

# KARABINER '86

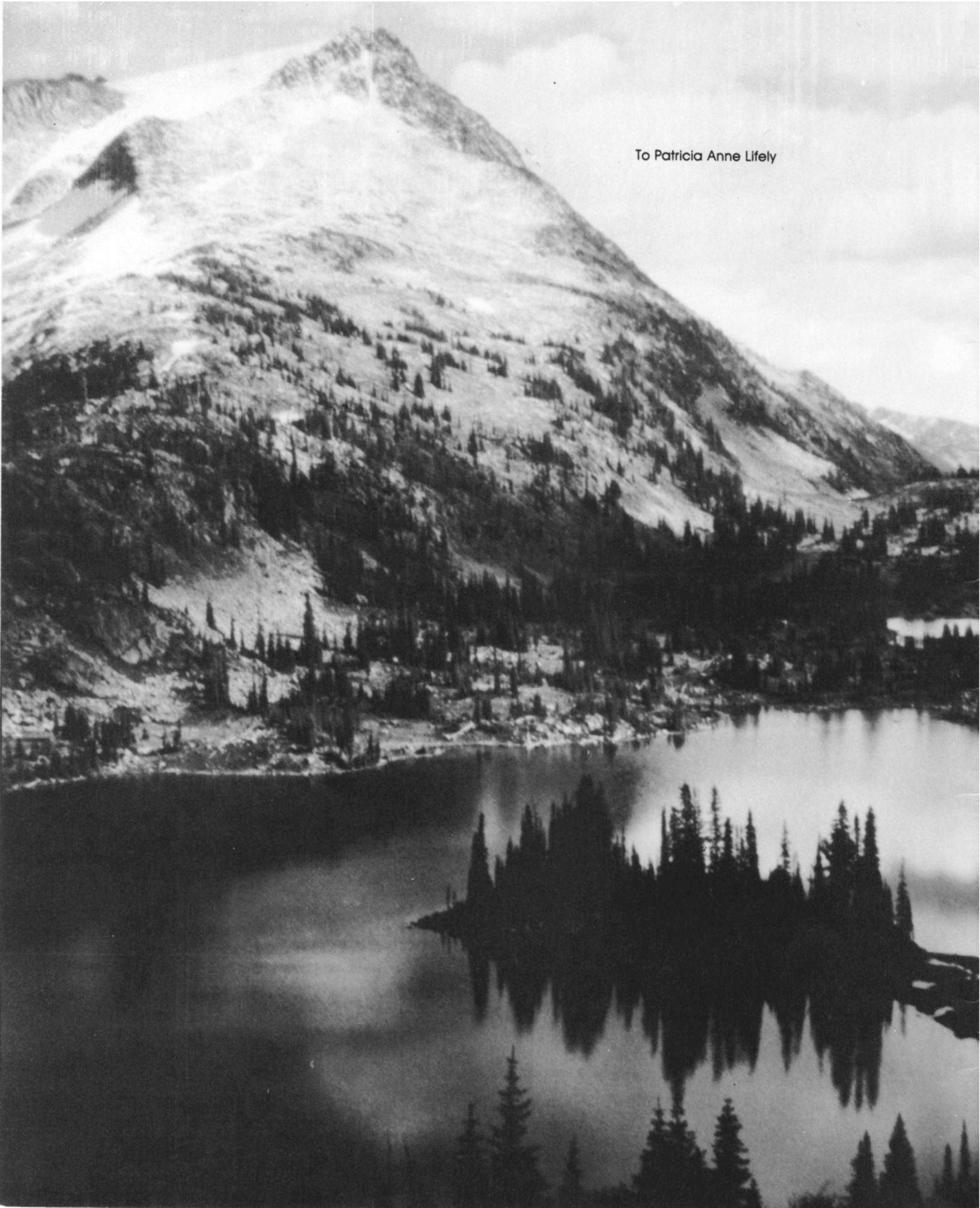
The Journal of the Kootenay Mountaineering Club

Vol. 29, Autumn 1986



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To Patricia Anne Lifely

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Vol. 29, Autumn 1986



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# Karabiner '86

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A prerequisite for molding something of quality is having quality materials to work with. In that regard my thanks go to all contributors to this edition for your rich and varied submissions.

A special expression of gratitude must go to the skilled crew who transformed my rough concepts into reality: the Electronic Publishing students of the Graphic Communications Department at Selkirk College in Castlegar. The high degree of professionalism they brought to the production task was an inspiration.

[Ed.]

# Karabiner '86

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## President's Report

by Fred Thiessen

Club organized activities have experienced unprecedented popularity this year. A total of 84 members attended camp, approximately 70% of the membership. Due to high enrollment, hiking camp was held for three consecutive weeks with 19 individuals per week. Climbing camp had 27 participants for the one week and some weekend outings reported over 20 people.

Unfortunately, the flip side of increased participation in outdoor activities can be a higher probability for accidents. As a club we had more than our share this year. Fortunately both camps were equipped with radios for emergency helicopter evacuations.

Accidents are sometimes unavoidable however if they do occur first aid knowledge is essential. Mountain rescue techniques should be familiar to all active club members as well. The reference material in the club library is an excellent resource for current information.

In future, all participants in the climbing course will be required to use helmets and harnesses to safeguard against personal injury and to cultivate safe climbing habits.

Along with climbing, ski-touring is another popular club activity. This year the club built two huts for ski-touring in the Bonnington Range with the assistance of a Canada Works grant. The successful project was created, coordinated and managed by George Apel in spite of adverse conditions.

In January a presentation was made to the Wilderness Advisory Committee regarding the Purcell Conservancy and Kokanee Park boundaries. The advisory committee's recommendations respecting Kokanee Park were not satisfactory to KMC and we will continue to lobby the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division for revised boundaries.

Finally, a volunteer organization exists only by the participation and commitment of its members and executive. I would like to thank all those who volunteered to lead trips, serve on the executive and participate in work parties. Without you the club wouldn't exist.

## Editor's Foreward

by Jeff Ross

Reflecting on the past year in the mountains, intense is the word that readily comes to mind. Early on, as winter blanketed our region, the signs of instability in the snowpack became evident, as did the likelihood of avalanche accidents. An almost inevitable toll which was exacted not just elsewhere, but close to home near Nakusp, and just outside the boundaries of Nelson's Whitewater Ski Area.

Then in May when our psyches were adjusting to a welcome change in seasons, there was the Mount Hood tragedy. Mount Robson exacted its toll later in the season, as did Washington's Mount Baker. Finally there were the three accidents at our own summer camps, two injuries at climbing camp, and a devastating fatality at hiking camp.

However, should we dwell on this darker side of the mountaineering experience? No, such transitions are part of life. Yet, given time now since the camp accidents, a healthy, universally held conclusion seems to have been reached. A universal conclusion that we should not let what has happened pass without a measured degree of introspection.

If there is a benefit to be gleaned from all the occurrences in the mountains over the past year, it is a reaffirmation of the need for a regular periodical review of our own programs, to insure safety standards remain a high priority. Safety concerns have always been of importance in club activities. But the requisite individual commitment each of us must make to insure our own personal safety, and likewise, that of the group while out there, has been brought into a sharper focus this year.

Selected members are now conducting safety and procedural reviews. Reviews which should be routine as we continue to strive for the highest standards.

But the year had its highs, too. In alpen glow at nine p.m. on May 20, Burnaby native Sharon Wood became the first North American woman to set foot on top of Everest!

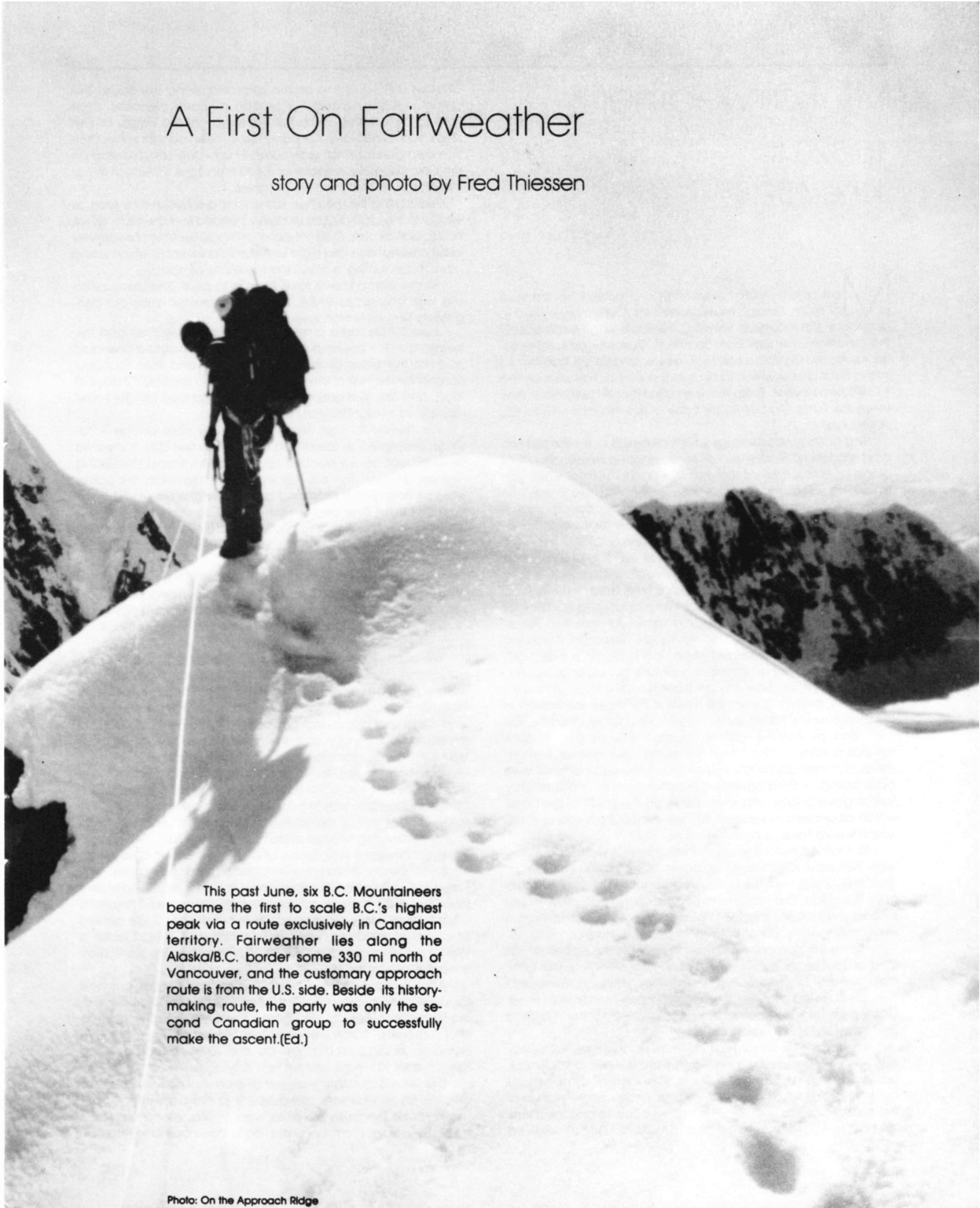
Club President Fred Thiessen and party inscribed another footnote in the history books; his successful Fairweather climb stirring vicarious feelings of pride in all of us.

Although hiking camp was understandably subdued for those who remained through the week of the accident, the following two weeks were essentially a non stop joy. In fact, the week two group may have to be levied a surcharge for excessive fun! It was sheer pleasure roaming through the extensive open alpine country around Anemone Pass near Mica Creek. The numerous small bands of caribou were the frosting on the cake for most participants, and sightings were made on typically long rambling day hikes, no matter what direction one took from camp. That brief summation replaces a more formal hiking camp account this year, while Larry Doell's off the wall account of week two participants' fetish with Earl Jorgenson's camp stools provides comic relief. Good medicine, and a welcome addition to Karabiner '86. Enjoy.



# A First On Fairweather

story and photo by Fred Thiessen



This past June, six B.C. Mountaineers became the first to scale B.C.'s highest peak via a route exclusively in Canadian territory. Fairweather lies along the Alaska/B.C. border some 330 mi north of Vancouver, and the customary approach route is from the U.S. side. Beside its history-making route, the party was only the second Canadian group to successfully make the ascent.(Ed.)

# Mt. Fairweather

15,320 ft

June 15-28

by Fred Thiessen

Most climbs of Mt. Fairweather are made from the west or south through Alaskan territory. Our group wished to approach the mountain from B.C., which is to the north-east of the mountain. We flew from Seattle to Gustavus on a scheduled Air Alaska flight, and as soon as we landed we transferred into a float plane which took us to the end of Tarr Inlet on the B.C./Alaska border. From there a Yukon based helicopter flew us up the Ferris Glacier to the base of the mountain 13 mi ESE of Tarr Inlet.

