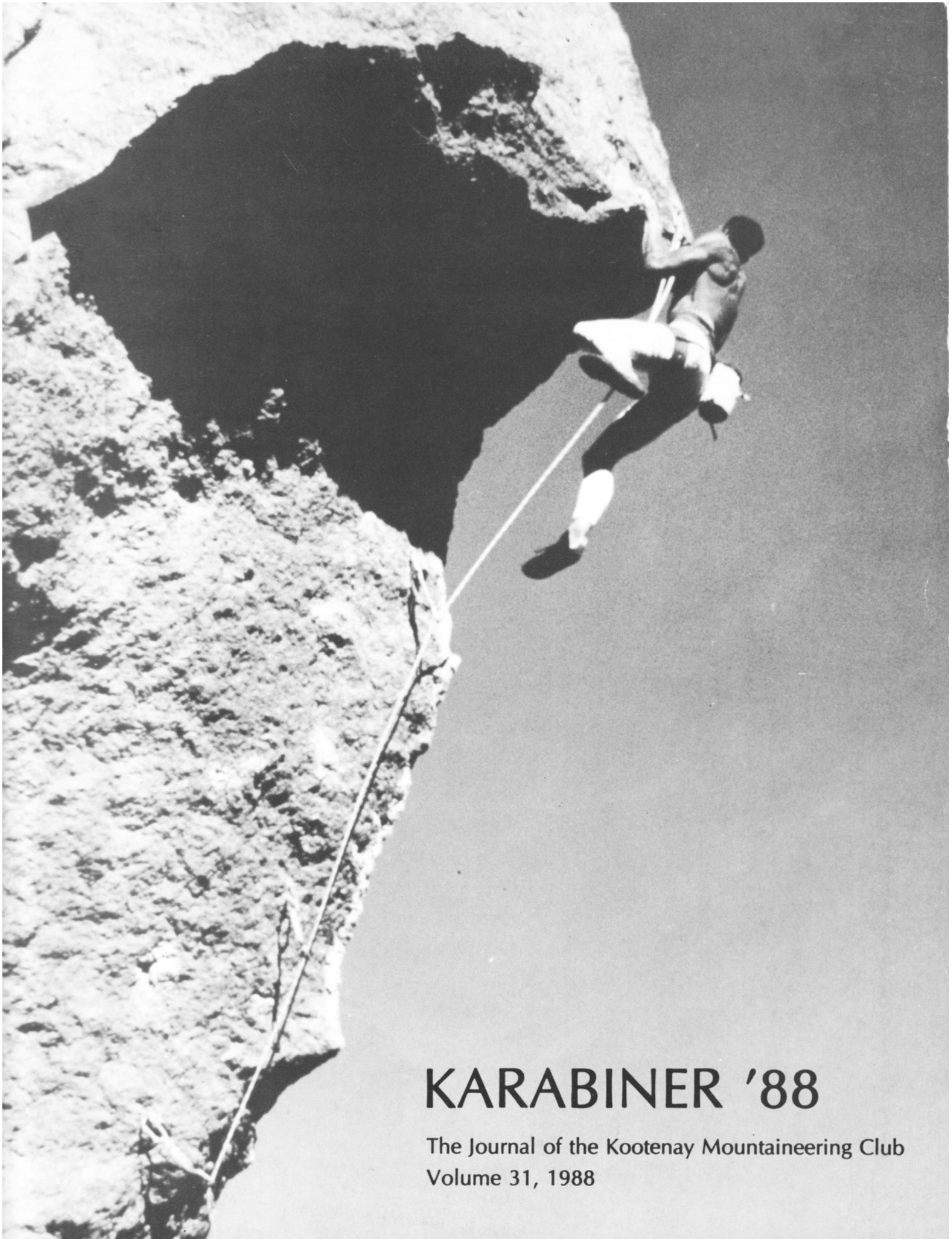


KARABINER '88

The Journal of the Kootenay Mountaineering Club
Volume 31, 1988



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Photo Credits

Cover

Mike Freeman on "Chain Reaction" (5.12c), Smith Rock, Oregon. Photo by Jeff Lakes.

Pages 20-21

At the Col du Valpelline, with the Matterhorn and Dent d'Heren in the background. Photo by Fred Thiessen.



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Mt. Sugarloaf
Photo by Larry Smith



KMC EXECUTIVE 1988

President	Fred Thiessen
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Camps	Ron Cameron
Newsletter	Sue Port
Karabiner	Kim Kratky
Trips	Rod Beauprie
Social	Dave Adams
Conservation	Stan Baker
Cabins & Trails	Paul Allen

President's Message

by Fred Thiessen

On the eve of our 25th anniversary as a club, I think it may be appropriate to reflect on our purpose and what we've achieved over the past 25 years.

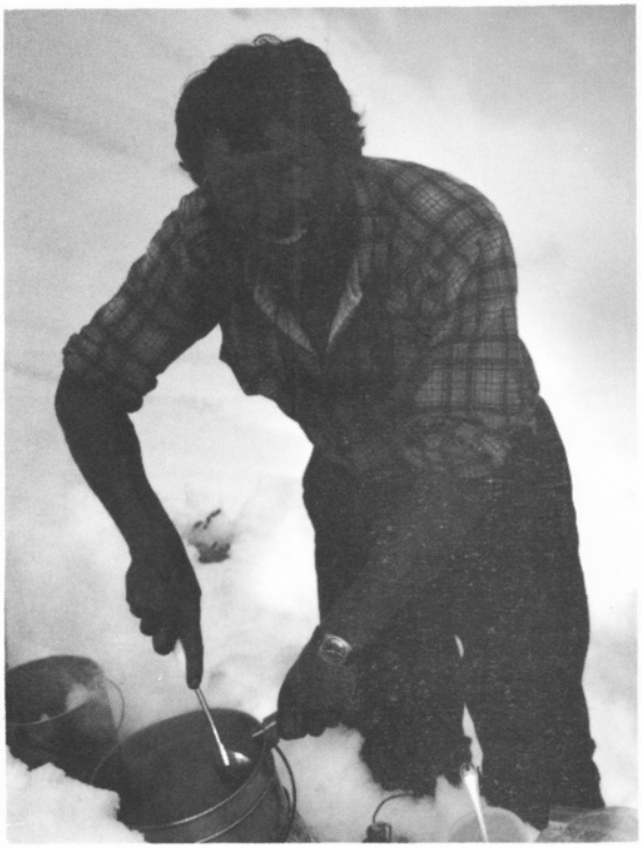
Since our formation in 1964, we've had a constitution which reads as follows:

1. The name of the society is the Kootenay Mountaineering Club.
2. The purpose(s) of the society is to promote an interest in, and development of, mountaineering; to further fellowship in the mountains; and to further the conservation of the natural values in the mountains by:
   a) Organizing outdoor activities into the mountains, in particular, hiking, mountaineering and ski-mountaineering activities.
   b) Instructing and assisting individuals and families in the sports of hiking, mountaineering and ski-mountaineering.
   c) Expressing the views of the members of the society on matters pertaining to the conservation of natural values in the mountains.

What's our scorecard and how have we fared over the years? Admirably well I would say.

We have an extensive outing schedule with quite ambitious trips. Climbing and hiking camps are an annual event. The location of these camps, plus many weekend trips, are in places far more exotic than could have been imagined 25 years ago. This is, in part, due to better road systems and the willingness to explore new areas. Our willingness to explore is worth noting. The list of first ascents and new routes by members over the past 25 years is lengthy and still being added to.

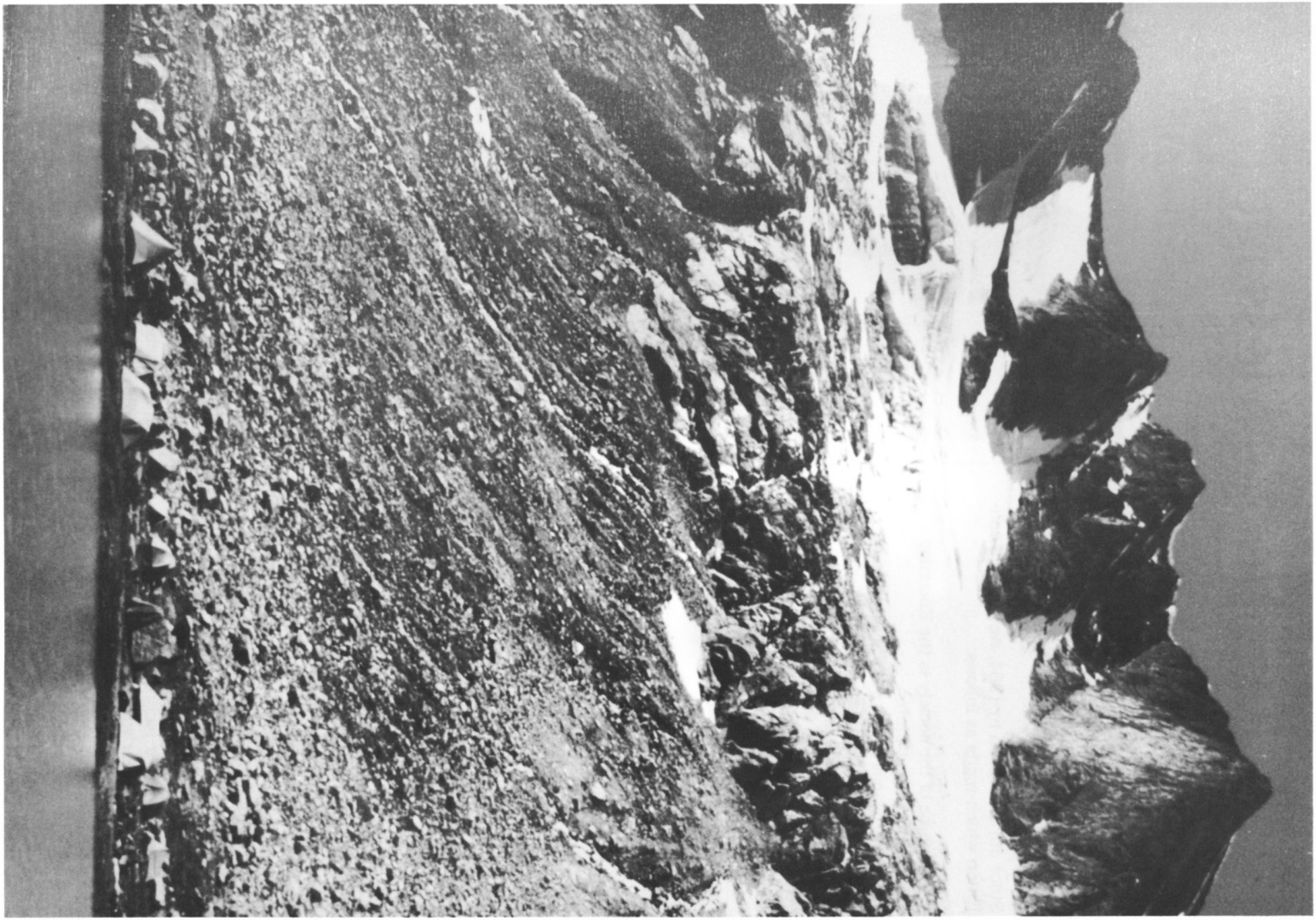
Our annual mountaineering school is an institution and an excuse for instructors to "limber-up" and pass on their techniques. Or is it an opportunity for a beer with old and new friends? Our course parallels the Federation of Mountain Clubs' school and gives a good basic mountaineering course.



Conservation may be the hardest to quantify, but the results have been measurable. KMC was the first to propose a Valhalla Park. Although the Valhalla Society carried on in later years, we have supported their endeavours. Other issues have been the support for the Fry Creek Recreation Area and the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy. We have always been active in the Parks Planning process and I feel we've been effective. I am certain that our opposition to mineral claims in Kokanee Park was a contributing factor in the decision to buy out those claims.

What hasn't changed is the number of cabins we look after. In our early years we looked after three: Record Ridge, Slocan Chief and Huckleberry Hut. Today it's the Copper, Grassy and Huckleberry Huts. The Huckleberry Hut was refurbished in 1964 and again in 1986.

I feel we have matured nicely, thank you very much, and I am looking forward to our progress over the next 25 years.



Climbing Camp, with Mt. Proteus in the background. Photo by Fred Thiessen.

