
- Try drying jeans over a campfire, when Junior has fallen in the lake, and you will find that cords or track pants for example are better hiking pants. Not only do they dry more quickly but Junior can fall in the lake twice in one day. So extra pants are a must.
- The layering method used by most adults for hiking also works for children. For extra warmth, instead of a winter jacket, try the combination of a Holofill/down vest and waterproof cagoule. The combination, over the usual layers of T-shirt, long-sleeved shirt and wool sweater, keeps a child warm from late spring to early fall, when needed. The vest is lighter and less bulky to carry, and the waterproof cagoule is a must anyway. In addition, long underwear can also be carried for extreme cold, and they make excellent PJ's.
5. Food - Children will eat anything once they realise there isn't anything else. But take along extra snacks, e.g. granola bars, fruit leather and mountains of gorp - the children and the marmots love it!
6. Miscellaneous - Although it means extra weight for someone, a few items not normally packed by an adult we consider a must. Some can be phased out as the child gets older. Train junior to love his smallest Teddy bear/ equivalent and allow him to take it. Our children, until recently, always carried a small pad of paper and a small pack of crayons. We always, still find room for a paperback book and one or more of the travel games, such as pocket Othello, cards etc. The more imaginative backpacker may manage without, but we prefer to be on the safe side.

Planned carefully, backpacking with the family can be a lot of fun and, all in all, is infinitely preferable to climbing the kitchen walls.

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RETURN TO DEVILS DOME - VALHALLA RANGE - 8900'

By: Ian Hamilton

Party: Peter Wood, Dave Adams, Ian Hamilton

I thought this would be a nice two day climb by the standard route, just the three of us, had all done it before, all straight forward.

We chose the simple route to the base of the mountain: Slocan Valley, Passmore Junction, Hodder Creek, Drinnon Lake across Gwillim Creek, camp at 7.000' by a small lake just near the mountain, good weather, nice sunset.

The following day, taking turns at leading, we moved up the rock section of the route. The only person who had any problems was your scribe, who claimed the rain and hail seemed to do something to the friction on the rock. No comments from the others.

The weather seemed to improve a little as we had lunch on the summit. According to the summit register, we were the first visitors in 4 years. The thought crossed my mind that if the Devil's Dome were in Llanberis or the Lakes, on a summer weekend, it would be covered by climbers coming to the summit from every possible and impossible direction. Instead, it just had one visit from 3 elderly climbers who could only handle the easy route. My next thought was: "I am pleased the Devil's Dome is not in Llanberis or the Lakes, or I would be left up in the air!"

For our descent, the weather turned on the rain and snow continuously. The friction between rocks and vibram seemed to disappear. From my previous climbs on this mountain, I knew the location of the principal rappel anchor points, but what I hadn't counted on was the slight down climbing between anchor points being so frictionless. More rappel points had to be found - used up a lot more of Pete's old slings than he planned, and some of Dave's new ones. Seven rappels to get down, normally only 3. I am supposed to know enough to be able to set up a rappel so the rope can be pulled free when needed - this time it didn't work out like that and I had to do the old Indian rope trick to get the ropes relocated enough to retrieve. The troubles were compounded by the steady hail and snow which completely spoiled any thought of looking up!

All this took so much time that we didn't get back to our campsite with enough time to reach the car in daylight. We tried to walk out, but by the time we reached Dinnon Lake, it was too dark to see anything, so we camped there and listened to the rain from inside Peter's tent. Home the next day. Dave was 24 hrs late for work - but they didn't miss him!

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ONE MAN'S VIEW OF THE SLOCAN VALLEY

By: Derek Willans

Despite the romanticism of ghost towns, decaying mine shafts and old logging flumes, the question eventually asked is, "What happened to the people?" Surprisingly, the answers are hard to find, yet history is constantly repeating itself all over B.C. Nowadays, however, politicians are being pressured to find better alternatives to the old answer, "leave or perish"

The superficial history of the Slocan is one of residents providing the labour to harvest the valley's resources. The real story, as the planners are finding out, is that local residents were and still are at the mercy of outsiders, who for the most part, do not live in the valley, but dictate how and when the primary resources should be developed and when they should be abandoned.

Nowadays, miners enjoy high wages. It wasn't always that way in Slocan. At the turn of the century it was a continuous struggle between residents who yearned for an equitable balance between dividends and payrolls and the non-resident mine owner who obviously didn't. Two miners writing in the Sandon Paystreak in 1899 said, "...keep away from the Queen Bess mine as they are working men 10 hours, both night and day, no short shift Saturday, and no work Sunday, and \$1.00 board for Sunday. The total amount a man can receive for his month's work is \$51.25..... This is the smallest wage ever paid at any camp in the west.

It took over 50 years of bitter strife between the mine workers and the mine owners before it was possible to alter meagre wages, wet and cramped mine shafts and bad air to get the eight hour day, health and safety regulations, and even strikes for better wages.

The opening of the mines in the Slocan was carried on in the name of free enterprise, though in truth, the profits were capitalized and losses socialized. M. Q. Innes, author of the "Economic History of Canada" noted that in Slocan in 1890..... "Many mines were closed as a result of the shortsighted policy of gouging all the available ore and neglecting the proper development in advance of further ore bodies."

To-day if we invest in a mine, we expect to receive dividends plus enough depreciation to recoup our investment, so that by the time the orebody is depleted, we have been able to re-invest our capital in other profitable ventures. If, on the other hand, we live in the area and work in a mine, about all we would have to show for our labours would probably be a house. As the planners recently sent in by the Government are discovering,

the owners of the Slocan mines never reinvested in the future of the Slocan. So when the inevitable happened and the mine closed, the investors withdrew completely and the Slocan miners found their lifelong investment in a house to be of little value in a local economy barren of any new ventures.

If the planners do their job properly, they will also find that Governments of the past actually worsened the well-being of the Slocan residents. By giving the CPR a guarantee of \$11,000 a mile to build a line, the Dominion Government ensured that the CPR not only controlled trade in the Kootenays, but as well, gained 3,335,000 acres of land and six square miles of coalfields. The CPR, having received enormous dividends from freighting ore out of the Slocan (The Kaslo-Slocan route made a profit of 82¢ a ton on goods shipped 12 miles), cut back its services to the valley as soon as the mines started closing down. In 1932, when roads were non-existent, the CPR reduced its daily service to the Slocan to once a week. Thus the government aided and abetted the industrial demise of the Slocan by allowing services to decline, not in relation to the need of the residents so much as in relation to the level of economic activity.

