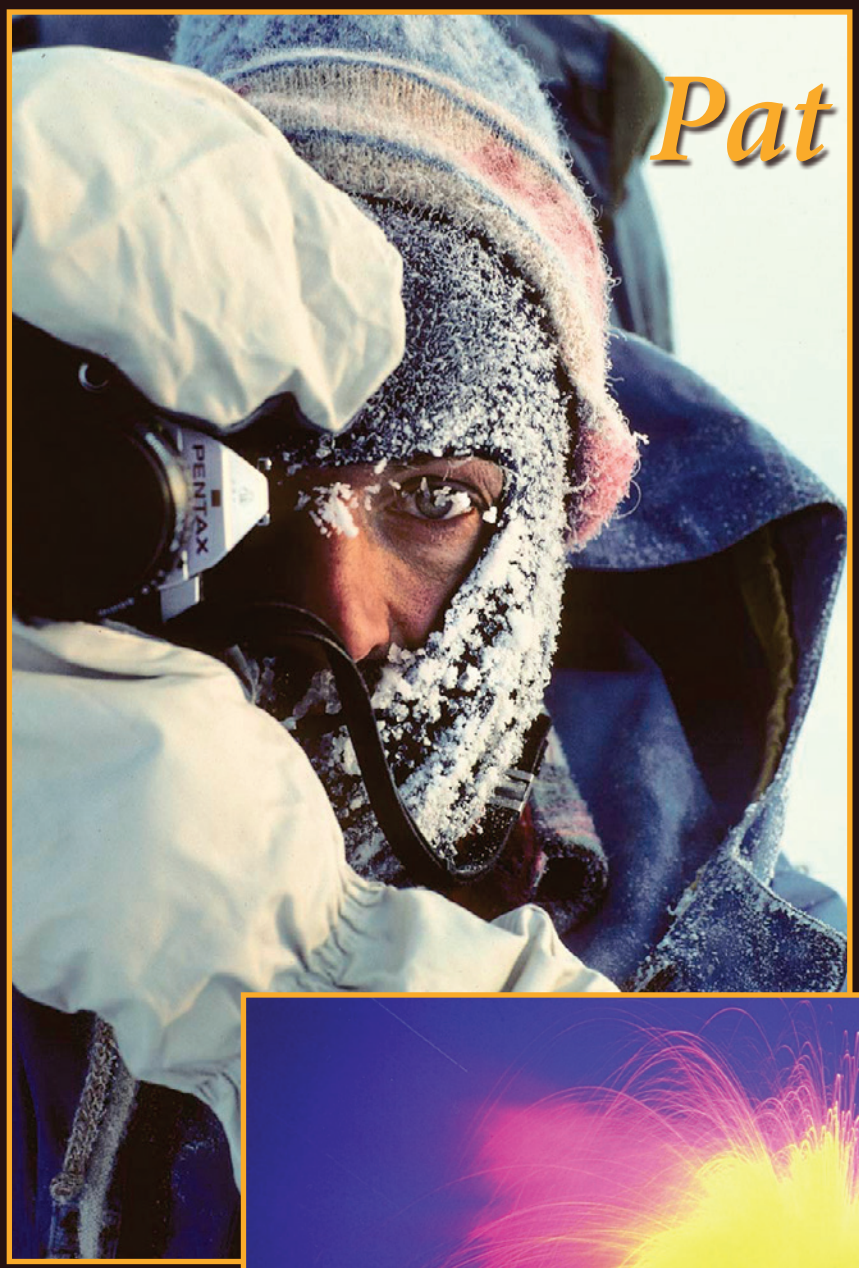
Focused on Adventure

Pat Morrow



by
Lynn
Martel

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Portrait of Pat Morrow

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The Alpine Club of Canada
P.O. Box 8040
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T1W 2T8
403.678.3200

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Front cover photos:

Pat endures -50 C temperatures while climbing Mount Ad Astra on Ellesmere Island, Nunavut. 1984 (photo: Martyn Williams)

When Pat's team went to climb Klyuchevskaya volcano on Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia, they found that it was erupting and had to change their objective. 1990

Pat and Baiba experienced the timeless culture of Dani tribesmen in Baliem Valley, Irian Jaya, Indonesia. 1994

Back cover photo: Baiba and Pat, "at home" on Jumbo Pass in the Purcell Mountains, British Columbia. 2010 (photo: Alex Mowat)
Title page photo: Lhakpa Tshering, Pat's summit partner on Canada's 1982 Everest team, boulders with majestic Mount Ama Dablam towering in the background. 2000 (photo: Baiba Morrow)

Introduction

More than once in my conversations with Pat Morrow during the process of putting this booklet together, I couldn't help but be struck by how often and how much he'd benefitted from the most serendipitous timing.

At no time or place was this more apparent to me than when Pat led me into his photo vault. Literally, a room whose walls are lined with filing cabinets and bookshelves all containing slide images of his various projects, essentially his life's work, with strips of tape identifying adventures in Nepal, Tibet, Japan, Kamchatka, Antarctica, Yukon, Africa and Indonesia, just to name a few.

The mere fact that so many of these photographs are saved on slides, and not on microchips as nearly all photographers' work is today, says much about the time in which he followed his heart and curiosity to explore some of the planet's most compelling landscapes and cultures.

Pat Morrow's story however, is so much more than the photos he took, the expeditions he embarked upon, the stories he's told in books and magazine articles and films in partnership with his wife, Baiba. And it's so much more than his legacy of being the second Canadian to stand on the summit of Everest as a member of our nation's first successful Everest expedition in 1982, or his being the first person to have completed the Seven Summits project in 1986.

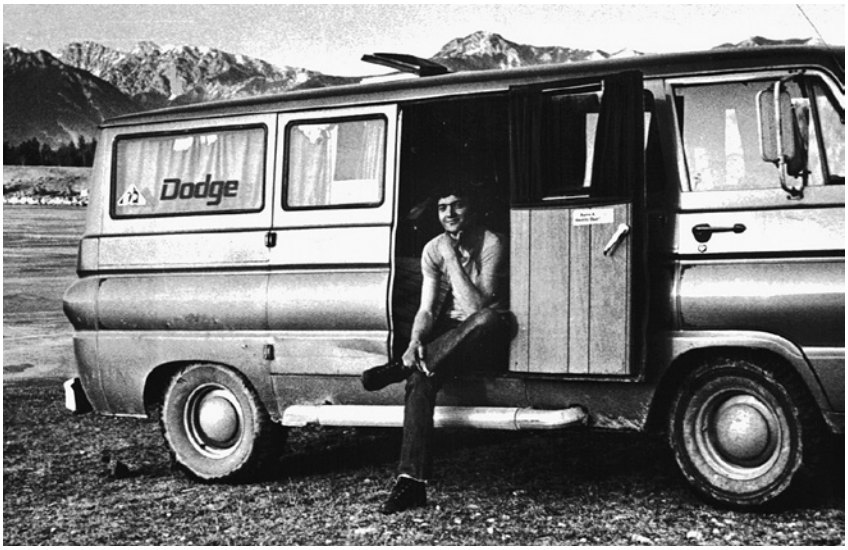
Pat Morrow's story is interwoven with the good fortune of having shared relationships with some remarkable people and how he embraced their lessons not just to achieve great success in his career, but to exhibit humility, generosity and gratitude in all aspects of his life through his unique, sensitive, respectful and revealing perspective.

And that's exactly why Pat Morrow is the perfect Patron of the 2010 Mountain Guides Ball.

—Lynn Martel

Project: *Adventure photography 101*
Location: *Kimberley and Calgary*
Years: *1952 to 1976*

Patrick Alan Morrow was born in Invermere, BC on October 18, 1952. His dad, Frank, was a carpenter and for the first year of Pat's life the family lived at the Giant Mascot Mine up the Spillimacheen Valley in the Purcell Mountains. After moving around the East Kootenay, they settled in Kimberley for Pat to begin school. As young boys, Pat and his buddies explored the bush on foot and by snowshoe. Through his high school years, Pat and his dad ran a hobby trap line on the south fork of St. Mary River.



Pat's Dodge van was his mobile base camp on adventures ranging from Alaska to Mexico. 1976 (Morrow Collection)

"We'd catch beaver, marten, wolverine, lynx," Pat recalls. "That's what got me interested in the outdoors in the beginning—hunting and fishing and pursuing, well, killing things. Then I discovered climbing, and I thought, well, there's a real sport where you're the one who could get killed. When I think of what hunting represents—knocking down an animal with a high-powered rifle—isn't sporting at all, whereas climbing is a pursuit that gets you out into the mountains without harming anyone, except yourself, or your partners, if something goes wrong."

Pat's first climbing encounter remains a strong memory. At 15 or 16, while exploring near St. Mary Lake with a friend he heard the sound of a piton hammer pounding metal into rock. Approaching the crag, Pat spotted two people on the rock face. With his awareness of climbing limited to a Walt Disney film about two kids climbing the Matterhorn, he could barely believe his eyes.

"I didn't realize climbing was a real sport," Pat admits. "It was almost too good to be true. Then the leader popped off and fell nearly the whole height of the crag before being caught on the rope by his partner."

When the climbers descended, one of them suggested Pat tie into the rope. "I had a cast on one arm, but as soon as I started moving up the rock, I knew. That was the sport for me."

As Pat pursued his new passion with friends, Bob O'Brien, the climber who had suggested Pat tie in that day, stepped forward to share the rudiments of climbing safety. Eventually he suggested Pat connect with the Calgary Mountain Club (CMC).

"In those days, there were no climbers to speak of living in small mountain towns around here, maybe just Banff and Calgary," Pat recalls. "I was totally fortunate to meet this fellow and doubly fortunate to be taken under his wing and do some climbs together."

While still in high school, Pat's Air Cadet instructor introduced him to the darkroom, an experience which developed into Pat's decision to pursue a career in journalism. Initially leaning toward writing, he changed his mind after the local newspaper editor whittled a story that had taken him hours to write down to a few sentences accompanied by a photo he'd taken.

"A hundred twenty-fifth of a second to take a picture, and hours and hours to write a story," Pat comments. "The light went on."

Prior to moving to Calgary for journalism school at SAIT (Southern Alberta Institute of Technology), Pat wrote to the CMC. Then president Archie Simpson replied with an invitation to join a group in the Bugaboos that summer for the $20 cost of a one-person food cache.

Suddenly Pat was feasting on cheap cheese and bologna and noshing amidst some of North America's top climbers, including Chris Jones and Brian Greenwood.