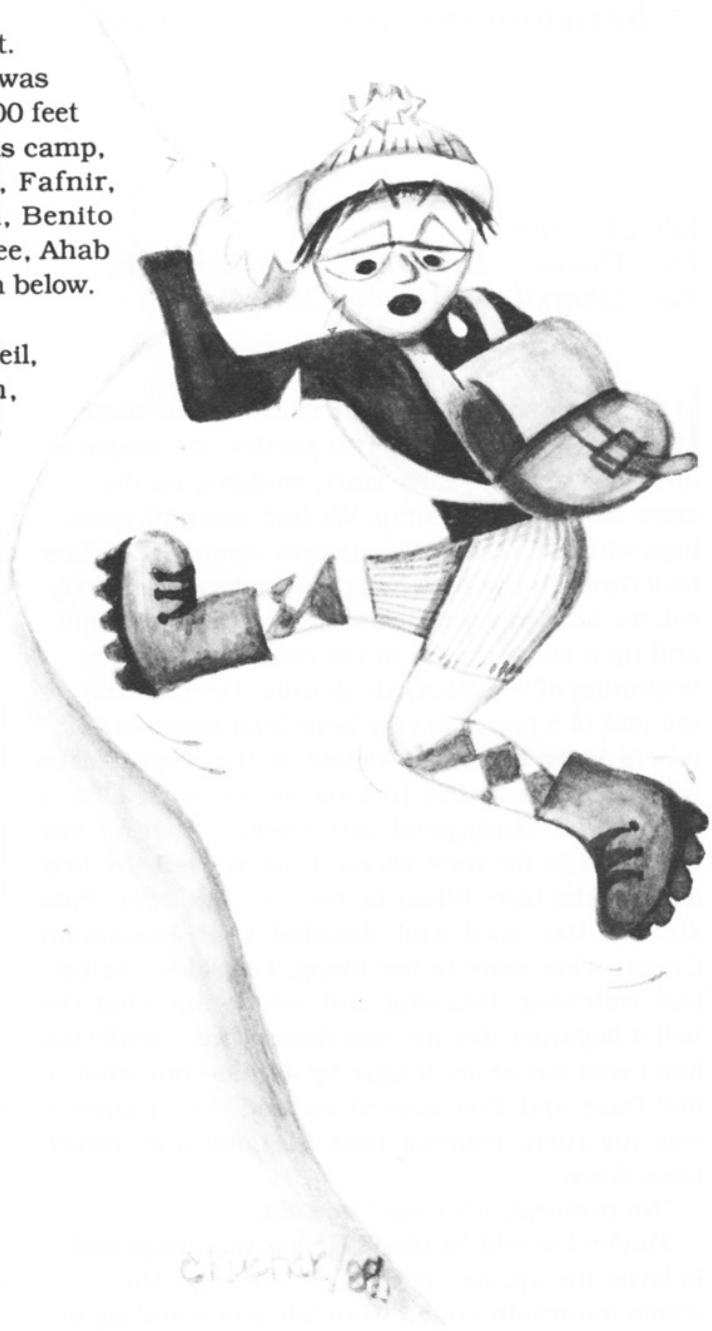
1988 Climbing Camp

Melville Group, Battle Range

The 1988 camp was at the headwaters of Houston Creek, in a cirque enclosed by Mt. Billy Budd to the south and the impressive Mt. Proteus/Moby Dick ridge to the north. Camp was on outwash gravel next to a small lake at 6,600 feet which proved to be a good location. From this camp, climbs were launched to Mts. Billy Budd, Fafnir, Escalade, Proteus, White Jacket, Redburn, Benito Cereno, Moby Dick, Pequod, Forecastle, Typee, Ahab and Butters. Some of these accounts are given below.

Participants at the camps were: H. Mutch, D. Corbeil, E. White, D. Lemon, P. Olson, S. Horvath, R. Beauprie, L. Stanich, P. Allen, R. Laytham, L. Doell, K. Holmes, M. Allegretti, I. Martin, H. Martin, M. Hamilton, E. Whipple, P. Tchir, C. Johnson, E. Neufeld, F. Thiessen, H. Ridge, and cook, Osa Thatcher.

Fred Thiessen



Mt. Escalade 9,680′

by Doris Corbeil

I saw a rock that I could get my arms around and glued myself on, fearing to move or breathe. Never had I seen so much nothing between me and a mountain.

July 29, 1988
Fred Thiessen, Eric White, Hamish Mutch, Pam Olson, Dave Lemon, Doris Corbeil

It seemed Escalade was the mountain to climb this bright sunny day. Two parties, six people in all, made another early start, trudging up the snow slope behind camp. We had morning greetings with the resident goats and used part of their trail through the rocky slope. Reaching the windy col, we headed north traversing a snowy side hill and up a steep glacier to the rock wall and the beginning of the Escalade granite. Being at the tail end of a group is very beneficial because the others leave big steps kicked in the slope. Jokes were flying fast and furious as we settled for a snack and readjusted our packs. Trading our heavy boots for rock shoes, Fred started the first lead up the face. When he reached the ledge, Pam started her lead and decided that Squamish Cracks were more to her liking. I stood at the bottom watching, listening and wondering what the hell a beginner like me was doing here. I really felt like I was out of my league by a mile—but what to do? Dave and Eric started up and then I knew it was my turn. Hamish took the lead and smiled back down.

"No problem, it's easy," he said.

Maybe I would be okay. He got to a ledge and belayed me up. As I came over the edge, the whole mountain ended. Hamish was standing on a piece of air.

"There's lots of room," he assured me.

I saw a rock that I could get my arms around and glued myself on, fearing to move or breathe. Never had I seen so much nothing between me and a mountain.

Chuckling, Hamish captured my terror on film and told me to belay him up. Because I didn't know how to hold a rock with both arms and belay at the same time, I had to let go, promising myself that if I lived, I would never, ever do this again.

The second ledge was not as exposed and I talked to myself long and loud. Convinced I could not stay or leave, I figured I'd better just climb on! We rounded an airy wall and missing the rock chute, short-roped along a ledge, up a fifteen foot wall, scrambled over a few more boulders and onto the top. We were greeted by the rest of the group sunning and eating lunch.

I guess it didn't look like I was having much fun, as I gripped the nearest rock and sat down. I had found the real definition of "EXPOSURE" and it was not a little old man flashing open his raincoat! I decided that I was going to take up knitting and sell my climbing stuff. I guess I really wasn't cut out to climb after all; it was too scary for me. After making this decision, I took off my shoes and ate lunch. These people were really good to listen to me bitching and complaining, just nodding and saying, "Uh huh," and "Of course."

Lunch over, we started short-roping down to where a fifty foot rappel station was being set up. I thought I liked rappelling, having done short ones, but this was a long way down. I talked myself up and then it was my turn to go down to the rope, clip in and go over the edge. I'm sure I did everything I had ever learned wrong but I was too scared to care. I did make it to the bottom of the wall and back onto the glacier—a long one hundred and fifty feet. We collected the odds and ends laying about, got back into our heavy boots and glissaded and joked all the way down the glacier to camp.

The sun was still shining and the air was clean. We laughed and took more pictures, then Hamish turned to me and said, "Well, how much?"

"How much what?" I asked.

"Well, you're selling your climbing gear and I thought I'd get some good deals before camp ends."

Being safe and sound and on the way home, knitting really didn't seem too appealing. "Maybe I'd better keep it for a while, just to make sure."

I didn't want to make any rash decisions.

Mt. Ahab 10,240′
Mt. Butters 10,460′

by Pamela Olson

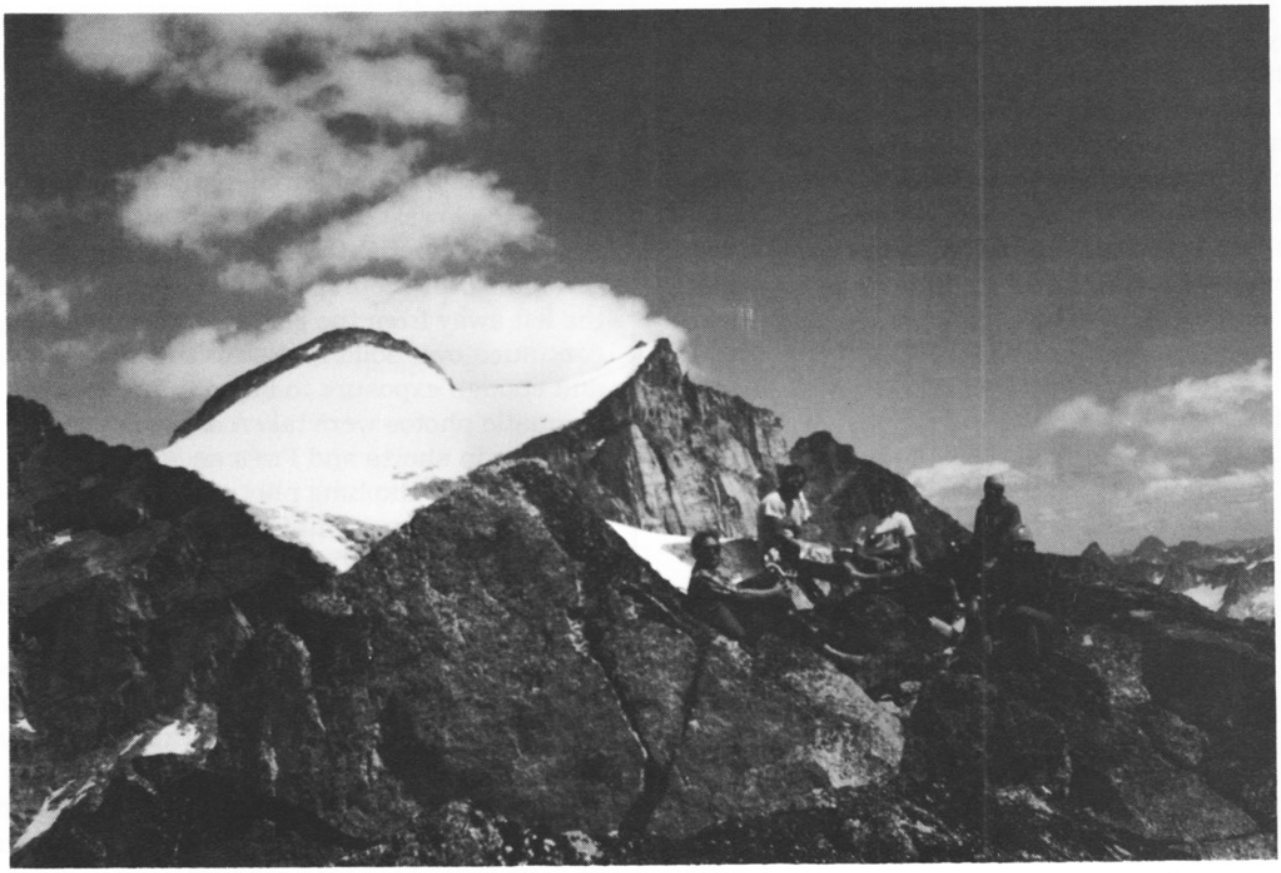
Eric White, Fred Thiessen, Peter Tchir, Pamela Olson and David Lemon.

We set off at 05:13:02 to the Moby Dick-Pequod col where we spent an hour setting up a fixed line to the bergschrund on the north side. We then rappelled our fixed line and faced off to Pequod Pass for a cold and windy lunch. From here it was a long snow slog to Mt. Butters which we reached at 1:45 p.m. We added our names to the tobacco can summit record noting that it was last ascended in 1984.

By now the weather had improved, so we shot off to Mt. Ahab and scrambled to its football-sized summit. Unfortunately, we didn't have time to linger as we all now noticed camp was a long way away. A quick glissade-avalanche returned us to Pequod Pass where it was still cold and windy.

The ascent to the Moby Dick– Pequod was slow and soggy. The final 450 feet to the col on the fixed line was wet, cold and strenuous for all and terrifying for some due to the steep ice. Crampon removal at the col was blissful to our tortured feet. After a foot thaw and the consumption of the last of the mountain mix, we descended our now familiar route on Moby Dick Glacier and over the slabs and moraine to camp.

Pamela was conferred honourary manhood status for participating in this ancient KMC ritual. We concluded that our fifteen and a half hour day, 7,300 vertical foot ascent was beyond excessive behaviour and bordered on masochism.



Summit of Mt. Escalade. Eric White, Fred Thiessen, Doris Corbeil, Pamela Olson, Dave Lemon. Photo by Hamish Mutch.

Benito Cereno 10,050′
Redburn 10,150′
White Jacket 10,250′
Proteus 10,660′

by Pamela Olson

Traverse or Excessive Behaviour?
July 25,1988
Eric White, Fred Thiessen, Pam Olson.

While sitting atop Benito Cereno, we looked west at all those lovely peaks and said, "Why stop here? It's only eleven o'clock." So we abandoned Dave and Carl and set off.

The climbing involved fourth class scrambling on large blocks which we negotiated using the authorized short rope technique of the Canadian Mountain Guides. Then we reached "The First Step," an unnamed pinnacle between Benito Cereno and Redburn. We ascended the pinnacle,



Eric White rappelling off a pinnacle between Benito Cereno and Redburn. Photo by Fred Thiessen.

tied off the last fifteen feet of the ridge and rappelled off using the world's largest sling.

We continued in the same vein over to Redburn. By now we were committed and there was no turning back. We hollered down to Dave and Carl, who were descending the glacier, that we would be late for dinner.

Then we moved on to White Jacket, a mere forty-five minute jaunt, arriving there at 16:07:32. Aren't digital watches great?

We persevered on to Proteus, which at this point was the easiest exit. After a short stop on the summit we trundled on down the established trail back to camp, arriving at 7:30 p.m.

We definitely had missed dinner. Since we had skipped climbing Harpoon, our behaviour can be described as excessive but not masochistic.

