

# KARABINER '95

The Journal of the Kootenay Mountaineering Club  
Vol. 38, Autumn 1995



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## KMC EXECUTIVE 1995

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Cover: Kokanee Glacier from Coffee Pass  
Photo: *Ron Perrier*

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# President's Report

The Kootenay Mountaineering Club had another busy year of hiking, climbing, skiing and enjoying the outdoors. The final cabin in the Bonnington traverse, the Steed Hut, was completed thanks to the efforts of George Apel and other club members. Donations from several corporations in the area allowed the cabin to be completed with a bit more ease. The club also donated money for the rebuilding of the Silver Spray Cabin.

The CORE report was released. It was reviewed by the conservation committee and comments sent to the government. Fred Thiessen introduced us to the Forest Practices Act and assured us that as long as we don't camp in community watersheds we should not have any problems. The Jumbo Pass ski development has been initiated and is almost through the first stage of environmental assessment. Many members of the club are opposed to the development and the Club has communicated this to the process through the efforts of the conservation director Ted Ibrahim and his committee. The FMCBC has also written opposing the development based on our recommendation and their research.

It is felt by many on the executive that the club will be increasingly involved in advocacy over the next few years. The need for access and the increasing pressures of other users on the back country will require our input. The president elect, Dave Mitchell, is representing the FMCBC as well as our club on a committee to promote cooperation between back country commercial operators and snowmobilers. The conflict between snowmobilers and skiers

is increasing in the East Kootenay and will spread to our area in the near future. Recommendations by the committee should make it easier for the skiers in the West Kootenay.

During 1995 we had a couple of situations that could have resulted in tragedy - people totally unprepared for a hike, and someone getting lost at hiking camp. This has led to extensive discussion between the executive and a meeting will be devoted to this topic early in the new year. Some suggestions are more rules, signed waivers, trip leaders being more selective through the use of a check list, and training courses.

The club sponsored a talk by Adrian Burgess which was very interesting although the attendance was low.

The access to the Kinnaird Bluffs continues to be a concern for the club as the subdivision nears completion. Bert Port has been working on this for some time and now has a committee to help him. The club is not interested in owning the bluffs but will work hard to find a solution which preserves access and climbing.

As I leave the executive I would like to thank the rest of the executive for doing their jobs so well and making mine easy. I enjoyed my time on the executive but now its time to let some new people get involved. To those who left with me thanks for your efforts over the years and good luck to our new executive. I look forward to the trip schedule next year.

*Susan Knoerr*

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# Editors' Forward

We hope you will enjoy the 38th volume of the Karbiner. This is our second and last attempt to produce the journal. We have endeavoured to improve on our mistakes of last year in order to produce good reading in an attractive format. Good luck to next year's editor. He/she should benefit from a step by step guide to producing the Karibiner that we have prepared.

Thank you to all the contributors. Kim Kratky is always keen to share experiences, a joy to work with and for many years has been a major writer. Laurie Charlton and Jan Micklethwaite did a majority of the typing. Hall Printing created their usual excellent final product.

Happy mountaineering.

*Ron Perrier & Gordon Frank*





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# Hiking Camps 1995

## Rusty Ridge

### Camp I

by Lesley Killough

By 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, all the vehicles were parked at the old logging camp, presumably the early fifties camp of C.Wenger, noted by the geologist J. Reesor, who mentioned that the loggers bathed in the hot spring just southeast of Buhl and Skookumchuck Creeks. We were happy to see that John Christiansen, who flew us into Dunbar Lakes in 1993 was our Frontier Helicopter pilot. From the helicopter, it was obvious that the first site chosen for the camp, at 7000 feet, was too wet and had too many trees for a safe landing. Camp was eventually set up at 7800 feet in a larch meadow by a small lake, with some good spring water.

Sunday dawned bright and clear and saw the camp splitting into small groups, some to explore the ridges and peaks and others to investigate the basins. Ron and Leon bounded up peaks 7, 6 and 5 (9200 feet) and boot skied down. Felix and Suzanne tackled peak 8 and the ridge to the northeast of the camp. Ineke, Luba, Jan and Renate hiked along the same ridge, but went to the lower end of it. Phillippe and Mireille explored the col to the south, as did Kal. Bess, Sylvia and Vivian explored the basins and met up with Laurie, Joanne, Wendy and Lesley who started naming the basins after the wildlife - Ptarmigan basin and Marmot basin. Marmot basin had evidence of mining exploration in the form of a bulldozer road, trenches and a claimpost called Vine Lake #100 and dated April 12, 1973.

The rocks of the aptly named Rusty Ridge consist of rusty, weathering, blocky siltstones of the 1.4 billion year old Lower Aldridge formation, with thick, speckly grey diorite sills. The same Lower Aldridge rocks are the host rocks for the Sullivan lead-zinc mine near Kimberley. Cominco and other companies have been searching for many years for a similarly rich deposit in the area, and hence the abundance

Opposite: Renate and Felix Belczyk at Rusty Ridge  
Photo: Ron Perrier

of relatively recent claims in the vicinity of Rusty Ridge, including some registered to Teck Corporation in 1990.

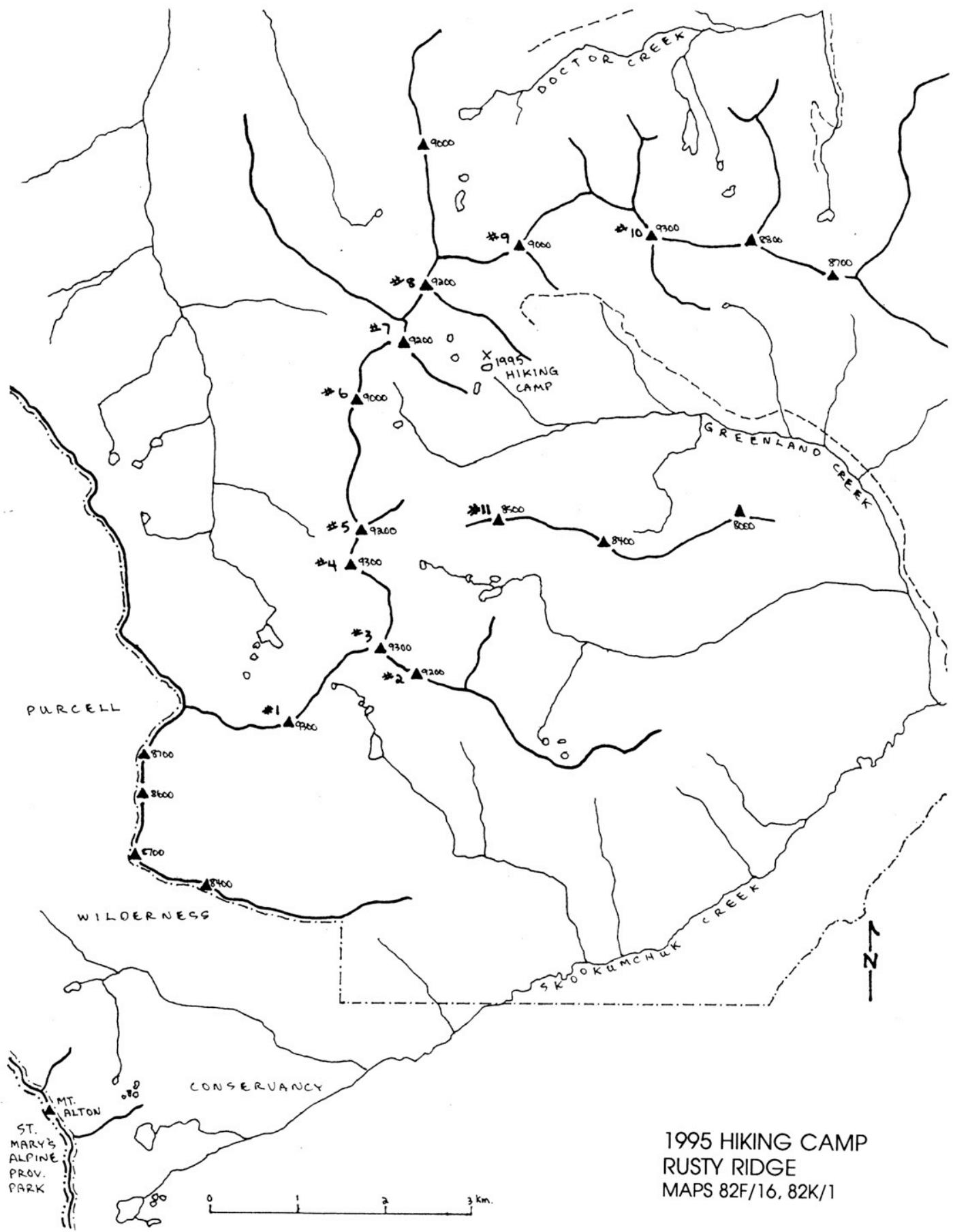
As Monday was another clear day, the ridge walkers hiked the whole ridge right around Larch and Ptarmigan basins, including peaks 7, 8 and 9. The hikers headed for the southern col with some ascending the ridge to the east (peak 11) and others exploring the southern basin with the bridal veil falls and appealing Blue Lake. The return trip was facilitated by discovery of a horse trail through the rocky talus below the col.

Leon and Ron led a large group, 10 in all, to peaks 5 and 4 on Tuesday, with the group descending down a very steep slope. Leon's patience and encouragement were much appreciated at the tricky points on the ridge. Laurie and company hiked up Axehead basin and onto the col at the end with a lovely broad ridge, but unfortunately, the weather was starting to close in and so they retreated back to camp. Phillippe and Mireille pioneered another route to Peak 11 by going down the main valley and up to the ridge by the edge of a rock glacier; they returned via Blue Lake and the south col.

From 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, to 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, it poured rain. The store tent was the site of some serious card games (hearts and crib) although some hardy souls set out for the ridge and Kal actually went for a 30 second swim in Blue Lake.

Although it was still raining on Thursday morning most of us felt that we couldn't waste another day and, in fact, it cleared up and the sun shone after 11:00 a.m. Ron, Leon and Renate headed to Peak 2 and also took in the nearby 8800 foot peak. Nine of us headed down the valley following the exploration road from Marmot basin. We were hoping to find the pegmatite dykes with their tourmaline and beryl crystals. We found the dykes and some nice tourmaline and mica crystals, but, alas, no beryl, although we noted that the site had been staked for C.C. Downie on May 17, 1995.

It was worth going down the valley to see the different varieties of flowers. The basin area around camp was dominated by yellow columbine and bright red paintbrush,



1995 HIKING CAMP  
RUSTY RIDGE  
MAPS 82F/16, 82K/1

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but on the avalanche slopes below, we found tall white bog orchids, wintergreens, valerian, beardtongues, larkspur, bronze bells, alum rock and yarrow.

Friday was another good day, with people going off in all directions. Leon, Ron, Suzanne and Jan scaled Peak 10 and got a good view of the logging devastation on Doctor Creek, but they did see an attractive lake. Laurie and Joanne got on the ridge at the head of Axehead basin and headed toward Peak 5, but didn't like the cornice situation. Wendy, Renate and Ineke also headed onto the ridge at Axehead basin and Peak 6 and then came down the basin and over towards Blue Lake. Lesley, Sylvia, Vivian and Bess lunched at Blue Lake and the latter three headed back over the ridge of Peak 11 with a long slog back to camp. Lesley met up with Toe, who had climbed Peak 11 and was returning via the col. Phillippe, Mireille and Felix saw Mt. Assiniboine from Peak 5.

Photo: *Lesley Killough*

Reminiscing over the presto log fire on the last evening, Renate commented that it was "the best camp ever with rusty rock ridges and an invigorating climate." Kal responded that he thought that some nights had been "colder than Christian charity." Certainly the absence of mosquito soup was much appreciated. Once again, we had all enjoyed a great week with excellent food and company. Where else can people enjoy gourmet meals with wine for dinner and great scenic hiking for \$250.00 per week or less? Thank you to Laurie for his quiet but effective leadership and to Suzanne for once again doing a super job of cooking - and to everyone for working together so well.

Camp Participants: Leon Arishenkoff, Joanne Baldassi, Vivian Baumgartner, Renate and Felix Belczyk, Susanne Blewett (cook), Ineke Bult, Laurie Charlton (leader), Phillippe and Muriel Delesalle, Toe Fyfe, Luba Horvath, Wendy Hurst, Lesley Killough, Jan Micklethwaite, Ron Perrier, Kal Singh, Bess Schuurman, Sylvia Smith.



# Camp II

by Joan Grodzki

This area is relatively unnamed, but since the Kootenay Mountaineering Club has ventured there it has become known to some by such names as Windy Ridge, Bedrock City and Rubble Ridge. Some of the peaks are now Peak 1, 2, 3 ... 9 1/2 ... 12, Ron's Peak, Jan's Peak, Pam's Peak and Drew's Peak. Camp One built most of, but not all the cairns. Camp was in Larch Basin. Southwest of camp lay Axehead Basin, which you had to pass through to get to Blue Lake and its valley. To the east there was Ptarmigan Basin, and to the east of that was Marmot Basin. Both were named after the inhabitants. The headwaters of Skookumchuck and Greenwood Creeks are also located in this area. They were named before KMC.

There was evidence of exploration by Cominco--large gaping cat scarcifications. According to John, the helicopter pilot, geologists had been in this area to survey for the extension of the ore body that forms the Sullivan Mine in Kimberly.

This is probably an area frequented by hunting guides in the fall because of the evidence of previous camps, a trail and the abundance of game (or should I say an abundance of droppings because there were only a few people who were quiet enough to actually see a goat or an elk--but I recall hearing that Mary Woodward from Camp Three saw a wolverine). The trail, which looked like it had been cleared for pack animals, made for a leisurely walk down through the meadow, down Greenwood Creek, up over the col and into Blue Lake, which was so-named by the previous camp.

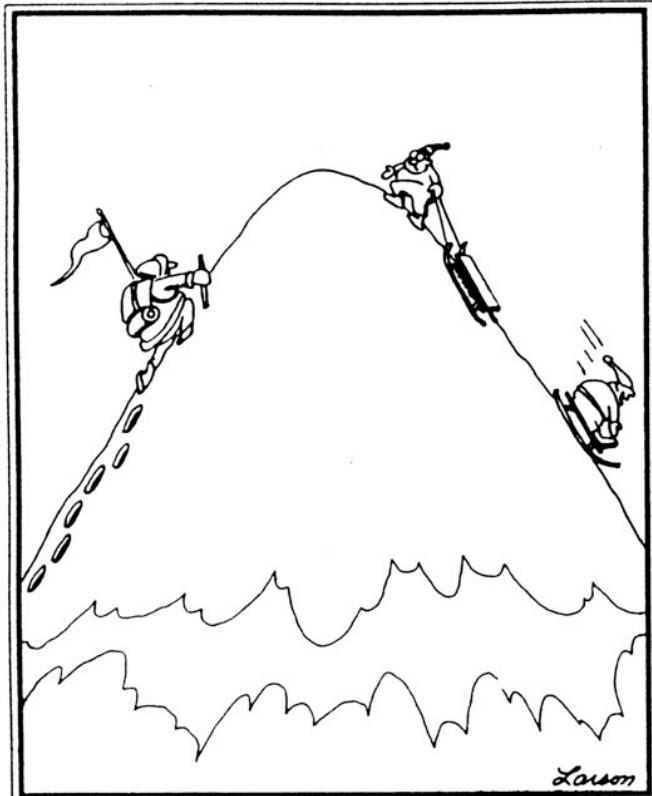
Camp was at about 7500 ft., and the peaks anywhere from 8500 to 9500 ft. Getting to a ridge or peak was relatively quick. The elevation gain was almost vertical. You could start on a ridge by the camp and walk for miles, with one ridge leading into another. At times on these ridges, the wind was so strong that you had to lean right into it. There were some spots where you felt like, if the wind stopped, you would just topple right off the edge.

Everyone at one time or another during the week had left on the bus (as Graham Kenyon would call going out in a group.) But most of the time everybody split into smaller groups and did a variety of hikes--climbing peaks, walking the ridges, strolling through the meadows--just depending on how they felt that day. Nobody got lost and everybody made it back for supper and their chores. (Well almost everybody.)

Every so often when you were sitting in camp, sipping tea after your hike, you could hear the rock giving way in the distance. You thought of a goat and the amazing places they can go gracefully, effortlessly. But noooo, it was Graham knocking down rocks--just getting the blinking rocks out of his way, tired of having everything he stepped on move right from under his feet.

David Cunningham, Rudy Goerzen and Dennis Sims got together for their first hike. David and Rudy conquered all the peaks and then some in three days. No wonder they had to take every second day off to recuperate. David also took a day off to spend it with his wife Joan, who spends her birthday in the mountains whenever they are lucky enough in the lottery to go to Camp Two.

Garth and Pat Thomson, Drew Desjardins, Joan Grodzki, Diane Paolini, Pam Jenkins (who started out on the bus a few times), Fritz Swinkels, Libby and Iain Martin, Susie O'Donnell and Graham (who rode the bus once) walked the ridges, climbed peaks, and strolled the meadows. Dennis and Pam hiked together for most of the week, but occasionally each went out by themselves. Most of the time Graham also hiked by himself. Pat, Diane, Libby and Susie found and named most of the flowers in the area during that week in camp. Jane Steed and Ethyl Goerzen walked



valleys and found more flowers in the meadows. Occasionally they walked a ridge or two, Jane started out on the bus a few times and Ethyl hiked with her husband, Rudy. Joyce McEwn and Ann Sutherns were more than satisfied with the serenity of the many meadows and basins. There was something for everyone in Rusty Ridge and everyone did everything.