Nowadays, driving through the historic villages of Slocan, New Denver, and Silverton, no signs occur of the once enormous wealth. There are no historic main streets with solidly-built courthouses, banks, or hotels; instead, buildings were cheaply built so they rapidly dilapidated or burnt down. The Kaslo-Slocan Railway was abandoned, the Nakusp to Arrowhead railbarge closed down, and the creeks are so loaded with heavy metals that spawning fry cannot survive. The only other industry to come to the Slocan since the onset of mining has been logging; and its history has been one of people trying to make money, all to often ignoring the effect on the Slocan Valley.

As early as 1896 a mining surveyor drew attention to the policy of prospectors to burn down the forests in order to look at the underlying rock, leading to flooding and droughts in watersheds. In 1912 a district forester was established, not to ensure re-forestation, but to introduce stumpage for the collection of taxes.

The early development of logging in the Slocan saw many small operators, many of whom simply folded up in the depression. By 1970 an outside mill, Triangle Pacific, replaced thirty-four operators and nineteen mills. Once again, the primary resources of the Slocan were controlled by outsiders with the aid of government policies, which Peter Pearse in his Royal Commission on Forestry, described as "a thicket of muddled policies, vague understandings, unwritten rules and fringe benefits." In 1974 a group of residents published a report on the Slocan Valley Logging practices. As many other reports, it outlined the ongoing destruction of the economically viable timber resource through the mill continually maximizing its

short-term economic returns. The authors stated that only 35% of the logged timber was sold as lumber, the rest was either left to rot in the field or burnt in the Mill as chips. Recent surveys by the B.C. Forest Service verify the residents concern that the Mill is leaving good lumber to rot in the field. In one balsam and spruce stand they found 20% waste of good saw log material, an unheard of practice in the forest industry. Even as recently as 1981, the Mill managers had to admit to the destruction of Cariboo Creek.

The Mill continually cries poor, yet it never will say what its lumber recovery factor is or its total sales or profits. Three-quarters of all retail businesses go bankrupt within two years of startup, yet this Mill has operated continuously for 15 years. As Ken Bernsohn put it in his book "Cutting up the North", "the only way sawmill owners are likely to go to the poorhouse is in a Rolls Royce." As a member of the industry put it, "anyone who forgets that the big profits in the forest industry come when you sell out is a fool." Timber values in the forest licences have been steadily increasing for years, and the Mill has been sold twice since it started up.

Amazingly, however, there still exists an option that both the miners and the loggers have left to future generations. A scenic and beautiful area of mountains and shorelines known as the Valhallas on the west of Slocan Lake. The residents are anxious that this area remain unlogged, uneroded, non-merchandised and undeveloped. The Mill refuses to recognize that people have the authority to make changes, mouthing the words multiple use, while looking upon the Valhallas as their very own fiefdom to do as they see best, even though the timber on its steep slopes represents less than the Mill wastes in its existing clear-cuts.

An alternative option to the Mill's logging plans has been proposed. Recently, local businessmen drew attention to the chronic unemployment in the Valley (that even in good economic times is 20%) and to the total lack of jobs for women that is causing welfare rolls to balloon. They pointed to the scenic values of the Valhallas as a unique opportunity to break the Valley's dependency on logging and to diversify its economic base by building up a tourist industry.

Gordon Sloan, author of the 1944 Royal Commission on Forestry said that tourists wouldn't spend millions if all we had to offer our visitors was the devastation of logged and burned lands and dismantled scenery. Energetic local entrepreneurs have presented strong arguments that logging and tourism in the Valhallas are mutually exclusive and that tourism would bring more jobs to residents than logging the Valhallas. Even more important, the Valhallas represents, for the first time

an opportunity for Slocan residents to become the owners and managers of their own industry.

Groups such as the Valhalla Wilderness Society and the Kootenay Mountaineering Club focussed on the high scenic and recreational values of the Valhallas and gained such widespread support throughout the Province that the Government was forced to place a moratorium on the Valhallas, and eventually, to set up a study group to recommend land use policy to the cabinet. Though this study group has yet to finish its analysis, it will be watched by many communities in the Province who also face depletion of their resources. Whenever a mine occurs or pioneer populations in company towns exceed those that can be supported by the available timber, alternative job opportunities in those communities become a vital necessity.

When will the Provincial Government give the power and benefits to locals to develop their own destiny by recognizing the scenic values of the Valhallas?

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AVALANCHE PRECAUTIONS & SELF HELP

By: Dave Adams

- Don't go into Avalanche country without an avalanche beacon for each member of the party & at least 2 snow shovels per party.
- If you have to cross an avalanche slope: undo waist belt on pack, safety straps on skis and take your hands out of the pole straps. Make sure your Pieps is switched to "transmit" and zip up your jacket.
- Before you step out on to the slope, make sure there isn't a safer route; if not, arrange your route so that you can make a quick ski-run across to a safe point: A rock ridge or group of trees.
- Whilst on a doubtful slope, keep at least 100' between the members of the party who are moving - the first and last skiers carry the shovels.
- Be especially careful if you have to zig-zag, this can cause dangerous slab avalanches, that may wipe out skiers lower down if they are not at a safe point.
- If you are caught in an avalanche, try to ski down and across to the safer snow at the edge, shout out so your friends can follow your route. If you get knocked down, try to discard your skis, poles and pack as these can pull you under. Do a butterfly stroke with your arms to keep your head high. As the snow slows to a stop, try to bring one hand up over the face to form an air pocket, and push the other up over your head to increase your chances of being spotted.
- Remember that after 30 minutes, an avalanche victim has less than a 50% chance of survival. Another good reason to always use your Pieps.
- An avalanche victim should be treated for Shock, Suffocation and Cold as soon as possible.

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BOOK REVIEW - "THE WELL FED BACKPACKER" by June Fleming

Book Review by: Ian Hamilton

One of the nice things that is readily apparent about this book is that the authoress has obviously had a lot of back packing experience, and if she has followed her own instructions, she must indeed be 'well fed'.

The book begins with some basics about nutritional needs and what makes good hiking foods, then proceeds to costs and weight. It covers sources of suitable hiking foods and suggests many alternatives to expensive freeze-dried products. From there, it moves to menu planning, packaging and cooking on a climb.

Several chapters are devoted to food ideas and tips for different meals of the day, all written in a light and informative style.

For example: the chapter on "Lunch is Often Plural" opens with "Because of a backpackers energy needs, it is usually realistic to think of "lunch" as a meal that happens more than once!

