



ISLAND BUSHWHACKER

*Volume 32 * Issue 3*

September, 2004



*Elizabeth Parker Hut - Lake O'Hara, 2004 Resting after a day's climbing & hiking.
Photo: Judith Holm*

VI SECTION MESSAGES

*ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST
THURSDAY, OCT. 21, 7:30 PM
UVIC UNIVERSITY CLUB (FACULTY CLUB)*

Submit your best from the past year for the photo contest.

Please bring slides in the following categories. Contest rules are simple: contestants may submit up to four entries in total, maximum two in any one category.

- ◆ VI = Vancouver Island Mountains: scenery, with or without people.
- ◆ MA = Mountain Activity: people in mountain settings.
- ◆ MS = Mountain Scenery: no people in the picture.
- ◆ NA = Nature: flowers, animals or natural scenery. no people or man made objects.
- ◆ HU = Humour: use your imagination.
- ◆ Bring your best prints: in any category or mountain theme.

NEW: Send your digital pictures to Rick Hudson (email, rickhudson@shaw.ca) well in advance for burning onto a cd.

When images are e-mailed, each file name must have the format: PHOTOGRAPHER'S INITIALS-CATEGORY-NUMBER. For example, Joe Blogg's entries in Mountain Activity would be labelled: JB-MA-1, JB-MA-2.

Mark your slides or photos clearly with your name and the category entered. Submissions should have been taken within the past year. Winning entries will be featured in our 2004 Bushwhacker Annual.

VANCOUVER ISLAND SECTION
OF THE
ALPINE CLUB OF CANADA



SECTION EXECUTIVE
2004

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SECRETARY - Jules Thomson 472-3820
TREASURER - Geoff Bennett 853-7515
MEMBERSHIP - Jules Thomson 472-3820
NATIONAL CLUB - Gerta Smythe 478-7369
SCHEDULE - Sylvia Moser 595-3670
FMCBC - Sasha Kubicek 478-0487

MEMBERS AT LARGE
Russ Moir
Selena Swets
Sasha Kubicek

BUSHWHACKER EDITORS
Rob Macdonald 727-6734
Viggo Holm 477-8596
Ian Brown 727-2480

SUPPORT POSITIONS

EQUIPMENT - Mike Hubbard 370-1096
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ACC website:
<http://www.alpineclubofcanada.ca>
ACC VI website:
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NOTE: Deadline for the next issue is: Mon. Nov. 1, 2004. Send all submissions to: holm@telus.net

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BANFF MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL WORLD TOUR

NOVEMBER 20 & 21 7:30 PM.

AT THE UNIVERSITY CENTRE AUDITORIUM

Saturday Night's Show will focus on short high adrenalin films.

Sunday Night's Show will focus on mountain culture and expeditions.

Tickets will be available at the University Centre Auditorium Box Office -- Tel. (250) 721-8480 and Valhalla Pure Outfitters from November 1st.

Access to Alpine on "Our Doorstep" Russ Moir

For several years now we, as a Club, have had ready access to one of our local, favourite alpine areas, Mts. Landale, El Capitan and Service via Cottonwood Creek. When the access road over Timber West's private lands was gated about 7 years ago we managed to negotiate a 'club key' for use by our members. There were some frustrations with lock changes, but on the whole it worked for us and we had access to some lovely alpine scenery.

Now over the last 2 years there have been changes. Due to vandalism on Cottonwood, Timber West changed and restricted key access to the gate at Youbou. Through some more 'negotiations' with their logging office we have been able to renew our Club's access to the road BUT under very restricted conditions. We're trying to ease those restrictions through some 'creative thinking'. One extra 'fly-in-the-ointment' has just occurred. Timber West's logging operations have just this month been taken over by a new company, Teal Jones, a Vancouver based outfit. We don't as yet know what their access policy will be towards groups like ourselves.

SO: For the interim here are the steps to go through for key access to the gates around Lake Cowichan

- ✓ Contact Timber West/Teal Jones office at Masachie Lake (contact Russ Moir 477-0070 or Murrough O'Brien first for this information)
- ✓ Go to the office at Mesachie Lake IN OFFICE HOURS (7:30am-4:30pm) to pick up key

This means Mon-Fri ONLY!! Key has to be returned BEFORE 4:30pm on that day OR with permission on next work day (say Mon. morning). It can be done!