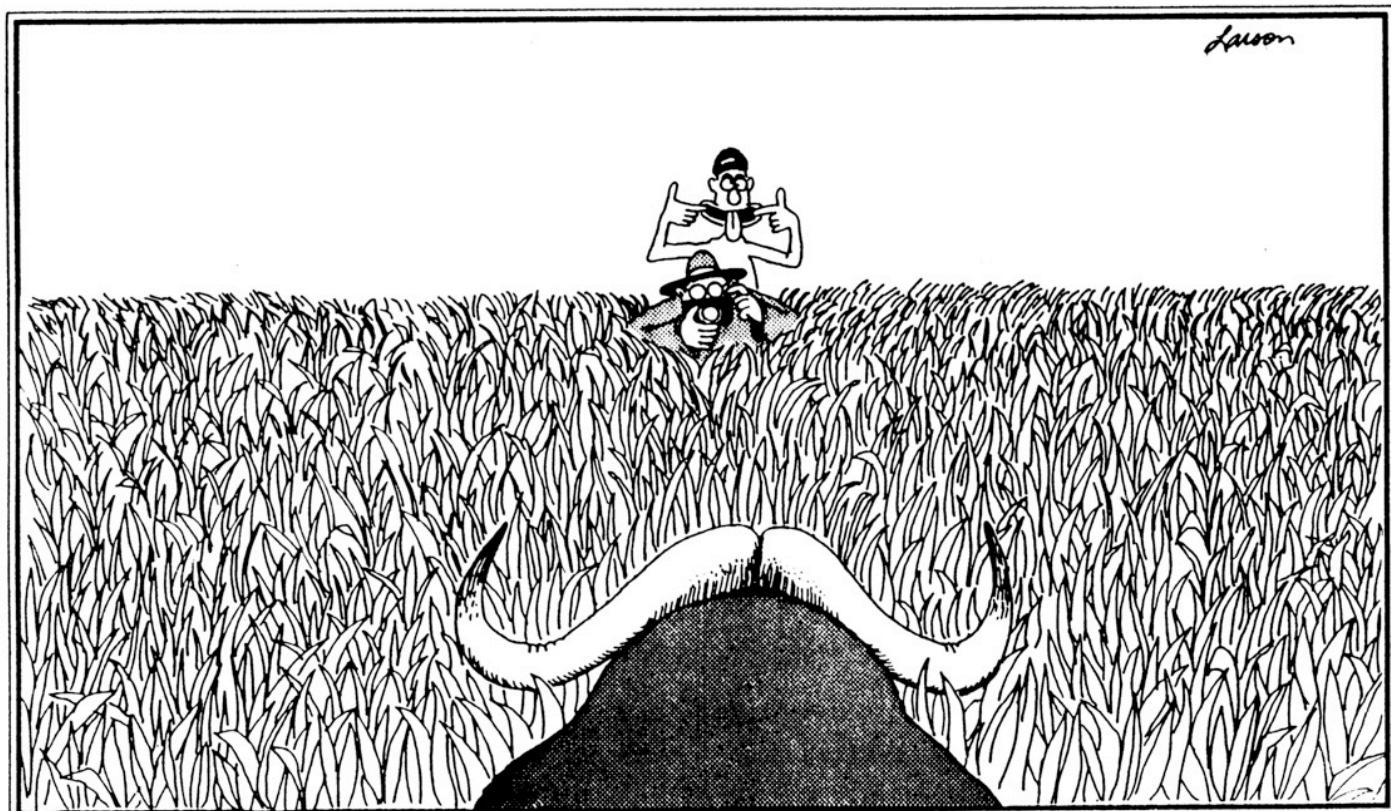
In Camp Two we were able to spend time around the campfire, relaxing and singing, since it did not rain and there was enough wind to keep the bugs away. Because of the way these three valleys came together, the wind never subsided for any length of time. It did snow the first night and the rocks were slippery the next day, but by the end of the week there was sunshine. People were swimming and bathing. Thursday and Friday were actually warm.

The different groups that ventured out from our camp wrote about their day. Everybody mentioned where they went and what they did. Some talked about the flowers, new found uses for ice-axes, skinny dipping, the animals they saw, where they went--just the usual stuff you do when you go to hiking camp and spend a week in the mountains--but this one anonymous mission is worth passing on. Wouldn't you say so Iain?

"The intrepid commands group stole out of camp before the crack of noon. MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: Capture more floral prisoners than were taken by the previous camp. Circumnavigating the basin, between the peaks of sextubble, septrubble & octrubble, keeping as close to the line of hanging on rubble that which lay at its angle of repose. The plan was to pick up the strays missed by the previous task-force. The air was tense, action not. The five were occupied with chat of yesterday; their warts was the order of the hour. The ground covered was prodigious. The hunters suffered casualties, but at the end of the day they emerged triumphant. Sixty-four known enemy captured plus two undefineables who were probably shot as spies."

By the end of the week, great change came over these mountain people. Did they become relaxed ... ? What would have happened if they had stayed two weeks? Would they have danced to the winds in Rusty Ridge?

Camp Participants: David and Joan Cunningham, Drew Desjardins (leader), Rudy and Ethel Goertzen, Joan Godzki, Pam Jenkins, Graham Kenyon, Caroline Laface, Libby and Iain Martin, Joyce McEwan, Susie O'Donnell, Diane Paolini, Dennis Sims, Jane Steed, Ann Sutherns, Fritz Swinkels, Garth and Pat Thomson.



# Camp III

by Earl Jorgensen

Several campers rendezvoused at a motel at Skookumchuck the evening of Aug. 4, and next morning had breakfast at Canal Flats. The weather was CAVU (ceiling and visibility unlimited). The 40 km drive to the helicopter site went fine and our flight into camp was a gorgeous day. The exchange with camp 2 was very orderly, and happily we set up our tents. Ron ventured onto the ridge above camp and came directly down in view of us all. The rock was not stable so his descent was very methodical.

Alas, that was the last of the sun. By bedtime it was raining and it stayed that way for 36 hours. Since we were rather reluctant to get our boots wet the first day, Sunday was spent mostly in camp. Monday wasn't raining, at least, so peak # 8 (9200 ft.) was the target for 7 of us. Seven more went to Ptarmigan Basin, while John, Muriel, and Hazel returned from a peak to the west because of rain and fog.

Tuesday was windy, some sleet and hail, and temperature 4 degrees C. However, groups went out, exploring Ptarmigan and Marmot Basins as well as the ridge overlooking Blue Lake. Earl went with John, Muriel, Hazel, and Jim into the two basins. After lunch in Ptarmigan, the group proceeded up to the ridge at the end of the basin. From there, things changed. Earl chose to go further on the ridge and climb the peak at the end and descend the spur paralleling the basin. But at the top, and in rain and fog, he zigged instead of zagged and descended unwittingly on a right hand ridge. The whole camp was aware of old mining roads in the area of Marmot and Ptarmigan Basins. So when Earl could see a road far down in the basin from the ridge he was on, he proceeded unconcerned.

However, as the day progressed, he became aware that the sun was at his back. He was travelling east, whereas camp was to the west. Aware that he was not where he was supposed to be, a night out was chosen. In the basin, shelter, wood, and water were found. The weather had cleared, fortunately, and so the night out was quite comfortable for Earl. But not so for those in camp. John's last view of Earl was seeing him kick steps on a snow slope as he disappeared into the fog above.

After supper, the camp split up into search parties. Also, the radio could hear transmissions, but no one was picking up camp signals. After a sleepless night in camp, it was

decided that a couple of people would hike out down the road (several kilometres) to the cars and then drive to Canal Flats. However, one more try by John on the radio succeeded in reaching Nelson Forestry (of all places).

Thus, all the search machinery was put into operation. RCMP, ambulance personnel, PEP, and the helicopter. The concern was that Earl was injured and lying on the ridge, so the helicopter was scouring the ridges. It flew over Earl three times. He had started up from the basin where he spent the night and was very near the top of the ridge overlooking Marmot Basin. Shortly after, Hans Korn came over the ridge about 600 metres along and called out. He had a portable radio and called the chopper. Since both Hans and Earl were on the ridge which did not have a landing spot, the chopper waited for them down in the basin and then lifted them back to camp before 11 am, to be met by RCMP and the ambulance crew.

Earl was given a check up, including an ECG, and was found fit, at least physically. He had spent the night in Doctor Creek. All in all, it was a very well organized search procedure by the members in camp whose experience and expertise was most noteworthy. The irony was that Wednesday was the brightest and sunniest day of the week and it was spent getting Earl back to camp. So the afternoon was spent drying out tents and doing laundry, reminiscent of a landscape from a Monty Python movie about a Chinese laundry.



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Thursday also remained sunny, and just about everyone set out for the ridge and peaks to the west, probably our best day. Hans was the long distance man of camp that day for he rambled far along the ridges and came down past Blue Lake and home.

Friday was again cloudy with low cloud and rain. Ron and a small group retraced his Wednesday route looking for the glasses he had misplaced. John and a small group went into the back of Marmot Basin looking for the misplaced glasses. Neither search was successful, but John and company did watch a family of goats ahead of them in the basin.

Saturday cleared out enough for us to break camp and fly out, but the last group to fly out huddled under a tree while a snow squall went through before the chopper arrived.

The camp was most noteworthy for its weather and for the anxiety created by Earl's unpermitted night out! Earl numbers the other 19 campers as very dear friends indeed!

Camp participants: Jennie Baillie, Mary Baker, Glen Cameron, Janet Cameron, Ron Cameron, Don Hagen, Reid Henderson, Ted Ibrahim, Earl Jorgensen, Hazel Kirkwood, Erica Korn, Hans Korn, Elaine Martin, Jim Mattice, Ray Neumar, Gitane Ouellette, Gaby Sittig, John Walton, Muriel Walton, Mary Woodward.





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# Climbing Camp 1995

## Tellot Glacier

### Climbing Camp Overview

by *Larry Smith*

For something different I suggested that the 1995 climbing camp should move to the Coast Range, and the Mt. Waddington area in particular. The idea was that participants could either fly in to the upper Tellot Glacier and stay in the vicinity of the Plummer Hut, or fly directly to Rainy Knob and try climbing Mt. Waddington. With a two week duration instead of the usual one week allotted for climbing camp, there should be enough time to do both, or to wait out a period of bad weather. Participants would form independent camping and climbing groups and we would leave all of the heavy camp gear at home. Initial response in the winter of 1995 was good, with a lot of people indicating they wanted to come. By mid-July only eight people had confirmed and then one week prior to leaving, two injuries left the number at five. Instead of a camp with lots of options, we now had a small number of people and no time to reorganize. All five were now to fly to the Plummer Hut.

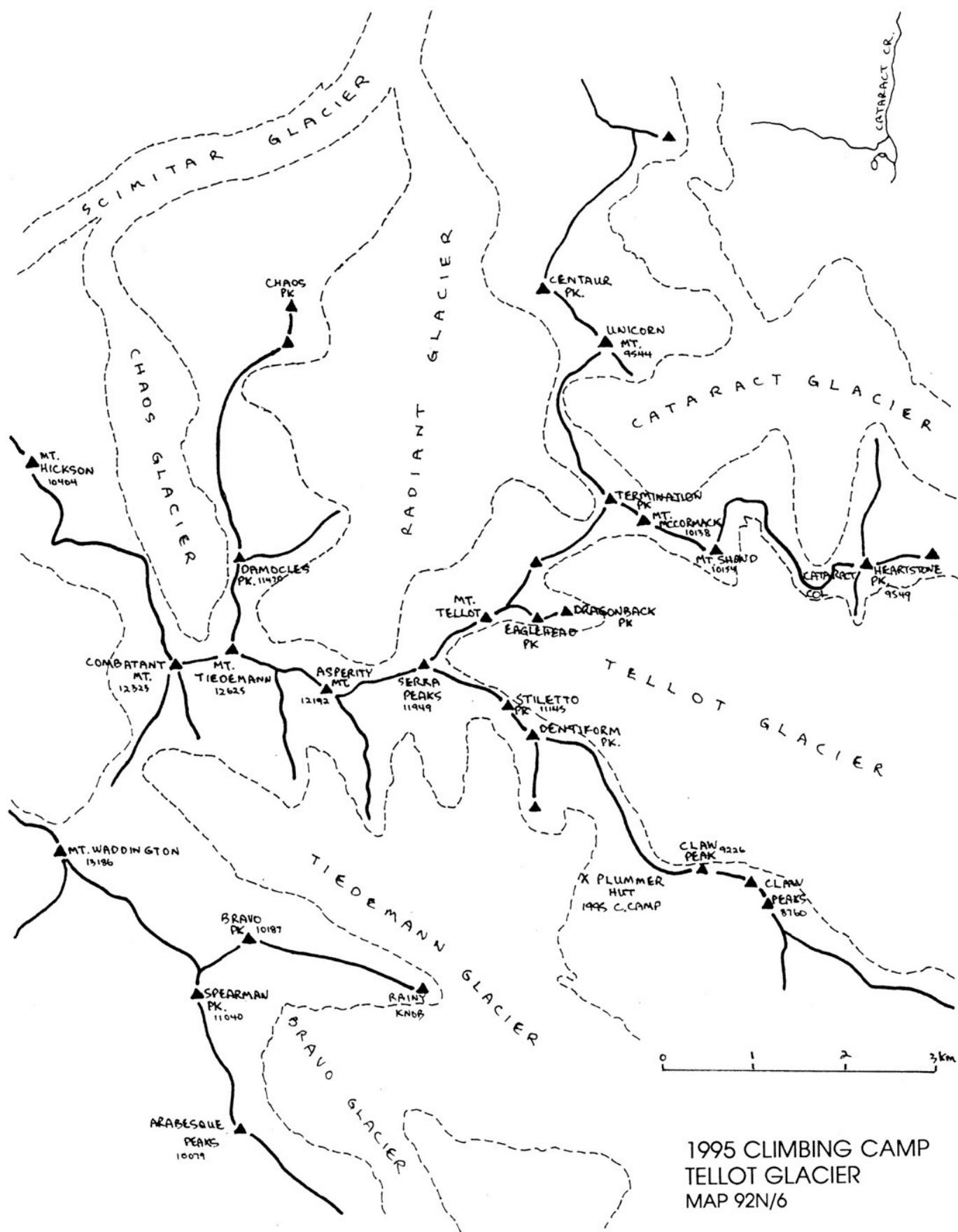
The helicopter flight into the Mt. Waddington area originates from Bluff Lake with White Saddle Airways. After a very hot mid-July the weather had turned to rainy and wet. In fact, the only three parties to summit Mt. Waddington so far that year had done so at the end of the hot period. Those unfortunate enough to come a week later sat in the rain and snow. The prospects of further bad weather were confirmed by the snow-whitened hills north of Cache Creek and the steady rain that fell as we drove west from Williams Lake. Arriving at Bluff Lake the weather had lifted and we flew in immediately.

Opposite: Claw Peaks from the Tellot Glacier  
Photo: *Gordon Frank*

Most parties attempting to climb Mt. Waddington fly to Rainy Knob which, lying at less than 7,000 ft. on the Tiedemann Glacier is usually accessible. The Plummer Hut, however, at almost 9000 ft., is at the upper limit of the helicopter and is not accessible during bad weather or strong winds. In fact, with a load of three people and gear for two weeks, it was necessary to drop one person (me) and some gear down low on the Tellot Glacier and to make two trips up to the hut. Parties trying to fly to the Plummer Hut should be prepared to get dropped off lower on the Tellot Glacier or at Rainy Knob should they not be able to land near the hut. Likewise, to fly out may require that you walk out to where the helicopter can reach you. Therefore, you should go fairly light and each flight should have the necessary gear to camp for several days.

The Plummer Hut is in good condition but getting across the bergshrunf between it and the Tellot Glacier may be a problem late in the season. The hut is equipped with two Coleman stoves and a lantern, although the stoves were problematic and the lantern required a special finesse to light. There is no water supply other than melting snow. From the hut there are numerous easy peaks to climb, moderate mixed alpine routes and enough clean granite to keep a rock climber happy for years.

Mt. Waddington is another matter. It appears that timing is essential. You have to be early enough in the season to avoid problems getting through the Bravo icefall, yet late enough so that the top portion is free of snow. In addition it is necessary to have a window without storms which will plaster the mountain with fresh snow and make rock climbing at 13,000 feet rather unpleasant. There is technical rock climbing on the summit block. Mt. Waddington is becoming an increasingly popular objective. This means that during a hot sunny week in mid-July there could be upwards of 25 people on the mountain and three or four parties trying to summit on a given day. There were reports of at least one party this year having to turn back within two pitches of the summit because of a slower party in front of them. Even if you have the mountain to yourselves, ropes of two efficient climbers who can move quickly are recommended.



1995 CLIMBING CAMP  
TELLOT GLACIER  
MAP 92N/6

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You may also want to consider camping higher than the Spearman Col and many parties were bivouacing at the base of the chimney that leads out of the notch between the Tooth and the true summit.

As for Fred and Eric's route over Mt. Munday in the early seventies, they must have had a very heavy snow year to go with the boldness of their youth. So what did we do? We shared the hut with two rock climbers from Whistler, climbed the peaks around the Tellot Glacier, sat out a few storms and debated when we should try for Mt. Waddington, which was plastered with snow from the recent storms. Finally we set up the radio and phoned Bluff Lake for a weather forecast. Another series of storms was approaching so we opted to fly out early. In all, we had an interesting 10 days and we didn't get as much snow as the Bugaboos or the Rockies.

## Climbing Camp Summary

by Eddie Szczerbinski

**I**t was decided to do something different this year for climbing camp, so the Mt Waddington area was chosen. The participants were Larry Smith, Tina Zimmermann, Armin Hasenkox, Gordon Frank and I.

Day 1, Saturday, July 29

Arrival at Bluff Lake and helicopter flight to the glacier right below Plummer's hut. Setting up at the hut. There were already two young men at the hut, Jason and Reid from Whistler. Mt. Waddington wasn't in a good condition to be climbed so it was decided to wait a few days before attempting it.

Day 2, Sunday, July 30

Reccie trip on Dragonback Mt and Eaglehead Mt. It was more like a hike than a climb. The day was cloudy and we had snow at the end of the day.

Day 3, Monday, July 31

Heartstone Mt day. We had to go through a crevassed glacier and do a lot of scrambling. There was low class five climbing near the summit but everybody enjoyed the magnificent view we had since it was one of the only clear days during the trip.

Day 4, Tuesday, August 1

All except for me did a long glacier walk and scrambled Shand Mt. They had to do a low class 5 pitch with some exposure.

