

Island Bushwhacker

Volume 46 | Issue 6 | Winter, 2018/2019



Triple Peak from 5040 Peak - June, 1984
Photo by Rob Macdonald

ACC VANCOUVER ISLAND SECTION

Social Events

The club has a monthly slide-show presentation at the Swan Lake Nature House, 3873 Swan Lake Road, Victoria, BC on the second Thursday of each month, except in July and August. The doors open at 7:00pm, and the show starts at 7:30pm.

Web Information

Web site: accvi.ca

Webmaster: webmaster@accvi.ca

Executive Meeting Minutes

Available on our meeting archives.

National ACC Office

For new memberships and renewals, changes of address or other details, and booking huts, contact the ACC National office directly.

www.alpineclubofcanada.ca

info@alpineclubofcanada.ca

403 678 3200, or P.O. Box 8040

Canmore, AB, T1W 2T8

Annual Membership Dues

Single \$53 Family \$75

Youth (19 and under) \$38

The Island Bushwhacker Newsletter

A monthly (except July and August) publication of the Vancouver Island Section.

Newsletter Editor: Mary Sanseverino, 250 592 4677,

newsletter@accvi.ca

We encourage submissions of items of interest to our membership, including news items, announcements, and short articles, along with photos. Email your submission by the 25th day of the previous month.

Advertising shall be accepted at the discretion of the editor. All advertising shall be for products or services of direct interest to our membership.

Our Motto

1. COME BACK ALIVE
2. COME BACK FRIENDS
3. RESPECT THE LAND
4. HAVE FUN
5. GET TO THE TOP
(IN THAT ORDER!)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Slideshow, Thur, Jan 10. On Denali with Clarke Gourlay. Join Clarke to hear about his exciting climb of Denali with his sons John and Kevin.

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Reminder to Members:

Keep your [membership](#) up-to-date, so to as to be covered by the ACC's liability insurance. Keep your [contact information](#) current on ACC National's site, as it's from this master list that we download our email addresses for mailouts.

Join the ACC-VI's [Facebook group](#).

You don't have to be a Facebook member to see this page.



Upcoming Slideshows, Presentations, Meetings and Get-togethers

Slideshow, Thu, Sept 13, 2018. Clarke Gourlay

Climbing Denali with the Gourlay family -- more information coming soon!

Victoria Slideshows are at Swan Lake Nature House. Doors open at 7:00 pm, the show starts at 7:30 pm. Tea and goodies by donation. New members, friends and family are always most welcome! We look forward to seeing you there.!

ACC-VI Annual General Meeting weekend - Feb 1 - 3rd, 2019, Mt. Washington.

Spend the weekend up at Mt Washington enjoying your own activities or joining in any of the events posted on the schedule. The AGM will take place at 7.00 pm on Sat 2 February, preceded by a potluck dinner in the Vancouver Island Mountain Centre (VIMC) at 5.00 pm.

More info: <http://accvi.ca/events/annual-general-meeting-weekend-at-mt-washington/>

Christmas Party Get-Together:

'Tis the season

Come and join the celebration with your ACC-VI friends at the home of Tom and Pam Hall in Victoria. Please bring your own drinks, food will be provided.

Friday 14 December 2018 from 6.00 p.m.

2680 MacDonald Drive East, Victoria V8N1X9

We will be collecting items for the food-bank and warm clothes to distribute.

All welcome. Please RSVP to Tom Hall at hall.pnw@shaw.ca by Monday 10 December.

We look forward to seeing you there!



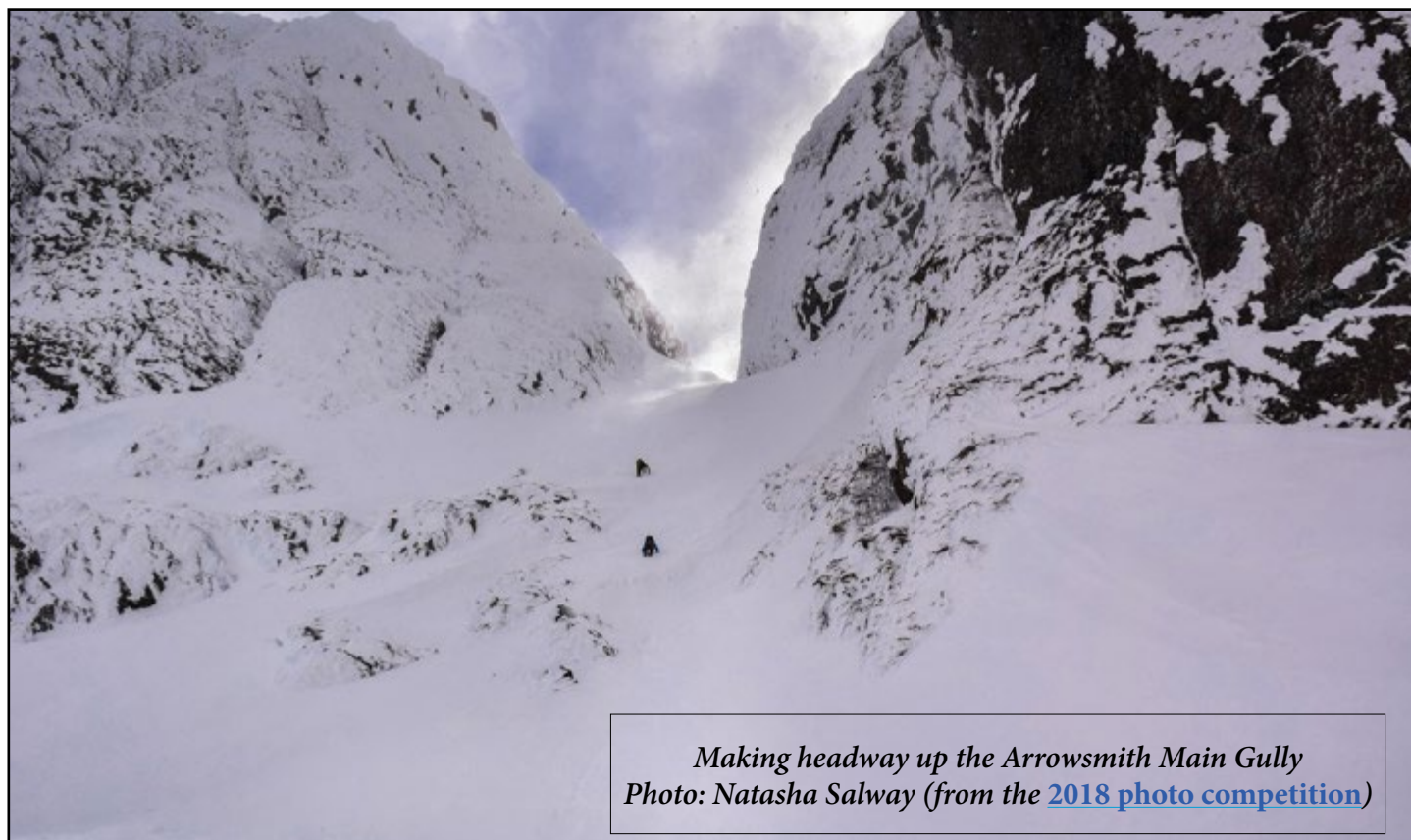
Upcoming Trips

Full information for all trips is located online at [ACC-VI Trip Schedule](#). Each trip listed here links to the [Trip Schedule](#). Click trip titles for links to full info.

Check the [Trip Schedule](#) often for new offerings!