The ominous beginnings which plagued us for the first two days started at Gustavus. For some unknown reason the float plane operator figured that two five gallon cans of white gas would be ideal for mountaineering. So Bob went back to Juneau (at no charge to us) to round up one gallon cans of fuel while three of us started to fly in with the float plane. Then, my tent poles could not be found on arrival at Tarr Inlet, but we didn't notice this until after the plane left. The problem was easily solved, but with an expensive solution, as it meant another trip to Gustavus for our extra tent. Then in the scramble of unloading the second flight and arranging another for the spare tent, Grant misplaced or lost his camera and Pieps. The following morning after realizing they were lost, it was too late, the tide had come and gone. This ended our major glitches but it sure left us wondering what else could go wrong.

On schedule, June 15, the Trans North helicopter arrived to fly us in, dropping us at the base of the ridge we wished to climb. We were totally surrounded by hanging glaciers, ice

and avalanche-prone slopes. The clatter of rock fall was a stark contrast from Seattle the day before. Furthermore, our intended ridge route appeared quite difficult from base camp. A short afternoon reconnaissance into a nearby icefall gave a view of a snow slope on the south of the ridge which appeared passable. But we still couldn't see a route which would take us onto the ridge.

As it turned out these south facing slopes worked out very well. Two days later we set up camp about 1,500 yds west of our base camp near the base of a spur which projected south from the ridge. The route to this camp was all on snow which became very slushy by late afternoon. We were forced into an early shift, getting up at 0300 and going to bed at 1800.

Above this camp we followed the spur to the ridge, which involved some rock scrambling and snow climbing. The climbing was not technical, though the rock was very loose and the snow offered no relief. It was soft and we had to shovel our way up several hundred yards of chest deep snow. Gaining the ridge at 7800 ft was a relief.

The ridge was wide, had hard snow and was not badly corniced. Progress along the ridge went quickly, a small rock pinnacle midway along the ridge was the only problem. At the end of the ridge one final 300 yard snow slope led up to the Grand Plateau Glacier. Due to the exposure and because we had to carry loads to the Grand Plateau Glacier we fixed

about 1,000 yd of line on the spur and along the ridge. The going was slow along this section primarily because steps had to be created. With the exception of the ridge, all the steps had to be kicked or punched in, filled up with snow, then tramped down, which was painfully slow. We set up camp on the Grand Plateau Glacier at 8,520 ft on June 21, which in our minds was still reasonable progress.

Not trusting the weather, Eric started a snowcave as soon as we got to the plateau. Unfortunately it ended in a crevasse, so we had to start all over. Our snowcave and adjacent trenches proved to be a wise move. The night was stormy and windy, which would have made tenting a noisy and miserable prospect.

At this camp Ellen's face began to peel. She discovered she was allergic to PABA. Bob had some ten-year-old congealed Skreen, which helped.

June 22 became a rest day due to the weather and the exertions of the previous seven days. We all packed one load up from the base of the last snowslope and then lounged around for the rest of the day. At this camp we had 12 days of food, and felt that only the weather could stop us. The route appeared straightforward beyond camp.

We awoke to high winds and cloudy skies on the 23rd, which prompted us to settle in for another rest day. It cleared around noon so we packed up, and skied across the Grand Plateau Glacier. The skis made all the difference; our packs were so heavy that plodding across the glacier would have taken at least one and a half days. With skis we made the crossing in a few hours to a camp at 10,496 ft around 1900. This was to be our last camp. From here we hoped to climb the mountain on a day trip.

The weather was still with us the following morning. It was a bright sunny cloudless day and only a few degrees below zero. From this camp the route was straightforward. We were aiming for the col between the main and west peaks, then east up the west ridge of the main peak.

We used skis to go up the valley leading to the col. The avalanche danger was low, the crevasses and bergschlund were easily crossed, and we were at the col (13,251 ft) for lunch. From here we set off, up the peak's gentle snow and ice covered west ridge past occasional crevasses. Not being acclimated to this elevation, our pace up the ridge was dead slow as we plodded our way up, gaining elevation at only 450 ft/hr.

We reached the summit at 1600, surprisingly without any headaches or nausea. The summit views were superb; the St. Elias Range to the north was in full view, to the east the Llewellyn ice fields, Glacier Bay to the southwest and to the west the ocean was a shimmering orange plate reflecting the sun.

Even though it was sunny and clear, it was a cold minus 15. Since the shadows were lengthening, our stay on top was fairly brief, and after about an hour we left for a quick descent to the col. From the col, our roped-up ski down was a Keystone Cops routine as we zigzagged down to our camp. We arrived at camp at 2000, 11 hours after setting out. It had been a shorter day than we anticipated, thanks to the skis, particularly on the descent.

After a leisurely sleep we convened to discuss our next move: go home, climb Quincy Adams or go back to bed. Going home won out, as we figured the good weather had to end sometime. So off we went. We arrived at our snowcave camp in early evening, set up our radio and made arrangements to be picked up two days later.

Our final day down was trying, as our packs were heavy and the snow was soft. The descent to the base of the spur went quickly because our lines were in place and our steps were still usable. From this camp on to base camp we stumbled

ed and plodded in knee-deep snow. The snow and weak snowbridges made for some breathtaking crevasse jumping and a few missed heartbeats as we fell in. We all went in at least once, but without serious consequences. We reached base camp early enough to dry ourselves out before sunset. All of us were soaked from our knees down.

On schedule the following morning, the helicopter showed up to deposit us at Tarr Inlet by noon. Glacier Bay Air Services picked us up the following morning and by that night we were in Seattle.

In retrospect, our route was probably the easiest way up Fairweather. No aircraft landings are allowed inside Glacier Bay National Park, so when coming in from Alaska, it means up to two weeks to approach the mountain. Since we could fly to the base of the mountain, had good weather, an easy route, skis and good conditions, we were on top on the ninth day, which is fast for the St. Elias Mountains which are well known for their adverse weather.

Party: Ellen Wood, Bob Brusse, Grant McCormick, Eric White, Gord Frank, Fred Thiessen.

## Huckleberry Hut Project

by Tom Bell and George Apel

It's the evening of December 21, 1985, and the candle is flickering on the Smartie poker chips, while three of us enjoy the comfortable warmth of the new Huckleberry Hut. The chip piles are almost as lopsided as the cabin was last year.

After chasing a porcupine out in the spring of 1985 we decided it was time to either burn or build. In early September cedar snags were felled and dragged to the cabin site. Tom's father, Jack Bell, came up for a couple of days in October when we began to build. The cabin roof was jacked up at the fifth log and rolled back onto the road. Then we threw the bottom half into the fire and began to lay the sill logs. Over the next two weeks the three of us rebuilt the bottom of the cabin using 5 timbers and 19 logs, and then rolled the roof back on. The two youngsters gained a unique education in hewing a smooth surface with a broadaxe. Oh for some horse liniment!

After a brief break spent explaining how a couple of days could turn into two weeks, we went back and put in a new window, new bunks, and the old door. During November Jack built a new door and we brought it up yesterday on the Kokanee Nordic Ski Club snowmobile. It seemed fitting that the new door was hung on a beautiful sunny day. Once again, a cabin which had provided shelter and enjoyment for so many people was able to bask in the admiring eyes of its users.

For two years we had talked about how someone should fix up Huckleberry Hut, but it was only when we turned our eyes to ourselves did we realize who that someone was. We are consumers of the recreation resource and it is important that after partaking of this resource we return something to it. Whether through environmental activism, teaching at rock

school, or rebuilding an old weary cabin; it must be recognized that recreational resources are limited and must be replenished through our own actions.

Thanks to Paul, Lea, Earl Jorgensen, Bill Bing, and Ira Schwarz for their help. Also thanks to Don Bell for cutting the lumber at his sawmill. A special thanks to Jack Bell for his patience, experience and enthusiasm for a project he was asked to look at for a day or two.

Now then, where were we?...Oh yes, I'll match your four browns with two reds. Good Skiing!

## Mt Abbot Climb

9,640

by Fred Thiessen

Mt Abbot (9,640) ft in the Badshot Range is seldom visited due to its remoteness and difficult access. The incentive for attempting to climb the mountain this past July 19 was the knowledge that the old four-wheel drive road had been maintained and was passable.

Our trip began at Trout Lake where fifteen of us assembled on Friday night. Early Saturday morning we started up Healy Creek Road which was long, rough and muddy. Near the end of the road some miners told us they had built a new road from the pass in a south easterly direction. They requested we keep off it as they were using it that day. However, once we had parked and packed our gear at the pass we were able to hitch a ride on the 6 x 6 to the end of the road, with the exception of Howie, who missed the bus by about one minute. We didn't feel that guilty about Howie walking; it gave us a break and he's a triathlete anyway.

Offloading, we contoured around and up to the base of Mt Abbot where we had a snack and discussed climbing the peak. We broke into two groups. Group A headed across the glacier to try the west face and north ridge, while group B went up the south ridge. Group A had no problems with its route and reached the summit at noon. Group B proceeded up the ridge, then split into two groups B1 and B2. Group B1 continued up the ridge to enjoy two pitches of climbing on rotten rock. Group B2 backtracked to follow group A's tracks. The summit was too small to accommodate all of us, so we alternated our positions and descended via group A's route to reconvene at the base for another snack. Once back at the pass (1600 hrs) we decided to camp at Trout Lake rather than at the pass, so down we hiked for another 16½ mi of boneshaking road.

This outing destroyed my reputation for leading difficult trips. We were able to drive to 7,000 ft, be back at the cars within eight hours and have a swim at the end of the day. Decadent.

Our group consisted of Fred Thiessen, Michael Brewster, Bob and Dave Moisey, Kim Kratky, Janice Issac, Larry Smith, Esther Neufeld, Dave Neudorf, Paul Allen, Robin Laytham, Rod Beauprie, Chris Overton, Howie Ridge, and Liz Stanich.

# Trekking in Tasmania

by Kim Kratky

Cradle Mountain, Lake St. Clair National Park... We had heard it mentioned so many times when telling Queenslanders we were planning a two-week holiday in Tasmania. At first we were inclined to dismiss the northern reverence for this 326,040 acre alpine park in northwestern Tassie. Afterall, Queensland scarcely had a mountain worthy of the name (the good citizens of Townsville are said to be adding stones to the top of Castle Hill so that is can be gazetted as a mountain) and many residents have never seen snow. However, we were impressed by the Cradle Mountain area and would recommend it. Although not as grand as southeastern B.C., it provides rewarding scenery and challenging bushwalks.

Our three-day visit began on Monday, September 30 on an absolutely flawless spring day. After renting good-quality down sleeping bags for 75 cents each from the Department of Recreation of Devonport, we drove 59 mi south to the end of the road at Lake Dove. The serrated teeth of Cradle Mountain (5,067 ft) form a backdrop to the lake; most sedentary visitors are content to proudly slip on their down vests and stamp around the car park before retreating to the Cradle Mountain Lodge for drinkies.

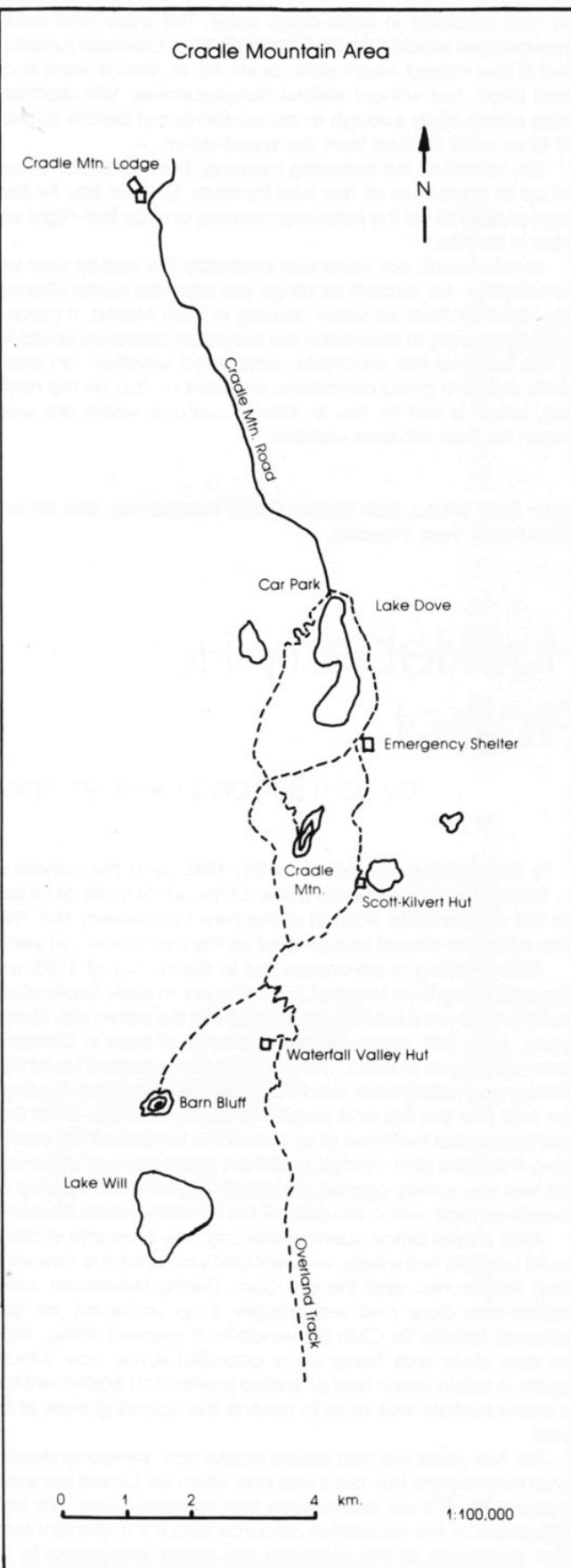
After fending off a few pesky black currawongs who seemed determined to fly away with our gear, we started off at 12:20 p.m., following a well-marked track to a hut NE of Cradle Mountain. In about two hours we reached the hut, dumped our heavy packs, and began to contour around the mountain on the north side. The track quickly degenerated as we alternated walking through waterfalls and stretches of bog.