A small group of us recently "showed our faces" to see if access could work. We found the office people very co-operative, even helping us get around the 4:30 deadline, but that method can't be relied on as yet.

In stark contrast to this scene, over in the Chemainus valley, at week-ends only, there is a very friendly gate-keeper, operating 7am - 9pm AND now Weyerhaeuser DO NOT even charge the previous \$2 /car fee - whoopee!

BUT (there's always a "but") the company have shaved a huge swath of the lovely old growth forest on the S slopes of Whymper. For access to the SE ridge get onto C29 from the 'park area' at C28 (go up to jct C27, go left on FINE new road to Jct C27/C29 go right on "highway" as far as possible to reach old growth on trail up - now only 2 hours easy to summit. The other way is to go on mainline to C29 and head up. Just a good traction car will be fine all the way.

The new road could give a good ski trip onto Whymper summit in winter as the ridge section is opened up. You win some, you lose some.

National Club News

Notes from the Board Meeting,

May 15th - 16th 2004.

Gerta Smythe

What a contrast: Leaving flowers and sunshine in Victoria, packing skis and also using them for a full day's skiing in winter conditions! It's great fun, meeting friends from across the country and enjoying mountain-comradery before the tasks around the meeting table.

The meeting always starts with the sections' reports. Although they are mailed in ahead of time, every rep has a chance to stand up and speak of achievements and struggles and it's a great time for sharing.

It's always interesting to hear from Montreal's rented ski house to Prince George's introduction of a writing contest and at the same time wondering, if the trip reports will be categorized as fiction or non fiction!

Montreal will send 27 members to their summer camp at the Wheeler Hut; Jasper is planning to climb Mt Columbia in 2005 to celebrate Alberta's Centennial. Calgary is at the time the largest section with 700 members. They offer 60 trips in winter and summer, 3 weeks of summer camp and many workshops, but noticed, that only 50% of the membership participate. The 3 Eastern Sections have been invited to participate at a coroner's inquiry into 10 climbing deaths since 1989.

It's interesting to hear, that some Alberta sections receive government funding unlike the situation here in BC where government funding to clubs was discontinued a number of years ago. When I asked, how one can apply for gov. support, I was told: move to Alta.

Toronto has managed the unique 'Bon Echo' Hut for 48 years, one accesses the hut and the climbing areas by boat. They have also produced a beautiful edition of the history of this hut.

Saskatchewan is boasting the lowest membership fee. They receive income from the sale of their t-shirts and a fun adventure race, they hold every summer. Dave was also wondering, if the electronic version of their newsletter is indeed read and if one should not continue to mail out the copies. A show of hands indicated, that all sections now have their news letters on the web, but 50% are mailing them out as well.

The Vice Presidents gave impressive reports, proof that many volunteers work diligently for the club. Carl Hannigan, VP facilities, is ever increasing the quality and quantity of our

huts. He is having discussions with BC Parks to build a hut in the Robson area and has been given the custodianship to the unique warden's cabin at Elk Lake.

There was a discussion on unaffiliated members and how to encourage them into the fold of the various sections where they live. Someone suggested to have members only on section trips. But of course, many unaffiliated members only join for a specific national trip and may not live anywhere near an ACC section.

Bruce Keith reported, that the office staff are maxed out and that we could help with their workload, if we were to reply promptly to inquiries.

Great Centennial Planning is under way: Manitoba is inviting the AGM to Winnipeg in 2006; Bob Sandford will produce a new membership handbook and stated, that digitizing 87 years of the journal is a huge job and will take 2 years for sure.

There was a report, that our great 'moneymaker': the Canadian Alpine Centre at Lake Louise is having financial difficulties. We own 30% of this venture and SAHA (South Alberta Hostelling Ass) 70%.

A Nominating committee was introduced and the slate of officers for next year's election will be announced at the fall meeting.

There are new regulations for 'Youth in the backcountry' and we can find these on the Web.

Much time was spent on the annual deficit and how to overcome this worrying situation. But since the AGM was in the early afternoon, the decision to increase membership fees and make the individual sections pick up the rest was not made until the next day by a vote of 17: 7. But you have heard about this by now from our News Letter and it too is posted on the Web.

Mike Mortimer recommended a new award to honor Don Forrest by recognizing a person who has made a significant contribution for the betterment of the whole mountain community.

Vice president for 'Services' pointed out, that the ACC was becoming increasingly involved in International Sports competitions and he suggested, that we follow the world with the 'anti doping policy': this motion was approved.