<i>Date</i>	<i>Trip</i>
Dec 8, 2018	Beginner Backcountry Ski Tour (B2) A lake circuit near Paradise Meadows ~ in non-avalanche terrain, to become more comfortable with your backcountry ski gear. Contact: Christine Forham bizhelp@telus.net
Dec 8, 2018	Heather Mountain (C2) WAITLISTED Apparently Heather Mountain needs a summit register – it would be great if you were on the team that places it. Contact: Walter Moar walter@waltermoar.com
Dec 15 (or 16), 2018	Transceiver Practice on Mt. Wood This is an opportunity to dust off the transceivers and refine your skills before the season comes into full swing. Contact: Colin Mann colin.mann.accvi.trips@gmail.com , Natasha Salway natasha.accvi.trips@gmail.com
Dec 15, 2018	Kludahk Snowshoe - hike (B1/C1) WAITLISTED A day trip on snowshoes in the beautiful alpine area of the Kludahk. Contact: Zoe Minnaard zoeminnaard@gmail.com
Dec 16, 2018	Babbington Hill (A1) A short but sweet – and easy-paced – trip to Babbington Hill in East Sooke Park. Contact: Walter Moar walter@waltermoar.com
Dec 22, 2018	Companion Rescue Practice at Mount Cokely (A2) Join us on Mt. Cokely to practice the companion rescue skills you learned in AST 1. Contact: Brianna Coates brianna.accvi.trips@gmail.com
Dec 22, 2018	(almost) Solstice hike in the Sooke Hills Escape the rush of the city for the quiet of the hills. Our trip will involve a seasonal summit celebration, followed by an optional stop at a local watering hole. Contact: Erich erich.schellhammer@gmail.com
Dec 29, 2018	Empress Mountain (B1) End the year (and burn some calories!) with good old Empress Mountain. Contact: Walter Moar walter@waltermoar.com
Jan 11 - 13, 2019	Mount Cain (A1-C4) *FULL* Suffer through another weekend at the Island's worst ski resort in a wooden shack with no electricity or running water. Read the full trip description online!! Contact: Martin Hofmann mhofmannskis+cain@gmail.com

<i>Date</i>	<i>Trip</i>
Jan 18 - 20, 2019	<u>Mt Cain Ski Weekend</u> Mt. Cain Ski weekend - enjoy the "Island's Finest Powder" from Cypress Cabin. Contact: Christine Forham bizhelp@telus.net
Feb 1 - 3 2019	<u>Annual General Meeting weekend at Mt Washington</u> Spend the weekend up at Mt Washington enjoying your own activities or joining in any of the events posted on the schedule. Contact: Colin Mann colin.mann.accvitrips@gmail.com
Feb 1, 2019	<u>Games Night at the AGM</u> Lets get together and play some board games and cards during the Friday night. Colin and Natasha will bring some games, or, bring your favorite game.
Feb 2, 2019	<u>Area 51 Tour of Mount Washington (B2) WAITLISTED</u> A ski tour of the NE ridge of Mt Washington is planned with beautiful views (in good weather) and nice, gladed, turns back down. Contact: Scott Collins scottcollins@shaw.ca
Feb 2, 2019	<u>Mt. Allen Brooks</u> Leave the VIMC, skin up the north glades and down the northwest slopes. This trip is suitable for Intermediate skiers with some Backcountry experience. Contact: Colin Mann colin.mann.accvi.trips@gmail.com , Natasha Salway natasha.accvi.trips@gmail.com



*Making headway up the Arrowsmith Main Gully
 Photo: Natasha Salway (from the [2018 photo competition](#))*

Mountain Education

ACC-VI offers a wide variety of courses aimed at giving our members the technical and safety skills to get out there in the mountains. Courses are open to ACC members in good standing only. You are welcome to join the section if you would like to enroll in one or more of these courses.

Education and Courses: <http://accvi.ca/programs/education/>
Is there something you would like to see? Contact education@accvi.ca

<i>Date</i>	<i>Education Even</i>
Feb 2 - 3, 2019	<p>Introduction to Backcountry Skiing (B2) WAITLISTED</p> <p>Learn the basics of backcountry skiing in this workshop. Open to telemarkers, alpine tourers and splitboarders. We will cover equipment, snow travel and unique features of winter in the backcountry. Participants should have at least AST1 (or be enrolled in an AST1 course). Saturday we will go outside and review the basics, Saturday late afternoon/early evening will be a short presentation and then Sunday we will go for a tour into Strathcona Park. Accommodation for 2 nights at Vancouver Island Mountain Centre included.</p> <p>Contact: Martin Hofmann (Leader) Josh Slatkoff (Leader) weskivi@gmail.com</p>
Feb 2 - 3, 2019	<p>AST Level 1</p> <p>The Avalanche Skills Training One is an introductory avalanche course designed for individuals with little to no avalanche related experience. Students will learn to recognize avalanche terrain, gain the skills to initiate and manage a self rescue, have a basic understanding of how weather contributes to avalanche hazard, be able to understand and interpret avalanche bulletins and the hazard scale, be able to interpret and utilize the Avaluator card and learn basic analysis of layers in the snowpack. This is a two-day course with one evening session. This year we are having two guides.</p> <p>Contact: Colin Mann accvi.education@gmail.com</p>



*Moraine views panorama at the 2018 ACC-VI Summer Camp.
 Photo: Roger Taylor (from the [2018 photo competition](#))*

Executive Episodes:

A quick update of ACC life from the chair's chair.

Winter draws on.....

We may still be waiting for the hills to turn white, at least here in the south Island, but the shortening days and festive lights remind us we are close to the end of the year. That went fast! And for the executive, that means a few items to address:

i. Annual General Meeting Saturday 2 February 2019 7.00 pm
Vancouver Island Mountain Centre, Mt Washington alpine resort.

The meeting will be preceded by a potluck dinner from 5.00 pm – all welcome.

- If you have items for consideration to be included in the agenda, please let me know by Sunday 13 January at the latest.
- If you are interested in taking on a particular role and serving on the executive committee, please discuss with Mike Hubbard jmhubbard@telus.net

Please see the separate notice on page 26 with details and links to the full weekend 1 – 3 February organised at Mt Washington. As this was posted on the schedule a few weeks ago, most of the beds in the reserved accommodations have been booked, but wait lists are being taken. And of course you are free to stay elsewhere and join in all the events. It is always a good time.

ii. Deserving donations

Each year our section is able to make financial contributions to deserving causes that we feel are aligned with our mission. For 2018, we budgeted \$2300 from our operating fund for these donations, and recently chose the following organisations to support. Follow the links to learn more about each.

- **Vancouver Island Spine Trail Association (VISTA)**
<http://www.vispine.ca/>
- **Vancouver Island Avalanche Centre Society**
<http://www.islandavalanchebulletin.com/>
- **Alberni Valley rescue squad**
<http://www.avrs.ca>
- **Campbell River Search and Rescue**
<http://www.crsar.ca/>
- **Philip Stone for development of climbing on Quadra Island**
<http://www.quadraisland.ca/>
- **Vancouver Island Marmot Recovery Foundation**
<http://marmots.org/>
- **ACC main club for Canadian Alpine Journal**
<http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/community/canadian-alpine-journal/>

If you have ideas of where you might like us to consider giving money next year, please let me know sometime.

Banff Mountain Film Festival

On Sunday 25 November, a capacity crowd at the University of Victoria auditorium enjoyed the spectacle that is the best of the festival. Hosted annually by our section, this event is both our major fund-raiser and a wonderful opportunity to connect with the community. Our sincere thanks to this year's organisers Anna-Lena Steiner and Lise Gagnon for achieving both goals in style. It doesn't get better than tickets all being sold within a couple of weeks of being released! Our thanks also to Cedric and Lissa Zala for being such helpful members of the team on stage and at our section booth. I think the lesson learned for next year is buy your tickets as soon as they are available – you snooze, you lose!

Photo contest

Another annual tradition, our section photo contest reliably provides an evening of merriment and light-hearted competition - no-one wants to compete too heavily for those monstrous trophies! Many thanks to Brian Parsons for collating and organising the entries for the 25 October show and to Mary Sanseverino for stepping up as MC. Thanks also to Neil Han for setting up and running the technology. Peggy Taylor for organizing the evening and handling the trophies, and Dave Suttill for providing goodies. The quality of the pictures was impressive, and the range of locations and vistas a good inspiration for trip planning during these rainy months. I noticed that the plaques date back to 1988, so this is their 30th year – happy birthday!

All the submitted photos are posted on [the website](#) and the winning entries will be featured in successive editions of the newsletter. Here are the 2018 winners with the trophies you can covet for next year!



Jes Scott
Winner "Nature"



Alcina De Oliveira & Roxanne Stedman
Winner "Summer Activity"



Alcina De Oliveira
Winner "Mountain Scenery"



Dave Suttill
Winner "Vancouver Island"

*Missing from the action: Hunter Lee,
winner of "[Winter Activity](#)" and
"[Vancouver Island](#)".*

Photos by Brian Parsons.

Catrin Brown
Winner "Humour"



This can only be a good thing

CRD is currently undertaking a “Regional Parks Landscape Evaluation Project”, with [details here](#).

