

Island Bushwhacker

Volume 48 | Issue 1 | Spring 2020



Stefan Gessinger starting up the face of Mount Rosseau

Photo by Evan Devault

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. Doors open at 7:00 pm and the show starts at 7:30 pm.

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.

www.alpineclubofcanada.ca

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

Annual Membership Dues

Single \$53 Family \$75 Youth (19 and under) \$38

The Island Bushwhacker Newsletter is published in March, June, September, and December. In other months, the **High Points Bulletin** summarizes events and key announcements for the section.

Newsletter Editor: Janelle Curtis

High Points Editor: Anya Reid

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

Slideshow, 12 March. [The First Conquest of Mt. Logan, Yukon May-June 1925](#). Join our club historian, Lindsay Elms, to view the film about a classic historical event in the history of Canadian mountaineering.

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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 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.



Upcoming Slideshows, Presentations, Meetings and Get-togethers

Film, Thursday 12 March. [The First Conquest of Mt. Logan, Yukon May-June 1925](#)

Join our club historian, Lindsay Elms to view a classic historical event in the history of Canadian mountaineering.

Filmed by Hamilton Mack Laing (National Museum of Canada) and Allan Carpe (American Alpine Club), this joint Canadian Alpine Club/American Alpine Club expedition tackled Mt. Logan, the highest peak in Canada at 19,551 ft/5959 m. The group walked in 110 miles to the icefields with 10 packhorses and 8700 lbs of provisions, then travelled another 100 miles to the top, all the while enduring an exceptionally cold winter with a large snowfall, wearing the heavy woollen and canvas clothing of the day. Can you imagine the toughness of these men?!! Well come and see for yourselves.

Victoria Slideshows are at Swan Lake Nature House at 3873 Swan Lake Road. Doors open at 7:00 pm, the show starts at 7:30 pm. Goodies and tea are available by donation. New members, friends, and family are always most welcome. We look forward to seeing you there!

NEW IN 2020!

ACCVI is hosting **Amazing Alpine People & Places: Community Events** at [The Network Hub - Nanaimo](#) (at 256 Wallace Street in Nanaimo) mid-month starting April 2020. Anticipate presentations, mingling, family and a kid-friendly atmosphere. Coffee & tea service provided. BYO all other food & drink (everything welcome). Entry by donation. All adventurers welcome - you do not need to be an ACCVI member! Pet-friendly venue. RSVP is requested due to limited seating (Please RSVP on event specific links). Doors open at 6 p.m.

AMAZING PRESENTATIONS ALREADY LINED UP:

Duogong: The inaugural ACCVI Family Camp!

Beyond the Gate: Inside Scoop on Backcountry Access

Epic Pacific Adventure: One man's journey from Mexico to magical BC.



Visit these websites for dates & details: accvi.ca/trips/calendar-view-of-trip-schedule/; thenetworkhub-nanaimo.eventbrite.com/. Please email nanaimo@thenetworkhub.ca or call Angie on 250-591-8847 if you are available to Co-host/Present an upcoming event or wish to collaborate to make these events even better!

Upcoming Trips

Full information for all trips is located online on the [ACCVI Trip Schedule](#).

Click trip titles for links to more information.

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

| Date | Event |
|-------------------------|--|
| March 7-8 2020 | Intro to Winter Camping Workshop (Waitlist is full) |
| March 7 2020 | Mt. Becher ski touring (B2) |
| March 8 2020 | Gowlland Tod Park (C1) |
| March 15 2020 | ICA Youth Snowshoe (A1) |
| March 16-18 2020 | Spearhead Ski Traverse (C4) |
| March 21-28 2020 | Campbell Icefield chalet |
| April 4 2020 | Rosseau Chute (Mt. Cokely) ski tour (B2) |
| April 25 2020 | Crevasse Rescue |
| May 2-3 2020 | Jagged Mountain (C3) |
| May 4 2020 | Intro to Rock Climbing Workshop – Evening Classroom Session |
| May 25- June 5 2020 | St Elias Ski Camp (A2-D5) |
| June 12-14 2020 | Intro to Rock Climbing Course / Workshop – Weekend at the Crag |
| June 12-15 2020 | Mt. Rainier via Disappointment Cleaver - Full/Wait Listing |
| July 12 - August 9 2020 | ACCVI Summer Camp 2020 |
| August 1-15 2020 | Hiking the Long Range Mountains of Newfoundland (C3) |

After our very successful joint snowshoe trip last winter with youth from the **Intercultural Association (ICA)** in Victoria, plans are again afoot for a ICA Youth Snowshoe on Sunday March 15 2020. Catrin and I are co-leading this outing, and it has been posted on the trip schedule.

We have 20 youth signed up (at last count, numbers may vary a bit), and are looking for five or six ACC-VI volunteers to help us during the outing. This would involve snowshoeing with a subgroup of 4 or 5 youth, so that all of them will feel supported, and we will get to know all of them at the same time.

In order to make the sign-up logistics easier, I have set up an editable Google sheet at:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1DMQJvK8UcFt00H7M8wtT0k8D4x3RTRdP0XTkUkbyInM/edit?usp=sharing>

You should be able to access and add your name even if you do not have or use a Google account. Please also let us know if you have snowshoes (extra pairs too), and whether you can offer or need a ride. Once I have a confirmed list of volunteers, I will email you separately with more trip details and plans.

Thanks in advance for your participation, any help you may offer is much appreciated.

Happy trails, Karun (karun@uvic.ca)

Mountain Education

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. 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 else you would like to see? Contact education@accvi.ca*

| Date | Education Event |
|-----------------|--|
| March 7-8 2020 | <u>Intro to Winter Camping Workshop</u> <u>(Workshop and waitlist are full)</u> |
| April 25 2020 | <u>Crevasse Rescue</u> |
| May 4 2020 | <u>Intro to Rock Climbing Workshop - Evening Classroom</u> |
| June 12-14 2020 | <u>Intro to Rock Climbing Course and Workshop – Weekend at the Crag</u> |

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



*Morning view of Triple Peak. Photo by Kara Aschenbrenner, submitted to ACCVI's 2019 photo competition
Vancouver Island Category*

Executive Episodes:

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

And they're off

The year had barely opened its sleepy eyes in the midst of winter, when two of our intrepid members, Stefan Gessinger and Evan DeVault, were out there again pushing the boundaries of what can be achieved on Vancouver Island. And their eyes may well have been sleepy too - that is after their 23 hour climb of Mount Rosseau by the southwest face. It's another wonderful tale of passion, endurance and some of the best vistas in Strathcona Park - yours to enjoy on our Facebook page. Congratulations Stefan and Evan!



Traversing over to the bottom of the climb. Photo by Evan DeVault

The North Face Winter Leadership course

Congratulations to Gary Croome and Derek Sou who were selected to attend the national club's winter leadership course in January. Both of them returned speaking enthusiastically about the depth of the learning experience from some of the country's most senior guides, as well as the depth of the powder at Fairy Meadows!

AGM weekend - number 8 in the series!

Yes, it was seven years ago that we first booked the newly opened Vancouver Island Mountain Centre at Mt Washington Alpine resort for a full weekend of activities around our AGM. In the spirit of “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it”, we have repeated the formula every year since.

From February 7th - 9th 2020 a good cross -section of our membership converged to fill every available bed at the Centre, with thanks to Brianna Coates’ organisation. Peter Gilbert, Martin Hofmann, Gary Croome, Keith Battersby, Josh Slatkoff and our education team all helped facilitate and lead a wealth of courses, workshops and trips during the weekend. Snow conditions were quite good, and as the weather brightened up over the two days, several ascents of the local peaks (aka bumps) were made.



A beautiful morning from VIMC and on the ski hill. Photos by Catrin Brown

A large potluck dinner preceded the Annual General Meeting, with its opportunity for the executive to share their activities of the year with the membership. Of special note is that the first full year of operation of our hut, Hišimýawił, has been a huge success with bookings above what was predicted, happily balancing the bottom line. Our hut champion’s optimism from the conception of the project is borne out. The draft minutes of the AGM are available on our website [here](#).

Updates from executive meetings:

Since the last newsletter, the executive has made a few decisions that may be of interest:

- **Photo contest trophies**

It is recognised that the time has come to put our giant trophies out to grass, or some such place (offers anyone?). Much as we appreciate the history in all the names on these monstrosities, it seems no one really wants to take one home for a year, and they may even act as a disincentive to competition. So, from next year the photo contest winners will instead be given a gift token to one of the outdoor equipment retailers. That should up the ante of your photographic composites this year.

- **Gear update**

Avalanche transceivers in our equipment stock, the Arva Evos, have been found to be seriously lacking in range compared to newer models. Thanks to a very good deal brokered by Mike Hubbard, we have now updated our stock with a set of 10 Mammut Barryvox Element units.



8 of these are available to rent from Mike Hubbard in Saanichton: gear@accvi.ca

A further 2 sets of avalanche gear (transceiver, shovel and probe) are available to rent at our new up-Island store, chez Lindsay Elms and Val Wootton in Courtenay: gear.north@accvi.ca. Many thanks to Lindsay and Val for taking on this role.

- **Annual donations**

At the end of the year, we were able to distribute approximately \$5000 to organisations that we feel are well aligned with our mission in advocating for the backcountry environment on Vancouver Island. The details of the organisations we selected were shared by email and are given on our website here. We are always interested to hear your ideas of worthy recipients for our charitable dollars, so please share your thoughts with us.

Island Bushwhacker 2019

Our Bushwhacker editor Rob Macdonald is busy compiling the submissions received for the expected publication of our Annual later in the year. As last year, Rob again plans to produce a print version, which is mostly black and white, as well as an online version which will have all photographs in full colour.

Every member is entitled to receive a hard copy of the journal as part of the membership fee. We are aware though that some folk prefer to read the online version, so in an effort to avoid waste and redundancy, we will be sending a mailout to the membership for you to select your option. Please note this year the receipt of the print version will be by OPT-IN, not by opt-out as last year. So don't ignore the email message when it comes if you want a hard copy!

Sooke Hills

As members in the south island will know, the CRD is working on a long-term project to open both the Sea to Sea Regional Park and the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park to the public. Several of us have attended workshops on these developments, and I received the following report in January:

“I'm happy to say that the Lakes Section of the Sea to Sea Regional Park is now officially open. Some of the major accomplishments that have gone into opening the Lakes Section include:

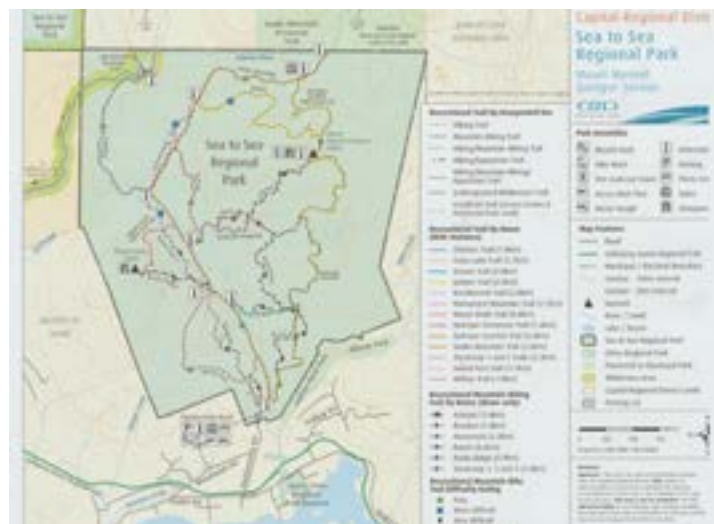
- A new multi-use aluminum bridge across Charters River to link the Mount Manuel Quimper Section to the Lakes Section
- New wooden bridges constructed on the Grass Lake Trail, the Peden Lake Trail, and on the Lakes Connector Trail
- A wooden staircase over the flowline on the Peden Lake Trail
- Removal of the old cabin at Peden Lake and rehabilitation of the site
- Trail maintenance on many of the Lakes Section official trails including vegetation brushing, hazard tree management, and erosion control
- Installation of park signs and directional maps on official park trails
- Removal of old fencing and gates on the Grass Lake Trail near the Charters Reservoir

Through time, we will continue to make minor improvements to the Lakes Section, in accordance with its classification as a regional wilderness area. We will provide an official trail link to the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park when it opens later this year, and eventually we may add a few additional trails to key destinations that aren't included in the official trail system now.



