

Karabiner '96

The Journal of the Kootenay Mountaineering Club
Vol. 30, Autumn 1996



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Vol. 39, 1996

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Cover

Sapphire Lakes

Drew Desjardins

Karabiner '96

Table of Contents

Editor's Forward, page 5

Ron Perrier, Joan Grodzki

President's Report, page 6

Dave Mitchell

Hiking Camp

Camp 1, page 9

Ron Cameron

Map, Hope Creek, page 10

Camp 2, page 11

Pamela Jenkins

Camp 3, page 12

Jane Steed

Trips and Trails

The Actress and the Bishop Went to Rogers Pass, page 13

Kim Kratky

Peak Bagging for Intermediates, Part IV, page 16

Steve Horvath

Thirty Something, page 17

Brad Kryski

The Farnham Tower Quiz, page 18

Hamish Mutch

Mount Adams, page 19

Dave Adams

Follow the Sun, page 21

Jeff Krueger

Where Are These Mountains Anyway, page 22

Kim Kratky

The Paria River, page 25

Ron Perrier

Patagonian Voyage, page 26

Philippe Delesalle

Journey to Mustang, Nepal, page 27

Renate Belczyk

Peru

Escalabdo En La Cordillera Blanca Del Perscalando, page 29

Derek Marcoux

El Volcan Misti, page 31

Kim Kratky

Cordillera Blanca, Quebrada Ishinca, page 33

Fred Thiessen

Nevado Pisco Oeste, page 35

Larry Smith

Assent of Huayna Picchu, page 36

Larry Smith

This and That

Mountaineering School, page 37

Peter Bullock

Leave No Trace, page 38

Dave Adams

New Provincial Parks

In The West Kootenays, page 39

Vivian Bowers

Naming Our Alpine Flowers, page 41

Muriel Walton

First Thing We Do:

Kill all the plaintiffs, page 43

John M. Taladay, "Kill all the plaintiffs,"

Climbing, August 1—September 15, 1994,
pp. 175—176

Editor's Forward

Welcome to Volume 39 of the *Karabiner*. We have endeavored to include every article submitted. Even though we are strictly a "mountaineering club," we believe many of our members are actively involved in all forms of adventure travel in all parts of the world.

With the absence of climbing camp, we had lots of room for contributors. We appreciate the efforts of all those members who take time to write about their adventures, or interests.

Enjoy.

Ron Perrier and Joan Grodzki



Joan Grodzki

President's Report

by Dave Mitchell

It's easy to be the president of the KMC. We have an enthusiastic membership willing to participate in events and dedicated executives who are willing to do all the work. All the president has to do is delegate. Well, perhaps the exception is writing the president's report. I suggested to our vice president, Drew Desjardins, that he write this report for me, and he told me, in less than polite terms, that I should write my own report!

We had a successful year in 1996. Both our summer and winter trips were well attended, although with the weather we had last spring, there was little to distinguish them. Maybe we should have called them trips with skis and trips without skis. Hiking camps were successful and you will read all about them in this journal. I wonder if I am the first club president who has never attended a hiking or climbing camp?

Climbing school went successfully this past year. Peter Bullock even managed to turn a profit. Hopefully we will continue to provide trips that challenge the "class of '96." Thanks are due to Bob Dean who resigned from the summer trips director position this year. He is going to be a hard act to follow. In fact for 1997-1998, we plan to have three people to replace him!

Nineteen ninety-six marked the 100th anniversary of the Slocan Chief Cabin. The September 21 celebration at the cabin was snowed out, so it was held at the Gibson Lake shelter. KMC, The Friends of West Kootenay Parks,

Kokanee Glacier Mountaineering and other individuals attended. Our spring social went well with about 25 attendees. Leslie Killough of Selkirk College Geology department gave a presentation. Thanks to Joanne Baldassi for her efforts as KMC Entertainment Director.

The AGM in November had 29 attendees. We discussed our restrictive membership policies (Kootenay residents only! All others Keep Out!) and our withdrawal from the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC). Since the withdrawal motion was passed, our membership fees were reduced. In the past, we felt that the value of the FMCBC was as an advocacy group, but it was an expensive membership to maintain. Although it may seem that the KMC is withdrawing from the outside world, the converse is true. Our role as an advocacy group has aligned us with other like-minded groups in the area such as the Elk Valley Ski Touring Association, the Columbia Valley Hut Society, The Ladybird Ski Club, and others. These are groups close to home with interests that overlap with ours.

Last year, Susan Knoerr's "President's Report" told you that the KMC was going to have to become more of a lobby group to preserve the mountain environment we love to play in. Here are some of the advocacy issues that we are working on.

We finished the construction of the Steed hut in early 1996. Now, for the 1996-97 ski season, we are hesitant to use it for fear of no fire-

wood. I hear that the snowmobilers enjoy the hut regularly. A document outlining the considerations for conflict resolution between the snowmobilers and skiers was near completion. Then our government dismantled BC Lands, who were spearheading the agreement. (Write to Kathy McGregor, Minister of Environment, Lands, and Parks if you are angry at her wasting your club's time, effort, and money.)

The Kinnaird Bluffs are a pleasant looking backdrop to the Emerald Green subdivision in Castlegar. We would obviously like to see them as climbing crags with some sort of protected access. Everyone involved (the subdivision developer, the City of Castlegar, BC Lands, and the Regional District) see this as some sort of liability-fraught "hot potato." This has been a frustrating effort for the Kinnaird Bluffs' committee (Drew Desjardins, Jeff Kruger, Mark Hamilton, Dan Mack, and Bert Port). They have prepared a very attractive information package with the assistance of Vivien Bowers and the Mountain Equipment Co-op. Our hope is that the government passes the "Occupiers' Liability Act" which will absolve the land owner of responsibility, should anyone hurt themselves whilst climbing, mountaineering, mountain biking, *et cetera*, on privately owned land.

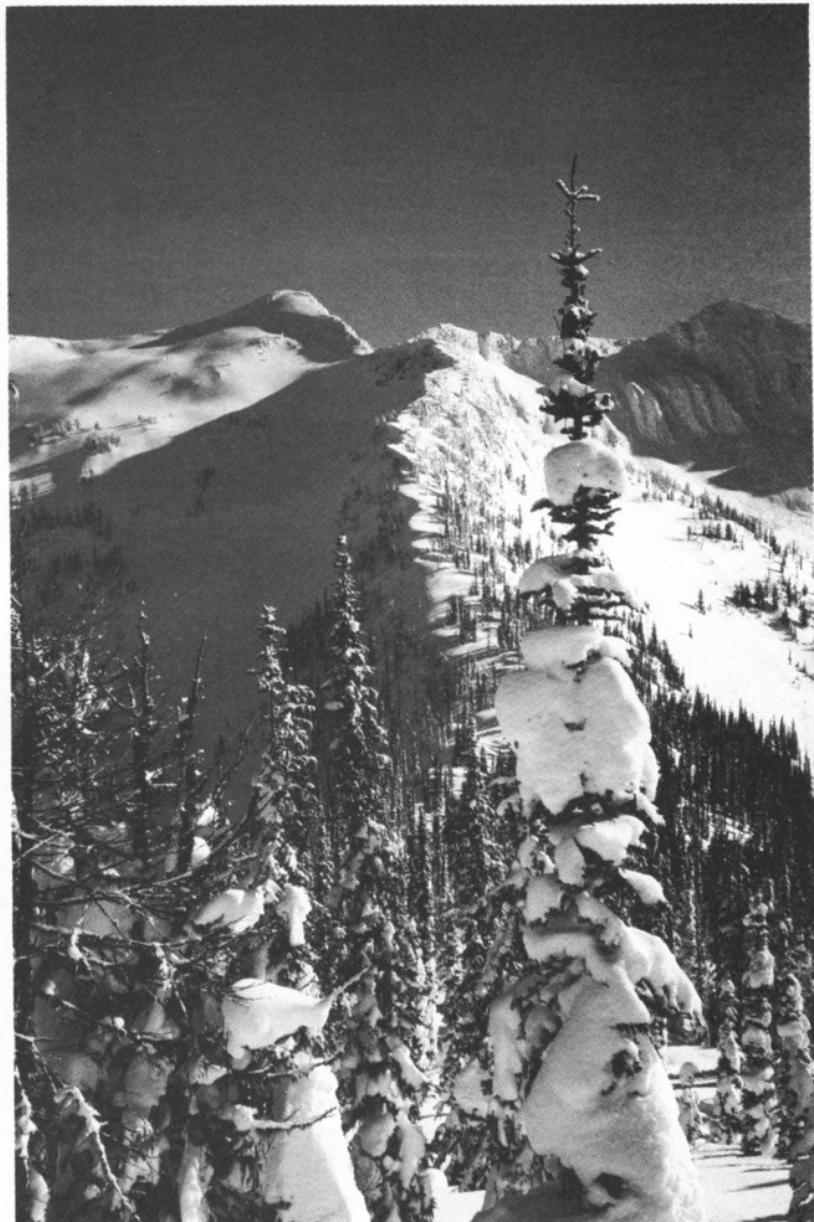
Incredibly, the prospect of a mega-project in Jumbo Pass still looms before us. At a time when downhill skiing has gone flat (pun intended), and in terms of the number of skier visits, the proponent

Oberto Oberti, goes blithely on. The access road would rival Rogers Pass and Kootenay Pass for avalanche control. The resort would have all the amenities and facilities of a small city, at twice the elevation of Rossland. Yet the government still entertains the idea? The resort is to be a year-round operation, so say good-bye to your peaceful hikes to Jumbo Pass or Monica Meadows. Contesting this proposal has been one focus for our Conservation Committee—Ted Ibrahim, Bob Hellman, and Wendy Hurst.

Like it or not, the KMC has become far more involved with advocacy. Consequently, we always need people to volunteer their time, not just for the fun stuff, but to do the things that enable us to have access to our playground. In conjunction with the above mentioned committees, Mark Hamilton is taking care of these issues as the Director of Cabins and Trails. He needs help with the "grunt work" as well as with the lobbying. Thanks Mark, for your efforts.

Garth Thomson deserves a special mention for his efforts over the last ten years as treasurer. We've never been broke or even close to it. There are not many clubs who can boast of that. It was not only his careful bookkeeping, but also his thoughtful money management skills that kept our club in the black.

Thanks are also due to Muriel Walton as the club secretary. She hosted every executive meeting and kept all the administrative duties in order. To be honest, the main reason I wanted to stay on the club executive was for the chance to eat



Mary Woodward

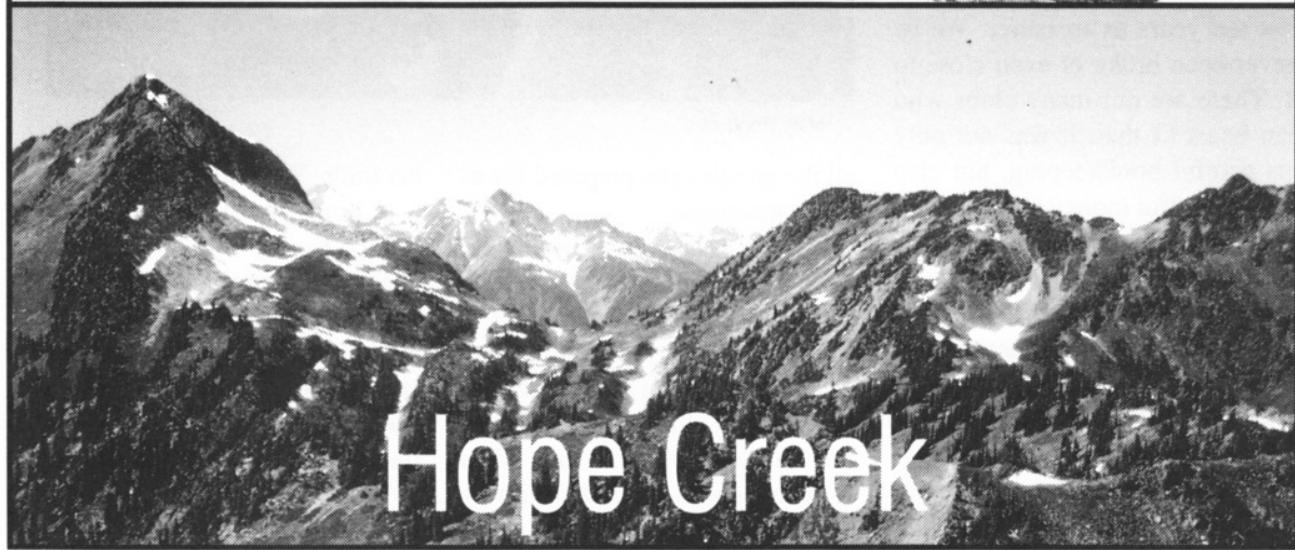
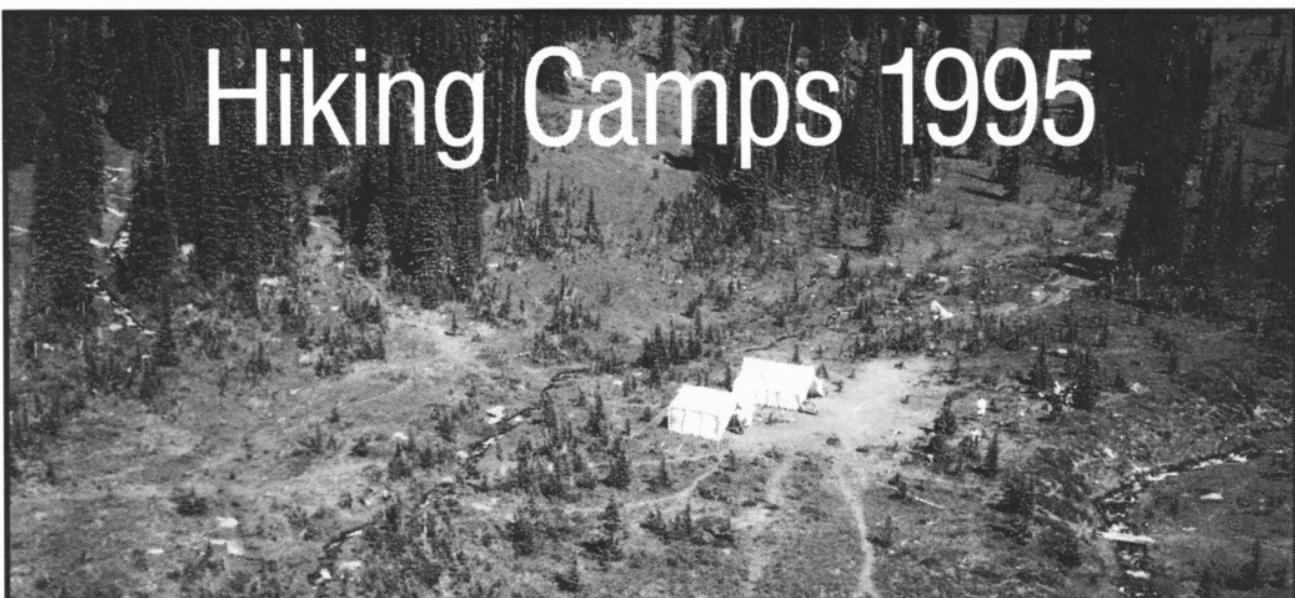
all the goodies she prepared for us at the meetings!

To add a sad note, February 26, 1996 we saw the passing of John Carter. He died in an avalanche in Kokanee Glacier Park, doing what he loved best. John was active with the KMC for almost 30 years. Anyone who hikes in the West Kootenays will remember him by

his trails. We will all miss him.

I hope you enjoy reading this year's *Karabiner*. I like reading about other people's adventures that I can't participate in for lack of vacation time, stamina, will, or ability. This is where I end and say thanks to Joan Grodzki and Ron Perrier and all the contributors for the 1996 *Karabiner*.

Hiking Camps 1995



Camp 1

by Ron Cameron

After a successful rendezvous, we cavalcaded 70 kilometres north to cross the Lardeau River at the Hope Creek bridge. Climbing some 609 metres up through the clear-cuts, we negotiated the 13 plus switchbacks and arrived at the helicopter-landing site. We flew to our camp spot at the headwaters of Hope Creek (1,951 m) in the Badshot range of the Selkirks. Snow was still evident and we found a rather high water table. We managed to find a fairly flat area for the cook and supply tents, in spite of the uneven terrain. Our week started with cool, damp weather, which improved as the days went by.

After Felix had surveyed all the peaks and valleys, Renate hiked them, as did Philippe and Mireille. Muriel, John, Jim, and Hazel not only hiked everywhere, but also discovered the bathing delights of "Grizzly Lake." The three "happy wanderers," Beth, Sylvia, and Vivian could be seen at the tip of virtually everything.

Glenn, Roy, Ron, and Leon took turns going further and higher. Close behind, no matter who was ahead, Diane and Jill trekked and trekked! They also carried the bandages and what, all to keep the bumbling leader from bleeding all over the mountains.

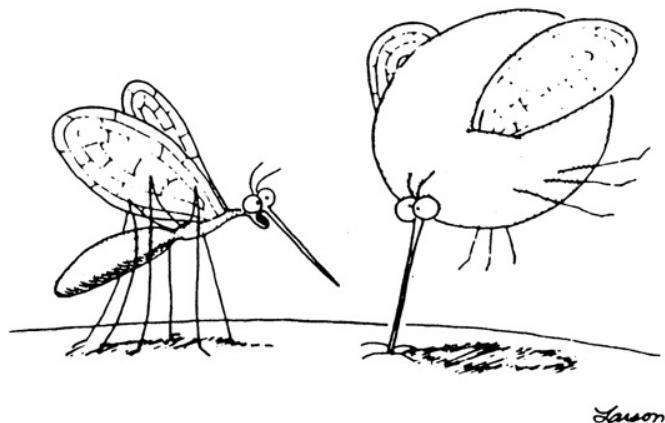
Luba, Janet, and Margaret hiked the ridges in all directions and took time to smell the flowers! While there are no major peaks in the area, Hope and Rebound were found to be sufficiently challenging for all! Other areas we enjoyed were "Bear Paw Creek," "Laid Back Meadows," "The Far Pavilions," "Sleepy Meadows," "Misty Maiden Ridge," "Debris Lake," "No Hope Peak," and "Golf Course Meadows." Hikers very much appreciated the fine vistas from the many ridges that seemed to go on forever. Particularly striking was the long, massive ridge east of camp toward Duncan Lake.