Mt. Forecastle 9,650′

by Doris Corbeil

South Ridge
Sunday July 24, 1988
Hamish Mutch, Doris Corbeil

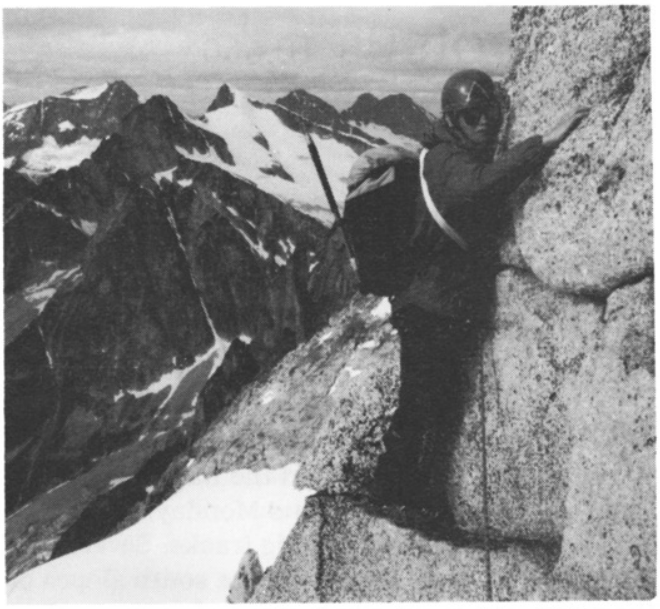
At 7:00 a.m. we left camp and travelled west across the boulder field and above the tree line to the lowest point of the south ridge. Directly below where it met the snowfield, we started to scramble over the huge granite blocks, keeping to the left away from the glacier. After roping up, we continued over solid rock with the sun shining and enough exposure to make it interesting. Dramatic photos were taken of the exposed climbers in shorts and Firés on solid rock; all the good stuff for climbing photos. On the last pitch I used some of my "climbing words" learned at rock school on a stuck chock! There were also a few "tricky" moves that led to the top of the difficulties and out onto a football-sized ridge.

Another half hour of scrambling brought us to the summit of Forecastle and lunch. As well as being a new route and a first for me, I had my introduction to the Kootenay Mountaineering Club greeting echoing from the opposite mountain. After a brief explanation and a history lesson on "The Call," I too was echoing its melodious greeting to the climbers on the other peak.

Proteus, South Face 10,660'

by Paul Allen

New Route
Steve Horvath, Paul Allen



Pamela Olson on the east ridge of Mt.Proteus.
Photo by Fred Thiessen.

At 4:00 a.m. the dawn weather looked bleak and so I told Steve to go back to sleep. At 5:00 a.m. it was no better and we decided to sleep in. It didn't start out as an auspicious day. However, at 5:30 a.m. Steve was dragged out of bed, herded up to the cook tent, rushed through his breakfast and physically pushed back to his tent to pack. All the while, he was still half asleep, and grumbling about how the weather still looked forbidding.

The desire to climb had overruled our cold feet and the uncertain weather. So late as usual, we set off and up because that was where the face of Proteus rose, out of the glacier straight above camp. Steve had waited fourteen years to get back to the Battle Group for this face and now I knew why. It dominated the camp, brooding above. I spotted it from the chopper on the way in, looked at it from every angle and studied it whenever possible.

Steve was sure the ridge would go but we both could see a band of overhangs one third of the way up. This looked to be the crux and if we were to climb this 2,200 foot face we had to find a way through.

Ten-thirty found us gingerly trying to poke our way through a monstrous bergschrund pulled away forty feet from the face and receding into the blackness below. Nothing was stable. Anything we kicked just fell away into the 'schrund; if we had ever crossed, retreat would be impossible. So we worked our way out from under the face onto the lower col where the ridge plowed down into the glacier. We had hoped to avoid this as it added 400 feet of what looked like hard, wet climbing. However, around this corner of the ridge, this route was broken and we quickly climbed three easy pitches, then traversed right onto the face just above our original bergschrund route and regained our previous high point.

We hurried lunch as time was late, and our packs were heavy with bivy gear. The weather was threatening and directly above was the band of overhangs. It was starting to look like an epic was in store as Steve led up a 5.7 pitch and into a big scree-covered bowl.

The next pitch dripped vertical water over moss-covered rock and was fun indeed. I poked my way up putting in occasional weak bits of protection. We were digging out wet moss and mud for every handhold– scary but fun. The rope ran out in the middle of a wet, downsloping traverse and Steve upclimbed and gave me slack to move over to a belay.

Steve led the next pitch and thankfully found a huge belay site. We were through this crux and the next ten pitches rose quickly past us. Easy upclimbing was punctuated by stops only to catch our breath.

We worked our way from the face over to the ridgeline. This proved to be solid and beautifully exposed. Air all around as the afternoon wore on and two short 5.7 pitches led to hands-in-pockets, chew gum and whistle type climbing as Fred would say. Five scrambly pitches later, we sat on the summit eating a cold supper, looking at Steve's watch and shaking our heads with disbelief. A big face climbed in six hours and a descent in the best of style will bring nothing but good memories for years to come.

Mt. Proteus 10,660'

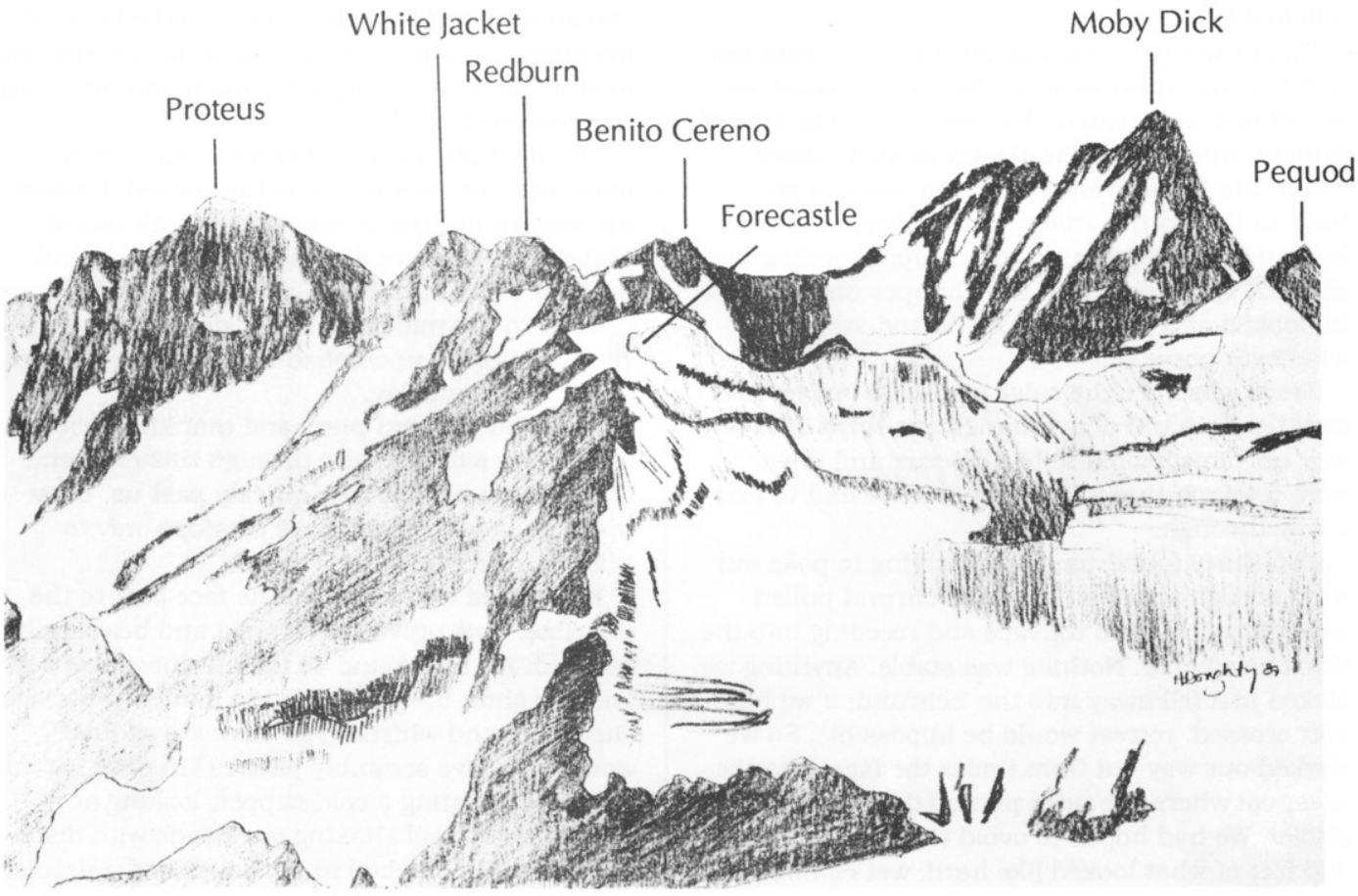
by David Lemon

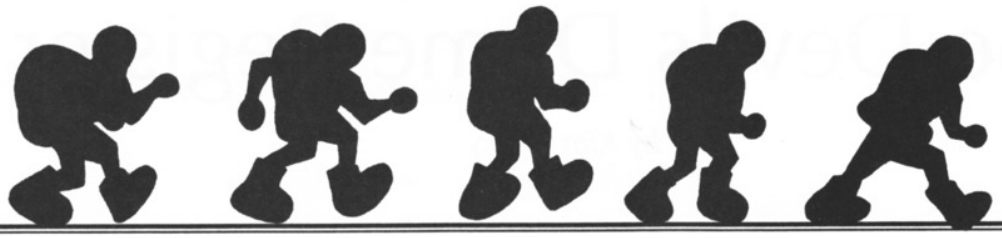
July 26, 1988
Dave Lemon, Carl Johnson, Robyn Laytham, Peter Tchir, Mike Allegretti, Rod Beauprie, Liz Stanich, Esther Neufeld

After a few clouds the previous afternoon, Tuesday was clear and the half of the camp that had not climbed Proteus Monday, set off to take advantage of the existing tracks. Seven mountain goats were seen on the south slopes of the mountain as we climbed out of camp on the way to the toe of the hanging glacier.

Following the new set of steps expertly kicked by Rod, later relieved by Peter, the party arrived on the summit at 10:30 a.m. after a four hour trip from camp. A leisurely period on the summit spent eating, lying in the sun, and identifying distant peaks followed. Rod, Esther and Liz then headed down to camp while the rest of the party diverted to climb Harpoon.

We then descended, in very hot weather, to the moraine just below Houston Pass where we discovered a prospector's camp, which yielded an old pair of crampons, one tin of Klim, one film cannister, and a claim post dated September 8, 1969. On the way down the moraine, Mike almost stepped on a nanny mountain goat and kid. We arrived at camp about 2:30 p.m. and proceeded to hydrate.



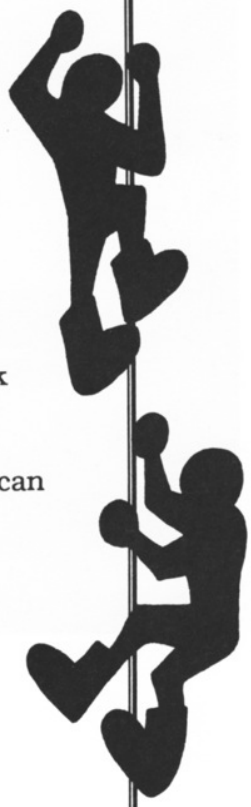


KMC HIKING CAMPS, 1974-1988

1974	Bonnie Gem	Purcells
1975	Gwillim Lakes	Valhallas
1976	Wilson Creek	Goat Range
1977	St. Mary's Park	Purcells
1978	Demers Lake	Valhallas
1979	Upper Wee Sandy Lake	Valhallas
1980	Bonnie Gem	Purcells
1981	Clint Creek	Purcells, Pioneer Group
1982	Monashee Park	Monashees
1983	Gwillim Lakes	Valhallas
1984	Hume Creek	Upper Duncan R.
1985	Valley of the Lakes	Bobbie Burns Lodge, Northern Purcells
1986	Anemone Pass	Mica Creek area
1987	Limestone Lakes	Height of the Rockies
1988	Glacier Creek, North Fork	Purcells

KMC CLIMBING CAMPS, 1969-1988

1969	Mulvey Group	Valhallas
1970	Royal Group	Rockies
1971	Adamants	North Selkirks
1972	Mulvey Group	Valhallas
1973	Gold Range	Monashees
1974	Battle Range	Selkirks
1975	Taurus Group	Purcells
1976	Deville Névé	Glacier National Park
1977	Clemenceau	Rockies
1978	Fairy Meadows	Adamants
1979	Nemo Group	Selkirks, Upper Duncan
1980	Farnham Group	Purcells
1981	Remillard Group	North Selkirks
1982	Leaning Towers	Purcells
1983	Freshfield, Mummery Glaciers	Rockies
1984	Vowell Group	Purcells
1985	Ape Lake	Coast Range
1986	Adamants	North Selkirks
1987	Laidlaw Creek	Battle Range
1988	Melville Group	Battle Range