What this means is that they are seeking input on potential acquisition of land for future regional parks. The focus is mostly on lands west of the Sooke River, but the conversation seems wide open for consideration of any potential areas within the CRD. Several members have attended workshops as an early part of this study, and everyone now has the opportunity to be involved through [this survey](#). Please note the deadline for submission of this is **13 January 2019**.

There is a lot of collective knowledge and wisdom in our group, so I really hope we take advantage of this opportunity to stand up, speak up, show up in whatever way we can. Thanks for doing your bit. Expansion of our parks can surely only be a good thing.

Section gear rentals

A benefit to our section members is the availability of our mountaineering and ski touring equipment at very reasonable rental rates. All the details are available here on the website: <http://accvi.ca/trips/gear-rentals/>

The south island gear is now coordinated by two members and stored in two different locations:

- **Mike Hubbard** is the gear manager for all backpacking and snow activities, including avalanche safety equipment. He lives in Central Saanich and can be contacted at jmhubbard@telus.net
- **Bernard Friesen** is the gear manager for all climbing activities, including ropes (for trip leaders only), helmets and harnesses. He lives in Victoria and can be contacted at bernardpicardfriesen@gmail.com

The up-island gear continues to be coordinated by **Clarke Gourlay**. He lives in Parksville and can be contacted at clarke@cheeseworks.ca

In addition, the club owns equipment for large fly-in base camp activities, such as the summer camps and the construction camp used for the 5040 Peak hut project. In 2018, the cost of the summer camp included a \$20 per person contribution into the section equipment fund for the use of this club gear. It has been decided by the executive that the per person amount for ‘gear rental’ in the summer camp will be raised to \$30 for next year.

We are fortunate to be so well supplied with equipment to support our many activities, and are very grateful to the members who help purchase, maintain, store and organise rentals of this gear.

The spirit of Christmas past and future

Our up-island members have already gathered to celebrate the season with a party at the home of Clarke Gourlay in late November. This event, organised jointly with Island Mountain Ramblers, also brought together people from the Comox Valley Mountaineering Club and the Alberni Valley Outdoors Club. I’m told the crowd of 50 celebrated “all things mountaineering” in a fun evening. Many thanks to the Gourlay family for hosting this.

South-island members, your party time is yet to come: Friday 14 December at the home of Tom and Pam Hall in Victoria. Details have been sent by email, and if you haven’t yet done so, please RSVP to Tom by Monday 10 December at the latest: hall.pnw@shaw.ca

5040 Peak Hut update

The big hut news - the grand opening – is covered elsewhere in this newsletter. Now is the time to start to enjoy our great new facility by planning trips to this location. The reservation system through the National Club is already live – nightly rates for members are \$20 per person and \$10 for youth, and you can book for up to 12 months ahead. Book at [ACC 5040 Peak Hut](#).

And just a reminder that for a short time – until 15 December 2018 – you get first dibs as the reservation system is open only to ACC-VI members. Go for it.

Summit registers

A new addition to our website is a [summit registers page](#) where you can find out where maintenance is needed (books, pens, tubes) and request the supplies before heading out on a trip. This is a great way to contribute to the Island mountaineering community, and ensure that we are giving opportunities for folks to record and share their ascents.

Executive events

The ACC-VI executive last met on Thursday 1 November 2018, and will meet again on Monday 10 December 2018. Minutes are posted on the website.

Wishing you all the best of the holiday season and New Year. Let it snow.

See you back here on St David's Day, 1 March 2019.

Happy trails
Catrin Brown

Catrin@shaw.ca | chair@accvi.ca



*First major snowfall of
2018/19 winter at the
5040 Hut!*

*Photo: Gary Croome from the
5040 Hut FaceBook page*



Memorial Fund Youth Grants

If you are under 30 or if you lead children and youth on trips to the mountains, you may qualify for a \$1,000 grant to undertake alpine expeditions. Check out the “[Memorial Fund/Youth Grants](#)” page on the ACC-VI website and apply before January 31, 2019.

In 2018 the Memorial Fund - Youth Grant Awards supported the following:

- A three-day ski tour of Liberty Bell, Washington, by the ACC-VI Youth group (Derek Sou)
- A Strathcona traverse including the first winter ascents of Mariner Peak and Tom Taylor (Evan DeVault)
- A hike of the entire VI Spine Trail from Victoria to Cape Scott (Isobel Glover)
- An expedition by 17 Scouts from Nanaimo to climb the highest peaks of the UK (Andy Chapman-Coombs)

The Memorial Fund welcomes donations in honour of mountaineers such as those whose lives are celebrated on the website. Donations are tax-deductible and are matched by the Vancouver Island Section. Please see the Donations section of the “[Memorial Fund/Youth Grants](#)” page and consider making a donation before the end of the year.

For additional information please contact geoff.bennett@shaw.ca.



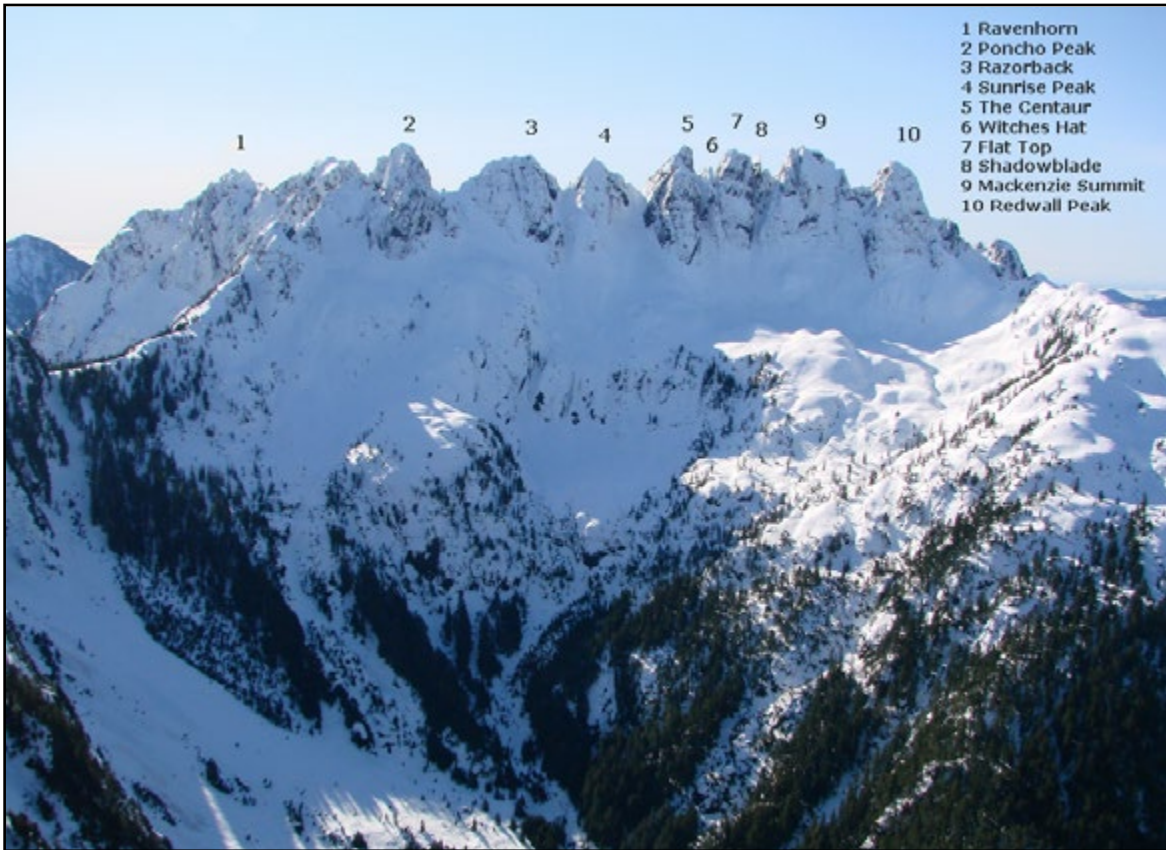
In Memoriam

Top row - L to R: Charles Turner, Dave Tansley, Viggo Holm, Gerta Smythe, Herbert Harzan