From the NW flank of the mountain we scrambled over snow-covered blocks of dolerite to a secondary summit. After descending to a snowy col and bridging up a suitable chimney, I reached the summit plaque at 4:00 p.m. This most enjoyable scramble reminded me of a short day trip at home in May.

We spent our first night in the spacious Scott-Kilvert hut, one of some 12 maintained by the national park service. There was ample firewood and a creek nearby, but the outdoor toilet definitely needed emptying. Sharing the hut with Janice and myself were two local men, experienced bushwalkers who had been on the rescue party ten years ago when a high school group went astray and a student perished. A real problem seems to be the many poorly-equipped people who waltz over from the mainland prepared for nothing more than a day at Bondi Beach. The park authorities are constantly at pains to remind visitors that the wind-swept plateaus of the park receive snow even in summer.

Our second day we left the hut at the civilized hour of 10:00 a.m. for a trek across the desolate moorland of Cradle Cirque to Barn Bluff, a 5,113 ft high finger of rock that looks like a volcanic plug. The park literature, which makes no mention of volcanic activity, says "The present topography is largely an outcome of the last Ice Age, about 20,000 years ago..." Whatever its origins, Barn Bluff looked like a more formidable climb than it turned out to be - just another scramble.

On our descent, ominous ranks of cloud began to sweep out

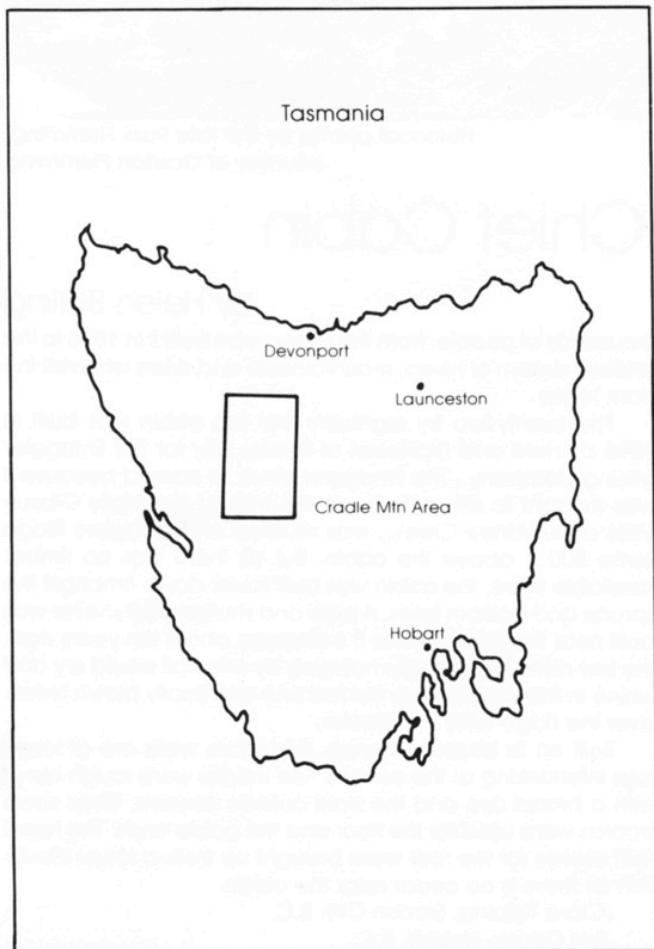


of the southwest, the source of most of the park's weather. We beat a hasty, muddy retreat to Waterfall Valley Hut, where the rain began in earnest just after our arrival at 3:00 p.m. Trails in the moorland section of the park get wider and muddier as walkers search for solid footing. Gaiters are definitely useful.

After a moderately comfortable night in the drafty hut - the little firewood we found was well soaked, - we awoke on Wednesday to find our valley pretty well socked in. Up on the edge of the 3,936 ft high plateau we could see fresh snow. Deciding that conditions looked less than pleasurable, we chose to return to the carpark via the Cradle Plateau, thus making a circuit of Cradle Mountain. A subsequent look in the guide book told us something we were soon to learn, "...great care must be taken on this section in bad weather."

Once on the plateau we blundered along the easy-to-see trail in high winds and blowing snow. We certainly needed every bit of gear from home-Gore-tex jackets, wool trousers and shirts, mitts, and touques. As the track descended, the weather improved so that by the time we reached the carpark, after three and a half hours, things seemed almost normal. Once again the black currawongs perched on our car's open doors and once again the motor-bound humans paid their brief respects to the alpine stillness.

Cradle Mountain-Lake St. Clair National Park offers much more than we were able to see in our brief trek. Perhaps the best-known attraction is the 53 mi Overland Track, a five day journey through the park from north to south. We are waiting for some other KMC traveller to write that report.



## Mt Duncan Climb 10,592 ft

by Kim Kratky

Over the last few years loggers have pushed farther up the Duncan River. By the autumn of 1984 it was possible to drive right to the southern edge of Glacier National Park and the headwaters of the Duncan.

There is something mysterious, something evocative about that phrase *up the Duncan*. For me it brings thoughts of remote logging camps and the stories George Robinson tells of his dad's trapping days. So when Peter McIver asked me to lead a club trip this year, I looked at the map and said, "Sure, Mt Duncan."

This 10,592 ft peak, situated in the Melville Group, is within the angle made by the intersection of Butters Creek and the Duncan River, to the north of Outrigger Ridge. The area is some 148 mi north of Nelson and can be reached in about four and a half hours; the road is suitable for two-wheeled drive vehicles, although it is deteriorating north of Westfall River.

On Friday, July 25, Janice and I drove to a campsite at the Butters Creek bridge where the rest of the party met us that evening. Joining us were Peter Tchir, Fred Thiessen, Rod Beaupris, Chris Overton, and Dave Neudorf.

Saturday morning the alarm went off at 4:30 a.m. and was promptly ignored, since rain was beating steadily against the tents. Finally, about 7:00 a.m. the rain stopped. We crawled out for a look at the low, grey clouds and had a leisurely breakfast. "Well," we agreed, "we can't drive this far without doing something. Let's check out the route." At 9:00 a.m. we left our vehicle in a clear-cut at 4,800 ft at the park's edge to ascend timbered slopes to the west. Five and a half hours later the first of our party reached the summit.

Of the climb itself there isn't much to say. Quite acceptable bushwacking can be enjoyed by keeping in timber to the north of the east-flowing Duncan. A moraine on the north side of the Duncan Glacier was reached in an hour. Higher up, we donned crampons and roped up to cross and ascend the glacier to reach Duncan's south ridge. By this time it was snowing steadily, so we mustered our collective will and ascended the easy broken rock of the SE arête to a snow summit.

Viewed from above, Mt Duncan is a massive L-shaped mountain with three summits of nearly equal height. Our summit, the southern one at the end of the L's foot, was climbed by a party in 1947, although we found no summit record. The northernmost summit was first climbed in 1913 by Holway, Feuz, and Häseler, Jr. Remarkably enough, the weather made a brief lunge for respectability while we were on the top, allowing us views of Moby Dick, Typee, Omoo and others.

Our return to Fred's Toyota was made in a brisk three hours, without incident. Just as we slung our packs into the truck at 6:30 p.m., the rain started again after holding off for our entire climb. Back at camp we all crammed into the Toyota for a celebration feast in the rain. It was a good day. The weather gods smiled on us. We did 12,000 vertical feet after a ridiculously late 9:00 a.m. start, and all climbers reached the summit. Next year we'll try Beaver Mountain, just west of Mt Duncan.



Kokanee Mountaineering Club Outing Circa 1920's

Historical photos by the late Ross Flemming,  
courtesy of Gordon Flemming

## A History of the Slocan Chief Cabin

The miners built the roads and trails into Kokanee some thirty years before it was declared a park. Of the many cabins they built, the Violet at the head of Silver Spray Creek and the Slocan Chief are the only survivors. For these excellent trails and roads the recreational user of the park today owes a debt of gratitude to those hardy men who created access up the six main drainages of the park. It would be impossible to duplicate those trails and roads today. They were handmade with a pick and shovel, horses and a stone boat or go devil, as it was called, and hand drill for blasting. The disturbance to the surrounding area was minimal. Except for the odd rock slide and inevitable windfalls, these roads and trails remain in good condition today.

Of the four access routes to the cabin: the Lemon, the Enterprise, the Keene and the Kokanee Creek drainages, Kokanee and Keene Creeks are the most heavily used. From these road heads it is approximately a two to three hour hike to the cabin, on a good trail. Four wheel drive vehicles are not required for these gravel roads.

The Slocan Chief Cabin stands on a bedrock bench at the foot of the northwest tongue of Kokanee Glacier at an elevation of 6,600 ft. For 90 years this magnificent log structure has provided the only shelter in this area of the park for literally

thousands of people: from the miners who built it in 1896 to the endless stream of hikers, mountaineers and skiers who visit the park today.

The twenty-two by eighteen foot log cabin was built in 1896 by Held and Dickinson of Slocan City for the Smuggler Mining Company., The Smuggler Mine, so named because it was thought to smuggle in on the end of the Molly Gibson Vein on Kokanee Creek,<sup>2</sup>, was situated on Smugglers Ridge some 500 ft above the cabin. But as there was no timber available there, the cabin was built lower down amongst the spruce and balsam trees. A pole and shake horse shelter was built near the mine. Before it collapsed about ten years ago, the few remaining shakes hanging by one nail would cry and whine in the wind before the last one was finally blown away, over the ridge onto the glacier.

Built on its bedrock bench, the cabin walls are of large logs interlocking at the corners. The insides were rough hewn with a broad axe and the bark outside remains. Whip sawn boards were used for the floor and the gable ends. The hand split shales for the roof were brought up from a lower elevation as there is no cedar near the cabin.

,Clare Tipping, Slocan City, B.C.

,Eric Denny, Nelson, B.C.

by Helen Butling

## Mining

The Smuggler Mining Company worked the mine for three years. In April of 1900, a local newspaper reported that the Smuggler, among a few other mines in the area, possessed undoubted mineral wealth.<sup>3</sup> In May the Smuggler was sacking ore for shipment. By June, the mine employed 23 men and by the end of the month the number was reported to be 62. In September, Oscar McMillan was commissioned to pack out the twenty tons of silver-rich ore via Lemon Pass and over Six Mile lakes to Nelson for smelting. During the snow free months the horses, using pack saddles, carried as much as 270 lbs each. In the winter the ore was rawhided out, that is, wrapped in cowhides skin side out and dragged behind the horses in the snow. In deep snow, straw filled ore sacks were strapped to the horses hooves to act as snowshoes.

However, by the end of the month the bond on the Smuggler was called in. In the resulting case of Greenlee versus Dickinson in Nelson the judge ruled that the net proceeds from the two hundred sacks of ore from the Smuggler were to go to the Bank of Montreal in payment of debts of both Dickinson and Greenlee. The 1928 mining records show a shipment of four tons of ore from the Smuggler, running at 276 oz of silver to the ton.<sup>4</sup>

Also in 1900, Clare Tipping of Slocan City staked the Snow Storm or Slocan Chief (from which the cabin gets its name) not far from the cabin to the south. The remains of the tunnel can still be seen today. Mining records show a total of sixteen tons of ore running at 144 oz of silver to the ton were shipped from this mine in 1901, 1923 and 1924. Since the last shipment from the Smuggler in 1928 there are no more records of any ore being shipped from these mines.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Slocan Drill

<sup>4</sup>Slocan Drill April-September editions, 1900

<sup>5</sup>Government Mining Records

## Recreation

The Kokanee Mountaineering Club (not to be confused with the Kootenay Mountaineering Club of today) was formed in 1916, and used the Slocan Chief Cabin as headquarters for their annual summer camps. These were obviously fairly large camps. Thirty-eight names for the 1925 camp are inscribed on a board and nailed to the wall above the east door.