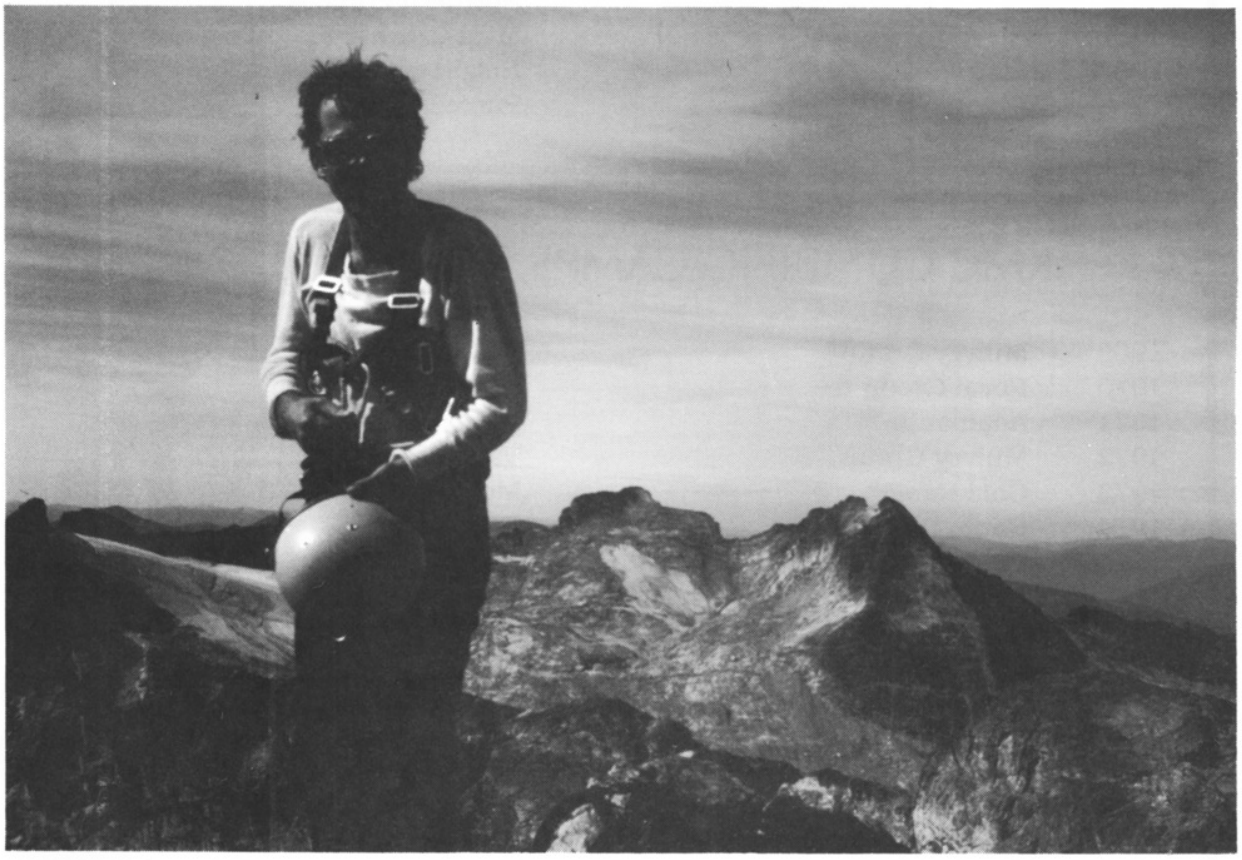


The Devils Dome Register

by Kim Kratky

In September 1987 when Peter McIver, Steve Horvath, and I climbed Devils Dome, we found the summit record to be in a pretty bad way. Rodents had gnawed holes in the ends of the plastic tube, allowing water to seep in and damage the original writing. We decided to take out the old record and started a new one in a film can. Since that time the club has donated the original to the Peter Whyte Museum in Banff.

As Devils Dome is an important peak in one of the Kootenay Mountaineering Club's major areas of activity, I thought club members might like to see what people have written about it from the top.



Steve Horvath on the summit of Devils Dome; Mt. Bor behind. Photo by Kim Kratky.

RECORD OF DEVILS DOME SUMMIT REGISTER

Name of mountain: Devils Dome, 9,100 foot, highest peak in the Devils Range.

FIRST ASCENT

July 1971: Bob Dean and Howie Ridge via south-east ridge from camp in Drinnon Pass. Kootenay Mountaineering Club first attempted in 1970 but turned back half way up.

SECOND ASCENT

September 3, 1973: Gordon Stein, Peter Wood, and Howie Ridge, via Route 1 from camp at lake south of summit. Interesting due to snow and ice. Rappelled off in darkness. Kootenay Mountaineering Club.

THIRD ASCENT

June 24, 197-: Gary Bruce and Scott Rowed.

FOURTH ASCENT

July 11, 1975: Ian Hamilton, Bert Port, and ——. Route 1 with harder variations on south.

FIFTH ASCENT

August 15, 1975: Peter Wood (KMC) & Scott Rowed (KMC, new member) by way of Route 1 with easier variations to the East. 3 1/2 hrs. from notch in East ridge and two hours from camp at Gwillim Lakes. Cold, cloudy day with strong winds at times. Dry!

SIXTH ASCENT

July 30, 1977: Peter Koedt, Jara Popelkova via boulder pile gulley-chimney just south-east of west ridge. Literally a pile of shit, not hard but not recommendable. ca. 5.5– and 5.6 direct near top.

SEVENTH ASCENT

July 31, 1977: Peter Koedt, Jara Popelkova, Gunther Offermann, Elena Offermann. South Face. Nice route. 5.7–5.8. 6 pitches.

EIGHTH ASCENT

August 1, 1982: Ian Hamilton, Dave Adams, and Peter Wood–KMC. 7:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. from camp by lake via Route 1.
Hail and rain for 15 min. near top of 2nd pitch. Black lichen became unpleasantly greasy. Clouds & thunder around while writing this, no lightning so far.

NINTH ASCENT

August 6, 1982: Jim Jones, Dan Offin via the S.E. ridge. Good for a few larfs. Wristwatch stopped working on the way up so we "trashed it" on the summit. Enclosed find remains.

TENTH ASCENT

August 1, 1983: Leo Jansma & Mike Brewster, KMC Hiking Camp '83 via S.E. ridge. One good pitch. 3 1/2 hours from snow below notch. Welcome Valhalla Wilderness Park.

ELEVENTH ASCENT

July 1, 1985: Chris & Peter McIver via SE ridge. Sunny.

TWELFTH ASCENT

August 8, 1986: Cliff McCluskey, Tim Evans, Craig McCallum, John Cameron via SE ridge and SE gulley. Great day.

THIRTEENTH ASCENT

August 24, 1986: Jeff Eppler & Bob Walton via SE ridge. "The 51st classic climb". It's snowing we gotta run!!

FOURTEENTH ASCENT

September 7, 1986: Paul Allen, Robyn Laytham, Liz Stanich, Rod Beauprie (our first tech. ascent– Liz & Rod). Beautiful weather, grand vista. An enjoyable 5.6 climb.

FIFTEENTH ASCENT

August 9, 1987: Dick Erickson, Tom Dabrowski, Bob Popielarszyk, Jim Truitt, Lou Demaria. Inter-Mountain Alpine Club, Richland, Wash. on a traverse of Devil's Range. Big thunder & lightning to north. Will have to leave quick.

SIXTEENTH ASCENT

September 20, 1987: Peter McIver, Kim Kratky, Steve Horvath via standard route. A fine, sunny autumn day.

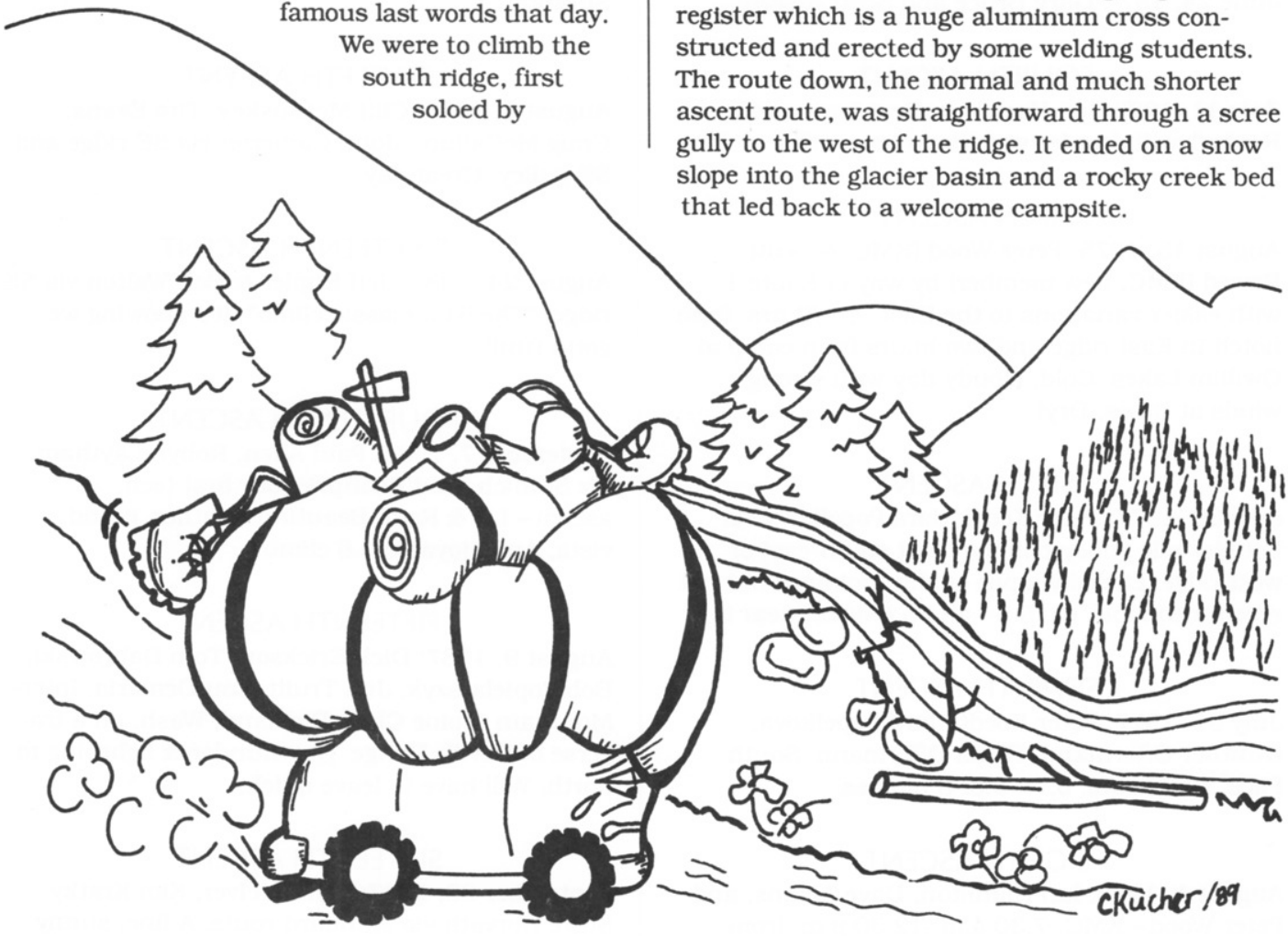
Mt. Nelson, South Ridge

by Doris Corbeil

10,807'
July 12-13, 1988
Hamish Mutch, Doris Corbeil

We left Creston on July 12, and spent a lazy day driving the three and a half hours to Invermere and up to Nelson Creek. We packed up what seemed like an army of gear and headed through the valley toward Nelson Creek. Three hours of hiking brought us to a semi-flat mossy spot above tree line that served for a campsite. Rain drizzled off and on all night but let up enough in the morning to send us on our way. "Only a few hours from here," were our famous last words that day. We were to climb the south ridge, first soloed by C. C. Ellis in 1910. We hiked up over the grassy slope and into a boulder field. Keeping north along the ridge we started to climb rock pinnacles up and over onto a solid ridge. We had been going for a long time and stopped here for lunch, amidst the wind and occasional snowflake. Thinking the summit wasn't far, we continued onto rotten scree and even more rotten pinnacles. It took hours to traverse around them. Finally, when we were almost ready to quit, one last rotten wall led around to a few solid blocks and the summit.

The clouds rolled in and the view was well hidden, a poor reward for a lot of hard work. The snow started us on our way after signing in at the register which is a huge aluminum cross constructed and erected by some welding students. The route down, the normal and much shorter ascent route, was straightforward through a scree gully to the west of the ridge. It ended on a snow slope into the glacier basin and a rocky creek bed that led back to a welcome campsite.



Billy Budd Traverse

by Rod Beauprie

"We really are in a pickle!" said Fred. "Yes, I haven't been in a pickle like this for years!"

Our band of seven had set out early that morning, boldly going where no flip-flop had gone before. Billy Budd was reputed to be an easy scramble and we planned to take a look at it and its neighbour, Claggart. As we walked along, hands in pockets, the conversation strayed from Claggart to Swaggert (the Reverend Jimmy) and then to Eric's dissipated lifestyle.

Some scrambling led us to a broad, slanting sheet of hard ice. Crampons were used with varying degrees of enthusiasm to reach the snow above. Further scrambling and a long snow ramp ended with a peak which we called Swaggert. From the top, we could see an interesting assortment of piled-up blocks to the east; an unnamed peak apparently held together only by gravity. Later reflection suggested that the further peak may have been the real Claggart and our "Swaggert" the unnamed peak. After a broad snow and rock ridge, we reached another peak which we designated Billy Budd. Much of the known universe, including the Goodsirs, the Wash-me Wanda Icefield and Gasherbrum Tower was clearly visible.

We followed the ridge to the west and more than a few rocks were rolled down its slope towards Stygian Lake. At least one boulder rolled past the lake and into the neighbouring valley. Larry Doell greeted us at this point, having soloed a snow gully up to the ridge. Larry continued east, not eager to repeat his ascent route. After seeing the steepness of his snow gully, we merrily strolled along the ridge, hands in pockets, to the end. We quickly reached a point beyond which we could not scramble and were forced to rappel to a notch, from which we were sure we could scramble to the snow.

The first rappel had great pendulum promise and was particularly interesting for Liz and I who had left our descenders in camp! One by one we accumulated on this pickle of a notch, while attempts were made to find a route down. A fifty metre rope was dangled off one side— out of sight. Another was dangled off the end, again out of sight and probably in mid-air. Fred rappelled part way down the only remaining side and saw nothing promising.