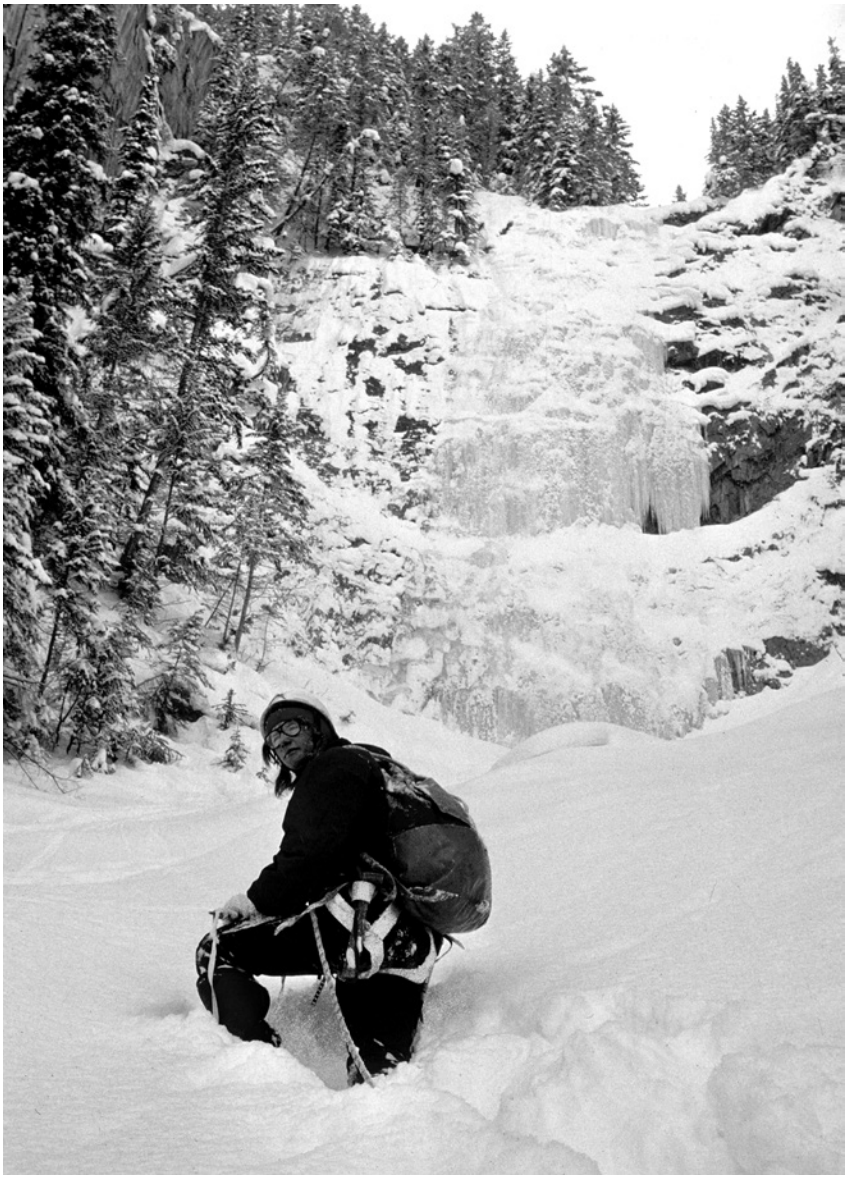
"All the core of the Mountain Club was there, sussing out new routes on the west side of the Howsers," Pat recalls. "I went in with a buddy

from Kimberley. Obviously, the stuff they were doing—wanted to do—was way above my abilities. But at least I could see them and spend a few days hanging out with them."

There he met Skip King, an American living in Calgary, with whom he climbed Pigeon Spire and attempted Bugaboo Spire.

Joining CMC members at their regular Wednesday night pub gatherings, Pat was inspired by Chic Scott, Donnie Gardner and Brian Greenwood's first winter ascent of 3,618-metre Mount Assiniboine. With only one previous winter ascent behind him—Fisher Peak in the Rockies' Hughes Range—Pat made a full winter traverse of Assiniboine in 1971 with Skip King and Montreal photographer Janis Kraulis—only the peak's second winter ascent. Caught by darkness just below the summit while descending, they dug a snow cave with their hands and ice axes to escape an approaching storm and minus 32 C temperatures.

At 18, Pat was infatuated.



John Lauchlan, one of Canada's finest climbers, makes the first ascent of Guinness Gully in Field, BC. 1975

Pat negotiates an amphibious descent of the Barranca del Cobre in the Sierra Madre Mountains of Mexico. 1979 (photo: Jeremy Schmidt)

His first year at SAIT consisted of learning all aspects of running a weekly newspaper, including selling ad space, laying out pages and writing. In 1971 he edited and co-published *ROCK*, a 16-page black and white magazine populated by climbing stories from the CMC through SAIT's journalism program. When an opportunity to work for the daily *Calgary Herald* presented itself, Pat, then 19, dropped out of SAIT for a year to work as a photography intern.

"I was totally hooked on photography by that stage," he recalls. "But after about eight months of driving around the city looking for pictures, I was starting to lose my creativity and I knew I could never make a living as a staff photographer, or for that matter, work for a daily newspaper."

While he recognized shooting car crashes was not his calling, he does credit his newspaper experience for invaluable training.

"I wouldn't be where I am today if I didn't go through that period, learning how to handle any photographic situation and tight deadlines," Pat admits.

After graduating from SAIT in 1973 with a Diploma of Journalism, he moved to Banff for two years to attend the Banff Centre's Diploma of Visual Communications in Photography program, living with his wife, high school sweetheart, Shirley Zaleschuk. After three years of marriage the couple realized in growing up they had grown apart, as Pat pursued his passion for climbing and photography adventures.

Then in 1974, Pat's mother died of cancer, and after graduating in 1975 he returned to Kimberley to live with his dad.

"It was a grievous loss. It was she who had bought me my first camera and had given me continuous encouragement throughout my early years as a photography student," Pat later wrote in *Beyond Everest – Quest for the Seven Summits*.

Having watched other photography graduates give up as soon as the going—and earnings—got tough, and as some CMC friends bounced from one dead-end job to the next to finance climbing expeditions, Pat made a commitment to follow the model set by his friend, Art Twomey, of living frugally to travel the world with his camera.

"I was determined to live by my camera between climbs, forging a career from my two passions," Pat wrote.

Pat climbs the north face of Mount Athabasca in winter, one of a dozen winter ascents in the Rockies that prepared him for climbs in the Himalaya and the polar regions. 1981 (photo: Jim Elzinga)

As at it would repeatedly during his life, Pat's timing and sense of a good story was serendipitous. While studying photography, he spent weekends shooting some of the world's first waterfall ice climbing images (then a fledgling sport), culminating in a 20-page spread in *Summit* magazine in 1975.

The reluctance of the old-school Brits in having such photos published however, would impart a life-long lesson to Pat to never sensationalize such exploits or those pursuing them.

"They really were gun-shy when it came to having their pictures taken and published in general interest magazines," Pat says. "They were there for the climbing adventure, not the publicity. I had to make sure when I was publishing stuff to try to just be the conduit to the mountains for the general public."

During that era he also spent two years photographing hang-gliders, including Alberta pioneer Willi Muller. In 1976, Pat's father lent him $1000 to buy a bag of Kodachrome and a plane ticket to the Austrian Alps to photograph the first world hang-gliding competition. After selling photos to five magazines, he quickly repaid his debt.

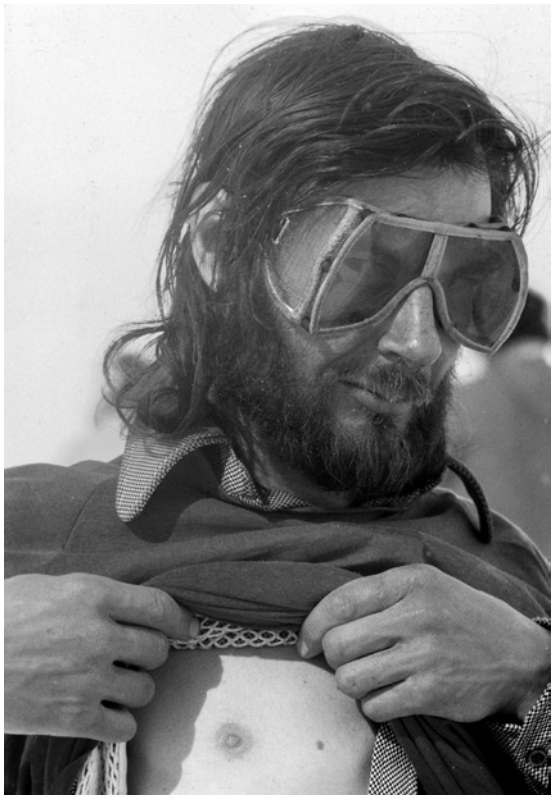
Adventure photography became the single motivating force in his life. With a 30-day Greyhound ticket, Pat travelled to Toronto, Ottawa, New York and Washington to present his portfolio to a roster of magazine editors, living on the bus when he wasn't crashing on people's floors or staying at YMCAs.

"In those days there was no *Outside* magazine, no climbing magazines other than *Summit* in the States, and it didn't pay anything," he recalls. "So I had to go to the general interest magazines, who were mostly interested in hunting and fishing, maybe skiing. It was really easy, and actually really exciting to go to magazine editors' offices and talk about what they were looking for. In those days, you could call them up in the morning and be there in the afternoon, or the next day, and show them your portfolio. In later years, personally seeing editors was impossible. You dropped your portfolio in a slot and a week later you got it back, and you may or may not get a call. It was wild, going out for sushi with people such as the editor of *Life* magazine in New York."

On that trip Pat discovered museums and photographic exhibits that ignited a formative cultural awakening. He also met Frank Edwards, the editor of *Canadian Geographic* in Ottawa, who extended Pat a lifetime couch invitation. When Frank moved on in 1979 to edit *Harrowsmith* and later *Equinox* magazine, Pat was invited to contribute his photographs. Over the next 10 years, he continued making the rounds in Toronto and New York expanding his contacts, meeting other photographers bunking at YMCAs and sparking relationships that endure to this day.

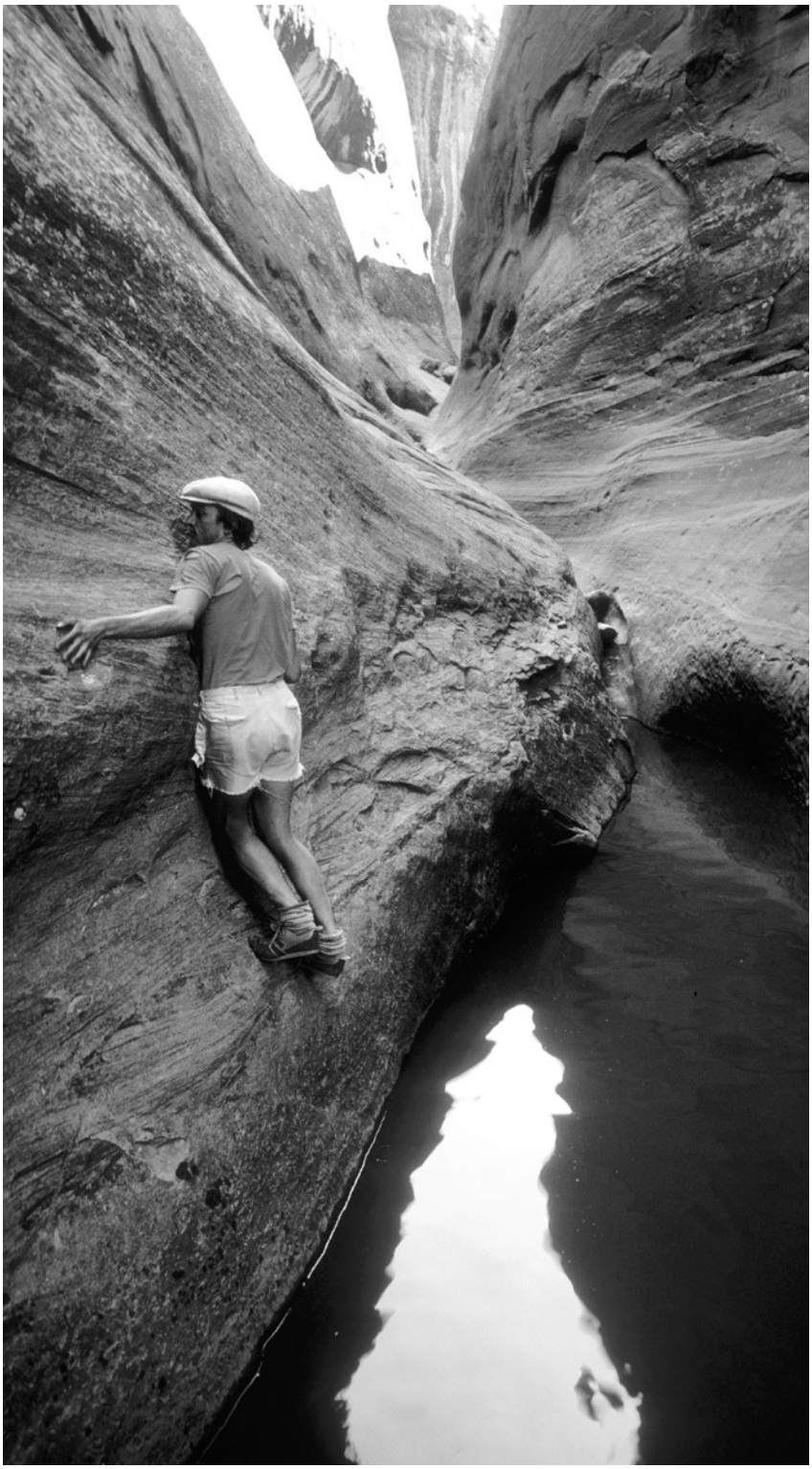
Among them, his relationship with his father, who died in 2003, was invaluable.