A chapter called "The one Liner" describes the pared down recipe which lists only the ingredients, and leaves out cooking instructions or proportions. The assumption is that most people have the intelligence to put the ingredients together in proportions that please them. Example: tuna, quick rice, almonds, curry, dried peas, shredded coconut.

The book also has a chapter on Winter Camp Cookery, which even if you choose to ignore the food suggestions, is well worth while just for the information and advice on cooking techniques and equipment planning.

The book is not recommended to those who use Freeze-Dried packet food or cans for their climbing trips. But anybody who has ever tried to improve their meals on trips and is sometimes struggling for useful ideas that work, this is the book.

The Well Fed Backpacker - by June Fleming - Victoria House - Portland, USA - 111 pages - \$4.95 (Paperback).

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#### NEPAL NUGGETS (FOOL'S GOLD)

By Peter McIver

After the Canadian Everest expedition, and the restraints of your editor "no travelogues, McIver" - I wondered what to write about Nepal.

First then, some "Advice for Travellers":

Don't tip the customs man, don't buy hash, "plentee cheap mister", don't stay in Freak street, don't drink the water - even the sparkling, glittering mountain cascades - until it has been iodinated.

Katmandu - city of promise, city of wonder. Narrow, dirty streets alive with flowers, round brown faces, each with a lotus powder dot, women in saris of yellow, purple, purple, blue and red, gold nose rings, men dressed in sacks, emaciated dogs, naked toddlers, excrement, Hindu shrines, bicycles, overhanging curved wood galleries, Tibetan rugs, Nepalese Tibetans, Tihetan Tibetans, Chetus, Rais, Ghorkas, Sherpas, Ghurta police - all, except Tibetan rug salesmen and taxi drivers, completely oblivious to Westerners. No curiosity, no stares - the invisible man.

Walk to the quarter of town containing the Royal Palace and big hotels. Streets, lights, cars, tourist parties, travel agents, and excrement. But the lights don't go out at 8 pm. And you must go there to get your trekking permit, about a morning of waiting, then collect it next day.

There to travel in this fascinating land? Buy Steven Bezrucha's book. Fred and I trekked from Kirantichap to Namche Bazaar, Gokyo valley and Everest Base Camp in the Khumbu valley. We trekked out, south to Dharan on a little used (by Westerners) route, after spending 10 days in the high country, 30 days and about 400 miles all told.

Did we make the right choice? Certainly. Would any other trek, to say the Annapurna Sanctuary in West Central Nepal be as enjoyable? Probably!

A fascinating country with unbelievable scenery, colourful, friendly, honest inhabitants. The country people are so different from the sophisticates of Kathmandu. Full of greetings "Namaste, one rupee" "Goodbye"

What images have stayed longest? The ice wall of Nuptse bathed in the light of the setting sun? The leopard draped over the fork of a tree at Chitwan in the Gangetic plains of South Nepal? Or my feelings when it jumped 25' to the ground 50' away? Possibly Fred & I eating supper and preparing for sleep on the porch of a house in Phedi near the Irkhua Khola (river)? Half the village came to watch us eating, preparing for bed.

My son Ian, who visited Nepal this past February has another memory. He visited the Buddist temple of Bodnath in Katmandu. Halfway up the  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of steps he was amused to see two monkeys mating. He pointed this out to a friend and the two of them were observing, laughing and making ribald comments, when two other monkeys raced down the steps.. One hurled itself at Ian's leg, the other jumped on his back. It was the turn of the locals to roar with laughter as Ian took off with the monkeys in pursuit.

What should you take? As little as possible, light boots, runners, warm jacket and pants, shorts, raingear, warm sleeping bag. A tent is unnecessary, unless you travel in

deserted places since all the local travellers stay in "tea houses". If you travel off the frequented routes a guide is necessary to obtain accomodation. Take plenty of 1, 5 and 10 rupee notes, since most small places do not have change - and probably no money at all.

When to go? October - November seems the best season, superb weather, little chance of rain, clean air, not too cold, no snow on the passes.

Living is very inexpensive, especially outside Katmandu when \$3 - \$4 per day is adequate.

Porters, guides, yes or no? There are plusses and minusses. In remote areas or inhabited areas not normally travelled by Westerners they are a must. They are optional for most of the popular areas, so herewith some comments:

If you are lucky your guide or guide/porter will take you to stay with friends and relatives as did Pasang our Sherpa guide/porter. This is often much more interesting than staying in the very basic tea houses often with other tourists. He will be honest, cheerful, fun-loving and (sometimes over) solicitous. Pasang took us to a private Gompa (Buddist temple), also to a Tibetan monk harvest festival. But he may try to slow you down (as Pasang did) or recommend to you a route for his own ulterior motives, and you must consider his routine, a long breakfast stop at 9.30 am - 11 am, lunch 1 pm - 2 pm, a preference for smoky huts and lots of company. Also it is nice that he carries some of your stuff.

There is a shortage of wood in Nepal, where a fire is a social necessity in any hut. Chimneys are not in vogue as they let the smoke out. (I awoke after about 2 hrs of sleep to find the wall of the hut burning. The wall was stone so this was a bit puzzling until I realised it was deposited soot-burning. There was however no cause for alarm as the Sherpas sitting around the fire were able to extinguish the fire with the help of cupfuls of chang, the local brew).

When there isn't enough wood, yak dung patties are used instead. This is principally at higher altitudes where smoke is an even more valuable commodity than in the valleys and roofs are carefully chinked to make sure none escapes. Yak dung patties burn well except when they are green (brown?). The aroma is then indescribable - a pleasure which should not be missed and which is best enjoyed while drinking Tibetan tea, made with rancid butter and salt.

I won't attempt to describe the scenery. It is difficult to convey the effect it has on you in words, and even photographs do only partial justice. But do look at some - I have a few (hundred) and would be happy to bore anyone who was previously interested. Just provide me with free beer!

But against this incredible backdrop it was for me the people (and the birds!) which stood out in memory. The music of the wooden whistle as we walk into a village; Madan, our host at Chitwan, singing Ghorka folk songs; the little boy with his split seam knitted wooden pants and wrong feet Wellington boots at our hut in Gokyo. Our beautiful young hostess at Labouche, in Khumbu valley, keeping her composure and serenity in the face of abuse from an ugly American; a group of hunters carrying W.W.I. rifles; our hosts, 3 buffalo herders cooking supper for us on open fire on stones placed on the wood floor of a straw filled loft - then giving us their sleeping quarters.