We are also making good progress with Sooke Hills Wilderness and anticipate that the park will be ready for opening this fall. Some of the activities we are currently engaged in include:

- Finalizing a detailed design for a new highway access road and parking lot (with a washroom) at the southern edge of Sooke Hills Wilderness. We are near to issuing a construction tender and hope to start construction by late spring. Park visitors will see activity starting soon, including felling designated trees to make space for the parking lot, and creating a temporary bypass trail from the highway to near Veitch Creek during construction. We want to remind you to please follow any posted safety instructions and to watch for construction updates as this project progresses. The end result will be an attractive, safe and welcoming gateway for our Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park visitors.
- Plans are also underway to install a new aluminum bridge across Veitch Creek, tied to the development of the parking lot. Visitors will see some upgrades being made to the trail between the parking lot and Veitch Creek over the coming months in preparation for the bridge installation later this year. This trail will be subject to temporary closures during work periods to ensure public safety; closure notifications will be posted on-site and on the CRD website.



- Development of an official trail plan. We are almost there, but still have some final alignments to determine based on input we've received from our stakeholders, our capacity to maintain the trail system, known environmental sensitivities and topographic constraints, and the desired visitor experience.
- Conversations with members of the newly formed South Island Climbers Association (SICA) about rock climbing in the park, and with the Coexisting with Carnivores group and university researchers about large carnivore habitat needs and known bird nesting sites.

- Contact with the Scia'new (Beecher Bay) First Nation about their interests in the park.

We will strive to manage and maintain both parks as regional wilderness areas for the benefit of nature and people. We want to ensure that the parks continue to provide a safe haven for large carnivores and the species and habitats they depend on; and we want to acknowledge that a changing climate, increased visitor use, and rapid urbanization will impact the parks in ways we can't yet predict. In this spirit, I hope we will all work together to ensure a vibrant and viable future for Sea to Sea and Sooke Hills Wilderness regional parks."

I am aware that many of our members are following these developments closely and may have thoughts they wish to share with the CRD. I would be happy to pass on any such messages or encourage you to do so directly.

Jamie Duncan 1963 - 2020

With a heavy heart I share the very sad news of the sudden death of Jamie while skiing in Japan with friends from the club in January. The following message was given to his family for the memorial service in Victoria on 9 February:

On behalf of the Alpine Club of Canada Vancouver Island section, I am sending our deepest condolences on this tragic and sudden loss.

Jamie was a well loved and respected member of our community over many years. He was a steadfast friend and companion, who taught us a lot through his gracious spirit. He brought a high level of competence, good humour and enthusiasm to everything he undertook. His completion of the 'Island Qualifiers' Award' in 2008 is a testament to his achievements as a mountaineer.



*Jamie Duncan on
ACC Valhalla Lodge
trip.*

*Photo by George
Butcher*

Executive events

The ACC-VI executive met on 21 January 2020 and will meet again on 17 March. Please send me any items you would like to add to the agenda. Minutes of all meetings are posted on the website [here](#).

Happy trails

Catrin Brown

chair@accvi.ca

The SUMMER NORTH FACE LEADERSHIP CAMP

is ACC's flagship program for aspiring Section trip leaders and applications are now live! This is a great opportunity to get excellent Hands On Leadership skills for Summer Mountaineering. Apply now for the opportunity to receive a week of heavily subsidized leadership training based out of our ever-popular General Mountaineering Camp. The deadline to apply is 17 March 2020, so please get your applications in to the chair early as there are Section Endorsements etc. to be completed before the application is complete.

For more information, see:

https://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/WEB/Camps/Summer_Camps/TNF_Leadership_Summer.aspx



*5040 Morning Ski. Photo by Aldous Sperl submitted to ACCVI's 2019 photo competition
Vancouver Island Category*

Memorial fund Youth Grant Recipients

By Geoff Bennett

We're pleased to announce two successful applications for 2020 Memorial Fund Youth Grants:

Nick Noble (\$800) for a hike of the entire Vancouver Island Trail. You may recall that the ACCVI Section supported Isobel Glover in 2018 when she became one of the first to hike the entire trail. Nick has a new twist - he wishes to show that a diabetic can manage the rigours of the trip and he plans to make a film documentary of the adventure.

Vanessa Barr (\$200) to undertake a foraging expedition for wild plants in the alpine, in a rainforest and along the coast. Immediately following the trip, she and her hiking partner will transform the plants into a gourmet meal for friends and family. Along the way she hopes to connect with First Nations traditions and people and to make us more aware of these connections and our island environment.

This is the tenth anniversary of the ACCVI Youth Grant program. Over the years the Section has awarded \$9,875 to 13 projects. These have been made possible by the Memorial Fund and the Section, thanks to donations from many individuals. A brief summary of these youth projects and expeditions is listed on the accvi.ca website as well as biographies of many of our beloved members and friends in whose memory the donations have been made.

You can learn more about the Memorial Fund Youth Grant at:

<https://accvi.ca/programs/memorial-fund-youth-grants/>

2019 ACCVI Leadership Recognition Program Results!

By Natasha Salway

2019 was once again a very good year for our leadership recognition program. This program was created in 2015 to give our active ACCVI trip leaders a chance for some healthy competition throughout the year. We are thrilled to be able to give back to these dedicated individuals with gift certificates generously donated by Valhalla Pure Outfitters, as well as the top prize of an Arc'teryx softshell jacket for the leader with the most points at the end of the year!

Trip points are calculated at 1 point per day, up to a maximum of 5 points per trip. 0.5 points are awarded for social nights, slide shows, cancelled trips and trips that are on the schedule but no waivers were submitted. Reminder that for your trips to count at full value for this competition, you must submit your signed waivers to librarian@accvi.ca

This past year saw an unprecedented 3 ties in the top 4 places! Once again, two Arc'teryx Gamma Mx Jackets were awarded to our top two trip leaders of 2019.

Tied for 1st place: Colin Mann and Derek Sou.

Congratulations go out to both leaders for a great year! A huge thank you goes out to the Arc'teryx team for being so helpful and accommodating with their ongoing support of our leadership program.

This year we were lucky enough again to have the generous support provided by the three Vancouver

Island locations of Valhalla Pure Outfitters. (The Victoria, Nanaimo and Courtenay stores.) Each store donated \$150 worth of gift certificates to be given out as prizes for this program. A huge thank you goes out to each store for this gift! Please be sure to thank them if you were one of the lucky winners.

2nd place *Natasha Salway* \$100 Valhalla Pure Outfitters Gift Card

3rd place tie *Stefan Gessinger* and *Jes Scott* \$100 Valhalla Pure Outfitters Gift Card

4th place tie *Catrin Brown* and *Martin Hofmann* \$50 Valhalla Pure Outfitters Gift Card

Waiver draw winners (Draw for everyone else who submitted their waivers, not including the top leaders.)

***Peggy Taylor* \$25 Valhalla Pure Outfitters Gift Card**

***Andrew Pape-Salmon* \$25 Valhalla Pure Outfitters Gift Card**

***Erich Schellhammer* Mountain Hardwear Hat**

We also had the pleasure of handing out our very first ACC trip badge for 75 points to

Alois Schonenberger!

Congratulations to both Colin and Derek for earning the top spots of 2019! I also would like to personally thank each and every trip leader who continues to put trips up on the schedule. Trips are the lifeblood of our section and we truly value the time and energy that you put into running them! Thank you!

If you have questions about leading trips or our Mentorship Program, please email leadership@accvi.ca

The Leadership Recognition Program will continue in 2020 and some of our leaders are already off and running! Join in the fun! For more information, please visit the website:

<http://accvi.ca/trip-leaders/leader-recognition-program/>



Colin and Derek. Photo by Jes Scott



Jes, Natasha, Martin, and Catrin. Photo by Erica Ellefsen



Portrait View: Access and Environment

By Barb Baker

Editor's note: We have a new column in the ACCVI Island Bushwhacker Newsletter called "Portrait View." The intent of this column is to focus on the contributions of folks on the ACCVI Executive Committee who contribute to our mountaineering community's activities.

Access and Environment Explained:

Access and environment issues are a concern all over Vancouver Island and involve various levels of government and ownership. The island's forest lands are both public & privately owned. A brief sketch follows: On Crown lands, British Columbia Timber Sales (BCTS) is the harvesting arm of Forest Lands Natural Resource Operation (FLNRO) and administers much of the harvesting to Forest Range Practises Act (FRPA) regulations out of the Port Alberni office for South Island Natural Resources District (SIFD).

Western Forest Products WFP also operates on Crown land and complies with CSA Standards for much of their harvesting. They operate south of Port Alberni to Bamfield, in the north of Vancouver Island from Woss to beyond Port McNeil and on Nootka Island.

Some Crown land is otherwise allocated as in the case of Alberni Valley Community Forest (AVCF) who administer lands north of Sprout Lake Highway 4 and south including Klitsa and Adder Peaks. All of these will subcontract harvesting operations to smaller harvesting operations & road builders. Also, woodlots are assigned to groups or First Nations (FNs) and are managed within harvest regulations.

Island Timberlands and Timberwest, jointly administered by Mosaic Forest Management are OWNERS of forest land. Roughly, these lands lie east of the Ralph Line (Sooke to Crown Mt), Chemainus Main and north shore of Lake Cowichan, all lands around Port Alberni, both sides of the Beauforts, Comox Lake and the east accesses to Strathcona Park, Oyster River, etc.

As well, other owners or lessees control access as in the case of run of the river power projects like Haa-ak-suuk Ck project with Tla-o-qui-aht FN who control access to Clayoquot Plateau Provincial park. Another example: Strathcona Wilderness Resort straddles access to south Strathcona Park at Bedwell Sound. City, regional, & provincial governments all may be involved with the above operators on accesses and environment issues.

So, for all these governing bodies or landowners/lessees, the ACCVI Access and Environment person tries to establish and maintain personal contacts. Some of these span more than a decade of collaboration and dialogue. WFP meets several times a year with the public as is required by CSA standards. They keep us informed where their operations may impact the Vancouver Island Trail as an example. Mosaic engineers have continued a long-established annual discussion with views of their maps of current and upcoming harvest plans. Their community liaison person rapidly responds to concerns or complaints. ACCVI has a long relationship with them. The AVCF director is a strong supporter of recreational uses of their lands and actively works on maintaining communication with us on road access and trails. He is currently working with Recreation Trails & Sites of BC (RSTBC) to authorize some of their trails. The Alberni Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) has partnered with locals and forestry companies on the Inlet Trail & Vancouver Island Trail. Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) have been very cooperative over years of negotiating and acquiring management of Mount Arrowsmith Massif Park and the Arrowsmith CPR Trail, just a fraction of lands they oversee including Mt. Benson. Many conversations with FLNRO on resource road accesses are ongoing. We have had exchanges with Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) with their accesses to east Strathcona Park and the Gulf Islands. The

supervisor of Strathcona Park is someone with whom we correspond. Our MLA has met with us on several occasions and has tried at the provincial government level to promote public access. A partnership established some years ago with FNs has continued. Often these meetings include other local activists. To cite an example of how these contacts work, FMCBC had a question about Nootka Island Trail maintenance. Working with the CEO of the forest company, the information went back to the inquiring party and at the same time, the profile of the trail was raised with the company. Another example would be the partnership with RDN that led to our work at the top of the Judge's Route. Because ACCVI had earlier input with RDN on the Arrowsmith Massif Park Plan it was easy to contact their Parks and Trails coordinator to set up the support which led to our work improving that section & reducing the environmental impact of trail damage.



*Trail remediation on Mount Arrowsmith's Judges Route.
Photo by A. Cullen*

Knowing people in influential positions has been very useful in my effort to press for access and environmental issues. Many times, these are occasions to inform and promote our interests. In every instance, I try to illuminate the club's activities, our many esteemed members, our commitments to the environment, education and inclusivity.

Wherever access and environmental questions arise across the Island, do not hesitate to contact me to investigate.

Barb Baker
Access and Environment
access@accvi.ca

Landscape View: Island Alpine Guides

By Jan Neuspiel

Editor's note: We have another new column in the ACCVI Island Bushwhacker Newsletter called "Landscape View." The intent of this column is to focus on the roles of folks outside ACCVI who contribute to our mountaineering community's activities.

