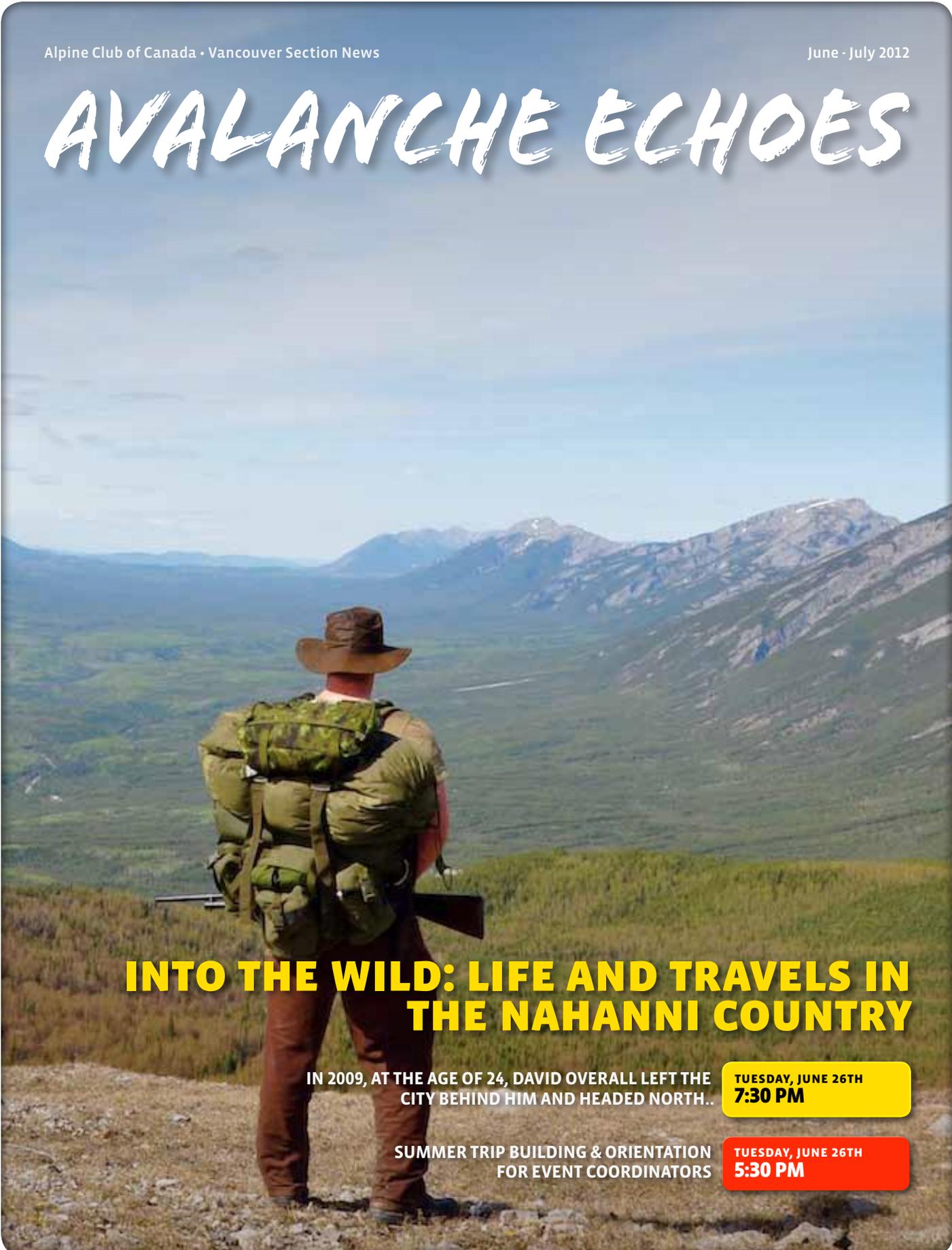


AVALANCHE ECHOES



INTO THE WILD: LIFE AND TRAVELS IN THE NAHANNI COUNTRY

IN 2009, AT THE AGE OF 24, DAVID OVERALL LEFT THE CITY BEHIND HIM AND HEADED NORTH..

