

Island Bushwhacker

Volume 51 | Issue 3 | Autumn 2023



*Spirit sticks flying on
Mariner Mountain.*

*Photo by
Quentin Thomas*

ACC VANCOUVER ISLAND SECTION

Social Events

The club hosts monthly slide shows at the Swan Lake nature sanctuary in Victoria and offers these as streamed in-person events so that members who cannot attend in person can also be involved.

Web Information

Web site: www.accvi.ca

Webmaster: webmaster@accvi.ca

Executive Meeting Minutes

Available on our meeting archives which are [here](#).

National ACC Office

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

www.alpineclubofcanada.ca

Email: info@alpineclubofcanada.ca; Tel: (403)-678-3200; Address: P.O. Box 8040, Canmore, AB, T1W 2T8

Annual Membership Dues

Single \$58 Family \$83 Youth (19 and under) \$41

The Island Bushwhacker Newsletter is published the first week of March, June, September, and December. Other weeks, the **High Points Bulletin** summarizes events and key section announcements.

Newsletter Editor: Janelle Curtis

High Points Editor: **Currently Vacant**

We encourage submissions of items of interest to our membership, including articles and photos in months when the newsletter is published. Please email your submissions to newsletter@accvi.ca 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

COME BACK ALIVE
COME BACK FRIENDS
RESPECT THE LAND
HAVE FUN
GET TO THE TOP
(IN THAT ORDER!)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Corn Fest and Pot Luck on 7 September from 5:30pm to 8:30pm! Come to share your summer adventures with old and new friends. ACCVI will provide corn and non-alcoholic drinks. Bring a dish to share and your own favourite beverage.

Contact ckasting@telus.net to register and we will send you details. There is room for 80 people.

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Reminder to Members:

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

Join or visit the ACCVI's [Facebook group](#). You don't have to be a Facebook member to see this page. And visit ACCVI's Discussion Forum at <https://discourse.accvi.ca/>

Upcoming Trips

Full information for all trips and education events is located online on the ACCVI [Trip Schedule](#). Keep your eye on the [Trip Schedule](#) often!

Event Schedule

Our trip and event schedule depends on members volunteering to lead a trip or organize an event. There are no specific requirements, other than confidence to lead a small group on your chosen route. For extra information please check the 'Information for leaders' section of our website (<https://accvi.ca/trip-leaders/>) or email a question to leadership@accvi.ca.

Dates	Trip/Event
TBA	Disability-friendly day-hike
7-9 October	Beginner-friendly hike along the Elk River Trail

Thank you for contributing to our community in this important way!

Mountain Education

The ACCVI Education Program exists to facilitate courses and workshops for members that will prepare them to participate in ACCVI trips, assist them in pursuing their outdoor goals, and develop the skills required as ACCVI Trip Leaders.

ACCVI offers a wide variety of workshops and courses aimed at giving our members the technical and safety skills to get out there in the mountains safely.

Dates	Education Workshop / Session
TBA	Workshop on how to lead trips, including beginner-friendly trips, backcountry ski trips, and hut trips
18 September - 21 November	MEC is sponsoring a series of 8 sessions for ACC members about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training that will focus on: Unconscious Bias and Human Rights; 2SLGBTQIA+ Foundations; Legality and Disability; Microaggressions; Pronouns and Inclusive Language; Unpacking the Knapsack; Creating a Safe Space

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 ACCVI's courses.

Education and Courses: <http://accvi.ca/programs/education/>

Is there something you would like to see? Contact education@accvi.ca.

Please see the [trip schedule](#) for information about upcoming education events.

Notes from the Chair

By David Lemon

Summer is nearing its end, but there will still be many opportunities to enjoy the Vancouver Island mountains before it is time to bring out the skis and snowshoes. Autumn days may be shorter, but they bring with them fall colours, fewer bugs and hopefully air clear of wildfire smoke.

The fly-in summer camp was cancelled this year because it was not possible to obtain required land-use permits and successful consultation with area First Nations in time to hold the camp. The process has been started for 2024, which should allow it to proceed next summer. Other activities did take place through the summer, notably the Wheeler Hut week at Rogers Pass in mid-August (see page 17).

Slide shows at Swan Lake are scheduled to start up again in October, so there are opportunities to share experiences of trips you have done this past summer or earlier with section members. If you are interested in doing a presentation, please contact the MC, Gordon Kyle, at events@accvi.ca.

There are still some vacancies on the section Executive and coordinators positions (listed at the end of the newsletter) so if you are interested in any of them, please let us know by sending a message to chair@accvi.ca.



Victoria Glacier. (Photo by Laurel Mitchell-Frost)

A call for volunteer Executive Members and Coordinators

Summer Camp Coordinator - By Liz Williams

Exciting and rewarding volunteer opportunities in the ACCVI!

This opportunity is to reinstate a Summer Camp Committee, and is best suited to those who live in the CRD.

The ACCVI needs four or five members (three minimum!) to carry out all the organizing of the helicopter fly-in summer camps.

Much of the policy and guidance documentation and processes are already in place and the past SCC is very willing to pass on its expertise.



Night summer camp. (Photo by Bianca Parcher)

Please see the [2014 Summer Camp Committee's Terms of Reference](#) on page 6 (note: some of Sections including **2: Budget** and **3: Planning and Logistics** have been altered/augmented since 2014).

Leadership Points Coordinator

Looking for a way to contribute your skills, to help keep our club vibrant, and fun?

We need someone new to join our volunteer team, maybe this is you.....?

The Opportunity - involves tallying points and promoting the "**Leadership Recognition Contest**", as well as, ordering, and presenting the prizes.

Time commitment - about an hour a month, after a short training session and a few hours extra before the AGM in January. and any extra you may want to invest

The Reward - Belonging to a team that appreciates your skills, enthusiasm and welcomes your ideas.

Please get in touch - leadership@accvi.ca

Other volunteer opportunities

Please see pages 31 and 32 of this newsletter for a list of vacant roles on the ACCVI Executive Committee and Coordinators.

If any of these positions interest you, contact our ACCVI chair, David Lemon, at chair@accvi.ca.



Alpine Club of Canada – Vancouver Island Section Summer Camp Committee Terms of Reference (TOR)

Purpose

The purpose of the Summer Camp Committee (SCC) is to oversee and coordinate all aspects of the summer camps, to ensure safe and enjoyable camps that fall within a specified budget.

Governance

1. SCC members are approved by the Executive, and will be limited to five members at any one time. A minimum commitment of one year is expected. Members are expected to live in or near Victoria given the need for face-to-face meetings and actions related to the summer camp inventory and planning.
2. The SCC will appoint a team lead / chair who will provide progress reports to the Executive and, when necessary, recommendations for Executive decision. The chair will also coordinate the activities of the SCC.
3. The SCC will record and maintain a log of key action items, decisions, and recommendations for Executive.
4. The SCC will meet approximately monthly, and two weeks before each Executive meeting, as needed.
5. SCC decisions will be made by consensus where possible and majority vote if necessary.

SCC Roles and Responsibilities

1. Inventory:

- a. Maintain and update an inventory of equipment, including its current state of repair and location.
- b. Replace and / or repair equipment as needed:
 - i. Replace consumable items (e.g. propane gas, paper towels, etc.)
 - ii. Make decisions on acquiring permanent equipment up to \$500.00 per annum
 - iii. Take recommendations to the Executive for equipment purchases over \$500.00 per annum.
- c. Oversee inventory budget and integrate with larger summer camp budget / revenue.
- d. Keep a record of equipment weights (for helicopter flights).
- e. Ensure equipment is clean, packed, and stored at the end of the season, ready for immediate use the following year.