At that time there was another cabin near the Chief also built by Held and Dickinson for the Smuggler Mining Company. This cabin was later demolished by an avalanche and no sign of it remains today. At this time the Slocan Chief was well equipped with bunks, cooking utensils and furniture. The gear, food and cook were taken in by Clare Tipping and his horses from the Joker Mill site the day before.

Freida Hume, a charter member of the Club wrote in 1922 of catching the 6:30 a.m. ferry from Nelson and travelling by Jitney (Model A Ford) twelve miles along the North Shore and, if the road permitted, five miles up the Kokanee Creek Road. From there it would be a thirteen mile hike to the cabin. At the Molly Gibson Mine, twelve miles up the road, they would wait for the hardy souls who had taken the steamer from Nelson to Kokanee Landing and walked all the way up the road. Freida wrote of the difficulties of picking their way across the rock slide on the west side of Kokanee Lake; the trail was not built until the thirties. It was this slide that necessitated the pack train going in by a different route.

The main purpose of this trip was the official opening of the park for which the club had been campaigning for

several years. At the park boundary on the Kokanee Creek Road on August 22, 1922, Kokanee Glacier Park was officially designated as a Class A park in a short speech by the incumbent M.L.A. Mr. K. Campbell. Kokanee Glacier Park encloses an area ten miles square. Within these boundaries are several glaciers, the six mile square Kokanee Glacier being the largest. Over thirty mountain lakes above the six thousand foot level of which the Joker Lakes, or Green Lakes as they were called, are the most spectacular.<sup>6</sup>

The 1922 camp consisted of 23 people, 5 of whom were women; this was only the second year that women had been allowed on the trip. Fortunately, the five women who had been included on trail on the 1921 trip (of whom Freda was one) had proved themselves capable of enduring these mountain adventures.

On arrival at the cabin, Freda described how the men cut boughs for the beds, taking care to take only one or two branches from each tree. They put up the tents for the women and chose their own bunks in the cabin.

Class A parks are exempt from logging and mining. However, in 1964 Kokanee Glacier Park was demoted to Class B to allow a company to mine the Molly Gibson Vein. Nothing came of this venture and except for the Scranton Mine, which is right on the edge of the park boundary, no more mines have operated within the park boundaries. An area which includes Kokanee Glacier, Kokanee Lake, Joker Lakes and the cabin plateau has been designated as the heart area of the park and is exempt from mining or logging.

<sup>6</sup>Arthur Foster, Nelson, B.C.

,Government publication on Kokanee Glacier Park



"Hotel Lipstick" Circa 1920's Fire

In 1932 a fire broke out near Keene and Garland Lakes. John Applewaite and Rex Taylor of the Forest Service were sent in up Kokanee Creek to fight the fire. In a letter to Helen Butling, John Applewaite writes: "We soon realized there was nothing we could do to put out such a large burning area. We decided to go to the cabin and see if we could save that. We cut a fire guard round it and by taking turns sleeping we were able to extinguish all the burning fragments as they fell and save the cabin."

"During this time," they said, "our oasis became a sanctuary for many animals and birds. We saw bears, birds, marten, marmots and pikas, some of which were badly scorched, standing around together. Normally these animals would be preying on each other, but in this situation they kept to themselves, licking their wounds and resting. As the inferno died down they wandered off to Enterprise Pass where the fire had burned itself out."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>John Applewaite's letter to Helen Butling

## Vandalism

The dirty thirties saw abuse and destruction of the cabin. The Mountaineering Club was not using it any more, and no mining was going on. People using the cabin at this time used the furniture and floor for firewood, and broke dishes and the windows. Now the porcupines could come in and out and add to the destruction.

## Spyglass Roderick MacLeod

Spyglass Roderick MacLeod, so named because of his association with the Spyglass Mining Company which held claims on Poplar Creek in the Lardeau. For the six years up to 1945, MacLeod made the cabin his headquarters while working the claims he had preempted from Harry Reichart, the Lone Dutchman.

MacLeod did much towards restoring the cabin, replacing the floor, bringing up a new stove -- by pack horse from the Joker Mill Site -- replacing the windows and generally making it habitable once more. Gladys Barker, MacLeod's daughter, relates that Annie the horse always made a fuss when she came to one particular place on the trail -- a short switchback on bedrock. It became known as Annie's Corner. Anyone familiar with the trail will recognize the spot.

After her father's death in 1945, for the next fifteen years to 1960, Gladys Barker and her family spent their holidays at the cabin, doing the necessary work on the claims to keep them in good standing. Besides the annual clean up of other people's mess that they were faced with each summer, they patched the now leaking roof with roofing paper and kept the cabin in as good shape in the short time they were there each year. If it had not been for the care the Barkers gave the cabin these fifteen years it is doubtful that it would have survived.

## Renovations

By 1961, with no one giving the cabin any attention any more, it was in a sad state of disrepair. The original shakes of 1896 were paper thin and easily blown off, the roofing put on by the Barkers was peeling off, windows were boarded up, floor boards were rotting; the cook stove was rusting away and there were few areas in the cabin free from drips.

At this point much to the consternation of a few dedicated users of the cabin, the Parks Branch, after cursory examination of the cabin one Sunday afternoon in July 1962, decided that it should be burned down. The Slocan Chieftains, as they called themselves, who were already planning renovations to the cabin, did not give up. Their spokesman Michael Stewart of Nelson, after several meetings with the powers that were, persuaded the Parks Branch to let his group go ahead with their plans. They would do the work and solicit funds. The Parks

Branch gave their blessing and agreed to provide some monetary help.

During August and September 1962, under the leadership and organization of Michael Stewart and Helen Butling, six weekend work parties were held.

An average of fifteen people would meet for supper in Kaslo before driving the then hazardous road to the Joker Mill Site twenty miles from Kaslo. From there it was a flashlight hike to the cabin. This is by far the shortest but steepest route to the cabin, however, doing it at night it is not so noticeable, unless one happens to look up and see the winding lights high up on the hill. Sometimes the hike was made in pouring rain, other times under a starlit sky.

In those days the cabin was well equipped with dishes, etc., and it was safe to leave sleeping bags and foamies from week to week, but besides food, the packs were always filled with nails, tools or even panes of glass.

Though people worked hard, these were also fun weekends; for the 1962 work parties people paid twenty-five cents a meal and Helen Butling saw to it that the food was of the best. In fact one young engineer from the Cominco Staff House in Trail was heard to remark that the Slocan Chief Cabin was renovated due to the indifferent food at the staff house. From one week to the next the young men looked forward to the superb Saturday night standing roast beef and lemon pie dinner. Helen also baked bread, her excuse being that she liked baking in a wood stove.

At this time mice were a real problem; there were dozens of them running over the faces of the cabin occupants at night. There were droppings all over the tables and any available food was nibbled. In desperation the *drowning in the bucket* method was used. It could be left from week to week and would catch an average of twenty-five mice a week. .

Art Waters of Waters Construction Company gave of his time and expertise to supervise the work. At the end of the six weeks the cabin had a magnificent new shake roof, two new windows in the gable ends, which gave a lot more light in the cabin. Three broken windows were replaced, a heater, a good cookstove, a woodshed and new foundation logs with cement work and rocks to keep the porcupines out were all part of the improvements.

Donations came from the Interior Breweries of Nelson (who picture the Haystack on the Kokanee Beer Bottle), Ross Fleming of Nelson, J. Oliver of Gray Creek, and Mr. and Mrs. Dave Abbey of Kaslo, not to mention the many man hours donated by those on the work parties.

In 1963 there was \$350 in the Slocan Chieftains account, money donated by two American Climbing Clubs that spent their 1962 holidays in the park, using the cabin as their headquarters. With this money and another series of work parties during the summer of 1964, the floor was replaced and a ceiling installed to create an upstairs sleeping area. In that same year cables were stretched between the walls to compensate for having moved the rafters up to accommodate the upstairs sleeping area.

•The Mouse Trap Water Bucket: fill a galvanised water bucket three quarters full of water; thread a strong wire through a small juice can smeared with peanut butter; bend ends of wire and place across bucket; hook a shake or board onto side of bucket.

# Ski Training Camps

For four years to 1970 the Canadian Amateur Ski Association (CASA) held a series of training camps through July and August, putting up tent platforms near the cabin and using a permanent patch of snow below the glacier as a training slope. The cabin was used for slide shows and lectures.

During this time grizzly bears became a problem, invading the cook tent and on one occasion breaking a window in the cabin. The game warden and Park Ranger were of the opinion that poor garbage disposal was at the root of the problem. This generated a good deal of argument both defending and attacking the CASA. However, when the camps terminated in 1970 to relocate at Whistler Mountain, bear problems ceased while during their four years occupation it had been deemed necessary to shoot five camp-happy grizzlies for safety's sake.

## Ski Touring

As early as 1962 groups were using the cabin for winter ski touring. A small party flew in to spend Christmas there that year, skiing out by way of Kokanee Creek.

The University of British Columbia Varsity Outdoor Club, starting in 1963, still organizes a winter trip to the cabin during the week between Christmas and New Year.

Since 1975 when the Alpine Club of Canada held a two week ski trip at the cabin, winter use has increased. The cabin is solidly booked from Christmas to May.

The ski mountaineers taking part in these camps come from all over the world and are a far cry from the average downhill skier. They are willing to spend all day pushing their skis uphill, not only for the pleasure of the ski down but also for the delight of being in the mountains. For the twelve or so skiers attending these camps it is a never-to-be-forgotten experience. After sharing the chores and snores, enjoying the leisurely suppers and social evenings, they find a rapport generated that belongs to that week alone.

## Maintenance

For ten years after the final renovation in 1964, the Kootenay Mountaineering Club held annual fall work parties at the cabin, giving it a good cleaning, iron oiling the floor, doing the necessary maintenance and restocking the woodshed. Like the original work parties, these were fun weekends with the same roast beef and lemon pie dinner (the price had now gone up to fifty cents a meal). As the last person iron oiled himself out the door, the cabin seemed to glow with pride at being restored to such mint condition.

Since 1974, the Parks Branch has looked after the cabin, adding a cupboard, sink unit and drain as well as some structural reinforcement for the walls and gable ends.

To conserve wood, the cookstove and heater were removed and a large exchange type heater installed in the middle of the cabin.

As all the available dead wood near the cabin has long since been used up, during the summer dead snags are flown in from the surrounding area, bucked up and stored in a shed near the cabin where they are available to be carried over to the woodshed for splitting. Woe betide the group that

does not leave at least a day's supply of kindling and split wood in the cabin and a woodshed full of wood. Hopefully, the previous group has done the same.

In 1969, the Parks Branch completed the building of an insulated A-frame cabin on Kalmia Lake not far from the cabin. With the number of visitors increasing each summer it was now necessary to have a resident ranger in the area for the summer months. A limit of twenty was put on the cabin. Signs to that effect are posted at the road heads advising people to bring tents, etc. The ranger collects the cabin fees and sees that people only camp in the designated areas.

In 1983, as a result of the dramatic increase in winter use of the cabin, a volunteer custodian was installed in the ranger cabin, from November to April. Complete with a radio supplied by Okanagan Helicopters and a weather station, communication was established on a daily basis.

## Future of the Cabin

Up until 1983, the future of the cabin was uncertain. The Parks Branch was undecided as to whether it should be abandoned and more efficient cabin built nearby, or the money spent on the Slocan Chief to make it suitable for winter use. In the fall of 83, the latter plan won out, and a start was made by panelling the downstairs with white pine. This not only warmed up and lightened the cabin, but also cut down on the wood consumption. Since then the stairway has been closed in.

## Epilogue

This year, the Slocan Chief Cabin celebrates its ninetieth birthday, and has proved its worth as a year round use facility.

It has survived many things: an avalanche that destroyed a cabin less than a hundred yards away, a fire that blackened the land, and vandalism in the thirties. It has served as a base for two mines, two mountaineering clubs, and a skiers training camp. It has twice not been considered worthy of restoration, but restored it has been.

It has stood on its bedrock bench for ninety years, the engineers have pronounced it a sound structure.

May it be well cared for and stand forever.