Fortunately, Eric, the last man down, spied a promising chimney. This crack led down the ridge to a point where a rappel could reach the snow. With some relief, the seven of us groped through the chimney and rappelled to the snow from which the col above camp was a five minute walk.

The first West to East traverse of Billy Budd:
Rod Beauprie
Carl Johnson
Dave Lemon
Pam Olson
Liz Stanich
Fred Thiessen
Eric White

The first East to West traverse of Billy Budd:
Larry Doell

Literary note: Melville's story, *Billy Budd*, concerned a young sailor called Billy Budd and his downfall at the hands of the wicked Claggart. Nearby Vere summit is named for the captain of the ship on which Claggart and Budd sailed.

Peakbagging For Beginners

by Steve Horvath

Definition: Peakbagging - one of the "games climbers play" (c.f. L. Tejada - Flores), especially favoured by Brits and similar hardy souls.

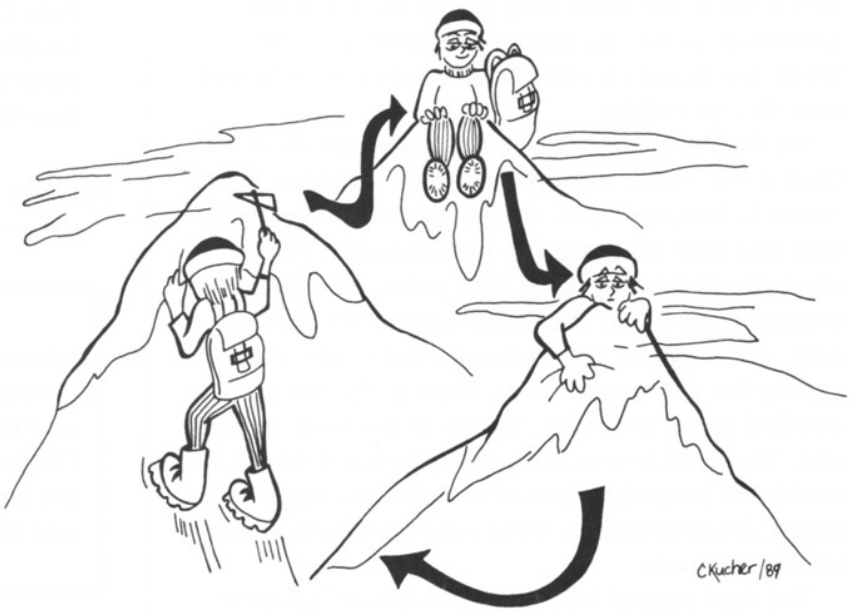
Well, why deny it. I like it too—when the mood strikes me. A trip I used to make annually until other duties, such as kids, tennis tournaments, etc. made it difficult, is right next door to us—one of my favourite places, good old Kokanee. I took my friend Barend Bredenkamp there in late August and it struck me—what a lovely place for neophyte peakbaggers. So here are the instructions.

From Gibson Lake up to just east of the south ridge of Esmeralda Peak (one to the right from Keyhole). Go up the obvious grassy avalanche paths paralleling the ridge to the foot of the south face of Esmeralda, then scramble up the south face to the summit. A pleasant class 4 on broken up firm granite or an easy class 5 on the very bottom (1 pitch). Have lunch on top, then turn east and traverse to next peak. Is it Kokanee or Haystack? It's the highest one in the range. From the summit, one can either continue on the ridge or drop down to the glaciers to get to the next summit. As the ridge narrows and gets quite loose, it is best to drop down north until it is possible to traverse to the saddle below Gray's peak of Kokanee Beer fame.

Leave the packs here and scramble east to the summit of Gray's for a view of Nelson and Kootenay Lake. Drop down to the saddle (don't forget to pick up the packs) and start a long diagonal traverse across lovely grassy and flowery slopes, back to where one has left the main trail in the morning. It is slightly longer than bombing straight down to the Gibson mine site, but is more pleasant and safer. It also avoids all the bushwhacking on the lower slopes.

It's an easy twelve hours for four 9,000 foot peaks. Rope is optional, but nice to have as the glacier has opened up considerably in the last few years. An ice axe is nice to have along as well, especially when traversing the occasionally steep grass slopes on the way back down. Crampons are not necessary.

Next year—traverse around Justline Basin.



Rhonda's Route To The Bugs

by Chris Overton

Rhonda Netzel, an associate member, came to the Kootenays to tell us that the Bugaboo Mountains are much closer to the Duncan River than to Brisco, the usual embarkation point. There had to be a route from the West Kootenay and she was going to find it!

We were intrigued and eager to join in the adventure. We ran the concept of a route from the west past a number of recognized goats in the club, but it was quickly dismissed. No road access and days of bushwhacking, we were told. Prospects brightened a little at the '88 Hiking Camp as views from MacDuff and Eyebrow provided a chance to look for a route. A route to Bugaboo Glacier, following the logging road up Howser and Rory Creeks to a long patch of snow and then up a snow gully, was clearly visible. The only unknowns were the last part of the road and the bushwhack up to the alpine, both hidden by a ridge. Fred Thiessen became interested, providing an excellent map updated from aerial photos.

Research with local loggers was anything but encouraging. "It's a wet drainage with lots of alders— it's all mature spruce and hemlock up there, and there's lots of them down." The bushwhack was shaping up to be a "5.9" epic. About then, Rhonda decided she was going to Alberta to climb Mt. Lougheed instead. Prospects were dimming.

On Labour Day weekend, Hazel Arnold, Hugh Smith and I set out in spite of what we had heard, to look for a route. The Howser Creek road starts from the Duncan River road at about 42 km (all distances from Lardeau). The road was excellent up to the Rory Creek confluence at 64 km. The Rory Creek road was well built but not maintained. The road shoulder has slumped at 72 km and 74 km, but is passable with a high clearance 2WD vehicle to the top landing at 76 km. We camped near the top landing Friday night at an elevation of 1,500 metres, two hours from Lardeau.

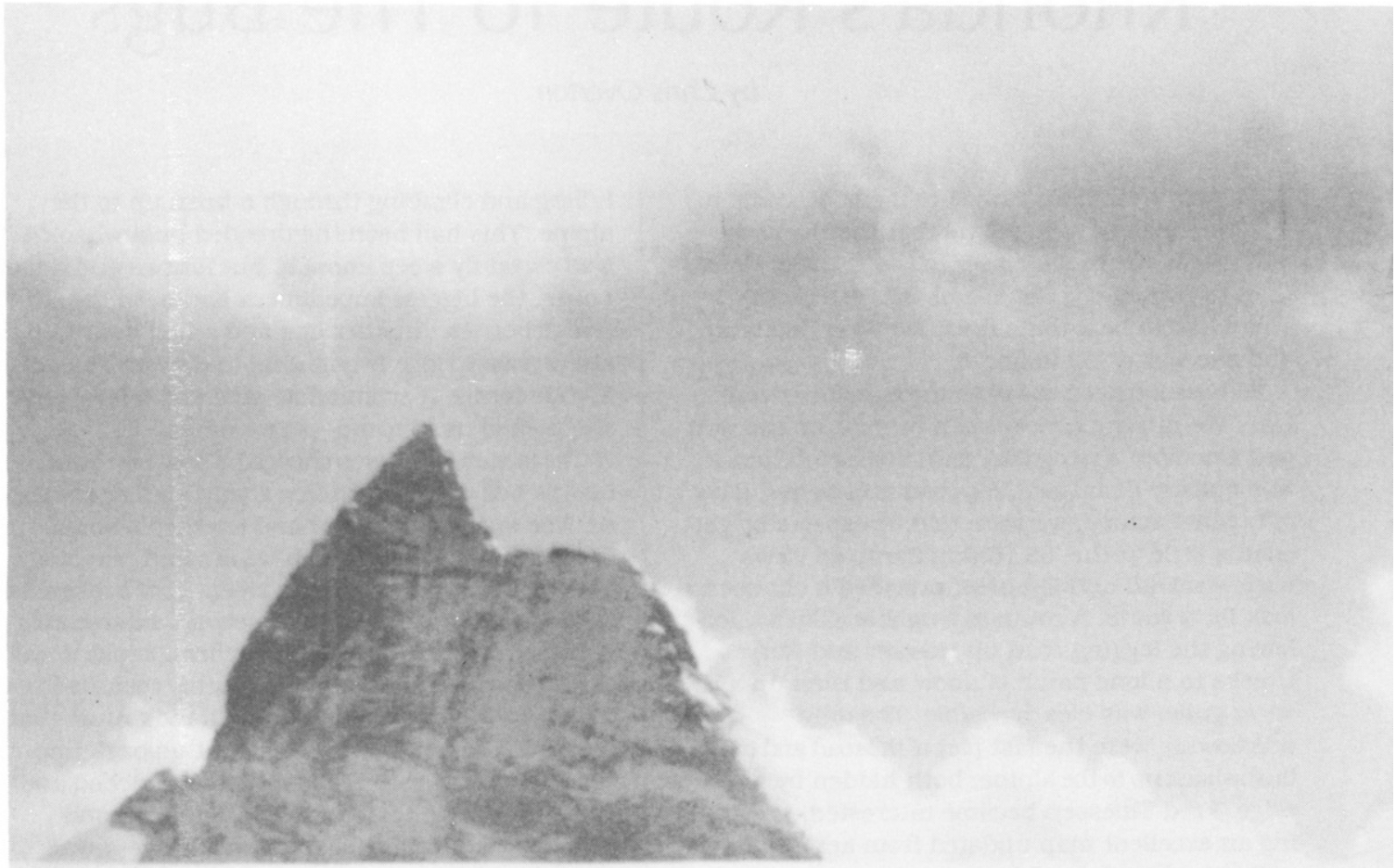
We set out Saturday on a bulldozer track made several years before as a firebreak. It worked well as a trail, but evidently not as a firebreak. From near the end of the track, we headed up through open woods toward a rocky, burned-off ridge. Before reaching the rock we turned north, sidehilling and climbing through a burn up to the alpine. This had been the dreaded bushwhack?! It was certainly steep enough, but for two and a half hours, the biggest impediment had been the huckleberries. Another one and a half hours up a steep grassy ridge brought us to Howser Peak at 2,400 metres. A swimmable pool and a level tent site invited us to camp— so we did.

The picture from camp changed. The snow route I had picked out from Hiking Camp no longer existed. The snow had melted and exposed a small, badly broken glacier which we crossed nervously. The snow gully had become steep, very broken ice with wicked looking holes. A second, intersecting gully compounded problems by firing rocks down at a frightening rate. A polite mutiny took us from the charted course. Hugh found a rock route that detoured the hazards and brought us back into the gully part way up. From there we kicked and chopped steps and scrambled up to a second glacier. Once there, the going was easy— a walk across the névé, up a loose boulder slide and we were on the Bugaboo Glacier! It was four hours from camp, eight hours from the car with an elevation gain of 1,340 metres.

We spent the next few hours touring the glacier and climbing Howser Peak. A cairn near the top provided interesting reading during lunch. The summit record had three entries, all from the late 'fifties. The first was from a disoriented party who had arrived via the east ridge and were planning to descend the west ridge. That is the easy way down— if you have a parachute. The note queried if theirs was the first ascent. The second note was from an American Alpine Club group, the third from an Alpine Club of Canada climbing camp. The name E. Whipple stood out from the ACC roster.

We returned to camp by our ascent route in time for a swim, dinner and a mug of tea while the sun set.

This route is attractive for anyone who has ambitions to climb Marmolata, Rock Ridge Peak, Thimble, Flattop or Howser Peak. The drive up Howser Creek and the hike are, like the rest of the Purcells, scenic and spectacular.



Petit Haute Route

by Jeff Roberts

Chamonix-Zermatt, April 18-26, 1988
Jeff and Delia Roberts, Fred Thiessen

The Haute route and its variants between Argentière and Zermatt in the Pennine Alps have attracted ski tourers since the route was first done in 1911. We became interested in skiing this route after hearing about it from others in the club.

After years of talking about it, we were finally in the Chamonix valley discussing our next move. The decision was easy, with its spectacular scenery, eighteen kilometre ski run and 2,800 metre drop, the Vallée Blanche was to



precede anything else. On Monday we took the tram to the Aiguille du Midi at 3,846 metres, waited for the snow to soften and were off. It was an easy run, the scenery outstanding and the crowds tolerable. Once back in Chamonix, we stocked up for the next day when we were to start the Haute route.

The first leg was from Argentière to Champex. To start, we jumped on the tram in Argentière to disembark at 2,900 metres. Our stop for the night was

the Trient hut in Switzerland. To reach it, we descended to the Argentière Glacier, then ascended to the Col du Chardonnet, then through the Fenêtre de Saleina and down to the hut. A straightforward tour, but a warm one on a sunny day. A white out the next morning dashed our hopes of climbing the Aiguille du Tour, so we decided to continue to Champex. Fortunately we had tracks to follow; it would have been very difficult otherwise. After a tedious zig-zag descent in breakable crust, we arrived in Champex to discover the town shut down as it was between noon and 3:00 p.m.

From here we hitched to Orsiers, then trained and trammed to Verbier to start our next leg to Zermatt. This is where we deviated from the regular Haute route which restarted at Bourg St. Pierre. Our variant, the little Haute route, offered some easy peaks to climb which weren't available on the regular route.