Day 5, Wednesday, August 2

Reid, Tina and I went for a climb on Claw Peak. We underestimated it and, most of all, we underestimated the weather. (The rest of the group had a nice "TV show" through the window in the Plummer hut.) We had to do four leads up plus some "exposed walks". The worst was the descent since bad weather settled in. It took us six hours to do this relatively easy but highly exposed climb (worst move was probably 5.7). The descent took more time than the ascent, since the surfaces were wet and we were getting cold. We hadn't carried much clothing.

Day 6, Thursday, August 3

Everybody went to Dentiform Mt. This mountain was really falling apart under our feet since there were loose rocks everywhere. Armin accidentally dislodged a rock on me resulting in some pain and swelling of my right knee. In my opinion, except for the little accident, it was the best day of the camp. We had a clear, sunny view of all our surroundings, but on the downside we were beginning to realise that the condition of Mt Waddington and the other big mountains wasn't getting better.

Day 7, Friday, August 4

Tina, Gord and Larry went to have a closer look at the Serra Peaks and climbed Mt. Tellot. They reported that it was a very long walk with some class 4 scrambling. The day was rainy and I decided to stay at camp since my knee wasn't improving either. Armin, Jason, Reid and I took a walk on the glacier to get rid of the "toilet bag" in a big crevasse.

Day 8, Saturday, August 5

Rest day for everyone since the weather was really bad outside. The spirit of the group wasn't at its best either. Some were convinced that the condition of Mt. Waddington and the other big peaks wouldn't improve sufficiently in the time remaining, while some wanted to give it a chance - the opinions were diverse. That day, I gained a little experience about human relations in the setting of an "expedition".

Day 9, Sunday August 6

Another day where the weather is very bad, so we cancelled

our planned trip down to Rainy knob. We set up the radio and called Mike King (the helicopter pilot) for a flight out, but the weather was too bad.

Day 10, Monday, August 7

We finally got an open "window" to fly out.

#### Conclusion:

Weather can really have a big impact on a trip. On our arrival, Mt. Waddington wasn't safe for climbing due to many weeks of bad weather. The "pyramid" was covered by snow and ice and the steep slopes would have exposed us to avalanches. We had hoped that the weather would get better but it didn't. I personally would have preferred to try it anyway but I chose to comply with the others that had more experience than I did. Mountaineering isn't about climbing mountains, it's about coming back from them !

This climbing camp taught me a lot of things about mountaineering, about human relations and about myself. Most of all it also taught me that we sometimes have to wait for the mountain. Mt Waddington is a very interesting and impressive area that deserves a visit, ... and since mountains don't move a lot in a lifetime, I'll probably go back one day. Anyone interested ?

final twelve-foot unbroken slab, which was surmounted using only the stickiness of our plastic boots. After rappeling off the summit, we picked our way back down the scree slope and retraced our route to the glacier with two long rappels. Two additional inspections of the shrund were made in the process. We then returned without incident over the glacier to the hut.



## Mt. Dentiform

by Larry Smith & Gordon Frank

**M**t. Dentiform lies at the eastern end of the impressive ridge that extends east from Mt. Combatant, separating the Tellot and Tiedemann Glaciers. At a height of about 3200 meters, it is the smallest and easiest of the summits on this ridge, which include Mt. Tiedemann, Mt. Asperity, the five Serra Peaks, and Stiletto Pk. We approached the mountain by crossing the Tellot glacier to below its north face. After Larry inspected the bergshrunf at close range, we crossed onto the rock and set up a belay station. We then proceeded carefully up two pitches of loosely strewn rock and ice covered with a thin layer of snow (slings and one ice screw used), and turned left across the ridge onto a scree slope which led up towards the summit. Here we paused for a short time to eat and admire the view. After the scree slope, a final 75 foot pitch of smooth, exposed granite broken by a few small cracks, was all that remained. The route was easily recognized by the path worn through the inch-deep black lichen. The cracks readily accepted small Friends for protection until the

Mt. Dentiform  
Photo: Gordon Frank

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# Trips and Trails

## Mt. Bonney - Finally

by Kim Kratky

**M**y relationship with Mt. Bonney goes back to the July 1st weekend of 1977 when Janice and I joined Eric White's trip. We spent a couple of nights at the tiny Sapphire Col Hut in wretched weather (the winds at night were so strong that the aircraft cables holding down the hut screamed like the damned in Hell) and never even saw Mt. Bonney. Since that time there have been a number of similarly cursed KMC trips to the environs of the peak, with no indication that anyone had climbed it.

When it came time to make up the 1995 trips schedule, I signed up to lead a Bonney outing on July 7-9th. My thinking went like this: after a gap of 18 years I deserved a second go at the peak; and if I made it a club trip, I could probably attract enough foolhardy people to make up a rope.

Next, I examined my maps and consulted the guidebook, all in the interest of choosing a route. Although massive and somewhat remote, Mt. Bonney was one of the first peaks in the Roger's Pass area to be climbed, falling to the Rev. William Spotswood Green and Henry Swanzy way back in 1888. For us, the 1931 complete east ridge route looked attractive: it traversed two other peaks (Swanzy and Clarke) on the way to Bonney; it rated three stars; and it was first done by Georgia Engelhard and Ernest Feuz. The fact that Ms. Engelhard is something of a role model and inspiration for some KMCers (even though she did do Camel cigarette adverts) lent an added cachet to the choice.

Trip established and route chosen, I waited to see what mad creatures might phone for such an outing. Fred Thiessen, Larry Smith, Thom Volpatti, Paul Allen, Hamish Mutch, Gord Frank, Andrew O'Kane, Andrew Port, and Trevor Holdsworth responded.

Friday afternoon, July 7th and the curse of Bonney re-appears--thick, low cloud and scattered showers blanket the Southeast Interior. Trevor elects not to go. Andrew Port does likewise. If I hadn't been the trip leader, I would follow suit. However, Fred, Larry, Hamish and I depart about 4:00pm and drive in the Cruiser to the Illecillewaet

Campground where we make a rendezvous with Gord, Paul, Thom, and Andrew O. The plan is to hike in to the Sapphire Col Hut on Saturday morning. Some hope to try Bonney that day and return on Sunday. Others favour an early Sunday start for the peak and a return to the carpark the same day.

Saturday morning under ominous skies we get away at 5:20 on the Asulkan Trail. Fred sets a furious pace, and the going is good as the path has recently been brushed out. Beyond km. 7 we reach the bare, scarred rock below the Asulkan Glacier and take a break. Andrew, who has been suffering, wisely chooses to turn back. We push on. Soon we see dots on the snow below, a party of four making for our hut and gaining on us. I should point out that the Sapphire Col Hut is about the size and shape of the witch's oven in Hansel and Gretel and will snugly accommodate seven as long as no one chooses to stand up.

Even though we have reserved the hut, we think it best to get there first. Fred responds to this challenge as you might expect and turns the boogie meter up a couple of notches. We rope up and head N. up the glacier, passing under Mt. Jupiter and then making straight for the col. So much for guidebook suggestions about zigzag routes to avoid the broken-up Asulkan Glacier. We reach the hut at 10:00.

We flop inside for a rest, snack, and drink. Stretched out by myself in the upper vestibule, I get a chill and begin to shake uncontrollably. If I don't say anything, maybe no one will notice how whipped I am. A long time later, the competing party shows up after having gone round the southwest side of Mt. Jupiter. They are two young couples from Kamloops who have obviously planned on staying at the hut. They decide to go down, and we turn over the hut to them so they can make lunch while we go out for some afternoon rambles.

The weather is pretty grim, but it's not raining or snowing--thus, optimum conditions for this spot. Paul, Hamish, and Thom set off to scramble Castor, Pollux, and Leda. Fred, Gord, Larry and I head up the S. ridge of The Dome, but blocks we scramble get increasingly big and the route becomes more exposed.

Since we have no rope, we discretely retreat. Later, I read that this route is a class 3 scramble and was first done by a mass ascent ACC party in 1908. We four return to Sapphire

Col and zip up to the summit of Castor, where we meet the other three who are returning from Pollux and Leda.

Back at the hut, we attack Gord's pre-arranged menu of rice and dahl. There's enough to feed all seven of us and about 18 porters. Bedtime is 6:45. It rains very hard at about 8:00. Good thing we didn't try Bonney today. Sunday, we're up at 4:00 and away at 5:00. It's cloudy and moderately ugly looking, but there's no question about not going. Gord is feeling ill and decides to stay at the hut.

We quickly descend 500-600' of scree to the SW of the hut and then continue NW on snow to just S of Lily Col. From here, we head up snow on the E. face of Swanzzy, Fred doing most of the kicking. Reaching the sharp N. snow ridge of Swanzzy, we follow it left or S to an ominous block of summit rock.

Now it's time for Paul to do his thing. The rope is brought out for one of its infrequent appearances today, and Paul leads a one-rope-length traverse on slippery rock along the east side of Swanzzy. I come over on a fixed line and then belay him as he quickly negotiates a second rope-length lead up an awkward, greasy chimney or gulley (he says it might be 5.4 because of weather conditions). At the top, he sets up two fixed lines, so the party can move quickly.

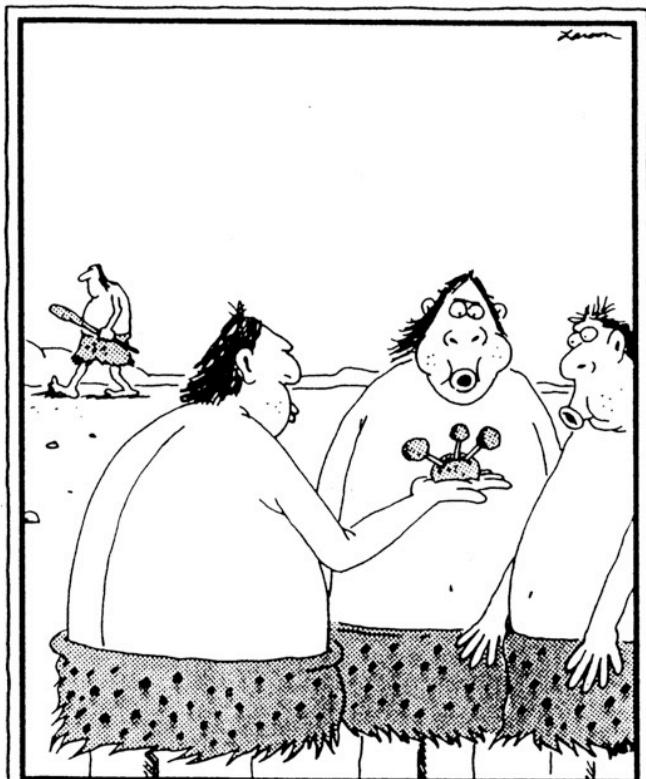
I follow him up to Swanzzy's summit plateau by 8:00. When I get to the top (9,572'), Paul is almost out of sight as he heads over the actual summit, a snowy curlicue to the SW, on his way to our next peak, Clarke. Talk about cranking up the boogie meter--this is a guy who hasn't done any climbing since 1993. I check out Swanzzy's cairn (no record), have a drink and a snack, and head out after Paul just as Thom is coming up. This looks like it's going to be six solo ascents.

I head over the snowy hump and descend to the Swanzzy-Clarke col. Far ahead, I see Paul motoring up the easy snow and broken rock of Clarke's E. ridge. I grind out the 900' from the col to Clarke's summit (9,947') by 8:30 and finally catch up--albeit briefly--to Mr. Allen. I'm able to look around long enough to see that the weather's improving; Bonney definitely looks within reach.

As soon as the rest join us, Paul takes off again. I notice that he has such a bad cold that he constantly keeps a cough candy gripped between his teeth; good thing he's not healthy. With Paul well ahead once more, we descend Clarke's W. ridge, a series of shattered, rotten towers interspersed with snow patches, and reach the last col. From here, the E. ridge of Bonney is easy broken rock with snowy intervals leading to the flat-topped summit ridge. This part negotiated, it's just a few minutes walk to the marginally highest spot with the cairn, which we reach around 9:30 (10,194', 4.5 hours from the hut). All six of us who have left the hut summit out in good order. We spend a scant 15 minutes to catch our collective breaths and then head back down the E. ridge.

At the Bonney-Clarke col, we divide into two parties: the majority favor going back over the top of Clarke, while Hamish, Thom, and I choose the short route--1,500' of steep snow S. to the Clarke Glacier. Fred's party makes its way down from the Clarke-Swanzy col and, inevitably, zooms ahead of us as we plod around the Clarke Glacier at the 8,000' level to cross Swanzzy's S. ridge. En route, we notice that an enormous chunk has fallen out of this ridge, thus creating an intimidating gap in a route described by Kevin Fox as "one of the forgotten classics of the Roger's Pass region." Continuing around Swanzzy, we lose and gain elevation and then traverse N. along the E. side of the mountain. One 75' rappel gets us down to a bench that leads easily onto the Swanzzy Glacier at about 7,900'. Here, we rope up to contour round the N. end of the glacier and head up the gulley just below the hut that we had descended at 5:00 am.

Back at Sapphire Col by 1:25, we quickly pack up and head down the Asulkan Glacier just after 2:00. Below the glacier, the party splits into three as climbers decide the best way to negotiate three north-running moraines. Gord and I descend



Danook shows off his Swiss Army Rock.

and traverse NE, crossing two moraines and a creek to reach the easternmost moraine where we pick up the Asulkan Trail. Farther down the trail we meet the others, who have forded Asulkan Brook. By 5:00, we are all back at the carpark for a quick snack and the long drive home.

We're feeling pretty cool that we did our whole Bonney trip from hut to carpark in 12 hours, and that we successfully evaded the weather gods' wrath. Then a few days later, I read that Engelhard and Feuz daytripped Bonney from Glacier House, traversing the peak from E. to W. and returning via Parsons Col and Loop Brook to the hotel. All in 20 hours.

## The Jordan Range

by Hamish Mutch

### Monday

In late July in a light rain, Steve Horvath and I helicoptered out of Revelstoke. We flew north along Frisby Ridge, and up Big Eddy Creek. The broad glacier and moraine-filled valley beneath looked increasingly uninviting as the raindrops turned to snow. At the last moment we spotted the perfect campsite on a shelf below Mt. Levers--level, sheltered and the size of several football fields. No need to cut platforms for our lawn chairs this time!

As we erected our tent, the rain stopped and the fog lifted. It was barely mid-morning, so we decided to attempt something close by. Cat Peak was an easy choice, although it was still totally enclouded. Predictably, as we went up, the clouds came back down, the rain and the snow returned, and so did we, finding some nice crystals in consolation.

### Tuesday

We awoke to wind and rain pounding on the fly-sheet. "Deja vu" as Krusyna would say, falling rapidly back to sleep. We emulated The Great Man. I slept all day, while Steve read enough for both.

### Wednesday

It's not raining, so we decide to visit Frenchman Cap. We hiked easily up the moraine above camp, discussing whether a peak with such a name will resemble a large condom, or a small one. We agree on the latter.

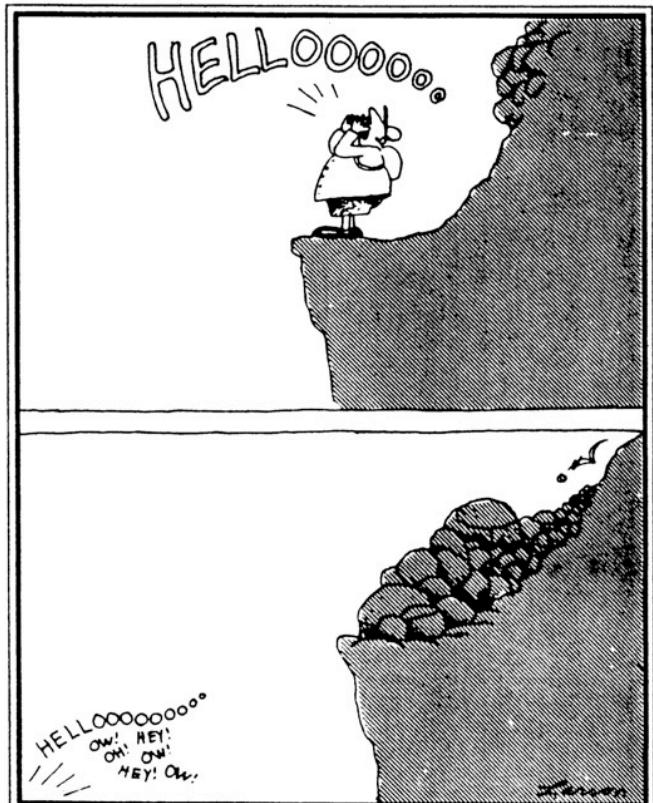
The valleys to the north of Levers Pass are filled with low

clouds blending into the glaciers below us. Mt. Downie and Boulder Peak jut out, some fifteen miles away. It looks as if we could just cloud-walk over to them. I suggest this to Steve, as we have some unfinished business on Downie. He looks doubtful, and I wonder if he's ever walked on clouds before.

We crampon east across the glacier to the south ridge of the Cap. The rock proves to be of doubtful texture, initiating a rapid change of name to Frenchman Crap. We ascend into more fog, and the summit takes us almost by surprise. As we lounge around, the occasional window opens, offering tantalizing views of disembodied glaciers and ridges. Unfortunately no big panoramas, or the briefest of glimpses of Mt. Moloch, somewhere to the east. And it never rained 'til after supper!

### Thursday

A most unlikely looking day. We decide to explore the unnamed glacier and peak to the south. We take whatever shelter we can from the heavier showers, and ignore the rest. We cross and recross the tracks of several million goats. We pass beside stunning meadows, lakes and icefalls, loosely framed by the drifting mists--a magical place. We search for signs of the little people who must surely live here, but find only goat turds.



At noon we acknowledge the futility of today's purpose, and accept reluctantly that our proposed rout is long, clod and wet, with little evidence of improvement. Discretion prevails, and we retreat unabashedly.

#### Friday

Schrund Peak is an attractive summit to the southwest, which we decide to traverse. We repeat our approach of yesterday until a broad snow slope leads away toward the east ridge. At the top of the slope we find two heli-skiing stakes, the only discordant note of the week. The sun comes out as we scramble to the summit. An impressive chasm on the north side reveals that this peak, at least, is aptly named.