Photo: Jeff Ross

# Hail to the Chief! (and one H. Butling)

by Jeff Ross

Rough hewn, strong and sturdy were the hard rock miners who prospected for silver at the Smuggler Mine in the 1890's. And when they hit paydirt it warranted construction of a cabin, true to the character of its occupants. Rough hewn, strong and sturdy, the structure would come to be known as the Slocan Chief Cabin.

Exactly ninety years later, this past September 13, over 100 people converged at the cabin beneath the northern end of Kokanee Glacier at the inspirational wellspring and historic center of Kokanee Glacier Park for the Chief's 90th birthday party. Gore-tex, thinsulate, pile, polypropylene and polar fleece clothing, all in a rainbow of colors, electronic motor driven cameras and video equipment, all were in evidence.

Astonishing stuff that not even a hard night with demon rum could have conjured up in the minds of those working the Smuggler prospect so long ago. But as the sturdy timbers were carefully set into place, if not being able to visualize our colourful appearance and wondrous accoutrements, might the frontier craftsmen toiling on the cabin have foreseen it would stand ninety winters more to accommodate our celebration? It would be nice to somehow let them know it did.



Photo: Larry Doell



Photo: Larry Doell

Although we had come to pay homage to the venerable Chief and its long gone creators, we all shared the distinct pleasure of being able to honor, in person, the generation of dedicated folk who saw the cabin through its oft troubled latter middle age up to the present. The people who, like their immediate predecessors, the members of the old Kokanee Mountaineering Club, were largely responsible for there being a Slocan Chief Cabin to honor these ninety years later.

Chief of the Chief's chief defenders, and number one lady (spouses excepted) in the hearts of most members of the Kootenay Mountaineering Club, Helen Butling was of course in attendance, as wild grizzlies couldn't have kept her from the proceedings. Besides Helen's long time ministrations on behalf of the cabin, which has spanned decades, Helen played a very real part in shaping the character of many a youth who had a hand in the maintenance of the Chief. Youngsters who were now grown adults in attendance at the party who were there in no small part to pay homage to Helen as well as the cabin.

Along with the grub, (the famous meals which Helen would whip up), she would minister to the flock, usually on a one to one basis, touching on subjects ranging from wilderness ethics, to the danger to one's backside if she caught anyone deporting themselves in a manner which might result in a compromise to the integrity of the cabin. During one of several honorary presentations to Helen, in concurrence with her efforts to safeguard the cabin, one of her former charges, now a Parks Branch official, said "Yeah, she kept us from burning it down!" This was just one of many warm thanks delivered to Helen, whose contributions to the KMC since its inception have matched or exceeded those she had made on behalf of the Chief. She is a ready confidant, respected sounding board, and a source of wise counsel for those working through the odd club-related dilemma. She is also among the most charming of companions on a trip afield, where her presence has enriched the experiences of so many.

During the formal tributes, Helen was presented with the Alpine Club of Canada's Service Award, by the ACC's and KMC's own Garth Thomson. Last fall Helen was awarded an honorary lifetime membership in the ACC. Our own President Fred Thiessen presented Helen with a lifetime membership in the KMC. Helen shares this rare honor this year with long time active club member and past office holder, Leo Gansner, of Cranbrook. Leo unfortunately could not be present at the party to receive his award.



Photo: Larry Doell

Yet another event was the dramatic unveiling of a delightfully mis-lettered trail sign that was to have been installed near the cabin. As the garbage bag shrouds fell away, the sign reading: Trail to Helen Deane Park, was revealed. Though all present were heartily in favor of this new park designation, Parks Branch official Phil, ("just when you thought it was safe to come out on the porch again, it's time for another presentation"), Whitfield said, the sign should have read Helen Deane Lake rather than Park, so it was dismounted and presented to Helen for use at home. For anyone not aware of the fact, Deane is Helen's maiden name, and Helen Deane Lake was named years ago, mainly in honor of her efforts on behalf of preserving the cabin.

As an attempt to name all the multi-leveled dignitaries present at the party would risk an omission, I won't. However, thanks must go to KMC's own John Carter who orchestrated the proceedings in conjunction with his duties for the Parks Branch. Also it would be remiss not to mention the man who kept our internal fires burning despite the early winter weather, Nelson chef extraordinaire Eric Zimmerman whose catering efforts provided everything we desired including the frosting on the cake. A birthday cake, (one of several), even sported a finely detailed chocolate replica of the Chief on top!

## Hut to Hut Hiking

by John Carter

Who would believe that in the Kootenays we have one of the finest hiking routes using three mountain huts? Some would say impossible; that one has to go to Switzerland or Italy or the high Sierra Nevada. But no, here in our backyard, Kokanee Glacier Park has a truly exciting route and one that could even be expanded.

Our foursome began from Gibson Lake, approximately nine miles up the Kokanee Creek road. A leisurely hike to the Slocan Chief Cabin along the Gibson Lake to Kokanee Lake trail started the hiking portion of the traverse.

A note for visitors to the West Kootenays; the trail is easy to follow and affords good viewpoints of Grays Peak, and the string of mountain lakes sometimes provide a tasty cutthroat. After approximately four hours the historic Slocan Chief Cabin is reached. Built in 1896, the cabin provides a welcome home away from home. There is a cozy wood stove to warm your toes with on a rainy, wet day, a comfortable sleeping loft and a glacier fed water supply nearby. There is a minimal \$5.00 charge per person per night year round to help defray costs of operating the facility.

Arising early, we began our traverse to the Woodbury Hut by ascending the trail to the toe of Kokanee Glacier. From that point on we would leave the trail behind to find our route using maps and altimeter. A steep climb on hard snow up the glacier between Battleship and Pyramid brought us to the top of the Battleship. From here we climbed carefully, heading east across the glacier to the south end of the Giant's Kneecap (9100 ft). What a glorious view, the steep walled Valhallas to the west, the Leaning Towers to the east and Mt Cooper and the Bugaboos to the north.

We descended from the Giant's Kneecap in an easterly direction picking the safest route through the icefield to bring us near Coffee Pass directly below Mt Cond. We reached Coffee Pass after an interesting scramble up a steep moraine, then gradually ascended in a northerly direction to a steep, hidden gully west of Kane Peak. Snow was evident in the gully but in the same condition as the snow on the icefield -- soft and wet. We made a short ascent across the gully, then climbed through the scree and gently sloping slabs to a steep gully leading off the south ridge of Kane. One could gain the same ridge, perhaps 250 ft further to the southeast. Once we gained Sawtooth Ridge we could see the headwaters of Woodbury, Silver Spray and Lendum Creeks.

After a short climb to Kane Summit, we realized that we could not continue down the north ridge. We had to descend to the snowfield but not till after lunch. The peak is a great location to ponder the encircling peaks and lakes, particularly the back of Kokanee Glacier. A short traverse across a snow bowl and we were on another rocky ridge leading off Kane. From there we descended to the glacier northeast of Kane to a beautiful but very stark cirque southeast of Glacier-View Peak. We were now on the east slope of the Sawtooth Range in truly spectacular scenery. Steep, almost vertical hanging ice and snow sheets clung to the peaks and huge fields of fallen slabs protruded through the quickly melting snow. There is even a small lake at the foot of this bleak cirque.

Leaving the area, we ascended a natural ramp of snow and rock which led to the summit of the Woodbury Glacier. This is the only way up to the glacier and the Glacier-View Peak. From the glacier we were able to see our destination, Woodbury Chalet. We chose not to ascend Glacier-View and so carefully descended Woodbury Glacier bearing to the left or west about halfway down to avoid the crevasses and the breakover point. A lovely, fast descent on snow to the upper basin area followed by a short ramble through isolated meadows and alpine larch soon brought us to Woodbury hut. A welcome sight for us all after ten hours and moments before a rain shower!

Morning dawned cloudy and cooler but still a good day to travel to Silver-Spray Hut. Our route began following the old mining trail behind the cabin to the 7900 ft level. A narrow level traverse brought us to a col at which point we began to descend soft, steep snow into a basin east of Moonlight Peak. An easier route over might be found slightly further up the ridge but then quite a lot more loose scree would have to be

crawled across! A short descent through some large boulders brought us to enjoyable grassy slopes at which point we traversed through the basin maintaining our elevation. Our route followed the 7300 ft or 7400 ft contour to the first lake southeast of Mt Kemball. This lake is a gem, set amid rocky slabs and small meadows. From the lake one can look straight across to Woodbury Glacier and the entire Woodbury Creek drainage.

A slightly ascending traverse from the lake around the ridge brought us to another small lake. The terrain is very easy to travel through and in season the larches and wildflowers are very pleasant. A word of caution; there have been grizzly sightings along this traverse route and care should be taken. From the small lake, an ascent of approximately 500 ft brought us to the south ridge of Evening Star Peak. A good location for lunch and a study of the previous day's route past Kane and Glacier-View Peak.

We climbed the ridge for 100 vertical feet and then skirted around Evening Star's southeast basin to another ridge leading off to a small summit to the east. A short time later we entered Clover Basin and wandered among the tiny tarns and meadows, finally reaching Silver-Spray Cabin under light rain showers. The remainder of the day was spent cleaning the cabin and reading the log book. The next morning we followed the miner's trail to the old Violet Mine site and continued on to Mt McQuarrie. The view was obscured by fog so we wandered back to the cabin, packed up and descended the trail to the Woodbury Creek parking lot and the end of a highly successful trip.

#### Packsack notes:

##### Map selection:

Slocan 82F/14 or Kokanee Glacier Park 1925

##### Best time:

Early July to early August on our route but later if slightly different route taken and additional equipment (crampons)

##### Time required:

Gibson to Slocan Chief — 4 hours

Slocan Chief to Woodbury Hut — 10 hours

Woodbury Hut to Silver-Spray Hut — 4 hours

Silver-Spray Hut to carpark — 1½ hours

A photographic record of the tour is available and those wishing to view it should call John.

## Rainy Day in Valhalla Park Hoben Creek

by Anne Dean

I arrived at the Silverton Camp Site at 8:30 a.m. in a torrent of rain. Four people from Rossland huddled under the trees. Deciding on a more pleasant alternative, they opted for the Nakusp Hot Springs. A boat appeared and the leader, a wet, grim looking Derek Willans climbed out. Myron Reise, Randy DeYoung and Ross Breakwell were already on the other side. Peggy LePage, Bob Perchie and Shirly Bonney

arrived and soon two boats were cutting through the calm grey waters of the lake. Once the boats were anchored we started upwards through wet bush at a fair clip trying to catch up with Myron, Randy and Ross, who had quite a head start.

Up we went, over and under trees - wet branches everywhere and the rain still falling. Thus we got higher, following the occasional distant sound of an invisible creek to our left, stopping here and there to peel off unwanted clothes or simply to rest. Luckily we stayed together, since one wet tree looks quite like another and once out of sight, all one could hope for is that a call or whistle would reach far enough to catch the attention of a fellow hiker.

Suddenly, slightly above and to the side, three young men appeared on a bit of an overhang. Randy, Jeff and Myron. We introduced ourselves and moved upwards through more trees and wet bushes. While walking next to Myron he remarked: "I recognize your plastic raingear. Bob Dean wore it the last trip I was on - any connection?" "Hm, I guess so, he is my..." The previous night I had carefully taped all the rips together, but walking through all this lovely virgin timber it had taken another beating - beyond repair. My clothes were getting soaked, although I felt comfortable and warm from the exertion.

We began to realize this "more of the same" would never end and our stomachs began to complain, "How high up do you think we are?" "Is this water safe to drink?" "Where are the meadows?" "Could we eat here?" "No, we shall stop at the waterfall." Up and up and up we went. At about 4,000 ft quite a deafening roar of rushing water, and to our left, a huge magnificent fall of tons of water came into sight. All grumbles forgotten we made our way down and stared up an undetermined number of feet, getting sprayed with water some more.

We found a sheltered place to sit, unpacked our food and within minutes everyone was busy taking off wet clothes and putting on dry ones. Some donning gloves, hats and sweaters. Someone was warming his hands over a burning stove with a pot of noodle soup starting to cook. Relaxed at last, I began to shiver and shake, the wet and cold reaching my very soul. I shall catch my death just sitting here I thought, eating and talking the time away. I wished desperately we could move upwards some more... but gratefully I was supplied with woolen gloves, a warm parka, brand new blue pants and delicious hot noodle soup while we rested. Lesson learned, it is important to come well prepared and the leader should reserve the right to turn anyone back who is not.

We had a very pleasant return trip, closer to the creek, more open space with ancient moss covered tree carcasses carelessly lying here and there. Lovely ferns and the occasional breakthrough of sunlight made that awesome feeling of fairyland complete. We found the boats and divided our weight equally between them. After wading in, shoes, socks and all, to give the *maleboat* a final push into deeper water, we crossed under sunny skies.