The notable things that happened during the week were "Captain" Earl Jorgensen's fly over which all hailed

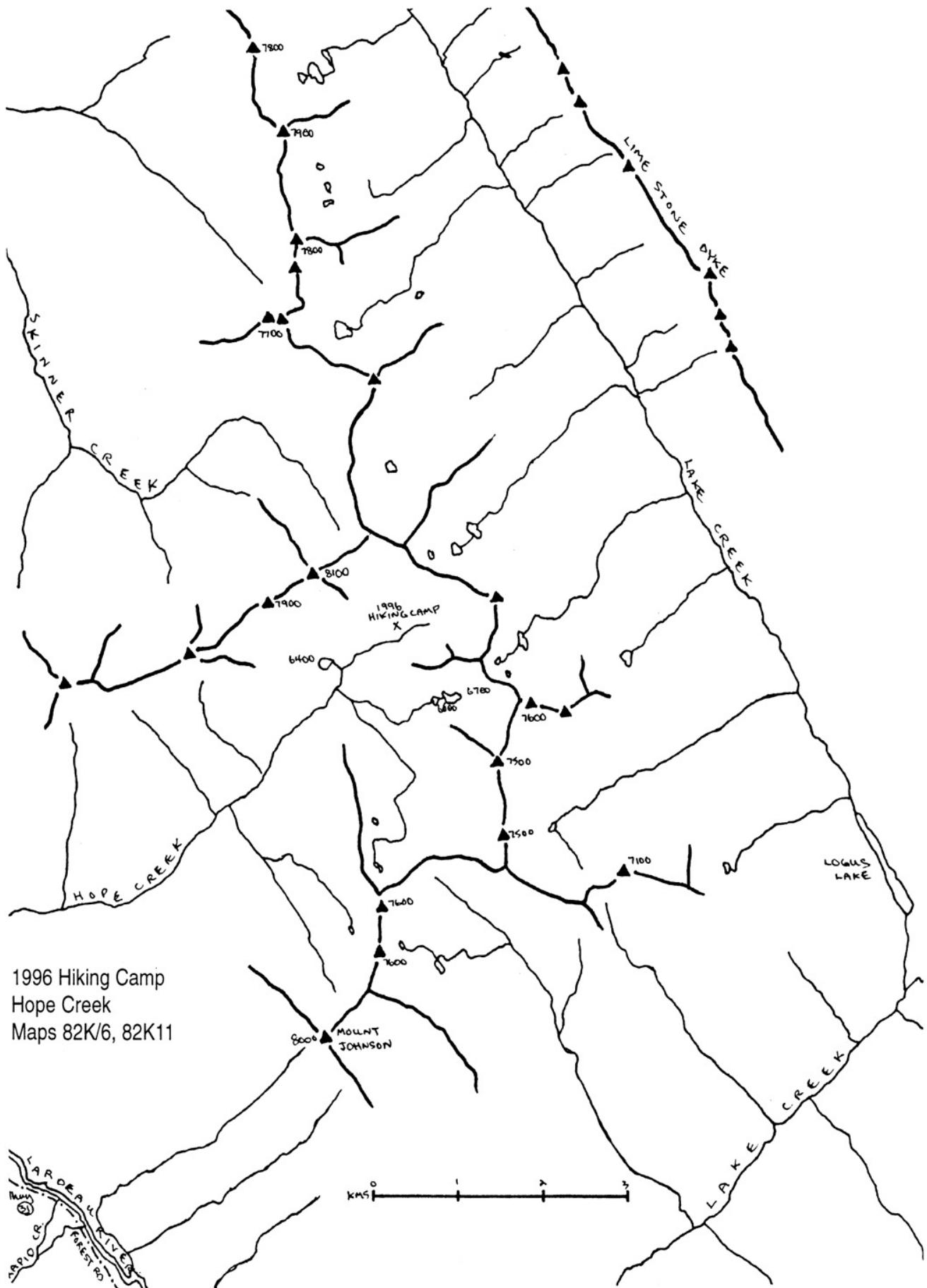
from the ground, "annual" camp celebration of John's birthday, and the surprise discovery that a Grizzly study was taking place less than two kilometres from the camp down Hope Creek.

The team of "cook and coook" worked very well together, providing us with great meals and entertainment the whole week through! And, in spite of the many mosquitoes and horse flies, the great company, campfires, good weather, and great hiking leave us all with many fond memories of this year's camp!

Participants: Leon Arisnenkoff, Vivian Baumgartner, Felix and Renate Belczyk, Glen Cameron, Janet Cameron (the cook), Ron Cameron (leader), Mireille and Philippe Delesalle, Margaret Gmoser, Roy Hopland (coook!), Luba Horvath, Hazel Kirkwood, Jim Mattice, Diane Paolini, Bess Schuurman, Sylvia Smith, John and Muriel Walton, and Jill Watson.



"Pull out, Betty! Pull out! . . . You've hit an artery!"



Camp 2

by Pamela Jenkins

Various obstacles beset this camp, right from the beginning. The first was that two couples were unable to come, but three of those spaces were filled before the start of camp.

Next, just as Alan Baker the leader was leaving his house with a car full of gear and the cat out, his phone rang. It was Garth Thomson to say that the car he borrowed had broken down in Castlegar. Alan had to act fast. He telephoned Lyn Vecchio at 7:01 a.m. to ask if she could drive his Subaru to Castlegar. Lyn asked, "When?" Alan replied any time in the next two minutes. Garth and Pat Thomson arrived in Kaslo one half hour late with some of the camp food and supplies. Lyn found her own way back to Trail. Camp 2 participants sincerely thank Lyn for her "willing service on short notice" (Alan's wording from the trip report book) for enabling Camp 2 to happen.

Clouds shrouded the mountains as we drove up from the Lardeau valley. Two convoys penetrated the fog and dampness to arrive at the same place, but it was not where Camp 1 had parked. The helicopter had difficulty finding us in the clouds, but was able to fly following watercourses. Despite the flying conditions, the excellent pilot got Camp 1 out and Camp 2 in.

Everywhere it was wet. We pitched tents in various wet bumpy locations. Nineteen people ate their first supper in the cook tent crouched on those little yellow stools which had been carefully crafted by Earl. Old flycatchers covered with enormous horse flies indicated the excellent weather of the first camp. The rain continued all night, but we all survived to eat breakfast in the cook tent on Sunday morning. One advantage of the inclement weather was "no bugs." Nothing could prevent us from setting out on exploratory trips in the rain and fog. John led one group up some snow gullies, and a few found some lakes over the ridge. Later, the

rain turned to wet snow. The precipitation continued into the early morning hours. It did stop for awhile and we ate our first meal outside. Olga had seen a squirrel, Pat had seen the moon, and Alan's barometer was rising. Earl threw a snowball at Kal, who thought it was cricket. Our optimism was short-lived. John led a group along the southeast ridge where we saw our first glimpses of Kootenay Lake through the clouds, and admired the flowers. Carl, André, and Shirley went to the peak north of camp, side-hilled around the northwest peak, where they were able to gain some snow practice for Shirley. They saw a black bear using his "well set" trail and were buzzed by a hummingbird.

On Tuesday we woke to a more definite promise of sunshine. Garth's possibly unreliable barometer had risen. Three caribou grazed in the meadow below camp. John's group hiked north following the contours and ridges beyond the top of the pass. The fog and rain returned and persisted. We stopped for an early lunch. Olga and I returned to camp while the others carried on into the cloud. About 2:30 p.m. the sun broke through, so Pam set off for the small rocky peak just south of camp for the first good views of the area and a photo opportunity. André and Shirley had scrambled on ridges towards Mt. Johnson, but uncertain weather had deterred them.

On Wednesday the weather improved and we were able to dry out. Humming birds buzzed Pam's hat as she brushed her teeth. John led a group to the north ridge and to a rock summit. Pam detoured to include a rocky bump east of camp, and then returned along the north ridge to the other summit, where she could see the others on the skyline of the next ridge over. Wendy, André, Shirley, and Carl went off to Sunset Peak, where they found a large cairn on top.

On Thursday Shirley and André arrived at the summit of Peak 8100 (or

the northwest peak) ate their lunch and built a cairn, whilst Pam was tackling the east ridge. She arrived by this different route later. After photos, André and Shirley disappeared down the snow slopes, Pam put a film canister in the cairn as a summit register, and then returned to camp. Shirley and André included a second summit before they returned to camp. Olga and Kal had a great ridge walk, and Olga swam in a lake below an ice field.

On the last day, Wendy, Olga, and Kal climbed Peak 8100 quite quickly, and found the summit register. They had a very pleasant short day. Shirley, André, John, and Garth set out very promptly for Mt. Johnson. They moved quickly through the bush, around the obstructing ridge, and up into the basin to the snow ridge which precedes the approach ridge to Johnson. They reached the transmitting tower without any problems, and returned by the same route.

Pam reached the top of the snow ridge before lunchtime and thought she had ample time. She did not continue on to Johnson, but took an east ridge which connected with one of the earlier routes explored in the fog. It took longer than expected to negotiate the ups and downs in the ridge, and the terrain looked different when it was clearly visible. She plodded safely back into camp just as André was setting out in one direction and Garth and John in another to look for her. People were first annoyed, relieved, and then happy that she had returned.

In the camp trip book, Ann and Holly both commented on Olga's kindness and special efforts preparing other foods for those with allergies which was much more than either had expected. Everyone was happy with Olga's cooking.

Pat Thomson was in charge of the flower identifications. We noted 81 species, a few not already on the list.

The weather was excellent for the

Camp 3

by Jane Steed

Camp 3 enjoyed flawless weather, accessible and challenging hiking, fine food, brilliant and profuse alpine flowers, stunning views, amiable company, and what more can one say? The horseflies and mosquitoes plagued us but we were prepared with mesh and chemical protection, gloves, fly swatter, and invective! The horse fly requires something akin to a hammer actually. The only good thing about a mosquito is that it dies easily—but 10,000 come to the funeral! Wildlife sighted included ptarmigan and chicks, dipper, humming

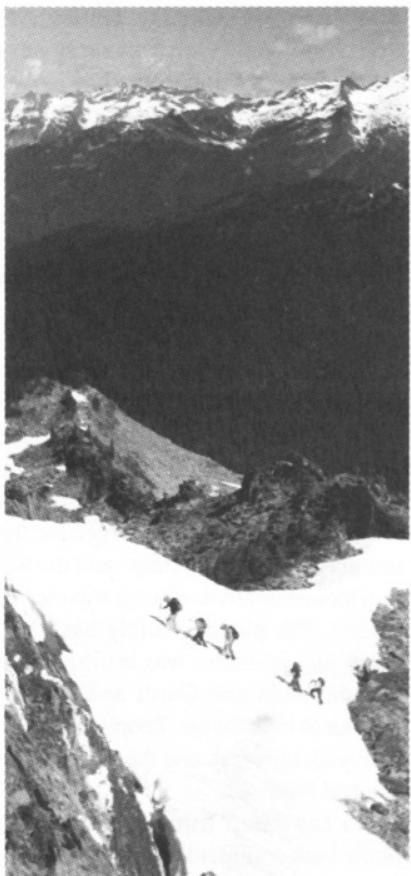
bird, marmot, and wolverine—not to mention "Horace," the bear that visited Elaine. After that, he was seen enjoying the campfire with the rest of the chorus. The hills came alive with the sound of our music.

Elaine was fortunate to retrieve her camera where she left it for a couple of days. But a marmot in her bathing suit? I ask you!

As one novice camper asked herself, "Are these not the craziest outdoor enthusiasts?" All the immediate terrain was thoroughly investigated, not a route left unexplored.

Thanks again to our leader and each other for everyone's contributions. Until next year....

Participants: Eric Ackerman, Dave Adams, Mary Baker, Joanne Baldassi, Susanne Blewett (cook), Laurie Charlton (leader), Don Haggan, Reid Henderson, Margaret Hornby, Elaine Ibrahim, Ted Ibrahim, Lesley Killough, Clorya Lagodi, Elaine Martin, Jak McCuaig, Raymond Neumar, Polly Samoyloff, Ted and Marilyn Steacy, Jane Steed (reporter).



... Camp 2 continued from p. 1

fly out, but our troubles were not yet over. One vehicle had a flat tire. It took ages and a stripped screw to release the spare. Olga patiently waited for one

Hey La de La de

by Elaine Martin

We have a leader by the name of Laurie
Pick the flowers and you'll be sorry.
Our gourmet cook is named Suzanne
She makes Kraft dinner for her man.

We know a guy by the name of Ted
He never wants to go to bed.
We have a girl named Elaine H
of the two Elaines she is the kid.

We know a guy by the name of Jack
Climbs straight up never looks back.
We know a guy by the name of Dave
Fell in the creek, what a close shave.

We know a girl by the name of Anya
Rather swim than climbing up yonder.
We know a girl by the name of Margaret
Does she love to skinny dip.

We know a lady by the name of Jane
Falls out of her chair again and again.
We know a guy by the name of Eric
All the bugs made him a wreck.

We know a guy by the name of Reid
We see him showering in the trees.
We know a guy by the name of Ray
He's 54 years old—no way.

We know a guy by the name of Dan
Always has his mosquito coat on.
We know a girl by the name of Mary
In camp her pack she'd carry.

We know a girl by the name of Polly
Faster with breakfast dishes by golly!
We know a gal named Leslie
Our expert on geology.

We know a couple Ted and Marilyn
She flew solo and he stayed in.
We know a girl by the name of Joanne
Likes to get in her tent when she can.

We know a girl by the name of Elaine
Slept with animal didn't know his name.
Had a bear in her tent again and again.
Marmot stole her bikini what a shame.

hour in Kaslo before deciding to drive on. Despite the various trials, camp was great.

Participants: Alan Baker (leader),
Olga Coltman (cook), Wendy Gagnon,
Walter "Butch" and Shirley Gieger,

Shirley Howdle, Pamela Jenkins
(reporter), Carl Jorgenson, Earl
Jorgenson, Joyce McEwan, Holly
Ridenour, Carlton "Scotty" Scott, Kal
Singh, John and Kay Stewart, Ann
Sutherns, Garth and Pat Thomson,
André Zimmerman.

Trips and Trails



The Actress and the Bishop Went to Rogers Pass

by Kim Kratky

This was supposed to have been a trip to Mt. Robson, but since Robin's daily contact with the rangers in Mt. Robson Provincial Park showed that no one had climbed that peak by any route yet this season and that conditions ranged from abysmal to marginal in early August, we decided on something more realistic and closer to home.

A trip to the Illecillewaet Névé seemed to provide the lure of big mountains in a splendid area and since neither Robin, Hamish, Peter, or myself had climbed anything touching the Névé, except Sir Donald, agreement was easily reached.

We left on Saturday, August 10, to drive to Rogers Pass. After some maddening mix-ups about where we were to rendezvous to camp at the Tangier Creek BC Forest Service (BCFS) campsite, we all wound up at the Wheeler Hut.

Peter and Hamish slept in Peter's van while Robin and I stayed at the hut where an all-day Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) Calgary Section wedding reception was in progress. This turned out to be fairly sedate and we slept well.

Sunday, we got away at 8:15 a.m. and headed up the Perley Rock Trail under clear skies. We meandered across the Illecillewaet Glacier until about 3 p.m. when we camped at about 705-735 (2,469 m), a spot which seemed to be at the point where the snow field began to slope down to Glacier Circle.

In less than an hour we had set up camp. I suggested a ramble to Young's Peak, estimating it would be about a three-hour round trip. This bump forms the eastern buttress of Asulkan Pass and was for long known as Asulkan Snow Dome. Robin wasn't keen, but Hamish and Peter concurred; eventually, we all set off together just after 4 p.m. We headed for the 2,606 metre col (689-

733) north of the summit, negotiated a bit of steep snow to reach the north ridge proper and became increasingly aware of bad weather approaching from the southwest. Quickening the pace, we raced up the easy snow and broken rock of the ridge, and sprinted the last few hundred feet to reach the summit's flat top by 5:25 p.m. We immediately turned and headed down the ascent route amid crashing thunder and ugly storms in every direction. Miraculously, our party got only a little rain and returned in good order by 7 p.m. The bad news was that upon returning to camp we found it had been hit by high winds that collapsed my Moss tent, breaking a pole, and ripping the fly and a pole sleeve on the tent proper. Peter and I made some rudimentary repairs, found that duct tape doesn't hold very well in freezing conditions, and turned in for a sound sleep. That night was clear producing a very hard frost, an ominous turn for the following day.

The morning of the 12th was clear and cold. At the beginning of the trip the rest of us had overruled Robin's suggestion that we bring crampons; today we could have used them. Perhaps underestimating Fox (after all, the first ascent of this route was made as a day trip from Glacier House in 1916; but then again Howard Palmer and Christian Hasler, Jr. were in that party, and it was a 19 ½-hour day trip), we got away at 7:50 a.m. Our approach proved to be more time consuming than we had thought as we had to contour far around to the east to avoid the plunging Geikie Glacier. Finally, we reached the point where we would begin the route. Scrambling up a cleft in grungy rock on the east side of the north ridge got us onto the north ridge proper at 2,438 metres (750-701). Here the ridge is a walk, so we plodded south until we reached a tower (mis-named The Witch

Tower) that we traversed high up on the east side without going to the summit. Next, we descended to a prominent notch with one little bit of tricky down climbing to reach this spot. At this point, Robin and I put on our rock shoes; the others didn't have any. After a break, we carried onward at 9:50 a.m., scrambling on good rock till we reached the 5.6 band of white rock described as the crux.

Here staying on the ridge means negotiating a bulging overhang, so we looked for something easier by traversing right or west. This meant we would cross unpleasant gritty slabs streaked with verglas, so I chose to continue the traverse by standing on the upper lip of the Geikie Glacier (frozen hard as rock) and chopping steps as I inched along in my rock shoes. Good fun. Back on rock, we surveyed the entire white band above us, but every potential gully and its approach was coated in verglas, probably from yesterday's storm and the cold night. This whole part of the ridge was in shade, and it was decidedly unpleasant—at least on that day. If we had had crampons, we could probably have turned the white band farther to the west, doing it all on snow. Note that the white band is in triangular form, ending in snow slopes on the west. We went back to look at the direct route right on the ridge, but no one was very enthusiastic, partly because this section also appeared to be iced. As well, I was less than happy since I had just lost my Rollei, having watched it tumble several thousand metres down the steep Geikie Glacier after it popped off my chest harness when I stopped for a break. That kind of dulled my appetite for carrying on. Next, Robin pointed out that the class 4 rock above the white zone could very well be coated with the same verglas. Considering the condi-

tions, the fact that we were still looking at 488 vertical metres ahead of us, our limited rack of gear, and the advancing hours, we decided to head down. I should point out that we hadn't roped up to this point, and that the ridge would be class 3 all the way to the white band. Our return was uneventful; this time we did go right to the top of the false Witch Tower. We were back in camp, somewhat chastened, just before 6:00 p.m., making for a day of slightly over ten hours. Re-packing gear for the next day, I noticed that my nearly new Lowe pack had suddenly developed a 25 centimetre vertical slash right in the middle of its back. Tent, camera, pack—what more could go wrong?