Verbier, a Swiss ski town, provided us with our immediate needs: beer, baths, restaurants and hotels. The next morning, we again caught the tram to gain our elevation. At the top, we traversed over to the Mount Fort hut where we skinned up. Our hut for the night was the Prafleuri. On our way we climbed the Rosablanche (3,336 metres), then descended to the hut. To our surprise we were the only people at the hut that night. Fortunately, we had some franc coins for the electricity meter. The hut had power, but the electric stove was out of order.

From here we headed for the Dix hut, a straightforward traverse and ascent—we had hoped. The first portion of the traverse was on avalanche debris which made balance control very frustrating on our tele gear. Once past this obstacle it was straightforward and we reached the hut in the early afternoon. I must add that beer is 3.5 Swiss Francs per can and worth every penny. The Prafleuri hut can be bypassed by leaving Verbier as early as possible in the morning or by staying at the Mt. Fort hut and traversing the Rosablanche, and it might be worth it.

We spent two days at the Dix hut due to its proximity to Mt. Blanc du Chillon which we wanted to climb. Due to the good weather, we were able to the next day. Along with many others, we skied to the first peak, removed our skis and climbed to the higher peak. An easy climb, but quite airy. We returned in the early afternoon to read, suntan and dry gear. This was a Saturday night and our first experience with weekend use. The hut was packed; there were probably a hundred and fifty people, and to our disgust at least half of them smoked.

Our journey to the Vignette hut the following day took us over the Pigne d'Arolla, a 3,796 metre peak. This area is very popular with weekend tourers so our run to the Vignette hut was on moguls!

From the Vignette hut, Zermatt is a long day away, however we decided to do it in two days which would allow us to climb two peaks on the way. The following day we climbed Mt. L'Evêque in the spirit of a bilingual nation, enjoyed one of our better downhill runs, then set course for the Bouquetin refuge. This unmanned refuge was more like the Canadian definition of a hut, except there wasn't any food left behind .

The next morning, to our dismay, it was whited out. Being the perennial optimists we noted the altimeter hadn't changed so we decided to take a chance and try for Zermatt. It turned out we were right (fools luck?). As we crossed into Italy, it cleared. After a short journey through Italy, we reached the Col de Valpelline where we dropped our packs then followed the Swiss/Italian border to the Tête de Valpelline, a 3,802 metre peak. From this peak we could see our route to Zermatt and enjoy spectacular views of the surrounding peaks.

From here it was all downhill to Zermatt, some eighteen kilometres away. Views of the Matterhorn dominated this run. We skied below its north face until we met the road which we followed to the gondola station. There we caught the lift down to Zermatt.

This ended our tour, a most enjoyable outing. And yes, it was worth it.

Ski Touring In Europe

by Jeff Roberts

- Maps and guidebooks are easily found. Eric Roberts' guidebook on the high level route, as well as the maps, may be purchased in most bookstores.
- Huts provide breakfasts, dinners, blankets and hot water by the litre. So no food, sleeping bags, tents or cutlery. But bring earplugs for the snorers you will be bunked with.
- Join the Alpine Club for reciprocal rights at the huts– fees are about half if you're a member.
- Off season is mid-April to mid-May. After mid-May the lower elevation snow is gone, and some lifts may be closed after May 20th or so.
- Beer and local wine as well as lunches are available at manned huts in addition to breakfast and dinner.



Jeff and Delia Roberts skiing the Vallée Blanche below the Aiguille du Diable. Photo by Fred Thiessen.



Delia Roberts on the ascent of Mt. L'Evêque. Matterhorn and Dent d'Heren in background. Photo by Fred Thiessen.

Climbing Mont Blanc

MAY 3-4, 1988

by Jeff Roberts



Jeff and Delia Roberts on the Plan Glacier below les Grands Mulets refuge. Photo by Fred Thiessen.

After completing the Haute Route, we made our way by train back to Argentière. We planned to move down to Chamonix and finalize preparations for the last objective of our trip—to climb Mont Blanc, the highest peak in Western Europe.

At this time of year, early May, Mont Blanc is a relatively easy climb. It is possible to ski most of the way; the technical difficulty is mainly in route finding through icefalls. The weather, we were told, was the biggest factor. Two clear days were needed in order to complete the approach to the Grands Mulets hut and then the climb itself via the Bosses Ridge.

After waiting almost a week for good weather, we finally made our way to the Aiguille du Midi teleferique and ascended to the mid-station. We bought round trip tickets as we would descend to this same point after our climb. The weather report was for a narrow window of stable weather; the winds were forecast to reach 100 km/hr by noon Wednesday. We were all aware that we had to catch a plane in Geneva on Friday. This would be our only chance.

The approach to the cabin was easy. Some avalanche terrain and a nasty icefall, but basically just a plod. It was much more difficult for me as I was weak and drained from food poisoning I picked up during our long wait. I doubted I would make the climb. Mt. Blanc is 4,807 metres, the cabin is at 3,050 metres and 1,800 metres is taxing enough when fit. I resolved to rest as much as possible to prepare myself.

We arrived at the cabin to find it almost full. There were over forty people, mainly in guided parties. Apparently we weren't the only ones who had been waiting for a week.

During dinner a pair of Americans came in. They must have caught the last tram up. The first American came in wearing his boots and pack, a major violation of hut etiquette. He was quickly told to remove his boots and leave his ice axe and crampons outside. I spoke with his friend after dinner. His partner had never been on a climbing trip before.

We bedded down early, planning to arise at 2:00 a.m. to depart by 2:30 a.m. The climb was supposed to take eight to ten hours one-way. We wanted to be off the summit ridge by noon when the winds were expected to come up. We were excited and it was hard to fall asleep amid the anticipation of the climb, and for me, the concern over whether I would be fit enough.

The next thing I knew, the lights were on and people were noisily preparing to depart. My watch told me it was midnight! I couldn't believe that everyone was leaving so early. We tried to ignore the noise and light, but finally gave in after about twenty minutes. I went outside and below me on the glacier, the first party was already leaving. It was 12:30 a.m.

Back inside we had breakfast. I was feeling better and hoped that I would have the reserves to make it. While we were packing we could hear the two Americans talking. The less experienced one was terrified. He had never done anything like this and was sure he was not fit enough to make it. I told him I was not sure I could make it, but there was a bivouac shelter halfway we could wait in if necessary.

We descended the glacier and put on our skis. It was pitch dark and snowing lightly. The lights of Chamonix were obscured by cloud. It was a lonely world consisting of circles of light from headlamps and blackness. We started out following the trail the others had left. It was typical of our experiences in Europe, the trail is always there—you just follow it. The Americans were right behind us. It was 1:30 a.m.

We moved quickly, the trail was good and despite the falling snow, we felt the weather would clear by daybreak. Travelling in the falling snow at night, the world becomes very small. The circle of light from your headlamp defines the universe. Noises are muffled and there is nothing to see.

The first half hour was spent settling into a steady pace. The Americans were able to keep up and we talked a bit about where they were from and where they had been. The unsure American was beginning to cheer up. He was moving quickly and talked enthusiastically of going home to tell his friends about the fantastic skiing in Europe.

As we gained elevation, the snowfall increased.

Isolated, each in our little universe, intent on keeping a strong pace, we didn't pay much attention to the changing conditions.

After the first half hour I had settled in with the others, despite the rapid pace. I felt strong and after an hour began to feel that I had a chance at getting to the top. Soon we began to catch the other parties. This was another of the characteristics of European ski-mountaineering, there are always others around.

At first the other parties were like phantoms in the falling snow. They appeared like street lamps on a foggy night, pale yellow lights marking the way, a handful of stars moving in the thick blackness.

Delia had led the whole way, setting a fast pace and we were catching the others. We came upon the first group at the bottom of what appeared to be a set of tight switchbacks. They had come to a stop. A member of the party was unable to do a kick-turn. The dark makes it impossible to focus on anything and it is easy to lose your balance while doing a kick-turn. The woman was having difficulty getting back on her feet.

The trail ahead was clear, so Delia impatiently cut around the stalled party and made her own trail. She completed her kick-turn and rejoined the broken trail. I followed, rejoining the broken trail just behind the woman who had fallen. Fred and the two Americans were stuck behind the remainder of the party and I moved ahead of them.

As I skied towards the next switchback, I looked through the dark. I could see through the falling snow that the switchbacks ahead were crowded with headlamps indicating we were stuck in the main party that had left one hour before us. Cursing to myself, "Damn, guided parties. Bunch of old women," I resigned myself to the slow-going until we were off this slope. Looking up, I could now see five switchbacks with skiers tip to tail, covering the whole slope above me.

I turned my attention to my pace as the woman ahead of me accelerated to make up the ground she had lost. Delia was almost at the next kick-turn point. I hoped the woman would be able to make a turn this time and not hold me up. Fred and the Americans were still waiting their turn at the previous switchback.

The cry, when I heard it, didn't register at first. "Avalanche" someone screamed far above me. I looked up as a chorus of shouts began "Avalanche, Avalanche, Avalanche." Above me, the whole world was moving. The headlamps were no longer in orderly rows but wavering around spastically. Simultaneously the slope dropped beneath me. It was the typical sensation of a slab settling. I had experienced this before and grinned to myself, thinking, "Wow, that was quite a drop." I looked down and saw the slope beginning to break into smaller and smaller pieces until it was just a pattern of cracks. Then to my horror, the cracks became gaps. First an inch, then six inches, then at ten inches the whole slope started to move, accelerating downward.

My headlamp lit the slope as I was carried down. I was knee-deep in large blocks of slab. Almost as soon as it had begun, it started to slow. I stabilized myself and tried to gain an even footing, but this wasn't possible. The ground was still moving slowly and steadily. Nothing could stop it.

Then I was hit from behind by a wave of snow that knocked me over. My headlamp lit the blocks as I fell into them. No longer was I knee deep, now I was in up to my waist. The blocks of slab were like giant teeth opening up and sucking me deeper as I moved down. Again the movement started to slow; I was sure I could regain my feet.

Just as I started to rise, another wave hit me knocking me face first. Now the slabs were taller than me. I could see valleys between them as I was pulled deeper and deeper into the snow. I realized that it was time to get serious about saving my life and started to discard equipment. I threw away a pole and was trying to get rid of the other one when I became aware that my skis were pulling me under. I was buried to my waist, my feet far beneath me.

Then one of my skis stuck and dragged me further down. Straining upward I tried to pull myself out of the snow. I felt something give and my ski was gone. I pushed up frantically with my free leg. I was able to keep my upper body on top and was starting to wonder what else I could do when

I realized the snow was slowing. I fought to get upright and came to a stop buried to the waist. My headlamp, now hanging around my neck, was still on. I couldn't see anyone else around. It was pitch black.

I shouted to Delia and Fred. The only answers were the cries of others. No Delia. No Fred. I shouted again as panic began to flood over me. Then I heard Delia shout.

"Where's Fred?" I screamed back.

"I don't know," Delia called.

"Come down to me, use your Pieps and search on the way."

As she came down I extricated myself. There was no sign of my ski or my pole. I took off my other ski and left it in the snow. By this time Delia had arrived. She had been right on the edge of the slab when the avalanche had occurred and had been able to ski out of the slide.

Any sign of Fred? "No," she replied and she had heard nothing on her Pieps. I checked that it was on receive and turned mine to receive also. I heard nothing. I looked at my watch, it was 3:20 a.m.

We began to search, Delia crisscrossing the slope on skis, me on foot pushing through the rubble. We paused occasionally to shout, but there was no reply. People passed by us in the dark, calling out to unseen friends lost in the darkness. We continued downward but there was still nothing on the Pieps. These things have a range of 100 metres—why could we hear nothing? Where was Fred?

It was now at least fifteen minutes since the avalanche had occurred. Fred's chances were diminishing by the minute. After thirty minutes he had a fifty per cent chance of being found alive. We couldn't leave Fred here; Fred was part of the mountains for us, he was always there smiling and leading the way. To die so foolishly was something he didn't deserve. We searched on, still there was no sound from the Pieps.

Panic was starting to set in again, the frustration of knowing he was here somewhere. We were doing everything we knew how, but somehow the darkness made it all so futile. There was no last seen point, there was no deposition zone. Only darkness and the shouts of others in four different languages. The debris continued endlessly. How could Fred be so far away that we couldn't at least hear a beep from his Pieps?

Then, far away, below us, we heard a call. It was Fred! He was all right! He was so far below us it was hard to hear him. But it was him all right.

Delia continued down to find him. I watched her go and turned to go back to where my ski was. I wanted to find the other one so I could keep going or get out, whatever we decided to do. If I could find it and Fred was all right we could keep going and maybe even make it. I returned to my ski, and started to search.

I looked for a long time but it was futile in the dark. I did find my pole and was still looking for my ski when Delia came back. It had taken her a long time to go down and back. She had found Fred. He had been completely buried but had been able to dig himself out. He wasn't wearing mitts when the avalanche occurred and had frozen his hands badly. Other than that he seemed okay. But Delia had only seen one American on the way down. It was the more experienced one, he had been sitting by his pack when she went by.

"Where's your friend?" she had asked.

"I don't know," he replied. "He's probably down there," indicating a pool of light below.

"You had better find him for sure," Delia had told him.

As she made her way back up, he began to call. The missing guy's name was Bob. We could hear him shouting and Delia told me Bob was missing. I abandoned my search and leaving my ski we once again started down the slope.

"Don't bother using your Pieps," Delia said. "He wasn't wearing one." A chill went through me. The odds of finding someone in the dark in an avalanche this size without a Pieps were pretty small.