I won't tell you about the birds - ask Fred.

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#### EQUIPMENT REVIEW - COLEMAN PEAK 1 STOVE

by: Ian Hamilton

This recent addition to the market made by Coleman, is very similar to the single burner Coleman - 505 Model. The Peak 1 on tests this year by the reviewer has proven itself to be very suitable for extended climbing or backpacking trips.

The weight, at just under 2 lbs, puts it in a similar range to other stoves with its noted heat output of 8000 BTU's for 1½ hrs on one filling. The 8R or Sev 123 which are so widely and successfully used, become rather limited in their use for groups of 3 or more, but the Peak 1 really comes into its own with this size group, because of the high BTU out put. Not quite as much heat as the MSR - but it costs less!..

Some of the good and poor points which have been noticed: The fold out legs provide good balance and some insulation when camping on snow. It uses white gas which is cheap and readily available. All the new models come with sharp edges, which can be filed off - not so easy to cure is the stoves shape, which can be awkward to pack. A really nice feature is a control valve that allows a wide range of heat control, from a flat out blast furnace to very low simmer. Make sure that the party has a cook along, not just a packet opener!

The built in pump makes it easier to light than most white gas stoves, and spare parts are readily available. Two other small annoying things - it can be overfilled, making it difficult to light, and when it is turned off it stinks for a short time - unpleasant in a cabin. For the price of about \$38 - #42 in B.C. it is a very satisfactory camping stove and I am confident in recommending it to anybody.

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KMC BACKPACKING TRIP TO MT. ASSINIBOINE - July 1982

Map: 1:50,000 82J/13 Mt. Assiniboine

By: Ian Hamilton

After the usual meetings to argue about where not to go, we decided on Mt. Assiniboine Provincial Park. Hike in, camp near Magog Lake, hike around, hike out - and that is what we did -

Those on the trip were Stan Baker, the chief, Darin Neufeld, 12 yrs, Veronica Pellerine and son Chris, 14 yrs, Ron and Annelies Anderson and children Mark, 12 yrs and Tanya, 10 yrs, Norm and Martha McKay, Bob Hammond, Kim Deane and son Richard, 15 yrs, Ian and Roberta Hamilton and children Colin, 14 yrs and Mark, 12 yrs.

Our trip started with rain at the Spray Lakes car park, which slowed up the overall enthusiasm, so we took two days instead of one hiking through Banff National Park. We didn't have a back country permit (park use permit) which the "Feds" issue for backpacking in parks; however, the ranger was not too strict in it's enforcement.

The trail was well marked, well looked after and straight forward, apart from the section used by horses. That section is a cross between a plowed field and a swamp! Awful!

Of interest was the number of people on the first part of the trail either pushing or riding their 10 speed bikes. I have never seen so many bikes and fishing rods on mountain trails before.

By informing the Mt. Assiniboine Provincial Park of our planned visit, we were asked to camp in the O'Brien meadows; the meadows are reserved for camping. It sounded a bit grim - told where to camp! - many groups camping! Anyway, it turned out to be such a nice place, about 1 km from the main lake with nobody else around apart from the KMC'ers. Our own creek, camping on thick grass, nice views, close to outstanding hiking areas, and to cap it all off - our very own one hole toilet. What more could we ask for?

While we were there, we noticed a few bugs around, and had snow and frost a few nights, but nothing to slow us from our day trips. One night we had a visit from a tent peg eating critter, no harm done, but it may have had indigestion later.

Norm, Martha and Bob took advantage of the parks branch cabins and used them; available on a first come first serve basis, for a small fee. The cabins must be especially nice to use during late winter skiing trips.

Stan and Darin had some success with fishing, but the number of fishermen visiting must create considerable fishing pressure on a 7000' elevation lake. Your scribe with Colin and Chris tried to climb Wedgewood Peak (9940') from the south ridge, but had to turn back at about the 9500' level due to verglas. The next

day we went to the ACC supplied, Park owned cabin, near Magog Glacier at 8700' right under Mt. Assiniboine. Access is via the headwall at the southern end of Magog Lake. The headwall ice is a bit steep in places, so we were happy to have ice axes. This cabin has to be an ideal starting point to climb Mt. Assiniboine. It would sleep about 12 - just - and according to the log book, the mountain had, at that time, only been climbed 3 times so far this year. We did not seriously consider climbing the mountain partly due to weather and partly due to group experience.

Mt. Assiniboine is such an attractive peak, and so much higher than the surrounding mountains that it will always remain a worthwhile mountain for climbers.

Most of our party were happy with the hiking trails and paths, and everybody seemed to visit all the best spots for views and walks. Kim Deane and Richard joined us all later, having travelled in from the Kootenay Crossing, and leaving with Chris via Sunshine Pass. The distance involved was all character building stuff.

All the young men and one young lady with us older people had a pleasant experience and certainly did their share of carrying the camping equipment. On the way out, they were talking of next years trip.

The Provincial Park's Branch personnel have been doing an excellent job of correcting over-grazing by horses, and trail braiding by past visitors. They still have some problems with a few clowns who light fires.

We would all enjoy visiting Assiniboine again!

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KMC SUMMER CAMP - WALDORF TOWERS - JULY 19/81

By: Fred Thiessen

Party: Kim Kratky, Don Mousseau, Carl Johnson, Eric White and Fred Thiessen.

Reconnaissance walks after setting up camp revealed that Whiteface Mnt. and the Waldorf Towers at the top end of Windy Creek were very attractive looking peaks.

Once we discovered no one else was going in this direction we made plans for exploring these peaks the following day.

After a leisurely breakfast in pleasant weather, we set off up the valley. After about 2.5 hrs of steadily gaining elevation we were at the col between Whiteface and Waldorf Towers.

Once at the col we quickly concluded that Whiteface from where we were was too ambitious for us. We then turned our attention to the Waldorf Towers which we concluded were climbable. Lunch, Photos and enjoying the view of the Adamants, then took precedence before we traversed the steep snow over to the base of the Towers.

Once at the base of the towers we split into two groups, Kim, Don and Carl tackled the west tower while Eric and I started up the east tower.

To get the adrenalin flowing, Eric had the foothold he was standing on disappear down the gulley when he was only a short way up. "Its allright Fred, you'll have a top rope when you get to this part". The next heartstopper was near the top of Eric's lead when a handhold came and nearly got me. "You're right Fred, it was a little loose". I took the second lead which was up a short loose gulley to the top. After more photos we were able to descend with one long rappel.