The next day again dawned clear with heavy frost on the tents. We headed away at 7:40 for Mt. Macoun, determined to gain some redress for the previous day. Hamish muttered that, "we got our butts kicked," adding that this was unusual since he and I were almost always successful. I reminded him that this was because we almost always climbed easy stuff. After an hour of glacier travel, we had reached the notch at the base of the formidable-looking north ridge of Macoun (732-718). This was to be another climb where the guidebook write-up did not quite square with reality. We scrambled to the first obvious step where we roped for a short, easy pitch of 5.0 or 5.1 (move left on a ledge, then pull up into an easy dihedral which slants back up and right to a commodious station). We then coiled the rope and moved easily along the ridge to an even more prominent step, looking forward to executing the coup de sabre described in the *Climber's Guide* by John Kevin Fox as "sensational and not altogether easy." Turning the step on the east or Beaver River side, we continued up the east face, occasionally diagonalling south as far as some prominent snow tongues. There was one horizontal snow band to cross, but almost all climbing was on very firm, moderately steep, class 4 quartzite with some 1,067 to 1,219 metres of exposure. The rope was not used. We topped out on the flat north ridge about 60 to 90 metres north of the summit cairn.

Where was the coup de sabre? Apparently we had missed it by bypassing much of the north ridge. However, it was interesting that there was no mention of this phenomenon in any of the summit record entries.

Having reached the summit about 10:15, after 70 minutes of climbing from the col, we lounged about gazing down the Deville N $\frac{3}{4}$ v $\frac{3}{4}$ at Beaver, Duncan, Sugarloaf, Wheeler, Kilpatrick, and many other old friends. A perusal of the summit record, which went back only to 1973, brought up names such as Bob Sawyer, Don Vockeroth, Murray Foubister, Leon Blumer, and Fred Beckey.

Finally, it was time to discuss our descent route. Hamish volunteered that he wouldn't relish down climbing the east face we had ascended. After some discussion, we decided to go down the west face, the easiest route on the peak. We made good progress most of the way by negotiating ledges and gullies in a zigzag fashion. Farther down, we examined and rejected a nasty gully giving onto the glacier on the peak's northwest shoulder. Instead, we diagonalled down to the southwest, descended a rib, continued down a gully to the left of the rib, and came out on the snow at 2,652 metres. Without a fortuitously placed natural chockstone in this chimney/gully, we might have had to rap. As it was, no rope was used on the descent. Considering ourselves quite fortunate to have discovered one of the few easy exits off the west face, we plodded back across the glacier to camp by 2 p.m., making our outing a leisurely 6½ hours.

Within an hour, we were packed up, had roped up, and were headed back to the north end of the Névé to pick up the Perley Rock Trail. En route across the glacier, we discovered what looked like a crashed satellite or at the least the remains of a weather balloon. It was a stilt-legged, tripod device with a solar panel that appeared to be some kind of weather- or snow-monitoring station. We took a few pictures and copied down the Env Canada XOO971 inscription, but have not yet followed up on our resolution to complain to the Government of Canada about littering its

own National Parks.

We continued by descending part of the lower Illecillewaet Glacier, diagonalling to the right, and picking up our tracks of two days before exactly where we had gotten onto the glacier. After a traverse across a moraine and scarified rock, we located the trail and began the leg-wearing descent. By 6:15, we were back at the vehicles, making for a 3 ¾ hour return and a 10 ½ hour day. In all, it was a very good trip, but we do have to go back and finish Fox.

What about the title of this story? It seems that one can attach the phrase "said the actress to the bishop" to almost any conversation having to do with camping or climbing and produce ludicrously suggestive results. "Said the bishop to the actress" also works well.

We invite you to try it.

MAP REFERENCES:

Mt. Wheeler,

82N/3 1:50 000 scale

Illecillewaet Névé

Youngs Peak (2,847 m 9,341')

Mt. Fox (3,225 m 10,580')

Mt. Macoun (3,047 m 9,997')

August 10-13, 1996

Participants: Kim Kratky, Robin Lidstone, Hamish Mutch, Peter Tchir



Peak Bagging for Intermediates

Part IV

by Steve Horvath

One can hardly ask for a better place to practice the art of peak bagging than our local mountains. The many ridges of Kokanee with their relative ease of access and egress are just the things. One of the better ones is the ridge on the north side of Enterprise Creek. Access is easy via the (steepish) Blue Grouse Basin trail. Once in the basin, you take a right turn and head up the meadows next to small waterfalls, to the basin below Insect Peak and Hampshire Mountain. From there head straight up to the summit of Insect Peak which is an easy scramble. More ambitious types can head up the short north ridge. The view from the top is lovely, though it is a bit of a mystery why this viewpoint justifies the "peak" designation. It seems to be not much more than a sub-peak of Hampshire Mountain, as one can see from the summit of Insect Peak.

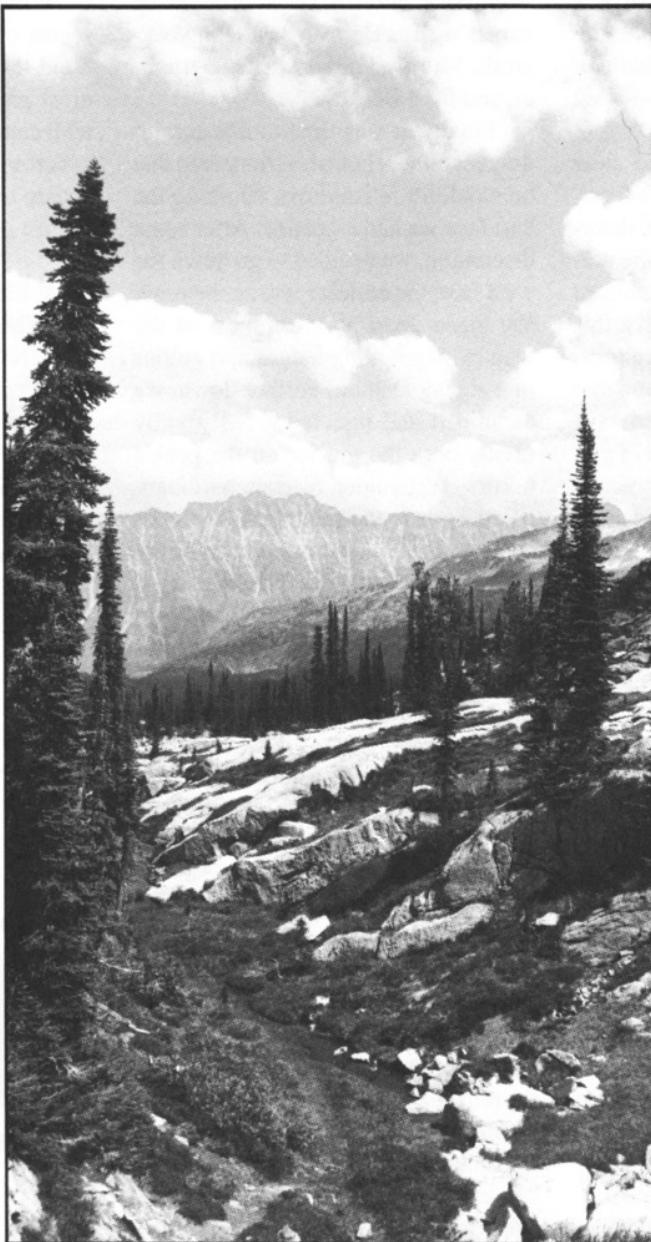
The way to the top of Hampshire Mountain is a bit more of a challenge. Its west ridge seems to offer enough technical climbing to slow one down to the point where doing a full traverse (all four peaks) would even take Konrad Kain a rather long day. Still, as usual, the best course of action is to go, look, and see. The bottom part of the ridge can be passed through fairly easily by following ubiquitous goat trails. Once the ridge steepens, follow the goat trail to the right and make your way to the

summit via the south face. This offers pleasant course finding challenges caused by certain differences between the anatomy and psychological approach to climbing between the two species.

Once on the summit the view is nothing short of spectacular. One can look straight into Kokanee Glacier, turning around, look into Mulvey Basin and The Devils Group. The amount of snow and ice one can see, especially earlier on in the season, is impressive. It can also be a bit confusing, especially when one contemplates the way ahead, which fortunately turns out straightforward. Down the comfortable southeast ridge and up the west face of Mount Retallack, then down to Granite Knob (a knob indeed, Insect Peak and Granite Knob were probably named from the valley bottom). From Granite Knob, you traverse the alpine meadows on its south slopes angling southeast to Tanal Lake to intercept the Enterprise Pass trail. The trail can be tricky to find, previous trips to the pass are definitely an asset.

This is a very long and strenuous day in a remote place; aspiring peak-baggers should not make a mistake of underestimating the potential for costly screwups. If one runs into route finding problems on Hampshire Mountain and its summit is reached after lunch, it may be prudent to turn back. Ice axes are definitely an asset,

especially earlier in the season (July). Still, four summits in just one day are a tempting proposition.



Thirty Something

by Brad Kryski

Someone once told me that the most injured group in downhill skiing is men in their thirties. What a bunch of dummies trying to do what they used to do in their twenties. Some of the aging changes are so slight that most days you don't notice. On the good days there are no differences, on the bad you can fully comprehend that rockers on warm sunny decks are just right. Perhaps the worst changes are in the mind and in judgment, but these things happen to someone else, right?

Last summer Ross Breakwell and I finally hooked up to go climb the south ridge of Gimli. But yes, the kids have their swim meet the day after tomorrow, and tomorrow night I chose to work an overtime night shift, and so if I don't sleep after my last night shift we can run up there and be home the same day. No problem, I've climbed it twice, led every pitch in fact, about ten years ago! Can't find that old route description, ah, don't need it—piece of cake.

Been doing lots of climbing? No, legs are strong though. Ran up Shasta and Hood with Jeff and Mike like nothing. Arms? Well. I can mix and pour concrete all day, and all that painting I've been doing, I mean that's gotta be good for your arms, right? Truth is I've helped my children become great athletes, provincial medal winners, but the swim club executive members almost never have time to get in the pool. It's always the same, too much work, and not enough volunteers.

But hey, it's morning, have a shower and a coffee, I'll nap in Ross's truck while we're cruising. Gorgeous day though, too nice to sleep. Just look at those mountains, a little adrenaline moving and lots to talk about. Just don't eat too much, that makes ya sleepy, right?

Boy, got here ahead of schedule.

Original plan last week was to wonder into the base of the climb, climb late in the day, camp, climb first light, and home for early dinner. Hell, if we gun it we'll be climbing by noon. We Can Do It!

Ross is a goat; he can set the pace. He does and pulls way ahead. Feel somewhat tired but the scenery is inspiring, very hot in the forest. I'll feel a little better up higher. We are ON SCHEDULE. We are roping up at 11:45 a.m. The first pitch is the hardest. Once it is over we'll be laughing, just a handful of java nuts and lead off.

Ooof, just like I remember it, kind of tough but steady progress. Geez, that old rusty pin is still there. Yep, it's a good pitch but the arms do feel it. Where's that belay ledge? Thought it was bigger, oh well, time to rest. Ross is climbing well. Second pitch is longer than I remember, Ross has no rope left and he hasn't quite reached the notch. My turn with the pack. I'm already looking forward to topping out. No time to enjoy this climb, just another job. Overtime, fund-raising chore on a mountain. Rushed it and squeezed out any of the pleasure.

Wind is cold. Gotta watch for the not so obvious lateral route moves. Get off route and it's not 5.7 anymore, it is impossible. Third pitch, mm-mm, don't really remember it. Straight up looks good, sure rounded rock, cracks are more like seams. Maybe that route was left 7.5 metres below. This is getting real hard. Arms are burning. Gonna have to cheat and hang from a piece. Hate to do that, gotta get into training again, and have to put that pegboard back up at the new house and use the thing. You know, like ten years ago. Yeah, take this rest and once I get over that bulge it's easy. Moving again, quick gain and suddenly hit the wall. I cannot free this bulge. No way today José.

Arms are jelloing, gotta move quickly, can't hold this stem forever, it's thin. Grab that friend and shove it in and be humbled. To hell with it, put a sling on it and step up and over to easier ground. Foot is in the loop, big step up pulling real hard on the biner and AIRBORNE! Headfirst, Backward, Hurtling Man! Yell "Falling," hit the sloping rocks 7.6 metres down and silence.

Damage check—no broken bones, no shit in pants, lots of ugly scrapes. That was no fun. Lower to a rest, weak second attempt. There are going to be big ugly bruises under those scrapes. Some pain creeping in. Sorry Ross, let's bail.

Going down, no problems. Oh Boy, I'm going to be sore tomorrow, back looks like hell. Climbing gear garage sale? Shape up or ship out? Lots of time to go down every mental avenue. I'd note all the stupid things but there are too many. I just want these wounds dressed nice and to go to bed.

Perhaps I sweat into my wounds because I deserve it. Man you are over tired.

It's not pleasant to be noticed for embarrassing acts but hey, it could have been worse, a lot worse. I mean later on at the end of November when I sawed my thumb badly elk hunting. At dusk, 5 kilometre in the bush, by myself, and still planned on carrying a 55 kilogram pack through 60 centimetres of snow to the truck. Now that was worse. But even that turned out okay (except I never did get sutured).

You learn more from the trips where things did not go so well, especially about your limitations. And you get some good stories to tell when you are finally in that rocking chair. The trick is to make it there.

Like Calvin said to himself, "I think my brain is trying to kill me." That Hobbes, he's the smart one!

The Farnham Tower Quiz

by Hamish Mutch

It is easier, not to say more pleasurable, to climb than to describe the process." Owen Jones, 1910.

1. Farnham Tower is:
 - a) An apartment building in Cranbrook.
 - b) A 3,353 m peak near Radium.
 - c) A gothic novel.
 - d) A federal penitentiary.
2. Farnham Tower is climbed:
 - a) Frequently.
 - b) Rarely.
 - c) In your worst nightmare.
 - d) Only by mistake.
3. Farnham Tower is made of:
 - a) Teetering piles of black crud.
 - b) The superb honey-colored quartzite.
 - c) Horrendous layers of red shale.
 - d) Blue cheese.
4. The best approach is:
 - a) Coming in from the south by MacDonald Creek (and the notorious red shale ledges).
 - b) North by Farnham Creek (and the golden quartzite ledges).
 - c) By helicopter.
 - d) Not at all.
5. An ascent of the Tower is:
 - a) Just another nothing Purcell scramble.
 - b) A good value, two star outing.
 - c) Get a life.
 - d) Certain death.

If you answered (b) to all of the above then read no further—you already know more than enough about this maligned, neglected, and underrated mountain. Otherwise....

During the fine spell of weather in late August (the last of the year) I drove to Radium and hiked up the old Farnham Creek road through knee-high daisies. I bushwhacked up the side valley east of Mt. Hammond and bivouacked on the steep hillside a short distance above the tree line. Water is scarce here and so are campsites.

Next morning I continued up to the bleak and frigid basin formed by the surrounding cliffs of Farnham Tower—Mt. Farnham and Mt. Hammond. Not a good place to camp. I crossed a steep snow slope and began climbing a long series of ribs and slabs, eventually reaching the east ridge of Mt. Farnham several hundred metres above the col, which joins it to the Tower.

From here the view of the Tower was impressive—it looked steep and exposed. After a short rest, encouraged by the warm sun and excellent rock, I put on my rock shoes and crossed over to the main tower. I climbed a steep groove system rather than the chimneys described in the guidebook. Two-thirds of the way up I was relieved to climb past a substantial (three-pin) rappel station. Terra cognita after all!

The summit was a surprise. I had always assumed that it was large and flat, as this is how it looks from most directions. In reality the highest point is at the end of a long, curving, almost level ridge which creates the illusion of a square summit block. You have to traverse about 122 metres to gain the last 10 where the quartzite finally yields to the infamous shale. The two-metre cairn built by Kain has long since been reduced to barely knee height by decades of lighting strikes. I found no summit record, but left a quick note in a plastic bag.

My stay was short as I was concerned about the descent and was anxious to get started. I had brought a short rope and made several rappels before reaching easier ground. On the last rappel onto the snow sloped the rope hung up. My trusty Swiss army knife came to the rescue and I continued with an even shorter rope. Later at the bivouac site, I noticed that my ice-hammer had somehow fallen off my pack. It began to feel like a re-run of "Kim Kratky Visits Rogers Pass."

The next day I slept late, drank coffee in my sleeping bag, and watched the sun creep down the side of Mt. Maye. There was no need to rush—the only things to be done were to walk out, and hit the beach at Invermere.



KMC President Dave Mitchell delegating trail-breaking duties on a trip to the Blanket Glacier.

Mount Adams

by Dave Adams

A huge white pyramid dominates the view to the south of Mount Rainier. This is Mount Adams. With its summit at 3,742 metres, it is one of the major volcanic peaks in the chain that includes Mount Garibaldi, Baker, Rainier, Hood, and Shasta.

In 1996 Howie Ridge and I decided to go and climb it by the non-technical "South Climb."

The drive down is long and hot—an air-conditioner is recommended. It goes to Pasco, then down the Columbia River, past the Dalles, to White Salmon, then north to Trout Lake. At Trout Lake there is a campsite and also the forest service office where one must acquire a "visitor's permit" to enter the Mount Adams wilderness. (It was des-

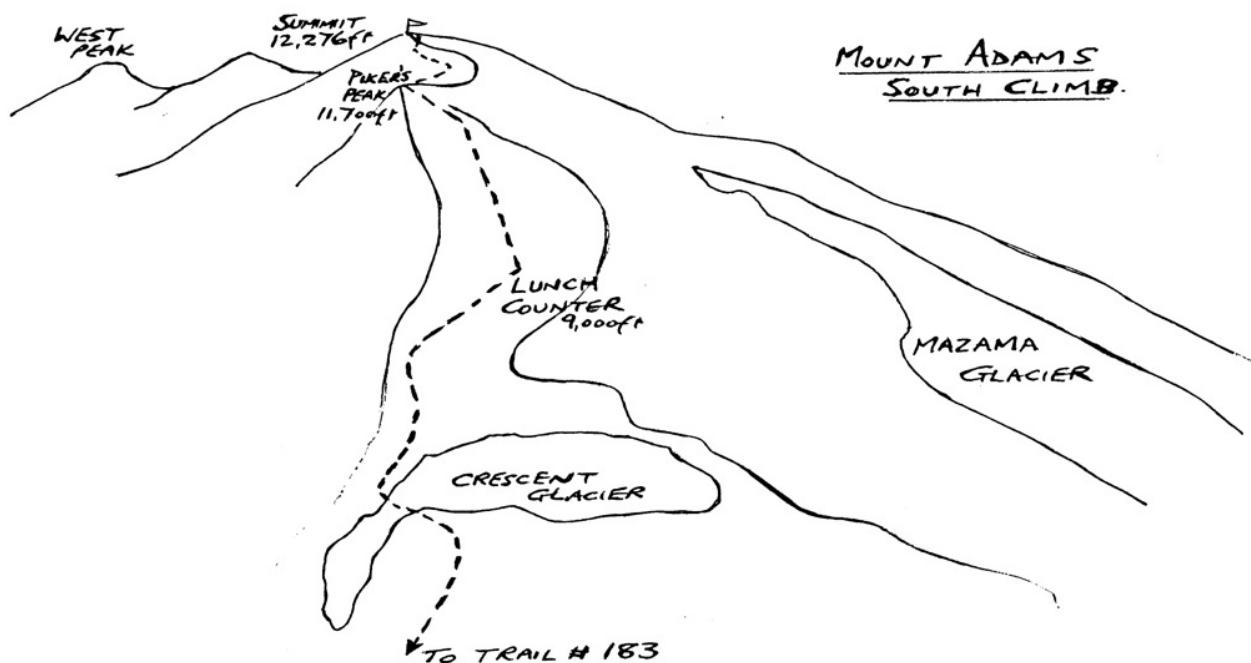
ignated part of the National Wilderness Preservation System in 1964.) It is important to pick up water at Trout Lake, as there is no water at the trailhead.