As we approached the search area a cry went up, Bob had been found. We rushed over and pulled out our shovels to help dig. Bob was less than five feet from where his companion had been sitting. He was about two feet under in a prone postion. His arms were between his legs in the

classic avalanche victim's pose. His legs were a twisted mess, both his skis were still on. I looked at my watch. It was 4:10 a.m.

Efforts began immediately to revive him. CPR and mouth-to-mouth were administered, but those working on him didn't share a common language. It was impossible to agree on a technique or to coordinate the actions of the various people. We put a duvet around him and put him in a bivy sac. Delia was sent, alone, to look for help. No one was left but two Europeans who had been looking for lost skis, Bob's friend, Fred and myself. I watched, frightened, as Delia skied off alone into the darkness. There was a large icefall she would have to cross.

After about an hour of trying to revive Bob, Delia returned with the rescue team. She had met them just above the icefall. The leader was a doctor who immediately pronounced Bob dead. We packed him up and headed back to the cabin. We arrived at the cabin at 6:30 a.m.

We returned to Chamonix that day. I used Bob's skis and Fred used some poles he had found on the way down. We spent the day in shock. After a night punctuated by nightmares, we arose to another clear day with high winds on the ridge of Mt. Blanc. Walking to the train station, we looked up and were caught again by the beauty and mystery of the mountain. Waiting for the train, we agreed we would return and try again to climb Mt. Blanc.



Mont Blanc Massif from the Aiguille du Midi.
Photo by Fred Thiessen.

Surviving An Avalanche

by Jeff Roberts

The above story is true. No amount of retelling has reduced the terror that all of us feel when we think of that night high above Chamonix. There are a lot of lessons we would like to share from this experience. All of us, Delia, Fred and myself, have ski toured extensively, yet we broke many rules. In the hope that we can save someone else from the same horror, we offer the following:

1. Despite all the rules that were broken, Bob died because he was inexperienced and because he wasn't wearing a Pieps. Bob didn't appear to have made any effort to discard equipment and to "swim" in the avalanche. Both Fred and I swam and discarded equipment. Believe us both—it works. We also both lost a ski which enabled us to push ourselves back up to the surface. Everyone else that we spoke with who was swept away also lost a ski. Bob had both his skis on when found. He was using the Couinard type of three-pin bindings with the riveted bales. With regular bales he probably would have lost a ski and been able to manoeuver more. If Bob had been wearing a Pieps he would have been found by any one of a number of people. He was buried near a lot of people who were quickly uncovered. He would have been found sooner and despite his injuries probably would have lived.

2. In our determination to climb Mt. Blanc we failed to consider the terrain, the other skiers, and the weather. It had been snowing heavily, there were thirty-five to forty people on the slope and the slope was getting steeper when we caught them. At no point did we stop and evaluate the conditions. It was dark and we had no idea of the terrain, we just followed the others. It is common to encounter other parties when climbing in the Alps. In this situation the avalanche was triggered by a "qualified" guide. There were at least three such guides ahead of us. All of them failed to consider the changing conditions and the fact that we were off route. We assumed the guides knew what to do and relaxed our vigilance. Always evaluate the route and conditions for yourself. Stop and decide whether the presence of the other parties is a threat.

3. Once the accident occurred, we began to search without any consideration for the size of the slide or the different positions of the people on the slope. Even in the dark, victims can be quickly located if the slope is crisscrossed in a very rough search pattern until a Pieps is detected. We were conducting a relatively fine search pattern despite the fact that we were completely out of the search area. I assumed that as I had been carried 300 feet that Fred had been too. In actual fact, Fred was carried over 2,000 feet down the slope! When searching in the dark or a whiteout, it is imperative that a rough search is carried out quickly to locate the areas where victims are buried.

4. When Fred called, Delia went down to help him. I stayed to look for my ski. I should have gone down with her. Lost equipment is lost equipment. If another avalanche had occurred I would have been caught alone, possibly with the others completely unaware. Once safe—clear out.

5. Once Bob was uncovered, we sent Delia down alone to find the search party. This was wrong too. She could have been in shock. She should not have gone alone, in the dark, after an avalanche.

6. Keep track of time and keep others informed. Bob's friend thought it was only ten minutes from when the avalanche occurred to when Bob was uncovered. It was very close to an hour. He was later shocked to find it had been so long.

7. Of the approximately forty people in the area at the time of the accident, we were the only ones equipped with shovels, duvets, and a bivy sac. Don't count on anyone in Europe having any emergency equipment.

Account of Camp Two 1988

by Jane Steed

Indian paint brush,
Paint me a memory.

For a minute there, I thought I was going somewhere," was my bemused response when the helicopter returned to the meadow as a wall of fog rolled in.

"When you can't see, you don't fly," said the pilot.

So everyone got out and used the few moments to resume the quick, intense annual visits while the fog rolled on elsewhere. I mentally rearranged the bodies lined up in the supply tent for the night!

Our departure from Camp Two was delayed and uncertain, but we did slowly evacuate everyone from another fine week in the alpine– except for the hardies who hiked out and got soaked! That Saturday resembled our third day which brought snow and all one could do was go for walks to admire the wintery contrasts. There was nothing like a snow storm to knock the initial impetus out of our high enthusiasm. As they say, sometimes the spirit soars, sometimes it sags– but only briefly. Fortunately, there were only two such days and the area offered many abiding pleasures.

The first impression upon arrival was the striking clarity of the air, the colours of the alpine flowers, the trees, rocks and textures, as if veils were removed from one's eyes. All so vivid on our first cloudless day as the first campers warmly welcomed us.

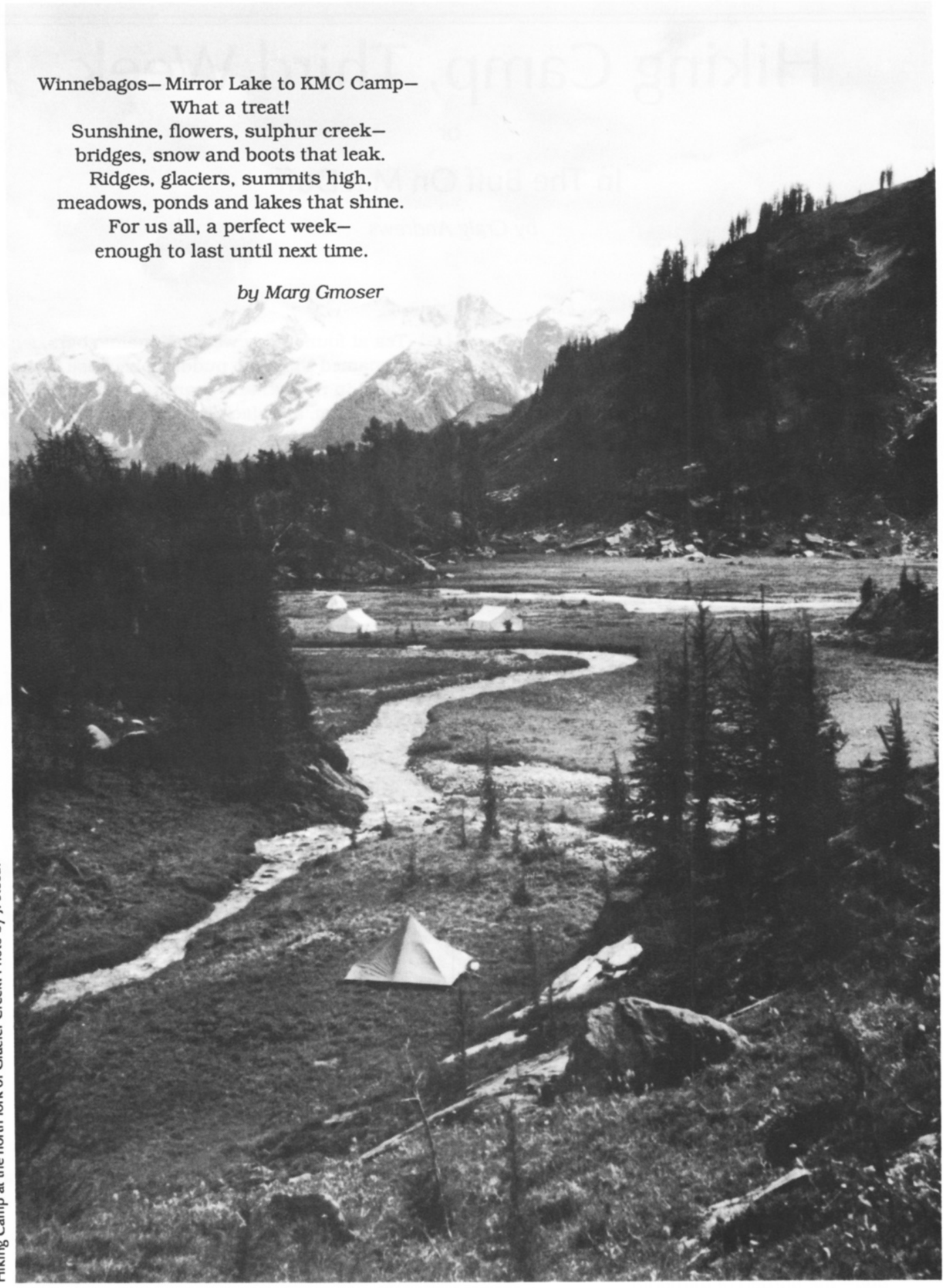
Subsequent days thrilled and satisfied everyone. Jack Steed, Philippe de la Salle and Garth Thomson enjoyed a very good three hour climb to Mt. MacDuff. Comments from campers: a paradise of flowers, meadows, streams and waterfalls; miles of ridges to climb; a snow climb to Mt. MacDuff, fabulous scenery from many attainable viewpoints; congenial group; great food; no honks, complaints or scowls; great wildlife and glaciers; well-organized; healthy food in a great location; excitement over deer strolling through the site unalarmed; seeing ten goats; the water voles and birds. Forget the mosquitoes and black flies though!

Persons Participating in Hiking Camp Two, 1988

1. Theresa Southam, Nelson (Cook)
2. John Stewart, Nelson (Camp Leader)
3. Kay Stewart, Nelson (Food Organizer)
4. Pat Thomson, Rossland (Food Organizer)
5. Garth Thomson, Rossland
6. Ritchie Deane, Rossland
7. Fiona Deane, Rossland
8. Luba Horvath, Rossland
9. Murray Gilchrist, Trail
10. Jack Steed, Nelson
11. Jane Steed, Nelson
12. Mary Culley, Toronto
13. Fritz Swinkels, North Vancouver
14. Marieke Swinkels, North Vancouver
15. Marg Gmoser, Canmore
16. Kal Singh, Canmore
17. Philippe de la Salle, Canmore
18. Mireille de la Salle, Canmore
19. Alice Bruce, Balfour

Winnebagos— Mirror Lake to KMC Camp—
What a treat!
Sunshine, flowers, sulphur creek—
bridges, snow and boots that leak.
Ridges, glaciers, summits high,
meadows, ponds and lakes that shine.
For us all, a perfect week—
enough to last until next time.

by Marg Gmoser



Hiking Camp at the north fork of Glacier Creek. Photo by J. Steed.

Hiking Camp, Third Week

or

In The Buff On MacDuff

by Craig Andrews

Some recollections from a journal, and some associations from other sources.

In the cook tent, watching breakfast being prepared and scribbling. Four burners roaring like the nearby falls. The cook is stirring the mush.

> *Rita: a munchkin. The heart of the camp and the cook. Ordered Superman to sleep on his own.*

There are larch here like oak that remind me of Victoria. Their outstretched limbs defy the coming winter and snow.

The falls near the camp change their character and colour as the day changes. In the morning they are a clean trickle. In the afternoon, when the day heats up, they are a toffee torrent.

> *Doreen: came for the flowers, but excelled at Mamm. Jams.*

Today we watch new friends scramble toward us on a too-thin ridge.

> *Georgia: brought fresh raspberries and green beans for us and "The Mists Of Avalon" for herself. Wendy: a marathoning woodnymph. Joan: her daughter is Monica, named for the mountain and meadow we saw that day.*

Across a snowpatch and on a ribbed and scoured ridge, others are moving slowly on and saying things I can't make out but I am surprised I can hear their voices at all.

> *George: always first up (with the deer), and often last done at the end of the day. Busy, busy with his pots. Janet: photographer-in-training and snow angel. Ron: Sir Hikealot, summer camp committee chairman (for which— thanks), and a clean shirt for every day— the burden of authority.*

Tea at four. Today we eat Nanaimo bars, which we renamed Nanaimo pudding, because it was blended in transit, and peanuts, and huge cookies, o.p. rum, and Jack Daniels. I don't actually remember the tea.

To bathe in a tarn after a hot return. To stand naked on the heather tingling in the wind and feel perfectly clean and the hundred little nicks and bites and scratches scrubbed better.

> *Ineke: her lake always had a nude in it.*

We watch two goats below us. They stroll up a nearly vertical snow slope, nosing about as though they are grazing. When they reach the ridge, they break through the soft snow pawing about preparing a place to settle themselves. They watch us too.

> *Karl: simply fabulous in his balsam tutu. Larry: camp leader, dwarf gynecologist, story teller. Together, they plucked an Eyebrow.*

Take the radio for a walk today. From our highest point we can see the Bugaboos, MacBeth Icefield, even Hume Pass. So from the top of the world, we send a message. But nobody hears.