By fits and starts we descend the northwest ridge, until it merges into the glacier. Here we take turns leading each other further and further into a maze of interlocking crevasses, from which we escape mostly by chance, to slop our way through half a mile of glacial swamp, and then by goat trail back to camp.

#### Saturday

We return to square one--Revelstoke in a light rain! At the time we felt that we had been unlucky with the weather, but the month of August proved otherwise.

Thanks Steve, it was a good time.

## Poplar Creek Again

by Kim Kratky

In October 1994 I visited the Poplar Creek area of the northern Goat Range for the first time, climbing Cascade Mtn. Since then, the region has become part of the new White Grizzly Park, and there is some doubt about continued motorized access. Fearing that easy access to alpine areas would soon disappear, I made three trips into the new park in 1995. My purpose here is to provide a record of those outings and give some indication of the area's summer and fall recreation potential. All map references are to 82K/6 Poplar Creek 1:50,000 scale.

### TENDERFOOT MTN. (9,350')

On June 24th Peter Tchir, Thom Volpatti, and I left for a two-day trip to the Tenderfoot Mtn. area. Tenderfoot is a glaciated peak at the head of the N. terminal fork of Poplar Creek; it was attractive to us because of its remoteness and

the possibility that it might have been unclimbed. The first day, we drove 140 km. from Nelson to the Poplar Creek turnoff, 26 km. N. of Meadow Creek, and continued a further 23.6 km. on the main haul road (almost all 2WD) to a point where the road crosses to the N. bank via the remnants of a smashed bridge (753-783). We car camped on the S. bank and set out in the afternoon to reconnoitre our route. After fording the creek, we followed the road W. to a recent burn; here we raced up E. slopes to the summit of a minor 7,650' peak (728-781) of absolutely no significance to inspect the southern approaches to Tenderfoot. It seemed that the E. bank of the N. terminal fork of Poplar Crk. would afford excellent going with very little bush, although we weren't able to determine what part of the massif at the N. end was actually Tenderfoot.

Sunday, June 25th, we got an invigorating 6:00 am start by fording the groin-deep creek. After walking on the road for 5-10 min., we turned off before crossing the N. fork and headed up its E. bank, traversing boulder fields, light timber, and snow patches (a most satisfactory route) until we reached alps below the headwall (749-813). We then ascended heather, snow tongues, and light bush NE to Tenderfoot's SW glacier, which is barely a "real" glacier. At this point, mist helpfully shrouded the peaks, so we blundered across the snow to a 9,100' col where we found a heli-ski radio beacon (764-828). From this point I spotted through the mist a cairned peak to the S. and persuaded the others it might be Tenderfoot. We reached this 9,250' peak (764-825) via snow and easy broken rock at 11:00 and found no record in the cairn. Within minutes the skies cleared and we were able to confirm that a higher peak to the N. was the real Tenderfoot. We then made a northwesterly descent across the SW glacier to gain Tenderfoot's W. ridge at about 8,700'. This gave very easy going to the summit except for one notch; we turned the lower part of this on snow to the N. and the upper bit by negotiating a slightly awkward shelf with good handholds high up (no rope needed on ascent or descent). The rest was wide heather ramps and easy broken rock leading us to the summit at noon. Here, we found another cairn with no record; there was some thought that these markers could have been built by heli-skiers.

As the weather continued to improve, we spent over an hour on the summit savoring views of the Gold Range, the Pinnacles, and the long SW ridge leading from our summit to Spyglass Mtn. We returned to camp via our ascent route in 3 hours 40 min. Call it an 11-hour day for both peaks, 10 hours for just Tenderfoot.

TENDERFOOT MTN. W ridge (III,4,s/g) 9,350' Lardeau Range. From car camp on S. bank of Poplar Creek, approach along E. bank of N. terminal fork. Ascend alps and glacier to gain W. ridge. Follow the ridge to the summit, solving

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minor problems at a prominent notch. 5 1/2 hours up.

#### SPYGLASS MTN. (9,360')

During our June trip we had talked about adding Spyglass to our Poplar peaks bag. The long S. ridge of Spyglass looked straightforward, and there was an intriguing looking 9,150' "thumb" between Tenderfoot and Spyglass that attracted us. On August 23rd, Fred Thiessen, Peter Tchir, and I prepared for this outing by car camping on the main haul road west of the first S. fork road and just beyond the km. 18 sign. A prominent slide comes down to the road, providing easy access to alpine regions without bushwhacking.

On the 24th we were away at 6:00 am under clear skies; the weather soon deteriorated and we were under threatening skies until mid-afternoon. From the road at 4,200'(791-769), we raced up the boulder field (this was a Fred trip) and into an increasingly steep gulley where broken rock gave way to slabs. Above this, we moved left onto a ridge (where we saw flagging tape) and followed it to the point at 788-783 (7,000') where the angle eases and the terrain becomes open, grassy slopes. Higher up, the ridge was made up of easy, broken rock. At one point, we traversed along the W. side of the ridge on steep heather to avoid up-and-downs on the crest. We passed through two horn-like towers, and above 8,500' clambered over large granitic boulders. This S. ridge seems to be a contact zone between granitic and metamorphic rock. At a point where the ridge steepens, we negotiated the difficulty easily by ascending a gulley on the left. An easy 30' of 4th class slanting ledges led us back to the ridge. We believe this spot is the 5.2 "steep, rotten granite wall" mentioned by the first ascent party of 1972. Beyond, we clambered up easy, broken stuff and over a false summit to the top by 10:30 (4 1/2 hours from the road; Fred did have the jets to the max all the way up).

We found a dilapidated cairn and no record. After rebuilding the cairn and putting in a record (including a note on the Spokane Mountaineers' first ascent of July 30, 1972), we lounged around for over an hour before deciding to proceed NW to the "thumb" we had seen in June. We descended the NW ridge of Spyglass (easy broken rock again, and a bit of snow), continued along the ridge, and ascended easy scree to the rock summit in 25 min. from Spyglass. There was no cairn, so we built one and added a note in a film can. For the record, it's Magnifier Mtn., 9,150', co-ordinates 777-807. Back on Spyglass, we had a quick snack and began our descent at 1:20 pm. At the point where the slope changes (788-783), we started heading down a ridge too far to the W. but soon corrected our mistake. Care with route-finding needs to be taken at this spot. We reached the truck at 4:00, making for a descent time of 2 hours 40 min. and a 10-hour day. Although the rope was not used on this trip, we think that parties might want to

rappel the slabby portion in wet weather.

SPYGLASS MTN. 9,350' S. ridge (III,4) From km. 18 on the Poplar Creek road, start up an obvious rock slide which gives way to steep gullies. Bear slightly L. onto a ridge which is followed to the summit. Where the ridge steepens a few hundred feet below the top, move L. and ascend a short gulley that rejoins the ridge. 4 1/2 hours up.

MAGNIFIER MTN. 9,150' SE slopes (I,3) An easy 25 min. trip from Spyglass. No rope required.

#### MT. MARION (9,730')

My last 1995 trip to Poplar Creek was a club outing on September 8-9. Mt. Marion is a glaciated peak about 2.5 km. S. of Cascade Mtn. at the apex of the headwaters of Wilson, Cascade, and McKian Creeks. It provides the most mountaineering interest of any of the peaks I've climbed out of Poplar Creek. Seven souls signed up for this outing: Hamish Mutch, Peter Tchir, Peter Jordan, Robin Lidstone, Kim Kratky, Ted Ibrahim, and Paul Allen.

After a Friday-night car camp at km. 10 on the main Poplar Creek road, we were up at 5:00 to drive to km. 17 where the S. fork road turns off. We followed this S. fork to its end (see my article in Karabiner vol. 37, pp. 23-24 for further details) and parked where the road gets quite bad and switches back left. We didn't find the really good route through the timber until our return, so I'll give the details of the best approach to the alpine.

Walk up this left switchback to another landing. From there, follow a skid road up and to the right. This soon levels out and becomes overgrown, but still features a path in the middle. Upon reaching the end of this skid road (about 10 min. from the car), look above the road to pick out some flagging. This marks the beginning of a very good trail that diagonals upward through open timber and into the basin on the NW side of Cascade (30 min. from car). The trail continues S. through more-or-less open country (where it's faint, there is flagging), passing E. and S. of the lake at 801-715 to reach the col at 803-708 (perhaps an hour from the car).

From this point we traversed E. and S. through alpland on the SW side of Cascade, passing through a col at 816-695. We then continued E. toward the Cascade-Marion col. There is a variety of routes through open country; if one gets too far N. below the bulk of Cascade, there are rock bands and steep heather that have to be descended. Farther toward the head of the valley of Wilson Creek, we found several limestone sink holes big enough to climb into to a depth of 10'-12'.

Before reaching the Cascade-Marion col, we started up snow and scree on the NW side of the prominent N. ridge (833-680 to 698) that leads to an unnamed subpeak to the W. of Marion. Gaining the ridge, most of us diagonalized down several hundred feet to reach the glacier at about 834-694. This unpleasant section featured steep dirt mixed with rotten rock, spiced by cliffs below. Impossible to protect. We gained the glacier, roped up, and traversed SE between bare ice sections to a rock buttress that is the true N. ridge of Marion itself. Hamish, Peter Tchir, and I crammed up several hundred feet of ice and snow-over-ice parallel to, and on the E. side of, the ridge. Robin Lidstone and Ted Ibrahim, who were without crampons, started on the rock ridge itself. Higher up, we three joined the others and scrambled to the summit. At first, the angle was quite gentle; farther up, the rock was loose; and higher still, the ridge was characterized by slabs covered with gravel (unpleasant, but only moderately dangerous). We reached the summit at 12:45 (5 hrs. 45 min. up), the rope being used only for glacier travel. Just as Peter T. and I reached the top, we met Paul Allen and Peter Jordan, who were coming up the W. ridge. They had ascended the N. ridge of the subpeak for several hundred feet above our party and crossed the glacier higher up. They then climbed an iced-up couloir to reach the ridge between Marion and its western subpeak, and continued to the summit by an easy scramble. Finding a cairn with no record, we added notes about our outing and included a brief reference to the 1961 first ascent, a 5 1/2-day epic from Meadow Mtn.

For the descent, the parties again separated in the same way, although Paul insisted his route was much easier. Those without crampons chose not to accompany him and Peter J. (probably a wise choice), and the three of us with crampons gave no thought of separating from our less stylishly equipped colleagues. As descending the gravelly N. ridge was tedious, Hamish (who was way ahead) decided to find an exit route off the ridge to the glacier below and to the E. of the ridge. Following him, we descended 100' of an ugly scree couloir to reach some steep snow on the glacier. Soon we were back at the point where we had joined the ridge on the way up. Here, we separated as before, reconvening to rope up for the glacier traverse. The only untoward event occurred on this traverse when Ted plunged without warning into a crevasse to a depth of about 14'. It took about 25 min. for him to get out with the aid of prussiks and some etriers we sent down to him. His mishap was a result of inexperience, as he stepped right on a patch of bright white snow surrounded by dirty, grey ice that we had studiously ignored on the way over.

Anyway, we retraced our steps and made a rendezvous with Paul and Peter J. for the long plod to the trucks as per our ascent route. We arrived back at 6:35 pm. That's a 5 hr. 25 min. return, and an 11.5 hour day. Paul's route is faster, but

our party seemed satisfied with the N. ridge, which was probably a first ascent by a new, if not particularly significant, route.

MT. MARION (9,730') N. ridge (III,4,s/i/g) Kim Kratky, Ted Ibrahim, Robin Lidstone, Hamish Mutch, Peter Tchir, September 9, 1995. Cross the lower glacier to the rock buttress at the base of the north ridge. Follow rock to the summit. Higher up, loose chunks and gravel-covered slabs are encountered. Some members of the party ascended the lower portions on ice and snow parallel to the ridge. The ridge is class 3 all the way. 5.5 hours to the top from road's end on S. fork of Poplar Creek.

Last go-round for easy access to Poplar Creek? Maybe not. Della Peterson of the Ministry of Forests says that the Poplar Creek road up to the park boundary near km. 17 will be maintained for the rest of this century. Keep in mind that most of the area that the road gives access to is within the new White Grizzly park. Kirk Shave of BC Parks says that his ministry is still in the process of determining policies on access and on activities that will be allowed within the new park.

## Devils Couch, Satan Peak, Banshee Peak & Mount Diablo

by Peter Jordan & Fred Thiessen

**B**y Friday July 14, 1995, there was only 2 of us interested despite earlier enthusiasm, so Friday night, Peter Jordan and I left Nelson to sleep under the stars at the Gwillim Lake trailhead.

To get to Coven Lakes, we used the following route which we think is the best to this part of the Devils Range. Follow the Gwillim Lakes trail through Drinnon Pass and descend to the small tarn named Warlock Lake. Leave the trail here and bushwhack NNE for about 200 m. and descend the talus slope to Gwillim Creek. Cross the creek and ascend in a NE direction to gain the 7000 ft. contour about 200 m. south of Cauldron Lake. This is same route used to access Devils Dome, a popular climb, so this portion could be flagged. From here, trend ENE to the immediate horizon and gain 300 to 400 ft. on the boulder field and steep grass, putting you above the cliffs. Then more or less maintain this elevation for about 500 m., gaining 150 ft right at the end, keeping you above the cliffs. Then a grassy slope leads

down to 7100 ft. into a basin just south of the SW peak of Chariot Peak. Contour around and then ascend to 7400 ft south of Chariot Peak. Continue going up if Chariot Peak is your destination. Since our destination was Coven Lakes, we continued to contour at 7400 until south of Banshee Peak. From here, gain elevation to cross the ridge south of Banshee at around 7800 ft. (more cliffs below). Once at the ridge, Coven Lakes are below in a NE direction.

Peter and I did not ascend to 7800 ft. to cross the ridge of Banshee, we continued to contour around and followed a goat trail which led us to Coven Lakes. This route is quite exposed and would be hazardous in wet weather or snowy conditions. From the parking lot to Coven Lakes was 7 hours.

Coven Lakes are in a very attractive basin with spectacular views to the Mulvey Group. There are lots of places to camp, complete with a healthy and thirsty bug population. Fortunately the largest lake had a spit where we could camp and there was enough of a breeze on the lake to keep the bugs tolerable. We dropped off our overnight gear, then set off to climb Devils Couch. The straightforward route ascended the steep meadows and boulders to gain the ridge just south of Devils Spire. From here, we contoured over and went up the south gully of Devils Couch, an easy scramble to the summit. On our return we inspected the route up Devils Spire, but we were running out of time and ambition. Return time to camp was 4 hours.

The next morning, we headed north to ascend the more easterly of the two gullies leading to the upper plateau below Banshee, Diablo and Satan Peak. We then ascended the east ridge of Satan, a 3rd class scramble, roping up for about 10 m. of the climb. We descended the same route, then traversed over to Diablo/Banshee which were only a few minutes away. We scrambled up to the col between the 2 peaks, climbing MT Diablo via the west ridge and Banshee via the east ridge (10 minutes between peaks). By now it was 0800 and time to head for camp and pack up for home. For these three peaks, our return time to Coven Lakes was 4 hours, Coven Lakes to the cars took 6 hours, which we reached at 1600, getting us home in time to mow our lawns and have Sunday dinner.

In looking at our times, and given the lighter weights of a day pack, I think that Banshee and Diablo are long day trips from the parking lot (say 15 hours), Devils Couch is probably too far away. If one was contemplating Banshee as a day trip, the best way is likely up the south ridge of Banshee starting where the ridge would be crossed at 7800 ft., (where you would first see Coven Lakes). This would be more efficient than descending into the basin as we did and climbing the peaks from the eastern side of the basin.

## Where are These Mountains Anyway? Part Two

by Kim Kratky

**I**n the 1994 Karabiner, I wrote an article about peaks worthy of the club's attention that never seem to appear on the trips list. Once again, here are brief, and I hope accurate, descriptions of outings that others may want to try.

### MT. WILLETT (9,040')

This first entry may not fit the criteria, since there have (I think) been recent club trips to these twin peaks overlooking Argenta on the east shore of the north end of Kootenay Lake. However, I haven't been able to track down written details on approach and routes. Carl Johnson, Peter Tchir, and I made a trip to Willett on the long July weekend of 1995. All map references are to 82K/2 Lardeau, 1:50,000 scale.

One of the best parts of this trip is the drive. From downtown Argenta, proceed along the road to Fry Creek Canyon, bearing left at 11 km. from city centre and left again at the Fry Creek car park. At about km. 12, you will see the signposted Kootenay Joe Road. Turn on to it and drive through some fields and past the last houses. Go immediately to 4WD low range. Now enjoy some 7 km. of mostly first-gear low-range driving; be prepared to back up at switchbacks. The motoring part takes about one hour from the heart of Argenta to the car park and picnic table at 6700'. High clearance only. Check your vehicle's precious bodily fluids before starting. Not for the faint of heart.

Now for the hiking/scrambly bit. From the picnic table, head N. on a trail into "Airplane Basin" (129-495). Ascend to the crest of Kootenay Joe Ridge to the east of a prominent black outcropping and descend snow and ridge to the N. (129-501). Follow a trail through the col at 131-505, keeping to open country just E. of the height of land. Occasional huge cairns are not reliable as route markers. Continue N. over alps (a variety of route choices on E. side of height of land) to a col at 127-538 and 1.5 km. W. of Winter Pk. Descend a few hundred feet on snow and traverse on snow NW below the 8450' peak S. of Willett (119-541). The crux is reaching the col at 118-546, which is at the base of the SE ridge of Willett. From snow on the NE side of unnamed 8450', a snow couloir and easy rock lead to the N. ridge of this peak. An easy descent to the col

follows. Alternatively, it may be possible to traverse on ledges or ascend a headwall just E. of the col.

Once at the col (7550'), ascend the easy SE ridge and face of Willett to its main, east summit (9040', cairn and survey marker). This portion is barely third class. Parties may wish to follow the ridge to the west summit (8750'). Return to vehicle by same route.