2. Budget:

- a. Estimate cost per person for summer camp participation: the camp fee to be based on anticipated helicopter costs plus materials and to be the same for all participants whether or not they feel they can hike into the area.
- b. Collect summer camp participants' fees.
- c. Coordinate with ACC-VI Treasurer for any advance deposits required.
- d. Confirm bookings and fees paid/due with Treasurer.
- e. Maintain record of funds received and expenditures.
- f. Profit or loss adjustments will be based on the following principles:
 - i. Refunds will be provided to participants equally if excess funds allow a refund of 5% or greater of the original fee.
 - ii. Excess funds that are less than 5% of the original fee will be added to the reserve summer camp fund to support future camps and the acquisition of new materials as required.
 - iii. In the event of unforeseen and unanticipated costs in excess of the estimated summer camp fee, these costs will be met by the reserve summer camp fund.

3. Planning and Logistics:

- a. Make recommendations for location of summer camps (with input from members, as appropriate).
- b. Coordinate with appropriate agencies and companies (e.g. BC Forest Service (road conditions) and helicopter companies (flights) for access to camp sites.
- c. Provide group and individual weight limits for fly-in camps.
- d. Develop and provide:
 - i. Guidelines for Camp Managers;
 - ii. Guidelines for Camp Participants;
 - iii. Travel details.
- e. Review completed camps with Camp Managers and update guidelines for future camps.

4. Policy Recommendations:

- a. Provide policy recommendations on issues as they arise and / or at the request of the ACCVI Executive.

Foosteps Across Vancouver Island

By Amy Tunstall

Editor's note: The Vancouver Island Trail Association (VITA) is one of the groups that ACCVI supports financially (see <https://accvi.ca/about/organisations-we-support/>). When participants of the recent ACCVI trip along the Forbidden Plateau met Amy in July, we bombarded her with many questions and invited her to tell us a bit about her hike along the Vancouver Island Trail.

On June 23rd, I Left my home in Victoria to hike the Vancouver Island Trail (VIT) with only a 50-pound backpack and a set of hiking poles. I was ready to start the pilgrimage north in what I expected to be a two-month trek through the interior of Vancouver Island. This hike would connect my footsteps from the southern tip to the northern most point of Cape Scott in a 770-km journey. The route would follow the Vancouver Island Trail (formerly referred to as the Vancouver Island Spine Trail) linking many parks and pathways throughout the island and connecting them with the use of industrial roads and old railway infrastructure.



Cowichan River. (Photo by Amy Tunstall)

Amid a heat wave, I began my journey following the old railway beds towards Lake Cowichan - a route that I had cycled multiple times. The VIT starts by following a series of popular recreational trails which make up a small section of The Great Trail - connecting one from the populated urban landscape of Victoria and Langford to the Cowichan Valley. For 100 km I followed what was mostly former rail line over a series of restored trestles which had been a community effort to save and restore. I walked this road-like trail of gentle grade through a forest of giant ferns and moss-covered maples. Even though the forest looked vibrant, the rivers were low and the creeks ran dry. In the heat of the day and the newfound weight of my pack, my body struggled.

Giant blisters had formed on the bottoms of my feet. With every step, I questioned my decision to leave and every piece of me wanted to quit, to do something else, **anything else**. But I pushed on through this discomfort. I knew that I just needed time to allow my body to get stronger. Prior to my departure, I had felt stagnant and what I craved was change and to feel good in my body again. Even though I wanted to be anywhere other than where I was, my intuition told me that the trail was probably the best place for me. This propelled me forward, and in three and half days I made it to Lake Cowichan where I would leave the manicured trail behind for logging roads and single track through the backcountry.



*Trail Markers along the Tuck Lake Trail.
(Photo by Amy Tunstall)*

Before I could continue any further, I needed to deconstruct the contents of my bag, and begin the process of “**Letting Go.**” By the time I flushed away the non-essential items, I had a 9-lb box filled with several layers, random camping gear, and my DSLR camera. With less weight, I found a new sense of freedom and began to enjoy the journey and to find my stride as I walked the dusty logging roads north towards Port Alberni.

Truckers stopped in confusion, wondering if I was lost, wondering why there was a random hiker walking these roads. Small pieces of pink and orange flagging led me away from these industrial roads towards my first river ford. Through steep cut blocks my path became obscure - flagging lost beneath the slash and fireweed. Like a child, I climbed, pulling myself up these steep sections, balancing on the large trees like tightwire over piles and piles of slash towards the covered forest where the trail would become defined and easy to follow once again. Eventually, I’d connect to a section referred to as the Runner’s Trail - a 17-km section that traces a First Nations traditional trade route constructed mainly by the Tseshaht First Nations. Eventually this route would end and once again I’d link back to the former Canadian Northern Pacific Railway.



*Tuck Lake Trail.
(Photo by Amy Tunstall)*



*Runner’s Trail.
(Photo by Amy Tunstall)*



*Port Alberni Inlet Trail.
(Photo by Amy Tunstall)*

Out of Port Alberni, I began my 1200 metre ascent into the Beaufort Range. The trail was steep, and eventually the logging roads would disappear into a multitude of dirt bike paths throughout the forest, and those paths would begin to fade as I climbed into the subalpine of exposed rock and mountain heather. Flagging became sparse as land usage agreements have yet to be finalized throughout this section. A well-known route across this range exists, however the use of my GPS would become essential to navigate this low-trafficked traverse. A nearly 90-km slow-moving backcountry trek involved steep pitches and areas that would need to be bushwhacked. From the summit of my first peak, Mount Hal, I could see the partial

crest that I would be following over the next several days as well as a few of the peaks that I would need to climb: eight summits.



*View of the Beaufort Crest.
(Photo by Amy Tunstall)*

Throughout this section there was little time to think. My only focus was on the route ahead and being methodical in my foot placement because an ankle injury would end this journey quickly. Snow hid in the shadows of the gulleys and I crossed these sections with caution. Every time I approached a peak, a rapid ascent and descent of steep pitches would follow. Hemlock and pine needles covered the slopes, and the earth would give way when my foot made contact. I fell repeatedly and with immense frustration, my only choice was to pick myself up once again.

I navigated around the erect boulders and small alpine lakes that scattered the plateau like ridge. Short sections became lost as I'd descend back down into the dense conifer stands. This was true backcountry, and although I had experience in the backcountry this section challenged me both physically and mentally: the rapid elevation gains and losses, the bulldozing of shrubs that ripped at my skin, the buzz of a thousand biting insects every time I stopped, and a feeling of being perpetually lost.

Although I had experience in the backcountry it had always been on lakes and rivers that were easy to navigate or on well-established trails that led one up towards a distinguished ridge line. This was new, and I took it slowly. I'd wake up with the sun and make camp near dusk, in these long days of over 12 hours I never made it any further than 20 km.

Another high elevation section lay ahead through Strathcona Park. I climbed up from Cumberland climbing back up to 1200 metres through what was once the Wood Mountain Ski Park into the Forbidden Plateau. A wooden kiosk informed me that I had reached the park boundaries, the large path through the park followed the contours of the land through dense mountain hemlock.