TUESDAY, JUNE 26TH
7:30 PM

SUMMER TRIP BUILDING & ORIENTATION
FOR EVENT COORDINATORS

TUESDAY, JUNE 26TH
5:30 PM



ACC VANCOUVER SECTION

The club meets monthly, usually for a slide presentation, at the Floral Hall in VanDusen Gardens, W 37th and Oak St., at 7:30 PM on the fourth Tuesday of the month, except in July, August and December.

www.accvancouver.ca
info@accvancouver.ca

Mailing address:
ACC Vancouver Section,
c/o Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC
130 W Broadway, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1P3

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Single \$ 41 / \$ 51 *
Family \$ 61 / \$ 71 *
Junior (under 18) \$ 31 / \$ 41 *
*Includes postal delivery of the
Avalanche Echoes

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
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Editor: Brad Badelt, 604 742 1711
echoes@accvancouver.org

SUBMISSIONS

We encourage submissions of writing (txt, rtf and doc formats), photography and drawings (jpg, tif, png). Email your submission or call the editor. Deadline is the 20th day of the previous month.

ADVERTISING

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

EDITORIAL POLICY

Suitability for publication is at the editor's discretion within the guidelines of the Section Executive. Articles may be edited for clarity or to fit the available space.

executive

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spearhead Huts Project

The Vancouver and Whistler Sections of the ACC are members of the Spearhead Hut Project—a group seeking to install huts along the famous west coast Spearhead Traverse. Find out what the Spearhead Hut Project is all about by checking: www.spearheadhuts.org.

The following documents are now available for interested readers:

- 1) Spearhead Huts System Proposal to BC Parks, prepared by Manrico Scremin
- 2) Environmental Assessment, prepared by Tobin Segal
- 3) Schematic Design proposals, prepared by Chad Manley
- 4) Public Survey, prepared by Liz Scremin & Jamie Bond

Vancouver Island Climbing

This year the ACC Vancouver Island Section celebrates its centennial year. One of the projects created to honour this event was a book entitled: "Above the Bush: A Century of Climbing on Vancouver Island 1912 – 2012" by Lindsay Elms. The book is now available at www.lindsayelms.ca

The ACC Welcomes Newfoundland & Labrador, and Southern Alberta Sections to the Club

At its Board of Directors meeting in Canmore, Alberta on May 26, 2012 the board unanimously approved the creation two new sections of the Alpine Club of Canada, the Southern Alberta and Newfoundland & Labrador sections. The Southern Alberta Section is the sixth in that province while the Newfoundland & Labrador Section is the first ACC section east of Montreal. The NL Section establishes the ACC in Atlantic Canada for the first time in its history.

The State of the Mountains

As Canada's national mountain organization, the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) has a commitment and responsibility to act as a steward of our mountains—to bear witness to the things our members see and experience in the high places we love so much. The State of the Mountains Report is a result of a collaborative effort between the ACC Access & Environment and Mountain Culture Committees. In this report, through the observations of many of our most experienced members, we have attempted to act on this commitment and "speak for the mountains". The report can be found at: <http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca/environment/forms/SOTM.pdf>

Annual Hiking and Painting En Plein Air Weekend Sept 14-16, 2012

Come hike, draw and paint high in the alpine of the Mount Baker ski area. All skill levels and all media (acrylic, watercolour, graphite, pen and ink, etc) are welcome. Weather permitting, we will be outdoors each day exploring the local trails and scenic viewpoints at Picture Lake, Bagley Lakes, Artists Point and Table Mountain. Accommodation and meals will be provided at the Mount Baker Ski Lodge, a woody dorm-style facility operated by The Mountaineers.