There is another approach to Willett on the W. side of the height of land, via the headwaters of Salisbury and Bulmer Creeks and a col E. of Tooth Ridge. This route presents fewer technical difficulties than the approach outlined above, but is not recommended: it's longer, involves more route finding, and is poorly marked. Finally, the geography of the area between Kootenay Joe Ridge and Mt. Willett is complex. Travelers should frequently consult map and compass.

Although our party did not use the rope, some may find it useful for gaining the Willett-Peak 8450 col. Let us know what the view's like; we were completely whited-out on the summit. This was a significant error on our part, because one climbs this mountain only for the view.

**SUMMARY--MT. WILLETT 9040'** SE face/SE ridge (III,3,s) Approach from Kootenay Joe fire road, over Kootenay Joe Ridge and via trail and open country to E. of height of land to reach a col W. of Winter Pk. Traverse the NE side of the 8450' peak SE of Mt. Willett to a pass at the base of the SE ridge of the objective. Then ascend easy broken rock and heather. 4 1/2 hours up.

Route desirability may vary depending on time of year and snow conditions. Many thanks to Carl Johnson for information on approaches and routes in this area.

#### "MT. GANSNER" (9,850'; co-ordinates 190-891)

This glaciated peak is the highest point on "Crystal Ridge" at the headwaters of the N. fork of Glacier Creek. Considered to be part of the Stockdale Group, it was first climbed by Art Maki and R.C. West as part of their Jumbo-Creek-to-Macbeth-Icefields trek of August 1960. It may have been scaled by one or more parties from the KMC's "Crystal Ridge" hiking camp in 1988, although it's difficult to tell from the written accounts. Mike Hryniuk, Ray Suomi, and I traversed the peak via the E. ridge and S. face on July 17, 1995. It would fit into the category that Steve describes as "peak bagging for intermediates." Once more, road access is a key. Previously, trips to "Crystal Ridge" entailed 90 min. to an hour of bushwhacking. Now there is a new 2WD spur road taking off to the NE from near the end of Glacier Creek's north fork road. In the summer of 1995, one could drive 2 km. to a landing at 5,800' (198-852) on the S. bank of the creek draining SW from Starbird Pass.



From this point, descend to the creek and walk its bed NE, with occasional detours into light timber on the N. bank, to the upper of two south-flowing streams (208-869, 6,800'). We took 1 1/4 hours to reach this point, with no bushwhacking. Next, follow this tributary N. through open meadows and up moraines and snow slopes to a 9,000' col E. of "Mt. Gansner" (201-895). At this point, you are on the S. edge of the Starbird Glacier and could hoof it over to Birthday and Eyebrow quite comfortably.

To continue for "Mt. Gansner," head WSW on the glacier on the N. side of the peak's NE ridge (crumbly, rotten towers). This is mostly a glacier approach with several hummocks to cross over, a traverse, passage of a bergschrund, and some loose rock bands to negotiate. All very sporty in a Purcell kind of way--5 hrs. 45 min. to the top. More than 20 peaks of 10,000' elevation can be seen from the summit.

For descent, there is a direct and easy route. Just east of the summit is a moderately grotty open gully on the S. side that leads to a 600-700' snow couloir giving onto snowfields below. This would also make a "cinchy" ascent route, although you may find the couloir icy at the top. For the rest of the descent, we followed the western of the two south-flowing creeks draining into the creek we had walked up. By staying on the W. bank and high above the creek,

you can effect a painless descent through open timber with virtually no bushwhacking, rejoining the main creek at about 205-863 (3 hrs. from summit to carpark).

Doing "Mt. Gansner" from the E. makes for a very pleasant general mountaineering outing of some 9-10 hours; parties should be equipped for glacier travel. All map references are to 82K/7 Duncan Lake, 1:50,000 scale. I understand that last September Mike Hryniuk and friends climbed Eyebrow Pk. (11,000') in a day using the approach to the col E. of our peak.

#### RAZOR'S EDGE (9,020')

This minor peak is not worth an outing in itself but could be nicely combined with Mt. Templeman or Abbott Pk. for a weekend in the Hall-Healey Pass area. Razor's Edge, part of the limestone dike that passes through the Badshot Range, presents an awe-inspiring, though rotten, SW face that drops over 3,000' to the headwaters of Hall Creek. It was first climbed by Kenneth and Pym Karcher in August 1950. Hamish Mutch and I climbed it last Labor Day weekend and suspect that no one had done it in the intervening 45 years.

Did I hear road access again? Yes, that's it. Now that the Healey Creek road is once more open, you can drive right to the height of land (6,600') at km. 25. From the Lardeau River road turn off just a few kilometers S. of Gerard and immediately cross the river via a gated bridge (seemingly always unlocked). Follow the 4WD road past such Badshot landmarks as Butler's Disco and Rick's Ranch through the pass and about .7 km. beyond to the N. to a point where boulders on the road stop even the most serious driver. Fred likes to reminisce that he and Paul Allen were able to drive right onto the glacier to the N.; the road still does cross the glacier, but you'll need foot power, a motorcycle, or a mountain bike to get there.

Anyway, follow the road to some mine workings and ascend moraines and snow to the Similarity-Razor's Edge col (8,700'). Then simply follow the NW ridge of Razor's Edge, a long rising sweep of limestone, to the summit in 90 min. It's a class 4 scramble with some exposure on the SW side and a heart-stopping 2,500' drop off on the NE. There's a kind of crux when the ridge steepens near the end. From a cleft in the ridge avoid a steep wall of rotten limestone by descending 5-10' on the left, traversing 30', and re-gaining the ridge. The rest is easy. Return to the col via ascent route. No rope was used on the approach or mountain.

This peak could easily be combined with a plod up Similarity Mtn. (9,370'), a 25 min. walk up easy snow slopes. Figure on about 7 1/2 hours for both peaks round trip from your vehicle. Some parties may want to carry a rope for Razor's Edge.

#### MT. ALDRIDGE (8,650')

I have some doubts about including our route on this peak as a recommended one. Hamish and I looked at Aldridge from the summit of Similarity and thought it to be laughable because of its unimpressive profile and low elevation. Nevertheless, it surprised us by offering a moderately challenging series of ups and downs requiring almost 9 hours of our time. Aldridge is located SW of Mt. Abbott and E. of the headwaters of Lake Creek. Access is again easy. At km. 24.5 on the Healey Creek road, turn E. and S. onto the Abbott Mine road. This can be driven for about 2.5 km. From this point, walk to the Abbott Mine site (20-30 min.), ascend an obvious snow tongue to the E., and continue R or S. on scree and moraine until you reach the upper Sierra Creek basin. Here you will find a disused road leading to a col at the base of Aldridge's NE ridge (891-068); the picturesque tarn and lunar landscape are arresting.

Here the climb begins. Start the NE ridge with easy scrambling which leads to a big platform. Pass the platform on the L. or E., descending to a notch via gritty slabs and scree. From the notch, ascend a big buttress or tower directly, using a large flake to work up a cleft and regain the ridge. Continue scrambling to the next high point and descend to the second major notch. Gain the second notch by going down a tricky flake and a short, exposed gully on the L, followed by steep, solid ribs and slabs (Class 4). From this notch, descend a gully of loose scree to the R. or W. of the ridge, traverse, and regain the ridge on poor quality rock. Continue on solid rock, with ups and downs, to the top, about 5 hrs. up. Thanks to Earle Whipple for helping me re-work this portion of the description.

The big attraction of Aldridge was that we thought it was unclimbed; and indeed we seem to have made the first ascent, as we found no cairn on the summit. However, approaches from "Aldridge Lakes" to the E. of the peak would be an easy walk-up via the E. and S. ridges. Since there has been so much mining activity in the area it's possible the peak had been climbed--but not, we think, by the NE ridge. Aldridge provides excellent views of the Lake Creek canyon and of a desolate landscape of alps dotted by lakes stretching out to the S.

Our party returned to the truck via the ascent route in 3 1/4 hrs., although descending to the lakes via the S. and E. would be dead easy. No ice axe was needed beyond the snow slopes above the mine for this trip in September, and we left the rope in the truck. Once again, some parties may want a rope for sections of the NE ridge.

All map references are to 82K/11E Trout Lake, 1:50,000 scale, which Fred says is no longer available. Alternatively, try 82K/NW Beaton, 1:100,000 scale.

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**SUMMARY--MT. ALDRIDGE (8,650')** NE ridge (III,4,s) Hamish Mutch, Kim Kratky, Sept. 2, 1995. From Abbott Mine workings, ascend snow tongue to E., then proceed S. into headwaters of Sierra Creek, joining a mining road to reach col at 892-068. Ascend ridge to S. and follow over many false summits, notches, and cols. Ascent: 5 hrs. Descent: 3 1/4 hrs.

There are still unclimbed, named peaks in the area, specifically Cairn Pk., a 9,350' heap of limestone rubbish directly S. of Abbott Pk. In 1987 Howie Ridge, Janice Isaac, and I had an attempt on this from the Abbott-Cairn col-- route not recommended because of stonefall. The long S. ridge of Cairn Pk. is ably defended by two, presumably rotten, gendarmes of formidable aspect. Approaches from the E. might be more practical but would require much overland travel and gain and loss of elevation.

## Peakbagging, Part 3

by Steve Horvath

**T**his is yet another lovely excursion off the beaten main track in Kokanee Park.

Start at Gibson Lake and go to Kokanee Lake. The main tourist highway turns right just after crossing the outflow of the lake. This is a good place for a short rest and use of the environmentally approved dumping area. Leave the trail just after the biffy and go due west. Climb up steep meadows and slabs of clean glacier-scoured granite. Bear left and reach a ridge running south from the northernmost subpeak of Outlook Mountain.

The ridge offers pleasant class 3 scrambling. Alternatively, one can go up the moderately steep snowslopes straight to the subpeak (good early season practice for recent snow/ice school graduates). From the top, one can enjoy lovely views of the Sapphire Lakes basin and, if so inclined, can drop down to it, traverse it, count the lakes, and exit via Lemon Pass and the main highway.

More ambitious types can continue down the ridge (bearing almost due south). More pleasant class 3 and views of more lakes in the upper Glory Basin are available. After 45 - 60 minutes of this entertainment, one has to make the last and binding decision. Go up the north ridge of Outlook, or drop down and left and bypass it on the east, or drop right to the pass at the head of Glory Basin and head out via Sapphire Lakes and Lemon Pass.

The north ridge looks quite imposing from here as one looks straight at it. It has its moments, class 4 or low class 5, depending on ones level of ability and prevailing conditions (physical and psychological). The summit amply justifies its name and one can spend a pleasant hour or so spotting the familiar places from this new vantage point.

As for the descent, drop down the south ridge almost directly above Gibson Lake and head straight down. It is a good idea to spot the best lines from the first subpeak. It is some 2000 feet straight down to the trail on the west side of Gibson Lake.

The above is not a major mountaineering challenge. Rather it is a longish day of pleasant scrambling and routefinding in the most lovely of settings. Still, it is best not to underestimate either the length or seriousness of the trip, i.e. the fitness, ability level, and isolation factors. Still, I have to admit that it is difficult not to feel somewhat smug when one looks down from the airy ridge and thinks of the sweating, mosquito-swatting tourist hordes on the main highway.

## Perfect Days in Glacier Creek

by Hamish Mutch

**J**ust a brief description of two new climbs in the Glacier Creek area. The traverse of Mt. Monica deserves to become popular, while that of Mt. Banquo, being longer and totally obscure, will appeal to true Glacier Creek aficionados only.

Mt. Monica - West Ridge and Traverse - September 1994

This is the rock ridge on the left side of Mt. Monica, which is so prominent from the MacBeth area. At the top of the Monica Meadows trail, hike north to the base of the west ridge. Stay close to the crest of the first step, climb the second step to the left, and you're there. Well, almost--finish with a little ridge walk.

I intended to descend the southeast ridge (see Karabiner '93, p.16), using the Brewster Ledges shortcut, which avoids climbing up and over the so-called "Mt. Aten." I missed this by being lazy and starting across too low, and eventually traversed the entire west face by a series of rocky ribs and

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grassy ledges, reminiscent of Lliwedd or Pavey Ark. A pleasant and nostalgic trip.

Hi-Tecs in the fall. Boots and axe in season. 10 hrs. return. A good day trip.

#### Mt. Banquo-North Ridge and Traverse-Sepember 1995

Follow the MacBeth Icefield trail to the waterfall, up the big moraine to the Banquo-Fleance col and descend the glacier on the far side, turning west just above the outlet lake. I stopped at the last trickle of water before the north ridge and briefly fell asleep. Reaching the crest below some broken black towers, I stayed on the rock all the way to the summit, finally arriving at about 5pm. There were superb views of the MacBeth Icefield and up the length of Duncan Lake.

I took the guidebook's advice and easily descended the scree slopes to the southwest, and back to the big moraine. (This would be an excruciating way to climb the mountain!) I walked slowly down the trail by headlamp. Recent trail construction made it easier to follow in the dark.

This is a more strenuous trip, 18km in length and 7000 feet of vertical. 12-14 hrs., with unique summit views.

## Baja California

by Ron Perrier and  
Jan Micklethwaite

**D**uring the 1995/96 Christmas holidays, we arranged a fourteen day sea kayaking trip to the Baja through Sea to Sky Trails (Len Webster, 105C-11831 80th Ave., Delta B.C. V4C 7X6 - phone 594-7701). Baja California, at 1400 km. in length, is the second longest peninsula in the world. Only the Malay Peninsula is longer.

After a direct flight from Vancouver to San Jose del Cabo (the major airport at the southern tip of Baja) we were met by our guide, Scott Akin, a 33 year old from Vancouver, and Shirley White, his 27 year old girlfriend - a teacher from Manitoba. We then drove north to La Paz, a distance of about 200 km following Highway 1, which runs the entire length of Baja. A typical Mexican road, it is very narrow with no shoulders - but plenty of curvas peligrosas (dangerous corners).

La Paz, with a population of 140,000, is the capital of the southern state of Baja California Sur. It is the main base for most of the kayaking companies but had little else of interest

to us. The trip really got underway when we loaded two kayaks onto the roof of Scott's van, left the city and drove 329 km. north to a hamlet named Ligui. The beach where we camped was located about 30 km. south of Loreto on the sea of Cortez. Considering the trip in retrospect, we all agreed that a better option than starting out in La Paz would have been to fly to and from Loreto via Los Angeles.

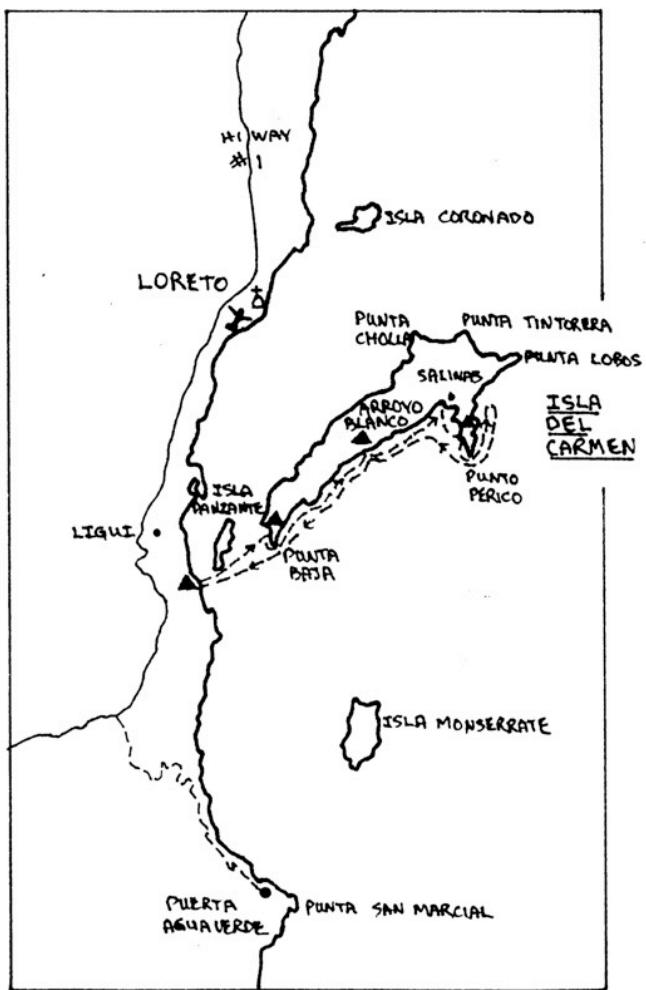
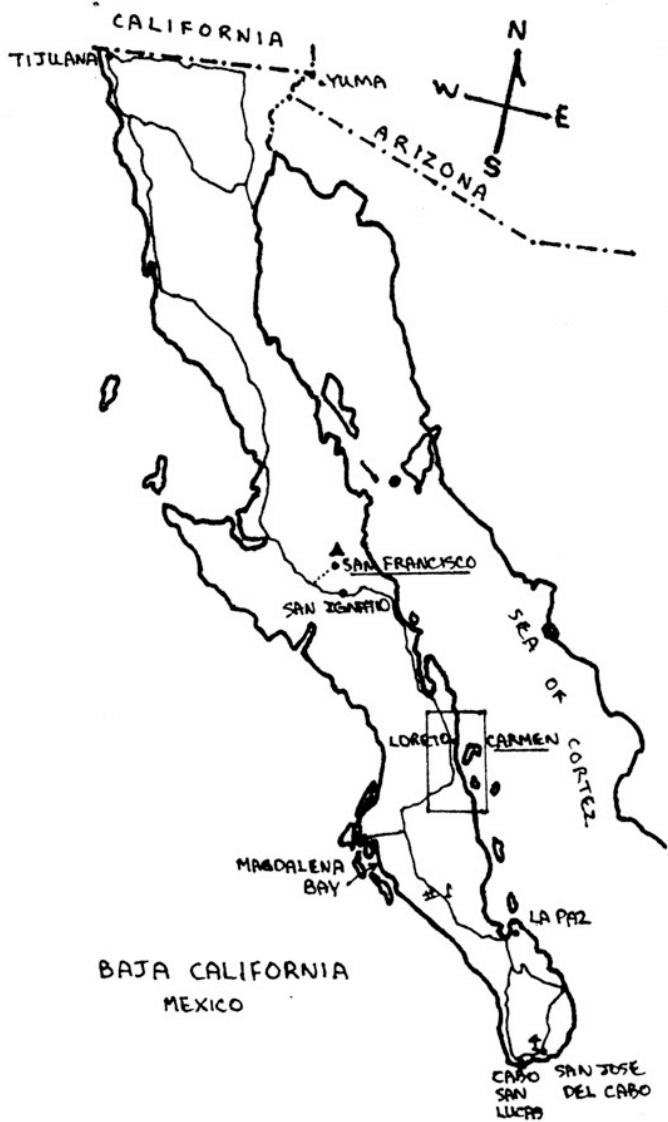
Several alternative itineraries were possible, including a two week trip along the coast, almost to La Paz or going part way to a hot spring and beach past Punta San Marcial and then back. We finally settled on an attempt to paddle around the island of Carmen (seven or eight days) and planned three additional days for whale watching at the Bay of Magdalena on the Pacific coast.