Eventually, after drying off at Silverton beach we headed home, each with our own thoughts of the day's events.



I was stunned and completely overwhelmed by its magnetism. Soaring vertically above the glacier, an immense fluted wall of ice forms two spectacular summits on a knife-edged ridge. Horrendous cornices outline the mountain and the vertical ridges which lead to and join the two summits. It seems to exist for reasons of its own, like no other mountain on earth. Viewing the 3000 ft south face of Chacraraju (20,053 ft) from Huascaran last year, I found myself very drawn to it. It was the most incredible sight I'd ever seen.

The east summit of the peak gets climbed occasionally as it's not as long or technical. The higher west summit is seldom climbed and for good reasons. The ridge which rises to it from the west remains unclimbed due to dangerous, rotten double cornices plastered over vertical rotten rock. The only other ridge comes from the east and is similar to the west ridge, and the other side of the mountain is even steeper with no ice at all. The peak is so thin that a climber near the summit once reported seeing green specks in the ice and was horrified to realize that it was the valley on the other side! They reached 70 ft from the summit and described continuing as being suicidal. The peak has certainly gained a reputation for being serious, and people have not come home because of their obsession with Chacraraju.

As my desire to climb the west peak grew, I realized that there was only one reasonably safe and potentially promising route to the summit. A very bold and direct line, the French route ascends the south face between two of the flutings and reaches the ridge very close to the summit. Unfortunately, the safest and most logical means of descent is to rappel directly back down the route climbed. Ice and rock fall are a very serious consideration and any bivouacs would be semi-hanging affairs, as there are no ledges. With all this considered, I decided to attempt it only if everything was just right.

A week before we were to leave, my partner informed me that he could not travel to Peru because of illness. Therefore I found myself in flight to Lima, committed to two months alone in Peru. After spending a few days hanging out in Huaraz, I met Australian climber Lyndsay Fletcher. We entertained ourselves by climbing the west face of Paron (18,461 ft), the south west face of Alpamayo (19,511 ft), and the north face of Kitaraju (20,006 ft). With two weeks remaining of my holiday, my thoughts turned to Chacraraju.

It is not unusual to see a resident of the Edward's Inn washing clothes by hand in the sink outside, but I noticed an attractive young lady scrubbing away at some soiled Goretex. She introduced herself as Kitty Calhoun from Boulder, Colorado, and she had just returned from climbing in Bolivia. There are many woman climbers these days, but few who, at 25, have climbed the Cassin Ridge on McKinley in four days and lead 5.10 on rock. Even fewer who happen to want to climb Chacraraju by the French route. It didn't take long for us to decide that we would leave the next day for Chacraraju to make an attempt on the south face.

We left our hotel in time to catch a 6:00 a.m. local bus and unloaded in Yungay, where we bargained with several drivers. A rough dirt road switchbacked up the valley to a beautiful lake known as Langanucco. I found the two hour drive in the back of the truck to be excessively long due to a malfunctioning digestive system — but this is part of the Peru experience.

Approaching a nearby house, we met an ariaro (burrow driver) and negotiated about having our gear carried up to basecamp. We were willing to hire two burrows, but he informed

sisted that both 70 lb packs could be put on one burrow. I couldn't help wonder if this was efficiency or just cruelty to animals. Surprisingly enough, the approach trek to Chacraraju base camp is very casual, taking about four hours. We bivouacked in a stone hut, where I tried eating some dinner, but that proved to be a mistake.

The next day we ascended the glacier to the bottom of the south face and set up a camp from which to start the climb. The next day was spent eating, resting and establishing a route to the bottom of the face. I wondered about what it would be like up there with almost no equipment, and decided we should take our sleeping bags and leave insulites and bivi sacs behind. Besides the bags, we would carry a stove, ½ litre of fuel, water bottles, two days of food, headlamps and 20 rappel anchors fabricated from electrical conduit.

Reaching the bottom of the climb at 3:00 a.m., I watched above me as Kitty worked on the steep rotten snow of the first pitch by headlamp finding little for good protection.

Feeling this would be typical of the first section, we decided to traverse to the next gully, also to avoid some vertical rotten rock above.

The following pitch traversed into the next runnel and I was somehow able to drop a mitt at the belay, into the darkness below. I would have to continue with one pile mitt on one hand and a gore-tex overmitt on the other. Across the valley, brilliant pink and purple illuminated the impressive north face of Huandoy. We climbed two more sustained pitches, including a vertical section of ice, to reach a moat beneath a huge overhung face. We ate a lunch of cheese, salami and chocolate while crouched backwards with my helmet against the rock. Although unaware of it, we were savouring the only flat spot the entire climb.

From here we traversed another full pitch to get back into the main runnel, and continued up complicated steep ice for four more pitches. One of these sections involved climbing steep ice plastered rock, then traversing vertical ice between two rock bands with no protection. Having only twelve hours of light in a day, and finding the climbing more serious and technical than expected, we had climbed only nine pitches and the day was over. We proceeded to cut a large ledge underneath an overhung rock face and a huge cornice loomed overhead. The angle of the slope was such that by chopping nine feet high by nine feet wide we produced a two foot ledge with holes in it. We cooked the only dinner we brought, and set up anchors for ourselves and our equipment. In the dark we had no idea what it looked like down there, but in the morning we realized our position. We were above 18,000 ft and it was 1,500 ft straight down to the glacier. I found it an exciting place to be, realizing that care must be taken with every decision and movement. To drop a rope or a boot up here would mean disaster.

We continued up the easiest part of the climb — four pitches of 65° ice with patches of very loose snow. As protection was poor and to save time, we climbed this section on running belays. Climbing became complicated again as Kitty led the 14th pitch up steep thin ice in the beginning of a narrow, almost vertical passageway. Next we arrived at what would prove to be the crux pitch. Kitty led up a vertical rotten one inch thick sheet of ice which was detached eight inches off the rock. This board of ice vibrated occasionally and caved in as she worked on it. It was a 100 foot pitch, all of which was on detached ice and unprotected. It was an impressive lead.

A few more very steep pitches kept us occupied for the rest of the afternoon. Traversing across very soft fluted snow, we stopped to dig a meager outsloping ledge where we ate

the last of our food. While I was cooking, my last lithium headlamp battery retired, eliminating our ability to climb and rappel in the dark. Minor afternoon storm fronts with light snow and winds had been systematically moving in during the day, but it would clear off overnight. The sunset that evening on Huascaran was incredible. Not for the first time, we talked about descending as we had no food left whatsoever. We were becoming very isolated up on the face, and had already found the climbing more demanding than we had expected. We came to the conclusion that after all the hard work to reach our present position, we would push for the summit in the morning.

Hungry, tired, and at 19,000 ft we pushed ourselves onward to climb nine more rope lengths of unrelenting ice, that varied from solid water ice to non-protectable soft, rotten ice and snow. Immediately after leading the 23rd pitch and getting clipped into my belay, I was struck by ice falling from the summit cornices, producing a severe headache. We hacked our way up two more fine pitches and topped out on the summit ridge. In a very pink and magical sunset, we cried and hugged each other. We were close to the actual summit, but to get there would involve some extremely dangerous climbing. The vertical, razor edged rock ridge was obstructed by

the most foreboding array of unstable cornices and seracs imaginable. We proceeded to stamp out a small ledge and collapsed in our bags for the night.

The descent was long and scary. We made rappels with two ropes rigged to single pieces of conduit in the ice, first making the hole with an ice screw. We had borrowed a rope to rappel with, and it was only 140 feet long. Knowing we would run out of rappel anchors somewhere near the bottom, we had to make each rappel as long as possible. Therefore, we had to equalize the end of the rope by pulling the shorter one when we reached the end. Sometimes, depending on the terrain, we would set the ropes at equal lengths prior to rappelling, but would then have to unhook from the rope to pass the knot. We rappelled from knotted slings in rock for three rappels, and from flukes for two others. It required the whole day, a bivouac in a snowstorm, and the next morning to make 24 rappels to complete the epic descent.

Eventually we reached our camp on the lower glacier, and had our first food and water in two and a half days. Later, reflecting on the climb, it was clear the experience had been the very essence of adventure... the final outcome of the climb, the day and the minute was always completely beyond our knowledge.



Kitty on the South Face of Chacraraju  
Photo: Jeff Lakes

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# Hiking Camp '86 A Visual Tribute



Top: Anemone Pass Basin

by Larry Doell

Left: Waterfall on Yellow Creek

by Jeff Ross

Below: Audrey Gerein and Mt Chapman

by Larry Doell





Photo: Larry Doell

## The "Fou" Bird

by Mary Culley

In camp a little cowbird  
Was crazy - mixed up --"fou."  
He hopped after humans  
In search of bugs anew.  
He skirted all along the ground;  
He flew above in the air.  
He loved to light on shoulders round;  
He perched right in our hair.  
Nothing to do but grin and bear it  
For when the fou bird ----s  
You have to wear it.

## Cult of the Yellow Stool

by Larry Doell

Webster's defines fetish as: A material object believed among primitive cultures to have magical powers.[Ed.]

It was as dusk fell on the first evening that the second hiking camp began its transformation into the Kootenay Mountaineering Cult of the Yellow Stool. It didn't occur at the more appropriate site of the Jeff Ross Throne Room, but on the heather outside the cook tent.

There, glowing a luminescent yellow in the twilight, convened a score of what appeared to be three-legged aliens. Upon closer examination, they were identified as Earl Jorgen-

son Bunsmaster Stools, engaged in a somewhat cheeky discussion on the true nature of buns - some preferring French rolls and others, crusty Italian.

It wasn't long before the surrounding trees sported flocks of stool pigeons and the lake was transformed with swimming stools. With foot stools underfoot, Naomi Lindstrom and Carolyn Mousel watched from their *No-tell Motel* as Carolyn's husband, Don, took Mrs. Gerein's little girl, Audrey, on a test drive in his flashy new *Stoolbaker* before returning to build his hopelessly utopian city of *Stoolingrad*.

Craig Andrews, in line with his profession as a stool teacher, deranged the cult into posing behind his daughter, Claire, who sat at the wheel of a *Stoolbus*.

While an unsuccessful search was under way for an amphibious subject for a toad stool photograph, Power Bill Hurst was proselytizing the new faith to mountain goats. Jack Steed was taking tomstoolery to new heights, enjoying several peak experiences on his E.J. Bunsmaster.

Mother Earthy, worried that the stools were going through life with only three legs, tried to interest them in occupational therapy classes.

Concerned that they were getting too much behind, Meadowlark Cully of *an ode to a Stool* fame, arranged for them to be enrolled in stool classes, and would exhort them daily for remaining at the rear of the class.

Being as a rule, bottom feeders, Teri McLean worked hard at devising a suitable menu for them - eventually arriving at an acceptable diet of butt roast with buns.

Jane Steed formed a choral group with Alice Korfman and Marylin Clark which affectionately became known as the *Stolettes*. They quickly absorbed Trudy Andrews and Muriel Walton's duo, Rum and Corkettes, and led the cult around the campfire in the evenings on rousing renditions of such old chestnuts as *Tie a yellow stool 'round the old oak tree*. Walter Branigan and Bob Korfman, taking each other in hand, focused on squeezing high soprano out of one another.

The total transformation was realized on Saturday morning shortly after John Walton pulled up his pants after posing for the *Waiting for John in the John* group photo. There on the alpine tundra, with only the fou bird as witness, we all crouched on hands and knees with stools clutched to our heads and transcended our individual egos, emerging collectively as a herd of stoolaboos.

## The Four Squatters

by Jim Kienholz

The Four Squatters is an attractive group of seven icebound summits lying some 9 miles SW of Howser Spire in the Bugaboos. The peaks are all over 9,500 ft, the highest attaining 10,070 ft.[Ed.]

Though the three of us had planned the trip a month or two earlier, at 10:30 p.m. on our scheduled approach day I found myself in the radio room of a firefighting base camp. Relieved of duty at last, I headed down the 14 mi road towards Kitchener. A terrific storm flashed all around my forest service truck, which was loaded with pails of fire retardant.

When my left rear wheel-well began making loud noises, I decided to head for the Creston Forest Service Base and bunk for the night.

Dawn saw me catching the 5:30 a.m. Greyhound to Nelson, then another to Ainsworth to meet my two companions.

Finally, we made it up the Duncan River to what had been planned as the end of our traverse from Howser Creek. Saturday night, we camped on Gravelslide Creek road, awaking the following morning at 5:00 a.m. for an early start, though we didn't get going till later. We saw peak 10,070 on the way in. What a beauty! Also, Mt Templeman! It took us an hour and a half to reach our base camp near a nice iced-up tarn to the west of Suck Creek. After setting up camp, eating lunch and going for a swim we headed out to recon the area.