Island Alpine Guides (IAG) was the first mountain school and guide service on Vancouver Island to distinguish itself by having Association of Canadian Mountain Guides (ACMG) certified guides and instructors.

IAG was started by Jan Neuspiel and Cliff Umpleby in 2007. Neuspiel had been living on the island and guiding here since the late 1980s while Cliff was a more recent arrival from the mainland. Neuspiel had been and continues to be very engaged in a guiding career in the Himalayan region. He spent six years living in Nepal and eleven years running a helicopter skiing operation in northern India. Umpleby had been running operations for Tyax Lodge Heliskiing for a number of years as well as doing other guiding work in Canada and Europe.



Jan Neuspiel

IAG's connection to the Vancouver Island Section of the Alpine Club of Canada (ACCVI) dates to the very origins of IAG. Indeed, some of the first courses we ran as a company were for the ACCVI. As ACCVI members know, there is a strong historical connection between the ACC and ACMG guides. The education coordinator for the ACCVI at the time, Peter Rothermel, understood this connection well and saw the value in mixing volunteer driven education with training delivered by professional guides to ensure that what is being taught is of a high standard and to current international norms. Indeed, Peter built one of the most active educational programs of any alpine club section during his time as education coordinator and IAG were proud to be part of that. IAG has continued to deliver a number of programs annually for the ACCVI working with education coordinators Dave Campbell, Harry Steiner, Alois Schonenberger and others.

From the outset IAG's goal has been to provide superlative educational and guided mountain experiences to islanders in their very own Island Alps. The company was built on a "buy local" model aiming straight at islanders with exciting opportunities right here on the island. Though IAG does get customers from off the island and indeed internationally, its core purpose remains the same: to serve the island.

***IAG Mountain Skills
Course***

***Photo by Torsten
Berner***





Ski touring. Photo by Jan Neuspiel

The company's priorities are first and foremost effective risk management and secondly guest experience. A distant third has been the financial bottom line which has grown in viability over the years but remains, as one might imagine, modest given the size of the island market and the desire to remain small and serve the local audience.

Most of what IAG does is educational. Around 80% of our offerings are courses designed to give people the skills that they need to head off into the mountains under their own steam and making their own decisions. Courses range from avalanche skills training and backcountry skiing to summer mountain skills, navigation and all manner of rock climbing courses (intro, learn to lead, rock rescue etc.). But there are also people who really enjoy the comfort and relaxation of having a guide to lead them through their mountain experience so IAG also guides plenty of backcountry skiing (everything from "slack country" near ski areas to longer expeditions), peak climbs (Elkhorn, Colonel Foster, Rambler etc.) and trips to the coastal ranges. Often trips



*Guest on Summit Tower of
Mount Waddington
Photo by Jan Neuspiel*

end up being a combination of guided and instructional with the guide able to seamlessly shift between teaching and guiding to help a guest achieve learning objectives but also perhaps reach certain mountain objectives that may be out of reach at their current level of training and experience.

You can find out a lot more about Island Alpine Guides by visiting islandalpineguides.com, writing info@islandalpineguides.com or by telephoning them at (250) 400-2870



Guests on Rambler West Buttress. Photo by Jan Neuspiel



Mount Rosseau First Winter Ascent

By Evan Devault

Editor's note: You can see more about Evan and Stefan's ascent on the ACCVI Facebook page [here](#)

Around 9 a.m., 13 January 2019, Stefan and I stood atop the Septimus Glacier's West Shoulder. "Couple degrees warmer than forecasted, eh?" Our dreams had just been shattered. Looking out at the stunning Southwest face of Mount Rosseau, it was clear the conditions were not in our favour. The glistening wall shedded its rime ice. Pinwheels rolled down its steep snow patches, starting small avalanches as they gained momentum. It was alive and roaring. Eleven months before, climbing Rousseau in winter had just been an (over)ambitious side objective on a bigger ski traverse across Strathcona Park. When conditions had not been right for it that time, we just brushed it off, and moved past it. After letting it stew in our imaginations for another year, it had been a bit tougher to pull the plug. Fast forward to 8 Jan 2020, after seeing a very favourable, though short break in the weather, it was time to try again.

We leave Victoria around 7 p.m. Equipped with hefty peanut butter and banana sandwiches (thanks Jen!), we avoid the usual fast food stop. To our amusement, when stopping for gas, we realize Stefan had smeared half his peanut butter on the steering wheel. We get to the trailhead at around midnight, and after faffing about with some gear, we're off at around 1:15 a.m. The stoke for the mission had kept me from napping on the drive up, leaving me already fairly tired.



Evan traversing toward the southwest face

The approach is relatively uneventful. We sleepily stumble our way through the different trail sections. Once the snow coverage deepens, we don our snowshoes, an unusual form of transportation for typical skiers, but the most suitable for the current conditions. Upon arriving at Baby Bedwell Lake, we're eager to test the ice to see if we can shave time with

a direct crossing. Our poles easily plunge through a thin, snowy, surface crust. "So much for that". As a consolation, the clear sky and moonlit vista of Tom Taylor are completely breathtaking. The reflection of the full moon on the snowy landscape also aids navigation. Getting through the bluffs, up to Little Jim Lake is a peaceful saunter. Though shortly after, I start stumbling and nodding off, just trying my best to follow Stefan's tracks and keep my eyes open. I'm soon awakened and rejuvenated by the warm sun-



Southwest face of Mount Rosseau

of the climb by eleven am. We quickly stash our snowshoes, poles, and anything else unnecessary for the climb under a big rock outcropping. “This is it, we’re further than we’ve come before, conditions are stellar, we’re doing this!”

We solo up the steepening face until the slope angle encouraged us to pull out the rope. From a piton anchor, Stefan climbs a lovely pitch up a mixture of steep névé and softer accumulated snow. The third pitch we simul climb, trench, and wallow up to our waists until I find a tree branch to dig out and belay from. The good climbing returns on pitch four, with more steep névé and an off camber traverse around a rimy bulge. I arrive at the belay to find Stefan grinning at his anchor setup. Multiple equalized pins backed up with some snow pro. Certainly the most SERENE anchor of the climb, good, because the next pitch looks full on. I take the lead on pitch five. After climbing a few meters around a corner from the belay, there appeared to be three options: two gullies to the right and on the left, a short snowy face that probably ramps out on top. I chose the left (wrong) option. After pounding a solid picket into the plastic snow, I climb to the top of the short face and realize my assessment from below had been totally wrong. “Oh neat, a vertical drop off.” Instead of a mellow ramp, the only option is actually more of a right trending, rime encrusted fin. I think about down climbing and trying a different line, but instead, I continue upward. I carefully mount the fin, on rotten snow. I dig through it trying to find purchase on something with my ice tools, but also trying not to dig too much, destabilize the whole thing, and trun-

rise, just in time for the crushing slog up the Septimus Glacier.

Winded, we pop over the col on the West Shoulder to a stunning view of the Southwest face of Rosseau. The face is still and quiet, unlike a year ago, when the predominant sound was icefall and avalanches. It looks like something out of Patagonia, with steep, fluted features glazed in rime ice. After taking a quick gander, we descend, and traverse across the wide snow slope to arrive at the beginning



Evan starting up the final pitch

dle off the precipitous edge. I delicately step up with each crampon and practice “quiet feet” while searching for more hooks with my tools. Pulling over the top is a relief. Since I only placed one picket way down below, I try and flip the rope over some bulges to lead Stefan up one of the more solid gully options. I dig a very deep t-slot anchor and begin to belay Stefan up. He follows the same path up the fin and also has to fight with the rope that I flipped into the other gully, oh well. It looks like we’re pretty much on the summit now, but I’m skeptical at this point. Stefan inspects further, “We’re half way,” he says jokingly, as I come into view. We did it!

The view is absolutely incredible from the top on this cold, clear winter day. We can see ships offshore from Tofino, Mount Arrowsmith to the Southeast and all the prominent peaks of Strathcona Park. The wind on top is also pretty spectacular. We don’t hang out very long, it’s almost 4 p.m. and the sun is close to setting. Both of us are dreading going back down the same way we came up. Stefan, having been up here in the summer from several variations, thinks maybe a descent down the South Gullies would be easier and leads off in that direction. He is right; they are slightly lower angle and filled with powder. We flop down with relative ease and are back at our gear stash in under an hour. On the way down, my phone rings. I ignore the call but take advantage of the cell service to let work know I definitely won’t be in tomorrow.

After a quick snack break, we strap on the snowshoes and begin traversing. Climbing back up the relatively small hill to the West Shoulder is a horrendous feeling at this point; good thing we broke a good trail on the way in. We’re pretty spent, and still hours away from the car. We contemplate a bivouac but decide against it, as the 60 centimetres of snow forecasted for tonight has already started to fall. It would be an absolute nightmare to re-break trail through that the next day. We trudge on, slow and steady. The sleepless fatigue sets in, and I begin to hallucinate. Every so often my headlamp beam catches a branch or a snowdrift, and the resulting shadow morphs into an animal, slinking through the night. I shake my head, knowing it’s not real, but I’m not able to make it stop.

At quarter after midnight, we arrive back at the truck, twenty-three hours after we started, and a very long time since we’ve slept. The snow is dumping. Fearful that we’ll get the truck stuck at the trailhead, Stefan drives us lower down, closer to the paved road. We dive into our sleeping bags and pass out in the front seats for a very content 8 hours.



Stefan above Love Lake after descending the south gullies

Maynard Peak

By Lindsay Elms; Photos by Lindsay Elms and Val Wootton

After talking with some of the local mountaineers/cavers in Port McNeill, I was unable to find a name for a peak two kilometres to the east of Maynard Lake. The most recognized mountain in the area is Merry Widow Mountain which is a little further west of Maynard Lake but accessed via the same forestry service road. Val and I, therefore, dubbed the mountain Maynard Peak (1419m). Prior to leaving home we viewed Google Earth and saw relatively recent logging (within the last couple of years) to the south of the peak. I felt confident that the roads would be in good shape. Although it rains a lot up this end of the island, the terrain is different, and I have found the logging roads don't deteriorate as quickly as other more rugged areas (maybe they build them better).

Late Friday afternoon we drove a few kilometres beyond Port McNeill—towards Port Hardy—and then turned south onto the Keogh Main Forestry Road. We turned the GPS on and started tracking the twenty-five-kilometre drive to Maynard Lake. About one kilometre beyond the south end of the lake we found the logging road to the east that we hoped would take us up to about 900 metres. The higher we drove the more overgrown (lightly) the road became, but it was just young alder saplings that we easily drove over. There were a couple of side spurs that we checked out, but we felt that if we continued a little further south, we could gain a bit more in elevation. We did!



Merry Widow Mountain



Route to Maynard Peak

The next morning, we deeked-off the road into the trees and proceeded up over a small bump to gain a saddle at the bottom of the South Ridge. We then continued up the ridge, occasionally stopping at rocky bluffs to look around. Near the top of the ridge we entered a recent burn area with some interesting looking burnt trees. We could see Shivas trident, a prancing horse, lizards and dragons. It reminded me of the summit of Mount Roraima in Venezuela where the local guides had given names to some of the thought-provoking sandstone features – the triffid, monkey rock and the leaping dolphin. The burn covered a considerable area on the summit and made for easy travel. Eventually we saw a white radio tower poking above the ridge and angled towards it. As we popped over the top, we saw a second tower on the highest point. Although it was a beautiful day there was a cold wind coming in from the north off the ocean.

We sat down in the lee of the tower and had lunch while being entertained by the ravens as they played on the thermals. They were showing off as they squawked and cawed at the tops of their voices. Ravens are



Approaching Maynard Summit

intelligent birds and obviously enjoy being around us humans and displaying their talents. Sometimes we've heard them trying to mimic us by answering our calls. All they want is for us to take notice of them. A couple of the younger birds (I am just guessing that they were younger) came over to us and began riding the up-drafts beside the radio tower. As they neared the top they would stall, wings spread out to maximize the lift, and alight on the rounded, slippery peak of the tower, but unable to get a grasp they would slide down a few inches and then lift back into the air only to swoop down and repeat the sequence again. They reminded me of a trainee pilot as they practiced making repeated attempts to land. The other ravens laughed at them and we also laughed at them, and by the sound of it I think they were also

laughing at themselves. It was amusing watching them. I couldn't help but compare them to my favourite New Zealand mountain parrot the rascally kea only ravens do not damage personal property or steal.