*Campsite from The Squarehead.
(Photo by Amy Tunstall)*



*View of Mount Albert Edward.
(Photo by Amy Tunstall)*

up, and then I climbed. Only to be stopped by another taller, steeper scramble less than 500 metres from the first. I began to panic, and my hands shook. Again, I'd need to climb. This time I'd need to make two different attempts to try and get up and over this steep section of crumbling rock. When I arrived at the ridge, I was met with only a short-lived sense of relief because the descent off Adrian Ridge was the most technical part of this entire VIT hike. It was a short section that left me bloody and shaken. This was the section that I felt could have caused me the most injury: a steep set of cliffs met with a non-intuitive route down. At the bottom of the cliffs the trail picked up once again, where I could begin to shake off the nerves from this challenging portion of trail.

I popped out of the trail near Upper Campbell Lake, on the side of Highway 28. Low on supplies, I had no other choice than to hitchhike my way into Campbell River. The next day I made it back to the trail, energized after having completed the two hardest sections of the Vancouver Island Trail. This was the point where I knew I would make it to the end. My body was now remarkably strong and attune to being in the mountains.

In a short amount of time, I made it to the base camp of Mount Albert Edward, where I would camp with 20 other groups at Circlet Lake, all of us preparing for the ascent ahead. Although I left relatively early, I hit a bottleneck as individuals of all ages pushed towards the summit. When I reached the main ridge, the impressive peaks dominated my view, but I veered away from the line of people who were trekking to the summit. Instead, I went in a northwesterly direction up and over Jutland Ridge. This section was particularly beautiful. My only wish was that I could stay a little longer and give myself more time to explore the many peaks and valleys in BC's oldest provincial park.

The next day I would face the hardest section of the entire trip, my ascent and descent of Adrian Ridge. On this section there would be no trail or trail markers. I started with a bushwhack up a nearly vertical cut block that halted at a steep cliff-like scramble. I looked at my GPS to double check my route, which indicated that I'd need to climb. Back and forth I paced along the bottom for nearly 15 minutes deciding upon my safest route



*Campsite from Adrian Ridge.
(Photo by Amy Tunstall)*

I formed a new relationship with this environment: one of respect, of inspiration and creativity. I loved the challenge, the demand and intricacy of each day. Again, I dove back into the monotony of road walking. Industry roads that would eventually connect me with trail, and trails that followed creeks and rivers. Trails that I assumed would be simpler. But when I connected with Glen's Trail it looked as through a tornado had ripped through the area. Sections of forest were completely uprooted. I was shocked. Never in my life had I seen so many trees ripped from the ground and stacked one atop another. For miles I climbed up and over the blowdown. Old signs hung in trees indicating this trail's former name. In its prime, this section would have been beautiful, but now most of it lay buried under piles and piles of blown-down trees.



*An example of the Blow down through Glen's Trail.
(Photo by Amy Tunstall)*



*Old Vancouver Spine Trail Sign.
(Photo by Amy Tunstall)*

The forest erupted; large Roosevelt Elk began dashing through the bushes. For days I had been following their tracks as they used the trail like a corridor. These large animals were abundant as I made my way towards Stewart Lake, from where I'd be able to see mountains once again. A river trail took me toward my final large climb up and over a small pass. The rain began, fog rippled around the peaks, and water cascaded from high up on the mountainside. Water began to add life to the landscape and a vibrance which had faded in the drought. Watchtower Peak dominated my view, and I wanted nothing more than to be there high up in the alpine once again. Although, for now I'd just be passing through. From Kokummi Pass I began making larger pushes with my distance. Something that began to happen naturally as the trail eased and my body transformed. Out of the mountains, long days of persistent rain began. Stopping became infrequent. In a few days I would make it to the coast.

When I arrived in Port McNeill, it was my first contact with the ocean since leaving Victoria: a cause for celebration. And it was my first time travelling to the north of the island. I followed the coastline north as bear tracks zigzagged across the beaches. A well-marked trail ran parallel to the coast. As high tide approached, I diverted back into the woods following a hilly route to the Port Hardy Airport. From there I bushwhacked around the chain link fence through dense highbush raspberries, watching as small planes took off. The next day I'd need to decide how to get to the North Coast Trail: I could either take a water taxi or follow a 43-km stretch of logging roads and cross Shushartie Bay.

I chose the second option, determined to connect my footsteps from end to end. A small goat trail led me down into Shushartie Bay. I followed along the river that I'd need to cross but I reached it at high tide. For three hours I waited on the banks of the Shushartie River watching the water retreat into the sea. Finally, the time came, but still the river was waist deep. I crossed in pursuit of a campsite at the far end of the bay, climbing over rocks and trees that made up the shoreline.



*Wolf tracks on the North Coast Trail.
(Photo by Amy Tunstall)*

At 4 a.m. I awoke to a single wolf howling from the bay I crossed only hours earlier. The melodic tune echoed through the night and several others joined in the course and sang until sunrise. In the morning I met with four other groups who had arrived by water taxi, and we began to leapfrog 120 metres up from the coastal shores and high into a bog of scattered boardwalks and knee-deep mud. A slow section, up and down over exposed roots and random pieces of wood. We celebrated the end of these overland sections and enjoyed the ease of beach walking. I decided that I wouldn't do any large pushes through the North Coast Trail. Instead, I took the recommended 5-6 days to navigate this route and savoured the final few days of this journey. I crossed over muddy headlands and root systems that acted like ladders guiding one from beaches into the forest above. Plastic buoys and lost crocs decorated trees like ornaments. Cable cars ran across the rivers, and the North Coast Trail became my playground.

From Christensen Point, grey whales patrolled the shoreline and I watched as spouts of water rose not too far off in the distance. Then the odd fluke. On my 44th day of the Vancouver Island Trail, I arrived at the northern Point of Cape Scott, a bittersweet moment. The North Coast Trail felt like the perfect way to conclude such a journey. Throughout my time on the VIT there were sections where I encountered not a single soul: through the Beauforts, I spent 6 days completely alone. To end my journey, I spent it in the company of others, sharing stories, food, and connection as we navigated this windy, muddy, coastal route following in the footsteps of coastal wolves. On some days the trail felt like it was never ending, but on others it felt like it has gone by too soon.



Amy in Victoria (Day 1)



Amy at Cape Scott (Day 44)

National News

By Christine Forhham - ACCVI National Representative

News Flash!!!

BOOKING SECTION TRIPS AT NATIONAL HUTS

There are some great changes to the new online hut reservation system for Sections. Now Sections can book ACC huts without putting money down and have 30 days before their trip to cancel without penalty. So anyone with a Section trip idea, this new change makes booking ACC huts more friendly for Section trips.

VOTING FOR NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

Changes in bylaws, have eliminated the "recommended" candidate when voting for the National Executive. All candidates will be pre-screened for qualifications.



Access and Environment

By Barb Baker

Mosaic Forest Management

Gate hours have changed to 6 a.m. – 6 p.m. when they are open. The [Access map](#) on their website, designed to inform the public of roads and gate openings, is not always accurate. Some icons e.g. Elk Mountain and Buttle Bluffs have disappeared; **CX91 to Mount Apps currently has NO gates**; Cameron Main 17 is closed temporarily until after fire season and Cottonwood may be reinstated (limited to week-ends) after fire season as well.

Plans are to discuss the icon situation with Mosaic Security.

Access permits for use of Comox Lake and Ash Valley accrue annual fees and are under-utilized by ACCVI members. Hoping to bring this concern to the ACCVI executive for discussion. Any comments/suggestions/questions/criticisms would be appreciated. Please contact comoxlakegate@accvi.ca or ashvalleygate@accvi.ca.