The "South Climb" trail No. 183 begins at the end of Forest Service Road No. 8040500. The five-kilometre section of road beyond Morrison Creek Campground is extremely rough and narrow. We saw one cracked oil pan! We planned to spend one night at the Lunch Counter—about 2,743 metres, so we carried camping gear. It is important not too set off too late as the snow can get very soft in the afternoon.

Follow trail No. 183, past the "Round the Mountain" trail No. 9, to just below the Crescent Glacier. We climbed the left side of the glacier, then

along the ridge across the top at about 2,621 metres. We arrived at the Lunch Counter, in about four hours from the car. It was extremely hot. We set up camp, then went to find some shade among the rocks. We slept until about 6:30 then made supper. The evening was wonderful. We had clear, warm weather so we sat outside in the beauty, the last sunlight on Mount Hood, the twinkling lights in the Columbia Valley below us almost at sea level, the glow in the sky above Portland, and the stars above us. Truly magical!

We were up at 3:30 a.m., had breakfast, and left camp at 5 when there was just enough light to see without headlamps. Conditions were perfect. The snow was rock hard, but we were still



able to climb without our crampons. We were both moving very well and we were soon on the false summit, Pikers Peak, at 3,566 metres. Here we took a short break for some chocolate and a drink. While we were there we met two guys on their way down. They had made the climb in a day, leaving their car at midnight.

The route to the summit arcs around a bowl under the ridge and it is only on the last four to five metres that one gets a view to the north and east. Suddenly we were on the top. The view of Rainier was terrific, we could see just about the entire Camp Muir route. We were amazed that it had only taken us three hours and forty-five minutes from our

camp at the Lunch Counter.

We had a good look around, took some photos, and ate our sandwiches, then headed down. We were back to camp in one hour fifteen minutes, we had some soup and tea, packed up the tent and gear, then moved on down. The snow above the Crescent Glacier was getting very soft so we were careful of the crevasses down the side of the small glacier. We got back to the car without incident, and then drove down to Trout Lake for a well-earned shower at the campsite, and then feeling refreshed, headed for home. At a gas station in the Columbia Valley we checked the temperature, it was 42°C. Thank God for air-conditioners! We had come

down over 3,658 metres in 7 hours.

Looking back at the trip, it is well worth while. In good weather the climbing is not difficult, but in bad weather it would be very easy to get off the route, and it is a big mountain. We carried rope and harness, crampons, ice axe, and ski poles. We only actually used ski poles, but came very close to using crampons on the section from the Lunch Counter to the Pikers Peak.

We also figured this route would make a great ski trip in the late spring when the access roads were open.

Participants: Dave Adams, Howie Ridge



Drew Desjardins

Follow the Sun

by Jeff Krueger

We planned to climb Liberty Ridge on Mount Rainier with a "warm up" on Mount Baker. Being "experienced veterans," we didn't need to call for a weather report—it was sunny outside! We arrived in Chilliwack to howling winds and brutal rain—this required executive decisions over an executive meal provided by the Pizza Hut. Apparently a snow front, which would cover the Rainier area, was moving in to stay for the week.

At the base of Baker, Mike's truck served well for a relatively dry sleep under a mix of snow and rain. Brad, not so lucky in the coin toss, spent a more humid night in his bivy sack on the gravel road which turned into mud bog by morning.

Now in Seattle, we headed off for a nutritious breakfast at MacDonalds (when in Rome?). More decisions were made over an Egg McMuffin and a chocolate shake. (Great brain food, but please Mike keep your window rolled down.) The trip to Rainier and Baker was postponed in favour of warm sunny California skies and Mounts Shasta (4,267 m) and Hood (3,353 m).

Shasta is visible from a three hour drive away. It's a volcano cone with snow starting at 2,438 metres on the north side and at 2,591 metres on the south side.

I was honestly sick of driving and of "gas station food." I really wanted to make it to a 3,048 metre camp the night before possibly summittting the next day. The "experienced" heads prevailed and we booked a motel. We took turns phoning home to break the tragic news that we were no longer in Washington as planned.

In the morning we tried to go sport climbing, but we were unwilling to spend the \$7 each to climb. With that behind us and the cramped space of the truck beginning to take its toll, we attempted Shasta. We decided on the longest, steepest route up the north face.

However, we quickly abandoned that route at the parking lot since we would start at 1,615 metres, in the middle of the desert at 2 in the afternoon in 35 °C heat. We decided over our meal of Powerbars to try an easier route in the trees starting at 2,316 metres. This provided a great walk through bone-dry pine forests leading into snow.

Those big packs were heavier at 3,048 metres than at lower elevation. We were in bed by 8 that night and awake at 1 a.m. to start the push to the summit at 2:30. The temperature was well below freezing and the snow was ice hard. We walked in the dark without speaking. During the day, the area around Shasta appears dry, barren, and uninhabited. Darkness revealed just how populated the California area really is—there were lights twinkling in every direction as far as we could see.

At 3,353 metres we could definitely feel the fatigue of the road and the elevation. We put on crampons and slowly made our way up. Our route wound between rockfalls on steep ice/snow the entire way. I dropped a water bottle at 3,658 and lost sight of it in the dark long before I stopped hearing it. I'm sure it slid more than 450 vertical metres on that hard slope. Dawn came while we were at 4,115 which was a bit disappointing since we wanted to summit before then.

The summit was covered in sulphur pits and foul gas leaks. I had drank three litres of water but losing the other half took its toll. I was not happy despite the view. We shot a few pictures and headed down. We were roped and with crampons until 3,658 metres where we took off the heavy gear and could move more quickly in traditional boot ski mode. Brad and Mike packed camp while I held my sore head and waited for the trip down to the truck.

Again that night we stayed in a motel, which I don't think is the KMC norm. We arrived at Mount Hood ski area at 12:30 p.m. in 26 °C heat. Mike

and Brad were willing to either pass on Hood or try tomorrow. I pushed hard to do it now since I did not want to get in that truck again. A little discussion followed and the choice was made to do it now. The ski lift would take us to 2,743 metres and we could make the next 762 metres easily. We could see dozens of climbers coming down from the summit through our binoculars.

Brad was not happy with this choice because it meant we would walk in the highest avalanche danger, and more importantly, the rangers would be watching our progress and think we were idiots for starting so late.

We had to take two chairlifts to reach the start point. We made the first lift and landed at the second to find it closed to hikers after 9 a.m. Apparently it was too risky for hikers after that time. The group atmosphere really changed at that point. I would say it was similar to being stuck in a tent with the same three people for several weeks. Mike chose a safe route away from the fray as Brad vented. He was his own volcanic eruption. The local snowboarders, Mike, and I learned a new dialect!

We moved on in a separate fashion, but I couldn't stop laughing at Brad's reaction to the unexpected walk and "unnecessary avalanche risk." As it turned out, I walked right over a snow bridge without seeing the crevasse beneath. It was a nasty place with an even more foul sulphur gas smell than that on Shasta. We roped up and pushed the final 305 vertical metre ascent in short order. There was a literal highway to follow from all the traffic earlier that day. Hood is one of the most spectacular peaks I've been on. It's not difficult, it just looks tremendously so. We returned to the base in less than five hours where most groups take eight from the top chairlift.

...Continued on p. 25

Where Are These Mountains Anyway?

by Kim Kratky

This is the third in a series of Karabiner articles about West Kootenay peaks that seem to be infrequently visited by KMCers. Once again, my intention is to provide enough details about these outings so that others may also enjoy them.

DEVIL'S HORN (2,590 m 8,650')

Devil's Horn (not an officially gazetted name) is somewhat of a mystery. Fred Thiessen got the idea of leading a club trip there as he thought it was the prominent peak that can be seen by looking east from Mirror Lake and up Powder Creek. That turned out to be another peak (see following entry), but an official KMC outing did ascend Devil's Horn on September 17, 1995. When we reached the summit after an easy scramble we were somewhat surprised to find a cairn, but even more intrigued to find therein the names of one-time KMCers Gunther and Dieter Offermann and Elena Underhill, who had made the first (and probably only) ascent in 1975. The *Climber's Guide South* for 1977 actually lists Devil's Horn and describes it as a "minor peak at head of Powder Creek, popular as a practice crag." The first part of the entry is correct; the second part wholly inaccurate. A further reference in the text sent me to the *Canadian Alpine Journal* Vol. 58 where there was in fact an article by Elena, complete with pictures, describing the climb and two earlier attempts. We can only surmise that the Offermann/Underhill party must have thought they were climbing the more impressive peak to the west and were confused by the foul weather that accompanied their several trips in this area. Climbing Devil's Horn (despite its evocative name) is about like going up Freya, Harlow, or Ludlow; it hardly rates inclusion in a climber's guide.

Anyway, here are some details for those who want to go there. You may

also want to check your KMC newsletter for January 1996 (I'm sure you do keep them). Access to the Powder Creek area is by way of the Riondel/East Shore Road. From Riondel, follow this road north past kilometer 13, crossing Powder Creek on a steel bridge. The next road past the creek is the Powder Creek Road, a route that demands four-wheel, low-range driving most of the way. The roadbed, although not steep, is full of holes and becoming decidedly overgrown; in other words, you don't want to take your brand new Jeep Cherokee Eddie Bauer Limited Edition up here. Drive the Powder Creek road to its end at about kilometer 12 (1,646 meters, 1 hour 20 minutes from Riondel road turn-off—marginal campsites at the road's end, difficult even to turn around). From road's end take the trail that leads to the lakes at 225-276, but after about 30 minutes, leave the trail and head northeast toward the prominent south ridge of Devil's Horn. Follow this to a basin above treeline and finish the climb via the southwest ridge (excellent scrambling on very good granite) or alternatively by the East Ridge. Return by the same route. The rope is not used.

DEVIL'S HORN

Map references: "Kaslo" 82F/15, 1:50,000, 1978.

Coordinates 225-286

Time to summit about 2 1/2 hours, 6- to 7-hour day

UNNAMED (2,789 m 9,150')

A rather striking rock peak that is prominent from Mirror Lake and Shatty Bench along Highway #31, this mountain is located on the north side of Powder Creek about 12 kilometers due east of Kaslo. Its best-known neighbours are Loki (9 kilometers south) and the Leaning Towers Group (11 kilometers to the northeast). On the Devil's Horn climb the previous fall we had

decided to return the following year for a go at this one. On July 27, 1996 a gang of four zoomed to the summit and decided to name the peak Mt. John Carter. Now we hear the Parks Branch may be naming something in Kokanee after John, so we will put our suggestion aside. Since our outing was a first ascent, we dragged a substantial quantity of climbing gear, none of which we used, to the top. Some parties may want to carry a rope.

For access, follow the Powder Creek road to about kilometer 9.8 from the Riondel road. This spot (1,524 meters, one hour from the turnoff) is directly south of unnamed 2,789 meters. From this point, head straight up through a boulder field and slide alder for about 100 meters to the base of a cliff or slabs. Diagonal right and head up a gully of attractive granite slabs, being careful not to get forced too far into the gully. Higher up, move left and ascend a forested ridge that parallels the gully, continue to above the tree line. Then make for a prominent knob that is passed on the right by following a wide gully. Proceed farther on a rib of alternate bands of limestone and broken shale to about 1,524; at this point diagonal left (but not as far as a prominent gully leading to the summit) and continue straight up surmounting one class 4 rock step until the peak's east ridge is reached about 150 meters east of the summit. From here, simply continue west over two steps of flat, plate-like shale (very Purcells, but solid) to the roomy, level summit platform (4 hours 10 minutes from the truck, but we were just back from climbing in Peru).

For the descent retrace your steps, but lower down avoid the slabby gully by keeping well to the right or west. Much farther down, two rockslides below come into sight. I descended the higher right one and then moved left

onto the lower one, which goes almost to the road, about 30 meters west of where the truck was parked. This outing was done as a day trip from Nelson, 6:00 a.m. ferry over, and 8:10 p.m. back. In all, it's a moderately strenuous trip in a somewhat remote area; one of the rewards is the view of the Leaning Towers from the summit.

The headwaters of Powder Creek are an attractive area for hiking and easy mountaineering. The trail gives easy alpine access to the complex series of ridges at the heights of land between Powder and Campbell Creeks and the St. Mary River, and numerous tarns provide good camping spots. Mt. Baldr (2,789 m) and some minor summits to its northwest would afford interest to scramblers, although Baldr's northeast ridge may offer rock climbing. The Powder Creek drainage does not give satisfactory access to the Leaning Towers Group.

From kilometer ten on the Powder Creek road head north crossing bush and a boulder field to the base of cliffs and slabs. Diagonal right into a prominent rock gully and follow it until preferable to move left onto a ridge. Follow this south ridge to about 2,438 meters before diagonalizing left for 150 meters. Continue straight up to gain the peak's East Ridge, which is followed to summit.

UNNAMED south ridge (III,4)

Map references are Kaslo 82F/15, 1:50,000, 1978. Coordinates 194-298 Time to summit 4 1/2, descent 2 1/4 hours, 8 to 8 1/2 hour day, including an hour for summit lounging.

Participants: Kim Kratky, Hamish Mutch, Larry Smith, Fred Thiessen, July 26, 1996.

TRIUNE MTN (2629 m 8,625')

Now for some Badshot adventures. On Saturday, August 31, Paul Allen and I climbed Triune in a driving snowstorm (an indicator of the winter to come?) and almost total white out.

Doing this as a day trip would be quite an accomplishment, but only because of the driving involved. We car camped near Ferguson, east of the metropolis of Trout Lake, and drove the Lardeau Creek road almost to its end along the south bank of the creek. Road

access is as follows: from Trout Lake townsite take the signposted Lardeau Creek road; at about kilometer five bear right, go downhill and cross the creek; continue along the creek's south bank passing the Canadian Mountaineering Holiday's (CMH) Lodge turnoff; about five kilometers past this spot you will see a road on the right. This, the Triune Mine road, may not be driveable because of deadfalls, so you might have to walk the three kilometers to the basin at 2,134 meters.

Once at the basin, continue to the road's end and ascend south on a remnant glacier to a 2,347-meter col in Triune's northeast ridge. From this point, simply follow easy class 3 broken rock to the flat-topped summit and huge cairn, about four hours from the Lardeau Creek road. The northwest ridge also looks as if it would be a "cinchy" route, although we must admit that most of the time on this trip we could see about 30 meters.

The Triune Mine itself, located at about 2,164 meters on the north face of the peak, makes an interesting detour. Allow about seven to eight hours for the peak and mine tour if you have to walk the road. This is a totally easy climb, although you do have to use your hands.

Approach via Triune Mine road, following it south to its end. Continue south over snow and rock to a notch in the northeast ridge and follow it to the summit.

TRIUNE MTN northeast ridge (I-II,3,s)

Map references: Trout Lake 82K/11 1:50,000.

Coordinates 753-079

Time to summit 4 hours, descent 2 1/2, 6 1/2 day.

FAYS PK (2,817 m 9,242')

The gem of Silvercup Ridge, Fays is best reached from the south via Highway 31. Access is excellent if you have a good four-wheel drive, high-clearance vehicle with low-range (translation: you can drive to 2,195 meters if you grit your teeth). Robin Lidstone and I day tripped Fays from Nelson on September 11, 1996, leaving the Queen City at 5:30 a.m. and returning by 7:00 p.m.

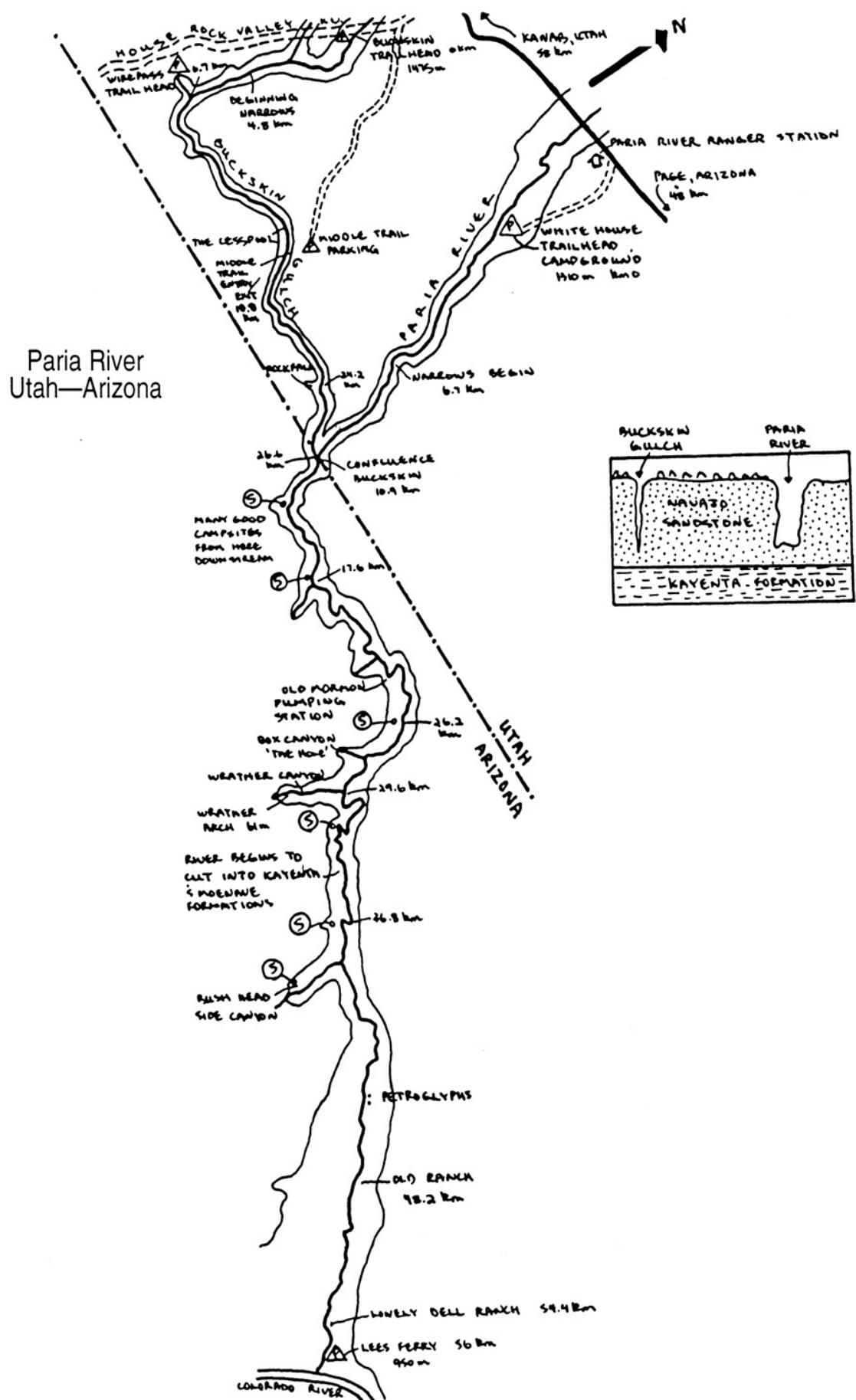
First, the access. Approaching from the south on Highway 31, go past Gerard and continue northwest across the Rady Creek bridge (signed). At about 12 kilometers from Gerard (1.4 kilometers past the bridge), turn right onto the upgraded Rady Creek road. After about 6.5 kilometers from the turnoff, turn sharply right onto a much-less-used road, go to low range and begin the serious driving. At about kilometer 9.9, go straight through a four-way junction and continue to a spacious landing after another 10.4 kilometer (2,095 meters, ample parking and scenic campsite, but bring your own water). This road is not as bad as Kootenay Joe is, but it is nosing into that category. Dave Elliott tells me that at the kilometer 9.9 crossing, he turned left and followed the spur to its end in an alpine area farther northwest.