When: Friday-Sunday, September 14-16, 2012

Where: Mount Baker Lodge at the Mount Baker Ski Area, Washington, USA

Participants: Min 6 - max 14 enthusiastic people

Cost: \$80 for ACC members and \$120 for non-members (The fee includes accommodation and meals.)

For more information and to register, contact Liz Scremin at 604-921-2651 or liz@pensiamo.com

NORMAN PURSSELL – Norm to those who knew him well – died in Vancouver on Saturday, April 28, 2012. He was 92 years of age.

Norman was a Life Member of the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) having taken out his membership in 1953. He had experienced his first mountain adventures in the Snowdon Mountains of North Wales in 1940. His interesting life story includes much more than his mountaineering accomplishments. He was born in the suburbs of London, England. During WWII he was trained as a Royal Air Force pilot and by the end of the war attained the rank of Flight Lieutenant. A three month training stint in air navigation on Prince Edward Island (PEI) would connect with one of his major climbing accomplishments many years later in 1967.

Having visited Canada during his wartime training, he was keen to start married life in Canada. In February 1948, he and his new bride sailed into Halifax harbour aboard a troop carrier along with many other newly married couples. Norm and Win were soon on the train to Vancouver where he started his career in engineering. Within a couple of years, their home in West Vancouver was under construction.

As a couple they enjoyed summer train trips to the mountains, with destinations like Glacier Park being a favourite. The family soon grew with Roy's birth in 1954 and twins Eileen and Tanis in 1959. Climbing and hiking trips continued with their first family camp in Larch Valley in 1962. During that summer trip Norm took Roy then aged eight and his six year old friend John up Mount Eiffel.

Norm had a lifelong interest in conservation. He was a member the Vancouver Natural History Society (since 1950) and the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists. He volunteered for many roles within these organizations including the role of president for both. One of Norm's most active conservation issues was his involvement in the Skagit Commission. He had first visited the Skagit Valley, 150 km east of Vancouver, in May of 1952. Conservationists were eventually successful in having the area turned into a provincial park. During the period of his involvement Norm was appointed by the BC government as one of the Canadian Commissioners representing the conservation community.

He dedicated a lot of his spare time to the Vancouver Section of the ACC, including a two year stint as chair of the section in 1967-68. In 1985 Norm received the ACC's



*Norm using his navigation skills. Mount Garibaldi in the background.
photo by: Roy Edgell*

prestigious Distinguished Service Award. He led many trips and camps over the years. Norm's cheerful demeanor and enjoyment of the outdoors ensured that his trips were fun to be on. He was recognized as a calm leader and always showed sound judgement in the mountains.

With all of his outdoor activities one of his fondest memories was that of the ACC Yukon Alpine Climbing Expedition (YACE) in 1967 to celebrate Canada's Centennial. Much has been written about the YACE camp held in the Centennial Range of the St. Elias Mountains. The Governments of Canada and the Yukon were keen to have mountaineering as a part of the country's centennial events. The ACC supplied teams of 4 climbers to do first ascents of peaks named after the ten provinces and two territories. Two additional peaks would also be climbed: Centennial and Good-Neighbour Peak sharing the Alaska border. With the 1967 ACC General Mountaineering Camp held in the same area, 250 climbers were in the St. Elias Mountains that summer. When Norm was passed over for a position on the BC climbing team he immediately applied for the PEI team and was accepted as that team's leader!

In a 1968 Canadian Alpine Journal article on his team's ascent, Norm recounted; "We only had a map with 150m contours and a few aerial photographs." The small four person PEI team was overwhelmed by the vastness of the St. Elias. This was not the Rockies or Coast Mountains they were used to.