> *Naomi: seventh in seniority at Pan Am Airlines and usually higher than any of us. Tells Bob: "When you come to San Francisco, I'll take you by the hand and tell you where to put your feet." Carol: she had a telescoping walking stick with a compass on it. She needed neither.*

At his 50th birthday party, John talks about being grateful for the place we are and for friends old and new.

For our climb to MacDuff, we prepare more carefully, set off more expectantly.

Muriel and Trudy: calmly tackled a steep couloir like they did it every day. Bob: a wayfinder. Pie crusher. Guide to the Crystal Palace.

When we find our crystal mine after a sometimes hairy scramble, we discover treasures neatly laid out for us by an earlier visitor. We have lunch there in the sun and laugh at our craziness.

Libby: member of the Rossland Rat Pack and possessor of the world's shortest ice axe. Closet puffer and 2 I.C. Kitchen.

Waiting. The fire has been put out and there is a smell of damp ash on the wind. Ron is assigning people to the chopper. I don't want to leave.

The last line. They are rolling up and stowing chicken-wire defences. They are taking pictures and jump-starting cars, exchanging addresses, loading barrels, saying goodbye.

Earl: cowboy and solitary peak bagger, "See you in the future; if not, see you in the pasture."



Participants at Hiking Camp third week were: Craig Andrews, Ineke Bult, Doreen Butler, Ron and Janet Cameron, Larry Doell, Wendy Gagnon, John Harvey, Rita and Ken Holmes, Earl and Karl Jorgensen, Naomi Lindstrom, Libby Martin, Carol Mousel, Georgia Proctor, George Robinson, John, Muriel and Bob Walton.
Photo by Trudean Andrews.

The Andean Experience

by Jeff Lakes

Digging for yet even more money, I handed the ticket agent more than one hundred dollars to cover my excess baggage charges. Oh well, I had 1200 feet of rope, 49 snow pickets, 88 lengths of conduit, screws, flukes, friends, bolts and pitons...enough gear to fix and solo climb a route that has had only one ascent, on a mountain which could probably be called the most spectacular in the world.

Shortly after arriving in Lima, I received a three month visa stamp and because I was a tourist, was escorted around the baggage check area by a customs official. Customs makes up for this kind gesture when you leave the country by proceeding with extensive searches. A short, dark man with a trolley carted my bags outside and loaded them into a taxi. After explaining how to get to my preferred hotel, the friendly driver sped away, asking in Spanish where I was from, and why I was in Peru. I explained that it was my fourth visit to Peru, and I kept returning because of Peruvian culture and the unique climbing that the Cordillera Blanca had to offer.

Not a mile down the road, the car was signalled to a halt by four policemen armed with loaded automatic rifles. They checked out the car and driver and asked him particulars of his passenger and his destination. After the interrogation we were granted permission to continue. As we drove away, I happened to turn around and see the questioning officer assume a ready-to-fire stance. I slouched down in the seat just in case he accidently fired the weapon. I had just arrived here twenty minutes ago..."Welcome back to Peru" I thought. Finally we arrived at the hotel, a little white building on the corner that had wrought iron work covering the door and windows for security.

I awoke to the sounds of the busy street below. Instantly I knew I was in Peru because all the sounds were so different yet so familiar to me. The different sounds came from the cars, the roosters and the strange animals that seemed to live on rooftops and from the people themselves, running around, talking and yelling in Spanish. I could also smell that I was in Peru because of the very distinct scent in the air. I suppose it's due to



In the Cordillera Blanca, Peru.
Photo by Jeff Lakes.

cars burning a more crude fuel than our own, South American sewage and disposal tactics, and whatever other odours natural things contribute. It's not an unpleasant smell, just Peruvian.

I left the hotel to buy some food and purchase a bus ticket so I could leave for Huaraz the next day. A friendly Peruvian in his twenties came walking along beside me. He introduced himself as Antonio. Antonio knew English quite well, so we talked about ourselves and compared living in Peru to living in Canada. We sat down in a small South American restaurant to have something to eat and to further discuss life in general. As the conversation turned to money, he asked me what exchange rate I was able to get at the travel agent. When I told him that I received 160 Intis for one U.S. dollar, he mentioned that a friend of his could give me 168 Intis per dollar. I was not in need of changing more money but could be compelled to at this rate. We walked down the street and into a shop. He assured me he'd be back in a minute and disappeared upstairs. He returned and explained that he would need my passport and travellers' cheques to exchange my money. I thought this strange because one always carries out the transaction with the money exchanger personally. I very quickly caught on to the fact that this store had an entrance to another street. He would obviously disappear with my money and passport if I agreed. The thieves are very deceptive here. They will invest hours pretending to be your "friend" before they quickly burn you, or distract you while another steals your gear.

Lately, the trend in Lima (as well as in the country) is to simply hold you at gunpoint in broad daylight and demand your passport, money and pack. After one unfortunate tourist was forced to hand over everything, he turned around as his assailants were leaving and asked if they could spare him enough money to get a taxi back to his hotel. Surprisingly enough, they gave it to him.

Following Antonio's attempt at my belongings, I chose a careful route back to my hotel. During the long walk back, I stopped at a corner and stared at the front of a bank which had had all its windows shattered by gunfire.

The 7:00 a.m. bus to Huaraz left Lima at 8:30 a.m., being quite characteristic of South America. Here one has to just "go with it" or one would never enjoy his stay since nothing is for certain, nothing is on time. It was good to finally be on the bus which would carry me to the very casual atmosphere of Huaraz in the heart of the Cordillera Blanca. We travelled the windy road up the coast through steep sand banks rising high above the ocean. It seemed like any minute, the whole mountain of sand would come down and completely erase the road like it never existed.

After four hours, we left the coastline, and during the next three hours we rose from sea level to 15,000 feet and then dropped back down 10,000 feet to arrive in Huaraz. Everyone on the bus began to complain about the cold and although I was sweating slightly, I reluctantly closed the windows around me. Even though it was June and quite warm for me, I realized the Peruvians were now experiencing the middle of winter and the shortest, coldest days of the year. Finally in Huaraz, I was welcomed at the Edward's Inn by familiar faces who have known me from past visits.

During the next month, I, with a few new-found partners, made three trips into the mountains. The first was an acclimatization trip. During the first four days, I experienced a severe headache and chest cold. When I was better, two others and I made the ascent of an easy 19,000 foot peak followed by a slightly more demanding ascent on the south-west ridge of Chopicalqui (20,726 feet). I then returned to Huaraz where I met a British climber named Simon Demant with whom I went to make an attempt on the very steep south face of Oshapalca. We were forced to retreat however, due to hazardous avalanche conditions.

Finally, without gear and alone, I walked up a long, narrow valley to meet my long awaited solo project in person. It was the mountain which I had been waiting to see and climb for the past year. It was overwhelmingly awesome. After a short two day reconnaissance I returned to town where after much contemplation I decided to return with gear to make an attempt.

Preparing for the sixteen day trip was quite

frustrating. It was difficult to get my supplies together since July 28th was Independence Day and everything was closed for a week including money exchangers, and food and hardware stores. An old man had promised to sell me twelve litres of white gas the following day, but when I returned he would have nothing to do with it— not at any price! However, after several days of perseverance, I was able to acquire the necessary supplies and depart for my trip. Simon decided to accompany me up to a fork in the valley where we would part and he would make a solo attempt on a nearby peak and then return via a different valley.

After a long, bumpy and dusty taxi ride, we reached the end of the road where we met my *arriero* with whom I had made a contract. We loaded over three hundred pounds of food, fuel and equipment onto his two burros and began the long haul up the valley. The burro with the heaviest load lay down in a heap and refused to move, while the other sank up to its eyeballs in a mudhole. However, after some forceful encouragement, we were able to coax the animals into continuing up the valley. Finally, after a few hours, we reached what he called basecamp, and I proceeded to cook us a big meal consisting of egg noodle vegetable soup and rice pudding. Since he came totally unprepared, I lent him enough clothes to stay warm for the night and bunked him in my tent.

In the morning after my *arriero* left, I ferried five seventy-pound loads across the creek hoping to get them across before the creek became too swollen. Later in the day, I carried a moderate load up the moraine ridge which I was quite certain would offer the easiest access to the glacier. It didn't. Reaching its end left me with a 1,000 foot deep scree hole, half a mile across...not a pleasant route for load hauling! I returned to the valley bottom and spent the next few days hauling all the gear to the end of the valley and up the moraine to a location that I had scoped out for advance basecamp. Making five trips hauling seventy pound loads from 13,000 feet to 15,500 feet became a lot of work. Stomach problems made it more difficult, as one's energy level drops substantially when one cannot eat. One important thing I have learned about load carrying is that it is imperative to have adjustable ski poles, hard lemon candies, and a good Walkman!

Now that I had all of my gear at advance basecamp, the next stage would call for finding a quick and easy route through the short glacier to the bottom of the wall. From this advance basecamp, I was unable to see the mountain, but could see the double cornices on the summit.

Two days later, I finally had enough gear at the base of the wall to climb the first 1,000 feet of the route and leave fixed ropes in place to re-ascend. There was only one problem. As the route finding, load hauling and stomach problems had cost me about a week, there really wasn't enough time left to climb the route properly. I would need three or four days to climb and leave ropes in place to the top of the face, and maybe another five to re-ascend and attempt the knife-edged ridge. I had to meet my *arriero* on the 13th of August or I would have no way to get my gear out of the valley. Despite my situation, I left my bivouac on the glacier and walked over to the beginning of the route. I thought that if I could fix the first 1,000 feet, I could return with more food later and do the upper section then. There was rock and icefall over on my left. There were hundred foot long icicles clinging to overhanging rotten rock. Hanging seracs balanced in unison made up the route to the ridge. Vertical to oblivion on both the east and west, the ridge was three feet thick with sugar snow, double cornices and plastered with long, slender icicles. As the thin, fragile, sword-edged ridge pierced the deep blue Andean sky, a haunting feeling consumed me and I thought..."Can it be for real?"

Mt. Sugarloaf, 10,742′

July 9, 1988

by Fred Thiessen

In our previous climbs to the Beaver Glacier cirque, we had plotted a route to Mt. Sugarloaf across the Beaver Glacier and had set 1988 as the year to give it a try.

So it all began with a car camp Friday night at Houston Creek. By midnight, we thought everyone had arrived so we settled down for a few hours sleep. A headcount in the morning revealed that Rod's car was missing so Chris went back to retrieve them from the last washout a few kilometres back. After a quick rearrangement, we drove to road end to start our upward journey.

We huffed, puffed and swatted bugs through the bush then headed onto the moraine which led us to the notch just north of Mt. Duncan.

Once at the notch, we paused to snack, catch our breath and rope up for the next leg which was across the upper Beaver Glacier.

After several hundred metres of step punching, Paul looked up to focus on the south ridge of Sugarloaf, one of two feasible routes on the mountain, to announce his preference. At this point the group broke into two parties, the Keeners to the south ridge and the Loafers for the "loaf" and then to Sugarloaf.

The Loafers plodded north to gain a snow ridge which took us to a point just east of the loaf. At the base of the loaf, we decided to circumvent it on the north side which put us at the foot of Sugarloaf's east ridge. The ridge was an easy climb, but the legacy of the previous week's snow storm made step punching tiring. We were on top around 1:00 p.m., seven hours after leaving the cars. The Keeners appeared shortly after to join us for a leisurely, scenic lunch. Rhonda surprised us all by sharing a litre bottle of beer all round—definitely a Keener.

The south ridge party described their route as a third to fourth class steep snow and rock climb which was enjoyable. However, the fresh snow was hazardous. With this in mind, we elected to descend via the Loafer's route at about 2:00 p.m.

The Beaver Glacier, with its fresh snow cover, provided a few amusing moments as we all fell into crevasses to varying degrees.

Once back at the notch, the sound of beckoning beer lured us down the 4,000 feet to the road (and beer) in an hour, making it a twelve hour return journey for some, fourteen for most.

This very spectacular area, consisting of Mts. Duncan, Beaver and Sugarloaf, are all day trips from the Duncan road and well worth visiting. The routes to Beaver and Sugarloaf are in Glacier National Park, so one may want to register with Parks Canada. If you go with Paul Allen, check your pack for beer cans.

We were–

Keeners: Paul Allen, Robyn Laytham, Rhonda Netzel, Peter McIver, Ken Holmes, Chris Overton

Loafers: Liz Stanich, Rod Beauprie, Hazel Arnold, Fred Thiessen, Peter Tchir, Larry Smith



Fred Thiessen points to Mt. Duncan from the summit of Mt. Sugarloaf. Photo by Larry Smith.

Iain & Hamish Martin
Rossland

Dear Fred,

re: Your request for an article on Mt. Fafnir:

It's not that I'm lazy, or wanting in wit,
Or the details are hazy, it's not that a bit.
It's just that Mt. Fafnir, by the route that we took,
Is just like the way it's described in the book.
While the view from the top is sure to impress,
If you don't hang around, the time's two hours less.

Iain
Sep. 09 88



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Errata

Delia Roberts was the author of the "Food Planning" article that appeared in Karabiner '87. Also, a line was omitted from the first paragraph of that article. The corrected paragraph is:

Fats are the most compact source of energy but keep them to 20% of your daily caloric intake. Even if you are very fit, high fat intakes increase the risk of cardiovascular disease. The recommended intake of protein is 0.9g/kg body weight/day for an adult. This really isn't very much and is easy to achieve, especially if you consider complementary protein groups (milk and cereal, peanut butter and bread, macaroni and cheese, pea soup with milk powder added).



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