Anyway, from the landing follow a disused mining road to the southeast and immediately pick up the fabled Silvercup Ridge Trail. This route wends along the southwest side of the ridge just above the treeline in a northwest-southeast direction. It's very well marked with cairns, flagging, red metal triangles on tree trunks, and even little metal plaques depicting hikers and horsemen. I understand the Kaslo Riding Club is responsible for much of the upkeep. Continuing southeast, the trail eventually rises to the ridge crest above the headwaters of Ottawa Creek. We followed a spur right to the base of the southwest ridge of Fays (2,469 meters, 1 hour 30 minutes from the truck—you will see what I mean about easy access).

From this point simply follow the broken, shattered junk of the southwest ridge to a prominent light-coloured step which is easily bypassed on the left. Regain the ridge and continue without event to the summit, less than an hour from the base of the ridge. Return is by the same ridge, with many easy exit routes on snow and scree of the west face. The actual hiking and climbing part of this trip took less than five hours and thirty minutes.

Silvercup Ridge and the Fays Peak

... continued on p. 26



The Paria River

by Ron Perrier

During Spring Break in March 1996, Jan and I spent ten days in southern Utah/northern Arizona. We flew into Phoenix and drove to Tusayan, 11 kilometres south of the Grand Canyon. Up at five a.m. to get into line for a camping spot at Bright Angel Campground on the Colorado, we eventually went down and up in two days. It can also be done as a day hike or as a stay at the Phantom Ranch (daypack only).

That evening we drove to Marble Canyon and got up early to meet Betty at the Lee's Ferry parking lot, the end of the Paria Canyon where it enters the Colorado. For US\$80 she shuttled us the 128 kilometres via Page Arizona to the Paria Trail Head 48 kilometres northwest of Page in southern Utah.

Kelsey (many books on hiking the Colorado Plateau) rates the Paria River and its main tributary, Buckskin Gulch as the best slot canyon in the world. The Paria from the White House Trailhead is 56 kilometres long but loses only 335 metres of elevation. The river in its first half cuts through the Navajo sandstone and then into progressively older formations adding variety to the beauty of the sandstone walls. Four to six days are necessary to enjoy this hike.

The ideal hiking time is April - May and September - October when it is driest. June has horse flies and is hot. The greatest threat of thunderstorms is mid-July to late August so weather forecasts must be monitored, especially in Buckskin Gulch. Temperatures in the summer often reach 40°C. The water is extremely cold in the winter. As the Paria is walked in and crossed several hundred times, the trip is not recommended prior to March. The water is usually not higher than mid shin.

We saw several types of footwear. The best were fish waders (a knee-high zip up neoprene wader) in large, light hiking shoes. Several wore neoprene

booties in hiking shoes, sandals, or double wool socks in hiking shoes (our choice). This worked well but in the mornings before ten a.m., the water is very cold. Shoes should be in good condition.

All water must be filtered and heavily treated because it is very muddy and there is no water in the entire 20-kilometre length of Buckskin Gulch. The best water is from several springs spaced sporadically along the hike. The first spring is at kilometre 16 about 5 kilometres past the confluence of the Buckskin, so it is necessary to carry almost two days of water from the trailhead. Good sweet water requiring no treatment is available at Wall, Big, and Shower Springs and from springs inside Wrather and Bush Head Canyons.

A ranger station (with good water), campground, natural spring, and petroglyphs are all near the trailhead. By kilometre 6.5 the Narrows is entered until kilometre 11 when the walls of the 152 metre deep gorge narrows to within 5 metres of each other. In floods the water can be 15 metres deep.

At kilometre 11 is the confluence of Buckskin Gulch with an excellent campsite available 500 metres inside. Most walk to at least the boulder rock fall before returning to the confluence. The entire 22 kilometres average 4 to 5 metres in width, occasionally widening to 10 metres or narrowing to 1 metre. It is 30-50 metres deep an average but is 100 metres deep near the confluence. Cool in the summer, and without water or any exit (except for a difficult scramble in its midpoint), it is usually done in one day. Several pools must be waded, including one called the Cesspool, which usually requires you to float your pack. A large rock fall with a five-metre drop must be negotiated. We found it oppressively narrow and dark. A tripod is recommended for good pictures, which depend on the reflected light off the red walls.

Below the confluence, the Praia is narrow for the first half, but it is not a slot canyon. Good campsites are found near the good springs. Exploring meanders or abandoned stream channels is worthwhile. At three or four locations, trails up to the rim exist offering fine views of the canyon. There are a few small side canyons, one with one of the largest arches in the world. In the second half the canyon widens eventually to two kilometres and the trail is often well above the creek avoiding boulders in the creek bed. Old ranches, petroglyphs, and an interesting cemetery can be seen. Most camp at the last water and walk out the last 19-21 kilometres in one day to Lee's Ferry and your car.

We stayed in Page that night and the next day explored Water Holes Canyon, ten kilometres south of Page. Antelope Canyon three kilometres southeast of Page is the most photographed canyon anywhere. It costs US\$15 for the ride and permit to visit the Crack. The Colorado plateau area of south Utah and north Arizona offers a great variety of spectacular terrain.

Participants: Jan Micklethwaite, Ron Perrier



... Follow The Sun continued from p. 25

We were on our way home after a meal and a beer. A trip of very diverse scenery where we all noticed the incredible number of people in the areas in which we visited.

Participants: Mike Hryniuk, Jeff Krueger, Brad Kryski

Patagonian Voyage

by Philippe Delesalle

Our project "Patagonia" finally materialized in November 1995 when Mireille and I flew south via Buenos Aires. Taking advantage of an Inter-country Air Pass, we stopped at Iguazu falls, a tourist "must," well worth it. Then on our way south, like every modern Patagonian adventurer we visited Peninsula Valdez where we had the good fortune to see mama whales and their offspring before their yearly departure to deeper seas.

Ushuaia, of the recent Falkland war fame, dominates the Beagle Channel in a striking setting. Its moody weather and fierce winds let you know you are not far from Cape Horn. We wanted badly to hike the prime objective to this trip. We quickly found out that South Americans do not walk much. We saw more people on horseback than on foot. Maybe a lesson for the next trip.

Generally speaking, there are very few established trails, and still less of trail information like maps, etc. But the potential is enormous. Any hiking through virgin nature in these areas represents a task above our present capabilities of time and equipment, and courage I dare say. Ushuaia dominates the harbor. One or two vessels came in daily either going to or returning from Antarctica. This fired up our interest. The ships were always full, until one day a small Russian scientific boat was leaving with an empty cabin. Mireille could not resist. We stepped on board—it pays to travel light and free. Past Cape Horn, we sailed the Drake Passage under good conditions. The return was more "normal" (meaning a heavy enough sea to shut down all hatches, and very few sat at mealtime).

To top this, the Captain of this modern vessel was visibly the youngest person of the crew, a very personable young man that Mireille quickly nicknames "Nureyev." We had been fortunate in our move.

Back on "Terra Firma" we were

eager to hike. We eventually made it to Bariloche, known in Argentina as "Number One Mountain Resort." Mireille and I were among a large crowd of very young Argentinean student backpackers. We quickly found out that in Argentina "going camping" is an end in itself and not a means like it is for us. The area is of great beauty with the numerous and colorful lakes, its major assets. We were disappointed by the trails—we in Canada are extremely fortunate to have at our disposal a well-developed trail system.

On this trip, our three "musts" were still to come.

Isla De Chiloe, we loved it even if it has been deforested. There is some magnificent hiking in the National Park of the West Coast. There is a multitude of islands to visit with local boats, and plenty of fish and seafood. We must return.

From Puerto Montt, we sailed three nights on the Navimag Ferry to Puerto Natales. Most of the 140 passengers were going hiking in Parque Nacional del Paine. A tent is a must, but we managed by arriving early. There are a few mountain huts being built in the park. It has a vast system of trails, well built and maintained, and everywhere magnificent vistas on peaks and lakes. A full week is hardly sufficient to walk all the trails. Wind is an almost constant companion. Though recently opened, the park is well organized and has a number of privately run huts. One can stay at the new hut being built at the Estancia Las Torres, 5,000 hectares of privately owned ranch located right in the middle of the park. On our return to Puerto Natales, celebrating our successful week, who do we meet? KMC member and old trekking friend, Kal Singh.

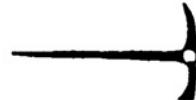
Next goal was Fitzroy. Another park, another country, another few hours of rickety, dusty bus rides. Fitzroy is visited only by those who really want

to see it. But it is worth it. Fitzroy and Cerro Torre—elegant, pure, granite spires searched by the extreme climbers—offers, to my thinking, the very best hiking. El Chalten, an uncoordinated conglomerate of various quickly put together buildings has the distinction of being headquarters of the park. However, the warden service runs a good show, and the trail system is maintained and patrolled. Hordes of Europeans will no doubt descend on this new park.

So I would say, given the time, some understanding of the language, good equipment, and a willingness to spend days in dusty buses, that this is a great and unique trip.

Give me another Patagonia!

Participants: Philippe and Mireille Delesalle



...Where Are These Mountains Anyway continued from p. 21

area is significant, not for any interesting climbing, but for the superb scenery along the ridge and the views up Trout Lake and across to the Lardeau Range. It's a trip well worth the drive.

From the end of the Rady Creek road, follow the Silvercup Ridge trail southeast to the base of Fay's southwest ridge. Scramble the loose, broken rock of the ridge to the summit, turning any difficulties on the left.

FAYS PK southwest ridge (II,3,s)
Time of ascent 3 hours, descent 2 1/4 hours, 5 hour day.

Journey to Mustang, Nepal

by Renate Belczyk

The remote and wildly beautiful Kingdom of Mustang in northern Nepal was closed to foreigners for many years. It finally opened in 1992. Last fall I traveled there with a small group of Vancouver friends. We flew to Katmandu and from there to Pokhara where our trek started. A guide, a Sherpa, a cook, and porters went with us. They carried our gear as well as the food, the kitchen utensils, and the tents. We hiked through mountainous areas. They had rich agricultural land wherever there was room to plant. Terraced fields on all the hillsides produced rice, millet, and buckwheat. As we got higher Rhododendron forests replaced the fields, which in turn were replaced by Juniper, Cypress, and Pine trees, and later by desert vegetation. Huge snow mountains such as Dhaulagiri, Annapurna, and Nilgiri were visible almost throughout the entire trek.

From Jomsom, the entrance point of Mustang, we hiked north up the Kali Gandaki Gorge passing villages surrounded by little plots of wheat, barley, and buckwheat. Nothing grew here unless it was irrigated. The mountains were bare and terribly eroded. We trekked over many passes, all about 3,048 to 4,267 metres and then descended way down into the rock-strewn valleys only to repeat the process again and again. Often there was snow on the passes. All of them were decorated with cairns and prayer flags. We met many yak, horse, and mule caravans. The animals were decorated with colorful woven blankets, plumes, and bells. The weather during the day was quite pleasant, except for the cold winds that howled up the valley (which was created by the flow of air between the peaks of Annapurna and Dhaulagiri). At night the temperature went down to minus 15 degrees.

The people of Mustang are solely Tibetan. They were quite friendly and just as curious about us as we were about them since not many tourists find

their way there. (The number of tourists entering Mustang is restricted and they have to pay a royalty of US\$70 per day.) We were often invited into a house for some Tibetan tea.

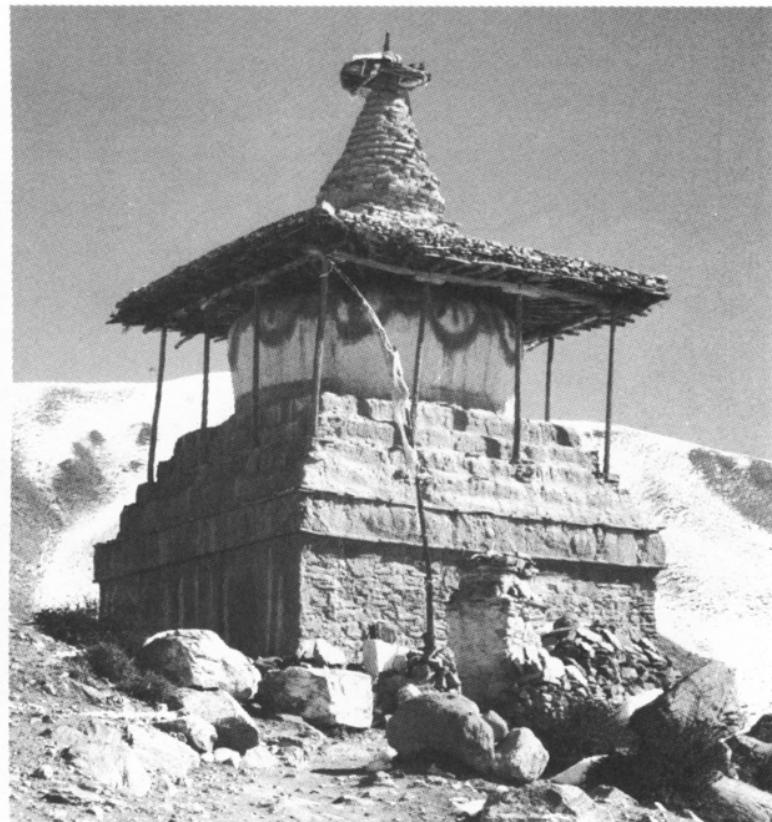
We admired the many Buddhist chortens painted in red, black, yellow, and white, and the ancient ochre colored monasteries and gompas. All pigments are made from local rock. Houses were built from dried mud bricks as were all the houses in Mustang.

In the relatively large settlement of Taarang, we were amazed at the spectacular ruins of an ancient palace as well as some beautiful frescoes in a cold and dark gompa. From there it was half a day's walk to the walled city of Lo Mantang, the capital of Mustang. Inside the wall, the city contained about 150 houses plus numerous Lama residences, the King's palace, and several monasteries. We walked the narrow alleys which we had to share with yaks,

goats, mules, horses, and people—the place appeared medieval.

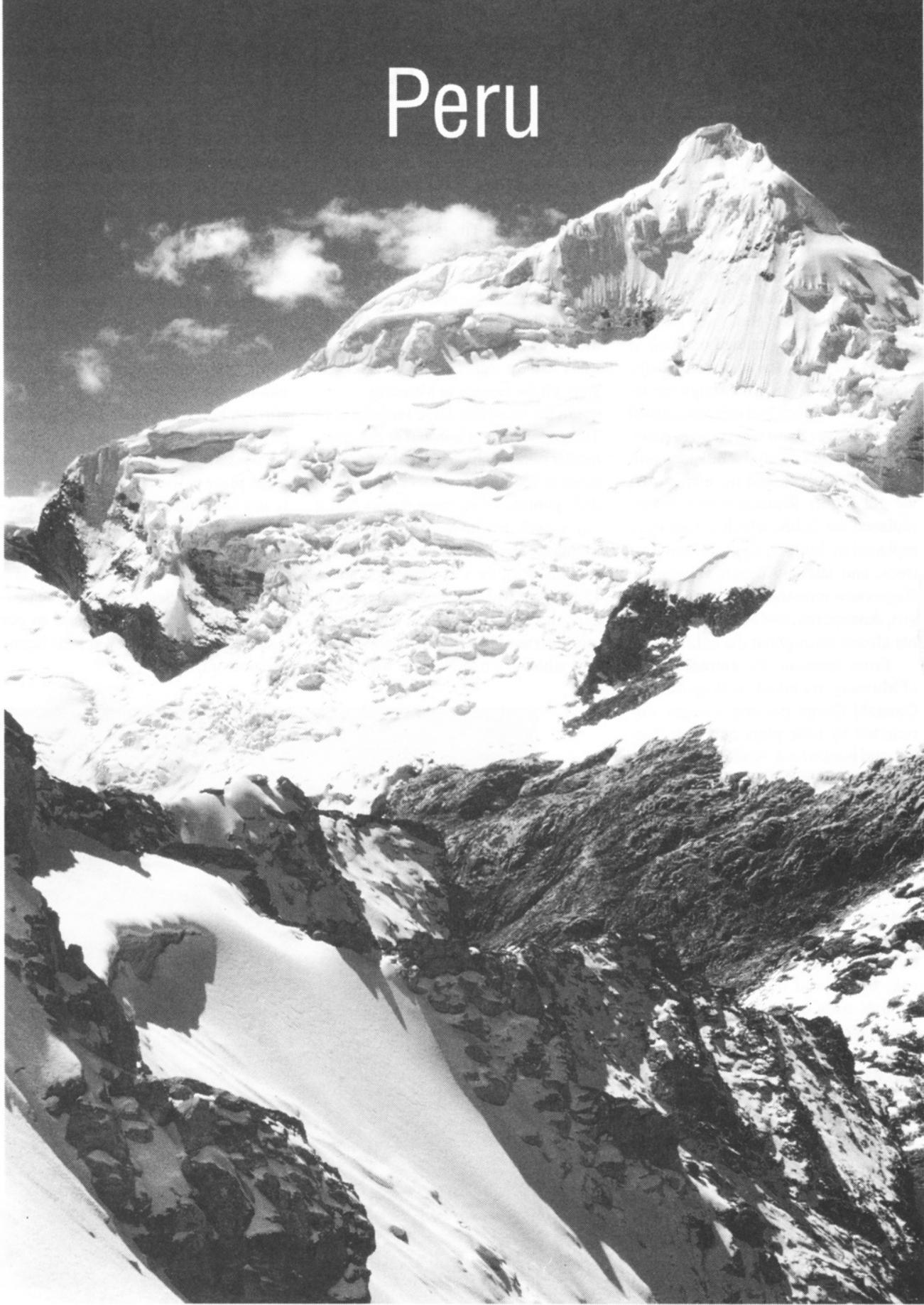
One of the highlights of the trip was an invitation by the King for tea. Unfortunately, the palace was as badly in need of repair as most of the houses and was terribly cold like all houses in the country. The tea was good though. The next day the King lent us horses which we rode to a remote monastery. It was fun at first, but the wooden saddles began to hurt our behinds and the short stirrups hurt our knees. The following day we could barely walk.