Their first attempt started in earnest in the early hours of July 13, 1967 but by 8:00 pm they were back in their camp, unsuccessful but with a better understanding what was needed to succeed. The second attempt on July 16 saw them departing camp by 1:30 am. The skies were clear and the views incredible with the sunrise lighting up Mount Logan. Upward progress was slow and careful climbing throughout the morning was required to first gain the false summit and then traverse a long sharp ridge leading towards the main summit of Mount Prince Edward Island. By this time the weather had deteriorated to whiteout and falling snow. The team pushed on up the final 300m of the SW slopes reaching the 3738m summit at 1:30 pm. The PEI Provincial Flag and Canada's Centennial Flag were both left flying on the summit when the team headed down at 2:20 pm. The newly fallen soft snow made the descent treacherous requiring many pitches of belayed climbing. The difficulties of the descent can be summed up by the fact that the team did not arrive back in their camp until 1:00 am the next day! Norm noted some easier approaches to this mountain and it is therefore unlikely that the first ascent route will be repeated.

Norm lost his beloved Win, after 53 years of marriage, in 2000. Despite this loss, with the encouragement of his close friends and family, he was able to resume his outdoor activities. Norm was still skiing and hiking in his late 80's.

-Paul Geddes

The Alpine Club of Canada bids a fond farewell to Life Member Norman Pursell, a Club member since 1953. In addition to climbing adventures from the Snowdon Mountains of North Wales to the Rockies, Selkirks and Saint Elias, he served as a Royal Air Force pilot in WWII. A devoted husband, father and engineer, he also volunteered with Vancouver Natural History Society and the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists, serving as president of both. As one of the Canadian Commissioners representing the conservation community on the Skagit Commission, his efforts were instrumental in having the BC area designated a provincial park. A dedicated Vancouver Section member and active volunteer, Pursell was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award. His fondest mountain memories were of the ACC Yukon Alpine Climbing Expedition celebrating Canada's Centennial in 1967. Serving as PEI team leader, his small group of four made the challenging first ascent of Mount Prince Edward Island.

Despite the pain of losing his wife, Win, after 53 years of marriage, Pursell continued skiing and hiking with friends and family until his late 80s.

Read Pursell's full obituary in the 2012 edition of the Canadian Alpine Journal.



*Norman Pursell hiking in Fitzgerald Park, Southwestern Australia in September 2005.
photo by: Elsie Foreman*



UPCOMING SOCIALS

26 JUNE 2012

Into the Wild: Life and Travels in the Nahanni Country

In 2009, at the age of 24, David Overall left the city behind him and headed North. He spent two years in the village of Tthenaago, a remote First Nations community on the banks of the legendary South Nahanni River in the Northwest Territories. He explored not only the river but its surroundings, making numerous first descents of tributaries and traveling through land few people have ever seen. Join us as David recounts his experiences in the village, sharing his photography and his impressions of one of the world's last great frontiers.

David Overall is an award-winning writer and photographer whose work has been featured in the Globe & Mail, Reader's Digest, and other publications.

26 JUNE 2012

Summer Trip Building & Orientation for Event Coordinators

The workshop will consist of dinner, refreshments, and a series of brief presentations by knowledgeable volunteers on how to organize a successful trip. Covered topics will include gathering information about your event, posting your event on iCal, screening candidates, and managing your event.

Mount Baker through Coleman Deming Glacier

June 2 - 3, 2012

After many days of skiing in whiteout conditions this season, I was watching the weather carefully prior to our trip to Mount Baker, scheduled for the weekend of June 2-3. The forecast called for rain in the lower mountain on Saturday and a possible window of good weather on Sunday. Since this was going to be my last ski trip of the season, I decided to once again wake up early on Saturday and hope for the best. Led by Marilyn and Dan Friedmann, eleven of us met at the Chevron Station on Boundary Rd and left Vancouver around 7am. The border crossing at Sumas took longer than usual as it turned out that June 2nd was the first weekend after changing the duty free allowance for short stays, and Dan's car was selected for a random search...