Summit radio tower



Maynard Raven

Looking out to the west we had a great view of Merry Widow Mountain (1405m) and then to its south a whole slew of unnamed, probably unclimbed peaks. Somewhere in amongst the group was Snowsaddle Mountain (1400m), but I couldn't pick out which one it was. However, to the northeast Castle Mountain (1343m) languished in the fall light while to its south-east the Karmutzen Range, dominated by Karmutzen Mountain (1426m) (see IBWA 1997 p.17-18), floated hazily in a cloudless sky. We both loved being surrounded by peaks we had climbed and peaks to be climbed.



Val at Maynard Summit

When we reached the saddle before the last small bump on the return journey, we descended down the gully to the west. In places following game trails. It was an easy descent and avoided the bushy bump. We came out onto a road which we then hiked down and back around to the vehicle. The adventurer in us was piqued as we saw all these peaks to the southwest that were beckoning to be explored – next year.



Alpine colour



Karmutzen Range

The Vancouver Island Trail

*By Ken Mibraith, President
Vancouver Island Trail Association
www.vi-trail.ca*

Editor's note: We are aiming to include an article from one of the organizations supported by ACCVI. You can also learn more about the organizations ACCVI supports [here](#).

Dear ACCVI. Before describing where the Vancouver Island Trail Association is at, I want to take this moment to thank you once again for your generous donation to the cause. We rely almost totally on tax deductible donations and trust me, we need every last penny.

2019 was an exciting year for us, appropriately falling on our 10 year anniversary as an Association. Ten years of thousands of volunteer hours doing everything from building trail to building relationships. Building trail continued on various sections bringing our total to about 85% completion. Approximately 650 km of the route is passable, but requires improvement. This assumes/includes the use of right of way access along 60 km of the recently closed Englewood Logging Railway. The community of Woss is a major supporter in this regard. The remaining 120 km lies within private forest lands.

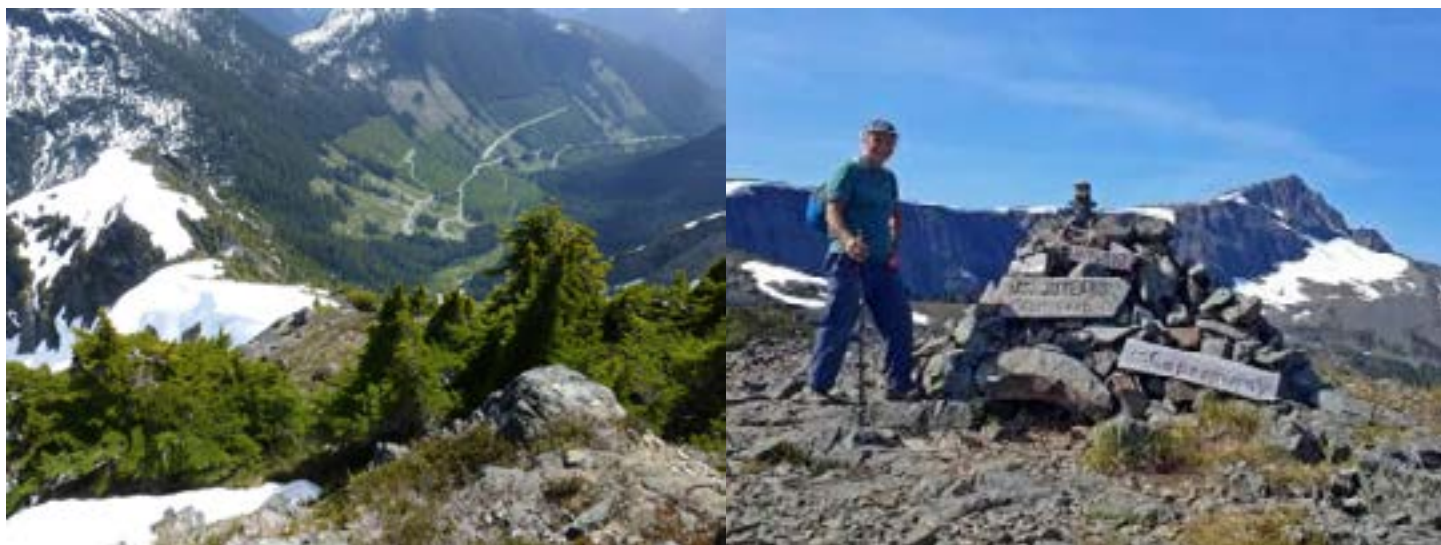


Building relationships continue to be a top priority. Our most significant relationship has been nurtured with Mosaic Forest Management. Mosaic is a recent merger of Timber West and Island Timberlands operations. Timber West had a major shift in policy last year with the unexpected \$150,000 gift to the Great Trail Association for completion of the Malahat Gap. We follow the Great Trail from Victoria to Lake Cowichan. Completing the Gap was also to our advantage. Since then, Mosaic and VITA signed a Memorandum of Understanding, the details of which is confidential until Mosaic releases to the public, but I'm happy to be allowed to report that as a result of the MoU, Mosaic has given us keys to their gates for the purpose of trail reconnaissance. A big step in the right direction! Generally speaking, we now face 4 gaps to completion, all 4 managed mainly by guess who? Mosaic.

Other relationships include several municipal and regional districts. Last June the Municipality of Oak Bay hosted an official opening of the South Trailhead at their Anderson Hill Park. They've also installed our trail signs on their Centennial Trail 6X6 posts from Anderson Hill to the Victoria border. (I happened to be the champion of that trail back in 2006 as part of my urban Pemberton Trail initiative, creating a loop from the

Inner Harbour to South Oak Bay). In the meantime, the Capital Regional District has given us the go ahead to install signs right up to the border of the Cowichan Valley Regional District. Last month the City of Victoria also gave us permission to sign. We have a great relationship as well with the Comox Valley Regional District, facilitating a contract between them and Mosaic.

Our Board of Directors decided to streamline the Association and focus on trail completion, acting more like a Task Force. We were being pulled in many directions. We cut our membership to only the Directors, freeing up time to allow us to focus on trail building. We're actively seeking 2 or 3 more Directors. We know we need a First Nations facilitator and a Social Media type. Our vision includes a significant FN presence. We see cultural signage along the route explaining customs, language, art, religion, territory boundaries, etc. Some folk have wrongly compared the VI Trail with the Camino de Santiago. I tell them we may not have Jesus at the end of our trail, but you'll learn about the 49 First Nation religions along the route.



Intro to Backcountry Skiing workshop

Josh S.

This year, we were able to offer twice as many spots by doubling the number of workshop leaders. On the morning of February 8, 2020, Martin H., Keith B., Gary C., and I met at 8:00 AM at the VIMC with our eager “students.” We started our day by reviewing weather and avalanche forecasts, discussing possible routes, and articulating our personal objectives. After a round of beacon checks, we set off into two subgroups of nine people. Our skin up took us just beyond the ski hill boundary to Mount Washington’s northwest ridge. Along the way, we discussed route finding and practised setting an up track. We even managed a few dreaded kick turns.



Photo by Jarrett Levesque

“12:00: It’s lunch – Union rules!” Quizzical looks on some of the 14 students’ faces shot my way as if to say, “Yeah, this skiing uphill stuff is hard WORK, but what are you talking about?” The importance of the mid-

day break is something that was imparted to me by my first backcountry ski partner 25 years ago, long-time friend, and fully unionized Parks Canada employee, Jack, who understood the benefits of pacing effort, replenishing food stores, adjusting gear, and checking in with each other as the day progresses.



Photo by Zoe Melanie Minnaard

The cold set in just as our union-allotted 30-minute lunch break expired, and we trudged on. At the top, while we were removing skins and preparing for the descent, we reminded the group why ski touring is arguably (by us anyways) the most enjoyable way to travel in the mountains. You get to take in all of the delicious scenery you would hiking but rather than crushing your menisci on the way down, you get to float through powder. We split into four groups (with an additional splitting into pairs) and agreed to meet up on the cat track a few hundred metres below. Our whooping and hollering was quickly interrupted when we noticed that two of our members had not made it to the rendezvous site. After about 10 minutes, half the remaining group turned their transceivers to “search” and headed back up hill to look for our missing companions but could not find them - it turns out they had veered in a different direction and eventually found their way back to the VIMC but had no way of contacting us because there was no cell reception. The mishap provided important learning for the leaders, namely the difficulty of managing a large group in a heavily treed area, even when dividing into relatively small sub-groups. It could have been helpful for us to more clearly describe where to meet in the

event that anyone became unglued from the group. The hour spent looking for our missing friends was also a good reminder about the impact on the rest of the group when members get separated.

On our ski down, the group practised some advanced tight tree skiing, as well as how to adjust technique for quickly changing snow consistency. By 4:00 PM our full group had grabbed some fizzy refreshments and reconvened at the VIMC for a classroom session on ski equipment, clothing layering, food, avalanche gear, navigation gear, emergency beacons, terrain selection, estimating travel time, avalanche refresher, reading terrain, snowpack fundamentals, recognizing risk signs in the field, and group management in avalanche terrain (objective and social hazards).

We hope our day out showed participants the upside of the downside and encourages more mountain training and forays. The Union of Ski Tourers thrives under strong membership!



Fault Peak

By Lindsay Elms; Photos by Val Wootton and Lindsay Elms

Over the years while climbing the peaks surrounding Zeballos, I have always looked across to a mountain/peak north of both Kaouk Peak (see IBWA 2005 p.6-7) and the old defunct Zeballos Iron Mine (http://www.beyondnootka.com/articles/zeballos_iron_mine.html). It's not a peak with a distinctive shape, but a rounded semi-alpine summit over 4000 feet with vast karst outcroppings. Four thousand feet is an elevation I have chosen as a benchmark—to see how many mountains above that height that I can climb (on Vancouver Island). Earlier in the year when Rod Szasz and I were climbing Z6 above Zeballos Lake, I took note of the logging roads on the eastern slopes of the mountain across the valley. They switchbacked quite high and it appeared the mountain/peak could be a very easy day trip. Val was wanting to get back into the mountains so this seemed a suitable first climb. Although she had climbed some moderate mountains in New Zealand and Australia, and local Mount Becher, this would be her first peek where there was no trail—most likely it would be a bit of a bushwhack, but I was sure it wouldn't be much.

We drove into Zeballos and visited the museum, then drove back towards the Nomash Main turn-off, but a kilometre before the main we turned left onto an unmarked logging road and started driving up hill. The road was in great shape as it gradually, kilometre by kilometre, climbed higher. A couple of false spurs, but we kept finding another spur road that kept going up. Eventually, we came to the end of the highest road at about 980 metres. There was a misty drizzle falling so that evening we didn't sit around a fire, but laid in the back of the vehicle reading. However, before reclining I did a quick recce into the trees and found flagging tape following the crest of the ridge. I thought it was possibly a trail established by some of the Zeballos

locals who enjoying get into the hills.

In the morning the drizzle had stopped but the clouds were still hanging low. We began following the flagging and found that it was a well-used trail. It minimized the amount of bushwhacking we would have to do. As we approached the south summit, we encountered limestone/karst fissures which we had to zig-zag around. I now assumed that the trail was established by the island caving community. Any limestone/karst outcrop and the



Looking back at the south summit of Fault Peak



Val negotiating the thick bush near the summit of Fault Peak



Val traversing the karst formations on the south summit of Fault Peak



Looking across the Zeballos valley to Fault Peak (middle) from Beano Mountain

cavers would be up there snooping around looking for sinkholes and caves to literally jam their bodies into like a hermit crab looking for a new shell. Later, I emailed the lover of dark, damp places Peter Curtis in Port McNeill who told me that he and his fellow spelunkers had flagged the route up to the karst area. Below the



Remains of the old mining cabin



More of the old mining cabin remains

south summit they found a polje—a large flat plain or field—and a 400-metre-deep cave, but they figured

there had to be a larger underground system judging from where water drains from the area into the timber on the contact zone. The cavers are trying to stop any further logging in the area as it is considered highly vulnerable karst and they say should never have been logged in the first place. Val and I didn't know this at the time and were just traversing the south summit on our way to the main peak.