"The support of my father—allowing me to keep my room at his house in Kimberley and come in and out of there, never paying rent—for me that was key. All my earnings went to gas, food and Kodachrome."



Bugs McKeith, one of Pat's irreverent mentors from the Calgary Mountain Club, exposes himself on Denali in Alaska. 1977

Project: *Canyoneering and photographing slot canyons*
Location: *Arizona and Utah desert*
Year: *1975 to 1985*



For Pat, the mysterious slot canyons that cleave and crease the Arizona and Utah desert landscape provided the closest exotic place he could visit on a shoestring budget, while offering grand adventure and photographic opportunities.

His first trip was in 1975 with Art Twomey, a pacifist who had been driven north to the Purcells in 1968 by the Vietnam War. Art provided Pat a valuable role model of someone selling his photos while pursuing a lifestyle of outdoor adventure.

"Art gave me the confidence to make a living solely with my photography," Pat explains. "I also loved the way he was conducting his life, living a zero overhead existence. He bought a trap line and built a cabin up in the Purcells, which eventually morphed into Ptarmigan Tours. The trapper's cabin turned into a backcountry ski hut."

Tragically, Art, who ran Ptarmigan Tours with his partner Margie Jamieson, died in a helicopter crash in 1997.

The months Pat spent exploring the slot canyons were nothing short of exquisite, not to mention instructional. He would camp for weeks, sometimes months, on the desert floor, or live out of his van equipped with a bed and gear storage space. Fellow desert rats would join him, including writer Jeremy Schmidt, a former Wisconsin schoolteacher turned Jackson Wyoming resident who worked as a Yellowstone National Park ranger and with whom Pat would share many subsequent adventures.

While places such as Antelope Canyon, Coyote Gulch and other tributaries of the Grand Canyon are now well-known with guidebooks helping lure the multitudes, at that time many destinations they explored were undiscovered and unnamed.

Pat has spent a cumulative year exploring the canyons of the American southwest. 1978 (photo: Art Twomey)

"We were the only people there, it was quite exciting," Pat recalls. "We were always discovering new slot canyons and going to known ones, trying to see them in new light."

With continuously shifting light, the deep, narrow, water-sculpted chasms provided magnificent subjects to develop the talents of a young photographer, while the lifestyle provided an idyllic existence that nurtured dreams and ambitions.

"We'd emerge at dusk from a whole day of exploration, latent images of fluted arches and finned formations from the flood-carved sandstone underworld feeding our imaginations," Pat says. "Lying on the desert floor at night, staring at the constellations, the flute music of Paul Horn's *Inside (the Taj Mahal)* album fed our canyon spirits."

The canyon sojourns yielded material for several magazine articles, including one for *Mariah/Outside*, an early version of *Outside* magazine. In effort to help protect and preserve the canyons' fragile sandstone features Pat and his cohorts applied pseudonyms to canyon names when publishing photos.

"We sometimes entered the labyrinth maze for a week, taking with us enough food and climbing gear to carry out extensive exploration in the cave-like formations. Often in the course of a two- or three-mile section, we would rappel several times, lowering ourselves with ropes into alcoves so deep that the narrow red coloured walls would converge like a dragon's jaw several hundred feet overhead, cutting out the sun for all but a few moments of the day. The rest of the time, the warm reflected light flowed in waves of changing colour, making it seem as though the rock itself was moving."

"...the photographs we brought back, despite the arduous conditions under which they were taken, were delicate, otherworldly reflections of our psyches," Pat wrote in *Beyond Everest*.

Through those formative slot-canyon years, Pat lived richly on an average annual income never exceeding $5000.

Extending the canyons' significance in his life, in 1984 he and Baiba Auders would load up their ubiquitous van to travel into the desert and exchange wedding vows, to the accompaniment of wedding guest Paul Horn and his magic flute.

Art Twomey and Margie Jamieson were Pat's inspirational mentors in the field of photography, conservation and living life to the fullest. 1985

Baiba and Pat tied the knot in the Arizona desert. 1984 (Polaroid photo: Janis Kraulis)

Project: *Book: The Yukon*
Location: *Yukon Territory*
Year: *1978*

Kye Goodwin makes a circum-ski of the Tombstone Range in the Yukon's Ogilvie Mountains. 1979

In 1978, Pat drove his trusty Dodge van from Kimberley north along the Alaska Highway to the Yukon on a mission to prove his mettle as a photographer. He'd met the publisher of Whitecap Books who was planning to produce a book on the Yukon using stock photos. Smelling an opportunity, Pat offered to shoot it, covering all his own expenses. If the publisher liked Pat's images, he'd use them instead.

Pat's interest in the Yukon was piqued two years earlier when he drove past the front ranges of the St. Elias en route to climbing Denali. This time, he had time to linger and shot extensively over the course of the summer and autumn, learning much about being an adventure photographer, including the potential for devastating equipment mishaps. While bivouacing with friends Uldis Auders, Janis Kraulis and Ingrid Prouty on Mount Hoge to catch the sunset over the Donjek Glacier, Pat dropped a lens. When Ingrid reached to grab it, she inadvertently kicked it further down the mountain. Later, they returned to camp to witness the backside of a grizzly protruding out the tent door. It had bitten through a leather lens case, but fortunately hadn't damaged its precious contents.

"Amazingly, I have hardly broken or damaged anything since the late 1980s," Pat states.

The most remote place he visited was the Gwich'in community of Old Crow where he spent two weeks "lassoing and collaring caribou" with biologist John Russell as the migrating herd crossed the Porcupine River.

During his travels, people kept telling him about Martyn Williams, a wilderness guide "who had been everywhere in the Yukon". While their initial meeting was brief, Pat and Martyn recognized a mutual love of adventure and forged a friendship that would result in numerous shared expeditions, beginning with a circum-ski of Mount Logan in 1980.

Impressed with Pat's photographs, Whitecap published *The Yukon* with a cover image of the Tombstone Mountains bathed in honey-gold alpenglow. Pat holds this range on par with other world-class mountain parks such as the Bugaboos, Argentina's Fitzroy and Chile's Torres del Paine. A second Yukon book would follow in 1997 with another publisher, written and photographed together with Baiba. The Tombstones made the cover again.

Having returned to Canada's far north many times since to pursue adventures that include skiing from Logan's 5,959-metre summit, twice, climbing the east ridge of Mount Steele, circum-skiing the Tombstones, cycling the Dempster Highway and floating five wild rivers, Pat remains captivated by the vast, remote wilderness, and enamoured of its inhabitants.

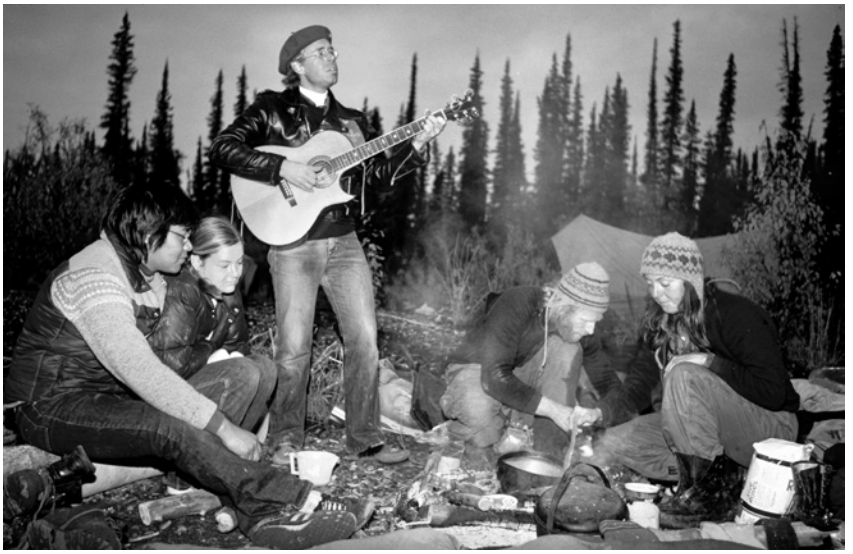
"I based myself out of my van or in my tent on

Brad Wrobleski climbs the east ridge of Mount Steele in the St. Elias Range, Yukon, during RCMP centennial year, 1995

the nights I wasn't taken in by some friendly northern souls," he recalls. "For the most part Yukoners are a friendly lot, they live so far from the more populated southern regions of North America that they welcome visitors—a rare commodity—with big smiles and open arms. There are not many of them, and most are refugees from the south."

His 1978 Yukon trip, Pat says, established a precedent for future expeditions, as he immersed himself in the world of his subjects.

"To me, if you're going to travel half way around the world for an adventure, you have to allow a minimum of three or four weeks and up to three months, to justify the effort and fossil fuels needed to get there. Any longer than that, it's hard to maintain your focus, any less time, you're short-changing yourself. Since I went freelance full-time in 1975, I've been on the road for a cumulative 15 years, searching for that certain *je ne sais quoi*. That is how important adventure is to me."



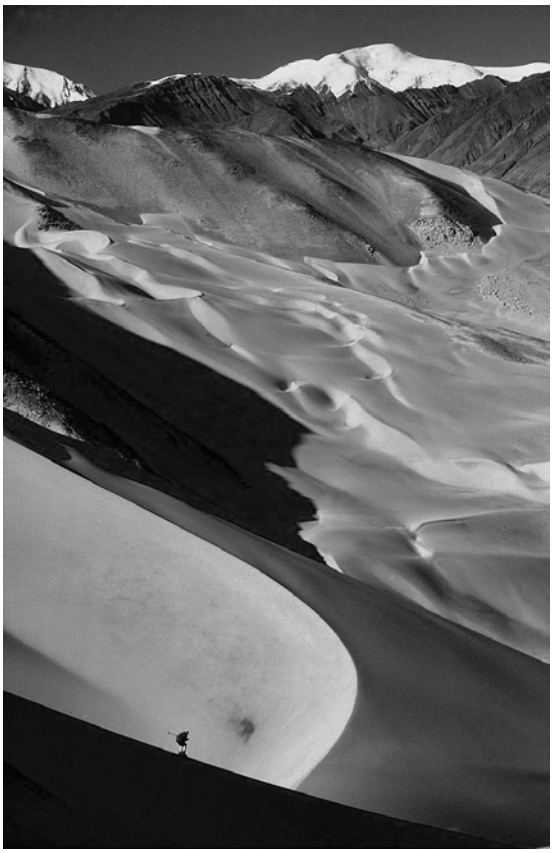
Bruce Cockburn serenades (from left), George Henry, Jan Staples, Martyn Williams and Maureen Garrity during a paddle of the Ogilvie River, prior to giving a concert in Whitehorse, Yukon. 1980

Project: *Muztagh Ata climb*
Location: *Chinese Pamirs*
Year: *1981*

In 1981, Pat got his big break, as the fledgling *Equinox* magazine hired him to document a small expedition to the far west of China, which was planned as a training climb for Canada's first expedition to Everest set for the following year.