We regrouped at the Glacier ranger station and we found out that we did not actually need a parking permit, as we were not going to park in a parking lot. The Forest Service Road turn-off is just after the Glacier Ranger station to the right and the 8.8-mile road to the Heliotrope Ridge trailhead was clear of snow up to the last mile. After leaving the road, we started our climb via the winter route by going through some trees and couple of moderate creek crossings until we reached open snow slopes. From then on, the route was clear, but the snow slopes became increasingly steep as we gained elevation. Some fog started to move in as we were climbing, but we were not quite in a whiteout yet. By the time we got up to the glacier, the visibility was getting poor and the weather was moving in as we had expected. Two people from our group decided to bail out and ski down. Since we were not going to enjoy clear views, we opted not to camp on the flat part of the glacier on a windy night. Rather, we decided to climb up a bit further and camp directly under the ridge of the Black Buttes, where we would be more sheltered from the wind. This was a good choice as we could afford to have a later start the next morning. I have to mention that this was one of the busiest winter campsites I've seen, almost like camp Muir at Rainier. About 15+ tents, and only our group was on skis. After setting up our tents, we dug a snow kitchen and later in the afternoon, we were finally rewarded by gorgeous views of the upper mountain and ridges as the clouds partially cleared.

We had read different weather forecasts and according to Dan's report we were going to have a window of good weather

in the morning, lasting till early in the afternoon. We woke up at ~ 5 am to poor visibility, so slept some more and by 6 am, it seemed that the weather was improving. After having a quick breakfast and putting our harnesses on, we started our climb around 7:30, a relatively late start for spring skiing. There was good coverage on the crevasses and we were not planning to rope up. But since we were going to be on the heavily crevassed glacier, we had planned to take two 8 mm ropes. An hour into the climb, we realized that we had only taken one! So Allen volunteered to go down to fetch the second rope and catch up with us, which he did in an impressively short time. We enjoyed a mellow ascent and firm snow conditions to the Coleman Glacier-Deming Glacier col, working around the few obvious crevasses. At that point we switched to boot crampons and carried our skis as we ascended the ridge to the base of the Roman Wall. It was quite icy but excellent for cramponing. But by this time we were exposed to the full fury of the winds blowing from the southwest, and our faces were exposed to blowing snow and ice pellets.