We then swapped towers with Kim and Don and climbed the west tower. The west tower was a pleasant one lead climb on solid rock. The climb involved a short traverse, then straddling the tower for a few meters and then a short bit to the top. Due to limited space on the top and the exposure, we climbed and descended individually.

After telling stories about the merits of each peak we set off home where we arrived about 3.30 p.m. - just in time for drinks around the pool. (Elevation of the west tower 8.600' east towers are higher).

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#### WINTER ASCENT OF MT. COOPER

Map: 1:25,000 82 KSW Nakusp - Slocan Range in Selkirks

By: Ian Hamilton

Party: Peter McIver, Bert Port, Ken Holmes, Ian Hamilton.

The start of this trip was the easy part. We arranged for Mr. Drury, who runs a snowcat skiing operation, to carry us and our equipment from Meadow Creek to the meadows on Meadow Mt. south ridge. (That's enough about meadows)

Due to prior commitment, we could only use the snow cat in the evening, so didn't leave the snowcat base until 7.30 p.m., and 2 hrs later reached our camp site at 7000'. We all used downhill ski boots, skins and Iser bindings. From our camp we had to ski

down into McKian creek at 4000'. Unfortunately, we missed the old fire access road, and the struggle down through heavy bush, timber and little creek beds is best forgotten. Right at the bottom of the slope we found the old road we had missed at the top. Our next move was down McKian creek, going south, crossing the creek as best we could, jumping from lumps of snow to lumps of snow as the creek was not frozen. Three wet feet out of a possible 8 seemed a good average.

On reaching Spokane creek, we turned south-east and headed up it. We camped at the last group of trees that reaches across the valley. Trusted that was as safe as we could be from avalanches which had been active 2 or 3 days earlier.

The camp site was at about 4300' and 1½ miles south-east of McKian creek. That was a 12 hour day to the campsite!

The good weather started to disappear the next day, and conditions became worse the higher we went. From our campsite - four-man tents are handy for winter camping - we started in the centre of the valley and went by an obvious straight forward route onto the Spokane glacier, which when we got on it, was very stable but steep. In the summer, I suspect, travelling across that glacier would be a bit more hazardous.

From the top of the glacier, the route is to follow the summit ridge until it is too steep for skis, then rock-scramble to the summit. We stayed on the top for nearly 3 minutes, which was plenty of time in the wind and blowing snow crystals.

(Campsite to summit 8 hrs.)

Then for the ski run back to camp, once we had passed through the main crevassed area of the glacier, the ski run had all the charm of skiing through 6" of cold porridge. The next day, back up and over Meadow mountain to the car. (14 hrs. travel time) It snowed or rained most of the way back, depending on our elevation.

General comments on the trip: Gortex jackets are especially good for winter touring, but of course don't function too well in steady rain. The mountain could not sensibly be climbed by our route in high risk avalanche conditions. I think pulling a toboggan would have been better than carrying a pack. Heel-lifters for Isers are a must. In winter camping, finding an unfrozen creek for water is worth the effort, compared to melting snow.

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KMC CLIMBING CAMP 1982 - THE LEANING TOWERS

By: Simon Waters

The Leaning Towers are a spectacular group in the Purcell Wilderness Area 15 miles N.E. of Kaslo. They overlook Pinnacle creek to the west and the St. Mary's valley to the S.E. From north to south the group comprises the Camels Humps, (the most acceptable of several names chosen by the camp wags); Wall Tower 9800'; Block Tower 9800'; Hall Peak 9975', (the original Leaning Tower); the Pulpit 9800'; the Pew (visually a separate peak from camp but actually a slight rise on the ridge); and the Sharks Head 9500'.

Between the Pew and the Sharks Head, another rise was named the Footstool. A spur of rotten rock running west from below the Footstool had to be crossed to climb the peaks to the south.

These southern peaks are more broken up. Bivouac Pk. 9500' and Wisdom Tooth 9500' can be climbed almost to the top on snow. The Molars 9400' are a series of rockpiles on the ridge; the Eagles Crest 9300' has a crest more like a cockscomb; finally Divide Peak 9100'.

The standard route up most peaks was to climb a couloir from the west to the main ridge, then follow the ridge to the summit.

The first climbing party into the area was McCoubrey's in 1933. Since then few parties have been to the area due to the poor access. In 1980 and 1981 serious efforts were made to climb the tremendous east walls. The north-east face of Wall Tower is one of the great unclimbed walls in Canada. (see CACJ 1982). Recent logging activities in the St. Mary's valley allow access from the south-east in a day and a half. However for a longer visit a helicopter is appropriate.

On Sat. July 24th at 9 am a dozen people waited at Kaslo airport. Our Party included: Paul Allen, Steve Horvath, Neville Jordison, Haru Kanemitsu (our cook), Robyn Latham, Robin Lidstone, Derek Moule, Hamish Mutch, Julie Norton, Gary Staples, Peter Tchir and Simon Waters.

Before noon we were all at our camp at 8000' below the Pulpit, with a tremendous view of the steep slabs on the west side of the group.

Sat: After lunch several people went to explore. The most energetic Robyn, Paul, Peter and Gary climbed Hall peak by the tourist route. Steve, Derek, Robind and Simon climbed the spur to the south and scrambled on the slabs below the Footstool.

Sun: Beautiful weather, cold in the morning but sunny all day. Apart from threats of thunder showers in the late afternoon, which usually blew over, the weather was consistently sunny

until the last day. Steve and Derek attempted Wall Tower by a new route but were stopped on the slabs higher up.

Mon: Steve and Derek went up the dramatic Sharks Head climbing both the north and the tricky and exposed south summits. Paul and Robyn climbed Block Tower; Gary, Peter and Hamish, Robin and Simon climbed Wall Tower, a continuously interesting climb with an airy à cheval close to the summit. This is a real classic and a great favourite. Neville and Julie were the first to cross the spur and explore to the south, climbing Bivouac and Wisdom Tooth.

The evenings in camp were enjoyable. The early arrivals would perch on the rocks outside the cook's tent, drinking tea or soup. Steve and Robin would resolve world problems whilst puffing away on rank smelling pipes, creating mini Comoncos in the mountains. As more people arrived, and space ran out, the evening game of musical chairs would begin.