Located in the Xingjiang Autonomous Region of western China's Pamir Range, and at 7,545 metres the second highest of the peaks that extend from the western edge of the Tibetan Plateau, Muztagh Ata was an ideal training peak for team members seeking more experience at high altitude. Journeying with Lloyd "Kiwi" Gallagher, John Amatt and Steve Bezruchka—as well as Kiwi's wife, Fran, and John's wife, Peggy, who accompanied them as far as base camp then left to explore other parts of China—the climbers spent nine days making the fourth ascent of the non-technical peak. Having skied up the peak, Pat set a new world altitude record for the telemark technique on the descent.

Lloyd "Kiwi" Gallagher skis the giant dunes of the Chinese Pamir. 1981



John Amatt bathes in the icy waters of Karakul Lake after the team skied from the summit of 7,545-metre Muztagh Ata, rising in the background. 1981

Setting their eyes on their next objective near the mountain's base, Kiwi and Pat turned their attention to some 300-metre high sand dunes.

"We didn't use skins; we just skied right up and then made turns coming back down," Pat recalls. "We only planned it as a one-time thing, but it was so much fun we went right back up the next day and took another run. We skied snow and sand on the same skis. It was really cool!"

The trip however, Pat would learn, was about so much more. China had just opened its borders to international travellers, and for six weeks of September and October the group never saw another Westerner, as the Xingjiang region was only accessible to specialized expeditions such as theirs. The Canadian climbers and the friendly Uighurs, Kirghiz and Kazaks were an equal novelty to each other, and both savoured the experience. The team was also blessed with an agreeable liaison officer, himself a climber with the Chinese Mountaineering Association, who allowed them to roam freely in the politically sensitive valley that borders Pakistan, Afghanistan and Russia.

Kirghiz pastoralists who live at the base of Muztagh Ata greet Stephen Bezruchka. 1981

"That was one of my best trips, because it involved a real meaningful cultural experience," Pat recalls. "The locals were still curious when we arrived there. They were interested in us, we were interested in them. That was in the days when everyone in Beijing wore the Mao suits and hats. It was communism at its peak—with really basic amenities, before they became westernized. We were only the third party of Westerners to visit the remote region along the old Silk Caravan Route since Eric Shipton was stationed at the British Consulate in Kashgar 33 years earlier. The once nomadic Kirghiz welcomed us into their felt yurts and fed us yogurt-like dairy treats produced from their large herds of goats and yaks.

"It turned out to be the expedition that set the pattern for all my subsequent international photographic projects. I was able to take intimate portraits of the friendly locals who had only ever seen a handful of foreigners. This expedition showed me there is far more to climbing than meets the eye."

Project: *The Seven Summits*
Location: *Alaska, Argentina, Nepal, Russia, Tanzania, Antarctica and Irian Jaya*
Years: *1977 to 1986*

Storm-bound in a tent on Aconcagua in 1981, Pat and Gordon "Speedy" Smith discussed the concept of climbing the highest peak on each continent. Pat was intrigued. He'd already climbed North America's highest, Denali, his first high altitude climb, on which he and Bernard Ehmann had established a new route on the southwest rib in 1977. The cheekily named Expedition "CLOD" (Calgary Leftovers on Denali) was comprised of CMCers not included on other expeditions that season. A few days after that conversation, Pat reached South America's highest point, Aconcagua's 6,959-metre summit, via the Polish Glacier route.

Next came Canada's Everest expedition—and the beginning of an enduring love affair with the world's grandest mountain range.

When they left Calgary for Nepal in July, 1982, Pat was 29 and extremely fit after a two-month climbing spree. In Kathmandu, he was enthralled by the intoxicating blend of ancient cultures, languages and Hindu and Buddhist religions.

"At the time, I was more intimidated than excited," Pat recalls. "I never had Everest ambitions. I was just invited. As a photographer trying to get a foothold in the freelance business, it made sense to go. Then on the way in to Everest, I realized all the other mountains were so much more beautiful than Everest, and so much more interesting from a climber's perspective. And also the Sherpa culture."

To the credit of expedition leader Bill March, the team was well acclimatized by the time they reached base camp after walking from the foothills for 250 kilometres instead of flying to Lukla as is common nowadays. By the time they reached the mountain they were prepared for the gruelling work of fixing their own route through the icefall. With 15 Canadian climbers, five support staff and 29 high-altitude Sherpas helping carry loads, they comprised a big team intent on a new route.

Bernhard Ehmann toils in the cold thin air of the Alaska Range on first ascent of the southwest rib of Denali. 1977

At that time, only 122 people had summitted Everest, compared to 5070 ascents made by 3431 individuals (some having summitted more than once) by the end of the 2010 spring season.

Then, while preparing the route, catastrophe struck. In pre-dawn darkness, an avalanche killed Sherpas Pasang Sona, Dawa Dorje and Ang Tsultim. As the team grappled with the question of whether climbing was worth losing a human life—a question Pat ponders still—two days later CBC cameraman Blair Griffiths died in a serac collapse in the Khumbu Icefall. Seven Canadians left the expedition for home.

"I think I was too numb to make any decisions, and some people made snap decisions to leave," Pat reflects. "I stuck around a little bit longer and I decided we'd already invested a lot, and we had the momentum, so I felt we should climb it to honour those whose lives were lost and salvage something from a difficult situation."

With Bill March and deputy leader Kiwi Gallagher providing leadership on the mountain and John Amatt managing media and sponsor Air Canada's expectations in Kathmandu, the team abandoned hopes for the South Spur route and switched to the established South Col.

On October 5, 1982, with Sungdare Sherpa in the lead, Laurie Skreslet became the first Canadian to stand on Everest's 8,850-metre summit. Ahead of his time in terms of climbing abilities, in 1984 Sungdare became the first person to reach Everest's summit four times.

Two days later, Pat led the less experienced Lhakpa Tshering Sherpa and Pema Dorje Sherpa to the summit.

"All of a sudden, the hammering inside my skull stopped and was replaced by an overwhelming sense of well-being that swept over me, far stronger than any previous summit jubilation I had experienced," Pat wrote in *Beyond Everest*. "It was as though we were in a hot air balloon, peering down on the tops of cumulus clouds two miles below. It was, quite simply, one of the most spectacular places I've been."

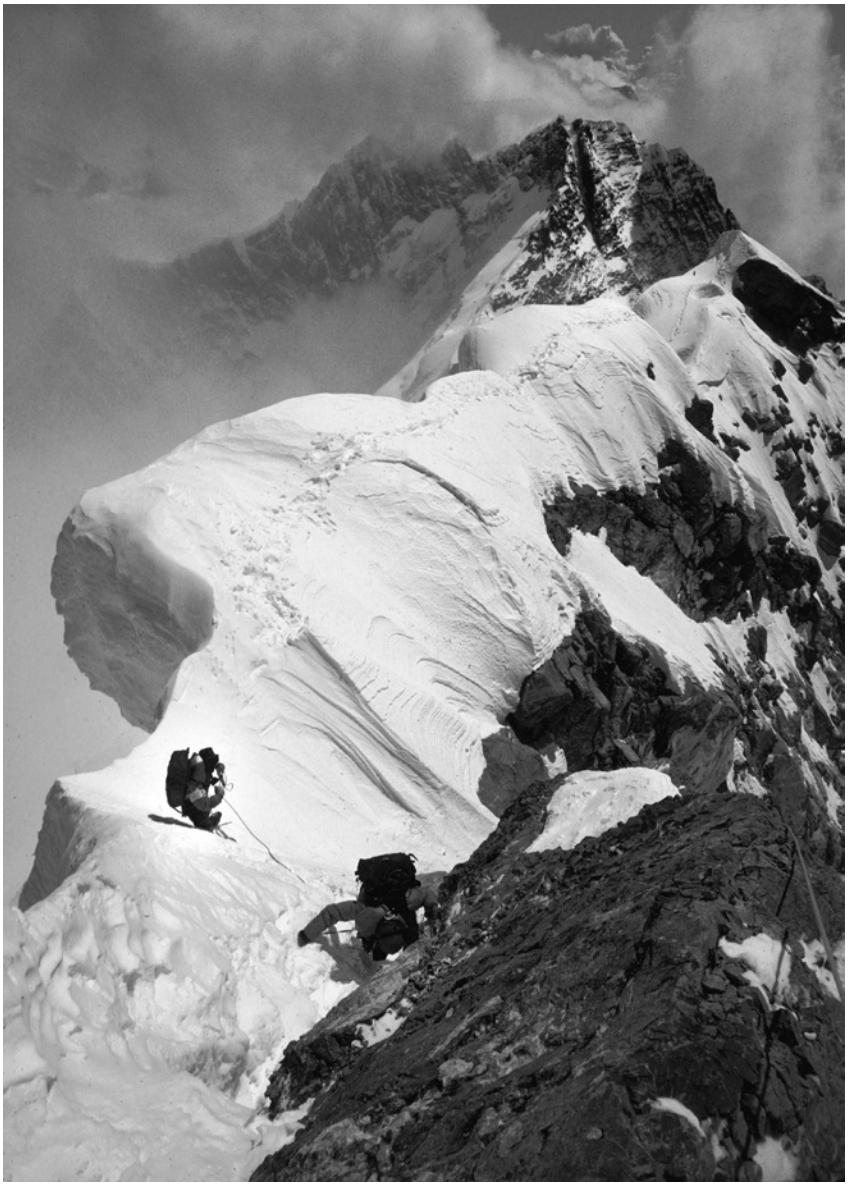
Dave McNab places a flower on the funeral pyre of cameraman Blair Griffiths after he was crushed by a falling serac in the Khumbu Icefall. 1982

Mere weeks later, back in Canada the team was lunching with Prime Minister Trudeau. As Pat endured a six-week Ottawa/Toronto/Montreal banquet publicity circuit, he stole moments to sift through his 4,000 photographs—the product of lessons learned about working in severe cold and high altitude. The National Film Board assembled a travelling exhibit of his shots that was immediately booked for four years. *Equinox* featured a 28-page spread in the January/February 1983 issue.

Once again, his timing was perfect as adventure magazines such as *Outside* and *Climbing* took off.

"I had had lots published by that time, but the recognition definitely helped, after all those years of struggling to find a marketplace for my esoteric adventure photos," Pat says. "Now there was an emerging outdoor magazine market to feed."

With Everest behind him, Pat switched focus, writing in *Beyond Everest*, "Just what does a man do after he's been to the top of the world? I realized with a start that I had already reached the summits of three of the seven continents—McKinley in North America, Aconcagua in South America and Asia's Everest—and they were the toughest of the seven at that. Suddenly, the answer seemed obvious."