Karl Nagy Memorial Scholarship

Application Deadline January 31, 2005

This scholarship is intended to provide an opportunity to ACMG candidates and/or ACC aspiring amateur leaders to develop their skills and abilities within the ACC General Mountaineering Camp environment. All applicants must be current members of the Alpine Club of Canada.

For more information contact:

Jon Rollins
Mountain Adventures Coordinator
adventures@AlpineClubofCanada.ca
403-678-3200 ext. 112

2004 The North Face/Alpine Club of Canada Winter Leadership Course

Application Deadline: October 25, 2004
Location: Vista Lodge, Golden Alpine Holidays
Date: January 10 - 17, 2005 (8 days)
Guides: Cyril Shokoples, Peter Amann
Asst. Guide: Brad Harrison
Cook: Kelly Mager
Participants: 10
Cost: \$600 + GST

FMCBC REPORT

Saturday, June 19 2004

Sasha Kubicek

All representatives that made it to Chilliwack were welcomed by beautiful weather and great hospitality from the Chilliwack outdoors club that were hosting this year's Annual General Meeting. Clubs from Vancouver Island all the way to the Fraser Headwaters were in attendance. Club reports were made and the areas of main concern to everyone were access issues, insurance issues, and funding issues.

The FMCBC's new executive director, Evan gave his report. He has been busy with the administration of the FMCBC and trying to streamline current processes going as far as even obtaining new website providers. His family will be moving to Vancouver in September.

A discussion about the Federations current insurance situation was had. In this complicated world of legalities, the Federation and other clubs are all trying to understand what their policy actually offers them and where they may be limitations. This opened up much discussion from other clubs.

Committees then gave their reports from Rec and Con to Trails. These volunteers have been very busy all year working on huge issues like the Sea to Sky Forum and Motorized Back Country Use. To hear a brief summary of the enormous amount of time these committees put towards these issues was impressive. The biggest thing was all this effort is volunteer time which sometimes gets overlooked. Some clubs noted that all this volunteer time focused on Lower Mainland issues. It was agreed that members on committees usually focus their time on issues that they personally feel passionate about but would be eager to help out with other issues.

If clubs have issues that need the Federation's help, they are to put together as much information as they have on the issue and pass it along to one of the committees.

Near the end of the day lots of discussion was had around what the Federation is going to do with land they own in the



Sasha Kubicek on Mt Cheam

SMOKE DRUMS IN SQUAMISH. It was agreed that a committee member will take this area on and research into getting a covenant put on the land so that any future decisions that might affect the ownership of the land will have the land itself protected.

With our heads bursting with too much information everyone was invited to unwind at a barbeque hosted by the Chilliwack outdoors club. A good time was had by all and some people stayed for a hike the next day. I myself joined a group going up Mt. Cheam and was treated to a fantastic display of Glacier Lilies and spectacular views of the surrounding area.

Thanks again to the Chilliwack outdoors club for being great hosts.

Snow Safety Seminars, Peter Rothermel

In this winter's trip schedule, I'll be introducing a series of three, separate, day trip workshops, pertaining to snow and it's fickle nature... and ours too.

There appears to be a real duality on trips regarding winter safety gear. For example, on every ski trip, it is usually mandatory for everyone to have a beacon, shovel and probe, yet on winter climbs almost nobody brings any safety gear. Case in point... How many people on the Mt. Klitsa trip, a few years ago, that had been caught in an avalanche, were wearing beacons, or had shovels, or had probes? How many of those same people would never get on skis, even in safe terrain, under stable conditions, with out first having their safety gear in place? As well, many people that travel in the back country in the winter, hiking, snow shoeing or cross country skiing don't consider themselves hardcore and assume they don't need the safety gear... yet they do travel where avalanches could possibly occur.

Finally, there are some that just can't afford the cost of safety gear and are willing to take a chance in traveling in winter back country.

These comments are not meant to point a finger at anyone, but to make the point. We can all use more knowledge and learning about avalanche never ends.

I'm not an expert at snow safety, nor am I a qualified teacher and these seminars are not a substitute for a proper recreational avalanche course. What I am trying to achieve is to get both experienced and inexperienced winter recreationists together for some loosely structured, in the field discussions and to share information. Participants are welcome to attend any or all these workshops.