On a search of AllTrails

No trails from Lake Oshinow, accessed via Ash Valley road system are posted but we know this a good way to get to Red Pillar, Mount Harmston and the Comox Glacier. Do look at the posted trails to Carey Lakes, Alone Mountain, Century Sam Lake accessed from Comox Lake Road on the east side of Strathcona Park.

Klitsa Mountain south approach from Nahmint Valley is open again after some days of road work.

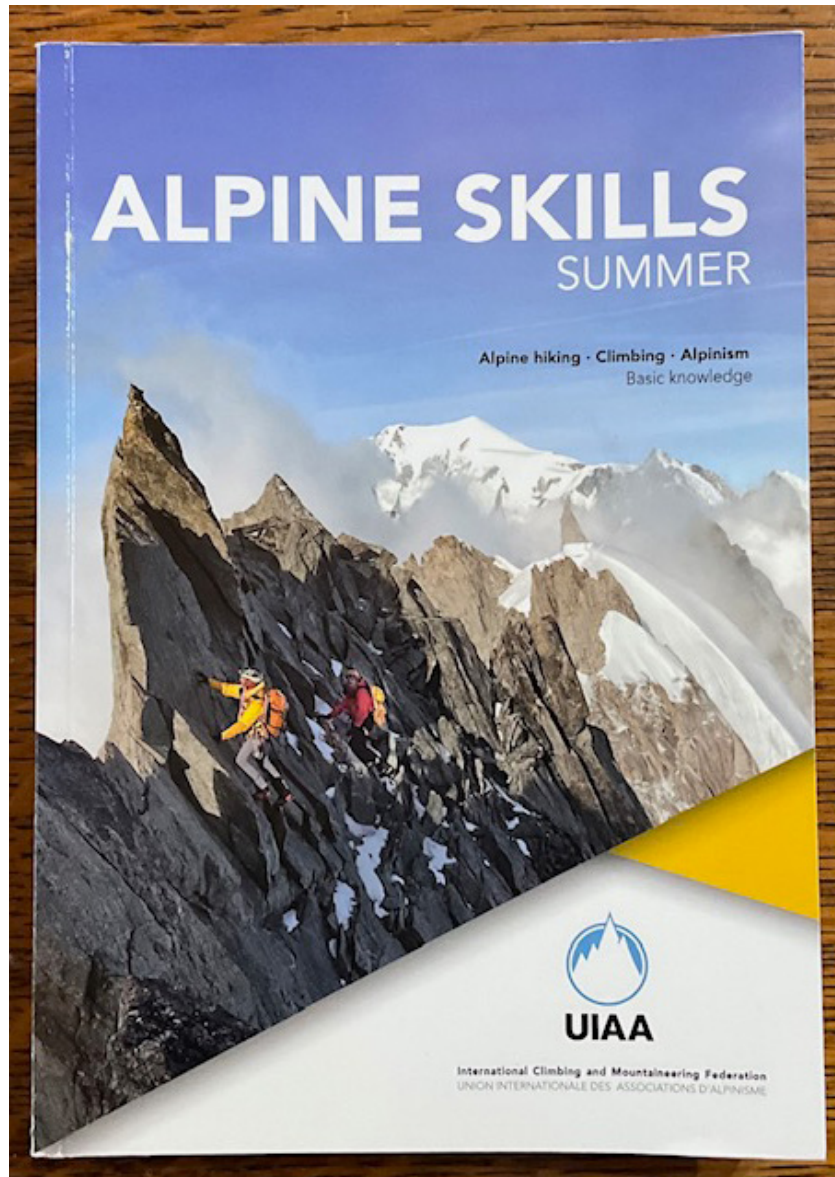


*Barry Hansen overlooking Milla Lake and Mount Harmston.
(Photo by Eryn Tombu Haigh)*

TRIP LEADERS ALERT!

EARN the “Hot Off the Press” NEW - UIAA HANDBOOK.

ALPINE SKILLS - SUMMER
Alpine Hiking Climbing and Alpinism



How? you say?

Simply put a club trip or event on the ACCVI schedule, and after the trip runs, email Christine at natrep@accvi.ca and give her your address, and she will get a coveted copy to you. Co- Leaders get one too and as an added bonus, we have made this retroactive to May 1. But hurry there are only 24 copies and when they are gone, this great incentive to fill up our schedule, will be gone too.

ACCVI Summer Camp at Wheeler Hut 2023

By Cedric Zala

Building on our section's super-enjoyable 2022 hut camp at Lake O'Hara, we targeted Rogers Pass for our 2023 hut-based week in the mountains. We had booked The Wheeler Hut, which is accessible by car and just beyond the Illecillewaet Campground in Glacier National Park. The group was diverse, and included a few gentle-terrain hikers, many more who were interested in more challenging trails and scrambles, and one who was intent on mounting a full-on climb of Mount Sir Donald.

The lead-up to the camp was intense and trying – a string of really bad luck. A couple of days before the planned drive up, co-leader Geoff Bennett developed medical issues and needed to be hospitalized for tests and so had to withdraw – a huge loss. Then on the way up late on Saturday afternoon, Cedric's recently rebuilt VW van broke down catastrophically on the Coquihalla Highway just north of Merritt. With a flurry of emails and tremendous support from the other participants we hatched an alternative plan, and eventually all the gear, and Cedric as well, were transferred to other up-bound cars on Sunday and so arrived safely at the Wheeler Hut by dinner-time. What a start!



Bryan and Leona on the Avalanche Crest Trail with Asulkan Pass in the background. (Photo by Cedric Zala)

But after that it was all up-beat! Each successive day offered many different (and thankfully far less dramatic) wonderful self-guided trips. Here's a sample of some of the hikes, etc., our members got up to during the week (and there were many, many more).

- Monday: Russ led a group of seven up to Abbott Ridge on this very hot day. The views were wonderful but the going was tough in the extreme heat. Meanwhile a ladies group drove down-valley and then up to Mount Revelstoke Park, where they enjoyed a hike and a swim in Miller Lake. This option allowed access to the alpine without first having to hike up 600+ metres, and later in the week several groups opted for this lower-impact drive-and-hike, some with a relaxing stop at Albert Canyon Hot Springs.
- Tuesday: Two groups took the Avalanche Crest trail. One, led by Sylvia, left early with the aim of scouting out and if possible summiting Avalanche Peak, while the other, led by Cedric, wanted to reach the bowl below Eagle and Avalanche Peaks. Meanwhile Mike led a group up to the Asulkan Cabin.
- Wednesday: Leaving at 2:20 a.m., Chad led a party of two up the NW ridge of Mount Sir Donald (3284 metres). They ascended quickly but had to contend with a lot of smoke in the air. Once underway, the climbing was amazing, but eventually the oppressive smoke and increasing winds led them to call it quits at 2950 metres and descend.
- Thursday: Mike, Sylvia, Janine, Becky and Ian descended from the Asulkan Cabin, while two parties went up the valley trail, one just to the final moraine where it steepened, and the other with the intention of going all the way up to the cabin. It did not go entirely as planned, as described in the following bit of doggerel:

An Asulkan Drama – a Rhymed Account of Thursday's Adventure

*Leona and Bryan and Cedric decided to go for a look
On a smoky Thursday morning along the Asulkan Brook.
On their way upstream they scoured the trail, looking this way and that,
Hoping to solve the mystery of Mike's missing Asulkan hat.
Alas, their efforts were thwarted, so they looked with eyes agleam
At the many cascading waterfalls that swelled the Asulkan stream.
Pushing relentlessly onward, they finally reached a sill
Where the turbulent water flowed under a bridge that spanned the Asulkan rill.
They awaited the down-bound party while the rocks in the stream were a-crunchin',
And sat in a streamside hollow and ate their Asulkan luncheon.
With the two alpine parties united, they soon heard a clatter - the feet
Of the up-bound party, but one of their group was down with Asulkan heat!
The unfortunate member was ambushed! And although his arms he did flail,
He was right then conscripted to join the group on the down-bound Asulkan trail.
Overall then, the endings were happy and we came back alive and friends*,
Looking after each other and doing what we could in pursuit of our alpine ends.*

*ACCVI's motto is: (1) Come back alive; (2) Come back friends; (3) Respect the land; (4) Have fun; (5) Get to the top (in that order!)