Pema Dorje and Lhakpa Tshering follow the crux moves of the Hillary Step on Everest's summit ridge, with Lhotse in background. 1982

No-one had yet climbed the "Seven Summits", and Pat recognized a great adventure story complete with reasons to travel to Africa, Europe, Australasia and "most exotic of all, Antarctica". Showing keen support, *Equinox* publisher James Lawrence funded Pat's climbs to Europe and Africa in exchange for a series of articles.

"To this day, I remain forever grateful to James and the staff at *Equinox* for their unwavering faith in me," Pat says.

During his post-Everest weeks in eastern Canada, Pat had begun forming a strong friendship with Baiba Auders, an occupational therapist and the younger sister of his friend, Uldis, who had died in an avalanche while skiing the Alps' Haute Route in 1981. In 1983, Pat invited Baiba and Jeremy Schmidt to climb Europe's highest, 5,633-metre Elbrus, in the Russian Caucasus Mountains. Along with the attendant discomforts of battling nasty winds and whiteout conditions on a high, snowy cold mountain, they enjoyed the warmth, hospitality and cooking of local Svenetian farmsteads. Then with Jeremy and his wife Wendy Baylor, Pat tagged 5,995-metre Kilimanjaro, hiking through giant heath forests and swaths of 12-foot-high groundsels to the desolate moonscape of the upper mountain where Jeremy and Pat skied on snow resembling "the coarse hide of a rhinoceros".

Reaching Antarctica's highest, 4,897-metre Vinson Massif, however, proved a daunting

Pat stands on top of Everest, with the Changtang Plateau of Tibet beckoning to the right and the deep valleys of Nepal to the left. 1982 (photo: Pema Dorje)

challenge. Assisted by Baiba and others, for two years Pat wrangled government bureaucracies, airline boardrooms, potential financial backers, cinematographers, equipment manufacturers and "stubborn old-boy networks of scientific organizations". Along the way, in 1985 he teamed up with Martyn Williams, Baiba and several others to co-found Adventure Network International Inc., creating the first and still only logistics/travel company to offer private individuals air access to remote regions in the interior of Antarctica.

"Before ANI, there was no company in existence to assist anyone who wanted to visit Antarctica as a tourist or adventurer," Pat says. "I'm proud that ANI established the foundation for other adventuresome people to be able to do that. It's a satisfying feeling."

In 1986, with three photographer friends, Pat would also co-found First Light Associated Photographers, a stock photo agency based in Toronto, Canada's second biggest stock photography agent at the time.

Finally, on the second try—the first ending in heartache when their plane was damaged in a storm at the Argentine base of Esperanza—Pat shared Vinson's summit with teammates Martyn Williams, Chilean climber Alejo Contreras, Pat Caffrey, pilot Giles Kershaw, Mike Dunn, Roger Mitchell and American Steve Fossett, who would go on to set numerous aviation records before disappearing on a solo flight in Nevada in 2007.

"I did five expeditions with Steve Fossett," Pat recalls. "Twice in Antarctica, Elbrus, Carstensz and Ellesmere Island. He was a wonderful guy, so unassuming, easy-going, yet he had really good endurance. He would come on those trips with us then rush back to his office in Chicago."

One of the greatest benefits of his Seven Summits project, Pat admits, was forming long-lasting friendships with people who eagerly helped him. Years later, at Steve Fossett's memorial in Chicago, of all in attendance, including three astronauts, only Pat and Richard Branson weren't wearing ties. In 2009, at the wake of underwater explorer Steve Drogin, another supporter and friend, Pat was the only person not sporting a Hawaiian shirt.

"Just meeting those types of guys, who have common goals, and counting them as friends—climbing has given me that kind of an opportunity to meet people of an adventurous spirit. Sometimes they come with you on those expeditions; sometimes they help you to go there and they'll send you on your way with their blessings—sometimes with a little pocket change to boot. Of course, for every one of them, there are hundreds more who generously offered their support in other ways."

While American Dick Bass claimed to be the first person to climb the Seven Summits project in 1985, he had not climbed the highest peak in Australian territory, 2,745-metre Big Ben on remote Heard Island, nor Australasia's tallest, 4,884-metre Carstensz Pyramid, tucked amidst the jungles of the remote Indonesian province of Irian Jaya. Instead, he'd settled for Kosciuszko, a 2,228-metre hill which Pat had hiked up in an hour from the top of a ski lift during a layover between flights in Sydney. From the start, having read Heinrich Harrer's account of Carstensz's first ascent, *I Come From the Stone Age*, Pat had concluded Carstensz, "a real mountaineer's mountain", was the true seventh summit.

Like Vinson, however, just reaching the mountain proved the crux of the expedition, as again Pat navigated a logistical jungle and "bureaucratic merry-go-round" to acquire permits to visit the restricted area.

Believing he and Baiba had finally secured all the right permits from three levels of government, they arrived in Irian Jaya and were turned back by police. Instead of going home, they trekked for a month in the highlands of the Baliem Valley and were lucky to witness the ancient rituals of the traditional Dani wedding cycle.

Pat carves up the fabled snows of Kilimanjaro. Of the 20 peaks above 5,000 metres that Pat climbed or attempted, he used telemark skis on 10 of them. 1983 (photo: Jeremy Schmidt)

On his second try of the only rock climb of the Seven Summits, Pat delighted in following Heinrich Harrer's 1962 first ascent route. On May 7, 1986, Baiba, Steve Fossett and three University of Indonesia Mapala Outdoor Club members hugged on the summit. Pat Morrow had become, according to Guinness World Records, the first person to climb the Seven Summits.

While he received the Order of Canada in 1987 for his accomplishment, including the exceptional body of photographic documentation it produced, he remains humble. In 1990, he was awarded the Summit of Excellence, presented annually at the Banff Mountain Film Festival.

"I felt a little guilty for getting a public award for a personal project that had already given me a tremendous reward in itself," he admits.

During the fourth ascent of Mount Vinson Massif, Pat Caffrey pauses to look toward the South Pole, 900 kilometres away. 1985

Project: *Adventure diary*
Location: *North, south, east and west*
Years: *1980 to 2004*

Martyn Williams, Brian Finnie and Jeremy Schmidt celebrate Martyn's birthday during a 12-day circum-ski of Mount Logan. Pat would go on to share many more adventures with all three friends. 1980

Monks participate in traditional cham dances at Tsurphu Monastery, Tibet. 1997

Karl Nagy guides the Royal Canadian Geographic Society's expedition to re-measure the height of Mount Logan, King Peak in the background. 1992

A skier laps up perfect powder in Rogers Pass in BC's Selkirk Mountains. 1996

Baiba walks amidst glorious scenery midway on the exotic Snowman Trek, Bhutan. 2004

Project: *Nurturing a partnership*
Location: *Canmore, Wilmer, Nepal and beyond*
Years: *1979 onward...*

Baiba Astrida Auders was born in Montreal, Quebec in 1955, the daughter of Latvian immigrants who marked her brother Uldis' second birthday on the trans-Atlantic ship that carried them to their new home in Canada. Growing up, Baiba enjoyed family camping trips. As a student at McGill University, she joined the outdoors club and embarked on skiing, hiking and camping outings.

Baiba embraced a chance to climb Antarctica's highest, Mount Vinson Massif, when she and Pat guided an expedition for Adventure Network International. 1991 (Morrow Collection)

In the summer of 1977, she headed west to the Rockies, working at Deer Lodge in Lake Louise for the season. After graduating as an occupational therapist, in 1979 she interned at Calgary's Children's Hospital, that summer working at Num Ti Jah Lodge on the shores of Bow Lake on the Icefields Parkway. That's when she first met Pat, dancing at the Canmore Folk Festival.

"Baiba was a frisky dancer, even in hiking boots," Pat remembers, but still, they followed separate paths for several years.

"Alas, Pat didn't polka," Baiba jokes. After sharing a couple of hikes in the Rockies and Purcells, in February 1983 Pat invited Baiba to join him for some skiing at the end of a month-long tour of the Alps, where he was presenting telemark demonstrations for Karhu. The day before Baiba arrived, Pat tore his medial meniscus. She helped him recover as they travelled around and ended up in Barcelona visiting some Catalans who had been attempting a new route on Everest's west ridge while Pat had been there in 1982. That summer Pat and Baiba climbed Mount Elbrus together in full storm conditions, making three attempts before summitting the east peak. The arduous trip cemented their friendship as they discovered a mutual love of pursuing the unknown and following instincts heightened by leaving the comforts of home.

Both admit it was easier for her to find a way to fit into the life Pat had already established for himself, living by his camera from one adventure to the next and even living together in his father's house for three years. Over time, Baiba developed her own photography and writing talents and together they've won eight national magazine awards. As they expanded their skills to include video and film, they've worked, together or separately, on more than 50 mountain films for such broadcasters as the BBC, National Geographic,

Discovery Channel, Outdoor Life Network, ESPN and the Canadian International Development Agency.

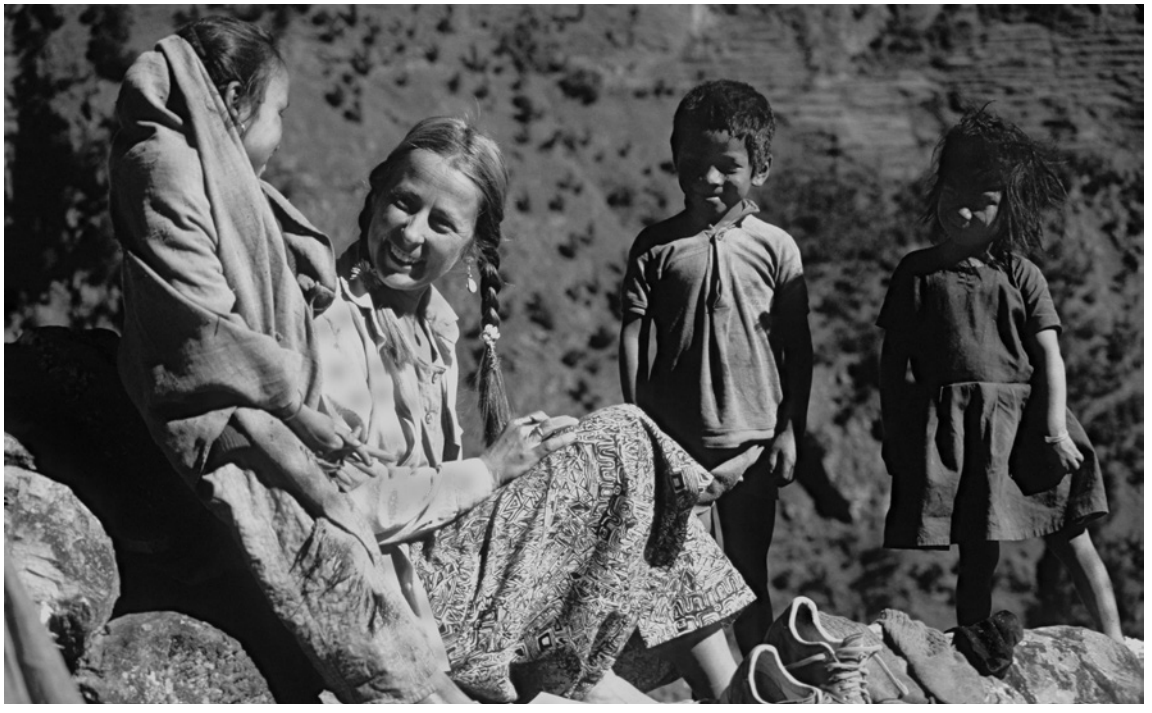
"I think it's fair to say that dreaming up and heading out on wild ass adventures together has helped nurture our relationship," states Pat. "Baiba is a wizard at travel logistics, both in setting up travel arrangements, and in making sure things go smoothly once we've launched."

