



2007 Banff Mountain Book Competition Awards

The Banff Mountain Book Festival wishes to thank the writers, the photographers, their editors and publishers for entering this year's competition. We received 113 entries from nine countries, and a dedicated committee had a very tough job to narrow the field down to 27 finalists.

The winners of the 14th annual Banff Mountain Book Festival were announced during the evening presentation on Thursday, November 1:

Grand Prize

Forever on the Mountain: The Truth Behind One of Mountaineering's Most Controversial and Mysterious Disasters

James M. Tabor, W.W. Norton & Company (USA, 2007)

This book begins as a classic tale of men against nature, gambling — and losing — on one of the world's starkest and stormiest peaks. It culminates as the first full account of the tragedy that ended a golden age in mountaineering.

Phyllis and Don Munday Award, sponsored by the Alberta Sections of the Alpine Club of Canada: \$2000

Best Book — Mountain Literature

Higher Than the Eagle Soars

Stephen Venables, Random House Group Limited UK (UK, 2007)

Stephen Venables has written an autobiography that explores how and, more importantly, why he became a mountaineer, and reveals a series of previously unrecorded adventures on several continents. At its climax, he revisits his dramatic, near-fatal success without oxygen on the Kangshung face of Everest, an event that confirmed him as one of the great British climbers of his generation.

Jon Whyte Award for Mountain Literature, sponsored by the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, Banff: \$1000

Best Book — Mountain Image

Yosemite in the Sixties

Glen Denny, Patagonia, Inc. — Lost Arrow Corporation (USA, 2007)

Glen Denny has compiled an extraordinary book of rare black-and-white photographs of Yosemite Valley climbers. Originally inspired by the work of Ansel Adams, Denny quickly mastered the effects of light on rock, but his special gift is for these portraits of climbers in their element, for revealing the climber's face in the unselfconscious moment of obsession on a route, of pleasure in camp, of awe to be in such a place. He conveys the culture of Camp 4 in the sixties as well as the spirit of the big-wall climbs. Many of these photographs have never before been published.

Sponsored by Rocky Mountain Books, Calgary, and the Banff Book and Art Den: \$500

Best Book — Mountain Exposition

Deep Water

Mike Robertson, Rockfax (UK, 2007)

Deep Water is a Rockfax climbing guide dedicated to the art of deep water soloing, covering venues in the UK, Spain, Portugal, Asia, and Australia, to name just some of the locations in the book. Deep water soloing, with its exciting combination of freedom above water and unencumbered movement, is now seen by climbers worldwide as a fresh new genre, and even as a lifestyle.

Sponsored by Yamnuska Mountain Adventures: \$500

Best Book — Adventure Travel

Wild Places Wild Hearts: Nomads of the Himalaya

Allen Smutylo, Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery (Canada, 2007)

The writing and artwork in *Wild Places, Wild Hearts* reveal the strange and rarefied world of the Tibetan Buddhist Himalayan nomads in eastern Ladakh. In six trips there since 2001, the writer/artist established a close bond with the 200-person Kharnak tribe. At 15,000 feet above sea level, in yak hair tents, the compassionate and extraordinary culture of the Changpas (nomads) survives in one of the most severe environments on earth.

Sponsored by Batstar Adventure Tours, Port Alberni, B.C.: \$500

Best Book — Mountaineering History

The Eiger Obsession: Facing the Mountain that Killed My Father

John Harlin III, Simon & Schuster (USA, 2007)

When John Harlin was nine years old, his family changed forever as his father plummeted to his death while climbing the infamous Eiger of Switzerland. In *The Eiger Obsession: Facing the Mountain That Killed My Father* Harlin crafts a thrilling account of his own epic and emotionally demanding endeavor to crest the very mountain where his father met his end.