- Friday: The weather changed, with rain, cooler temperatures, and a thunderstorm, too. Valley walks were the order of the day.
- Saturday: Cedric led a group from the Visitor Centre in Rogers Pass to Balu Pass. The smoke was largely gone by then and it was a fabulous day for hiking, with stunning views from the pass. On the way back we happened upon a marmot on the trail, and had the totally unexpected experience of watching her nurse one of her pups right there in front of us. Back at the Wheeler Hut, Mike and Becky saw a young grizzly on the road right outside the hut! Later, during the traditional evening last-night party, Bryan and Cedric sang “I Gotta Get a Woman with a Chain Saw” and then Ian gave the most amazing juggling demonstration with red glow-balls in the darkened room. And finally Mike recited “The Ballad of Idwall Slabs” to great peals of laughter.



Lise, Mike, and Leona at Balu Pass. (Photo by Cedric Zala)

Thanks so much to everyone who attended. It was a shame that some people had to leave early due to smoke and other happenstances that arose at the last minute. I’m particularly grateful that the group pulled together so willingly at the start of the trip, when my van broke down and the organization of the trip threatened to come apart at the seams. But people enthusiastically got involved and the camp went off very well.

Participants: Bruce Batchelor, Ian Brown, Janine Buckley, Scott Collins, Nikki Ducharme, Lise Gagnon, Mike Hubbard, Abe Johnson, Chad Katunar, Fred Katunar, Bryan Kingsfield, Cheryl Milne, Russ Moir, Lynne Moorhouse, Sylvia Moser, Becky Noble, Roger Painter, Bruce Patterson, Shaun Peck, Siobhan Wagner, Leona Winstone, and Cedric Zala

Recommendations: Books and films about nature, wildlife or mountaineering.

Compiled by Janelle Curtis

Members have a list of recommended films, books, and presentations. Here is what they suggested...

Barb Baker recommended a video:

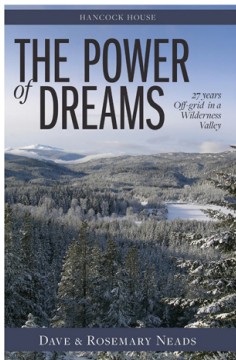
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XG_ZcZMrPM

A New Way Up with Fabi Buhl, Will Sim, and Jake Holland

24 minutes on YouTube



Heather Kellerhals recommended two books:

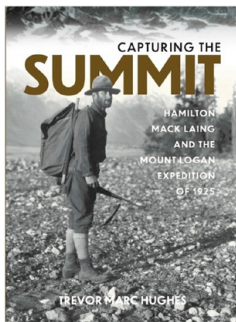


The Power of Dreams, 27 years off-grid in a wilderness valley

Written by Dave and Rosemary Neads.

Published in 2022 by Hancock House.

This is "for anyone interested in the Chilcotin area of BC, this book could be especially interesting.



Capturing the summit, Hamilton Mack Laing and the Mt. Logan Expedition of 1925.

Written by Trevor Marc Hughes

Published by Ronsdale Press.

This is really two books in one - the actual climb of Mount Logan and the scientific work done by Hamilton Mack Laing.

You might also be interested in this video about avalanche risk:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHVSseqzI1vU>

The Banff Centre Mountain Film Festival

By Laura Darling

ACCVI will be screening films from the
Oct-Nov 2023 Banff Centre Mountain Film Festival (BCMFF) on

Sunday January 28, 2024

at the Farquhar Auditorium at the University of Victoria (UVic)



Watch for announcements in late autumn:



on the *ACCVI website* at:

<https://ACCVI.ca/>

(see the "[Trips & Events](#)" page)



on the *Farquhar ticket office website* at:

<https://www.uvic.ca/farquhar/ticket-centre/index.php>

(see the events listed under "What's New")

Portrait View: First Nation Liaison

By Geoff Bennett

Editor's note: The Portrait View column in our ACCVI Island Bushwhacker Newsletter focuses on the many and varied contributions of folks on the list of ACCVI Executive Members and Coordinators who contribute to our mountaineering community's activities.

My first personal contact with Vancouver Island First Nations happened fourteen years ago. I asked Jason Hunt of the Kwagiulth Nation to carve a big paddle for me. Jason is a member of the famous Hunt family of Indigenous artists. Sometimes, if the moment was right, he would share insights into his culture as well as issues affecting his Port Hardy community.



Geoff Bennett and Chief Gizhii Manitou Gaamik in 2016. (Photo courtesy of eVeritas)



Canoe Arrival in Kingston in 2016. (Photo courtesy of eVeritas)

I used the paddle to steer a 36' canoe with a crew of 16 on fundraising trips from Ottawa to Kingston. On the fifth and final trip in 2016, Chief Gizhii Manitou Gaamik of the Eabametoong Nation, along with twenty youth from the Indigenous Leadership program at Royal Military College (RMC), greeted us with a smudge and drumming ceremony on our arrival. I acknowledged that we had travelled from the lands of the Anishinaabe to those of the Haudenosaunee. Around my neck I wore the "hand of the hunter," a gift from a member of the Métis Nation. In return we brought funds for sports at RMC. The whole experience was novel and exhilarating.

Earlier in 2016, the Warrior Youth of the Ucluelet Nation requested a grant from the Memorial Fund, which I administer. The ACCVI executive approved funds for them to buy rock climbing gear and so began our relationship with First Nations. From the beginning, we worked with Ricardo Manmohan, who mentors Indigenous youth on the island and all across BC.

In 2018, ACCVI member Brianna and friends ran a rappelling workshop with Indigenous youth in the Tofino area. A few months later I formed a First Nations (FN) Liaison subcommittee. Over a dozen volunteers signed up. COVID stopped us in 2020 but it was exciting for a while. It wasn't easy, though, especially if you ask those who scouted Effingham Inlet for climbing venues.



*ACCVI and Warrior Youth in Toquaht Territory in 2018.
(Photo by Ricardo Manmohan)*

In the meantime, Chris Jensen, Chris Ruttan, and many others were building a hut on the flank of 5040 Peak. They involved First Nations from the beginning. In fact, the provincial government insisted on Indigenous support of the project. The full story has been told in several [Island Bushwacker Newsletter](#) articles, as well as in the [ACC State of the Mountains](#), [Ha-Shilth-Sa](#), and [Backcountry Magazine](#).