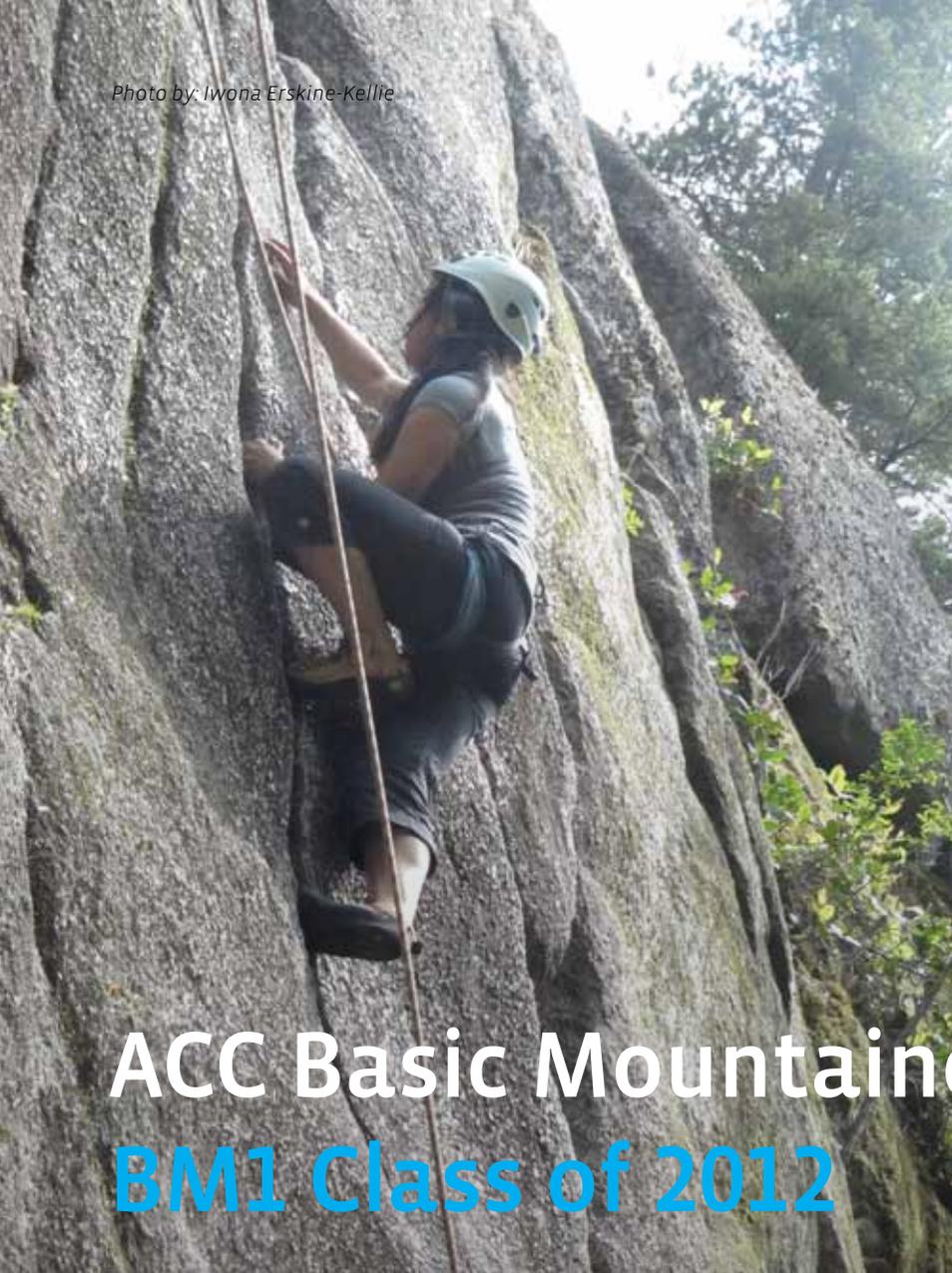
While assessing the last slope of the Roman Wall, it was icy enough that we had a short debate on whether to leave skis behind or not for our summit push. By this time, there were patches of fog moving in and out and I had high doubts that the snow would soften. Nevertheless, we ended up carrying our skis for the steep climb up. We noticed on the way up that the icy slope was interspersed with patches of fresh powder snow, making us more optimistic about the feasibility of a ski descent. Once on top of the Roman Wall, it was quite windy and we were losing the visibility pretty quickly, so we didn't cross the expansive plateau to the true summit. After brief hesitation, with Reza's and Dan's reassuring words, we convinced ourselves that the patches of powder snow clinging to the slope would allow us to actually make turns on the icy Roman Wall, so skis went on and down we went, one by one. Skiing down the Roman Wall was quite enjoyable and nicer than we thought it would be. Skiing on powder in June is thrilling enough and we even had moments of blue skies to take in



great views as the wind continued and fog came and went. Further down, we switched back to crampons to descend the short icy ridge back to the col. We knew that we had a nice ski run ahead of us back to the campsite. However, the fog was increasingly bothersome and we needed visibility to navigate through the crevasses of the upper Coleman Glacier, despite having a GPS track that would take us back to camp. So at several points we took minute-long "waiting for the clouds to part" sessions, preparing to make our breaks when the sun briefly reappeared. Using this strategy, we did not blow our chance for a good ski run and finally made it down at the campsite, after a fantastic run with excellent snow conditions for skiing. After packing up our tents and having a cup of tea, we were in for more skiing down Heliotrope Ridge to the lower open slopes. The snow became heavier and heavier lower down, and our thighs burned navigating steep-ish slopes with heavy packs, but it was still a quite decent, enjoyable, and continuous ski back to the trees. A short walk in the woods and we were on the road again. Once on the road, the rain started ... our window had closed, but we had timed it perfectly. This was a great trip. Thanks to Dan for leading the trip and sharing his experience and intimate knowledge of the terrain. My skis are now packed away until next year.