Once across the karst we had a short descent down to a meadow and a tarn where we found evidence of a mining operation: the old dilapidated remains of a cabin and its paraphernalia, rusted out 44-gallon drums and the odd core sample. Again, I later found that this was from the late 1950's, early 1960's. There is no where that prospectors haven't been in the Zeballos vicinity. After inspecting the remains, we climbed up

to a saddle and then ascended the bushy ridge towards the main summit. The higher we got the more karst intersected our route and the thicker the bush became. Finally, we found ourselves literally five feet off the ground scrambling over the bush searching for the high point according to our GPS. The bush was damp and we were getting wet so it wasn't a summit that we really wanted to 'hang out' on. However, before heading back down I wanted to look over to the west into Rowland Creek where that there had been a large landslide similar to that in the upper Elk River in Strathcona Park in 1946. I haven't been able to confirm a date, but it was probably around the same time. There wasn't much evidence anymore as it was now overgrown, but I could see where the slide had originated from. A quick couple of photos to verify 'been there, done that' then we descended back to the meadow below and old cabin remains where we eventually had lunch.

Although the peak didn't have either an official name or a local name from what I could gather, Val and I decided to call it Fault Peak (1337m) after the creek below to the east.



The view up the Nomash valley from the head of the logging road below Fault Peak



Looking across to the main summit of Fault Peak



Whiskey Jacks and "IT'S ALL ABOUT THE FOOD"

By Christine Fordham

Did you ever wonder what those cheeky, habituated Whiskey Jacks (Gray Jays) do with all the food they scrounge?

Their natural prey consists of insects, rodents, baby birds, frogs, fungi, fruits, seeds and even carrion. They manipulate food in their mouths into a bolus, coat it with special sticky saliva that along with its preservative qualities, sticks to anything it touches. They store the bolus under lichens, bark flakes, or conifer needles. These “scatter-hoarders” don’t need to migrate because they can remain in the sub alpine forests by caching their food all year long. A food-storing Gray Jay may make up to 1000 caches a day. Their food stashes amass, over the short season of abundance, and they will rely on these in an otherwise foodless winter.

During late winter, and freezing temperatures, they raise a batch of young. Their recall skills, which is a corvid family trait shared by crows and ravens, helps them to remember where all those caches are stashed to feed the young birds. This is especially important as Whiskey Jacks raise only one brood a year, and the young need to learn how to find and cache food for their first winter’s survival.

One wonders about their future, with global temperatures rising. The quality of their food stores risks becoming nutritionally deficient as the freeze – thaw cycle ramps up. When these cute, habituated birds share human food, from our bare hands, it can also lead to nutritional deficits, and the transmission of bacteria and disease. It makes me feel ashamed to have participated in interrupting their critical food supply for the fleeting thrill of having a bird on my hand.



On patrol...the watchman. Photo by Christine Fordham



Mount Albert Edward and Jutland Mountain. Photo by Roger Taylor submitted to ACCVI's 2019 photo competition

Vancouver Island Category

ACCVI History 1911 to 1919

By Lindsay Elms

In late 1911, early 1912, Arthur O. Wheeler, president of the Alpine Club of Canada, Lieut.-Col. William W. Foster* and other prominent Victoria mountaineers and businessmen founded the Victoria (later Vancouver Island) section of the Alpine Club of Canada to help fund and organize an expedition into the newly sanctioned Strathcona Provincial Park. The expedition was well documented and reports can be read in the Alpine Club's journals, but future development of the local section was poorly documented for many years. Who chaired and the years they lead the section took some figuring out, and the trips and climbs undertaken by its members was unrecorded, except in some newspaper articles in Victoria's *Daily Colonist*. Through these old newspaper clippings, I have been able to establish somewhat of an outline of the club's activities over the years and the roles of people on the executive, although it is far from complete. Some of the articles I have transcribed in full - they are wonderful period reading - while others I have edited to highlight the main details. Although the Victoria section started out small (<30 members), we will see through the years how it has grown to be one of the prominent sections of the Alpine Club of Canada.

*William (Billy) Wasborough Foster was born in Bristol, England in 1875 and educated at Wycliffe College, Gloucestershire. In 1892, Foster immigrated to Canada to work as an engineer for the Canadian Pacific Railroad in Revelstoke. In 1905 he became a Justice of the Peace and then in 1908 the Police Magistrate in Revelstoke. Foster entered the Parliament of British Columbia as Deputy Minister of Public Works in 1910. It was under his energetic administration that British Columbia gained a Dominion-wide reputation for the efficiency of its highway system. In 1913 Foster was elected a member of the B.C. Legislature. In 1914, he enrolled for service as Captain Foster of the Canadian Mounted Rifles. He became an infantry battalion commander in 1917. After four years' service in France, Foster returned to British Columbia with three wounds and five 'mentions'. He received the Distinguished Service Order with two bars, the Military Cross and both the French and Belgian Croix de Guerre and is said to have refused the Victoria Cross for gallantry when commanding the 52nd Ontario Battalion on Paschendaele Ridge, requesting that it should go instead to one of his officers. On his return to Canada he was appointed Honorary Colonel of the 15th Battalion Canadian Artillery and became President of an engineering firm. He was also the Honorary Aide-de-Camp to three Governor-Generals, President of the Canadian Legion, the Canadian National Parks Association and the Alpine Club of Canada from 1920 to 1924. In 1935, he was appointed chief of the Vancouver City police department. In 1937, Foster returned to Europe in charge of a large Canadian contingent which was attending the dedication to the Canadian War Memorial on Vimy Ridge. Foster again served his country during World War II, later was promoted to the rank of Major-General and was appointed chairman of the Canadian Officers' Selection Board. For his services he received the Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (C.M.G.). However, it was as a mountaineer the Billy Foster first gained national and international fame, when in 1913 when he made the first ascent of Mount Robson and in 1925 made the first ascent of Canada's highest mountain, Mount Logan. Although he will be remembered for those two ascents, he is also remembered on Vancouver Island as the man who initiated and organized the logistics for the ACC expedition to the newly established Strathcona Provincial Park. This expedition made the first ascent of Elkhorn Mountain, the Strathcona Matterhorn in August 1912. Foster couldn't participate in the climb, but in his honour they named a peak near the head of the Elk Valley after him. In 1934, Foster was awarded the Silver Rope Award for Leadership from the ACC. William Foster died in Vancouver in 1954. At the time he was the Honorary President of the Alpine Club of Canada. As noted in an editorial of the *Vancouver Sun*: "General Foster had every manly quality to command the respect and willing obedience of his officers and the admiration of the public. In addition, he possessed that subtle presence by which a gentleman may be identified. All who knew him are proud to do him honour."

1911

Reported in the *Daily Colonist* April 28, 1911, p.3.

DEFINING EASTERN BOUNDARY OF B.C.

Hon. W.R. Ross Commissions Director of Alpine Club to Mark Off Line Between Provinces.

It's the general impression among everyday business people that the Alpine clubs of the world represent a too-ardu-

ous, too dangerous and too exciting form of a sport, and that their members are suffering from an advantaged stage of suicidal mania. England's Alpine Club is the parent organization, having been in existence for the past fifty years. Soon after its initiation Ruskin wrote the following stricture: "Even the Alps themselves which your own poets used to love so reverently, you look upon as soap poles in a bear garden, which you set yourselves to climb and slide down again with shrieks of delight." But later he retracted and made the amend honorably by joining the club and becoming one of its most enthusiastic supporters.

The Alpine Club of Canada, though but five years old, believes that there are other ways to usefulness than merely providing mountain climbing for its members. It was announced at the club's fifth anniversary celebrations held at Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary and New York that an expedition would this summer be conducted to Yellowhead Pass, Mount Robson and the Jasper Park region, for the purpose of mapping that Alpine district and presenting it to the world at large through the medium of the Alpine Club. This seems to be a highly practical form of usefulness. The expedition will be in charge of the director of the Club, Arthur O. Wheeler, who is a specialist in mapping mountain areas by means of photography, and who has already mapped the Rockies and the Selkirks along the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway for the Dominion government.

The expedition is a strictly Alpine Club one. The assistant topographer will be Rev. George Kinney*, the conqueror of Mount Robson; the club's official photographer Byron Harmon of Banff and the Austrian guide, Conrad Kain will also be attached. The outfitting and transport of the party will be in the charge of Donald Phillips, of Edmonton, who shared with Kinney the triumph of the first ascent of Mount Robson. Also, proper persons to deal with the geology, botany and zoology of the area surveyed will be attached to the expedition.

One object of the expedition is to ascertain the possibilities for the annual camp of the Alpine Club in the vicinity of Mount Robson in 1912. It is expected that by then all-rail communication will be established with the pass. Of recent years a number of explorers have visited it, all of whom have spoken in glowing terms of its Alpine splendours. Among them are Dr. Arthur P. Coleman, president of the club, Rev. George B. Kinney and Dr. Norman Collie, Arnold L. Mumm, and Leopold S. Amery, of the English Alpine Club. Messrs. Mumm and Collie will visit the region this year for the third consecutive time in succession. If the photographs brought back by these gentlemen are to be believed – and photographs do not lie – there is a region of peaks, passes, snowfields, icefalls and glacial rivers that will equal, if not surpass, any region contiguous to the line of the C.P.R.

Canada is indeed singularly blessed to possess two transcontinental railroads that run through such wholly unsurpassed Alpine scenic grandeur. The character of the mountain scenery is totally distinct along each line so that visiting tourists will do well to come and go by different routes. No two mountain ranges of the world are similar in characteristics, and the same is true of their component parts.

Provincial Boundaries

The director of the Alpine Club has been commissioned by Hon. W.R. Ross, the minister of lands for British Columbia, to establish and mark the boundary between the provinces of British Columbia and Alberta and the Dominion government is collaborating with the Alpine Club and rendering tangible support.

It speaks well for the progressiveness and utility of the club that it is ahead of the times and will be the first to map the region systematically, and to bring its scenic features to note in a form that can readily be grasped by travelling public. The club's policy from the beginning has been a progressive one. It has established connections in many parts of the world and has done much to bring to the general notice not only the Canadian mountain ranges, but Canada itself. No other alpine club is operated on the same plain, and that mountaineers and explorers of world fame become life members of the Canadian Club. The annual camp for this year will be held in the main range of the Rockies at Sherbrooke Lake, along the line of the C.P.R. It has been whispered that the club has only been awaiting railway facilities to hold a camp in the Windermere district, not far from Earl Grey's camp at Toby Creek. The Windermere district presents another interesting and beautiful region of totally different characteristics. It is two hundred miles from Yellowhead Pass, as the crow flies, and between an ocean of peaks, many of which have not yet been even seen. The possibilities for the Alpine Club are great. It ought to be supported, not only by several governments of Canada, but by all public-spirited Canadians.

*George Kinney was born in 1872, at Victoria Corner in New Brunswick. In 1895, Kinney enrolled at the Methodist Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky, graduating in 1898 with a Bachelor of Arts in Theology. The following year he was accepted on trial to the British Columbia Conference of the Methodist ministry and worked in many communities. In 1906, Kinney attended the ACC's first mountaineering camp in the Yoho Valley where he assisted in guiding nine club members the top of Mt. Vice-President, the club's first official climb. While presiding over a congregation at James Bay

in Victoria in 1907 Kinney was asked to join Arthur Coleman, and his brother Lucius, in an attempt on Mount Robson, the highest mountain in the Canadian Rockies. Kinney and the Colemans returned again in 1908 and their two attempts were abandoned due to bad weather. Kinney continued his obsession with Mount Robson and made a number of attempts with Curly Phillips in 1909. On August 13 in dense clouds and high winds, Kinney claimed to have reached the summit, however, many read his account (especially the leaders in the ACC at the time) and refuted his ascent outright. Whatever the outcome, it is undeniable that Kinney's effort deserves to be remembered as a great modern climb of Canadian mountaineering. Although Kinney was a conscientious objector, in 1916 he enlisted in the Army Medical Services for the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force, serving as stretcher bearer in the 4th Field Ambulance Corps. In 1920, Kinney moved to Cumberland and was welcomed as the pastor of the Grace Methodist Church. In 1922, Kinney joined a party led by Harold Banks that made the first ascent of the Comox Glacier. Kinney stayed in Cumberland until 1923 and was then assigned a station in the remote coastal community of Ocean Falls. During the Depression he worked with the men on relief and from 1925 to 1934 was in Proctor, B.C., where he developed the Kootenay Waterways Mission. From 1937 to 1942 he worked with the Koksilah Indian Mission in Duncan. In 1942, George Kinney retired to Victoria where he died in 1961.