In Chris's words, "*The ridges of 5040 Peak form the boundaries of several large watersheds. Therefore, they also form the natural boundaries for at least six First Nations including Ucluelet, Toquaht, Tla-o-qui-aht, Tse-shaht, Hupačasath and Uchucklesaht. Like the hub of a wheel, 5040 Peak is a special nexus and an ideal location to bring together youth from the region. I do not know if there is a better single viewpoint than the summit of 5040 Peak to observe and appreciate the traditional territories of so many First Nations.*"

Chris and his team worked closely with those First Nations but there was one challenge which eluded him – a name for the hut. The elders couldn't agree. So, Chris asked me if the Warrior Youth could accomplish something their elders couldn't. And indeed, they did. The story of their gift of the name Hišim̓yawīł has been told many times. It's pronounced Hish-IM-ya-width, the same number of syllables as Fifty-Forty but more meaningful. The Nuu-chah-nulth name means "gather together." "Hish" is the sound made by a pod of humpback whales when eating herring and by humans when eating herring roe at a feast.

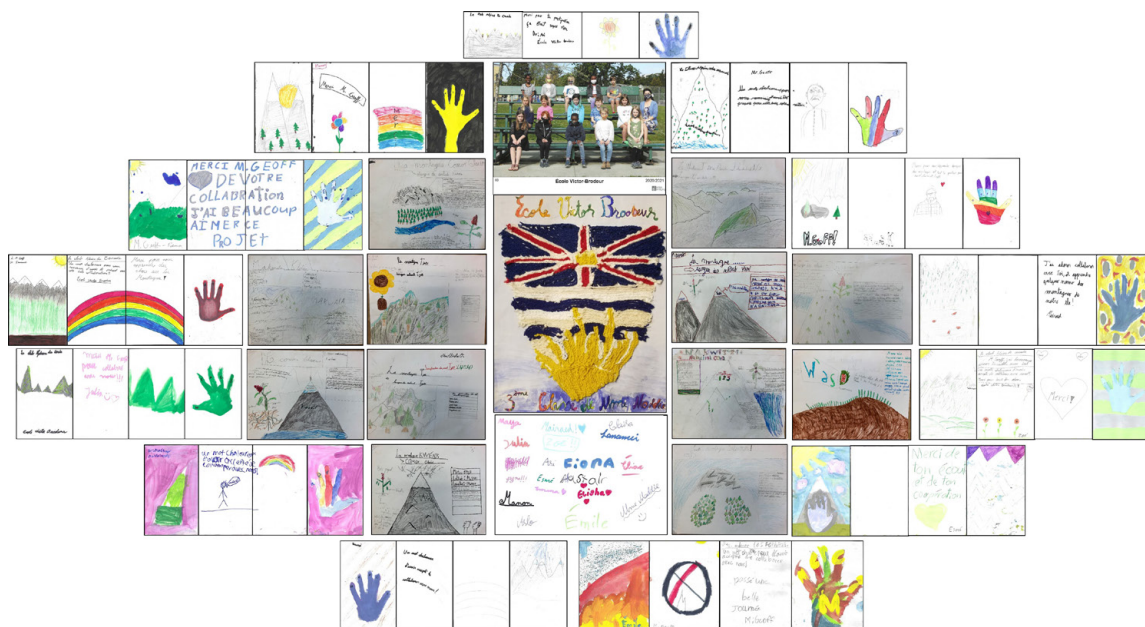
On October 5th 2019, the Warrior Youth gave the name to the hut in a ceremony attended by many ACCVI youth and adult members. Mike Hubbard described the scene in the [Island Bushwacker Newsletter - Winter 2019-20 Issue, page 17](#).

Some of those youth wore boots and other mountain equipment donated by ACCVI members. This ongoing project has been running for five years and provides gear to Indigenous youth in the Tofino and Zeballos (Ehatis) areas.



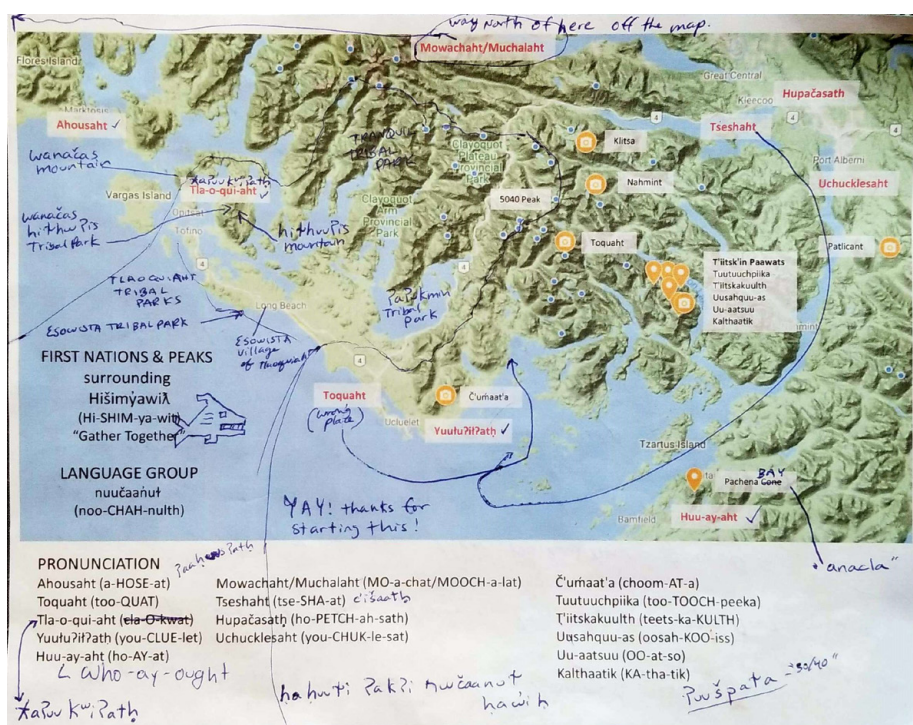
In the middle of the dreary COVID years we received a welcome request from École Victor Brodeur in Esquimalt to help a third-grade class research Indigenous names of Vancouver Island mountains. Lindsay Elms, Mary Sanseverino, and I collaborated on the project and produced an [interactive map](#) of 430 mountains over 1000m, of which about 70 have Indigenous names. Interestingly, only a few of those names were proposed by Indigenous people themselves. However, when we asked a few people for more names, we found a reluctance to share information or even to reply.

This is a larger issue than mere names of mountains. We have inherited the legacy of a difficult history. There is an ingrained “colonial” habit of taking without giving that has led to mistrust. The challenge for us is to win back trust.



Children's Cards from École Victor Brodeur in 2021. (Photo by Geoff Bennett)

As part of our relationship with First Nations, we offer two free weekends per year at Hišim'yawił. Mary and I were the hut custodians in August 2021 when an Indigenous group of seven arrived. The rather frosty initial encounter is described in the [Island Bushwacker Newsletter Autumn 2021 Issue on page 12](#). We fielded questions such as “Who gave you permission to build this hut on our traditional territory?” Luckily, we knew the history. After things settled down, we talked about our mapping project. I pulled out a paper copy of the Tofino area and asked one of them to annotate it. “May I?” she asked, a bit incredulously. After writing all over it, she wrote “Yay! Thanks for starting this!”



2021 annotated Map of First Nations and Peaks surrounding Hišim'yawił. (Photo by Geoff Bennett)

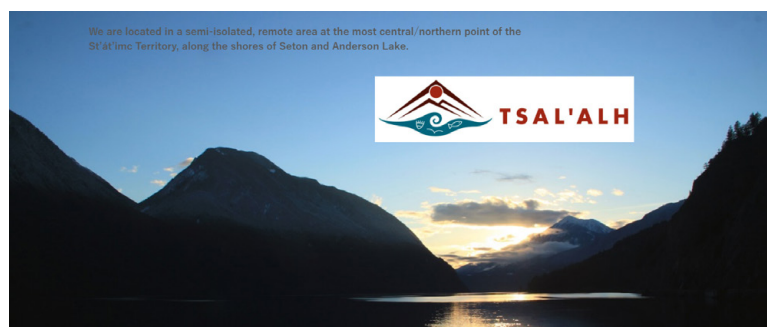
In the original support documents for the hut, we agreed to erect a couple of trail signs to welcome people to traditional First Nation territories. EJ Hurst and I visited three First Nation Directors last year to get this project underway. Getting agreement on wording is the first step and, as you might imagine, this is taking more time than we thought. We are learning that long-term in-person relationships are crucial, as well as “give and take.”