Bottom row - L to R: Richard Eppler, Roger Neave, Sydney Watts, Larry Talarico

The Mackenzie Range

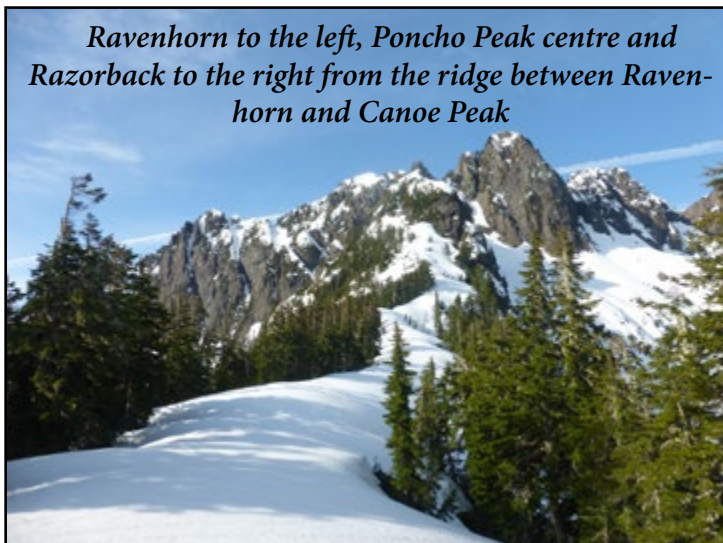
By Lindsay Elms



With the end of 2018 in sight I can look back over the years and note that I have made 14 trips into the Mackenzie Range. Seven of those trips have been via the Climbers Trail and seven via Canoe Creek. I have been up the Climbers Trail in the spring, summer and fall but never in the winter. The upper basin of Canoe Creek has seen me once in summer and will never do that again. The bush was thick—real thick—and the bugs were bad—real bad. So bad that it

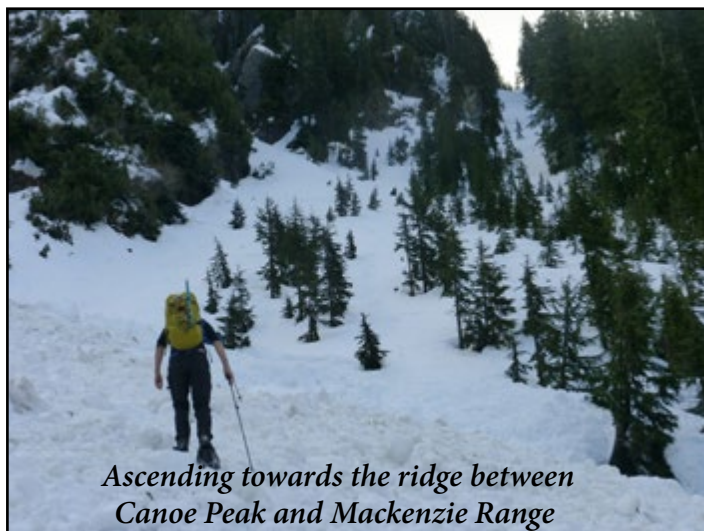
was the only time I have ever been chased out of the mountains. I now will only go in via Canoe Creek in the spring.

My first few trips into the Mackenzie Range in the mid to late 1990s were up the Climbers Trail where all the familiar peaks of the range are located: Redwall Peak, Mackenzie Summit, Shadowblade, Flat Top, the Witches Hat and the Centaur. From these summits I kept looking across at a series of peaks—four unclimbed summits—to the southeast of the Centaur. They piqued my interest but I never got around to do-



ing anything about climbing them. Finally, I am not sure exactly when, they found their way onto my serious bucket list, but the problem was my bucket list was already huge.

Val and I finally made time for a trip up Canoe Creek in 2011 (I can't believe it was seven years ago) after a friend in Port Alberni told us about the easy access via the mini hydro road. Once on the ridge we found the snow conditions soft and avalanche danger high so instead of risking being avalanched on we went up Canoe Peak – my second ascent. In 2012, we tried accessing the summits in late June but were bugged out as mentioned earlier. Then in May 2013, we finally summited the peak in the middle of the group. It reminded me of



*Ascending towards the ridge between
Canoe Peak and Mackenzie Range*



*Razorback and Sunrise Peak
from the upper basin on Canoe Creek*



*Chauncey McEachern, Rod
Szasz, and Chris O'Grady near
the summit of Canoe Peak*

the back of a Razorback pig, hence the name Razorback. Later that year we were back up the Climbers Trail where we ascended the South Ridge of the Centaur.

The next year we floundered in the soft snow of the upper Canoe Creek without summiting anything. Then in May 2017, Val and I returned with Rod Szasz and climbed the highest peak of that group of four—Poncho Peak. Stefan Gessinger first climbed it back on March 15, 2014, and then continued traversing along to Razorback (2nd ascent) and then the 1st ascent of Sunrise Peak. Two week later Stefan returned with Ian Kilpatrick and climbed the Ravenhorn, the southern-most peak.

Now it was 2018. I really wanted to get the last two peaks climbed—Ravenhorn and Sunrise Peak. On April 8, with Chauncey McEachern, Rod Szasz and Chris O'Grady, we headed up the hydro road. There was lots of snow about and we found ourselves walking the last few hundred metres up the road in it. Once again in the upper basin avalanche conditions were extreme but we managed to squeak in an unscheduled ascent of Canoe Peak again.

On May 2, I was back with Chris O'Grady and Laurence Philippsen. Conditions were better and the weather superb. This time we climbed Ravenhorn. The summit wasn't quite as straightforward as I thought it would be as a little rope work was required but it was a stella day.

Now I had one last peak to climb—Sunrise Peak. I decided not to access it via Canoe Creek as the snow was



Lindsay starting to rappel the chockstone at the top of the gully between Flat Top and The Witches Hat

thin in the basin and the bush and the bugs were getting ready to break out in profusion. Instead I would access Sunrise Peak via the Climbers Trail but it could wait until the summer when all the snow had gone from that side of the range.

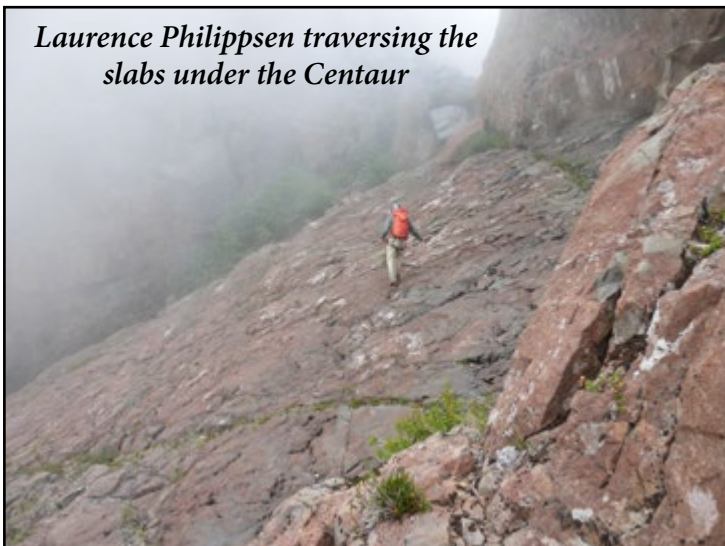
On August 24, Laurence Philippsen and I drove down early in the morning from Courtenay and started up the trail at first light. There was a lot of dew on the trees and bushes and by the time we broke out into the alpine 2.5 hours later we were quite damp. The mist was swirling and occasionally the summits of the peaks poked through. The clear blue sky wasn't that far above us. From the scree slope we cut out to a small saddle and then dropped down into a basin on the back side of the range. After descending about 150 metres we then climbed back up another scree slope looking for the narrow gully that would take us up between the summit of Flat Top and the Witches Hat.

I had been up this gully twice before and new that it was narrow and not that obvious until you are in it. At the top of the gully there was a huge chockstone which we would have to scramble under. By now the mist had de-

scended and visibility was poor. It took a little scrambling until I finally found the gully and then we climbed up to the chockstone. A thin squeeze up a chimney under the chockstone and then a short headwall put us on the easy slabs that traversed under the Witches Hat around to the Centaur.

From the ridge below the Centaur we got one fleeting glimpse of the summit of Sunrise Peak and then it was gone. There was no turning back. We had two ropes with us so we set up a rappel down into the saddle between the Centaur and Sunrise Peak. From the saddle we decided to leave the rappel rope in place and continue on with the one rope. After 20 minutes and some low 5th class we scrambled onto the summit of Sunrise Peak.

It had been 21 years since the first time I had climbed in the Mackenzie Range—Shadowblade and Flat Top—with Doug Goodman, but I experienced the same feeling. It didn't matter that we couldn't see anything this time; I had seen everything before from other trips. It felt good to finally climb the last of the spires in this spectacular range. I don't have to return to them, but the Mackenzie Range is a special place and I know the peaks will call me once again to be amongst them.