Mustang is stunningly beautiful but a harsh place to live. It has no trees, barely any vegetation, and the 6,000 people who live here eke out a living from agriculture, summer grazing, and winter trade in the lower regions. It is a humbling experience to see these people do with so little compared to our standards—and yet they appear happy and content.



Renate Belczyk

Peru



Escalando En La Cordillera Blanca Del Perscalando

by Derek Marcoux

Shortly before Christmas 1995 I invited Andrew Port on a three week spring ski traverse in the coast range. Considering that I had no plan, no goal, and no one else in mind to do it with, it was inevitable that my idea was not considered seriously. Before the phone call was finished, Andrew's idea to spend six weeks in Peru climbing in the Andes sounded a lot more credible. We decided on the end of May and into June 1996 as the time to be there. And so, the next several months were spent researching guide books, getting shots, and arranging a plan with our third recruit, Keyes Lessard.

We arrived in Lima, Peru on May 16 and eventually made our way to the ever hospitable residence of Ken and Rita Holmes (current KMCers who live and work in Lima). Contrary to belief we were not on a fact finding mission for the crew of Theissen et. al., who were a second wave of KMC members to travel to Peru sometime in June. We spent two days exploring Lima, learning all about Peruvian buses and taxis thanks to Rita, and arranging our bus transportation to the town of Huaraz in the province of Ancash.

The ten hour bus ride was painless. We headed north through the desert coast line of Peru and then took an abrupt right turn to head over a 4,267 metre pass in the dry, snow free Cordillera Negra. Initial glimpses of the Cordillera Blanca came into view as we descended from the pass. Keyes, who was receiving a crash course in Spanish from his seat partner, quickly started asking questions about the mountains. Luckily the woman knew her province and was able to point out several of the prominent mountains. The highest peak in Peru is Huascarán, with an elevation of 6,706 metres and it was

less than 30 kilometres away!

Arriving in Huaraz at 3,048 metres left the three of us feeling a little light headed, but we were happy when we got a room in the hostel of our choice. Edwards' Inn is owned by an English speaking Peruvian who is also an active mountaineer. Needless to say, he helped us with the many logistics, and the current conditions in the mountains. The three of us were one of the first climbing groups to arrive this year which gave us the advantage of off-season rates for the room.

Although Peru is in the southern hemisphere, climbing seasons closely resemble seasons in North America due to the country's proximity to the equator. Two distinct seasons exist—the wet and the dry. Our arrival coincided with the shift between these two seasons and for the first part of our stay the snow was too deep and bottomless in the mountains. However, we had travelled many miles and were keen, so we decided to do a trek in the Cordillera to help us acclimatize and to wait until snow conditions improved.

The 62 kilometre hike was the popular Llanganuco to Santa Cruz trek which is completed by many world travellers who come to Peru seeking to experience the mountain culture and scenery. We took a collectivo (bus-taxi) from Huaraz to the village of Yungay, about one and a half hours north, where we rented another collectivo to take us to Lake Llanganuco at 4,267 metres. Although the road continues over the pass, splitting the Cordillera, we opted to get out at the lakes and follow the road and old burro trail for the rest of the trip. Being rather "soft" and over outfitted gringos, we started the trek with the only suitable footwear we thought should be used—full shank plastic mountaineering boots! When I encountered the first burro driver guiding a group over the mountains wear-

ing nothing more than sandals constructed out of used tires, I realized that perhaps this trail wasn't as rugged as I'd thought. Such an arrogant display of wealth was always on my mind as we encountered family after family living in mud brick houses with dirt floors. It was hard to imagine what goes through their minds as they see us walk by with more on our backs than they could hope to earn in a lifetime.

The trek took us on a horseshoe loop from Laguna Llanganuco through the Cordillera and back over another pass. A long valley eventually guided us through Lupine filled meadows to the village of Santa Cruz where we caught a bus back to Huaraz.

After a couple days of rest eating local pizza cooked in wood-fired ovens, we set our sites on the peak Chopicalqui 6,340 metres which we had seen during our trek. Again the bus took us up, the now familiar valleys and we arrived at our first camp at 4,572 metres by 2 p.m. the same afternoon. We dined that night on our new concoction of instant mashed potatoes and sardines. Our previous trek revealed that Peruvian pasta, while bad when cooked normally is remarkably worse when boiled for an hour at altitude. Thus we searched high and low for adequate substitutes, the aforementioned instant mashed potatoes and sardines was complemented on alternate evenings with its counterpart—instant mashed potatoes and tuna. This formed the staple of our high-altitude cuisine and worked for the most part until combinations of nausea from the altitude and nausea from the menu plan invoked rather sudden and unpleasant responses. At our second camp at 5,029 metres we stumbled upon a documentary crew from Switzerland and France who were making a film about the history of the Peruvian Guides Association. There were altogether about 15 climbers and porters who

planned to climb the same route as us. The porters had literally shovelled a route through the bottomless powder on the south slopes toward the summit!

We moved up to our third camp at 5,639 metres in the Huascaran-Chopicalqui col. One day was for rest; the summit day dawned clear and cold. Andrew began melting snow at five a.m. and by six we started for the summit. We passed the French and Swiss camp at 5,791 metres and continued along the gentle plateau which led up to the steeper summit pyramid. We took advantage of several hundred metres of fixed line established by the Peruvians earlier that week and straight forward climbing took us to a gentle slope on the southwest shoulder. Unfortunately, a crevasse blocked the last 15 metres to the summit so we had to be satisfied with our achievement as is. (L. Smith insisted I report that we did not reach the true summit.) We had summited by noon but the weather had closed in obscuring any view that we might have had. The 3 of us descended to our 5,639 metre camp where Andrew and I fell asleep in the tent complete with crampons. Keyes, driven by an altitude headache, insisted upon descending to our 5,029 metre camp. After much persua-

sion and some hot soup, we packed up and made our way through the glacier to the lower camp. The next day we were back in Huaraz relaxing in the sun and drying out gear.

Once back in town, the people were impressed at our accomplishment, considering that the amount of snow was still hindering other parties. Although our story generally degraded with each account from "Yes we summited"! to "Well we sort of summited but were blocked by a crevasse." to "Well, ... indirectly, ... guided to the top ..., film crew ... I guess"

The last few weeks were spent doing a trip into the Ishinca valley and summing—under our own power—Urus, (5,486 m). On this trip we hooked up with some climbers from Salt Lake City which afforded us the luxury of renting a burro team to haul our packs the 15 kilometres to Ishinca base camp. We spent several days climbing and hiking in this area and visiting other groups of climbers including an MEC clad group from Canmore and Golden.

After our last climbing trip, we travelled back to Lima where we spent a few days before we flew to the tourist town of Cuzco in southeastern Peru. We spent a week or so relaxing, taking in

the Inca ruins of Machu Picchu and experiencing a local drink called Pisco Sour (generally served at happy hour between eight and nine every night).

Cuzco was the heart of the Inca empire before it was taken over by Spanish conquistadors. The current Spanish buildings are built on the foundations of the earthquake resistant Inca walls which provided numerous photo opportunities. A US\$20 fee allowed admission to all of the Inca ruins, museums, and cathedrals. Although Huaraz was a more true view of Peruvian life, Cuzco was a great place to spend time at the end of the trip.

Our travels back to Canada were uneventful after we stopped the baggage handler in Lima from inadvertently sending our luggage to Buenos Aires. When we arrived in Vancouver we fed ourselves with good ol' fish and chips, drank water straight from a tap, and sank back into the culture of the West Kootenay ... always remembering our adventures escalando en la Cordillera Blanca del Peru.

Chopicalqui (6,340 m)

Participants: Derek Marcoux, Andrew Port.



Derek Marcoux

Cordillera Blanca, Quebrada Ishinca

by Fred Thiessen

Before arriving in Peru we settled on our motto of "easy peaks for old guys and no heroics." What we then had to do was spend time looking at maps and guidebooks to find peaks that were accessible, relatively easy, and climbable in a reasonable time as we wanted to climb a few peaks as well as be tourists. With this criteria we settled on the Ishinca valley. I wasn't far from Huarez, it had two easy peaks that were day trips from a base camp, and had great views of larger mountains.

After arriving in Huarez (3,050 m), we spent a day acclimating. Upon Ken's arrival from Lima early on the second morning, we were ready to go. Earlier that morning before Ken's arrival, Kim had negotiated the rental of a mini bus to take the four of us down (north) the Rio Santa valley for 13 kilometres, then up the Ishinca valley for 6 kilometres to the end of the road at Collon (3,350 m). Since it was market day, the chaos of the market prevented the bus from even getting near our hotel. However, with some difficulty we were able to get a taxi to take our packs to the bus station. At Collon, two young men accosted our bus and made it quite known that they were our donkey drivers. At first we weren't quite so sure this was the case, but it soon became apparent that they were the only burro owners around. After some negotiation, we settled on four donkeys to carry our gear in, a guardian (Herman), and the date his younger brother would come back to take our gear out. By around noon we were on our way for the 14-kilometre walk. It was pleasant in a spectacular setting. The steep, narrow valley gained elevation gradually and it took us about five hours to reach the camping area at 4,200 metres, which was just below treeline. The acclimated donkeys and their driver took three hours to get there and we met them on the way out

about three-quarters of the way in.

This area is not uncharted wilderness as livestock grazing and other traditional uses have likely occurred here for centuries. It is a very popular valley for trekking and mountaineering, and contains easy acclimation peaks for those wanting to climb Huascarán and other high peaks. What this also means is that water quality was questionable and human and bovine biological end material is easily found. However, the setting was spectacular and we had time to socialize with climbers from Slovenia, Spain, Britain, France, and elsewhere. We also had plenty of time to observe the effects of altitude sickness on those with lots of ambition, but little knowledge of acclimation.

Going slowly, we spent the next day hiking the trail to Lago Ishinca at the south end of the valley. This allowed us to check out an abandoned and mostly roofless stone hut as a shelter for climbing Ishinca. The stone hut had been built to house government personnel involved in draining Lago Ishinca prior to 1960. Hamish Mutch on hearing our description of the cabin observed that it was in the same condition in the early 60s.

On our third day, we felt that we had acclimated enough to climb Urus (5,420 m). At 6 a.m. we set off through the tall grass and rock on the south slopes of Urus. Fortunately, we soon discovered a very good but very steep path that took us up to the base of the glacier (5,000 meters), which we reached by around 8:30. We crimped up here and slowly walked up the glacier, enjoying ever more spectacular scenery and finding excuses not to rush. Kim and I were clearly the slower ones to acclimate while Larry and Ken were faster. This being the case, Ken and Larry were on top at around 11 or so, with Kim and I, 20 minutes later. It was an easy climb on a moderately steep

glacier, like climbing Esmeralda Peak from Coffee Pass, only it was 2,500 metres higher. It was a warm sunny day with great views. We lingered, snacked, then descended to the base of the glacier for a second lunch, and followed the path down.

The next day, after a leisurely breakfast, a visit with other climbers (and observing the misery of others who didn't understand the meaning of the words "acclimate slowly,") we set off to the abandoned stone hut so we would have an early start on Ishinca the following day. We arrived early at the hut (5,000 metres) in a bit of storm, filtered water, ate, and enjoyed a spectacular sunset, then shivered a bit before going to bed. By now we were likely acclimated as we all had a reasonable sleep that was rudely interrupted by our alarm clocks at 4 a.m. With headlamps, we stumbled onto the moraine surrounding Lago Ishinca to reach the glacier at first light. While roping and cramponing up, a French party passed us (unroped) leaving one of their slower members to pray and find his own way up. In perfect weather, we followed the well-defined cattle track to the Ranrapallka Ishinca col, then up the easy west ridge to the summit (5,530 metres). The bergshrun was the only difficult part and it was easily passed. We shared the summit with the French party who had passed us and were waiting for their slower member to arrive. When he did, it was obvious he wasn't having a good time. The East Ridge appeared to be a fast and straightforward descent route—it was. We arrived back at the hut in the early afternoon, had lunch, chatted to the Slovenians who were spending the night, and then descended to our base camp which was still two hours away.

The next morning our burros arrived and we left shortly after sun up. There were no buses or trucks to give

us a ride down from Collon, so we walked right to the highway which gave us a chance to observe the rural hill culture in the Cordillera Blanca. This of course did involve a small additional charge for the donkeys, but better on the donkeys' backs than ours. An enjoyable and successful outing. Its success was in part due to selecting smaller peaks that one had a reasonable chance of climbing, acclimating slowly, and filtering every drop of water that we drank.

Guardians likely aren't essential (we met people who didn't have them), however, in the popular areas like Quebrada Ishinca the guardians tell you about parties without guardians who have lost gear. And we did meet people who had gear stolen. In a party such as ours, the price was very reasonable, and we appeared to be supporting local employment and encouraging a guardian social club, as they all seemed to know each other in the base camp area. Donkeys aren't essential either,

but the thought of carrying a week's food, climbing gear, and lots of clothes for 14 kilometres up to 4,200 metres wasn't all that appealing and the donkeys are readily available for a reasonable cost.

Urus, 5,420 m & Ishinca, 5,530 m
Third week of June, 1996

*Participants: Ken Holmes, Kim Kratky, Larry Smith, & Fred Thiessen
average age = 47.*



Fred Thiessen west ridge of Ishinca

Nevado Pisco Oeste

by Larry Smith

We bounced and rumbled northward down the Santa River Valley towards Yungay. We were safely ensconced in the 40-seater bus on which Kim had negotiated passage at the inter-city bus and colectivo depot along the banks of the Rio Quilcay in Huarez. We were on our way to climb Pisco Oeste. The name for the Pisco massif originates from a French expedition where their porters drank two bottles of pisco (a brandy unique to Chile and Peru) after the climb. The four of us, plus driver, and the inevitable couple of hangers-on, made for a strange sight in a country where the local buses are usually crowded.

At Yungay we turned east, up a tight, winding road towards the crest of the Andes and Lugunes Llanganuco, a pretty alpine lake in Huascarán National Park. The fragility of mountain living was clearly evident as we passed the area of old Yungay and the memorial to the people who died in the 1970 alluvion which buried the town and its 18 thousand inhabitants. The alluvion was caused by an earthquake that created a massive rock and icefall off the west face of Huascarán Norte, which looms impressively over the town.

At Lugunes Llanganuco we had hoped to hire burros for the trip to Pisco base camp. Alas, there were no burros to be seen. We quickly ditched some of our excess gear and food and started the steep hike up towards Pisco. The trail was so steep in fact, that the local cattle rarely grazed in the upper grasslands. This allows the natural bunch-grass vegetation to remain relatively undisturbed. The trail to Pisco base camp goes up through a series of cliffs and benches. On one of the steep portions we met the burros coming down after delivering a guided team of Americans to base camp. As we had a late start and were carrying heavy packs, we did not make it to base camp that night. We camped in the bunch grass, one

bench lower. It was here that Fred put his agriculture degree to good use. Think like a shepherd he said, as he headed to a small group of trees and an old shepherd's camp that was sheltered from the wind. That evening we were treated to good views of Huascarán, Copa, and Pisco. With darkness we watched the headlights of vehicles grinding up and down the switchbacks on the road across the valley which leads to the Amazon.

The next morning we completed the walk to base camp and then straight up and over a lateral moraine. The other side of the moraine was unstable so we fixed a rope to get down. This was probably the most dangerous portion of the climb, followed closely by the next portion which was a walk across the stagnate boulder cover toe of the glacier. Once across, we climbed a short ways up to high camp that was located just below a glacier and the Huandoy-Pisco col. The campsite was, as usual, rubbish filled and was inhabited by an international collection of climbers, porters, and girlfriends. Most of the climbers were pushing the altitude too fast and some were very sick.

We set out early the next day and climbed scree and snow to the col. From there we traversed around the far side of the mountain, gradually gaining elevation until we reached the bergshrun. The 'shrund' required a little skill and effort to cross, but from there it was a straight shot to the summit with the required picturesque views of the surrounding peaks. We retraced our steps to camp and then returned to base camp the next day.

When participating in this type of climbing in Peru, the return trip is often as interesting as the climb itself. Getting to the start of the climb can be uneventful. With a little disposable cash, you hire a colectivo or bus or truck, which drives you there. As you are never quite sure when you are going to return, you usually get to experience local transit on the way out. You walk out to the road and wait to see what comes along. In this case it was a local bus filled with people and agricultural products from the eastern slopes of the Andes. There were bags of maize filling the aisle of the bus (too heavy to lift to the roof) and the reinforced roof was loaded with oranges, potatoes, and much more. We got all of 200 metres down the road and then stopped to change a tire. We were on our way back to Yungay after they pushed the bus to get it started. Watching an extremely loose front windshield vibrate as we bounced along, one could not help wondering about the state of the brakes. At Yungay, they changed the tire again and we were on our way back to Huarez.

Participants: Ken Holmes, Kim Kratky, Fred Thiessen, Larry Smith.



Fred Thiessen

El Volcan Misti

by Kim Kratky

El Misti is the mammoth volcanic cone overlooking the southern Peruvian city of Arequipa (pop. 1,000,000). I first got the yen to climb it when I was in Arequipa in 1983; at that time I was recovering from knee surgery and had been out of climbing for two years, so setting Misti as a goal seemed the height of fantasy. But lives do take strange turns. When Fred Thiessen, Larry Smith, and I made plans to climb in Peru, I didn't have too much trouble persuading them to put Misti on our list. After all, Arequipa is an attractive place in its own right, and it does fit right in with a southern circuit including Cuzco.