"It was always in me to go and see stuff," Baiba admits, adding that she would probably have been just as content, "to marry someone from the Latvian community and have kids."

Indeed, Baiba's easily adaptable nature blends well with Pat's more driven personality. She possesses that magical quality of fitting in as contentedly as a Bodhisattva anywhere, in any situation, exuding calm, willingness and openness to accept the world as it comes to her. No doubt every plant in her spectacular vegetable garden feels eager to bloom and grow in her presence out of gratitude for her nurturing good nature.

"As I contemplate the latter half-century of my life, I realize that adventure, in its adrenaline-pumping form, means little to me," Baiba says. "I am more content to plant that potato garden and be less project-driven. Having said that, I would head off for a long walk in the Himalaya at the drop of a hat. What adventure brings to my life is the ability to be spontaneous and live simply out of a backpack. It is more about the intention of leaving behind the trappings, and baggage, of a comfortable life and launching into the unknown."

Baiba walks with Biscuit, a grizzly bear that was released into the wild by researchers Charlie Russell and Maureen Enns, in Kamchatka Peninsula, Russia. (photo: maureenenns.com) 2000



Baiba shares a smile on a trek into Dolpo, Nepal. 1990

Project: *Himalayan Passage*
Location: *Tibet, Nepal, China, India, Pakistan*
Year: *1987*

"Rather than investing a month or more to a dull and dangerous existence on the side of a single mountain, why not see how far you can travel in a lateral direction using the same skill set?" **—Pat Morrow, Beyond Everest**

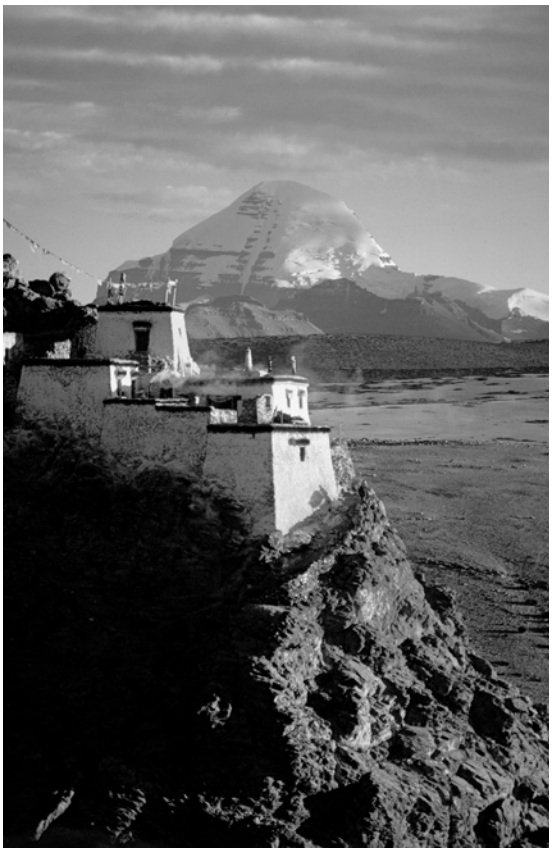
Pat and Baiba's next big expedition, following the completion of his Seven Summits project was, in Pat's words, an "antidote" to four years dedicated to the logistical and financial burdens of that endeavour during which hardly any climbing was done.

With no set itinerary, Pat and Baiba, accompanied by Jeremy Schmidt and Wendy Baylor, embarked on a seven-month overland circumnavigation of the Himalayan range.

Setting out from Lhasa in June, the two couples pedalled mountain bikes across the remote and arid Tibetan Plateau—despite the fact it was illegal to travel on any kind of privately owned vehicle—and crammed themselves into overloaded Chinese and Indian trucks, boarded buses piloted by "manic" drivers and trekked on foot. Along the way they journeyed through northern Pakistan via the treacherous Karakorum Highway, through Kashmir, Garhwhal, and eastern Nepal. Covering 10,000 kilometres, the journey resulted in magazine articles and Jeremy's book, *Himalayan Passage,* illustrated by Pat's enchanting photographs.

"The big trip was a reaction against having wasted so much time planning the Seven Summits," Pat says. "We used it as a kind of reconnaissance to check out areas that we would methodically go back to in subsequent years. In order to make it happen, *Equinox* gave us a couple of assignments to do adventure

Chiu Monastery stands in the shadow of Mount Kailash, Asia's holiest mountain, Tibet. 1987



Wendy Baylor jokes with Tadjik villagers in the Kunlun Mountains, Xingjiang, China. 1987

Wendy, Jeremy and Baiba cruise down the Karakorum Highway, Hunza Valley, Pakistan. 1987

stories, one on caving in Guilin, China, and another profiling the work of Canadian biologist Don Reid who was studying pandas at the Wolong Panda Reserve. Those two stories covered our airfare, and the ten grand that Steve [Drogin] donated to our expedition also went a long way. It only cost us about five grand each, because we were basically camping the whole way. We had bikes for a big part of it. That was amazing, just crossing Tibet and going into western China where I'd been in 1981."

In Tibet, they hired truck drivers to take them across part of the vast, sweeping Chang Tang, which, at an average elevation of 4,500 metres and four times the size of Texas, is sparsely populated by nomad camps. At Mount Kailash, the holiest of mountains from where four of the world's most significant rivers originate—the Indus, Sutlej, Brahmaputra and Karnali—they walked the *kora*, the 52-kilometre pilgrimage route around the mountain. Sacred to Hindu, Buddhist, Bon and Jain religions, they shared the ritual alongside the devout, some of whom prostrated themselves for the entire distance, even over a 5,669-metre pass. They cycled on teeth-rattling, rock-strewn roads and endured filthy hotels, feces-littered latrine holes and sometimes aggressively curious locals staring at the Westerners and their bikes and modern gear.

At other times, they'd roll into a Uighur village bordered by neatly planted rows of tall poplars on both sides of the road and be welcomed into well-kept mud brick houses adorned with handsome wooden doors. Or they delighted in finding a roadside eatery serving freshly made noodles with sautéed green onions and tomatoes, topped off with fragrant tea.

"That is the trip I remember well, I really enjoyed being out there, the spirit of it all," Baiba says. "Tibet, Lhasa—was a pretty exciting time. It was a grand journey, but it was still work. We were still trying to make a living, trying to come up with images and trying to find the place and time to focus on that work aspect. It was sometimes challenging."

The adventure—or collage of adventures—remains a cherished time for both.

"When we reached Dharamsala five months after being in Lhasa, we were hit hard by news of a bloody riot that had erupted shortly after we left," Pat recalls. "This brought home to us the vulnerability of the Tibetan people in their own country."

Uighurs visit the adventurers' camp along the Karakorum Highway in Xingjiang, China. 1987

Project: *Annapurna to Everest trek*
Location: *Nepal Himalaya*
Year: *1994*

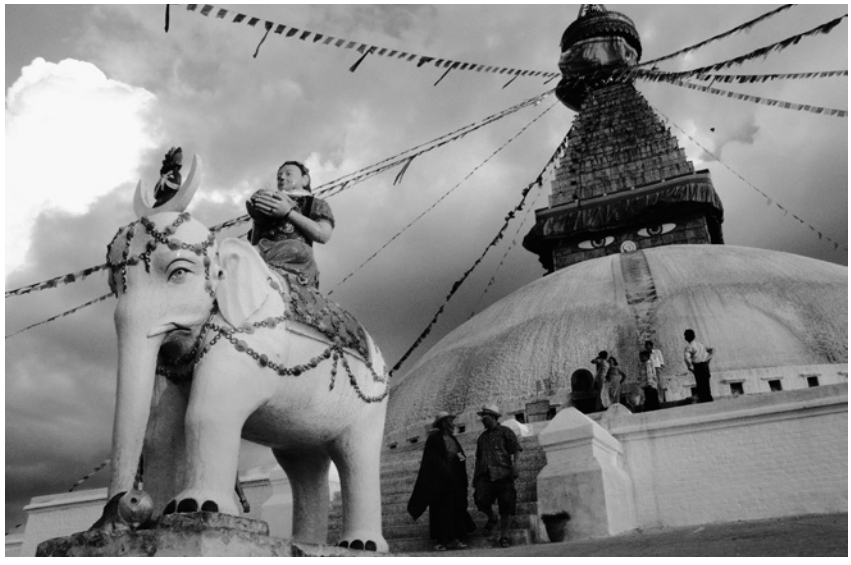
In 1994, after half a dozen Himalayan visits, Pat and Baiba returned with an ambitious plan. On previous trips, they'd both reached the end of a trek feeling like they weren't quite ready to leave the magic of life on the trail. So, trekking from Annapurna to Everest sounded like a perfect idea. They enlisted the help of Ang Nima Sherpa, from Kunde village, whom Pat had gotten to know on the 1982 and 1991 Canadian Everest expeditions. In 1992, Ang Nima had spent two months in Canada, hosted by the Morrows and other members from the '91 team.

The monk at Manang gompa transmits ancient wisdom. 1994

Starting from Pokhara in central Nepal during the monsoon, they passed through the lush foothills en route to a high pass that leads to Mustang on the edge of the Tibetan Plateau, travelling through scenery that makes the Annapurna circuit popular today.

"There were several different hill tribes; it's a culturally rich area where the old salt caravans used to go," Pat describes. "You're walking up the Kali Gandaki, by some measures the deepest gorge in the world. The gorge drops 6,800 metres from the top of two Himalayan giants, Annapurna and Dhaulagiri, on either side. Even though it's a popular trek, we did it during the monsoon, since we needed to start early to get over the last high passes before winter. We had the whole place to ourselves; no other tourists or trekkers, just locals. Also, everything is green at that time of year, with the farmers out in the fields."

Over the course of their 80-day trek, they passed under the massive flanks of seven 8,000-metre peaks—Annapurna, Dhaulagiri, Manaslu, Shishapangma, Cho Oyu, Everest and Lhotse. Linking six treks into one 600-kilometre journey, they crossed over four passes that were each nearly as high as Mount Logan. Overall, they climbed the equivalent elevation of Everest—from sea level to the summit—five times. The journey yielded a photo essay for *Equinox*, and plenty of enduring memories.



Boudhanath stupa inhabits the "Tibetan Side of Town" in Kathmandu, Nepal. 1994

"The Himalaya is my favourite mountain range," Pat admits. "Over the years I've spent a total of three years there on six climbing expeditions and 20 treks, with more than 500 trekking days. With the Annapurna to Everest trip, we answered the question of what it

would be like to get to the end of a trek and just keep going. It was pure magic!"

Apart from the stunning high alpine landscape scenery, a main draw that lures Pat and Baiba repeatedly to the region is the people.

"There's something about the chemistry of the people and the beauty of the mountains that draw us there," Baiba said. "Especially their friendliness. They're dirt poor, yet they invite you into their home. I just love life on the trail. You get into a certain rhythm; a way of ease. It takes about a week to walk out the business in your mind. I find it rejuvenating, refreshing. After a while you realize there's nothing in your head anymore and you enjoy simply seeing and being."

But like mountain regions the world over, the remote Himalaya too, is changing.

"That 'supertrek' exemplified our love of interacting with local mountain people in a manner that is next to impossible in larger group sizes," Pat says. "But the trekking experience is being compromised as these areas become more visited. The locals benefit in some ways, as you watch a road being built to bring goods into a village that was previously several days' walk from the town, but at the same time 'Canmorization' happens, and it brings pollution, noise and social problems."