Laurence Philippsen traversing the slabs under the Centaur



Laurence Philippsen on the summit of Sunrise Peak

Photo: Chris Jensen

5040 Peak Hut

Photo: Rob Macdonald



Photo: Chris George



Photo: Chris George

The Grand Opening of 5040 Peak Hut: October 20, 2018

*By Catrin Brown, Lawrence White, Chris Jensen, Chris Ruttan, Rick Hudson, Nadja Steiner,
and Rob Macdonald*

It was a perfect day: the fall colours, the brilliant sunshine, the vistas in all directions. It was an exciting occasion: the camaraderie of friends gathered, a fine weekend to share in the mountains. And most of all it was a happy celebration: a sense of accomplishment, a pride and a relief in what had been achieved, and an excitement as to what is promised.

This was the Grand Opening of the Peak 5040 hut on 20 October 2018. The 33rd ACC hut in the country, the first on Vancouver Island. And for those of you who were not able to share in the occasion directly, we have gathered here a summary of what was said and shared during that sunny afternoon in the mountains.



*The crowds gathered up at 5040
Peak Hut - over 60 attended!
Photo: Rick Hudson*

Catrin Brown: ACC-VI current chair

“I don’t think I have ever felt the honour of being the current chair of our section more strongly than today. For today is the culmination of an extraordinary 3 or 4 years - when a vision became a plan, and a plan became a reality. Over this time I sometimes felt that someone had pushed the fast-forward button and I was living events in a speeded-up version of life. As permits were applied for, grants awarded, stakeholders consulted, opinions sought, funds collected, meetings held, roads graded, and so much more – even before a spade hit the ground and the intense building phase began (which start to finish took just over a year) - it was hard not to become dizzy with the pace. It has truly been a firestorm of activity, and just look at what has been achieved. So today is a celebration of all of that and of the community that made it happen. It is my privilege to introduce our guest speakers in turn.”



5040 Peak Hut



Lawrence White: ACC national executive director

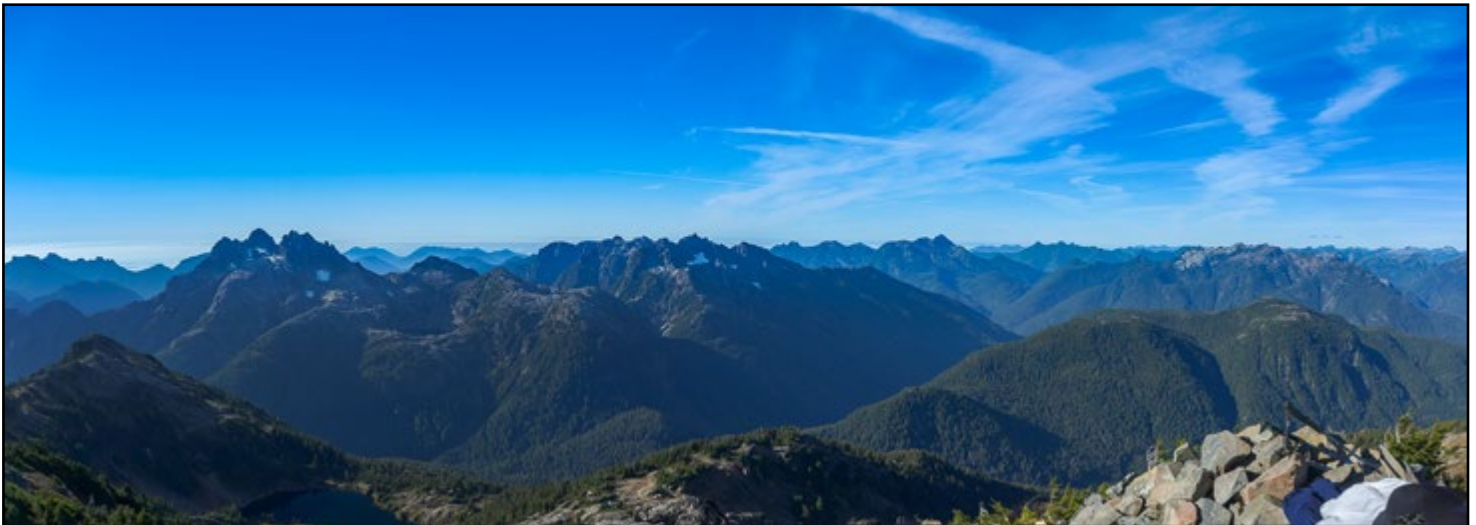
"I grew up in Langford. Well I guess it's called Westshore now. Somewhere between the bustle of Victoria proper and the lushness of Goldstream park. Mountains were not a thing for me then, though our family frequently camped up and down the Island. In fact I don't think I even skied until a high school trip to Mount Washington in 1990, replete with blue jeans and my Iron Maiden jacket. Never would I have imagined leading Canada's national mountain organization out of Canmore, Alberta some 20 years later.



*Lawrence White
Photo: Rick Hudson*

People who don't live on the Island don't understand the Island. What it means to live on an Island, to be an Islander. It's a different pace, a more measured pace juxtaposed by people's pursuit of both meaningful relationships and meaningful solitude. So imagine my sheer joy when I was approached by the section in late 2016 for broad based support of a hut on the Island. It would be the perfect combination of solitude and community. And on October 20, 2018 it was officially opened to that community.

I want to congratulate everyone involved in this project. It was executed with purpose and vision, with thoughtfulness and speed, with inclusiveness and transparency. The hut at Peak 5040 will be celebrated for decades to come by people of the Island, and by those of us longing for the Island. It is your gift to the mountain community and for that I hope you are eternally proud. I am certainly proud to have played a small part in my role as Executive Director."



*Grand views for a Grand Opening
Photo: Rob Macdonald*



5040 Peak Hut



Chris Jensen: Peak 5040 Hut project leader

“First Nation: I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are fortunate to be able to gather on the traditional territory of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth First Nations. From the summit of 5040 we can see the territory of at least seven different Nuu-Chah-Nulth First Nations – for example, directly to the west, we can see the Tribal Park of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. Over the summit to the east we can see the territory of the Tseshaht First Nation. Thousands of years of First Nations history and culture have taken place here and we are excited to share this cabin with you. I hope that this place can benefit your communities such as youth in a Warriors Program.



*Chris Jensen - Project Lead
Photo: Rick Hudson*

Recap: How did we start the journey to get to where we are now? It's the classic case of when one door closes, another opens. Rick Hudson had spearheaded an initiative to look at taking over and managing the Ranger Hut in Strathcona Park. For various reasons, the section decided to not pursue it. If you know me then you know I love mountains huts - so the end of the Ranger Hut project was a disappointment for me and others, but it was a necessary catalyst for this project to begin. In January 2015, during the AGM at Mt Washington, I asked the membership if they would support the idea of looking across Vancouver Island for a suitable hut location. The membership essentially said go fill your boots!

The Team: I wasn't the only person that had an interest in creating a hut. Four other people quickly volunteered to join the effort and the Hut Committee was born. I'm pleased to see that all the original Hut Committee members have stayed involved through

the full project. Chris Ruttan, Martin Hoffmann, Rick Hudson, and Lindsay Elms have been committed to this project from the very start to now....the opening. But the all male make-up of this original group meant that we risked just sitting around, drinking beers and scratching ourselves. I was a bit concerned that we didn't have enough motivated people on this project. Then I recalled the saying that 'Women who seek to be equal with men lack ambition'. Ah ha! We needed some ambitious women to join to make this project happen. Thankfully Colleen Kasting, Nadja Steiner and Barb Baker soon stepped up into critical roles. Their involvement helped to ensure we actually get something done! And with this strong team we might be able to actually accomplish something.

The Hut Committee spent 2015 in a thorough site selection process and began community discussions on this idea. By the AGM in January 2016 we had narrowed it down to this area. We then spend 2016 working on fundraising, permitting and design. By the AGM in 2017 we had a permit and enough funding to get started. Last year on Aug 25th we broke ground. If you were involved you know what an epic rush it was



5040 Peak Hut



to beat winter and get the hut weather tight. It was down to the wire, but thanks to a herculean effort from volunteers and our heroic Construction Manager, Chris Ruttan, we succeeded. And now here we are in 2018, a little less than 4 years from when the first seed of an idea was planted. Now we can start to enjoy the fruits of our labour.