Misti offers no technical difficulties; in fact, it was first climbed in the eighteenth century. A story relates that the giant cross on the summit was dragged up from the city under the orders of the Archbishop of Arequipa about 1779 to commemorate the city's surviving an earthquake. Misti is also remembered for having been scaled by the renowned Annie Peck in 1903 as a warm-up for one of her many attempts on Huascarán. By the way, she is generally credited with the first ascent of Huascarán, having gained the lower north summit (a trifling 6,654 metres—for the metrically challenged that's 21,830 feet) in 1908.

Arriving at the desert metropolis of Arequipa (2,325 m) by plane from Lima on July 5, we are well acclimatized after a couple of weeks and three climbs in the Cordillera Blanca. A question mark is our health, as each of us has in turn been leveled by a twenty-four-hour bout with food poisoning, a gift from a restaurant near the pre-Inca ruins of Chavin de Huantar in the Central Highlands. As well, our party has dwindled to three, since Ken has returned to work at Cominco's foundry near Lima. However, while discussing the expedition in the garden of our hotel in Arequipa, we are approached by an eighteen-year-old student from

Maine, one Micah Tapmann, who asks if he may accompany us. Since we are looking for extra bodies to help defray the expense of transportation to and from the mountain (over US\$200), we graciously accept. No problem with this boy, he will leave us all in the dust and be the first to reach the summit.

And now for the planning and logistics. Although Misti is only 15-20 kilometres in a straight line from Arequipa, access is fairly difficult. The budget-minded can take a bus to the village of Chihuata on the south flank of the peak and start walking. This is said to be a fairly tough trip of at least three days return with little or no water en route. Being gentlemen of leisure, we opt for the more expensive private vehicle approach and engage the services of Mr. Anthony Holley, a well-known local Anglo-Peruvian aged about 70. Mr. Holley has been doing tours of various types for a long time, as is attested to by his tour vehicle, a 1960 long wheel-base Land Rover with 625,000 miles on the odometer (that's miles, not kilometres). With Holley retained and consulted, we plan the rest of the trip: 1 tent, meal for 4 for 1 night, 18 litres of water (there being none on the mountain), and absolutely no climbing gear. This is to be a light-pack-with-ski-poles kind of ascent of a peak with virtually no snow at this time of year.

Sunday, July 6 dawns clear and sunny (of course it almost always does so in Arequipa). Venturing out at 7 a.m. to buy fresh bread, we are harangued by a well-dressed drunk in a bakery and fight off three robbers in a convenience store (these Arequenos do get rowdy on the weekend). Mr. Holley arrives at our hotel promptly at 9 a.m. He admirably lives up to our preconceptions: tall, lanky, ruddy of face, wearing glasses, and clad in shorts. The only thing missing is the khaki safari suit. We jam into the vehicle along with our gear and a friend of Holley's who is to provide protection during the dangerous return

through the pueblos jóvenes, or shantytowns, along the route. Our drive takes about three hours as we wend our way past the last impoverished rat lands of Arequipa, follow the Rio Chili valley between Misti and, its even bigger neighbor, Chachani, and drive across the top of the Aguada Blanca dam. The terrible quality of the unpaved road and the fact that the Rover has to wheeze its way across a 4,100 metre high altiplano does slow our progress some.

By 12:15 we have reached our rather arbitrary drop off point at about 3,900 metres along the road on Misti's north flank. After downing a quick lunch, stashing a 19 litre water can, and consulting our survey map (Characato 1:100,000, US\$16), we trudge away upward. The going is laborious, first on dirt with spiky tufts of grass, then on a crumbly rock rib, and finally onto black, soft sand barely held together by grassy bunches. By 3:30 we have reached a sort of flat spot at 4,600 metres and begin to scoop out a tent platform. It's windy, dry, and below freezing. When night falls at 6:30, we turn in—Fred, Larry, and I—to Fred's tent, Micah to his bivy site in the rocks on the ridge leading to the summit. We loan him a toque and some gloves. Kind of us, but his site is actually less windy than ours.

In the first part of the night, the wind howls, the tent shakes, and fine black sand seeps through every opening. Later I go out for a pee; a difficult task when one is wearing both long johns and climbing pants without flies. As I lean far over to ensure a proper arc, I forget about the edge of our platform and plunge face first over the drop. Putting my hands out to stop my fall, I make contact with a piquantly thorny shrub. Still, getting a view of the dazzling stars almost makes it worthwhile.

Up at 4:45 for a breakfast of Nescafé and muesli packed by the Govinda Restaurant of Arequipa (these Arequenos are cosmopolitan). Larry, still suffering from the after effects of

the food poisoning in Chavin, elects not to try for the summit. Micah has survived remarkably well, despite the cold (all our water bottles have frozen). He, Fred, and I get away just before 6 a.m. with very light packs. We head up the rock rib just west of our campsite, pass through a patch of sandy lava, negotiate more rock and sand, and after some hours reach the base of a rock buttress at around 5,486 metres. Micah is in the lead despite a bout of shitting and puking for three hours the night before. At the buttress, I have a good crap and munch a piece of chocolate. Invigorated, I now know I can finish this climb. When Fred, who is lagging, arrives, we take counsel. As Holley is to meet us at the road at 1 p.m., we decide we will have to turn back at 11, even if we haven't reached the top. Each man is to go at his own pace.

But first we have to get through the rather formidable-looking buttress. We do this by turning it on the left; still, there is 5 to 6 metres of class 4 rock, not trivial at 5,486 metres without a rope. Beyond this point we're back to plodding, each alone with his thoughts. The next time I look back, there is no sign of Fred; he has turned back at about 5,693 meters, about 183 metres shy of the summit. By this time, Micah has gotten about twenty minutes ahead. I look

down and concentrate on placing my feet in his footprints in the sand. Off to the left and just below, I see a point on the crater rim with a dusting of snow, an outcropping Anthony Holley said would count as the summit. Ahead lies a gray cone with a cross. I press on at an agonizingly slow pace. Nearing the summit I begin to follow a rudimentary switchback track. Finally, at 10:45 I get to the top, touch the cross, and get my picture taken. Micah has been here 15 minutes and because of the intense cold is ready to head down. Stretching below us on one side is Arequipa, while in the other three directions there is nothing but desolate, brown, treeless altiplano broken by the occasional dry, salt lake and by neighboring peaks like Pichu Pichu (5,500 m). To the north-east lies a smoking volcano, well to the north in the haze sits Ampato (6,310 m), near the summit of which the Inca mummy of a teenage girl was found in late 1995 (see National Geographic, June 1996). I spend ten minutes on top.

Now for the fun part, the descent. We plunge down, me with ski poles flailing, kicking up clouds of brown dust. At the buttress, we down climb gingerly, Micah kindly supplying me with a spot. He's doing just fine for a guy who's never climbed anything higher than Mt. Washington in Vermont.

Past this spot, we move into a gully to the right of our ascent rib and do a scree run all the way back to our camp. There's no sign of Fred, Larry, or the tent, so we pack up our gear left here, have a drink, and continue downward. Far below, we see Holley's truck on the road. Retracing our steps through the sand and open grasslands, we skirt some cliffs above the road and reach the Rover at 1:10, two hours fifteen minutes from the summit. As we discuss the day's events, Fred estimates he would have made it to the top about forty-five minutes after us, but he did turn back because of the time factor. In retrospect, we should have asked our ride to pick us up at 3:00. However, one wouldn't have wanted to make it much later than that since neither Holley nor either of us relished driving back in the dark.

The Lonely Planet Guide to Peru says Misti is "technically one of the easiest ascents of any mountain of this size in the world." Still, its loose composition of scree and sand, and its fairly hefty elevation make for an enervating, trying, and moderately non-trivial ascent. Good view, though.

Participants: Kim Kratky, Larry Smith, Fred Thiessen.

Fred Thiessen west ridge of Ishinca



Assent of Huayna Picchu

by Larry Smith

We rose early (well not that early) and huddling over the Primus, forced down a breakfast of burnt oatmeal (well we wandered down to a café in Aguas Calientes and ordered buns with jam, jugo de papaya, and café essentia). We then began the hike to the start of the climb; one kilometre downhill to the Puentes Ruinas train station and took a bus up the 700 metres to Machu Picchu. Huayna Picchu is the lush, green, terraced hill seen at the rear of Machu Picchu in the classic photographs. The start of the climb begins at the far side of Machu Picchu where you sign out in a register.

You must start by one p.m.

The climb follows a well-trodden trail and steep steps carved from the rock with a crux move just below the summit. After squeezing through the short tunnel, you summit to views of the surrounding valleys, Machu Picchu, and an impressive hydroelectric installation. The guidebook lists the climb at one hour. Kim and Fred were feeling frisky in the thick, tropical air however, and decided to complete the climb in half that time. As for me, my fragile lungs seemed to prefer the rarefied air at above 5,000 metres and I was a couple of minutes behind. Sitting on top,

we were able to witness the cumulative effects of sedentary lifestyles and too many cigarettes on many of the people reaching the summit.

The descent involved walking down even narrower, steeper steps in the company of a young Spanish party and their Peruvian guides. Afterwards we descended another 300 metres or so to the Temple of the Moon where the stone work was comparable to anything in the main Machu Picchu site.

Kim Kratky, Fred Thiessen, Larry Smith



Fred Thiessen Summit of Pisco

This and That... Mountaineering School

by Peter Bullock

Once again we have a fully trained crew of mountaineers ready to get some climbing done this summer. The nine-week course ran smoothly, much to the credit of the volunteer instructors who came out to help and show their stuff.

Once again there was a full class of 20 people signed up for the course and about 6 more on the waiting list. Every class had a good showing of both students and instructors coming out.

The weather was pretty darn wet the first night at the Kinnaird Bluffs, but it got steadily better as the weeks went by, with beautiful sunshine for the weekend finale up Glacier Creek.

The five days at the bluffs were spent covering protection placements, belay setup, and climbing techniques. After that we put our knowledge to the test and adapted it to snow up at Mt. Ymir. The students setup snow anchors, and tried out ice axe arrests in every

configuration, sliding down the hill upside down, backwards, with a few somersaults thrown in. Everyone made it to the top in time for lunch in the sun and prepared themselves for the 610 meter bum slide down to the trucks.

The June 15 weekend up Glacier Creek was well attended with 21 people. The road was nearly clear to the end and good snow conditions made for a great walk. There was about 1.5 meters of snow on the glacier with the hanging glaciers around dropping loads throughout the day. Saturday afternoon, we set up in the icefall and prusiked, pulleyed, and pulled students and instructors out of the crevasses as part of the rescue techniques. The entire crew made their way up the glacier to the south ridge on Sunday for great views and a snack lunch. Again amazing weather and good snow conditions on the glacier with an early start.

Thanks once again to all the volunteers and I hope all the new members

from the school feel at home in the KMC and will continue to take part in the club's adventures.

Peter Bullock, Mountaineering School Director

Students: Donella Anderson, Jesse Boulaine, Tim Boyer, Christine Browlie, Olinda Chicca, Michelle Douville, Alan Fedoruk, Kari Hill, Philippe LePage, Patricia Longson, Lisa McGregor, Jan Micklethwaite, Jo-Anne Nassey, Ron Perrier, Nancy Selwood, Amy Stevenson, Amy Tchir, Dustin Thatcher, Marina Sara Yoon, Rita Wege.

Instructors: Lee Boyer, Ross Breakwell, Armin Hasenkov, Steve Horvath, Chad Johnson, Jeff Krueger, Brad Kryski, Peter Tchir, Fred Thiessen, Thom Volpatti.... Thanks once again!



Leave No Trace

by Dave Adams

Minimum impact backcountry use is a practical approach to caring about the land and others who share its richness

Limit the Group Site

Large parties cause greater impact to trails and campsites.

Pack It In, Pack It Out

Take out all of your garbage, and remember aluminum foil and plastic don't burn.

Use an Established Campsite—In Remote Areas

Use resilient ground at least 30 metres from lakes, creeks, and trails.. Leave the campsites as you found it—or even better.

Use a Back Packing Stove

They don't scar the ground.

Do Not Cut Down Trees

Dead or alive.

Wash Yourself and Pots Away From The Water Source

Even biodegradable soap pollutes cold water.

Dispose of Human Waste

By burying it 15-20 centimetres deep at least 30 metres from lakes, streams or trails.



courtesy of Kevin Giles

New Provincial Parks In The West Kootenays

by Vivian Bowers

They are probably among the West Kootenay's best kept secrets. In July, 1995 the provincial government announced the creation of six new parks and three park extensions in the West Kootenays, for a total of almost 250,000 hectares. If you haven't heard much about these parks since, that's the plan. Until BC Parks has the money and manpower to do a proper inventory so they can find out what's in these parks and what needs protecting (some day, our prince will come...), they are keeping them more or less under wraps. Nothing like the label "park" to suddenly attract Vibram hordes to a previously undisturbed area.

BC Parks have learned from their experience with Valhalla Provincial Park. After it was proclaimed, BC Parks promoted both Valhalla and Kokanee Glacier parks heavily, hoping to counter forest industry's claims that parks wouldn't result in any economic benefit. The promotion worked, and the parks were inundated with more people than the parks could handle.

So with these new protected areas, BC Parks has chosen a "conservative" policy, which basically comes down to preserving what natural values are there (although previous commitments, such as heli-skiing, cat-skiing, guiding, trapping, and hunting, will be honoured). Down the line, BC Parks plans to develop detailed master plans for all these parks, a process that will include public input.

Here is a list of our new provincial parks (from smallest to largest):

Lockhart Creek Park (3,751 hectares), protecting a lakeshore-to-alpine watershed and trail on the east side of Kootenay Lake;

Syringa Park a 4,191 hectare addition to encompass more ungulate winter range (dry, low-elevation, interior Douglas-fir forest);

Kokanee Glacier Park a 6,203 hect-

are adds to the grizzly habitat that's not in high-people-use areas;

Kianuko Park (11,638 hectares), taking in the Kianuko Creek drainage, a tributary of the Goat, about 40 kilometres north of Creston;

West Arm Park (25,319 hectares), protecting the Nelson watershed, including Five Mile and Lasca creeks;

Purcell Wilderness Conservancy (32,662 hectares, an extension to the west side) so that it now includes sections of Fry and Carney creeks and touches on Kootenay Lake. (A further 34,947 hectare extension to the east side brings the total size of the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Park to 199,683 hectares);

Gladstone Park (39,322 hectares), taking in the northern half of Christina Lake and extending northward into the alpine;

Granby Park (40,845 hectares), encompassing the headwaters of the Granby River;

Goat Range Park (78,947 hectares), a huge chunk of the Selkirk Mountains roughly north of the Kaslo-New Denver highway (31A), west of the Lardeau River, and south of Trout Lake. This area is a somewhat shrunken version of the "White Grizzly Wilderness" that the Valhalla Society lobbied to protect. It includes Mt. Cooper, highest mountain in the southern Selkirks, and the stretch of Lardeau River south of Trout Lake that is the only natural spawning area for the Gerrard rainbow.

The last one, Goat Range, is the park I know most about since I recently wrote an article about it for *Beautiful British Columbia* magazine. There are KMC members who know the area far better than I do, however. Many of you will have hiked at least to the edges of Goat Park. The summits of Mts. Brennan and Whitewater are on the boundary, as is the end of the road up to Meadow Mountain. The Wilson

Creek trail is within the park boundaries. The major climbing and hiking destinations deep within Goat Park are Mount Cooper (3,071 m), Tenderfoot Mountain and Glacier, the beautiful Poplar Lakes (also called Marion Lakes) basin, and the neighbouring meadows of the Wilson Creek headwaters. A KMC hiking camp was held in that area in the late 1970s.

Access to the park's core, always difficult, will become trickier still when some of the logging road access routes into the park, such as up the Kuskanux and Poplar Creek drainages, are "deactivated." The roads are too expensive for BC Parks to maintain. In some cases, shutting off road access is also a way of protecting an area, such as the Poplar Lakes basin, from too many visitors.

BC Parks turned down an application to hold the 1997 KMC hiking camp at the headwaters of Wilson Creek. Having spent a weekend hiking in that area, I have to agree that I shudder at the thought of the "Vibram-impact" of a three-week hiking camp on the area's meadows. As my hiking companion noted, currently the Poplar Lakes-Upper Wilson Creek area has the pristine feel of Monica Meadows or Gwillim Lakes before they were discovered by backpackers. In any case, Upper Wilson Creek is high-value grizzly habitat. As Kirk Shave of BC Parks told me, "Setting up a large camp there is beginning for trouble."

My limited research into these new West Kootenay Parks left me with the following fuzzy conclusions:

- It's important that we've protected some really large, ecologically-viable areas, including complete watersheds and some low-to-mid-elevation old-growth forests.

- On the other hand, it is never enough. There are some critical wild-

...Continued on p. 42

Naming Alpine Wildflowers

by Muriel Walton

For most, a good day of hiking is measured by weather, conversation, exercise, views, and by "bagging the peak." For old timers, exploring new territory may be important. For wildlife enthusiasts, being startled by an elk puts the day into the "excellent" category. I rate my day by alpine wildflower sightings. I seldom have a bad day.

I first had my eyes opened to the glory of an alpine meadow near Bonny Gem Lake. I had often seen carpets of brilliant-red Indian Paintbrush, bright-yellow Arnica and blue Lupins before, but when a flower enthusiast took me aside and exclaimed over the richness of the scene, the sight of that alpine garden was burned into my memory as if it had been photographic film. Pointing out the strong narrow flowers of the paintbrushes, she guessed that they evolved so that the long bill of the hummingbird will not damage the plant. With almost no sense of smell or taste, she explained, hummingbirds depend on sight alone. Red attracts them. She showed me that the colour of the "brush" is not part of the tubular flowers, but part of the floral bracts that enfold the greenish-yellow flowers. She pointed to slopes where I could find bracts of pink, orange, yellow, and even pure white. For that brief minute between helicopters she talked about the flowers as if they were old friends, naming them, describing them, and posing questions about them. With such strange names as Fleabane, Lousewort and Erythronium grandiflorum, I decided that looking at and smelling would be my limit. Little did I know then.

I only wanted to enjoy their beauty. But I found I could not avoid naming. Can you imagine trying to tell your friend about a party without using any names? It might sound like this. "The tall lady with red curly hair was with the fat bald man. No, not that red head, I mean the one with blue eyes, not

brown eyes." By using names the conversation becomes pointed and precise, and so it is with flowers. Lewis Clark in his handsome book, *Wild Flowers of British Columbia*, published in 1973 says, "Happy is the hiker who is able to greet by name the alpine flowers that brighten the hike for they become known friends to gladden the heart no matter how unfamiliar the path. Of course, before they can become acquaintances they must first be introduced."