The area we will be traveling through will probably be the Saddle Route on Mt. Arrowsmith or at the Forbidden Plateau Ski area. Snowshoes or skis will probably be useful, depending on conditions, but not mandatory. It will be stop & go travel, so participants should layer their warm wear towards both aerobic activity and standing still for long periods. The traveling will not be hard and will be of a "B-2" nature.

The first workshop will be, Common Sense Snow Safety, geared towards using our first line of defense and our most important tool...our brains. We will act as though we were in the back country with no safety gear... how to recognize avalanche danger, how to test conditions on the move

and how to avoid dangerous areas and what to do if caught by an avalanche, with nothing more than an ice axe and a ski pole. As well, we will discuss first aid and comfort for victims. It will be done on the move, hiking through snowy terrain with many stops to assess conditions and discuss how to proceed.

The second trip will be "Using Your Safety Equipment", focusing on safety gear with a main theme around beacon use and multiple victim searches. As well, during breaks, we will discuss the merits of different types of beacons, shovels, probes and how to use them. We will likely spend most of our time in one area repeatedly practicing finding and recovering victims, with the last part about how to deal with a recovered victim and going for help.

The last day trip of the series will be "Snow Science 101" and will deal with the structure of snow, digging test pits of different types and studying the crystal structure of the different layers under magnification, with a hand lens. We will try to test different aspects of slopes, but for the most part will not be very active. Lots of warm wear will be needed, with insulated boots, bum pads and warm drinks recommended.

I am hoping to have experienced and knowledgeable people helping and many interested in learning more about the mysteries of snow.

Note: These are practice sessions and not a replacement for CAA instruction, but a precursor or supplement to proper instruction.



Arrowsmith in Spring conditions

Photo: Peter Rothermel

Up-Island News 2004

by Lindsay Elms

The snow was deep and around longer than normal years but once we began getting the hot weather in June it quickly disappeared and it continued to disappear at an alarming rate. On Easter Saturday Valerie O'Neill and Lindsay Elms visited the local Beaufort Range did a route up the North Face on Mount Clifton from Kim Lake. Meanwhile Sandy Briggs, Paul Rydeen, Darren Wellman, Hinrich Schaefer and Julie Deslippe climbed the entire West Ridge of Cat's Ears Peak. On Friday they spent 7.5 hours getting to a camp on the first bump at 3,800 ft and on Saturday: "...we had a sunny marvellous ridge tour with some steep snow, a rappel or two, a little rock climbing, lots of exposure, super scenery, and a stunning situation. If it weren't for the bush it would be an instant classic! We spent the whole day on it then came down on Sunday morning in just under five hours of bushwhacking. Cat's Ears West Ridge 'integrale' is a super fun snow route." On the August long weekend Sandy, Mike Miller and Josh Slatkoff also made the third ascent of the West Buttress on Rambler Peak. Peter Rothermel finally made it up Rambler on his fourth attempt along with an ascent of the imposing Rambler Junior. Peter also managed, on his second attempt, to get to the top of Warden Peak and finally get his IQ. Other summits for Peter included 5040 Peak, Red Pillar, Mariner Mountain, Maquilla Peak and a rained out trip to Mount Tom Taylor. However, in Peter's words: "The summer is not over yet!" Other trips saw climbers reaching the top of Shadowblade, Flat-top and Witches Hat in the Mackenzie Range, Crown Mountain and Grayback Peak in the Haihte Range, Mount Kitchener (Prince of Wales Range,) Mount Tom Taylor and Big Interior Mountain. There are also reports of some of the Heathens visiting the peaks and spires at the northern end of the Haihte Range. On August 18 Lindsay Elms and Val O'Neill climbed Marjories Load, the southern summit of Big Interior Mountain, and found a film canister left by a party of six climbers from the 1st Arrowsmith/Port Alberni Scout group who had climbed the peak on July 23, 1965. The contents of the aluminum canister were dry and in good shape which is more than can be said for many of the PVC summit registers. With the incredible summer where rain and overcast weather were rarely observed, more than the usual number of parties went in to the Golden Hinde, almost making it a tourist route along Phillips Ridge. The hot weather also saw many overwhelmed with heat exhaustion and two women were rescued from Phillips Ridge by the Campbell River Search and Rescue.