When supper was served there was a rush on the cook's tent, not so much to get fed first, but so as to get to a rock before they were all taken. Gary would arrive late, and still wearing his 5% transmission goggles in the gathering gloom would load his plate with a remarkable assortment of dishes (such as curry, icecream, dreamwhip, soup, salad and jello). These he would eat indiscriminately, whilst enthusiastically describing the days hairy exploits.

We were served canned chicken which looked like raw sewage and tasted like boiled string. Most of it ended up in the garbage, though Gary loaded his plate up twice with chicken, icecream, mustard and peaches. Neville who'd bought the food was threatened unfairly, with horrendous punishments. Haru mentioned that this was the third camp where canned chicken had ended in the garbage. Next years food buyers please take note!

Robins tent, pitched next to the cook's tent, was of a design outdated by the war of the Roses, or a left over from Ghengis Khans marauding hordes. It had an external frame with four legs. Every day a leg would fall off and Robin would unconcernedly puff on his pipe and ignore it. The great mystery of how the tent managed to loose a leg each day and still stand was never solved. Robin was never seen to adjust his tent and it remained perched, miraculously, two feet above the surrounding snow; defying gravity and logic.

During the week all climbers where kept as busy as they wanted to be, and climbed each, or between them, all the Peaks in the Leaning Tower group including some bouldering.

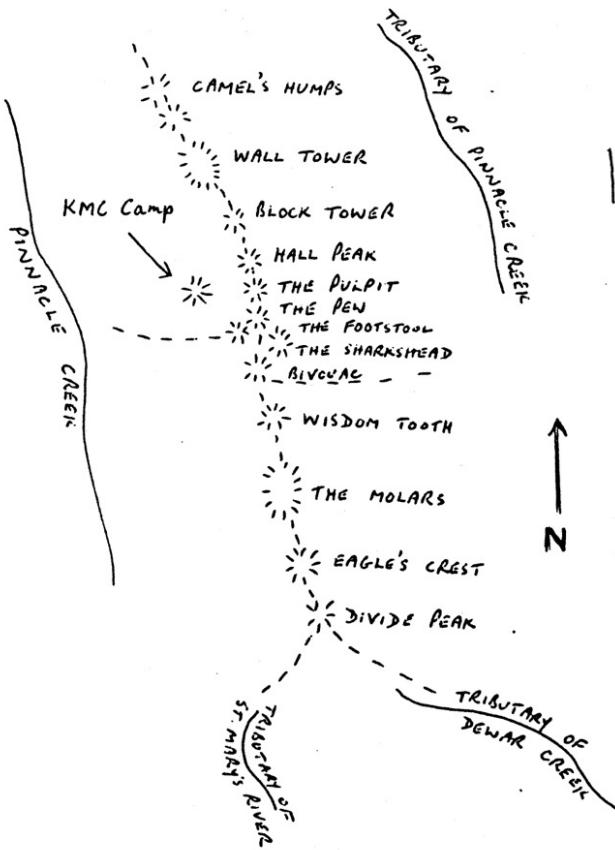
Mon: The helicopter was booked for 2 o'clock, but contact was not made until about one. The pilot asked for a report and we optimistically told him we had flying conditions. We waited tensely,

and at about 2.15 pm we hear the 'copter. Five minutes later it appeared out of the cloud and took out the first group. Returning from this trip the pilot spent an hour unsuccessfully looking for a way through the lowering clouds, and then had to get to Nelson to refuel.

Late in the afternoon those left at camp gave up hope and repitched their tents. Just before dark the helicopter managed to get in, and after a lightening trip returned to pick up the last four. They still had their tents pitched but the pilot wouldn't wait for anything. So grabbing their packs they left everything else behind.

The helicopter couldn't return until the following Thursday to pick up the abandoned gear, the cooktent and sling. The extra helicopter time added \$ 140. each to the cost of climbing camp.

All in all the climbing camp was a tremendous success. None days of superb weather and magnificent climbing, with a little bit of drama at the end to remind us how lucky we'd been.



WALL TOWER - SOUTH FACE

July 27/28/29/82 By: Steve Horvath

Party: Derek Moule, Steve Horvath

Tuesday, July 27/82

We came to the climbing camp ready for big things and spent some time looking for new routes, however just about everything we looked at appeared rather difficult. Paul Allen saw what appeared to be a reasonable line on the south face of Wall Tower, actually the only line, that continues right up to the summit.

We got to the start of the route at about 1 pm - on Wall Tower, up a water run off from the summit. Derek started, and immediately got into trouble. It took him almost 1 hr just to get off the ground, a rather common problem in places where the glaciation has receded as recently as here (we figure no more than 20-30 years ago)

Anyway, we managed to get some 50 feet up and as we did not have the right protection with us to continue the hard climbing above and it was already 4 pm we came down, leaving the rope there for the next day. We hung all our gear at the end of the rope and pulled it up some distance and left, "just like painters" Derek remarked.

Wednesday, July 28/82 - By the time we got to the foot of the climb and were organized it was almost 10 am. We were fairly cold, but the climbing was consistently difficult, 5.6 - 5.7 and I warmed up quickly. Most of the holds were rounded (also sloping the wrong way on all sides of the mountains). The cracks, what there were of them, were either bottoming or flaring and almost always full of moss and dirt. I have done more gardening up there then all spring but fortunately had my ice-pick along - it's just great for cleaning moss and dirt out of narrow cracks. On all of the first pitch I used only one point of aid. I stood up in a sling briefly to place a pin high enough to protect a tricky move that then went free. Talk about courage in one's rucksack. Everytime I felt that I was coming to a flatter place, I found only a steeply sloping shelf, the wall is so steep, that anything less than 70 degrees seemed flat from below.

I finally ran out of rope some 10 feet below a promising looking platform so I self belayed and brought Derek up some 15 feet off the ground and - what relief - the platform was indeed flat and large enough to sit on, the first such place since morning. So after engineering a bomb proof triple anchor I brought Derek and the pack up. "The shortest 2½ hrs of belaying I ever spent," said he and only then did we notice that it was well past lunch time.