As we left camp I noticed a couple of dark spots on a side hill far in the distance. I never thought of them again until later when we were halted from further progress by two large grizzlies. My partner's first impulse was to take off at a fast run. Instead, the three of us just stopped and watched the Silverbacks as they held us at bay. After almost 20 minutes they majestically waddled off to the other side of the hill.

We proceeded warily to the north up a very nice approach ridge south of the Squatters while a localized storm crashed about us. Turning back, we noticed a double rainbow over the Suck Creek drainage and sun dogs on McDuff. Black clouds swirled around Mts Fleance and Banquo and were heading towards Mt McBeth.

Back at camp we prepared a deluxe mountain feast to replenish what had been burned off during the day, and to build up energy for the big push in the morning. Leek soup started off the extravaganza, followed by rice and chicken casserole with shrimp, and hot chocolate with cream and honey. Supper was topped off with an assortment of homegrown dried fruits, and we headed for bed. Idle chatter on bear hunting, hides, and roasts put us into a light sleep.

Rising at 5:00 a.m. we were away at 7:10. Twenty minutes later a light rain began to fall and quickly turned into a horizontal wet-out. Fortunately, we found an old bear den and settled in for early lunch break to wait it out. After the storm had subsided we decided to start backtracking and were immediately hit by a second wave. When we finally made our way back to base camp, we found the tent looking like it had been in the middle of a rice paddy. Evacuation orders were issued, and after a hasty packing job of squishy gear was completed we headed out.

Deciding to side hill toward our route, nothing was visible or recognizable until, at last, we ran into our previously erected cairns on the ridge. Afterwards, the well marked trail was followed back to Toyota Camp which we reached in a steady rainfall.

Report: The trail has been brushed, cleared and heavily vibramed with some new blazing and flagging done. It could still use a little more, but that will have to wait till next season. Also, the porkies camp at 6,200 ft by the lake on the east side of the approach ridge needs a clean up. But a very nice place to cruise it is! Our original route, Rory Creek (Bugaboo side), across The Squatters, down the south ridge and exit via Gravelslide Creek, will be put on the back burner. But wait a minute, I wonder if it would go on skis?

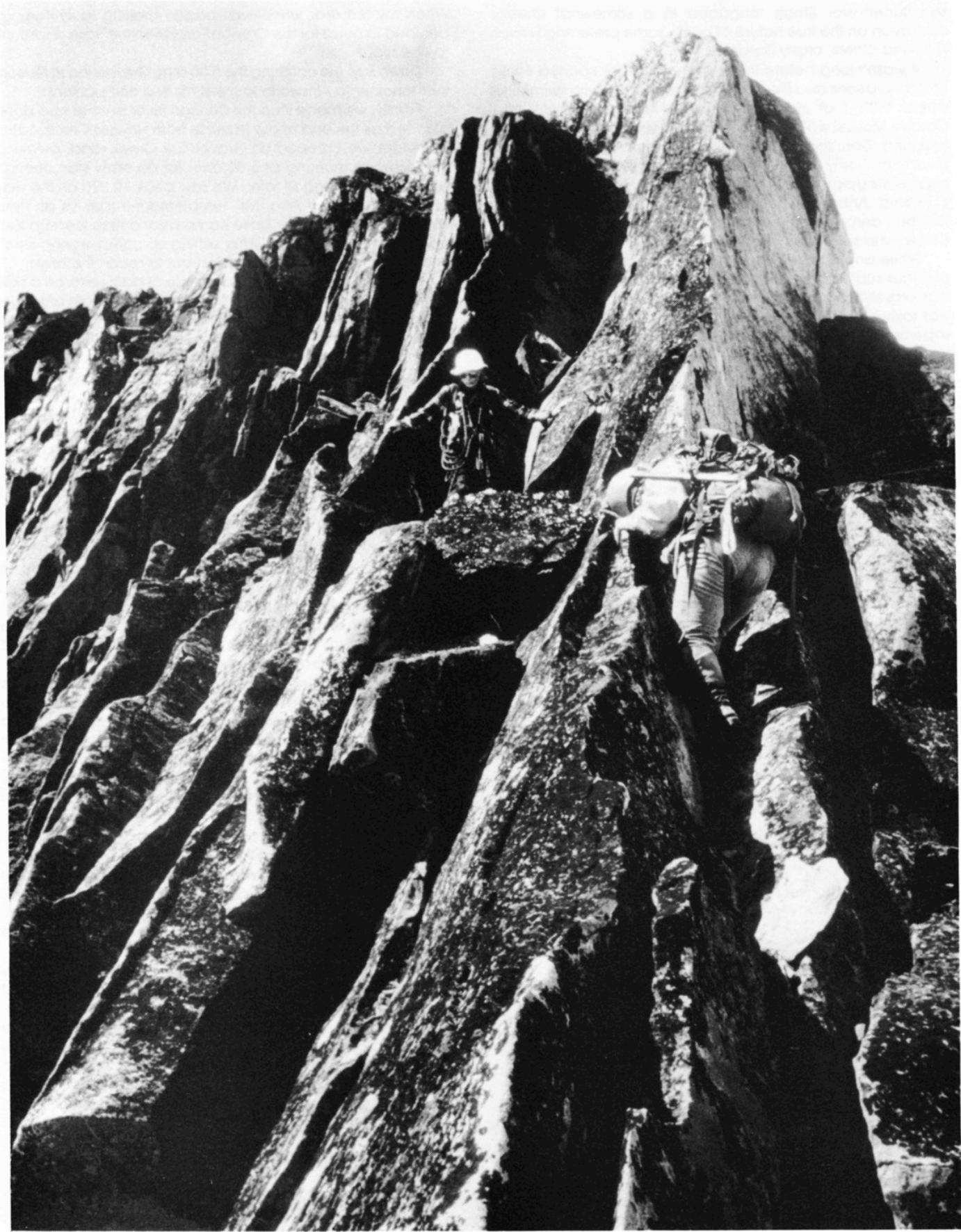


Photo: Descending East Blackfriar, by Fred Thiessen

# Adamant Glacier 1986 Climbing Camp

## August 2-10

### Introduction

by Fred Thiessen

This year's climbing camp was held at the base of the Adamant Glacier in the Adamant Range of the northern Selkirk Mountains. Our group consisted of 24 climbers, one full time and two part time cooks. We were: P. Tchir, B. & B. Kryski, C. Johnson, B. Port, G. Staples, M. Allegretti, P. Wood, T. & H. Chow, P. Olson, A. Pearson, H. Mutch, D. Lemon, D. Kennedy, D. Neudorf, K. Holmes, J. Martin, J. Roberts, E. Whipple, S.L. "OK" Horvath, P. Allen, R. Laytham, and J. Cameron.

Our camp was well situated on the shore of a small tarn at 6,400 ft below the snout of the Adamant Glacier. From the camp the following peaks were climbed: Mt Sir Sanford, Silver-tip Mt, Blackfriars Pk, Adamant Mt, Pioneer Pk, East Peak of the Gothics, The Gargoyle, Mt Thor, Gibralter Pk, Azimuth Mt, Mt Fria, Mt Wotan, Mt Sir Benjamin and Ygdrasil Mt.

Two unfortunate events occurred during the week. We had two injuries: Pam Olsen broke her ankle on Aug. 4 and Steve Horvath broke his heel on Aug. 9; at present both are mending well. In both cases a radio was used to call a helicopter for a quick evacuation.

Accounts of selected climbs made at the camp follow.

### East Blackfriar

10,680 ft

by Heather Chow

On August 4, our party left camp around 6:30 a.m. We managed to keep our feet dry while crossing the small bridge near camp and headed off toward the Blackfriar peaks. As we ascended a snow slope NW of Azimuth notch to gain the long south ridge, the sun rose over Mt Thor. We originally started to follow the south ridge, but after a couple of rappels to negotiate some large boulders, we opted for what looked like a faster route along the snow slopes on the west side of the ridge. Although we had to descend about 140 ft, the firm snow was good for travelling.

We stopped for an early lunch on some rocks below the ridge. Why is it that everyone else's lunch always looks better than your own? I could smell Audrey's fruit cake and chocolate chips as I munched my soggy peanuts. Even Fred's gorp looked better than mine.

After our stop we set off along the rocks and shortly afterwards headed back down onto the glacier. We roped up there and Fred led the way up the steep snow slope on the south side of East Blackfriar. The snow was becoming soft and there was ice underneath. It seemed to go on and on. Looking south we could see fresh tracks on Sir Sandford leading to the summit ridge. Finally, we reached the rock of the south face and went straight up, coming out about 50 feet away from the summit. It was nearly 3:00 p.m. and with camp a long way off we did not want to spend too much time on top.

Our descent started off down the south ridge, followed by a rappel onto the steep snow slope which we had ascended. We returned by more or less the same route we had taken up.

Although successful in climbing the peak, the trip was not without an accident. Pam and Audrey, who were travelling slower, were descending the Adamant Glacier about the time Fred and I reached camp. Near the snout of the glacier, Pam slipped and broke her ankle. Audrey returned to the camp for help, and a group quickly went up to apply first aid and carry her down to camp, arriving around 10:00 p.m. She was flown out to the hospital in Golden the next morning.

Participants: Fred Thiessen, Audrey Pearson, Pam Olsen, Heather Chow.

### The Gargoyle

10,250ft

by Jeff Roberts

Our pseudo-keen party of four, Jeff Roberts, Heather Chow, Carl Johnson, Dave Lemon, decided not to risk another day in Horsefly Heaven and set off for Pioneer Peak and East Peak of the Gothic.

After cramponing our way up snow, ice, and rocks all except for Dave Stay Sharp Lemon we arrived near Thor Pass. Inspection revealed quantities of dirt and rubble. To keep our boots clean we continued up the glacier to the ridge of east Peak of the Gothic. It was clear we could drop down the other side, climb Pioneer and then East Peak, and be home for 4:00 o'clock tea.

Surmounting the ridge we discovered, to our dismay, a large obviously dangerous bergschrund making the descent to join the others rather technical. As usual when confronted with a serious problem we stopped for lunch. We climbed up to the base of the prominent white bank and hung our feet off the ledges and enjoyed lunch a la aerie.

After lunch we climbed on the white ledges to a cliff band of technical rock, probably 5.5 or 5.6 up a large crack. J. Roberts did the honors with much moaning and some swear-

ing. The team followed and we approached the summit en masse. The last bit was not particularly difficult but ropes were used as it was rather airy.

Once on the top, the contents of a rusted tuna can (ex Krusna or HMC) revealed we were on the Gargoyle. Not bad except that we thought we were on East Peak of the Gothic! Normally one would trust a map produced by H.M.'s own map-makers over the contents of an old fish container. However, the presence of others who were clearly convinced they were on Gargoyle led us to conclude we weren't on East Peak and further, that the rubble heap marked on the map as the Gargoyle was indeed an error. That decision made, our thoughts turned homeward and to tea.

Three rappels brought us back to the snow and then to camp. Time had flown by and it was 7:30 p.m. when we reached camp. In all, a day where much went awry climbing the wrong mountain, missing tea and biscuits. However we were the first people up the Gargoyle since Kruzna in 1968.

## Gibraltar Peak

9,890 ft

by Steve Horvath

This account describes the route of the first ascent in 1953.

Without a doubt my most enjoyable climb in two years. The easy approach from camp was via flower strewn alpine meadows under blue skies. The snow was firm; there was no need for crampons. We located a luxurious ledge for our gear and packs, then began to climb. The first 30 feet are the crux, the first 10 merely slimy, but then some 15 feet of off width, leaved chimney crack. Brad and I agree that it warrants a 5.9 rating. Fortunately it can be well protected and those that would like to aid it can do so without resorting to the use of pins.

After that, difficulties lessen and the second pitch is a delightful series of short walls (about 5.4). Some 4th class follows; into and through the hole - or guillotine - as Fred calls it. What a wild place to belay. Sitting astride the ridge under a huge boulder (flake) which spans a notch in it, we viewed a 600 foot drop to Gothics Glacier below. The third pitch is elegant, airy, and a sheer delight. Exposed on the ridge crest, the breathtaking views on both sides detracted from our concentration. Then a lovely 5.5 jamcrack, splitting the summit blocks and the fun is over. One short rappel, three 150 footers, the last one depositing us on the rocks on the luxurious gear-up ledge.

Highly recommended.

P.S. When approaching from Fairy Meadows, cross the Gothics Glacier, then a short rappel down the Toadstool/Gibraltar col, then turn left (east) - walk 100 feet.