Story Time: During the build there have certainly been some exciting times. Storms that broke tent poles, people waking up covered in snow, 2,000 lbs of metal siding being dropped out of the sky. Yes, that's why the metal under the deck has such character. It crashed into the woods from about 1000 ft up and was recovered with the help of a drone. The endless days that Chris Ruttan has spent up here. Without his work ethic, patience and guidance we wouldn't be standing here now. He certainly put all of his heart into this build

Thankful: Look around at how fortunate we are. We share the gratitude of what we have here. From now on, no more ferry to the mainland for huts. With the deepest of appreciation, thank you to the core team and every person that has played a role in making this place come true."



*Toasting the team
Photo: Lawrence White*

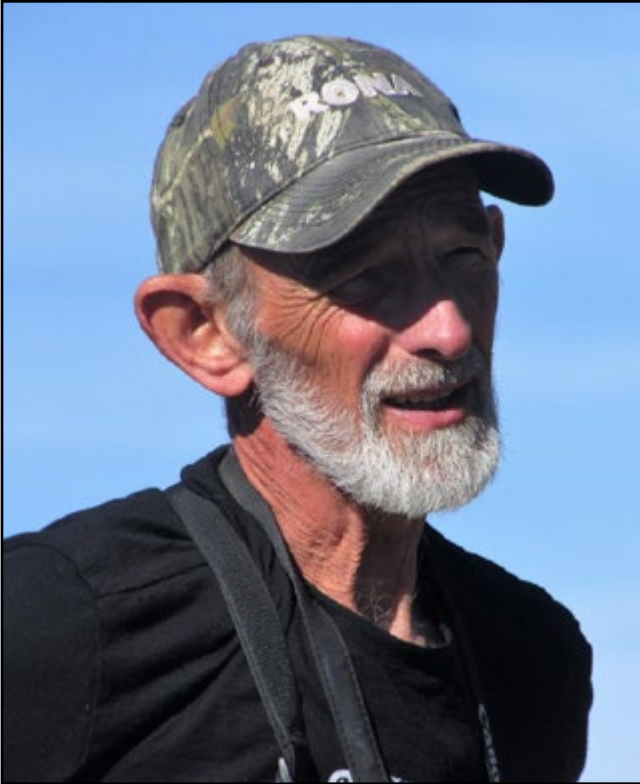


5040 Peak Hut



Chris Ruttan : Peak 5040 Hut construction leader

“Longer ago than I can now remember I put up my hand like a fool and took on a job that I will prob-



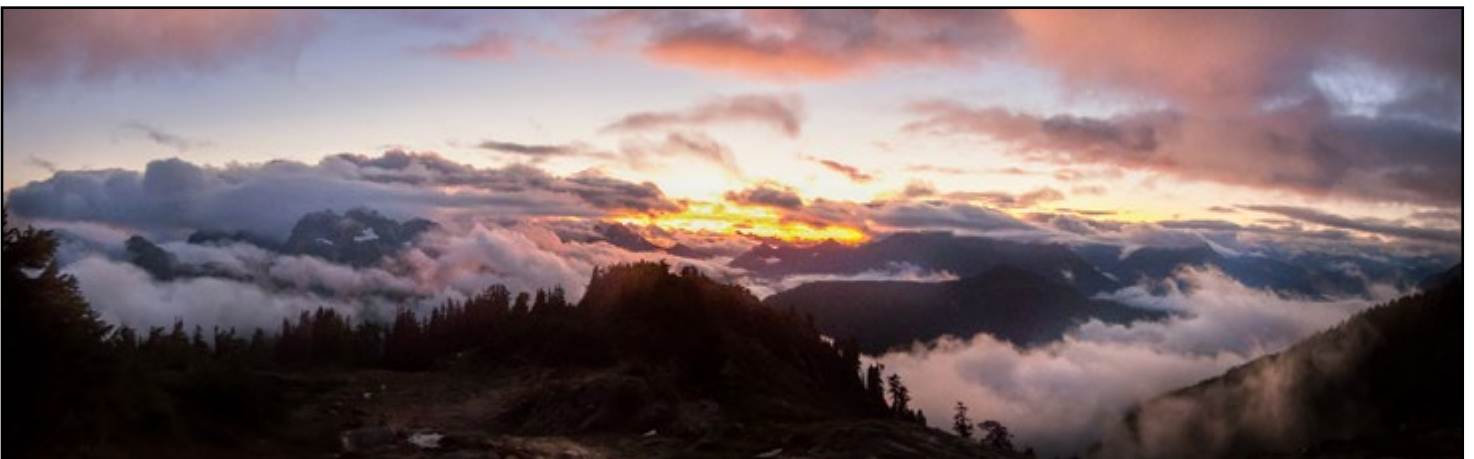
Chris Ruttan - whose building skills were crucial
Photo: Rick Hudson

ably never see the end of. That may seem strange to say considering the actual job is really close to completion and I could walk away and just not bother with looking back, but somehow it just isn't that easy. The 5040 hut is that job and in some inexplicable way it has twisted itself around my heart and strives to hold me in that place on that wonderful, pretty little mountain. But now it belongs to everyone and somehow that eats at me. When I'm there I feel like I have some special connection to it that gives me a sense of home, but when I have to share it I can't shake the need to act like a guardian or mother hen and that takes away my ability to just ease away my days up there. Perhaps after some time I will be able to let it go and just go back to carving wiggly lines in the snow like I did for so many years before, but after all those days and nights up there, often alone, I got caught by something.



Ready to ski!
Photo: Chris Ruttan

The chalet is a great building and the job was a grand challenge and one I'm pleased to have been up for. It was good to see it looming in the fog just up the ridge as I trudged up in the half dark to start another shift, but now it's time to move along. I look forward to the next season and hope for tons of snow, that's what it was all about in the beginning - a warm, dry place to use as a base to ski from, so okay I'm ready to ski.”



Balcony views
M. Sanseverino



5040 Peak Hut



Rick Hudson: Peak 5040 Hut fundraising committee chair

“October is always a good time to open a hut, because October is Thanksgiving month, and we have much to be thankful for. Chris Jensen has already thanked our large team of volunteers. It’s my happy task to thank our equally generous donors.

Donor's plaque Photo: Chris George

Cast your minds back to early 2016. The Hut Committee was busy evaluating designs, and believe me, there were lots of them. But the gorilla in the room – indeed, the elephant in the room – was always ‘great plan, but how much will it cost?’ By June of that year we had a design which closely resembles the one you see here today, and Chris bravely figured out an estimate – I won’t tell you how much. I added a 30% contingency, and the result came to almost exactly HALF of the final total! (It’s nice to know we use the same accounting practices as the bureaucrats on the Site C Dam.) No matter – we had a number, even if it was flawed.



Now, where to find those sorts of funds? Chris applied to the Island Coastal Economical Trust, who promised us \$90K provided we found \$45K in matching funds. Could we do that? Mike Hubbard, Geoff Bennett and I went through the ACC membership list, looking for ‘senior members’ – you know, the ones who drive Volvos or BMWs. We made a little list. Then came the tricky part – making ‘the ask’. Nervous? I hadn’t been that nervous since I called a date for the senior prom. I thought it best to try a friend first. I asked if he’d like to be a Triple Peak donor (give \$1K or more), or a Mt Arrowsmith donor (give \$5K or more), or a Golden Hinde donor (giving \$10K or more). Graham said, ‘Put me down for \$5K.’ Just like that. Incredibly, in just 6 weeks, we raised \$66K! Many of those champions are here at the opening. Thank you for your donations, and thanks for making the effort to come and see what your money created!

We contacted ACC National in Canmore, AB. The executive director Lawrence White (who is here today) and president Neil Bosch both supported the project, and took our request to the Board. Shortly thereafter they approved \$40K to help. National had already been helping, of course, because we’d routed all donations through them from the start, so donors would get a tax receipt (the ACC is a registered charity). Our section’s executive came through with another \$27.5K, and Mountain Equipment Coop gave \$15K – the largest they give for this type of project. We were flying! For the record, this section’s members have now raised \$100K.

This is a good time to thank Colleen Kasting who has been the accountant for the hut project, has managed the incoming and outgoing funds, and kept the project on an even keel. She’s done an outstanding job. A plaque has been mounted on the wall in the hut, acknowledging all those who gave \$1K or more. There were many others who gave less, but gave what they could. We will have a Donor’s Book in the hut soon, recognizing everyone who gave. AND BY THE WAY, IT’S STILL NOT TOO LATE to get your name in the book!