By: Mandana Amiri

Photo by: Iwona Erskine-Kellie



ACC Basic Mountaineering Course

BM1 Class of 2012

“How are you doing?” Our leader calls down as he breaks trail. “Fine!” I squawk. In reality waves of fear and vertigo threaten the exhilaration of summiting as we near the jagged peak of Mt Matier. At 2,783m it’s the highest in Joffre Lakes Provincial Park, near Pemberton.

Today is the culmination of three weekends of instruction, team-building and experience gained on the ACC Basic Mountaineering Course. Starting with two days of rock climbing at Smoke Bluffs in Squamish, followed by snow and ice drills on Mt Seymour and finally an ascent of Matier, our group of 24 rookie mountaineers are taking things pretty seriously right now.

As several rope teams labour up the mountain’s north east ridge, our leaders steering us safely away from an arching cornice on one side and a great drop into nothingness on the other – we are definitely on the “don’t fall” plan.

Everything we’ve learnt is imperative to our safety, from the alpine butterfly knots securing us to our rope, to tightly fastened crampons that kick US, French, and now front-pointing German-style footholds into the slope.

We all had a huge laugh practicing self arrest with our ice axes the week previously on Seymour, diving down a slope like penguins – feet first, head first, even on our backs. But up here on Matier, as we plunge our axe shafts deep into the snow every couple of steps, we’re now capable of holding a fall. Saving a life.

Falling chunks of dislodged ice fly past us from above and then disappear quietly into the soft blanket of cloud hiding the Matier and Anniversary glaciers far below. Behind us are striking views of Mt Joffre (2,721m) and a multitude of other peaks appearing as islands scattered across a sea of clouds.

A distant rumble grows louder and more sus-

tained as an avalanche suddenly thunders down below out of sight. It’s mid-morning and the sun has been baking the slopes faster than expected. Conditions are deemed unstable and it’s time to descend.

As my team crouch precariously on the knife-edged summit we have seconds to enjoy the moment before turning around to follow the others heading down.

Beyond the col between Matier and Joffre the snow has turned to icing sugar and as we wade through, another avalanche sweeps down the Anniversary Glacier, wiping out our earlier tracks and making it impossible to return the way we’ve come.

My team investigates a descent of the steeper, crevasse-riddled south side of the glacier. Having been well instructed in crevasse-rescue, we’re ready to prussic out or rig up belay anchors and a zed-pulley hoist if needed. Thankfully no one does a disappearing act but it’s enough to inspire more practice in



Photo by: Lucy Selkie



Photo by: Jessica Selinger

these particular skills back home.

We discover this side of the glacier to be equally unstable, so the whole group gathers safely at a tall rock bluff to wait for the sun to go down and the snow to harden sufficiently for our return to camp at Keith's Hut 3km below.

During our five-hour wait we realize a few things. Namely that it's good to have extra food, water, layers and a sense of humour ready for such delays. Sun block helps too, in this giant reflector oven. More than a few of us return to work with fiery nostrils and other extremities.

We lay back, enjoy each other's company and watched nature's show of force as a stream of avalanches crash down the slopes on both sides of us.

By early evening there's a consensus that the north slope is sufficiently firm, and we double-time it across the debris fields one rope team at a time.

What an epic day...

From our "alpine start" at 4am we don't arrive back into camp until around 8.30pm. We quickly pack up and hike through the dark with headlamps, reaching the cars at around 11pm before a three-hour drive back to Vancouver.

It's been a true adventure though, and we've enjoyed an amazing course with a fantastic group of like-minded people. We'd like to thank all our instructors for volunteering their time to share their valuable knowledge and experience with us. Thank you: Margaret Hanson, Tony Knight, Martin Siegert, Amir Khamlou, Brad Schalles, Saar Moisa, Ian Ross, Travis McClinchey, Gunnar Olovsson, Mark Snaterse, Iwona Erskine-Kellie and David Hiscock.