## Pioneer Peak

10,760 ft

## East Peak of the Gothics

10,640 ft

by Brett Kryski

Under clear skies on another beautiful day, Peter Tchir, Dave Neudorf, Mike Allegretti, and myself left camp about a half hour behind Paul Allen, Robin Layham, Ken Holmes, and Fred Thiessen with the thought of meeting on the top of Pioneer Peak. We started up the west side of the Adamant Glacier on very hard ice, then headed north through Thor Pass. Crampons were necessary on the south side of Thor Pass, while on the north side the soft, knee-deep snow was made bearable by following the footsteps of Fred and his companions.

We headed up the Gothic Glacier under a hot sun; the only detour was a very large snow-filled crevasse. More slogging took us to the rock on Pioneer Peak and an easy scramble brought us to the top where the others were enjoying the sun. Apparently they had wanted to do the East Peak first, but six Alpine Club of Canada members had beat them to the mountain by ten minutes. After approximately an hour on the Pioneer/East Peak col summit, Paul stated he was interested in climbing East Peak, having come all this way. I agreed to join him.

We started up the snow to the base of the rock while the others crossed the Glacier heading for the Toadstool-Thor col. Postholing up the snow, which the ACC members had crammed up three hours earlier when it was ice, we reached the base of the rocks, and dumped some gear. A short, easy, roped scramble along the ridge took us to where we found two ACC members chained to the rock. They were waiting for the others who had made the summit a few pitches away.

Paul traversed out and up the Mummery Crack, which is well protected but a bit slimy. Following, I learned the joys of trying to chimney with a pack. Two more easy pitches followed, the second traverse took us out on the very exposed west face to within ten feet of the summit.

While the others descended, Paul and I waited an hour before going down. We met them again as they were downclimbing the Mummery Crack, and a short rappel put us past them on the ridge. From here we scrambled to the gear we had left behind and followed the tracks of Fred, Robin, Mike, Peter, and Dave to the col and down to camp. We set a possible record of one and three quarter hours from where we left our gear to camp.

# Mt Wotan

9,720 ft

by Brad Kryski

**O**n August 6, Steve Horvath and I climbed a new route on the southwest corner of Wotan. Assuming crampons would be unnecessary, we made a slow approach hike on newly frozen snow and arrived at the enormous wind cirque below the south end of Wotan. Traversing high below Wotan's southwest corner we gained a 4th class ledge above the lower third of rock. While an interesting crack runs up this lower face, a large overhang running across it makes it look like a serious aid proposition.

Our ledge ran out near the beginning of the southwest buttress. Bypassing an intimidating off-width crack on the right side of the buttress we started in a low angle depression on the left side. This was about halfway from the snow to the obvious talus patch on this corner of the mountain.

What had appeared easy was not. The first pitch was 5.5 - 5.6, mossy and poorly protected. Steve led up through upside down onion skins to a gravelly ledge while I crouched under an overhang to avoid the bombardment. The ledge was at the bottom of a gully that I followed for a pitch up to the buttress crest, but earlier fears that a short wall existed above my notch were confirmed. Also, the gully had narrowed to a crack and for the last 20 feet you could look through and see daylight. The rock was totally detached!

Downclimbing 50 ft to a ledge below the black, lichen covered face to our left, a fantastic crack bolted upwards through the 75 ft face. I led up this superb crack which had everything. At 80 feet I decided to go left through an overhand rather than traverse on chicken heads to a flat spot on the buttress crest to my right.

The overhand was the crux, 5.8 moves through loose blocks between two jutting flakes and I was through. I screamed as I almost took a 50 pounder down to show Steve. Trenching left 50 feet more, the crack resumed and I merged with an obvious bottomless dihedral. I belayed, semi-hanging at the bottom of this while Steve readied the packs for belaying.

Then, tragedy struck!

Steve, who had removed one of his rock shoes for comfort and placed it on the ground under the packs, was horrified to see a gaping hole had opened in the debris. He had been sitting on a detached flake and debris and shoe were 15 feet down, behind the rock, gone forever! Yes, the echoes of Steve's cuss words bounced off the neighbouring peaks as I hauled up my pack. However, I was concerned as to how Steve would fare following that pitch in his big boots.

I needn't have worried. Spurred by anger, Steve refused my offer to haul his pack, and climbed the pitch cussing and complaining dramatically. It was an impressive scene from my perch. Steve powered over the short layback and small overhang above me, still wearing his pack. But finally the anger was over, and Steve remembered that he wasn't wearing his rock shoes and brought me up to the large ledge on the buttress crest. A short layback or two, a bit of face climbing and a half pitch were out of the question. But by then I was on the edge of the boulder field that he had hiked up to the summit.

Later in camp while sorting gear Steve confessed one of my favourite large chocks had been eaten by a flake and was irretrievable. I also discovered that I had forgotten to remove my first belay anchor, a favourite angle piton, after removing the carabiner. As these things happen in threes we knew the mountain was satisfied. I was too, it was my first new route.

# Mt Sir Sanford

11,555 ft

by Paul Allen

**F**lying into climbing camp all eyes turned towards Mt Sir Sanford, as well they should, for it dominates the landscape from all directions.

Sir Sandy is built more like a miniature Robson or Mt Temple than a typical Purcell spire. It is supported by ribs and buttresses with big faces with glaciers cascading down its flanks.

Camp was set up by noon. An hour later six of us; Robyn, myself, Mr. Holmes, Steve Horvath, Brad and Burt Kryski, all set off for an overnight bivy at Ravelin col. We went over the glacier, up and down Azimuth Notch and then the party separated. Three of us passed the great cairn hut and crossed the glacier to Ravelin col arriving there at 8:00 p.m. Steve and crew went for a stroll up the Haworth Glacier, saw 21 mountain goats and nearly got lost. They bivied out overnight and caught up with us in the morning.

A warm, windless night at 9,000 ft on a sandy bench with a spectacular star-filled sky, accompanied one of the best night's sleep Ken, Robyn and I have had in a long time. I wish all bivies were like that.

We rose at six and made our way up the tourist route ridge. Sir Sandford lived up to its name, what a pile of sugar. You can't cut your hand on this stuff, the rock wears off instead....Up the long, easy ridge to a snow covered hourglass where we belayed on crampons and then a long snow hike to the summit ridge and on to the summit.

We peaked out at noon with a fine view of the Purcells and Rockies surrounding us. Summit photos were taken and then we slowly slogged down to the hourglass. Two ropes were fixed and then we proceeded down the sandy ledges to the col.

A long glissade brought us down to the Adamant Glacier. We spent the night at the cairn cabin, raiding its food supplies. Here, the great Holmes made homemade soup, with everything thrown in. Early the following morning we made a bridge over the creek and departed for camp.

Two glorious days of sunshine proclaimed more of what was to come and on the first day of camp we reached our major objective. Not a hard climb but a very beautiful mountain and nice sense of accomplishment making everything else seem like an extra.

# MT THOR

9,850 ft

by Dave Neudorf

The flanks of Mt Thor rose directly to the north of our campsite at Lake Kathryn and due to their proximity, Thor constituted a perfect outing for our rest day.

The long, gently sloping south ridge of the mountain was easily gained from the old lateral moraine of the Adamant Glacier which encircled our camp to the north and east. We scrambled up through some grassy meadows to a line of granite blocks on the ridge proper. Along the way we were surprised by a mountain goat nanny and kids on the rocks above us. Being in no hurry we settled down to observe the goats as they nonchalantly crossed our path. The sun was already blazing and the goats spent several minutes rubbing their heads in the cool snow before disappearing in the rocks.

The granite of the ridge crest gave easy passage upward and offered a sheer view of the small icefield leading to Thor Pass. Further along, the rock was broken and eventually led to some steeper but still moderate snowslopes. We zigzagged up these slopes kicking steps, and higher up were able to follow the steps Gary had made ahead of us. He had bypassed the ridge by climbing up through a somewhat more difficult gully system to the east.

The snow continued to steepen but it led us right onto the summit ridge some 100 yards east of the summit, the highest, westerly point on the ridge. A pleasant and short class 3 scramble over broken granite brought us to the top and a panoramic view of the peaks surrounding the Gothic Glacier.

We descended along the ridge with the intention of reaching a snow slope further to the west which would have taken us directly to the Gothic Glacier. To reach this slope we traversed some easy ledges on the south side of the ridge. The ridge itself offered more difficult rock in accordance with its description. A short descent on sun softened snow brought us to the Gothics neve (no schrund to cross this day).

We strolled across the neve, periodically stopping to watch the progress of Mike and Fred on Gibraltar as they neared the summit, and dropped to the Fria Glacier through the notch west of the Toadstool. Here we had a ringside seat to Brad and Steve's final rappel off Gibraltar.

Slipping and sliding down the soft snow we soon arrived at the meadows surrounding the shallow lake above camp. From here it was a relatively bushfree descent through a wooded glade which led us home in time for a warm afternoon bath and a cup of tea.

It was a pleasant day of easy scrambling with some class 3 rock on the summit ridge by our route and more difficult rock by Gary Staples' route. Some strenuous class 5 climbing was found by Steve Horvath and Paul Allen on the prominent southwest face of Thor the following day.

Party: Dave Neudorf, Dave Lemon, Gary Staples, Peter Tchir.

# Last Day on Thor

by Steve Horvath

On the last day of climbing camp, Paul Allen and I set out to attempt a new route on the southeast face of Thor. The weather was still perfect and most people chose to take a rest day around camp. One week of steady climbing with long approaches had taken its toll. We were rather spent, not exactly fast, but as we were quite familiar with the terrain, we made good time.

After some arguments as to where to start and which line to take, Paul led off. Straight up, fast at first, he came to a stop some 100 feet from the ground. Some time ago, a huge rockfall came down the face — the glacier below was still littered with pick-up truck size boulders — and a fine sand was covering the rock. He downclimbed, as 5.7 moves felt rather unsafe. I went to the right and gained clear rock — then one lead, with an interesting 5.8 mantleshelf — and I was able to belay onto a fine grassy ledge.

Three long pleasant pitches later, after Paul was able to find another 5.8 lead, we came to the crux: a steep, slightly off width, right leaning crack — lichen covered and too wide to fit jams. It was too wide to protect with the gear we had, and I soon found leading with one rock shoe and one running shoe was not the safest way. I had lost my right shoe two days earlier, on Wotan, but that's another story. It seems that 5.8 is about the limit for Nike Lavadomes and this crack was at least 5.9. Safety foremost, we decided to rappell even though we were one and a half pitches from the summit. I never like rappelling, especially down unknown terrain, so I was relieved when the last one was over.

I stopped on a small ledge, some six feet above the iced-up bottom of a small bergschrund, level with its lip four feet away. Thus, I could either downclimb or step across. I looked across — the snow looked soft, as it had been all week. The slope below was steep, not long, and had a good flat runout. I had already changed into my big boots, so after another quick inspection I stepped across. My feet came out from under me. The snow was quite hard and I started to slide. I tried to stop, but was not too concerned as the runout looked okay. Then, right before me was another bergschrund. I could not see it on my initial inspection, as it was hidden by a bulge in the slope. Unfortunately, its lower lip was fairly high so instead of shooting over it, I hit it — feet first — and bounced back and down into it, slid a little way then stopped. Paul made an exceedingly fast rappel and helped me to get out. Next he got me to a nice flat ledge, put my feet up and gave me his dry shirt and jacket. I took pain medication from my first aid kit and then Paul was off. Two hours later the helicopter arrived, with Paul and the ambulance attendant, a short fellow in a short-sleeved shirt and cowboy boots. Fortunately the pilot quickly flew up Bert Port and Ken Holmes so, as Bert told the ambulance guy, KMC could look after its own. And look after me they did. They rigged up a text-book evacuation down a steep snow-slope and generally, took embarrassingly good care of me.

The final diagnosis upon arrival in the Golden hospital was a broken right heel and severely sprained right ankle. There went the rest of my climbing season and tennis.

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To summarize the situation: the accident was caused by human error, 100% preventable. The fact that it was the last day of climbing camp and the end of a mentally exhausting climb and rappels were contributing factors.

The positive factors were:a) I was fully dressed with a long-sleeved shirt, gaiters, and big boots. I had on my hard hat and full-sized climbing pack which helped prevent head and

back injury and severe abrasions. b) I had an experienced climbing partner whose excellent knowledge of first aid served well. c) This year we had a radio in camp. I was in Golden hospital in three hours and was spared a difficult and painful evacuation. d) I had my first aid kit with me and the pain medication helped.



Photo: Mt Sir Sanford, by Fred Thiessen



### Anemone

Anemone, giver of beauty,  
Springing forth on mountain meadow.  
The snow has gone and sunlight warms  
The earth, your bed, so long asleep.

Your supple stem and petals bright,  
Dance in the summer wind;  
As if to look all about  
And sing to mountain majesty.

Celebration, calls your life,  
As a spirit warm and giving.  
Your petals to mountain meadow leave  
Your beauty, that joy, forever.

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