We had a leisurely lunch and continued on. It was still difficult, but we got used to lack of easy protection and my gardening was getting better. Some 70' up though I run into an overhang that was worse than the ones before. The only way seemed to be

either to aid right up it or try to go to the left and use a loose looking flake, about 4x6 feet for a handhold (no foot holds here - but we got used to that by now). After putting in a hex as high as I could, I went for it and found myself dangling from the rope, shins scratched and a little bit banged up. As I grabbed hold of the flake, the whole thing moved and - visions of the bloody thing falling on Derek, chopping up the rope in process - I let go. Fortunately the hex held! What now? Using the rope I made an interesting tension traverse to a moderately promising crack on the left side of the route - leading up to the wall. Was it ever vertical (again as I moved up, the protection below me came out; those flared cracks were beginning to get through to me) - what a pleasant surprise on top, small platform there but a blank wall in three directions. After placing a piton I made another tension traverse and managed to come out at the level of the overhang. This whole procedure gained about 4 or 5 vertical feet. So, I tied myself to a piton, untied the rope, pulled it through the protection, tied in again and continued. The wall above the overhang went free, but just barely. Finally I arrived at a stand that looked flat after climbing up all those overhangs, but after I tied myself in and got ready to bring up Derek I found myself sliding right off the shelf.

When Derek got up it was past 4 pm so we rappelled on a 7mm rope leaving it there to jumar up the next day and then down on a 11 mm rope to the ground. The rope reached, stretched and all - just - I had to untie the knot to get to a step some 8' off the ground from where I could jump down. Derek followed, but as he finished his rappel and was standing on the small step, massaging his calves, the rope did the old shrinking trick; with the weight off , it started to shrink and move up out of reach, slowly at first, then faster. Derek jumped for it and managed to hang on. Then we tied both of his aiders to it and it was still 5' off the ground. Back to camp, good dinner and restful nights sleep.

Thursday, July 29/82 - Had an early breakfast (about 5 am), got to the foot of the climb at 8 am but had all kinds of problems getting the jumaring organized. It proved to be harder than expected. We put extra food and clothing into the pack with hopes of our traditional summit bivy but the pack was heavy. In any event I did not start on the third pitch until around 11 am. Getting organized and re-organized on a small sloping shelf some 300 feet of the ground does take some time and planning. Third pitch went fairly fast, up a small overhang, then up a steep narrow chimney with a large overhang on top, but fairly reasonable hand holds. This pitch was supposed to end at, what from the ground appeared to be a large platform, the ending of the dark licheny rock and start of the whitish, lichen free overhanging cracks leading to the summit through a band of overhangs. Well, it was the end of the dark rock and start of

the summit cracks but not a large flatish spot - the only place to stand or sit on was the upper lip of the overhang and it took me 10 minutes just to engineer good anchors. Derek came up, panting and groaning under the weight of the pack and then it was time for a lunch, a real quickie this time, as by then the weather to the west and south west was visibly deteriorating. Huge black clouds covered Kokanee and was sending trailers in our direction, the wind was picking up, it was no longer warm, short sleeve weather. The next 20 or so feet were desperate, strenuous and technically difficult; an off width, overhanging flared crack. Finally managed to place some protection and moved up another 20 feet and tried to place another piece in. Finally I succeeded, gave it one more tug and it came right out. I looked down and the rope was running clear to Derek not once touching the rock. Obviously my first piece came out and Derek tactful and admirably calm as ever, did not want to alarm me by telling me about it so this did come as a bit of a surprise. Few more frantic attempts to place the big camlock, the last one moderately successful, then tension and finally some rest.

Off, some distance away, thunder and lightning over Kootenay Lake. It was getting cooler, what with increasing wind and sun behind the cloud. I was already 3 pm and I certainly could taste the dinner (it's not good for one's moral, I found out, to be able to see the cook's and ones' own tent while climbing a big wall). So, caution being the better part of valour, we decided to retreat.

I still think that it was a right decision at the time and under the circumstances. The fact that the storm eventually spent itself over the Kootenay Lake and did not reach us except for a few showers, even though annoyance is not of relevance here. The lessons learned and re-learned are: More commitment and more time, more specifically always carry good rack of gear and enough food. If we bivied at the foot of the climb rather than climbed down to the camp and back up we could have saved ourselves lots of time and energy and made the summit, as after looking at our high point both from the ground and the summit ridge - a few days later - we could see that we were only some  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pitches from the broken up easier rock below the summit. Thus, better luck next time.

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ATHABASCA PASS TRAIL

By: Barb Patterson

Hello there fun seekers! Have we got a trip for you! It all started innocently enough. Assorted personnel from the Forest Service, Parks Branch, and Historic Sites thought it would be nice to trace David Thompson's route over the Athabasca Pass. Our plan was to fly up to the Pass and hike out to Wood Arm (an arm of McNaughton Lake). At Wood Arm we would be picked up by boat and taken back to Mica.

The first evening consisted of exploring the Committee Punch Bowl Lake area and taking each other's pictures next to the B.C.-Alberta boarder markers.

The next morning (under leaden skies) we set off down Pacific creek in search of "ol' D.T.'s footsteps". We didn't find them, but found traces of the trail between rather extensive sections of bog.

After a soggy lunch break we started up the notch between Pacific and Jeffrey creeks. At the top of the notch we lost the trail and had to pick our way down the slope as best we could.

The descent was steep and the undergrowth primarily Devil's Club. (The details of this part of the journey are best left to the reader's imagination). After 2000 vertical feet of this we reached Jeffrey Creek and were able to pick up the trail again. From here the trail meandered gently down the slope to the mouth of Jeffries creek. Our designated campsite was just the other side of the Creek. All that lay between us and our resting place was a mere 1 kilometre of Devil's Club, Huckleberry bushes, (I no longer like Huckleberries) stinging nettle and wind-falls (cleverly disguised by the thick underbrush).

Our campsite was situated on a lovely level gravel bed with plenty of fresh water nearby. Unfortunately it was also the natural breeding ground of the local mosquito population!

The following morning we had an early breakfast and set off down the gravel flats for Wood Arm. For this stretch of the adventure the trail was seldom found and the walk ranks as one of my truly memorable bushwacks. I was constantly reminded of Humphrey Bogart plodding through the steaming jungle with water up to his knees, slashing at the undergrowth with his machette, at least he had a machette..... I'll bet his swamp water was warmer too! It was a combination of wading out to gravel bars, wading into swamps and bushwacking along the edge of the river. After about 12 hrs. of this (and 12 kms) we reached the logging slash at the end of Wood Arm. At the first landing we stopped for the night and a well deserved rest.

On the third day after a leisurely breakfast, we set off to do the remaining 4 kms. Fortunately the roads were not too overgrown and we made reasonable progress in the old slash. We arrived at the pick-up point about lunchtime and waited for the boat.

The boat trip across McNaughton Lake was a treat after such an adventure. The skipper made a big supper and supplied us with all the coffee we could drink. The weather and scenery were beautiful; a nice way to end the trip.