On June 19 was the inaugural Kusam Klimb Mountain Endurance Event in Sayward on Mount Hkusam. This event was billed as:

A wild and rugged 22 km loop heading up (meaning steep) and over Mount Hkusam and down the Stowe Creek watershed. Elevation gain is a mile high over the first 6km of Bills Trail. Starting at sea level, participants pass through some of

the most spectacular scenery on Vancouver Island with views of mountain peaks and the Johnstone Strait as they negotiate their way over the well developed trail. The loop includes hard packed hiking trails having steep inclines and declines, open sloped rock scrambling, deactivated gravel logging roads, alpine meadows with possible snow pack, multiple creek crossings at various levels, unstable surfaces with possible obstacles such as fallen trees and boulders, and asphalt road surface (approx. 2.2km). Some sections are remote with no vehicle access. After a rural start at Sayward's Heritage Hall participants will pass farms in the valley, old, 2nd and new growth forests, scenic view points on rock bluffs, and active logging sections. Four strategically placed checkpoints include first aid, support and direct contact to the race headquarters start and finish line. Two checkpoints will offer refreshments and one checkpoint will offer a hot lunch. Climbers will be timed. Some will race, most will Klimb to the finish and brag about it!

The winner of the event was Andrew Hallam, a Courtenay runner who is currently residing in Singapore, in a time of 2:51:19 and he was followed by Courtenay's Keith Wakelin in 2:51:51. Keith is no slouch as in 1998 he did the Golden Hinde in 24 hours with Lindsay Elms. The first female was Claire Townsend from Victoria in a time of 3:05:41. Victoria's ACC member Mike Miller had a great finish time that placed him 7th overall. For this first time event there were 140 participants, a much larger number than anticipated, and with those sorts of numbers the prospects for the event look good for the future. For more information and results on the Kusam Klimb visit: <http://www.sayward.com/klimbcurrent.htm>

The Heathens Mountaineering Club had their annual summer camp based at Crest Creek Crags in July and from all accounts it was its usual success. A full report will be in the next update.

Meanwhile, there are new developments at the Comox Lake Crags. John Waters has published the long awaited guide book to the crags which also includes several other notable bluffs that the locals scale such as Ramparts Creek on Mount Washington and the bluffs at Morton Lake near Campbell River. At the same time the Village of Cumberland has issued a formal request for proposals for the operation of the Comox Lake Park and Campground. A sixteen page submission guide lays out the framework council will use to make a decision and award the contract. The deadline for the proposals is September 17, however, the old contract doesn't expire until December 31 and the village council has stated a new agreement must be in place by October 31. In the 1997 planning committee report which outlines the long range plan for the Lake Park, it calls for "fuller, safer, and more effective use of the property." The plan also referred to "eco-tourism" and "non-invasive" uses – such as canoeing, hiking or nature education – as "highly desired and encouraged." Rock climbers are fearing they may face restrictions on access to the numerous climbing bluffs. The report called for operators to "discourage the climbing of the rock cliffs within the area for any

reason,” however, Mac Fraser, the chief administrative officer for Cumberland, cites its main concerns are liability but hasn't ruled out rockclimbing and has invited members from the climbing community to come before council as a delegation and make their feelings known.

Access to the Comox Glacier and other nearby areas has been closed for periods this summer when the forest was considered to dry and fire danger extreme. Timberwest has been logging in the vicinity of the Glacier trailhead and a good 2x road has been pushed across Datsio Creek through to Comox Creek and by the signs of the flagging it looks as though they

will be pushing the road further towards the park boundary. Unfortunately, Timberwest is going to begin logging seven days a week in the area thus making access harder as they are strict about no one using the Comox Lake Main while they are actively hauling. Loaded trucks are coming out every five minutes from a variety of locations since they have opened up the Cruikshank River area. According to Timberwest this is not just for this year but next year as well, however, the road is open between 6 PM and 6 AM (when the fire ban is not in effect.) It is recommended to contact Timberwest before heading into the area to get the latest information.

It has just recently dawned on me exactly what a trip leader's REAL role is.

by Peter Rothermel

On our recent washed out Tom Taylor trip, I found the real reason and my true calling for being a trip leader, worthy of the title.

We had left camp in a ceiling of cloud somewhere below my chin and found ourselves thrashing through shoulder high, sopping wet blueberry bush and within an hour of our hike we were soaked to the skin, yet still continued on. An hour later found the rain starting to fall and my good pal Tom forging ahead, with a few other alpha types setting a manic pace and half the group strung out behind, while I frantically tried to both keep up with the “alphas” and hang back enough, so those following would still see someone and not lose heart.