In the spring of 2023, we were pleased to offer a Memorial Fund Youth Grant to Kyle Smith from the Ehattesaht Nation at Ehatis near Zeballos. Under supervision, he will design and bolt a climbing route on a local crag. Kyle may also be the first Indigenous person to join ACCVI. Around the same time, the Ehattesaht Nation asked the Alpine Club of Canada for assistance to build an indoor climbing wall. Several ACCVI members have made generous donations.



Ehat's Crag in 2023. (Photo by Julia Simmerling)

In this era of “reconciliation” we face new situations and challenges, not all of which go the way we might like. In 2022 the first group to fly to ACCVI’s Soprano Peak summer camp was approached by an Indigenous person who asked to know what they were doing. This was handled diplomatically and the camp continued. After the 2023 Bendor camp location was announced in March 2023, I was asked to alert local First Nations. There are three in the area and several settlements close by. The Xwísten didn’t respond. The N’quatqua said OK, but then it transpired that the camp was not on their territory. Finally, the chief and council of the Tsal’alh Nation wrote a polite letter expressing their concerns about wildlife, helicopters, and other issues. They would not support our camp. We tried three times over the phone to persuade them but to no avail. The ACCVI executive had a spirited debate about “rights” and in the end they voted to move the camp to Athelney Pass and to request a government permit. However, time ran out and unfortunately ACCVI’s 2023 helicopter fly-in summer camp was cancelled. The lesson learned for the future is to apply for a permit one year in advance through [Front Counter BC](#). They contact local First Nations as part of the process. This is the procedure that ACC National has followed for their camps in BC.



Tsal'Alh First Nation.

In the Alpine Club of Canada, we view ourselves as stewards of the mountain environment. However, most of us are relative newcomers to BC. Given the history of the past two hundred years, we should respect those who have lived here for thousands of years. We are now, finally, trying to reach out and do the right thing. Nevertheless, during this “early contact” time we may be challenged to understand each other, to accept our differences and to listen without judgment. This may take a while but we’re learning. I’m enjoying the journey. ***Please join us on the trail.***

ACCVI History

By Lindsay Elms

The section's history webpage has been updated to include the years 1940 to 1949. Read newspaper articles about the section, Strathcona Park, and Forbidden Plateau during a tumultuous period when the world was at war. In 1942, the section went on hiatus and didn't reestablish itself until November 1945. During these years a splinter group broke off and formed the Outdoor Club of Victoria taking with it many members who were more interested in hiking than climbing.



Ski jumping on Forbidden Plateau in 1948 (Photo by Harry Dougan)

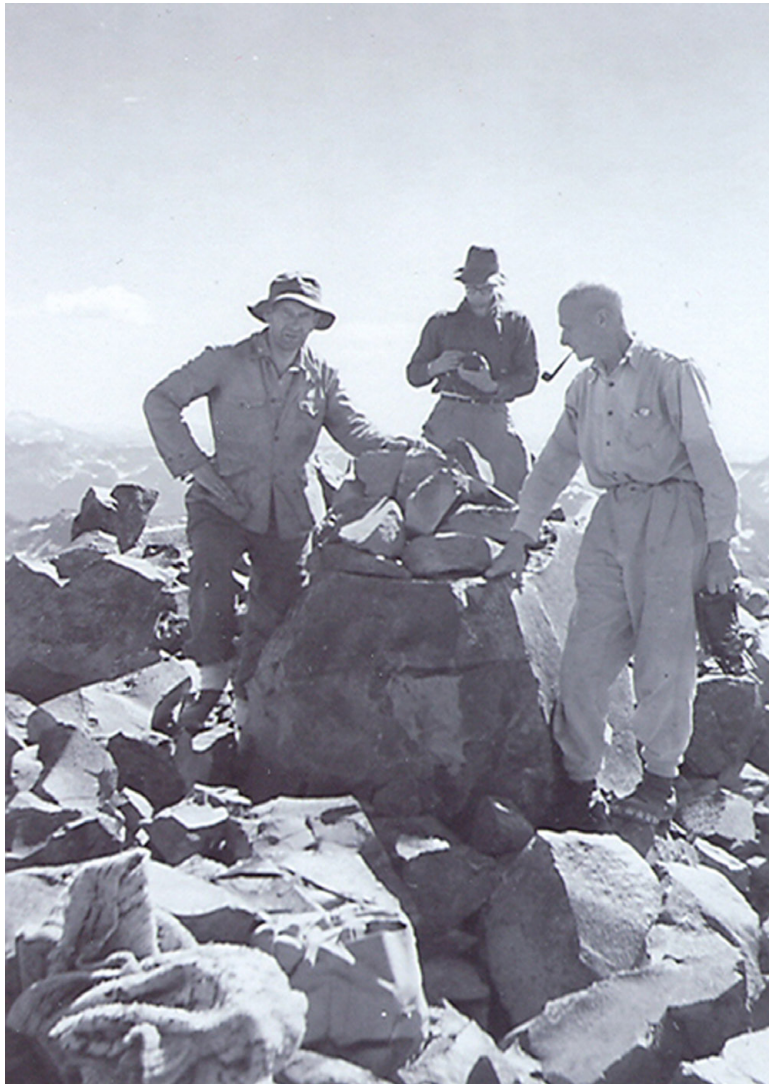
With the section reestablished, members started attending the General Mountaineering Camps (GMC's) in the Rockies again and skiing on Forbidden Plateau became immensely popular with a bus service being provided from Victoria on weekends.

Social events started up again with guests (Don and Phyllis Munday, George Kinney, Rex Gibson and Noel Odell) giving talks to the section and the annual banquet in the spring was eagerly anticipated. There were two significant mountain trips of interest. The first was in 1947 when Ralph Rosseau undertook a solo trip from great Central lake to Rees ridge and the Aureole Snowfield and back. Ascents included Mount Septimus, Argus Mountain, Comox Glacier, Tzela Mountain, The Red Pillar, Iceberg Peak and Mount Celeste, several of which were most likely first ascents.

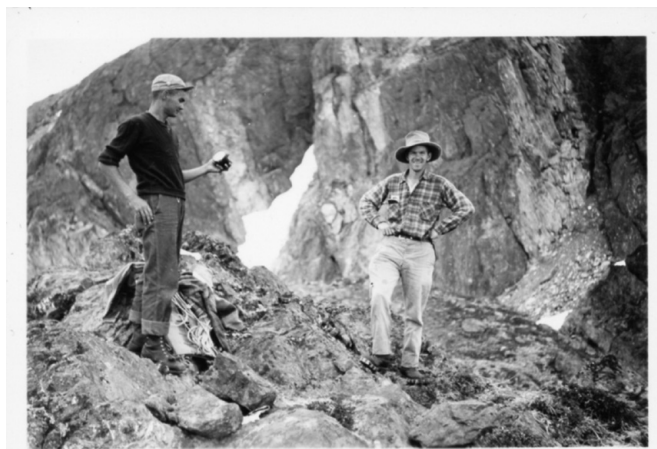


*Ralph Rosseau on Mount Arrowsmith
(Photo courtesy of Louise Eck)*

The second was the second ascent of Elkhorn Mountain in 1949 by Geoffrey Capes, Bill and Mallory Lash, Charlie Nash and Phil Wolstenholmes.