Text put together by Beth Williams and Jody Lotzkar



Photo by: Iwona Erskine-Kellie

UPCOMING SOCIALS & COURSES

Crevasse Rescue-Dry school

Monday, June 25 (BCIT climbing wall, Burnaby Campus)

This is a training session for crevasse rescue techniques including prusik training and various pulley arrangements (mainly drop loop and Z pulley).

Into the Wild: Life and Travels in the Nahanni Country

Tuesday, June 26 (Floral Hall, Van Dusen Gardens)

In 2009, at the age of 24, David Overall left the city behind him and headed North. He spent two years in the village of Tthe-naago, a remote First Nations community on the banks of the legendary South Nahanni River in the Northwest Territories. He explored not only the river but its surroundings, making numerous first descents of tributaries and traveling through land few people have ever seen. Join us as David recounts his experiences in the village, sharing his photography and his impressions of one of the world's last great frontiers. David Overall is an award-winning writer and photographer whose work has been featured in the Globe & Mail, Reader's Digest, and other publications.

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The workshop will consist of dinner, refreshments, and a series of brief presentations by knowledgeable volunteers on how to organize a successful trip. Covered topics will include gathering information about your event, posting your event on iCal, screening candidates, and managing your event.

UIAA Rock Climbing Instructor Course

Beginning Saturday, July 28 (Squamish)

After this training, the candidate will be proficient in leadership and teaching skills during a rock climbing activity on top-rope, with leader-placed or bolted protection and on single or multi-pitch terrain, according to the standards of the International Mountaineering Federation (UIAA).

"Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible."

Dalai Lama



UPCOMING TRIPS & SOCIALS

- SAT, JUN 23 2012 - SCRAMBLE - NORTH TWIN (D3: DIFFICULT)
- SAT, JUN 23 2012 - SCRAMBLE - MT. LINDEMAN (D3: DIFFICULT)
- SUN, JUN 24 2012 - SCRAMBLE - SKY PILOT (D3: DIFFICULT)
- MON, JUN 25 2012 - TRAINING - CREVASSE RESCUE-DRY SCHOOL (D1: EASY)
- TUE, JUN 26 2012 - TRAINING - SUMMER TRIP BUILDING & ORIENTATION FOR EVENT COORDINATORS (D1: EASY)
- TUE, JUN 26 2012 - MEETING - INTO THE WILD: LIFE AND TRAVELS IN THE NAHANNI COUNTRY (D1: EASY)
- THU, JUN 28 2012 - SKIING - LITTLE TAHOMA PEAK & MT. RAINIER (D3: DIFFICULT)
- FRI, JUN 29 2012 - HIKE - SOUTH CHILCOTIN - TYAUGHTON CREEK BIKE OR HIKE (D1: EASY)
- SAT, JUL 14 2012 - MOUNTAINEERING - STORM PK. AND MEDITATION MTN. (D3: DIFFICULT)
- SAT, JUL 28 2012 - TRAINING - UIAA ROCK CLIMBING INSTRUCTOR COURSE (D3: DIFFICULT)
- SAT, JUL 28 2012 - MOUNTAINEERING - BUGABOOS OR ROGERS PASS (D2: MODERATE)
- SUN, JUL 29 2012 - SCRAMBLE - ROGERS PASS / BUGABOOS - HUT BASED (D2: MODERATE)
- SAT, AUG 18 2012 - SCRAMBLE - STONERABBIT (D5: EXTREMELY DIFFICULT)
- SUN, AUG 19 2012 - SCRAMBLE - LARABEE MT SCRAMBLE (D2: MODERATE)
- FRI, SEP 14 2012 - HIKE - HIKING AND PAINTING EN PLEIN AIR (D1: EASY)
- SAT, SEP 15 2012 - SCRAMBLE - COQUIHALLA SCRAMBLING WEEKEND (D4: VERY DIFFICULT)
- SAT, MAR 23 2013 - SKIING - VALHALLA SKI CAMP (D3: DIFFICULT)



Return undeliverable Canadian address to:
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c/o Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC
130 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1P3