Children survey their world from a rooftop in the Manaslu area, Nepal. 1994

Project: *Japan Alps traverse*
Location: *Honshu, Japan*
Year: *1995*

"You don't go to Japan for a wilderness experience," Baiba states.

But in 1995, she and Pat discovered great pleasure in the densely populated Pacific island nation when they embarked on a unique cultural journey—a month-long, high-level ridge walk following the spine of the Japan Alps.

Tradition runs deep in the Japan Alps. 1995

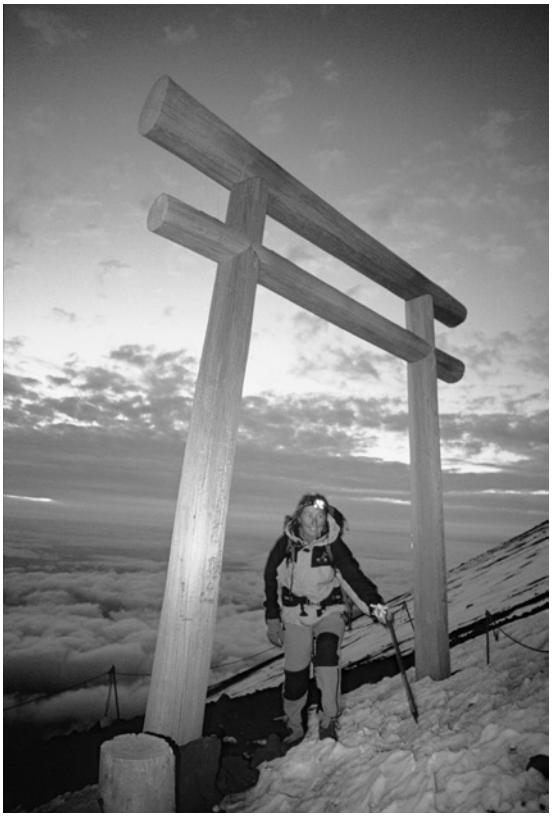
While industrious locals usually indulged in only single-day trips up to the many huts in the range, the Morrows savoured 30 days of continuous hiking, maintaining an average elevation of 2,500 metres.

Launching their trip from the Sea of Japan in the west, they trekked to the shore of the Pacific Ocean on Japan's east coast. Along the way they climbed 21 peaks above 3,000 metres as they captured still and video images for a short film for Canadian Discovery Channel and a magazine feature for *Equinox*. The publisher of a popular Japanese outdoor/climbing magazine helped arrange stays at huts for the northern section. For the southern part, the Morrows camped.

Accompanying them was Adiseno, an Indonesian climber and journalist with whom Pat had made three ascents of Carstensz, and who the Morrows had hosted in Canada to learn the rudiments of climbing snow and ice. Canmore resident Jacob Herrero also joined them for the second half of the trip, sharing his much appreciated Japanese language skills as interpreter.

Their Japanese friend, Chizu Tokutake, helped by delivering supplies up to the Morrows and by arranging social gatherings with members of the Japanese climbing community, including Junko Tabei, the first woman to climb Everest.

"The culture of Japan is so interesting, it's one of my favourite countries," Pat says. "It's got one foot in the ancient past, and one in the future. There are



Baiba pauses at the torii gate at dawn on the summit of Mount Fuji, culminating hers and Pat's traverse of the Japan Alps. 1995

ancient Buddhist shrines and people going up into the mountains to observe religious holidays. The Japanese have looked after their wild places better than we have."

On another trip to Japan, Pat and Baiba spent a month skiing in Hokkaido, with Pat later making telemark turns off the iconic summit of Mount Fuji, a destination he's reached three times.

On their Japan Alps traverse, travelling during the peak of the fall season treated them to the spectacular autumn colours of cherry, maple, zelkova and ginkgo trees.

"These were very different kinds of mountains," Baiba recalls. "Japan is so civilized. You know you're on a small island in a very densely populated country, but travelling through this very precious ribbon of wildness."

Along the way, both cherish memories of having met some very "interesting, quirky Japanese characters."

"One thing that still stands out in my mind is when the staff at one of the huts placed a boom box outside as we set out for the day, and John Denver's *Rocky Mountain High* echoed in the still morning air as we headed up the trail," Baiba recalls.

Project: *Kangchenjunga circum-hike*
Location: *Nepal, Sikkim (India)*
Year: *1998*

A bus trip on the back roads of Nepal is like entering a lunatic asylum on wheels. A manic driver—and they are all manic—begins by revving his engine and then slipping the clutch so the whole assembly lurches forward whether passengers are on or off. Once underway, the shrill, overamplified songs of popular Hindi films pierce the eardrums. Nearly every Nepali man, woman and child is addicted to tobacco, so the squalid interior soon fills with acrid cigarette smoke. Chickens, bags of cement, potatoes and produce somehow fill up the limited space remaining once you have filled the narrow seats with your own frame. The smell of unwashed feet and armpits gives the whole experience an earthy olfactory quality. After six or seven hours of such mental and physical torture, a traveller comes to the midpoint of the journey, only to realize there is still another six hours to come.

—Baiba Morrow, Footsteps in the Clouds- Kangchenjunga a Century Later

Early during his career, Pat came across the work of Vittorio Sella. The Italian master photographer, equipped with heavy, cumbersome, and yet delicate equipment of a century ago, painstakingly captured some of the finest mountain landscape images ever created from expeditions to Alaska, Sikkim, Africa and the Karakorum.

In 1899, Sella joined explorer and climber Douglas Freshfield on a seven-week circumnavigation through Sikkim and Nepal of the sacred

8,586-metre Kanchenjunga. It was a remarkable feat. When Pat read Freshfield's 1903 book, *Round Kangchenjunga*, richly illustrated by Sella's sublime black and white images, he sensed another Himalayan foray. In 1998, he and Baiba set off to retrace Sella and Freshfield's expedition around the world's third-highest mountain.

"His [Sella's] photographs of alpine landscapes in these regions are still some of the finest representations of mountain ranges ever done," wrote Pat in the *Footsteps in the Clouds*.

Knowing that modern political boundaries would prevent them from exactly retracing the original route across the India/Nepal border via high alpine passes, Pat and Baiba divided their expedition in two sections, starting in the spring in India and then returning in late fall to do the Nepal side.

To add a little "spice" to their objective, Pat wanted to climb Mount Siniolchu, an alluring 6,888-metre peak on the east flanks of Kangchenjunga that Freshfield had described as "the most beautiful mountain in the world". The peak, however, lay in a restricted military zone and required an "exorbitantly-priced" permit from the Indian Mountaineering Federation.

With Paul Kallmes, a fellow admirer of Sella's work, as expedition co-leader, the team also included Pat's old friend, photographer Ace Kvale, Ali Palmer and Kit Katzenbach (now Deslauriers, who, in 2006, would become the first woman to ski from the summit of Everest).

The trip presented numerous challenges. While the financial burden of the permit fee was eased by a Polartec Challenge grant, they could do nothing about the heat wave that created avalanche conditions, nor their "snarly, arrogant" Indian liaison officer. Baiba, who elected not to participate in the technical, high altitude climb, endured his company at base camp while Pat and his teammates were eventually turned back by "atrocious" snow conditions two days from the summit.

"For me, it wasn't as gratifying as a trip, but I didn't mind, I'd go off on little hikes," Baiba recalls. "The mountain conditions were terrible, so that was disconcerting. The best part, though, was seeing that part of the Himalaya."

For Pat, however, the combination of following Sella and Freshfield's travels, and climbing on one of the Himalaya's most beautiful peaks makes the trip one of his most significant.

"It was a wonderful opportunity to go to Italy later and meet Sella's grand-nephew and even see the house where he processed his photos," Pat says. "And it was a chance to try a beautiful climb."

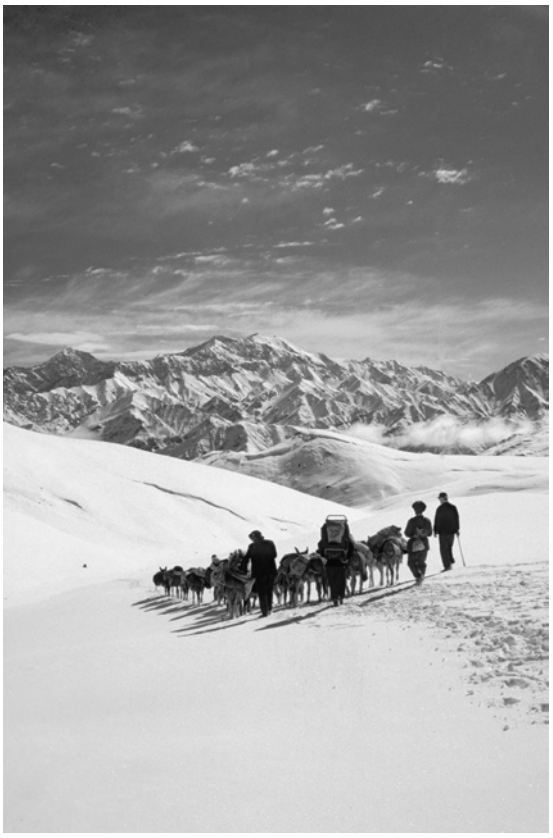
Mount Siniolchu, soaring to 6,888 metres in Sikkim, India, was described by Douglas Freshfield in 1898 as "the most beautiful mountain in the world". 1998

Project: *Kunlun Trek – searching for antelope birthing grounds*
Location: *Changtang Nature Reserve, Tibet*
Year: *2001*

One of the great blessings of his career, Pat admits, has been meeting some especially impressive people. American biologist George Schaller ranks high on that list.

Recipient of the National Geographic Lifetime Achievement Award, Schaller has been instrumental in establishing more than 20 parks or preserves worldwide, including the Changtang Nature Reserve in Tibet, the second largest protected area on Earth. In the spring of 2001, Pat and Baiba, along with climber Jon Miceler and Banff physician and ACMG mountain guide Jeff Boyd, joined 68-year-old Schaller on an expedition to locate the birthing grounds of the endangered Tibetan antelope.

The trip was no holiday. For 30 days, the group travelled by donkey and camel caravan, far from the closest Uighur villages through the hostile, largely uninhabited heart of the Kunlun Range, between the barren Taklamakan desert and the Tibetan Plateau.



The caravan supplying the expedition searching for the birthing grounds of the Tibetan antelope descends through the remote Kunlun Range toward the Taklamakan Desert in Xingjiang, China. 2001

"Dr. Schaller lived up to his reputation of being a hard-core defender of wildlife," Pat says. "He was there to study animals; that is his goal in life. He'd started out as a research biologist but realized, if there were going to be any animals left to study, he'd better become involved in conservation. Now he's making up for lost time. He wanted to pinpoint the birthing grounds of the Tibetan antelope in order to urge the Chinese government to increase protection of this endangered species, which is being hunted to extinction for its valuable hair used for making the very expensive shatoosh shawls."

They found the birthing grounds, but were two weeks too early to witness and photograph the actual birthing. When Jon Miceler began to suffer symptoms of what he thought was a ruptured hernia, and the pack animals were growing weak from the lack of adequate grazing in the austere landscape, the team left for home.

"The route took us into Sven Hedin and Captain Deasy territory," Pat says. "We were hit by a pretty major snowstorm. It was late June, early July, and our supplies were pretty extended. That was a miserable experience, watching two donkeys die. In retrospect, other expeditions to that area fared much worse— Hedin lost dozens of animals. There weren't even any Tibetan nomads living there, so we knew how precarious it was to be there. There were herds of antelope and we wondered how they could survive. Of my six expeditions in Tibet, this was the toughest, and in some ways the most rewarding, even though we narrowly missed our goal."