1912

Reported in the Daily Colonist February 14, 1912, p.10.

The Alpine Club of Canada – The Victoria committee has arranged for a meeting of the above club on Thursday, February 15, 8 p.m., at the Alexandra Club café to hear Mr. Arthur O. Wheeler, the club director, describe the proposed arrangements for the camp this summer in the Rocky Mountains. Visitors can be introduced to the meeting by members. The Hon. Secretary Mr. F. Helm, P.O. Box 1129, will give full information to intending members.

Reported in the Daily Colonist July 9, 1912, p.14.

Captain Frederick V. Longstaff, F.R.G.S., Corps of Guides, left Victoria last night for Banff to help organize the annual camp of the Alpine Club of Canada at Vermillion Pass.

1913

Reported in the Daily Colonist January 21, 1913, p.17.

Mr. Arthur O. Wheeler, president of the Alpine Club of Canada, will give an illustrated lecture on the "Alpine Areas of Strathcona Park," to the B.C. Superintendents in Victoria on the evening of Thursday February 14 and will be followed by an address on Strathcona Park development by Mr. Reginald H. Thomson, the Government engineer in-charge of the project.

Reported in the *Daily Colonist* January 29, 1913, p.3.

CANADA'S MOUNTAIN WONDERLAND SHOWN

Director of Alpine Club Gives Interesting Lecture Before Natural History Society of British Columbia.

Mr. Arthur O. Wheeler, director of the Alpine Club of Canada, gave an address to the Natural History Society on Monday [January 27] evening on "Canada's Mountain Wonderland" the mountain ranges of British Columbia. He described the original formation of ranges and the process of sculpture by which these have been cut into the towering peaks we now see, the dazzling snowfields, the wild gorges with their impetuous foaming torrents, the lovely lakes and among them the grassy tracts with their profusion of brilliant alpine flowers, which will delight the beholder and repay them for the long journey hither from Europe.

As to how the mountains were formed, he said that the inner mass of the earth shrank, leaving the crust outside too large for it. The pressure of the Pacific Ocean was too great to be sustained by the unsupported crust, which crumpled under the pressure, the first folds to be formed being the Coast Range and the Selkirks, and later another great settling threw up the Rocky Mountains. These folds or crumples are made up of sedimentary rocks pushed inward from the sea shore, for the mountain ranges have not been thrown up hot, from the centre of the earth by volcanoes as is often mistakenly supposed.

The ridge, folds or crumples lie in lines from northwest to southeast and have a precipitous face inland to the northeast. At this precipitous face the strata have been broken across by the formation of what is called faults; one is

well seen in Banff. Then when these ridges or ranges are formed Nature at once begins to cut them down “weathering” them on a huge scale by rain, wind and snow till they are cut through by ravines and valleys and the remaining portions are left as magnificent pyramids, castles or pinnacles, the mountains we so admire.

Evidently the greatest agency in erosion is water, particularly frozen water, in snow. Snow piling itself up (50 feet has fallen in a year in the Selkirks) keeps on crushing and crushing the lower layers till they fuse into ice, which under this great pressure becomes plastic and flows now becoming a glacier, always downward, and with this great pressure behind it, and the extra help it gets from stones, rocks and boulders it has broken off and is carrying with it it scores out and always widens its channel, from which a ravine becomes a valley, isolating its parent peak ever more and more.

Mr. Wheeler showed some wonderful pictures, taken at high altitudes where there are violent winds and quantities of snow. As it is driven against the rocks it sticks to them and forms wreaths outside them in very insecure positions; these are called cornices, look safe and tempting, have no support below and may lure the mountaineer to trust them, and they fall him to his destruction.

A very steep glacier from Mount Robson was shown 5000 feet high, with a turquoise-blue lake at the bottom of it. Cloudy days suit climbing best at these high altitudes (Mount Robson is 13,000 feet), for then the surface is hard and there are fewer avalanches.

When Mr. Wheeler was climbing Mount Robson with three other men, they were resting at a point but decided to move a little further on, and in five minutes after they saw an avalanche sweep over their previous halt, which shocked them, for, as the guide, who alone spoke, said: “We should have been killed.” As a glacier in its descent falls over a ridge, which in a water-river would have meant a waterfall, the upper ice cracks and gapes, forming a crevasse, and the ice on a glacier, cracked and strained, arranges itself in pinnacles, columns and fantastic shapes. They are on a huge scale. Yet when a visiting lady saw them at Glacier and was asked about it, she said she did not think very much of that. She thought the C.P.R. should have spent its advertising money to better advantage than it cutting the ice into shapes like those.

Running water has done something in the sculpture of the district as in the gorges of the Selkirks, where the river runs underground threw crystalline, limestone or marble for a mile through caves that are quite dark but brilliant with their white interior when lighted up. Here travelling in the dark is quite impossible. Mr. Wheeler did his exploring with a bicycle lamp, but once he and his guide crossed a log bridge together they were dropped into the water, their lights were extinguished.

They could not get out in the dark and their matches were wet. By drawing the edge of a knife over the match head, however, they managed to light one and won back to the world. Pictures were shown of Lake Moline [Maligne], Ottara [?], Louise and the others, of the gorges of the Yoho, of pinnacles among the conglomerates, and the Eagle’s Eyrie, and the society was so delighted with the lecture that they stood up to emphasize the strength of the vote of thanks they passed to Mr. Wheeler for coming to address them on so fascinating a subject. In his reply he emphasized the publicity the Alpine Club of Canada gave to the Province, bringing here every year great climbers from foreign lands, besides giving cheap holidays in its camps to some of the best workers in the Province.

1915

Reported in the Daily Colonist January 16, 1915, p.6.

Mr. Arthur O. Wheeler to give a talk to Alpine Club of Canada members on Tuesday January 19 on “The Caves of Cheops” Selkirk Mountains.

1916

As reported in the Daily Colonist July 23, 1916, p.9.

ALPINE CLUB WILL CAMP IN BOW VALLEY

Eleventh Annual Camp Will Keep Alive Camp-fire Circle on Behalf of Members at the Front.

The Alpine Club of Canada has arranged to hold its eleventh annual camp – the second war camp – in the Bow Valley. The camp will be known as “The Bow Valley Camp,” and will be operated in conjunction with the Club house at Banff. It will open on Thursday, July 12, and close Monday July 31. The object of the camp is announced to be to keep alive the camp-fire circle on behalf of the members now on active military service for the Empire. Accommodation will be

prepared for 100 persons.

In accordance with clause 14 of the constitution, the annual meeting of the club will be held during the camp for the election of officers, presentation of reports, and transactions of business.

The main camp will be placed in the Bow Valley, on the south side of the river, below the Massive Range, at an altitude of between 5,000 and 6,000 feet above sea level. This range contains a number of fine peaks, of which Pilot Mountain, Mount Brett, one unnamed, and Mount Bourgeau are the most conspicuous. It is the home of the wild goat, and flocks congregate in the alpine meadows of its hanging valleys. Facilities will be provided to cross the Bow River and so to visit Hole-In-The-Wall Mount, Mount Edith, and Mount Louie, the last a difficult peak yet unclimbed. There are many other fine peaks in the area.

1917

Reported in the Daily Colonist November 17, 1917, p.9.

ALPINE CLUB HAS BRILLIANT RECORD

The Alpine Club of Canada is justly proud of the part taken by its members in the war. Eighty-nine of them – a large proportion of the total – have gone on active service. Seventeen of these have been killed, sixteen wounded, and two are prisoners of war. Eight have been mentioned in dispatches, one of them twice and another four times. Six have won the military cross, four the D.S.O., one the C.M.G., two the Cross of the Legion of Honor and one the Croix de Guerre. It is indeed a fine Roll of Honor.

1918

Reported in the Daily Colonist March 29, 1918, p.6.

Alpine Club of Canada anniversary dinner on Thursday March 28 at Alexandra House in Victoria. Mr. Arthur O. Wheeler talked about the war effort of club members and read a letter from Lieut.-Col. William W. Foster. Talk of annual camp in Paradise Valley the site of the 1907 camp. Mr. Robert D. McCaw* toastmaster.

*Robert Daniel McCaw was born in 1884 in Welland, Ontario. In 1903, McCaw was articulated to the surveyor George Ross. In February 1907, he received his Ontario Land Surveyors Commission and entered into partnership with George Ross and in 1909 he received his Dominion Land Surveyors Commission. Later that year the partnership dissolved and McCaw began working with Arthur Wheeler. In 1912, McCaw received his British Columbia Land Surveyors Commission and became a member of the firm Wheeler, Campbell and McCaw. He was then engaged in road location on the West Coast of Vancouver Island for the Public Works Department in Victoria. In 1913, he made a photo-topographical survey along the route of the Banff-Windermere Highway for the Public Works Department of British Columbia. In 1914, the firm of Wheeler, Campbell and McCaw was dissolved, and in May of that year McCaw began to make photo-topographical surveys for the Surveys Branch of the Department of Lands of the Province of B.C. In 1929, he was appointed a member of the permanent Provincial Civil Service. From the mid to late 1930's, McCaw was working on Vancouver Island and the West Coast. In 1940 and 1941 he worked around Alberni where he made ascents of many of the peaks surrounding the Kennedy River including Pogo Peak and Steamboat Mountain. McCaw was on the Board of Management of the Corporation of British Columbia Land Surveyors in the 1930's and was the chairman of the Victoria section of the ACC from 1916 to 1922. McCaw was working in the field during the summer of 1941 when he was taken ill. Robert McCaw died in 1941.

1919

Reported in the Daily Colonist March 9, 1919, p.6.

Mr. Arthur O. Wheeler is to give a talk on "Surveying the Great Divide of the Rockies" to the Victoria Branch of the Engineering Institute of Canada at Girls Central School on Thursday March 13, 8 p.m. Admission is free and open to the public.

ANNIVERSARY NOTED IN USUAL MANNER.

Alpine Club of Canada Held Annual Dinner at Brentwood – Returned Soldier Members Speak.

The Alpine Club of Canada sustained a well-established custom on Friday evening by holding a banquet, on this occasion marking its thirteenth anniversary. The gathering took place at Brentwood Hotel, 21 members meeting round the festive board and sharing the programme of speeches, illustrated lecture, music and dancing that was arranged by way of entertainment after dinner. But one regret was expressed during the course of the evening, that being Lieut.-Col. William W. Foster, D.S.O., M.C., chairman of the Victoria section of the club [1912 – 1915] who went overseas shortly after the annual banquet in the Winter of 1915, had not reached the Coast in time to take part in the proceedings.

Director Arthur O. Wheeler and Mr. Robert D. McCaw shared the duties of toastmaster, the first toast proposed being the loyal one of “King and Empire.”

Interesting short speeches by returned soldier members of the club were given in response to three of the subsequent toasts, “The Victorious Allies,” “Our Members Overseas” and “The Returned Overseas Members,” the speakers being Mr. C.B. Reynolds, Major Francis A. Robertson*, D.S.O., and Flight Lieut. Gordon Cameron, respectively. Mr. Stanley H. Mitchell, secretary of the Alpine Club of Canada, responded to the toast to the Alpine Club of Canada.

Director’s Address

Director A.O. Wheeler’s was an exhaustive review of the activities of the club during the past year, while detailed reference was made to those of its members who had distinguished themselves overseas in the war.

“Not least among the records of Canadians and Americans are those of the individual members of the Alpine Club of Canada – Canadians, British, Americans. In all the 113 known members, men and women, have been on active service since the war began. The highest known rank, previous to the war, of any member volunteering was that of major. There are now 12 majors, nine lieutenant-colonels and two brigadier-generals. Below the rank of major are 26 captains and one honorary captain (Mrs. J.W. Henshaw), one lieutenant-commander (USA), 24 lieutenants and one honorary lieutenant, French Army (Mrs. Stanley Jones), and five sergeants. Thus, out of 113 volunteers from the Alpine Club who have been on active service overseas 79 hold commanding rank. That speaks for efficiency.”

Continuing, the director detailed the distinctions won by Alpine Club members during the war. Eleven members had been killed, two taken prisoners of war and a dozen or more wounded, some several times. Since the last anniversary Lieut. J. Tyler, USA, Air Service, and Lieut. T.J. Taylor, Victoria, had given their lives.