Now can we meet the wildflowers and come to know them? The best way is by hiking with someone who has already made their acquaintance. Having met a few flowers, you will find yourself looking into field guides with coloured photos, glossaries, and descriptions to find out more. As you become familiar, a checklist will help with identities. When you tick them off, you'll want to read about the plants and study the subtle differences, and you will learn their Latin names. The BC Ministry of Forests' new, *Plants of Southern Interior of British Columbia* by Parish, Coupe, and Lloyd is a helpful resource.

It has been my good luck to hike with KMCers who know the flowers well, who know their idiosyncrasies, and who have been excited to introduce those rare and elegant species. Hurrying across a steep scree slope near Glacier Lake, the pace slowed. Our leader pointed to a splash of deep rose. There atop a metre-wide dome of moss-like leaves was a mass of tiny petals forming a floral masterpiece. Jack made the introduction. "Look at the size of this Moss Campion! It must be twenty-five years old! A massive central taproot reaches metres into the mountain to hold this plant in place on the shifting scree. It doesn't bloom every year. In fact, it may go for 10 years without a bloom or 25 years with only 1 profuse bloom like this one. Do you know that

the flowers can be white? White is rare. See these branches underneath the flowers? They are resilient and tough, but don't step on them or else they will break and die. They can withstand fierce winds, freezing rain, and even drought, but they cannot stand to be crushed by a hiking boot. Can you smell the fragrance? That is what attracts the night-flying insects to cross-fertilize them." Without stopping, he pointed with his boot to a yellow Stonecrop, one of the sedums. "If you step on these succulent shoots don't worry. They will simply grow new roots."

At Limestone Lakes hiking camp Margaret Gmoser's knee surgery kept her at a slower pace and that was my good fortune. She introduced me to St. John's-wort, Miterwort, Lousewort, Mountain Sagewort, and Sandwort. I began to wonder who this Botanist named Wort was. She laughed and told me that "wort" simply meant "plant." Margaret spared me from their Latin names, but when we looked up those we marveled at, I noticed that she used the scientific index. When she went home that summer in 1987, she sent a paperback, *Wildflowers of the Canadian Rockies* by George W. Scotter and Halle Flygare. I've carried it to each camp. After every hike, I mark the year beside each photo of the flowers I've seen. At a glance you can tell if the flower is common or rare, or if we've seen it on Rusty Ridge or up Wildcat Creek. This guide shows some flowers that do not appear east of the Rockies and I've listed a couple of dozen flowers on the blank back pages that we find in the Kootenays that are not included, but it remains a good, lightweight, easy to use, field guide. Because you find the flower by colour (rather than by family name or habitat), it is useful to begin identifications and quick for veteran botanists.

A word of caution about names, never count on just one common name

for an alpine wildflower. At Mount Cartier, enjoying tea after a hike, a young man pulled a piece of plant from his pocket that looked like a little upside-down mop and announced, "This is a Western Pasqueflower." "No it is not, that is a Tow-headed Baby," countered the hiker on the next stool. "I don't think so", said another, "I think it is a Windflower." Jokingly, I added, "My kids call those Moppets." When a new face came into the circle, he asked, "What do you call this plant?" After studying it, she replied with confidence, "That is a Chalice Flower's seed head." Looking into the old edition of C.P Lyons guidebook, *Trees, Shrubs and Flowers to know in British Columbia* (revised in 1995 by Mr. Lyons and Bill Merilees), the confused young fellow called out, "I give up! Here it is called a Western Anemone." Each of these local or common names is correct. These are their nicknames. However, the scientific name, *Anemone occidentalis*, should always identify that flower anywhere in the world. It was the Swedish naturalist, Linnaeus, who thought of using two-part names for plants, comparable to the way we give names to people belonging to different families. In plant names, the first part tells the genus or group to which the plant belongs. For example, *Sedum* means "to sit." This is the same as a surname. The second part of the botanical name indicates the particular member of the group or the species; for example, *rosea* describes the rose-like fragrance of the root. This is comparable to the given name of an individual. This succulent leafy plant, *Sedum rosea*, we call Roseroot, or occasionally King's Crown. Are all scientific names universal? In preparing a checklist of "KMC Hiking Camp Alpine Wildflower Sightings" for the May 1996 Newsletter, I discovered that there is at least one exception. Bog-orchids and rein-orchids are placed in the genus or family called *Platanthera* in *Plants of Southern Interior British Columbia*, while A. E. Porsild in his *Rocky Mountain Wild Flowers* published in 1979, calls the genus *Habenaria*. Who can explain?

Many wildflowers bear the names of early naturalists. Sitting atop Mount Sibbald looking down into International Basin in 1991, I met *Sibbaldia*, one of the most common alpine plants in North America. Its low, bright-green mats

Sibbald, an early professor of medicine at Edinburgh, who died in 1722.

Often the name of a wildflower describes it, as in the case of the *Saxifrage*, for *saxifrage* means rock-breaker. Many of our Kootenay *saxifrage*



spreading over the dry slopes of nearly all our mountains, sport small, pale-yellow flowers. (Sometimes confused with Cinquefoil, you must look carefully at the three-branched leaflet tips for three teeth.) Both mountain and flower have immortalized Sir Robert

John Walton

species grow in such narrow crevices that you might think the roots had formed the cracks. Have they not? I call marvelling over the small, delicate, white flowers of the Spotted or Prickly

Saxifrage with Pauline Butling as she loaned me her magnifying glass. To enjoy the intricate flower design of alpine flowers you should get down on your hands and knees with a magnifier. Don't be fooled by the Leatherleaf Saxifrage. When its small white flowers that cluster on the tip of a tall red stem are spent, there appears a dense cluster of red seed capsules in pairs. I searched my guides for this strange red "flower," finally realizing my mistake. Don't miss our Purple Mountain Saxifrage growing in a dense matted cushion, and to the east, the Yellow Mountain Saxifrage.

It was at Limestone Lakes that Pauline set me searching for the elusive Mist Maiden. Does that name intrigue you too? Although *Romanzoffia sitchensis* grows at low elevations in the far north, here in the Kootenays I have seen it only in cool, shady canyons and on mossy or rocky cliffs with water dripping or spraying onto the tiny plant. It has yellow-throated, bright white flowers with five petals fused at the base to form a tube. Mist Maiden is the treasure of the mountains for me. Lists of flower names sighted at hiking camps often include over 100 species. This number depends on the enthusiasm and knowledge of the list makers, on the altitude, temperature, soil conditions, and moisture. These questions always arise. Should we include ferns, horse-tails, grasses, sedges, rushes, and trees? At what elevation are flowers classified as "alpine"?

You may think it impossible to study the flowers while keeping up with a group of fast hikers. In fact, a trip leader said, "On Saturday we have a long day. If we are going to get back before dark, I don't want anyone along that is going to be stopping to look at flowers." Of course, he is absolutely justified. We have to devise ways to study that unknown plant without breaking the pace. Filling your waterbottle quickly gives you an extra minute to examine that beautiful little violet-purple Common Butterwort in the bog beside a mossy stream. A flash of the magnifier will reveal helpless insects stuck to the yellowish-green sticky leaves, soon

to be digested by this carnivorous plant, one of the few meat-eaters on our lists. Many special plants, like the gorgeous Red and Yellow Monkey Flowers and Fringed Grass-of-Parnassus oblige by growing near creeks. Choose your lunch spot carefully. There on the very summit are the tenacious, yet delicate, tiny and often rare flowers that only the hardy ever see. Resist the temptation to pick those lone flowers. Leave that rare Alpine Poppy on the ledge at high altitude. It may take years to replace. A



quick photo of Lyall's Iron Plant or Mountain Chickweed will help you identify better than a limp crumple that loses its colour. Carry a matchstick for size comparison and take two fast photos, one of the bloom, and one of stem and leaves. That is quicker than trying to get both into focus. Where an abundance of plants of the same species appear, slipping one into a plastic bag for later identification will make little difference. Arrange a flower day when you just wander with someone who likes to photograph the rare and the glamorous.

Never think that long hikes make poor flower sighting. The largest number of species that I have seen in a day was at Edouard Pass in 1992 on a ten-hour hike that took Kal Singh, my husband, and I through meadows, along creeks, over shale, cliffs, and boulders to a 3,048 metre peak. I did not keep them waiting.

Being able to recognize our Kootenay wildflowers, to call them by name, and to introduce them to other KMC hikers, is an exciting step toward a deeper understanding and appreciation of our magnificent mountains.

If you have flower sightings that you would like to share or additions or corrections to our list send them to mwalton@knet.kootenay.net.



... New Provincial Parks in the West Kootenays Continued from p. 39

life areas that weren't protected.

On the other hand, is park status necessarily the best way to protect wildlife? One biologist I talked to suggested there are probably fewer grizzlies in Kokanee Glacier Park than there are just outside the boundaries in Lemon Creek. Many animals don't like two-legged people, but tolerate the odd logging vehicle.

On the other hand, I'm glad that preserving sensitive wildlife habitats and ecological gene pools is taking precedence over allowing people to hoof it wherever they please.

On the other hand, I'm glad I was able to go hiking in there before the road was closed.

If you are heading into the backcountry areas of these parks, BC Parks would appreciate you calling them first so that they can suggest where to camp or travel etc. to avoid ecologically sensitive areas.

First thing we do: kill all the plaintiffs

by John M. Taladay

It seems that no level of personal foolhardiness will prevent people from trying to pin the blame for their injuries on others. Our society has even come to accept the theory that taking a fall on a sidewalk can somehow be the sidewalk's fault and its owner's responsibility. But so far, no blame has been laid on the cliff or its owner for an injury to a climber.

Acceptance of personal responsibility is the cornerstone of climbing. If climbing wasn't dangerous, everyone could do it. If everyone could do it, it wouldn't be worth doing. Implicit in the penultimate reason for climbing—"because it's there...—is the corollary," and you're not." If climbers choose to indulge a sport that by its nature is exclusive of others, they must forego the guarantees of safety that our society has created. Stated more simply, if you're not willing to accept responsibility for climbing injuries, don't climb.

Thus far, in the few decisions that have dealt with the issue, courts have refused to hold landowners liable for injuries to climbers, regardless of the climber's level of experience. In most significant case, *John v. Department of the Interior*, a federal court of appeals dismissed the plaintiff's claim that the National Park Service should be held liable for failing to rescue a would-be climber who eventually died, relying in part of the principle that "the inherent dangers of mountain climbing are patently obvious." At least one other federal court has agreed. In *Dehne v. United States*, a rock scrambler sued after falling at Arches National Monument. The court held that the plaintiff "chose to take an obviously dangerous route" up a steep wall and placed herself in danger. Thus, the plaintiff's own decisions, and not any act or failure to warn by the defendant, caused the injuries.

Lawsuits aside, there is no logical basis for pinning liability for climbing

accidents on landowners. The only other things I can think of that present the same conspicuous danger as a cliff are fire, guns, and drunken guys named Rocco. Even the most dimwitted among us can understand that if you hang out on cliffs, you could get hurt. To hold the landowner liable for climbing injuries just doesn't make sense.

Unlike a hidden or manmade danger, cliffs are a visible, natural formation, and a landowner should not be liable for the danger created by them. Recognizing the need to expressly protect landowners, over 40 states have adopted "Recreational User" statutes, which provide immunity for acts of negligence by the landowners who permit people to use their land for recreational purposes, including climbing. While recreational users statutes vary by state, they generally provide immunity for acts of negligence by the landowner; only intentional acts (such as firing birdshot at the climber) or reckless or malicious conduct (like the owners forgetting to mention that they planned to bulldoze debris off the top of the cliff after giving permission for climbing) are not protected. In some states, a recreational user, such as a climber, is given the same lowly legal status a trespasser.

Recreational user statutes also protect landowners against a duty to warn recreational users of natural hazards, such as the danger of falling off cliffs or drowning in rivers. Many recreational user statutes provide the same protection to the state and local communities, so that public land managers will also be encouraged to open their lands to recreational use. Usually, the landowner loses the protection of the statute if any fee is charged to use the land, although this does not always apply to public lands.

While landowners have not been held liable, it is true that a number of

cases brought by climbers against other parties have reached settlements where the climber was awarded money. Only one case that has reached judicial decision, however, has decided that someone other than the climber himself was responsible for climbing injuries. Fifteen years ago, *Sewell v Eastern Mountain Sports, Inc.* involved a mountaineer on Denali who accidentally unclipped from her ascender device and took a 60-footer. Arguing that the design was defective, she was able to convince a jury that the manufacturer should be held liable, and received \$76,000.

Product manufacturers do have a high level of responsibility to design safe products, especially where the purpose of the product is to provide safety. But all climbers (if not jurors) know that even well-designed gear does not guarantee safety. Ropes cut, protection pops, shoes peel, well-chalked fingers slip—shit happens. Putting aside the opening sequence of *Cliffhanger*, climbing products do not fail under normal usage. They generally are scrupulously manufactured and extremely well-designed; it's climbers who are not.

Under general principles of product liability law, which vary by state, a manufacturer can be liable for three types of acts: a defect in the manufacture of a product, a defect in the design of a product, or failure to warn a consumer of the risks of using a product. These principles have not been specifically applied to climbing equipment in reported cases, not even in *Sewell*. Nonetheless, it clearly is appropriate to hold manufacturers liable for malfunctioning defects, such as if, for instance, a manufacturer produced a harness that did disintegrate like in *Cliffhangers*. Likewise, manufacturers should be held liable for design defects if they are shown to have directly caused the inju-

ry. Often, however, it is difficult to determine whether the injury is attributable to a design defect or a user error. For instance, in Sewell, the jury never indicated whether the climber may have been at fault by failing to use the ascender correctly. But it is ridiculous to presume that the dangers of climbing should require extensive warning by a manufacturer. Even the most moronic climber should recognize the danger clearly. The same logic applies to disclaimers in climbing guidebooks and magazines: anyone old enough to read knows that cliffs and mountains are potentially hazardous to your health.

One other category of people that bears responsibility for the safety of climbers is guide services. The duty of a guide service is sometimes imposed by state statute, but regardless of the source of the duty, guide services, like other professionals, will be held to the generally accepted standard of care within the industry. The exemplary standards set by guides in this country unquestionably require a high regard for safety by practicing guides.

But unlike product manufacturers, guides can affirmatively require clients to waive the right to recover for the negligent acts of a guide, even if the duty for the client's safety is imposed by statute. Thus, guides can and do require climbers to execute liability waiver forms.

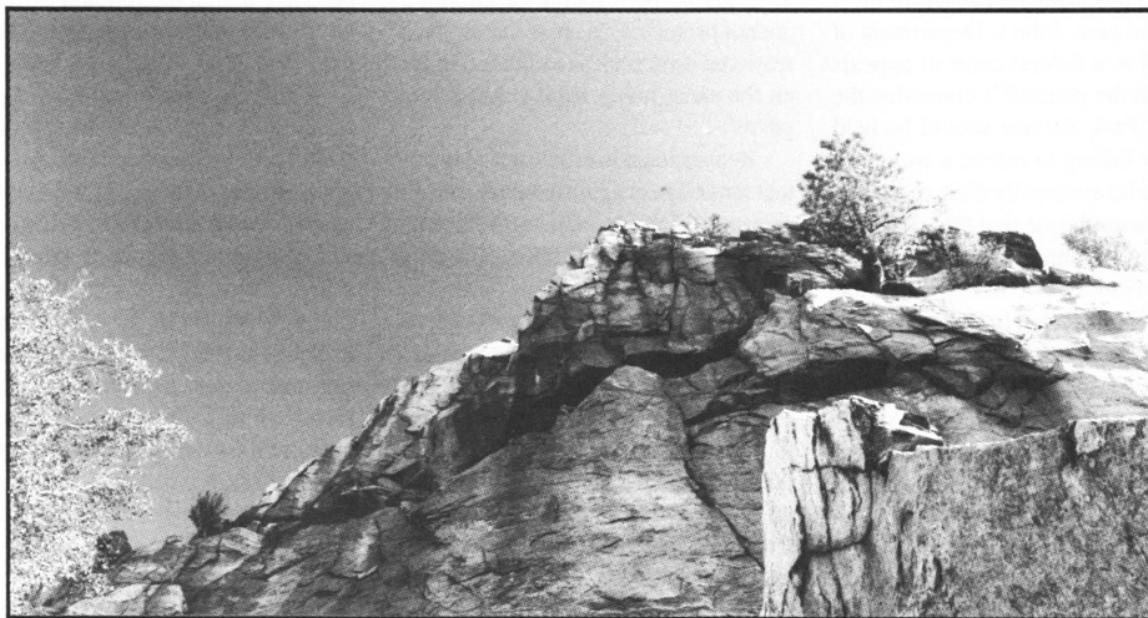
Once climbers sign on the dotted line, they assume the responsibility for all risks and injuries described in the release. Numerous courts have upheld these liability-release forms. In fact, one case, *Blid v. Rainier Mountaineering*, involved a mountaineering course in which a participant suffered a serious leg injury while being lowered into a crevasse. The release, which contemplated "hazards of traveling in mountainous terrain" and "accidents or illness in remote places," barred the plaintiff's recover. Valid release forms—perfectly appropriate to sports where some degree of danger is unavoidable—have allowed guide services to shift the responsibility for risk to where it rightly belongs: on the climber. Even novice climbers must be willing to accept the risk that guides will make mistakes. They do have alternatives—they can climb without a guide or stay at home.

At the recent Access Fund Rendezvous in Joshua Tree, California, a round-table discussion was held to address the Department of the Interior's plan to recoup rescue costs from climbers, beginning in Denali National Park. One option suggested was that climbers endorse a plan of self-reliance, so that the Park Service would no longer undertake climbers rescues and would avoid the cost all together. Climbers

would be solely responsible for their own safety. A person opposing that position stated that we have a moral responsibility to try to rescue climbers in danger, that we cannot leave them to die. This may be true, and, commendably, climbers traditionally have undertaken the responsibility to help their fellow climbers, but climbers should have no expectation of and certainly have no right to a rescue.

The perception that climbers have a right to a rescue or a right to safety, or have a right to recover damages from those people who fail to provide it for them, tears at the very fabric of the sport of climbing. There is a faction of climbers who will always blame outside forces for their own failure. They invented phrases like "I missed the crux because my shoes are blown" and "the hold was way greased with chalk." Well, I'm willing to admit that my shoes are fine; I'm just not that good a climber. If I meet my demise on the bold new expedition I'm planning—Everest: Drunk and Naked—it won't be the fault of the guide or the landowner or the government or the gear manufacturer or my climbing partner—it will be my fault. As Mark Knoffler said (in the song prophetically titled "Solid Rock"), "When you point your finger 'cause your plans fell through, you've got three more fingers pointin' back at you."

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Joan Grodzki