Finally, I’d like you all to know that when this helicopter lands back at its base today, we are officially broke, and could really use a top up!”



5040 Peak Hut



Nadja Steiner: Peak 5040 Hut volunteer coordinator

“How many people can say they received hundreds of emails that say 'I want to help?' Probably not that many! As the volunteer coordinator of the 5040 hut building project, I was one of those lucky ones. I will give you a selected few examples which might give you a taste of what has come in: 'I am keen to help out with the 5040 Hut build ... I don't have construction experience but am happy to help where I can'; 'I am interested in helping with cooking or general support'; '...I own a painting company so anything to do with painting/staining I should be extra helpful with'; 'I am not a member of ACC-VI but am happy to ...help'; 'I am a journey person carpenter and I'm interested in participating in the build'; 'I am an apprentice carpenter interested in helping any way I can... I have plenty of ... tools as well as safety gear I could bring'; 'I'm down to help build the hut,... have experience building sheds, pouring concrete, swinging hammers, using power tools, carrying heavy things...'. The responses and interest from club members, non-club members, and simply passer-byes was truly overwhelming!

I have also been lucky enough to be one of those 10 or so people who have been at the hut site on those beautifully sunny days when the first heli load touched down, the first stakes went in the ground and the first spade load of earth was lifted, as well as when the grand opening ceremony highlighted the beautifully finished hut. It's hard to believe then just how many of those spade loads were lifted, how many hammer blows fell, how many droplets of sweat trickled down heavy foreheads, how many mosquito bites were endured, and how many hands were involved in this project. To be up at the construction site for occasional weekends was a true treat. In conditions ranging from amazing sunshine to blowing winds, driving rain and first winter snowstorms, you could feel the buzz of excitement, watch the continuing progress, and see the smiles coming with a good dinner, a nice cold lemonade or a hot cocoa (with or without whiskey) after a good day's work. Yes we built this hut, but we also built a community. To all those volunteers in the front row, right in the center, in the background and everywhere in between, a huge thank you!!! You were the pulse of this project and part of the legacy that is now standing at the base of Peak 5040.”



Nadja Steiner and the Grand Opening Feast - organizer, coordinator, and caterer extraordinaire!

Photo: Rick Hudson



Catrin Brown: ACC-VI current chair

"In many ways I see the volunteers as donors too. Some have donated their tools, others their talents and their time. Many have shared expertise that is their livelihood, many have worked invisibly behind the scenes shopping for the cooks or maintaining the accounts. In time we will prepare a book with the names of all the volunteers recorded to leave at the hut as part of its history.

There are two volunteers who are in a class of their own, and I have the impossible task of trying to do justice to what they have done. I simply can't.

- **Chris Ruttan**, our construction leader, you have redefined the concept of a hard worker. Up first, down-tools last, you have been here day after day, month after month through every aspect of construction, most often working alone. On a day like today it might be easy to forget some of the challenges you have faced – from the Island's worst storms to physical pain. Yet you are as uncomplaining, determined and creative a soul as anyone knows, and you have consistently beaten the odds on getting the job done.
- **Chris Jensen**, our project leader, you are an exemplary leader in every sense. Your "can-do" attitude inspired the team to push forward and give their best. Since I first met you back in 2012, I have appreciated your enthusiasm and gracious communication skills. Your patience, thoroughness and optimism made this project happen, and I have watched in awe as you have navigated us through every bump in the road, metaphorical and literal. Chris, I think I speak for many of us when I say we are better people for having worked with you.



*Catrin Brown - Grand Opening MC and ACC-VI
Section Chair
Photo: Rick Hudson*

No-one has really any idea how much you two have done, as most of it was unseen, undocumented. But we do know we would not be here today without both of you. Perhaps not surprisingly there was a wish circulated to call this the 'Chris hut', but with typical modesty that was not what you wanted. But to ensure your role in this legacy is shared and preserved, we have prepared a couple of plaques to be hung in the hut. And on behalf of the ACC-VI executive, I am pleased to present you each with a new Goretex jacket – as we somehow thought your old ones may be a bit worn out."



*Cobalt Lake below the hut
M. Sanseverino*



Rob Macdonald: Early ACC explorer of Peak 5040 and beyond

“When I was asked by Rick Hudson if I would say ‘a few pompous words’ at the official opening of this hut, I took it as a great honour. But I said yes mostly because it gave me an opportunity to thank those who put their shoulder to this wheel. This project is not unlike planning an expedition to climb some distant, difficult peak in terms of having a vision, many challenges to meet, and many points at which turning back, defeated, enters one’s thoughts. What better than to attempt to do something never done before? What better than to accomplish what others have failed at, or have declared impossible? Well! Here stands this hut as stark evidence not only that it was possible, but that it could be done in style and by a remarkable team that includes more people than our section had as members back in the ‘70s when I joined the section.



*Rob Macdonald at the
Grand Opening*

Mountaineers don’t really expect a ‘thanks’ for things they get up to, but they do get a huge reward both personal and collective for long hours of toil in these places. That reward is the camaraderie of shared challenge, the forging of new friendships and knowing that you were one of those who pitched in, and that your sweat is on the boards of this new hut along with that of the many others you met along the way. It’s a

reward that lasts a lifetime in memories and photographs.

On a more personal note, I’d like to say what this place means to me. It was back in early June of 1984 that Rick Eppler and I bashed our way through the bush of the west ridge, and post-holed our way through spring snow to a summit with views that drifted in and out amongst the clouds. That view, in particular, was our first good look at the route to Triple Peak, a mountain we had long coveted. A few weeks later we walked across those snow-covered flanks below Triple Peak on a brilliantly clear day, and from there dreamed of other peaks across the road. Many years have passed since those halcyon days and, today, the view of those peaks across the valley brings back to me bitter-sweet memories of where I fell in love with Vancouver Island’s ranges and set out on the voyage of becoming a mountaineer. It started here for me, it led to a fast friendship with Rick, and thence to countless other places and adventures that have become deeply woven into my



*Looking across the valley
Photo: Rob Macdonald*

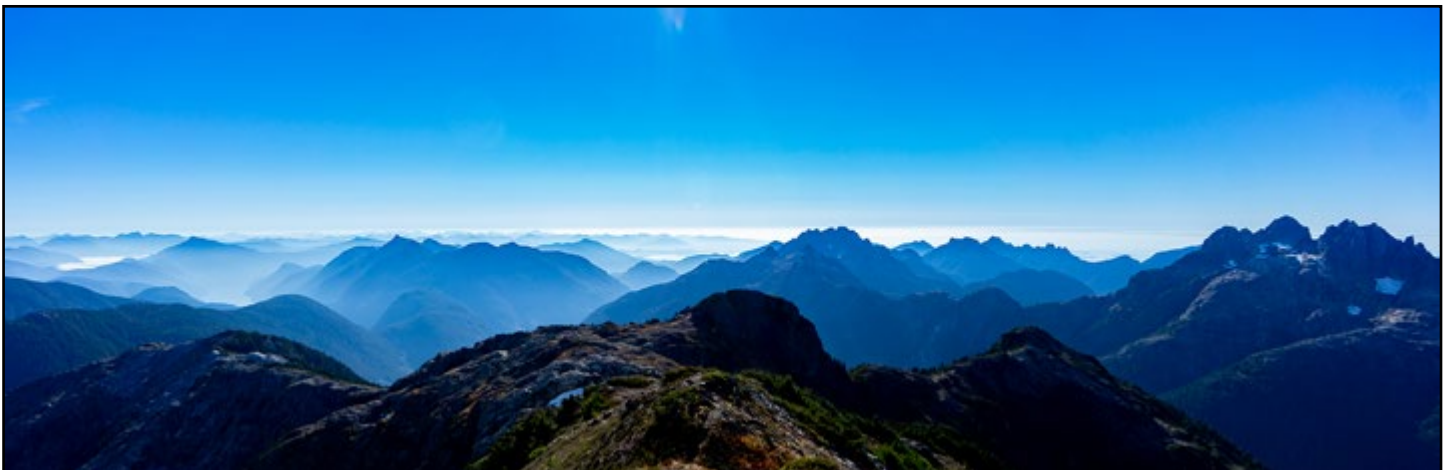


5040 Peak Hut



life, so deeply in fact that it is impossible for me to imagine what my life would have been like had I never spent that time in these ‘Highway 4 Ranges.’