Despite the harsh travel conditions, Baiba never worried for her own safety.

"The Kunlun trip was really fascinating. To be with George Schaller was a huge privilege," Baiba says. "To see that remote landscape was quite special. But the donkeys were dying; they were running out of food. The local Uighur and Kirghiz guys who were with us were solid people, but they'd never been there either. It was an interesting place, with these wild yaks, rather like gypsies of the animal world, with wild shaggy tails living in high, remote valleys."

Later Schaller did help convince the Chinese to enforce some degree of official protection for the antelope.

Project: *The Magic Mountain*
Location: *Ladakh*
Year: *2005*

Over the years, Pat found opportunities to take his creative eye and ability to function in harsh mountain environments beyond the realm of still photography. Moving pictures and sound offered an exciting, new challenge to documenting the mountain experience. On some assignments, such as re-measuring the summit of Mount Logan in 1992 for the Royal Canadian Geographical Society and TV Ontario, he shot both stills and video. But, Pat realized, in order to do a proper job, he would have to choose between one or the other. By 2000, he was ready to make the wholesale switch to filmmaking.

In 2002, Pat and Baiba embraced their first entirely self-produced documentary, *The Magic Mountain*.

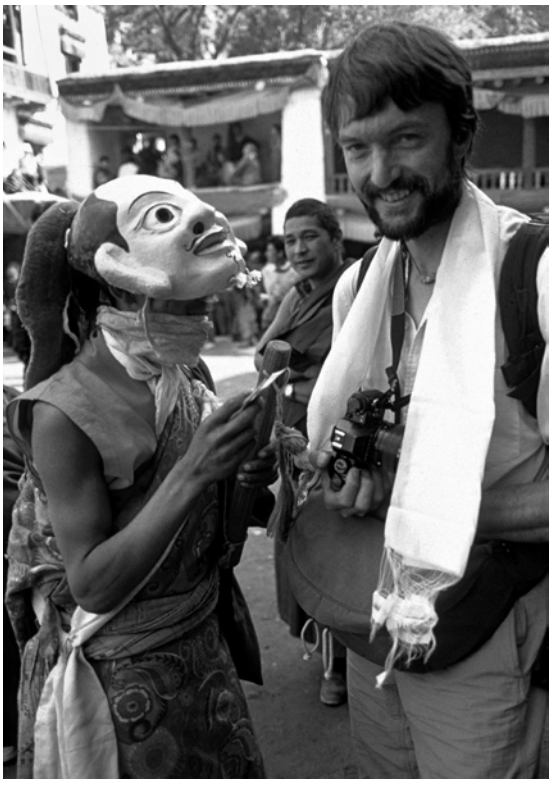
Their subject was Cynthia Hunt, the enigmatic founder and director of HEALTH Inc. (Health, Environment and Literacy in the Himalaya). The location took them back to the Himalaya, and the high, dry Buddhist region of northwest India called Ladakh, where they had first travelled and met Cynthia in 1993.

Their captivating documentary, filmed between 2002 and 2004 during three trips totalling six months, follows Cynthia and her two Ladakhi "interns" as they trek to places NGOs and government agencies rarely go—villages where high infant mortality and female illiteracy rates are grudgingly accepted as a way of life.

Pat and Baiba gamely attempted to keep pace with their indefatigable subject, dressed in the traditional shalwar khameez with an incongruous and tattered Montreal Canadiens baseball cap pulled down over long braids, as she made her rounds of the remote mountain villages.

"Cynthia is the single most impressive mountaineer that I've had the pleasure to know," Pat declares. "On a diet of *tsampa* (the local staple of roasted barley flour), noodles and nutritional yeast because of health issues, she carries her 25-kilogram pack over 5,000-metre passes, leaving us in the dust. She's lived in a tent for most of the last 15 years she's spent in the Himalaya and that's the way she prefers it."

In the winter of 2004, the Morrows and Cynthia joined a caravan of Ladakhis walking for four days along the narrow, confining corridor of the mostly frozen Zanskar River, following an ancient route called the Chador to reach the village of Lingshed. Rimmed by 6,000-metre snow coated peaks, the icy conduit passes through a gorge deeper than the Grand Canyon. In one section, the disintegrating ice forced them all to wade through shin-deep water where some of the locals chose to go barefoot rather than get their footwear wet.



Pat enjoys some local culture at Hemis Monastery in Ladakh, India. 1991 (photo: Baiba Morrow)

Whether providing guidance in simple solar greenhouse construction, forming a women's cooperative, or delivering animated lessons about oral hygiene to Buddhist monks, Cynthia's energy seemed boundless.

"This project was special, not only because we could spend so much time in Ladakh", Pat says, "but because it helped spread awareness of Cynthia Hunt's NGO, HEALTH Inc."

"Ladakh remains one of my favourite places," Baiba says. "Out of all the trips we've done, it's been rewarding to focus on one area, and to follow a story for a few years—to have the time and opportunity to get to know people, to make inroads and make friends."

With funding from the Canmore Rotary Club, the Morrows helped organize an educational trip to western Canada for the two young Ladakhi men from *The Magic Mountain*, another experience they describe as "very special".

Adding icing to the cake, *The Magic Mountain* won three awards at international mountain film festivals, including the coveted People's Choice Award at the 2005 Banff Mountain Film Festival, Best Canadian Mountain Film at the 2006 Vancouver International Mountain Film Festival and Grand Prize at Bratislava, Slovakia's mountain film festival that same year.

The Morrows walk the frozen Zanskar River with Cynthia Hunt and Sonam Norbu during the filming of The Magic Mountain in Ladakh. 2005 (Morrow Collection)

Project: *Homecoming*
Location: *Wilmer*
Years: *2007 onward...*

"Walking is not simply therapeutic for oneself but is a poetic activity that can cure the world of its ills." **—Bruce Chatwin**

After making their home in Canmore for two decades, in 2007 Pat and Baiba decided it was time to move.

The quiet mountain town they'd made their home since 1987 had grown and evolved into a high testosterone, goal-driven suburb of Calgary where they no longer felt content.

"Basically, we were evicted by overdevelopment," Pat says. "We saw it coming for quite some time, but where do you go? Every mountain town in North America seems to be facing the same pressures of development. It wasn't until we went over to Wilmer and found a quieter place that reminded us of what Canmore was like when we first moved there, we knew we'd found a new home."

With about 140 houses and no sidewalks, the hamlet of Wilmer, BC, nestled in the Columbia Valley at the foot of the Purcells, harbours a peaceful, laid-back rural atmosphere. When friends Jim Thorsell and Nancy Knechtel—now neighbours—told them the house next door was for sale, Pat and Baiba started packing.

Dawa Nuru Sherpa goes for a paddle with Baiba on the Columbia Valley Wetlands near the Morrows' home in Wilmer, BC. 2007

Two of Pat's heros, Fred Beckey and Conrad Kain, pose for his camera chez Morrow. 2009

While they admit feeling some sadness leaving friends behind, they quickly re-connected with old friends in the East Kootenay and fellow "refugees" from the Bow Valley.

"This is the valley I was born in, everything is familiar to me," Pat says. "It's been great, rediscovering my old stomping grounds, the Purcells."

Since moving into the rustic bungalow—with a recently added Tibetan-influenced loft overlooking the Columbia Valley Wetlands and the Pacific Avian Flyway—both Pat and Baiba have renewed their association with the environmental group Wildsight and its efforts to conserve and protect the Columbia and Rocky Mountain ecoregions. The fit is perfect—in the early 1970s, Pat had teamed up with environmental activists Art Twomey, John Bergenske, Carol Hartwig and dozens of others to help establish the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy.

And, once again, Pat's timing was right on the mark. Soon after moving into the community, he discovered the Conrad Kain Centennial Society (CKCS).

"When I first read Kain's biography, *Where the Clouds Can Go*, at age 16, it became a subconscious blueprint for conducting my life in the mountain world," Pat explains. "He led by the example of showing respect for the natural environment, and for being honest and humble in his pursuits as a climber and a guide. With the Kain Society, I was really keen to contribute towards helping let the public know who Kain was."

Now, as CKCS chair, Pat has helped create a website (conradkain.com) and organize events with the Alpine Club of Canada to celebrate Kain's contribution to mountaineering in Canada. In honour of Kain, the first mountain guide

ACMG guides Kirk Mauthner and Tim McAllister (left side) and Baiba (on right) introduce local teens to Conrad Kain's Bugaboos, BC. 2009

ever hired by the ACC in 1909, Pat organized a guided alpine climbing adventure with ACMG guides Kirk Mauthner and Tim McAllister in the Bugaboos for a group of local teenagers in July 2009.

"Interestingly enough, Bob O'Brien, who threw the rope down for me when I was 16, was about the same age I am now," Pat adds. "So that's part of the reason I'm interested in getting kids that age into the mountains."

And Wilmer, it so happens, is also where Kain made his home.

While Baiba tends to her spectacularly productive vegetable garden, the Morrows continue to contribute to various productions, including a documentary on the efforts of Wildsight, the Sierra Club and the WILD Foundation to conserve the Flathead Valley in the southern Rockies, and a promotional film for Central Asia Institute's founder Greg Mortenson, co-author of the best-selling *Three Cups of Tea*. Pat also helps nurture the next generation of outdoor adventure photographers by teaching photography and video workshops.

In addition to appearing in numerous books and magazines, in 2002 photos of his Seven Summits project were chosen for a series of Canada Post stamps, featuring a picture of each of the Seven Summits, plus Mount Logan.

Young Robert Lawrence helps spread the word about local conservation efforts during the Canada Day parade in Invermere, BC. 2010

"I was lucky to have been born into an age when we can be anywhere on the planet within 48 hours and still find cultures and landscapes that have somehow maintained their integrity," Pat says. "Every minute, from here on in, that window of opportunity shrinks. That's exploration today."

He was also very lucky, he readily admits, to have partnered with Baiba.

"When I first met Baiba, I was a really independent thinker," Pat says. "I had, of course, worked with others on trips and short-term projects, but I didn't know how to work with another person on a day-to-day basis. And for Baiba, she had to learn every aspect of the esoteric art of 'hunting and gathering' words and pictures. It took about a year for us to work together comfortably and now I'm so grateful—her extra fire power allowed us to go anywhere we wanted to all these years, and somehow make a living on top of it. And also, she supported me on a lot of trips I did on my own. I'm really grateful for that, too."

Baiba and Pat conduct a video workshop in the Great Bear Rainforest on BC's coast. 2008 (photo: ronwattsphoto.com)

Focused on Adventure

From the cloud brushing wonders of the Himalaya to the mysterious jungles of Irian Jaya to the mountain wilderness of his backyard Purcell Mountains, Pat Morrow's career has defined adventure journalism for 35 years. As a climber he forged challenging new routes, while his natural curiosity and keen storytelling sense took him not only to the top of the world as a member of Canada's first Mount Everest expedition in 1982, but also to become the first to climb the highest mountain on each continent. As photographer, writer and filmmaker, Morrow has explored some of the most remote and exotic destinations on the planet. But far beyond capturing captivating images of landscapes, flora and fauna, Morrow's books, magazine articles and films embrace the people of each of those places, honouring their unique customs, histories and cultures. A passionate advocate for wilderness preservation and social justice, Morrow, together with his partner in adventure, in work and in life, Baiba, has set a high bar for documenting the stories of people and the places that nurture their souls.

For further information regarding the Summit Series of mountaineering biographies, please contact the National Office of the Alpine Club of Canada.

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