The next hour saw the rain coming down in real earnest and still the group surged ahead. My day pack was weighing more, from rain soak, than my multi-day pack did, on the approach in. I knew that Tom would never admit defeat and it dawned upon me that nobody else in front would either. As it turned out, nobody behind would throw in the towel either.

I shouted out, “STOP, WE NEED TO MAKE A DECISION”. It fell on deaf ears and the group surged on like up-hill jello. When I finally got the group to, “STOP! STOP! NOW! STOP!”, it was decided to find a couple of large trees to duck under out of the rain and discuss our next step. The “Alphas” wanting to go UP to find a dry treed spot and the rest weren't talking. Someone made the observation that as the tree line was thinning and we wouldn't likely find a large dry treed spot unless we went DOWN.

That's when I grabbed the reins and stated, “OK, this Tom Taylor trip is officially ended. Anyone wanting to go on will not be on an official Alpine Club trip. Who wants to continue?” Nobody said anything. So I said, “Who wants to go down?”, thinking I'd have some support for where I wanted to go. But no. Not one person would say they wanted out first.



Wet Peter

Photo: Denise Hook

Everybody was casting glances around waiting for the first to admit defeat so they could quickly follow and not be the first to cave in. The silence was only broken by the hissing sound of rain fall, as it soaked ever deeper into our boot soles and our bodies souls. So I stepped up to the podium and announced that I would publicly state, and go on record, as the wimp that chickened out first, to the sighs of relief from EVERY person, including all the “alphas.”

Only later, on reflection, did I come up with the realization that a trip leader's real role isn't in coordinating the logistics of the trip's start, setting a pace, route finding, or any of the things most people would associate with the job. A trip leader's true role and only REAL purpose is to chicken out first and allow the rest of the group to save face!

HISTORY

Plane crash on Mount Arrowsmith 1954

Lindsay Elms

Fifty years ago this October on the Sunday of the Thanksgiving weekend a RCAF flight from Vancouver to Tofino crashed onto the slopes of Mount Arrowsmith. The Twin engine Beechcraft C-45 Expeditor aircraft had a crew of four aboard and were on their way to conduct a Thanksgiving Day service in Tofino when it went missing in the vicinity of the mountain. At the time brothers, Ulf and Adolph Bitterlich, two well-known mountaineers from Port Alberni and Victoria, were climbing on Mount Arrowsmith when they heard a plane engine rev up, stop and then crash. They reported that at the time of the crash there was a heavy snowstorm and visibility was poor and were therefore unable to find where the plane had crashed but were sure it was within a mile radius of the mountains summit. Later that afternoon after the call had gone out saying a plane had gone missing RCAF aircrafts were also unable to locate the downed plane.

Monday morning the search continued with seven aircraft and two helicopters in the hunt for the missing plane. The search planes picked up two weak SOS signals and it was believed they may have come from a portable transmitter called a Gibson Girl carried by the missing craft but the signals were too weak to be pinpointed. This gave a slight glimmer of hope that some of the airmen might have survived, however, no further signals were received. At the same time two teams

of experienced alpinists headed by Ulf and Adolph Bitterlich were dropped by helicopter near the summit of Arrowsmith. While flying in the wreckage of a plane was sighted through the mist at the 5,100 foot level on the east slope of the mountain and by 11:20 A.M. they were able to confirm a positive identification of the wreckage as that of the plane. Searchers located three bodies near the scene of the crash and the fourth body was believed to be still inside the wreckage.

For the next several days fog and winds up to 70 miles per hour on the mountain and sleet combined to ground three helicopters who were waiting for favourable weather to fly into the site where a small crew were sitting by the crashed plane. In the meantime a ground rescue team of 33 from RCAF Comox and Sea Island managed to hike in to the crash site in driving rain and sub-zero temperatures and by Thursday night had brought out, overland, the four bodies.

Remnants of the plane can still be found on the slopes of Mount Arrowsmith although the crash site is not obvious anymore. Smaller pieces of the plane have been removed by souvenir hunters, a common occurrence at any crash site or site of historical interest. This is just one of many other plane crashes that have occurred on the mountains of Vancouver Island although it is something that we all don't want to happen too often as invariably loved ones are lost.

'T WAS A FINE SUMMER IN THE MOUNTAINS !



Mulvey Basin, August 2004

Photo Doug Hurrell