The Party included: Dave Suttle, Mike Hanry, Larry Hewlett, John Addison, Fred Thiessen and Barb Patterson.

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#### THE FOUR SQUATTERS - AUG. 5-7/82

By: Fred Thiessen

Party: Carolyn Schramm, Carl Johnson, Barb Patterson,  
Fred Thiessen.

North of Howser Creek on the east side of Duncan Lake are the Four Squatters. Very visible from the north end of Kootenay Lake they had always attracted me. An even better incentive was hearing that a road existed and had been cut out to 4500'.

After several dreary days the weather finally cleared up and off we drove to beyond Howser creek. At the derelict trailers, past Gravelslide creek we turned up a rough road which soon improved, then deteriorated into a steep, rough 4-wheel drive road. The switch backs were quite exiting as we had to back up between them. At the junction we turned left and prepared to bushwack up the hill from road end.

Our bushwack was relatively short but very steep, which soon put us into an expansive alpine environment. From where we entered the meadows it was a pleasant walk to the northermost of the four lakes where we camped.

The next morning Carolyn and Barb had a leisurely day, while Carl and I climbed two of the Squatters.

Starting early, we set off along the major ridge system which culminated at the highest squatters. The ridge was not difficult but quite up and down... It wasn't until noon that we were at the end of the ridge where we had lunch. From here it was a short snow walk to the second highest Squatter. Then down a slight decline to the base of the highest Squatter, which we climbed by scrambling up the east ridge. From the peak the view of the Bugaboos were spectacular and very inviting.

Hoping to save time on our retreat, we decided to descend down the glacier, then traverse along the east side of the ridge to our camp. As it turned out, this route was not much of a time saver. The descent down the glacier was easy enough but there was no easy way along the east side of the ridge. Our up and down traverse along the side hill ended when out of frustration we ascended to the ridge to back track - back to the camp.

Rather exhausted we slept in. After a slow start we wound our way along the lakes with the intent of camping at one of them for another evening. However at lunch time we got bored with the horse flies and set off, found the trail and drove down to Argenta.

To find the trail: drive up the road and take the right fork at 4500' and drive to the end of the road. The trail starts here and ascends about 1500' along the crest of the ridge to the meadow.

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#### TWO NEAR MISSES ON BAFFIN ISLAND

By Howie Ridge

One morning in June found Ian Hamilton, Bert Port, Peter Wood and I travelling up the Parade Glacier on nordic skis between the 4000' sheer walls of Iviangernat and Asgard. We were pulling our climbing and camping gear on sleds behind us. The sun was peeping over the massive towers on the Inviangernat ridge to our left. The day was perfect. Firm snow, no wind and little cloud made the gliding quite pleasant.

To go from the Parade Glacier to the Cariboo Glacier and back to our base camp at Summit Lake in Auyuittuq National Park we had to climb about 200' up a steep cirque wall of snow to the pass between Mt. Freya and Mt. Asgard. It was 9 am. We took our skis off and prepared to drag the sleds up by two climbing ropes attached end to end. I led up kicking steps in the deep snow with my ski poles in my left hand and skis in my right, plunging them into the snow for support. Bert followed about 15 feet behind dragging the ropes.

When I was about 30' from the top there was a sudden "thump" and a large crack opened in the snow across the slope above me. All I had time to say was: "oh dear!" Large slabs quickly slid toward me and started to push me over on my back, head down the mountain. Somehow I managed to twist over onto my stomach and arch my head up above some of the moving mass of snow. I was buried and popped out on the surface two or three times. Once when it went all dark I remember thinking, "So this is where it will all end for me, between Freya and Asgard". By doing an exaggerated version of the breast stroke and butter-

fly I managed to stay near the surface of the shallow slide. (The slab fracture was 10 or 12 inches thick).

It stopped as quickly as it had begun. All went quiet. I lifted my head, spat out some snow and could see Peter picking himself up out of the debris to my left. To my right stood Ian, wide eyed and buried over his skis and boot tops. I yelled: "Where's Bert?" and was happy to hear him say, "I'm right behind you!"

The slide had carried me down about 125'. It was a couple of hundred feet wide. Our sleds were partially burried but with a little searching we were soon able to locate all our equipment. Nothing was lost. We were fortunate that the snow was the ultra-dry, crystalline Arctic variety. If it had been heavy or wet we would have been in big trouble.

As it was, we made several errors in judgement. We should have gone up the side rather than the middle. There was a rock outcrop half-way up on the right side. We should have loaded the slope with only one climber at a time.

We should have positioned the sleds and waiting personnel back on the flat of the glacier out of the potential avalanche out-run. It was an experience - I don't need too many more - Thank you!

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We had arrived at the banks of this unnamed river at 5.30 pm the previous evening. It was in full flood. Huge boulders could be heard tumbling along in the current. No way to cross! The ice on the ocean fiord was too fractured by the tides to get around the mouth of the river on the sea ice.

We broke camp at 6:30 am, wearing our skiing boots, polypropylene underwear, shirts tied up at our waists, wool hats and carrying our 95 pound packs. The ski poles served as balance sticks. My God the water was cold! The first several branches of the river were no more than knee deep and after 30 minutes we had only one major tributary to cross. As fate would have it this was by far the widest and deepest.

Peter tried to cross, wading almost to the middle where the water was washing up to his stomach. Movement was nearly impossible due to the heavy pack and strong current. Suddenly Peter toppled over and was swept away. Several times he disappeared under the icy waters struggling to get free of the packs.

Ian, Bert and I dropped our packs and ran along the boulders on the shore. Ian and I grabbed Pete by his pack and arm and pulled him onto the rocks at a point where the current swept in along the shore. Bert raced further downstream and grabbed the other pack and Pete's skis just as they were about to be carried out into the sea ice. Fortunately the

pack had been caught temporarily on a rock.

Pete had bruised one leg quite badly and lost his insect vials, pocket knife, lighter, climbing pants and a pair of ski poles, But he was lucky to be alive.

Ian finally tied the rope around his waist and forced a route across the stream. It was all he could do to make it. We then used the rope as a handline and ferried the packs across. By 8.30 am we were all across and Bert was brewing hot tea with lots of sugar.

When crossing big streams, roping across makes much sense. Don't wear belly straps. Keep your pack weight small and use hand supports such as poles for extra balance. Don't let anyone play hero, be calm and careful. And last but not least make all plans before you cross, as communication becomes very difficult due to the roar of the water.

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