Fast forward 35 years – let’s say the early 2050s. A new generation, some not yet born, will visit this place and spend more than a rushed hour at the summit. Perhaps they will wander the ridges above, perhaps sit on this very deck and wonder who built this place. They may look across the valley as I did, perhaps meet someone here who will become a fast friend in adventure and their life will be forever changed by that new sense of their place on this planet. I am sure these things will happen just as I am sure that this is the gift given by all of you who have contributed to this project, the first ACC-VI Hut on the Island. It is the gift of the magi.”

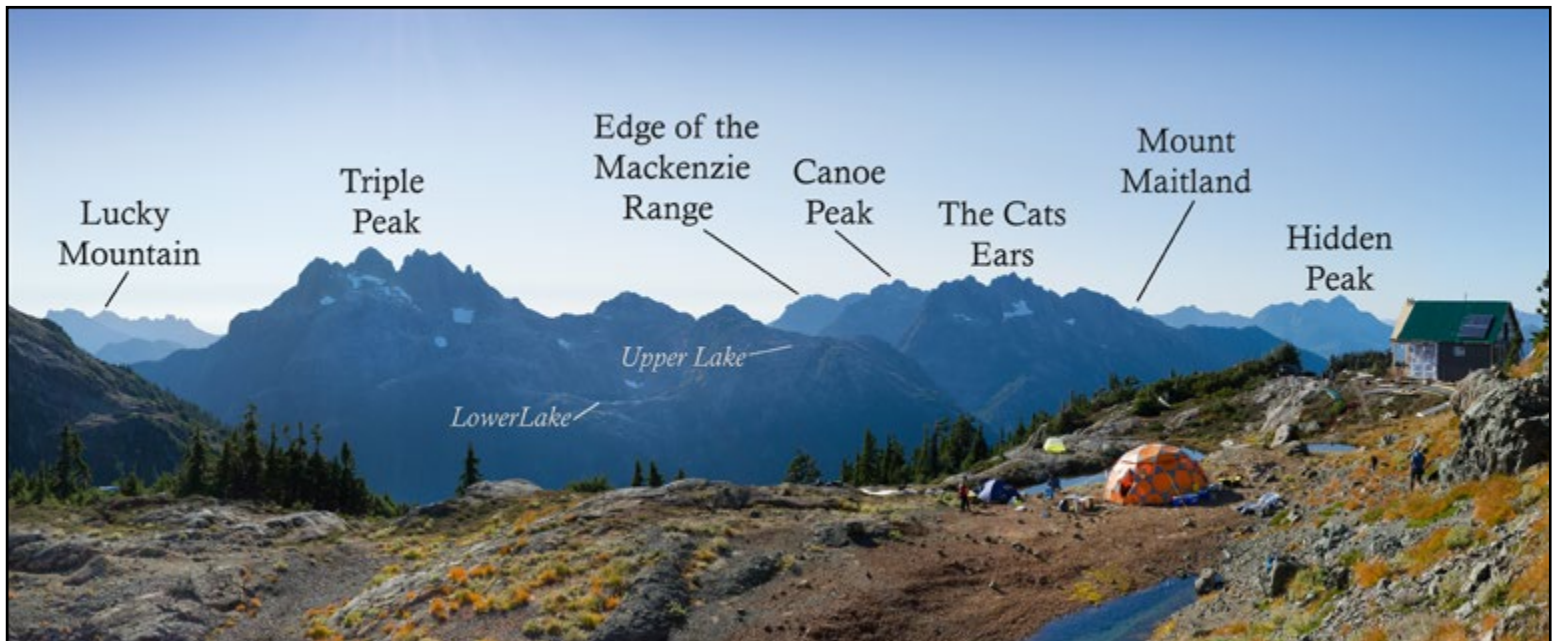


The gift of the magi
Photos: Rob Macdonald

e-Trails: Mountain News and Stories

Gil Parker reports "On October 22nd famous Himalayan climber Doug Scott gave an amazing talk on the climb and perilous descent of the Ogre, a difficult, high peak in northern Pakistan. During a rappel, Scott broke both legs below the knees and was forced to rappel down the cliffs and crawl many hazardous miles to base camp. During his description of various experiences in Nepal, he talked about **Community Action Nepal, (CAN)** a UK-based charity operating across the breadth of that mountain nation. CAN has been operating for 20 years, building schools, health centers, and refuges for mountain porters. It operates in areas seldom visited by tourists, but sometimes destinations of mountaineers, and uses local talent and materials. Administrative costs are minimal. Doug Scott is the Operations Director and I noted that several eminent climbers (Bonington, Messner) were actively involved in supporting the cause. (www.canepal.org.uk) I was convinced that it was worthy of support. The Alpine Club of Canada, Canmore head office, supports this organization with Canadian tax receipts for donations (by cheque or credit card) to Community Action Nepal."

ACC-VI Annual General Meeting and weekend at Mt. Washington. Spend the weekend up at Mt Washington enjoying your own activities or joining in any of the events posted on the schedule. The AGM will take place at 7.00 pm on Sat 2 February, preceded by a potluck dinner in the Vancouver Island Mountain Centre (VIMC) at 5.00 pm. Check out the [ACC-VI AGM](#) webpage for more info.



*Looking south-southwest from just above the 5040 Peak Hut.
Photo: Chris George*

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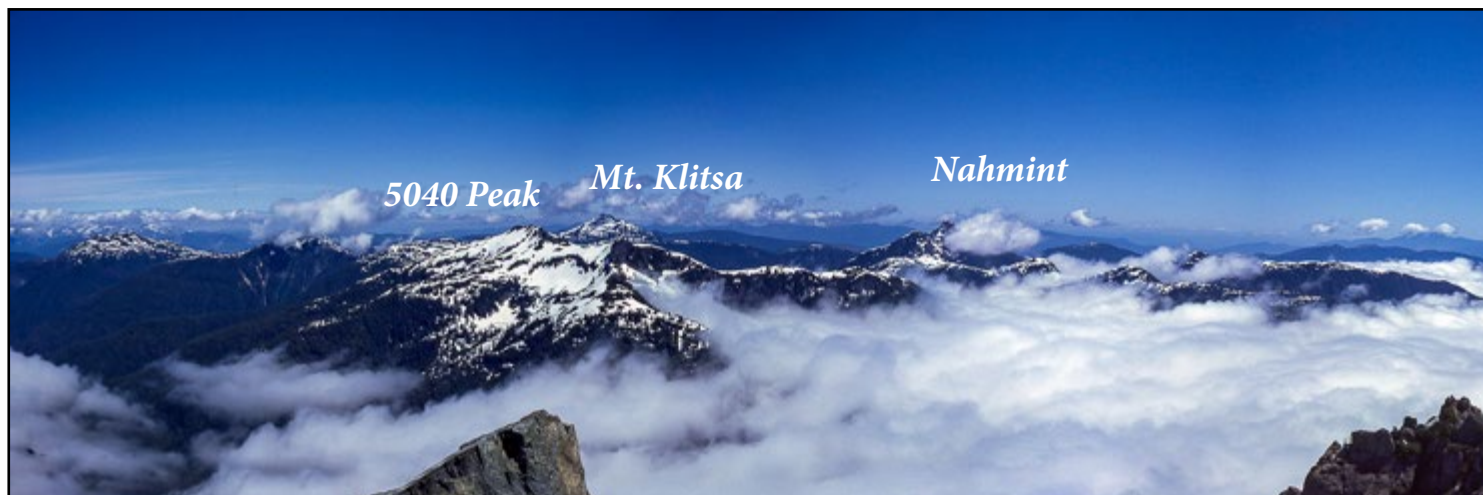
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*Panorama from Triple Peak looking back towards 5040 Peak - taken in July, 1984
Photo: Rob Macdonald*



***From the Front Cover:
View of Triple Peak from 5040 Peak summit***

***Taken in June, 1984 by Rob Macdonald as he and Rick Eppler took their ease
on the top of 5040.***

**Thank you to this month's contributors: Geoff Bennett, Catrin Brown, Gary Croome, Lindsay Elms, Chris George, Chris Jensen, Rob Macdonald, Gil Parker, Brian Parsons, Chris Ruttan, Natasha Salway, Nadja Steiner, Roger Taylor, Lawrence White.
Well done everyone!**