Scott provided great double kayaks, the "Seaward Southwind" model made in Summerland, B.C. Despite the mounds of equipment and supplies we were able to stuff almost everything into the waterproof hatches, leaving only a few items to be lashed onto the decks. Of the latter, the most important were the cameras, installed in waterproof containers, ready to be pulled out at any moment.

We paddled south of the island of Danzante, camped on a white sand beach on the Punta Baja of Carmen and climbed a small mountain north of the campsite. The next day, we headed further around Carmen and camped at Arroyo Blanco, a small canyon cut through white limestone cliffs. Scott and Ron walked to the end of the arroyo over several dry waterfalls and in about an hour and a half had reached a viewpoint where they could see the ocean on the other side. Meanwhile Shirley and Jan spent some time snorkeling amongst the colourful fish and coral in the sheltered bay. The next day, we stopped to replenish our water supplies from a spring, but found it dry. Pushing on, we encountered strong headwinds in Salinas bay that made paddling difficult, but we persevered and eventually reached a perfect sand beach. We landed about a mile from the remains of Salinas, a fishing village and salt works that had been abandoned in the early 70's. Now, the only resident is a caretaker who walked down the beach (in gold leather shoes) to inform us that no camping was allowed. Although we were aware that all beaches in Mexico are public, we decided not to argue with a man so impressively shod and agreed to leave after exploring the town.

Most of the buildings seemed to have been left as if the residents expected to return and even the medical office still contained shelves of dusty drugs of all kinds. The church and one house were the only structures that appeared to be well cared for - as did a small grave with the name Jose Cuervo.

Our destination for that night was Punta Perico, a small



beach across the bay which we hoped would give us an advantage in the morning when we headed for the windy side of Carmen. Up at five a.m., we set off at 6:45 to attempt to kayak around the entire east and north end of the island. In five previous attempts, Scott has only been successful once. The prevailing north wind produces dangerous waves that rebound off the north facing cliffs (clapitus waves) and there are no beaches to land on. Despite a calm beginning, the wind came up half way along the east side and we had to turn back, returning to Arroyo Blanco.

The next day was dead calm and we retraced our route to Ligui on the mainland. That afternoon we drove to Loreto, which is the oldest settlement on Baja (1697), toured the town and visited the mission.

While we were planning the next phase of our kayaking experience we met two American travellers, Gunther and

Carlos, who had just spent four days in the Sierra de San Francisco. The deep canyons of this mountainous area were declared a World Heritage Site in 1993 because of the many (forty six in all) caves decorated with prehistoric paintings dating back ten thousand years. It didn't take us long to decide to give our kayaking muscles a break and detour to visit this special area.

We arranged to leave the kayaks at a farm near the beach and drove 270 km. north to San Ignacio. The turnoff to San Francisco is about 45 km. further northwest along Highway 1. This rough side road, built in 1985, continues uphill for 37 km. northeast to the community of San Francisco. Located there were a small church, a one room school, a general store, a clinic and a "salon sociale" for community gatherings. The village serves about 20 ranchos that seem mainly devoted to raising goats, burros, mules and catering to the visitors who arrive to tour the caves and the canyons below.

The first order of business was to meet with the head man, Enrico Arsi, who controls the guiding services and ensures that all the guides in the area get their fair share of the guiding opportunities that are available. We arranged for a guide, four burros to transport food and equipment, and three riding mules. We then set up our campsite just outside town.

That day happened to be New Year's Eve, and by nightfall the town had filled up with the population from all the ranchos in the surrounding hills. Everyone was dressed in their best outfits and seemed determined to see the new year in with style. The Salon Sociale quickly filled up and an ad hoc band began to play for dancing. Their approach to the evening's musical program was simple. Someone held up a ghetto blaster and they all listened to the song for a while until they felt confident enough to join in and play along. Strangely, all the songs sounded identical - but everyone seemed to be quite pleased with the fact that there was a band at all.

Luckily, we met another gringo who was able to explain the inflexible rules of the salon and saved us from embarrassing ourselves socially. The procedures were clear. All women sat on one side of the hall, more or less encumbered by babies and children-depending on their age and marital status. The men stood on the other side drinking and enjoying each other's company. The only time the sexes were allowed to mix was if a man chose to ask one of the women to dance, which happened rarely. At the end of the dance the man had to return her to the ladies' side where she then waited until someone favoured her with his attention again.

In the morning, we drove to the ranch of our guide, Angel Arsi, who quickly and competently packed our supplies onto the four patient burros and saddled up the mules. On the first and fourth day we shared the dubious privilege of riding the mules down, and up a steep trail that even good hikers found challenging. These sturdy creatures were remarkably sure footed and seemed able to handle every bedrock ledge or crumbling descent that came along. On days two and three we followed Angel over poorly marked trails to the most accessible and famous of the area's shallow caves. The paintings, executed on the undersides of the stone overhangs are well preserved and offer a vivid glimpse into the lives and interests of the canyon dwellers of ten thousand years ago. Using shades of red, black and occasionally yellow, the artists depicted men and many types of animals - deer, pronghorn, dogs, rabbits and even whales and other sea creatures. The climate and the remote location have preserved the drawings in excellent condition. Each site has been made more accessible by the installation of wooden walkways, railings and descriptive signs - all provided by UNESCO. Photography was easy, with a tripod using available light, since flash is not allowed.

In retrospect, we decided that one day in the canyon would have been sufficient, since the caves are not far apart. However, a guide is essential as the trails are unsigned and obscure. As well as the paintings, the canyon itself is worth a visit. A verdant and peaceful spot, it contains many varieties of cactus, date palms and a slowly flowing stream.

The cost of the trip is based on the number of burros and mules needed, as well as a flat rate for the services of the guide. In our case the total came to 1270 pesos or \$180.00 US.

After leaving San Francisco we spent two days travelling back down Highway 1 to La Paz, with appropriate stops for sumptuous feasts of Mexican specialties washed down by huge Margaritas. Our last camping night was spent under a palapa at the Bay of Conception. After saying goodbye to Scott and Shirley in La Paz, we headed back to San Jose del Cabo for the flight home.

## Road Trip to Bulawayo

by Bruce Bourden

**M**ount Inyangandi, April 8, 1995. Even though it's the highest mountain in Zimbabwe it doesn't look too difficult. At a mere 2592 metres it would only be a small ascent up a shoulder and then a long ridge walk to the summit. To four "veteran" hikers from the Kootenays it should be just another Esmeralda or Old Glory type day in the mountains, albeit on the other side of the planet. Then why all the dire warnings posted at the trailhead? Quicksand, fierce storms, enveloping mists, hidden crevasses! What the sign didn't say was that the mountain is haunted! At least as far as the locals are concerned it is, so they won't even look at the mountain directly, let alone climb it. They say the spirits hidden in the Guti mists that envelope the mountain almost daily don't like to be disturbed and anyone straying off the muddy little trail will be harmed. Oblivious to this rather intangible danger we innocents ended up having a wonderful afternoon on this beautiful sub-tropical mountain enjoying the exotic plants and spectacular views of the Eastern Highlands from the summit. It was only when we returned to the little village of Nyanga that we learned of the spirits and that over a dozen people had apparently disappeared without a trace on this mountain in the last few years alone; including two relatives of a high government official. Perhaps the spirits

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chose to grant us safe passage or maybe it was just good luck, but we certainly had a pleasant hike. Would we recommend it to anyone else? Of course we would; but stay on the trail and think nice thoughts and maybe the spirits will be kind to you too.

This African adventure started several months earlier in Ted Ibrahim's living room near Nelson, when four footloose members of the Kootenay Mountaineering Club began to make tentative plans to tour through South Africa and Zimbabwe. In addition to Ted, our host and trip leader, we were Renate Belczyk, Anne Dean and Bruce Bourdon. With the recent dismantling of apartheid and the apparent onset of a period of relative political stability, it seemed like a good idea to pay a visit before the crush of tourists arrived to "find" the treasures stored in this most fascinating part of Africa. Our trip was to be without definition. Other than securing a flight and renting a car upon arrival in Johannesburg we intended to just wander around for a month. We figured that Ted's and Renate's extensive foreign travel experience would get us through the rough spots while the naivety and enthusiasm of Bruce and Anne would ensure a healthy degree of confusion and excitement. The formula worked. Advance preparations primarily consisted of reducing our anticipated luggage to a "Toyota trunkful" and then accepting the usual array of needles and pills required to ward off the various ailments that plague that part of the world. Opinions varied as to whether advanced research would be necessary to enhance the experience. As it turned out one battered Lonely Planet Guide, two triple A road maps and four imaginative minds proved to be more than enough to carry us through.

Following our exhausting two day flight from Vancouver via Frankfurt we were very anxious to get on the road and see where the fates would take us. Hence we wasted little time upon arrival and were soon cruising northwards out of Johannesburg towards the Zimbabwe border as the hot autumn sun beat down upon that great socio-economic gulf that is the legacy of white minority rule in South Africa. We couldn't help but notice that, while much of the City of Pretoria basked in the warmth of white affluence, the notorious "townships" on the outskirts were still scorched by decades of poverty and oppression. Unidentified on local road maps or even by road signs, the approaches to these densely populated townships would typically be preceded by a steady stream of pedestrians trudging patiently along the hot and dusty shoulder of the road. At first glance, in this vast and featureless highveld, they appeared to be neither coming from, nor going to, any place in particular. The next indicator would be an increasing number of large gatherings of people either getting into, out of, or waiting for, the ubiquitous Mercedes van. These vans, usually carrying twice their designed capacity, belching clouds of black diesel fumes and travelling at enormous speeds, shuttled vast

numbers of people into the nearest city or ditch, whichever came first. Eventually the source of all this humanity, the elusive "township", would come into view - and what a view. It would appear as a veritable ocean of small concrete structures sprawled across the dusty plain to the horizon in every direction. On closer examination they struck us as rather bleak and featureless communities consisting primarily of row upon row of tiny houses punctuated only by the occasional "ablution block" (communal washroom) and even rarer "bottle shop" (beer hall) or "take away". The impoverished simplicity of these townships stood in stark contrast to the obvious economic strength and complexity of the major urban centres which they served and, to us, gave the term "apartheid" physical form and substance.

Unlike South Africa, the country of Zimbabwe is more rural and far less affluent. However, it also appears to be less troubled and one where the genuine charm of Africa can still be felt through the mists of politics and change. We experienced this most clearly as we happily roamed through the Great Zimbabwe ruins near the town of Masvingo. These are the only known remnant stone walled structures in all of sub-Saharan Africa and stand today as a spectacular monument to the powerful Rozwi Nation that once controlled much of the trade throughout south central Africa from 1000 to 1500 A.D. The "discovery" of this large abandoned city posed a real problem to the early white leaders of Rhodesia (what is now Zimbabwe) in that it fully conflicted with their fabricated image of pre-European Africa as an impoverished, unskilled clutter of unorganized tribes. As recently as the 1960's the last remnants of this Rhodesian Government were still attempting to characterize Great Zimbabwe in their school literature as the possible remains of King Solomon's Mines, against all scientific evidence to the contrary.

Fortunately our visit to Great Zimbabwe was far more spiritual than political in nature. On our first evening we wandered into the area known as the great enclosure, lit only by a beautiful African full moon. Alone in this silver world except for the occasional sound of a baboon in the nearby forest we all sensed the very real presence of a powerful and proud people now gone. Perhaps it is a lesson on the arrogance of all nations but to us it was mostly just a beautiful moment in a beautiful place and a chance to reflect on just how fortunate we were to have the experience of simply being there. Early the next morning we climbed the ancient path to the hill complex and home of the great kings. Perhaps the word "home" is too kind as the kings were not encouraged to mingle with their subjects in the valleys below and consequently these hilltops became more a form of self-imposed imprisonment. We poked and prodded among the caves and passageways as the morning sun painted the world pink about us and cast monster shadows in the fields below. Although the stone work was rather crude compared to

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ancient structures in northern Africa the way in which the builders blended their work into the rough mountainous landscape was, in itself, impressive. The object appeared to be to complement nature, not dominate it as in our so-called more progressive cultures. The Great Zimbabwe ruins are designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and certainly warrant the recognition.

Africa and abundant wildlife are considered to be synonymous and we were certainly not to be disappointed in this regard. We hit paydirt in Hwange National Park, a vast forested plateau in the far southwest corner of Zimbabwe. As our visit was definitely not a safari complete with porters and guides, it was only a hunch and some good luck that eventually led us to the remote Ngwethla Camp where we were treated to a virtual smorgasbord of African big game. Ngwethla Camp consists of a tiny patch of dirt surrounded by a rickety three strand fence near an isolated waterhole that is vital for the local big game population. The only other occupant of the camp was a resident custodian with some rather unsettling stories about recent nocturnal animal intrusions into the camp. He certainly wasn't deceiving us and, as predicted, that evening we had a pure African experience - elephants, zebras, giraffes, wildebeests, warthogs, impalas and cape buffalo - all within yards of our sad little perimeter fence. After dark a flashlight shining beyond the fence would typically reveal dozens of pairs of eyes bobbing and weaving through the nearby underbrush. We felt like we were in a sort of "zoo in reverse" and the animals had come to visit us in our cage. Then, above the insistent grunting, rustling and crackling outside the perimeter rose the unmistakable sound of lions. Royalty had arrived! We immediately recognized it as one of those defining moments in a trip - a brief but transcendent experience that made all the planning and cost worthwhile. Back in Nelson we had joked about the possibility of such an experience in a kind of academic way and casually dismissed it as one that really didn't have to be - and then secreted our private thoughts away. Now, under a glorious blanket of stars, in the warmth of that African night we could at last share our secret and openly revel in the majesty of that sound. This was what we really wanted and we got it.

Early next morning we went out to the waterhole to enjoy what Anne appropriately referred to as the "rhythm of Africa". This involved a slow methodic pace and an almost ritualistic separation of species in order to ensure that every animal in the vicinity safely got a morning drink. Prior to dawn the waterhole and the vast open plain around it would be entirely free of any wildlife. Then, as the first traces of light would slant across the plain, a group of large shadowy figures would soon emerge from the forest and silently drift towards us, stopping as a group at regular intervals to check for danger. It would be the stately giraffes and zebras, as

different as could be, but friends nonetheless. They would drink together, watching over each other all the time, and then, as if on cue, fade quietly back into the forest to let another species down to drink. Perhaps it would be the cape buffalo alone, feared and properly shunned by the others, or maybe the wildebeests and impalas, another compatible and exceptionally frisky pair. When the majestic elephants came, all the other animals left them to bathe and drink their fill. Occasionally, around the distant forest fringe one could observe brief bursts of activity and dust as yet another group restlessly gathered about to await its turn. However, eventually as the sun rose higher and the day heated up, the ebb and flow of animals would diminish and the ritual cease - until the cool of the evening revived their interest once again.

We spent quite a bit of time in both Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe and the much more famous - and crowded - Kruger National Park in South Africa. Although the latter gets more world attention, we all agreed that Hwange offered a superior wildlife and wilderness experience. In South Africa wildlife viewing is a major spectator sport - perhaps the equivalent to hockey in Canada. Booking space on a "night drive" out into Kruger Park with a ranger is like getting tickets to a an NHL game. This must be done many months or more in advance. The next day all the talk is about who saw what and where. "Winning" appears to consist of seeing a lion or a leopard (we won on both counts!). In Kruger the camps are like luxury resorts with "up-market" restaurants and lodges surrounded by fences that could keep out an army. Although wildlife is abundant and the amenities many we still preferred the moods and feelings evoked by Hwange's simple charm and natural setting. If you ever go, try Ngwethla Camp and enjoy the "rhythm of Africa" by the waterhole.

The casual nature of our tour through southern Africa offered some outstanding opportunities to explore many obscure but impressive places that would never make it on the itinerary of a commercial venture. The long African evenings (darkness came at 6:00 p.m.) would find us pouring over our Lonely Planet Guide and handful of maps searching for these special places. At other times we would rely on tips from fellow travellers or locals. We were seldom disappointed. The results of these informal investigations included such ventures as a walk across the impressive Livingston Bridge to visit Victoria Falls from the seldom seen Zambian side; a long, hot and dusty trek through the mysterious Matopos region to study some 10,000 year old paintings in the remote Bambata caves; a 500 metre descent into the spectacular Blythe River canyon via a rather vague and circuitous trail; beachcombing along the shores of the Indian Ocean north of Durban on a lazy, warm afternoon; camping beside a crocodile pond near the Whovi game preserve (where wardens and poachers do battle over the few



**The African rhino: An animal with little or no sense of humour**

remaining White Rhinos); and visiting the Mooti shop on busy Diagonal Street in downtown Johannesburg to buy some impepo from a healer (cures headaches and sadness). This of course was punctuated by some more conventional travel fare including a mandatory visit to the grave of Cecil Rhodes at Malindidzimu (View of the World) south of Bulawayo, a wild raft trip down the Zambezi River and fine dining on the balcony of the Mikasa Sun Hotel in Victoria Falls.