Geoffrey Capes, and Bill and Mallory Lash on the summit of Elkhorn Mountain in 1949 (Photo by Charlie Nash)



Roger Whitmee Jr. and Harry Dougan on the Golden Hinde in the late 1940's. (Photo by Harry Dougan)

ACCVI History - A Hiatus from 1942-1945

By Lindsay Elms

Editor's note: Lindsay Elms posted about this ACCVI hiatus on the [ACCVI Facebook Page](#) on 16 July 2023.

Between 1942 and November 1945 the ACCVI was on hiatus (disbanded) due to the war. Recently I received an email from Chic Scott with an edited letter regarding the section and what it was planning during the time. It is interesting to read about the direction some of the section members wanted to move towards - a hiking club and not climbing. In a letter to Herbert Sampson [past president of ACC] from Arthur Wheeler regarding the future of the ACCVI and problems they were having within the section he wrote:

For more than a year there has been trouble in the Vancouver Island Section of the Club, which has been altogether detrimental to its effectiveness. We decided to take radical action and clear it up, so called a general meeting for Saturday ??? 21, 1942. We met and, after discussion, a resolution to disband was voted upon with a majority of 20 to 5 in favour of such action. The Vancouver Island Section then ceased to exist. The same evening a number of the old members drove out to Sidney and held a meeting at our house. It was decided to form a provisional section, to be named "Victoria Section of the Alpine Club of Canada". All present, some twelve in number, signed an undertaking to join as members of a provisional section. By unanimous vote I was appointed provisional chairman and Mr. Fred W. Maurice provisional secretary. The formation of a newly named section is, of course, subject to the approval and consent of the club. Will you please secure this for us at the earliest possible date, so that we may continue full organization of a Victoria Section ... I may add that the two principal causes of trouble were: A certain number objected to paying the Alpine Club of Canada dues of \$5.00 in addition to Section dues of \$2.00, but desired to continue with the Section and participate in the name and prestige of the Club. Others did not want to climb, but wanted a purely hiking concern, and so on to make trouble.

Yours most truly,

*Arthur O. Wheeler
Chairman provisional Victoria Section*

Eric Brooks, the president of the club, didn't know how to deal with this and was reluctant to recognize the new section. Many letters went back and forth but it is unclear how the difficulty was resolved and it wasn't until 1946 that an active Vancouver Island Section reappears.



Our First Years

Reported in the 50th Anniversary, Outdoor Club of Victoria, 1942 – 1992.

By Ruth Clay

The Outdoor Club began as a breakaway group of the Victoria section of the Alpine Club of Canada. People hiked with the Alpine Club in the 1930's and did some technical climbing but the breakaway group wanted more local hiking and on a regular basis. Alternate Sundays were chosen and the system worked very well. So well, in fact, that a meeting was called by Thomas Goodlake for March 7, 1942, and the Outdoor Club was officially born. The first meeting of the Club began with a mere telephone list and the eight people who were present at the meeting were Shirley Bastin, (at whose house they met), Katherine Capes, George and Thomas Goodlake, Ruth Griffith, Hope Hodges, Gordon Turner and Joan (Hall) Williams. The object of the Club was, "The Club is for people interested in the outdoors for hiking and for other side interests such as nature studies and biking parties. During the war years many members joined the forces and left town. Those dedicated members who kept the Club operational were Thomas Goodlake, Stephanie (Bowes) Manson, Bill Mathews and Elizabeth Thorneycroft. They and others kept in touch with the far-flung members, sending out copies of the "Groundsheet". Transportation was a problem, during those years, so trips were planned by bus service and with the use of Thomas Goodlake's 4-seater yellow convertible "The Banana". On occasion it was proved this vehicle could carry more than ten people. Gas rationing did not help this situation. Using buses meant that many mountains were climbed in the area surrounding Victoria. Interesting points from those early years were:

The Groundsheet was mailed for one cent per copy.

Good boots cost up to \$10.

Monthly meetings were held in private homes.

A MOUNTAIN OF ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITY!

The Vancouver Island Mountain Sports Society (VIMSS), are offering to either sell their owned and operated, Vancouver Island Mountain Centre, to a single entity or to a consortium (for \$700,000; it needs to be a not-for-profit with similar goals to VIMSS to realize the 2 million dollar discount in price), or choose a variety of scenarios on a operation only model. The Vancouver Island Mountain Centre facility, which opened in 2011, is located on Mount Washington across from the Nordic lodge at the entrance to Strathcona Park. It is a beautiful 40 bed dorm style accommodation with kitchen, large meeting rooms, fitness facilities, offices, drying room etc. The VIMSS is a mountain multi-sport society, providing programs and services in the mountain environment for families and youth educational and mountain sport groups.

Possibilities for the opportunity could be in the form of a collective purchase and/or a sub contractor organization to staff and program the Vancouver Island Mountain Centre.

Do you have interest in seeing this facility thrive for outdoor education and mountain sport programs?

For more information, any interested parties in the sale or operation of the facility contact Gord Campbell, Chair of VIMSS at camgor@telus.net

ACCVI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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chair@accvi.ca

Past Chair

Catrin Brown

pastchair@accvi.ca

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newsletter@accvi.ca

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David Sutill

secretary@accvi.ca

Treasurer

Garth Stewart

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vacant

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Access and Environment

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Martin Hofmann

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More about Hišimýawił [here](#)

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Island Bushwhacker Annual

Janelle Curtis

bushwhacker@accvi.ca

Kids and Youth Program

vacant

kidsandyouth@accvi.ca

Schedule

Karun Thanjuvar

schedule@accvi.ca

If you're a trip leader who wants to put a trip on the [schedule](#), email Karun at schedule@accvi.ca

Website

Jane Maduke (stepping down after 2023)

Evan Devault

webmaster@accvi.ca

Membership

Josh Slatkoff

membership@accvi.ca

Executive Member at Large

Deniz Naydin

Emily Port

Gordon Kyle

If you're a trip leader who wants to check if the people coming on your trips are members, email Josh at membership@accvi.ca

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Erich Schellhammer

gear@accvi.ca

If you live on the north island:

Valerie Wootton

Lindsay Elms

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Sue Castle (Hospitality)

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Valerie Wootton

comoxlakegate@accvi.ca

Ash Valley Gate Key Custodian

Barb Baker

ashvalleygate@accvi.ca

Hišimýawił

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Roanne English (Reservations)

EJ Hurst (Committee Member)

Keith Battersby (Committee Member)

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Summer Camp Committee

Laura Darling

Jeff Beddoes

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Environment Committee

Please contact David Lemon at chair@accvi.ca if you are interested in helping to look at ways to minimize the club's environmental impact.





***From the Front Cover:
Spirit sticks flying on Mariner Mountain.
Photo by Quentin Thomas***

Thank you to this month's contributors:

Barb Baker, Geoff Bennett, Janelle Curtis, Laura Darling, Lindsay Elms, Laurel Mitchell-Frost, Christine Fordham, David Lemon, Heather Kellerhals, Bianca Parcher, Quentin Thomas, Eryn Tombu-Haigh, Amy Tunstall, Liz Williams, and Cedric Zala.

Well done everyone!



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