Glorious Record

“It is a glorious record, and one that might have been expected of mountain men and women in a period of such magnificent heroism,” noted the speaker.

A number of officers (members of the Alpine Club) had won further distinctions since the last Journal was published: Colonel R.P. Clark, now promoted to Brigadier-General; Col. John A. Clark, Vancouver, promoted to Brigadier-General; Col. Charles H. Mitchell, C.B., Rose of Italy; Col. W.W. Foster, 2nd Bar to D.S.O.; Major F.A. Robertson, Victoria, D.S.O.; Major W.M. Pearce, Calgary, M.C.; Capt. Alan Morkill, M.C.; Lieut. T.J. Tyler, Croix de Guerre.

Victory Camp

Passing from the soldier members’ record of the past, the speaker went on to refer to “the Victory Camp” which is to be held during the coming summer at the summit of Yoho Pass, and to the “Welcome Home Camp” at Mount Assiniboine in 1920, at which it is hoped to have all soldier members as guests. Reference was also made to the Congress of Alpinism to be held at Monaco in the spring of next year. The Alpine Club of Canada has been given full recognition by the inclusion of President Patterson, the two vice-presidents, Colonels Mitchell and Foster and Mr. A.O. Wheeler.

“Thirteen years we have been in existence, and are still going strong,” concluded the Director. “Thirteen is supposed to be a hoodoo number. I have always considered it a lucky one, and the fact that our future turns upon it at a general period of reconstruction of the world will, I hope, prove my contention to be correct.”

Lantern Lecture

After the Director’s address the diners adjourned to the big hall, where Mr. Wheeler gave a very interesting lecture, illustrated by wonderfully fine lantern slides, about the mountain terrain lying between the G.T.P. and C.P.R. and big areas of which he traversed in connection with the B.C. boundary survey which is being carried out.

The remainder of the evening was pleasantly informal, Miss Long and Mr. McCaw providing music for dancing, and Mrs. McCaw and Miss Long contributing vocal and pianoforte solos respectively which were greatly enjoyed. Alpine Club songs were used to choruses, in which everyone joined, and the time was pleasantly filled until nearly midnight.

All the arrangements were admirably carried out by the special committee composed of Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler,

Miss Colwell and Mr. McCaw (who designed very clever souvenir cards), and the hotel furnished an excellent dinner, which was by no means the least of the numerous pleasures of the occasion.

*Francis Arthur Robertson was born in Cold Springs, Ontario, in 1875. Robertson graduated from Manitoba College with a Bachelor of Arts in 1902 and attained a Master's degree in 1912 from the University of Manitoba. For some years he was in business in Edmonton, and after studying law moved to Victoria. Prior to the Great War he held a commission in the 5th Regiment in Victoria, and at the outbreak was given command of the fortification at Esquimalt. When the 47th Battalion (New Westminster) was formed he applied for a transfer, and proceeded overseas as a Major with that battalion. The loss of an eye in 1916, led to a period in hospital, after which he transferred to the artillery. He returned to France as Officer-in-charge of the 12th Siege Battery and at the Battle of Amiens in 1918 he was again wounded, this time losing a leg. *Reported the Daily Colonist June 21, 1919, p.5.*

VICTORY CAMP WILL BE IN THE YOHU VALLEY

Alpinists Meet July 22 to August 5 in Heart of Rockies – Splendid Climbs in Mountainous Region.

The prospectus for the fourteenth annual camp of the Alpine Club of Canada has just been issued, and shows that the members who are joining the gathering this year will meet on July 22 to August 5 near the summit of Yoho Pass beside Yoho Lake at "Victory Camp," with an outlying camp near the mouth of the Upper Yoho Valley.

The Alpine Club of Canada was founded in 1906, with Mr. Arthur O. Wheeler, the present director, as its head, and the spirit of the organization has continued to grow in a wonderful way, even surviving the period of the war, which took such large numbers of the members overseas. This year many of the men who have not been able to attend camp since 1914 owing to the fact that they were carrying arms will be back in camp again, and it is expected that the camp gathering will be exceptionally interesting.

The main camp as already mentioned, is near the summit of Yoho Pass, near a picturesque little mountain tarn surrounded by groves of spruce and little meadows, where avalanche lilies and white heather grow in abundance. Mountains that may be reached from camp are Mounts Wapta, Field, Michael's Peak, the Vice-President and President, Mount Carnarvon, Mount Burgess, and others. From the Upper Yoho (the outlying) camp there are in addition Mounts Kerr, Marpole, Kiwyetinok Peak, Whaleback, Isolated Peak, Mount Gordon, Mount McArthur, Mount Des Poilus and Mount Collie. Those who are ambitious can extend their expeditions. A graduating climb, as all members know, is 10,000 feet. Any mountains filling the necessary requirements will be accepted as graduating climbs by aspirants to active membership.

The prospectus points out one little thing that the average peripatetic in British Columbia does not know: That Yoho is the Indian word for Grand! Glorious! Wonderful! The Yoho Valley comprises the maximum of mountain scenery in the minimum of area.

The usual accommodation provided by the Alpine Club will be furnished.

Field Station on the C.P.R., will be the point of arrival by train, while Emerald Lake Chalet, which is to be open for the season, can be made a starting point for the main camp by those who wish.

Mr. A.O. Wheeler, who left Sidney, Vancouver Island, about two weeks ago, is in Banff at the present time organizing his survey, and of course will be present when the camp meets in July. The annual, meeting of the club, which always takes place during the holding of the camp, will be very interesting this year, although probably next year the gathering may be even more interesting, the name of the camp already being given as "Welcome Home," as it is proposed to invite all returned soldier members to attend this gathering as the guests of the club. At the annual meeting this year it is proposed to bring up for discussion the erection of a suitable memorial at the club house, Banff, as a record of the members of the club who have been on active service during the war and to formulate plans for establishing a fund in this connection.

Reported the Daily Colonist July 31, 1919, p.9.

ALPINISTS HAVING SUCCESSFUL CAMP

Vancouver Island Section Well Represented at Gathering Which is Meeting This Year in Yoho Valley.

Lieut.-Col. William W. Foster, president of the Vancouver Island Section of the Alpine Club of Canada; Mrs. Foster, Miss Jennie McCulloch*, secretary and other members of the organization from here who followed Director Arthur O. Wheeler and Dominion Secretary Stanley Mitchell into the mountains to join the Victory camp of the Alpine Club at Summit Lake, are evidently, together with those from other parts of Canada who are attending the first of the post-war gatherings, enjoying the very best of conditions for the annual outing.

Summit Lake is above the Yoho Valley and the camp opened on July 22 for a fortnight. More than one hundred of the members are attending this year, and although this number is not so large as some prior to 1914, this is more than anticipated earlier in the season.

Field is the starting point, and camp can be reached by either the Burgess Pass trail, about seven miles, or by way of Emerald Lake. On arriving at camp, one is served with afternoon tea. Vancouver Island, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Macleod, Saskatoon and Winnipeg are responsible for the larger proportion of the campers, but there are about twenty-five members from the United States from as far east as New York, New Jersey and as far south as Indiana. Tuesday, July 22, the first night in camp, a sing-song from the club's song book was held round the cheerful camp fire, where acquaintanceships were renewed and expeditions for the coming days discussed. On Wednesday parties were made up for the ascent of Mount Michael, hikes to Takakkaw Falls and other points of interest. On Thursday some of the more ardent members climbed Mount Wapta, others walking to the Twin Falls. In the evening the New York section took hold of the entertainment and furnished an excellent programme. On Friday a graduation climb of Mount Vice-President was to take place, but rain prevented any climbing.

* Jennie Long McCulloch was born in Stratford, Ontario in 1879. She came to Victoria with her parents in 1885. She joined the staff of the King's Printer and rose to the position of Chief Clerk. In 1913, she became active in the Alpine Club of Canada where she met Frederick Longstaff; they married in 1921. After marriage she retired and devoted her time to various cultural interests. She died in Victoria in 1957.

Reported in the Daily Colonist August 19, 1919, p.8.

The "Victory Camp" of the Alpine Club of Canada, held on Yoho Lake the last week of July and the first week of August, was remarkable in that it constituted a reunion of many members who have been overseas during the period of the war and have been unable to attend any of the war-time camps. After ascending Mount Vice President on July 26 with a party, Lieut.-Col. William W. Foster, president of the Vancouver Island section of the Alpine Club and Western vice-president, gave a most interesting address on the work of the Canadian troops in the late war, closing with a continuance for the period of reconstruction upon which the country is entering, of the splendid and patient effort and unfaltering patriotism that had been the factors in winning the war.

Reported in the Daily Colonist December 4, 1919, p.13.

ALPINISTS ELECT OFFICERS FOR YEAR

Col. W.W. Foster Is Honorary Chairman of Local Section, Mr. R.D. McCaw, Chairman – Plan Meetings.

The election of officers for the ensuing year was held in connection with the meeting of the Victoria Section of the Alpine Club of Canada on Tuesday [December 2] evening at the home of retiring secretary, Miss Jeannie McCulloch, Linden Avenue. The following was the result:

Hon. Chairman William W. Foster; Chairman, Mr. Robert D. McCaw; Secretary, Mr. Gordon Cameron.

The executive is to be composed of Mr. W.A. Aldridge, Mr. W.S. Drewry*, Major Francis A. Robertson, Miss Colwell, Miss McCulloch and Capt. Everall.

Mr. Reynolds will represent the Vancouver Island section of the club on the Photographic Committee, whose duties lie in the direction of collecting photographs of interest to the society.

Mr. Arthur O. Wheeler, director of the Alpine Club of Canada, was present at the meeting, and stated that the organization hereafter would publish a quarterly review, to which the secretary of the local section would be asked to send reports four times yearly, the said reports to be a resume of the activities of the Vancouver Island society.

The local section has already made tentative plans for the January, February and March meeting, at each of which two members will read papers. It is the intention also to invite several people to address public meetings to be arranged under the auspices of the society information having already been received of a number of famous Alpinists, a noted natural history student, and a lady botanist who are expected on the Coast within the next few months. If they can be prevailed upon to lecture here the meetings will be arranged.

The membership of the society here numbers about thirty.

* William Stewart Drewry was born in Belleville, Ontario in 1859. He qualified as an Ontario Licensed Surveyor in 1882, and a Dominion Licensed Surveyor in 1883. In 1884 he was hired by the Surveys Branch of the Department of the Interior, working under Captain Edouard Deville who pioneered photogrammetry as a method of surveying in Canada. In 1892, he was commissioned as a B.C. Land Surveyor and began work for the Surveyor General's Department of the B.C. government, working mainly in the Nelson and Slocan mining districts and continuing his use of photographic

surveying. In 1897, he moved from Kaslo and entered private practice with H.T. Twigg in New Denver, surveying mineral claims throughout the Kootenay area. Drewry was also a mining entrepreneur during this period, staking personal claims and assisting in the establishment of the Provincial Mining Association of B.C. and The Association of Lead Mines of B.C. Drewry dissolved his partnership with Twigg in 1906 and moved to Nelson, working independently both on mining work and the survey of roads in the area for the government. In 1909, he was appointed the first and only Chief Water Commissioner of the province, a position he held until 1911 when he resigned. From 1911 to 1913 he held the position of Inspector of Surveys for B.C., and until 1922 conducted a number of surveys for the Department of Lands and the Department of Mines. He was responsible for much of the Cariboo/Lillooet district boundary survey. After 1922 he took private work and retired in 1930. He was an active member of the British Columbia Licensed Surveyors Association, being on the board in various capacities between 1909 and 1922. He was also a member of the Masonic Order, and the Alpine Club of Canada. William Drewry died in Victoria in 1939.



*5040 WinterSki. Photo by Tom Roozendaal, submitted to ACCVI's 2019 photo competition
Vancouver Island Category*



Passing it forwards: Skiing with the Little Munchkins at Mount Cain

By Sonia Langer

Two years in a row, these two lively little munchkins shared a weekend at Mount Cain. Lily and Sofia. They are now ski buddies. Mama Tashi Hofmann and Papa Brian Hinds had a chance to work, study, and catch up in Victoria, and sent four-year-old Lily off with Mami Alcina and Papi Martin. Lucky for two-year-old Sofia and I to have these great friends with whom to spend the weekend.