The in-country logistics of all this was rather simple. Camping places were abundant and easy to find and the roads were, for the most part, quite good and reasonably well marked - we only got completely lost a few times. However, we did get a little tired of the many Military road blocks in Zimbabwe. Food from the local markets was plentiful, quite cheap and, with a little attention to spoilage in the heat, apparently safe (none of us got sick anyway). The Youth Hostel in Bulawayo deserves special mention as a pleasant haven in a quiet residential area yet within easy walking distance of downtown and many good restaurants. It is a focal point for travellers from all over and a fine place to share experiences before moving on. Throughout our trip we were fortunately blessed with wonderful April weather, warm but comfortable at night for camping yet never oppressively hot during the day. Exchanging a

Kootenay winter for a South African autumn certainly was an easy thing to do.

In keeping with our KMC roots we elected to complete our trip with an over-ambitious attempt to climb Cathedral Peak in the majestic Drakensburg Mountains. At over 3000 metres Cathedral is one of the many high peaks along the Lesotho border and appeared, at first, to be an achievable goal when approached from the south ridge. Doubts initially started to rise when, in the early morning light, we first observed its symmetrical summit peeking above the clouds across the coastal plain. It looked high, and far away, very far away! Anxiously, we pressed on only to get lost in a maze of trails in the complex valley system below. It took us several hours to work our way up onto the massive ridge that led towards the distant peak. The views at our lunch stop were spectacular, but clouds had now boiled up out of the valley and obscured the peak completely. We observed a small notch high up on the summit ridge just below the clouds and decided that it might serve as a suitable high point under the circumstances. The map quaintly referred to it as "Orange Peel Gap" - no need to wonder why. The route to the gap was, at first, a ridge walk from heaven. Super exposure, a gentle grade, and great views even through the light mist. However, as we approached the gap the slope steepened dramatically and the damp grasses that thrived even at this altitude threatened to offer a quick ride to the bottom with any misplaced step. With cautious determination we pressed on and happily reached the safety of the gap in a gentle rain. Too late to move on into the lowering clouds we peeked through the gap to the vast coastal plain below, took a few pictures and quickly started on our long descent. It was dark and storming furiously by the time we finally reached the base. Although unsuccessful in reaching the summit we were completely satisfied with our effort and happy to have even been among these impressive peaks. Africa is a massive continent with a long reputation of challenging travellers. Perhaps it was only fitting that our trip should conclude in such a way.

## Mexico's Copper Canyon

by Jan Micklethwaite

**L**a Barranca del Cobre, or Copper Canyon, is a natural wonder located in the Mexican state of Chihuahua. It encompasses more than 10,000 square miles of virtually unexplored mountains in the Sierra Madre range. As well as the ridges, spires, challenging trails, waterfalls

and hot springs, the area also includes deserted Spanish missions, lost mines and hundreds of uncharted archeological sites. Another highlight is the opportunity to take one of the world's great train rides, the Chihuahua to Los Mochis connection. In order to hike this section of the canyon, however, you get off the train at about the halfway point. By then, you've ridden through some very scenic country and have experienced many of the 39 bridges and 87 tunnels along the route.

The region is inhabited by the Tarahumara Indians who live in tiny villages perched along the cliffs where they farm, herd animals and live much as their ancestors did centuries ago. They are famous for their ability to run vast distances in nearly vertical terrain. All the trails into the canyon were made by the Tarahumara and there are few accurate maps available - since they always know where they're going and visitors who actually hike into the canyon are rare.

I chose to travel with Gary Zeigler and his wife Amy Finger who own and operate a small company called Adventure Specialists. They have organized and guided more than a hundred hiking trips into the Sierra Madre canyons since 1969. They continue to employ as local staff the same Mexican family, the Mancinas', that Gary met and worked with on his first trip to the region (as a Peace Corps volunteer). These people provide pack burros, set up camp, get water and cook the food. As a result, hikers only need to carry day packs.

Gary's background includes a Ph.D. in anthropology that he achieved through his investigations of a lost city in the jungles of Peru. There, he also pursued mountaineering, accomplishing a series of first ascents. He is a delightful travelling companion, with an offbeat sense of humour and a million stories of his adventures - including some hair raising events from the Vietnam war. His wife, Amy, holds degrees in geology and climatology and has become a specialist in the unusual flora of the area. She has also compiled an extensive bird list and can identify anything that zooms by overhead.

Our group met in El Paso, Texas and drove by van to Chihuahua, where we stayed overnight and then boarded the train to take us to a whistle stop just past Divisidero, the most scenic outlook along the tracks. This hamlet boasts a couple of hotels, mainly for train travellers, and a few marked trails that descend short distances into the canyon. However our plans were more extensive. We were to begin at the canyon rim (7800 feet) and descend to our first camp (4100 feet) after about nine miles of hiking. The second day it would be a short walk down to the bottom of the canyon and the Urique River (3500 feet). Everything went as scheduled and we arrived at the river, on a beautiful sunny morning, ready to explore the canyon for several days.

We set up our tents in a sandy area near a deep, emerald swimming pool and had some time to swim, plan some hikes and admire the towering andesite cliffs around us. The burros, happy to be rid of their loads, headed off in all directions to browse. Everything looked quite idyllic.

The printed intinerary for the next day stated that we would wake to the melodic songs of Flycatchers, Brownbacked Solitaires and the squawks of parrots but instead, all that could be heard was pounding rain and the sounds of boulders crashing off the walls of the surrounding cliffs. After a breakfast, eaten elbow to elbow under a small tarp, we set off to explore some of the Tarahumara trails that lead to a hot spring, several miles from the camp. Even the best GoreTex and polypro were unable to keep us any drier than the plastic garbage bags worn by our local guides. The steep climbing, relentless rain and high humidity had us soaked to the skin for most of the day. When we finally reached them, the hot springs were a bit of a disappointment but the shallow, muddy pools gave us a chance to struggle out of our dripping clothes for a while. We chose to take a different route back that involved crossing the river several times, and, although Amy assured us it would only be chest deep, we frequently found ourselves swimming, towing our daypacks behind in plastic garbage bags. By then, we couldn't have gotten any wetter, so it didn't matter.



"I can't believe it! This is impossible! Nothing here but—wait! Wait! I see something! ... Yes! There they are—granola bars!"

That night was a scary one, as the rain continued and the crashing of falling boulders intensified. By first light, the river had come up so high that it was clear we needed to move to higher ground. While the wranglers scrambled to round up the burros, we packed our soggy equipment and headed up the slippery trail. Fortunately, by the time we had reached a suitable spot to set up camp again, the weather had cleared, so we could dry out and continue our explorations for a couple more days. We visited caves that have been used for centuries by Tarahumara herders and climbed up to a calcite mine that had provided bomb sights for planes during the second world war. A few intrepid souls climbed around on the cliffs and hiked off trail, looking for archeological sites.

On our final day in the canyon, which happened to be Christmas eve, our group hiked to a small village about 3000 feet below the rim. We camped across the river from the settlement and helped our cook, Rosa, prepare a special feast of chile rellenos, rice, beans and salad. When night fell we could hear the sounds of singing, coming from the village, so we responded with a Christmas carol. For over an hour we exchanged songs, each group taking over when the other had finished. Finally, our repertoire was exhausted (much like our bodies) and we gratefully fell asleep to the singing and drumming that continued from across the river.

Next day, before we left, the village women arrived with their woven pine needle baskets and a variety of carvings and musical instruments that they make to sell to travellers. They hike to the rim of the canyon daily carrying their wares on their backs, to set up a market on the platform of the Divisadero train station, where everyone gets off to see the view. It must have been a treat for them to have a few customers arrive at their doorsteps.

On the hike out, we took an off trail detour through the cliffs to explore a remote archeological site. Perched high in the massive headwall forming the rim of the canyon was a large shelter cave enclosing the remains of an early cliff dwelling village dating back a thousand years. Human bones and other artifacts remain in mud burial structures and the ceiling of the cave is blackened by the campfires of generations. After this evocative experience, the transition back to the twentieth century bustle of the train station and the hotel required some adjustment. Because of a train breakdown our trip out was by van and the weather gods prepared us for our return north by arranging a blizzard en route to Chihuahua. When we finally said goodbye in El Paso, we unanimously agreed that it had been a memorable trip that included something for everyone - from the experienced mountaineers to the folks who think of a walk in Central Park as an adventure.

Adventure Specialists can be contacted at Bear Basin Ranch, Westcliffe, Colorado 81252 Phone (719) 783-2519, fax (719) 783-2076. Phone and fax in winter (719) 630-7687. They keep group sizes small (mine included 12 people) and allow hikers to form subgroups based on conditioning, expertise and interests, since there are local guides who can accompany small group explorations.

If you want to explore the Copper Canyon on your own the most popular spot to start is the town of Creel, which is also on the railway. It has various services for hikers and shuttles can be arranged.

## Peru

by Trevor Holsworth

In May 1995 Lee Schaeffer and I visited Peru to do a little mountaineering. A great time was had by all. I got sick a bunch, Lee got a little sick and we both felt some high altitude sickness. We visited all the best places in Peru -- Rita and Ken Holmes' place in Lima, Macchu Pichhu, and the Cordillera Blanca. Our trip was planned for five weeks, however we cut it short a week due to the disagreeable weather. Between all the travelling and sightseeing, we managed about ten days in the mountains.

We spent the majority of the time in the Ishinca valley just north of the town of Huaraz. The town was very poor and very dirty, however it was blessed with fantastic views of Huascaran towering 4,000 meters above. Lee and I managed to crawl up a few less lofty peaks and made a desperate attempt on Chopicalqui at 6,300 meters. Weather, deep snow, and altitude sickness curtailed our efforts. However, the scenery and beauty blessed us deeply, especially in our mildly euphoric oxygen-starved state. We ended our journey by circumnavigating the Cordillera Blanca by chicken bus, travelling over 5,200 meter passes and watching the clouds envelop the mountains.

The conditions were fairly similar to a summer in the Rockies. The sun was very hot, and the nights no cooler than -10 degrees C. The Peruvian mountains are famous for their easy access to high altitudes, beautiful fluted ridges, classic glacier mountaineering, and steep snow and ice faces. Incredible hiking trips through the mountains, beautiful peaks and climbing which ranges from easy to difficult make Peru an awesome spot for most mountain travellers. Take a good assortment of antibiotics to fight the nasty bugs if you go!

# This and That

## Notes About the Columbia Mtns. Guidebooks

by Earle R. Whipple

In 1992, the American Alpine Club published two guidebooks to the Columbia Mountains based on two manuscripts, of which I had prepared at least ninety percent by 1987. The West and South volume was edited again by William L. Putnam and the Central Volume by J. Kevin Fox.

In 1987, such damage was done to the manuscripts by AAC editors that I objected, and since late 1987, the AAC refused to answer any of my letters concerning the books. From then to the present, I have continued the work and since 1987 I had no input to the volumes.

By 1990 I had accumulated much additional information and corrected many errors, but the AAC did not take advantage of these. The result was that more than 125 first ascents and new routes are missing from the two books. In addition, some material in the Central volume was invented by Fox when he had no data, or descriptions have been changed by him resulting in errors. A more complete account of this has been published in the latest CAJ, plus an additional article by Bruce Fairley.

For instance, descriptions for the climbs on Uto Peak, Route 3 (West Face) and Sir Donald, Route 2 (Beaver Valley flank) are inventions by Fox. The people who did the climbs give different descriptions. Fox also changed Cyprian Peak, Route 3, to an account which leads to the north side of Augustine Peak where there is no route (first noticed by Hamish Mutch). On Mount Macoun, Route 1, there is no excessive difficulty in jumping the crack. The Central volume is so permeated with such distortions that it is probably impossible to spot them all. There is also much mislabelling of photos, and deletion of map coordinates and pitch by pitch accounts.

All extensive guidebooks are prone to errors, and the author

(Whipple) has had his share of them, but he can find no justification for the many omissions and inventions in these two volumes.

A surprising amount of time and hard work is necessary to reduce errors to a minimum and find old and new routes, in this case roughly ten years. The KMC has been especially helpful in this and providing details about access routes.

## Meet Some New Plants!

by Norman Thyer

Flowers are often a prominent environmental feature at Hiking Camps, and it is a popular pastime to count the number of species found. Sometimes this number has been close to 100!

Yet there are many other forms of plant-life in the ecosystem. Some of them may be even more abundant than the flowers, though less conspicuous. Grasses, sedges, rushes, mosses, lichens are usually present in the alpine meadows too, but aids to their identification in this part of the world have hitherto been few, and mainly suited to professionals.

Lone Pine Publishing, together with the Forest Service of British Columbia, is now addressing this scarcity with a new series of books. "Plants of Northern British Columbia" was followed in 1994 with "Plants of Coastal British Columbia". As the titles suggest, each book covers only a region of a province, and not our Kootenay region, but many species found in other regions occur here too. In return, the contents encompass practically all forms of plant life except fungi, ranging from trees and shrubs, through flowers and ferns, grasses and sedges, to mosses and lichens.

Of course, with such a range, one cannot expect a detailed description of every species, yet the coverage is remarkably comprehensive. For almost every species described, there is a colour photograph, often supplemented by line drawings, plus a description of the plant, its ecology, and

miscellaneous notes on, for example, other similar species, uses by aboriginal people and the origin of the name.

These may not be the best books for those, especially beginners, who want to specialize in flowers, as the flowers are organized by family, whereas other books, such as the Peterson "Field Guide to Pacific States Wildflowers" and C.P. Lyons's classic "Trees, Shrubs and Flowers to Know in British Columbia", arrange them by colour, which is usually the most conspicuous feature. However, they give an excellent introduction to some of the less glamorous branches of the plant kingdom. There are good keys for identifying grasses, sedges and rushes, with clear explanation of technical terms where needed, and, for the first time in my experience, mosses and lichens are given common English names as well as the official Latin ones.

There is now a third book in the series: "Plants of the Western Boreal Forest and Aspen Parklands". For a long time, there have been rumours of a volume for the Southern Interior of BC, but so far I haven't seen it. Meanwhile, we can learn a lot from the existing volumes, as our "Interior Wet Belt" has much in common with the coast, and our alpine areas with the north. And you don't have to wait for the snow to leave the alpine areas. When we have our early spring hike along Slocan Lake to Evans Creek, take along your field guide and magnifier. Then perhaps someone can confirm my suspicion that we have reindeer lichen growing in the company of Rocky Mountain junipers in the clearings along the trail.

## The Hamill Quartzite

by Earle R. Whipple

**T**he extensive Hamill Quartzite strata at and near Glacier are generally hard and firm and offer very good climbing. Geologically, this rock is termed "competent" because it transmits stresses very well (it is stiff) during compression which accompanies mountain building. In contrast, rocks such as shale (or slate) or limestone (or marble) deform easily under compression and bend and flow readily. These latter are termed "incompetent" because they do not transmit stresses well.

The hard and "competent" nature of quartzite has a weakness in that this rock tends more to crack during compression and bending. The greater the rate of bending and the less the confining pressure during deformation, the greater is the tendency to crack. Limestone, by contrast, bends and flows

plastically with considerable ease. Such behaviour is evidenced by a wide crack in the quartzite of the north ridge of Mount Macoun, which must be jumped.

The deformation, in this case bending, is seen well in the north face of Mount Sir Donald, as viewed from the summit of Uto Peak, where the strata are bent in a trough-like structure called a syncline. Not so evident in this view are the joints (extensive, planar crack systems) in the quartzite which are not parallel with the bedding. The west face of Sir Donald is developed in such a joint system and these joints are at a high angle from the bedding. The joints are a source of weakness in the strong quartzite. On August 22, 1983, a buttress of rock resting high on the joint system of the west face broke away and slid down the face in a huge avalanche. Most of this mass of rock fell onto Vaux Glacier, but a relatively small number of racks tore through the area of the Vaux bivouac below the west face, destroying mountaineers' tents and causing one injury. The climbers were lucky to have escaped with so little bad outcome.

Another case of this weakness is the recent collapse of the south ridge of Mount Swanzy. The exact date of this avalanche is unknown, unless a witness can be found or the date can be bracketed by accounts of climbers in the area of Sapphire Col. The avalanche on Sir Donald did not affect any of the routes, but a good climb appears to have been obliterated on Mount Swanzy.

A third possible case is the east ridge of Ursus Major in the Hermit Group. According to the guidebook author, J. Monroe Thorington, the first ascent of Ursus Major was by the east ridge, but when the ridge was reconnoitred by David P. Jones and the author in 1989 it was found to be very difficult or perhaps impossible to climb without artificial aid. This was puzzling also because Jones had climbed the east ridge on snow in 1970, and difficulty in recognizing the route which he had done. A possible explanation is the structural failure of the quartzite of the east ridge and adjacent face after 1970.

Structural failure of other types of rocks, of course, occurs and it is not known by the author whether quartzite is more prone to collapse than others. Between 1892 and 1906, a high mountain in the western Battle Range was destroyed by structural failure and avalanche, near Illusion Peak in the Melville Group.

Much of the Hamill Quartzite is exposed at Glacier and its surroundings, and it is slowly being worn away by erosion by the glaciers and the wedging action of the freeze-thaw cycle. The alternative is that it is still underground, waiting to be exposed in a later age. Which case is true depends on the area being examined. The geological age of the Hamill Quartzite is late Pre-Cambrian and early Cambrian. Its Age

thus spans the date of the evolution of creatures with hard parts at the beginning of the Cambrian Period, more than a half billion years ago.

The north-south trending valley of the Beaver River and Duncan River is probably underlain by an extensive fault whose displacement is up on the east and down on the west. It thus brings older rocks of the Horsethief Creek Group (Pre-Cambrian) to the surface in the Dogtooth Mountains to the east of Glacier where the overlying cover of the Hamill Quartzite has been worn away, exposing the less solid rocks of the Horsethief Creek Group. As one goes south on the east side of the fault (and the Beaver-Duncan trench) the overlying Hamill Quartzite reappears in the Central Purcells in the area of Mount Hamill and Blockhead Mountain. The highest peaks here (Mt. Farnham) are composed of the Horsethief Creek Group rocks which are not of high quality for climbing.