The drive to Mount Cain had a new level of challenge for Martin and Alcina and I: audio books, songs, stories, and snacks are necessary to keep the kiddos entertained. For one little munchkin, bathroom breaks, and the other, the emptying of the plastic potty at the side of the highway. Everything with a toddler is epic!

The next morning, after the valiant journey of getting our gear on, and getting all that gear and both munchkins to the bottom of the bunny hill, it was finally time to ski. Lily and Sofia, each between the skis of an adult had many runs of shooshing down the hill! What fun! It was so great to see Martin Skifreak with his joyful, giggling granddaughter. It was so great to ski with my daughter. After all those years, all those ski trips with Martin and others, here we were passing it forwards to these two little munchkins.



Sonia with Lily and Sofia with Mount Able in the background. At Mount Cain.



Martin Hofmann with granddaughter Lily, enjoying a ski day at Mount Cain.

Trying not to be a pushy parent, or too forceful, I just really, really, really wanted to see her ski by herself. I explained to little Sofia how to put her hands on her knees, and how to skootch forwards in little steps to gain some velocity. The concept of pizza and French fries was lost on her, as she's never eaten French fries, and her legs aren't strong enough to hold a snow plow shape. That she was so focused, so attentive, so willing to please, made me cry a bit. My reverie was abruptly shattered and I stopped crying when I realized that she'd somehow sorted it out and was now plummeting down the slope. Gah, I should catch her!! Luckily, the forward motion also shocked her, and she sat down and skidded to a stop. After a few more tries, she found the speed by parallel sidehilling for a good while: she managed it! She was skiing!! This was more exciting than any skiing I've ever done. For Sofia and I, this was our Dreamchute.

"Again, again, again", she cried. I cried too.



Ski buddies in January of 2019. Lily almost 3 and Sofia not yet walking at age 1. The beginnings of what might be years of skiing together.



Little Sofia super focused on her skiing on the bunny hill at Mount Cain.

And Lily too, skiing all on her own, her little legs holding her up and pointed towards Mami Alcina! Watching Martin carefully guide her direction as she skied between his skis, and then watching him simply let her go, to carry on alone, catching some impressive speed, sure was thrilling! I cried again to hear Martin's joy and encouragement, and see his arms thrown wide with exclamations of, "Lily, you did it!" Passing it forwards!

Lily and Sofia are looking for a few more munchkins with whom to ski! It's a whole new kind of adventure involving laughing, crying, stubborn refusals, puzzles, stuffies, books, and for a few more months, a plastic potty.

Hišim̓'awił One Year On

By Martin Hoffman

By all measures the new hut on 5040 Peak is a great success. It has received more guests than we expected, even in the dead of winter, totalling 1543 paid nights as of January 2020. That's not counting many, many nights of volunteer workers who either acted as custodians or worked on the hut construction or, in most cases, both. The hut is being used by members and non-members and a good number of users were under 17, the youngest being 6 weeks old. At the other end, the oldest user was 86. Without exception the guests praise the hut not only for its location with spectacular sunsets but also for the facilities such as pellet stove, drying rack, propane cook stove and a well-equipped kitchen. The comments in guest book and on Facebook are proof that the hut was done right.



Photo by Laura Greenfield

While it is often referred to as just “The Hut” it now has an official name. Hišim̓'awił means “Gather Together” in the Barkley Sound dialect of the Ucluelet First Nation. The pronunciation is [Hi-SHIM-ya-wit]. The name was proposed by the First Nations Warrior Youth in consultation with the elders of the Ucluelet First Nation. The naming ceremony took place up at the hut with members of the Warrior Youth and ACCVI youth in attendance.

The hut also has a functioning webcam and weather station there now. We have been collecting images of the changing seasons since May 2019 and weather data since October 2019. The weather conditions are harsh up there and the anemometer got iced up more than once in early winter, but we have some wind data and the anemometer is not broken so we will be getting more. The next step is to find a way to get that back to the web so we can check on current conditions. That will be a project for spring and summer. In the meantime, there are a couple of time-lapse videos from last year at: <https://accvi.ca/hisim'yawił-gallery/>

We have also installed two wind turbines that will provide electrical power when there is less sun, November – February. This is especially important to have given the number of clients going up there all winter long. The settings are still being tweaked but they should be working next season.

Members can book a year ahead, non-members 30 days ahead. We find that people's lives change and we often get cancellations and empty spaces. So, if you can't book too far ahead, try anyway. Costs continue to stay the same \$20 per night for members and \$25 for non-members. Those under 17 are half price. As long as we manage to keep our hut income and expenses equal, we hope to keep the same rates.



Photo by Gary Croome



Photo by Chris Jensen

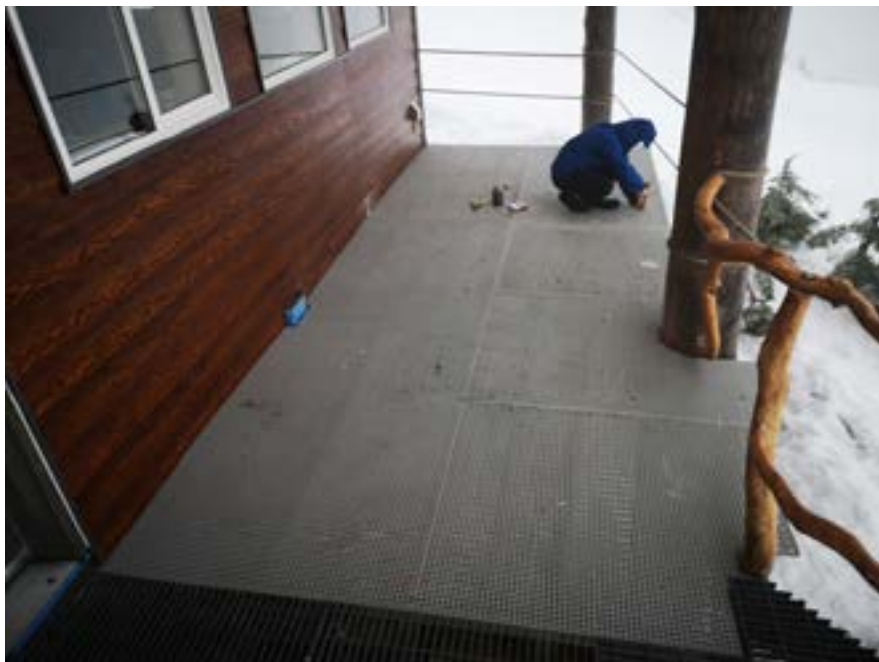


Photo by Kelsie Wamer

Edward Whymper and the Volcanoes of Ecuador

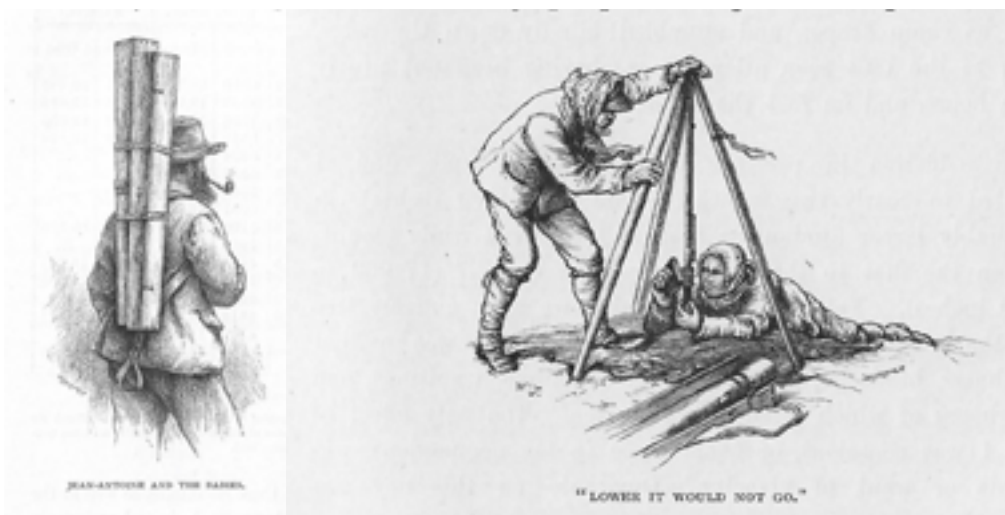
By Don Morton

In preparation for a visit to Ecuador last September, I reread Whymper's account of his 1879 -1880 Travels Amongst the Great Andes of the Equator which he published in 1892. Since this remarkable story could be of interest to readers of the Bushwhacker Newsletter, I have prepared a short summary.

From December 1879 to July 1880 Edward Whymper led a scientific expedition to Ecuador supported by the Swiss guides Jean-Antoine Carrel and his cousin Louis Carrel. Along with studying the physiological effects of altitude and gathering information about plant and insect life, their goal was to determine the heights of the highest volcanoes. There was much uncertainty about these peaks because no one had completed the precise triangulation required to bring the sea-level datum to the mountain areas.

Whymper had used the services of Jean-Antoine Carrel many times in the Alps including three of his eight attempts to climb the Matterhorn mostly from the Italian side, but for the disastrous 1865 ascent two Italian clients already had engaged Jean-Antoine secretly to climb the ridge from their side. Consequently, Whymper hired Michel Croz and the Peters Taugwalder, father and son and ascended the Hornli ridge from the Swiss side. On reaching the summit, he saw the rivals far below and signaled his success, so they retreated. J.-A. Carrel returned with three colleagues and reached the summit by the Italian ridge three days later. Any remaining animosity must have dissipated by 1879.

The Ecuador plan was to measure accurately the air pressure on each summit with a mercury barometer - a glass tube nearly a meter long filled with mercury. For redundancy, Jean-Antoine carried two such barometers on most ascents, stopping for measurements on the way as well as on the summit. Each barometer and its leather and wood carrying cases weighed 6 1/2 pounds. The accompanying engravings by Whymper shows Jean-Antoine with the awkward load which they called the "babies" and the set up of the tripod for taking a measurement. An assistant at sea level in Guayaquil recorded daily readings to correct for changes in atmospheric pressure.



Engravings showing the carriage and use of the mercury barometers

From January to July 1880 Whymper and his two guides made first ascents of Chimbarazo, Sincholagua, Antisana, Cayambe, Saraurco, Cotacachi and Carihuairso and a second ascent of Chimbarazo by an alternate approach as well as recording measurements on the summits of Corazon, Cota-paxi and Pinchincha already climbed by others. The team also reached the lower summit of Illinzi, but ice-varnished ridges kept them from

the highest point and bad weather terminated an attempt on Altar. The following table shows how their altitudes compare with current measurements. The mean correction to Whymper's values is -86 m.

Whymper's 456-page treatise *Travels Amongst the Great Andes of the Equator* records all the climbs as well as much information about local flora and fauna, some archeology and anthropology, remarks on their own physiology at altitude and two folded maps. Since Whymper was a professional engraver, the book is illustrated abundantly, depicting specimens they collected as well as mountain scenes like the views of Chimbarazo reproduced here.

My own two-week visit provided an initial exploration of the higher regions of this small country. Using the efficient intercity buses and a few inexpensive taxis I visited Guayaquil, where there is a superb Archeological Mu-



Engraving of Chimbarazo from the approach on the first ascent.

seum, Cuenca, the archeological site at Incapirca, the rail tour of the Devil's Nose, the capital Quito, the Equator crossings of the highway to Ibarra and a rail tour down to Salinas. Actually there are two Equator crossings, the first where early surveys located it, and the second a little farther north determined by a more accurate GPS measurement. On my return south, a taxi from Riobamba took me to the west side of Chimbarazo, where I hired a bicycle for a descent on the gravel road from the appropriately named Carrel Refuge at 4800 m. (The Whymper Refuge, 200 m higher by trail, is the usual base for summit climbs.) From Latatunga, in another taxi, I visited Cotapaxi National Park, where I climbed the trail the final 200 m to the Jose Rivas Refuge at 4800 m. After a minor eruption of gas and ash in August 2015 and some continuing activity, the authorities closed the Park for a year.



Engraving of the first ascent of Chimbarazo.



Chimbarazo in 2019 from the south west, viewed in the same direction as Whymper's engraving.



Cotapaxi from the north in 2019.

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From the Front Cover:

Stefan Gessinger on the first winter ascent of Mount Rosseau

Photo by Evan Devault

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Well done everyone!