## John Duncan Carter (1945 - 1996)

by Kevin Giles

We got a call on the radio at about 7:30 PM on Feb. 26; "John hasn't returned to the Ranger A-Frame and the last time anyone had seen him was at 10:00 AM, skiing from Smugglers Ridge toward Kokanee Pass to meet two friends who were touring up from Gibson Lake."

John must have got caught out. Nothing too serious could have happened, after all John was the Kokanee Kingpin, the old man of the mountains, our undisputed leader. John's intuition and knowledge when it came to snow stability, plus his familiarity of mountain terrain (especially at Kokanee) were legendary.

He was our close friend. If it were one of us he would have immediately come looking, so we did exactly that for him. As we travelled up the Kokanee drainage towards the Park, I thought of John's participation with the local PEP rescue group. He had always thought it important to take the time to prepare for situations like this one, and he had always been the first when it came to getting someone else out of trouble. It mattered not that it was the middle of the night, that the temperature was -30 degrees C, or that it could turn out to be an epic test of endurance. John was always up to the task and if it had of been someone else tonight he would have been leading the way.

The radio crackled as we travelled onwards towards Kokanee Lake. The search party from the Slocan Chief had traced John's route onto a 40-45 degree slope that had avalanched. He was found at the bottom. "There was no hope." We were all in disbelief, each of us shocked at such tragic news.

Continuing up to the site under the brilliant moon and stars, we individually dealt with our thoughts. Every foot of this route had the mark of John Carter, he had personally managed the entire renovation of this most popular route into the Park. There was the Gibson Lake Cabin that John rebuilt when it was in danger of falling over under heavy snow load, the bridge he rebuilt after being crushed by snow, and the Kaslo Lake Campsite he built for the benefit of weary hikers so they might enjoy the majesty of the surrounding peaks. There was the Woodbury Hut that John rebuilt after it had been smashed by an avalanche and the Silver Spray Cabin; that magnificent timberframe structure that he had successfully guided to completion. It was difficult to believe that this rugged craftsmen of the outdoors was gone.

Once at the A-Frame, a flood of memories came to mind. It was always a treat to spend a day anywhere with John, but to enjoy his hospitality at the A-Frame was special because of his good cooking, baking and conversation. There was the time John hosted his Venture Scouts here for a winter ski week. While day-dreaming about great powder snow, he mistakenly added salt instead of sugar to the rhubarb crisp. Not being wasteful, he then encouraged the boys to try to eat it for the rest of the week. By Friday he gave in and pitched it. There across the meadow was the Slocan Chief Cabin that John had continued to protect. He had so successfully organized its ninetieth birthday celebration in 1986. Only last summer, he replaced some of its structural members.

John Carter was born and grew up in the Kootenays, roaming the mountains he loved from an early age. You could sit on a peak with him and he could identify all the surrounding mountains, many of which he had climbed. If he wasn't spending time exploring or working in the outdoors he was probably reading or writing, both of which he did with passion. He displayed a wealth of knowledge for the flora and fauna that made the mountains their home. His knowledge was encapsulated in a variety of guide books he wrote: A Guide To Kokanee Glacier Park 1st and 2nd editions in 1973 and 1974, Exploring The Southern Selkirks in 1980 and Hiking The West Kootenays in 1993, the second edition of which is to be published this spring. John was a visionary, an advocate and a watchdog of Kootenay Parks. As president of The Friends of West Kootenay Parks, he promoted an awareness of the unique sanctuaries that these preserves represent. As a founding member of the Nelson

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naturalists he promoted an awareness of wildlife found everywhere.

John was a mover and a shaker who made things happen, being very persistent about the up-keep of trails and huts for the enjoyment of all visitors to the backcountry. Each year he would begin work before the snow had fully melted. He would continue working until the Larch turned gold, thus bringing on some sense of urgency to work longer and harder, until finally the snow of the new winter would force a retreat to the valley bottom. A man of strong ethics and principles that he never compromised, he always performed his artistry on these enhancements in a way that resulted in the least environmental impact, no matter how much more difficult it made the task. Always leading by example, he worked the hardest while making any project enjoyable for all of us working alongside him. After spending his week working in the mountains, the weekends were reserved for roaming and hiking, canoeing or skiing with his sons Robin and Jordan.

To John, the skills of rope work, route finding and snow stability were second nature. Setting an up-track was an art and he would always consider those behind that may not be as strong. Woe be to the person who set a too steep a skin track because they would certainly suffer John's wrath. Once the ridge top was attained and the skins were off, his skiing would become poetry in motion.

Kokanee Glacier Park and indeed the mountains of the Kootenays were blessed by John Carter's presence. Perhaps we'll name a trail to honour him - a mountain and a cabin too - but most of all we'll miss this old man of the mountains very, very much.

## In the Lap of the Gods

by Chris Champion

**A**t least 45 people have perished climbing K2, the world's second-highest mountain. For deadliness, the 28,250-foot peak in the western Himalayas has no rival. Even among the victors - 100 or so souls who did scale K2's full height - death has claimed one third or more. Some were blown off the mountainside by icy winds of up to 100 mph, others were swallowed by thunderous avalanches. Victims tumble thousands of feet. The death toll grew two weeks ago when six mountaineers were hurled from the treacherous summit and Jeffrey Lakes died of

exhaustion and dehydration after a near-superhuman descent to a lower camp. It was the heaviest loss in a day on K2.

Mr. Lakes, born 33 years ago in Vancouver, grew up in Trail. His father Gerald still lives in nearby Montrose. "When Jeff was 18, he first discovered climbing on an Outward Bound trip," the elder Lakes recalls. "It became his whole life - rock, ice, and mountain climbing." To pay for his avocation, the young mountaineer laid seismic cables for oil companies and worked in Vancouver as a sheet-metal worker. Five years ago he moved to Calgary.

"Only half a dozen people could ice-climb as well as Jeff," says Eric Hoogstraten, 35. For 15 years, he and Mr. Lakes went on trips "to the world's premier frozen waterfalls" in the Rockies.

Mr. Hoogstraten, who lives in Fernie, delivered the eulogy at a family memorial service in Trail last week. Few mourners will forget the tale he told.

Four years ago Mr. Lakes guided an ascent of Alaska's Mount McKinley, at 20,320 feet the highest peak in North America. The climber then made trips to Bolivia, Peru, and Nepal. He first took on K2 in 1993 with a Dutch expedition, which was turned back from the summit by storms. A subsequent attempt on Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain, also failed due to the weather. "He found K2 the ultimate experience," says Mr. Lakes' sister Jennifer Vance, 26, who lives in Calgary. "After K2, even Everest couldn't compare. For climbers, K2 is simply the greatest mountain."

Also known as Godwin-Austen, K2 is the highest peak in the Karakoram range of northeastern Pakistan. Although several lower peaks are technically more difficult, K2's killer reputation has drawn would-be conquerors since the Italian explorer Luigi Amedeo di Savoia, the Duke of the Abruzzi, made the second unsuccessful assault in 1909. (The first in 1902 was by a smaller party.) Not until July 1954, more than a year after Sir Edmund Hillary of New Zealand first climbed Everest, did another Italian team reach K2's top.

This spring Peter Hillary, son of Everest's first conqueror and a renowned climber himself, was organizing a small expedition with room for one more. Matt Comesky of Wellington, N.Z., a member of the Hillary group, suggested his friend Jeffrey Lakes. To raise funds Mr. Lakes sold his prized Iroc-Z sports car. "He just managed to scrape the cash together," says Mr. Hoogstraten.

On June 9, 1995 Mr. Lakes flew to Skardu in Baltistan, northeasternmost area of Pakistan. From there, climbing parties hire dozens of Balti porters to ferry supplies up to base camps at the foot of K2. Climbers ascend the

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Himalayan giant via four campsites on the way up. On June 24, Jeff Lakes sent a postcard from Skardu, predicting his party would make its bid between August 5 and 15.

Two other expeditions worked in loose tandem with the Hillary team. A British-American outfit was led by Alison Hargreaves, 33, a Scottish mother of two and the first woman to climb Everest solo without oxygen. A Spanish group had five members. Hostile weather scotched several starts but by early August they were all ready to set out once more.

"This time good weather held out," Matt Comesky said in a telephone interview from Skardu last week. While Mr. Comesky remained below at Camp 2, his companions climbed by fixed ropes to Camp 3. Then 11 mountaineers proceeded to Camp 4, at 26,000 feet the last camp before the summit. Above this camp lies the treacherous Bottleneck, a narrow avalanche-prone gully. It engulfed Vancouver climber Dan Culver after a successful ascent with Jim Haberl, the first Canadian to reach K2's peak in 1993. Last week, reports Mr. Hoogstraten, "Peter Hillary told me that the weather was too hot" on August 12. The climbers "opted to wait at high camp till night" to tackle the summit.

At 3 am. on August 13, Messrs. Hillary and Lakes set out to break trail above that camp. They spent several hours in dangerously cold temperatures, Mr. Hoogstraten reports. By dawn, clouds were moving in as the remaining climbers caught up at 27,000 feet. Two of the Spanish team turned back. Six climbers - Ms. Hargreaves, Rob Slater from Colorado, Bruce Grant from New Zealand and three Spaniards - "passed Peter and Jeff and continued up the mountain," says Mr. Comesky. By noon, with grim weather fronts approaching from the north and south, Mr. Hillary turned back. He left the radio with Mr. Lakes, who opted to carry on. "But the storm hit sooner than Jeff expected," says Mr. Comesky. The Canadian finally turned back and safely reached high camp.

Shortly after 6 pm. a jubilant Ms. Hargreaves and her five companions radioed base camp from the summit. They were never heard from again. Mr. Hillary told London's Independent newspaper that at that elevation after dark, "It's like being in space and no way back. You might as well hitch a ride from a passing spaceship." In his opinion, "summit fever" - a frenzy brought on by thin air and the effect of high altitude on blood - probably took hold of the six climbers. Next day spotters saw only Ms. Hargreaves' body, which had fallen 1,500 feet and was now "hanging somewhere out of reach."

Resting at the high camp that night, Jeff Lakes was buried inside his tent by an avalanche. He managed to dig himself out, but lost all his equipment except the radio. Missing his harness, crampons, pickaxe, and sunglasses, he radioed to Messrs. Comesky and Hillary at Camp 2 that he couldn't make it down. "Over the radio we managed to talk Jeff down to Camp 3," Mr. Comesky says. However that camp, too, had been avalanched. No shelter, no supplies.

At that point, Mr. Lakes has two choices: either wait there until a rescue could be tried, or attempt the harrowing climb down the mountain through the night without an axe or crampons. Says Mr. Comesky: "Jeff never once asked us to come and get him. He chose to come down in the dark." Next began what Mr. Hoogstraten calls his friends "superhuman effort to keep alive." The bone-weary man inched down 5,000 feet of sheer ice hand over hand down the fixed ropes. Mr. Comesky describes that achievement as "just beyond endurance." By then with the combination of dehydration and exhaustion, "Jeff's blood would have been so thin that his heart could barely pump it," Mr. Hoogstraten observes. Most would have given up with the odds stacked so horribly against survival.

Instead the ordeal continued. Mr. Lakes clambered down a 2,000-foot rock bluff known as the Black Pyramid. After 30 hours, "driven by sheer adrenalin and the will to live," he reached Camp 2 at 1:30 am. on August 14. The New Zealanders got his breathing under control by 3:30 or so, and he managed to take some fluids. But it was too late. Mr. Lakes died in his sleep between his two companions. "With the storm still on, we had to bury him there and then," Mr. Comesky concludes.

In the aftermath, as in the aftermath of hundreds of other climbing deaths, people were left wondering why anyone would subject himself to such hazards.

Gerald Lakes believes climbing "gets in the blood," and its allure "just won't leave you alone." Eric Hoogstraten says, "for Jeff, it was about exploring both the terrain and his potential. He also loved the companionship of climbers and the scenery."

Jeff Lakes himself told his family that, if he should die during a climb, "he was doing what he wanted and where he wanted."

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# Kokanee Glacier Lottery

by Kevin Giles

To secure accomodation at the Slocan Chief or Silver Spray Cabins between the beginning of December and the end of May requires a reservation obtained via a lottery run by Kokanee Glacier Mountaineering as the contractor responsible to B.C. Parks. Both cabins are booked through the same lottery system depending on a series of choices made by the applicants.

Some features of the lottery system are:

- The Slocan Chief cabin accomodates twelve, the Silver Spray cabin, eight.
- Applications forms along with letters of information about the lottery are sent out to those on the mailing list in mid-August.
- Applications must be accompanied by a non-refundable \$20.00 application fee and must be received by the draw deadline which is generally the first Monday in October. Telephone calls and facsimiles will not be accepted.
- The application requires the leaders name, address, and telephone number, and the number of members in your group. The names of the other individuals in the group are not required.
- The application form allows a choice between either cabin, and allows the applicant to specify up to three different weeks for which they want to be considered. In addition, the applicant is asked whether he/she is willing to accept other weeks.
- If an application is drawn and the specified weeks have already been filled, and the applicant has indicated a willingness to accept other weeks, then

they are placed on a stand-by list in the event of cancellation.

- Only one week will be reserved per group, Saturday to Saturday.
- Successful entries will be contacted the day following the draw.
- Policies regarding park use are mailed to the group leaders. It is the group leader's responsibility to inform group members of these policies. In particular, dogs are strictly prohibited.
- For the winter of 1995/96, the nightly hut fee for both cabins is \$25.00 plus GST.
- We can provide a list of names to help top-up the groups to the cabin maximum.

It remains B.C. Parks philosophy to ensure that as many individuals as possible have the opportunity to experience Kokanee during the winter. This reservation system is designed to eliminate overcrowding by distributing use of the cabins evenly through the winter season. The system gives an equal opportunity to all potential cabin users. The cabins have been booked completely for the entire season for the past few years. There are many applications requesting February and March - everyone is hoping for that magical powder. However, great ski-touring conditions often occur during the shoulder seasons as well (often with powder into April), and groups selecting weeks during those times have a greater chance of good luck in the "Kokanee Lottery". All revenue from the application fee and the nightly hut fee goes towards offsetting the cost of the winter program in Kokanee Glacier Park. With revenue derived from the application fee and nightly hut fee, the winter program in Kokanee Glacier Park is totally self supporting.

To be placed on the mailing list, please contact:

KGMI  
R.R.# 1, Site 3, Comp. 32  
Nelson, B.C.  
V1L 5P4  
phone: 354-4092  
fax: 354-4091

# Karabiner Index

By subject, Vol 1 to 38 - June 1964 to June 1996.

Compiled by Ron Perrier & Sue Port

Notes concerning this index:

- Volumes 1 - 9 were published by the Kootenay Section of the ACC and Volumes 10 - 38 were published by the KMC.
- Volume numbering has been inconsistent. For ease in indexing, numbers have been assigned as follows: Vol. 20 - 1977; Vol. 21 - 1978; Vol. 22 - Spring 1980; Vol. 23 - Spring 1981; Vol. 26 - Autumn 1983 (The pages are not numbered. They are identified 1 - 40 with page 1 about Ian Hamilton.)
- References are given in as volume:pages (for example, 14:12-19 means volume 14, pages 12-19.)
- Don't forget that our club library contains all the volumes. Feel free to come and consult!

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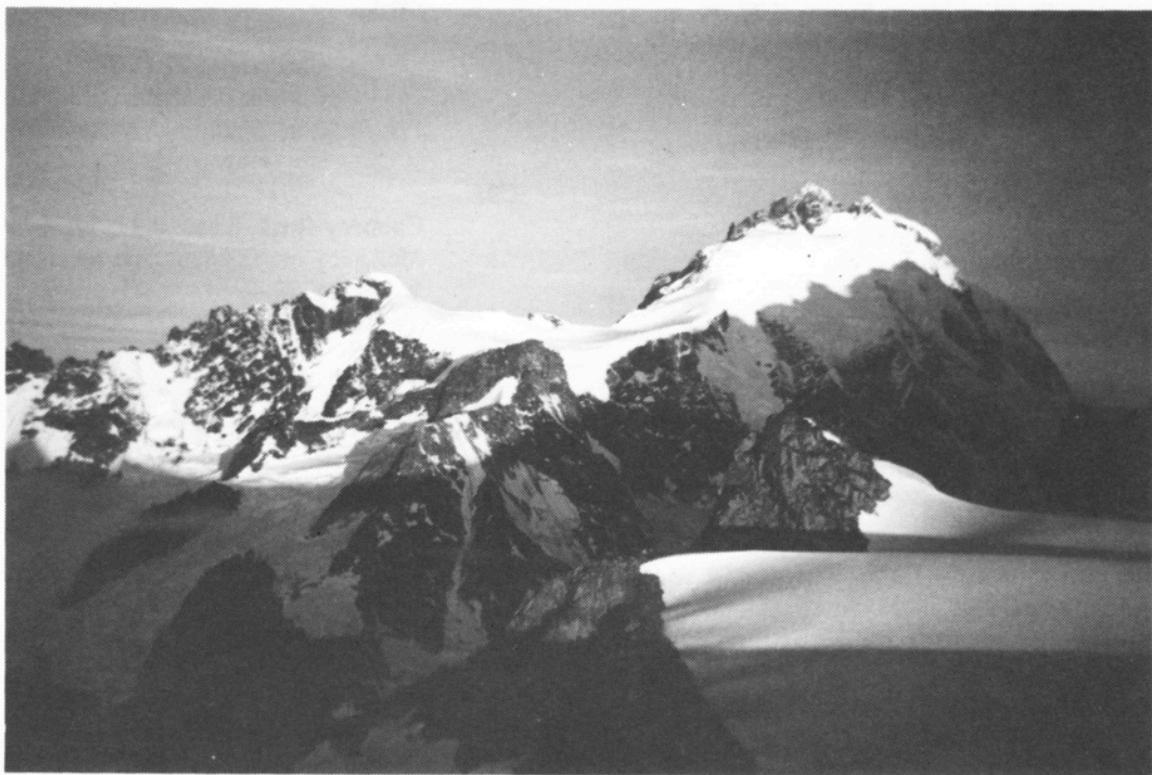
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Mt. Waddington Sunrise  
Photo: *Gordon Frank*