James Monroe Thorington Award for the Best Work of Mountaineering History, sponsored by UIAA: \$500

Special Jury Mention

Dead Lucky: Life After Death On Mount Everest

Lincoln Hall, Random House Australia (Australia, 2007)

Dead Lucky is a personal account of an extraordinary survival story on Mount Everest. In May 2006, Australian mountaineer Lincoln Hall fulfilled a lifelong dream and reached the summit of Everest. But as he began the long descent with his Sherpa companions, altitude sickness overpowered him and he collapsed in the snow. After hours of trying to revive him, the Sherpas pronounced him dead and, as night fell, they were ordered by the expedition leader to descend to save themselves. The next day, a group of climbers, including Calgary's Andrew Brash, found Hall alive on the crest of the summit ridge. "I imagine you are surprised to see me here", Hall said.

Canadian Rockies Award

Glen Boles: My Mountain Album

Glen Boles, Rocky Mountain Books (Canada, 2006)

Artist and photographer Glen Boles has climbed extensively all over North America and in Europe, but his first love is the Canadian Rockies, where he has summited over 450 peaks, often by difficult new routes. Many were first ascents. Over the years, Glen has become familiar with all facets of climbing, from expedition climbing to mountain rescue.

Sponsored by Deuter and selected by a local committee: Deuter Pack

For immediate release, November 1, 2007

Story of 1967 Mount McKinley tragedy takes Banff Mountain Book Festival Grand Prize

Forever on the Mountain, James M. Tabor's tale of the mysterious fate of a group of expert climbers who disappeared on Mount McKinley in 1967, was awarded the 2007 Banff Mountain Book Festival Grand Prize. The Phyllis and Don Munday Award, sponsored by the Alberta sections of the Alpine Club of Canada, comes with a \$2,000 cash prize.

Tabor's meticulously researched book tells the story of a 12-man expedition led by Joe Wilcox. Five of the team returned, while seven remained trapped near the summit by one of the worst storms ever to hit the area. Ten days passed without a rescue attempt, and all seven men died. "The era of mountaineering Tabor describes — just a generation ago — is so different from today's light and fast style, that it's almost impossible to imagine ourselves back there," says Book Festival jury member Dougald MacDonald. "This book helps us understand what it was like."

Forever on the Mountain: The Truth Behind one of Mountaineering's Most Controversial and Mysterious Disasters (W.W. Norton & Company, USA, 2007) was among 26 finalists in five categories.

Stephen Venables's autobiography *Higher Than the Eagle Soars* (Random House U.K., 2007) won the prize for Best Book in the Mountain Literature category, sponsored by the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies. The book follows Venables from childhood through previously unpublished alpine journeys, including an epic climb on Everest's Kangshung Face. Jury member Will Gadd praises the book for its sheer sense of fun. "Should be remedial reading for every tortured alpinist wrestling with angst," he says.

Glen Denny's remarkable book of historical photos *Yosemite in the Sixties* (T. Adler Books, USA 2007) was awarded the prize for Best Book — Mountain Image, sponsored by Rocky Mountain Books and the Banff Book and Art Den. A tribute to the golden years of climbing in Yosemite, MacDonald describes the book as "packed with previously unpublished yet beautiful photos." The award for Best Book — Mountain Exposition, sponsored by Yamnuska Mountain Adventures, went to Mike Robertson's *Deep Water* (Rockfax, U.K., 2007), a guide to the emerging climbing genre of deep-water soloing. Jury member Ed Douglas commends it as "an awful lot of fun."

Allen Smutylo's *Wild Places Wild Hearts: Nomads of the Himalaya* (Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery, Canada, 2007) took home the award for Best Book — Adventure Travel, sponsored by Batstar Adventure Tours. It's a beautiful collection of artwork from Smutylo's travels through Ladakh. "This book has eerie and moving art, engaging writing, and ultimately delivers the best thing an adventure travel book can — a sense of place."

John Harlin III was awarded the John Monroe Thorington Award for Best Book on Mountaineering History, sponsored by the Union Internationale des Associations d'Alpinisme. His emotional memoir *The Eiger Obsession: Facing the Mountain That Killed My Father* (Simon & Schuster, USA, 2007), traces Harlin's return to the Alps, 40 years after his father's fatal climbing accident. "A judicious and moving assessment of a famous father and his son's journey from beneath his shadow," Douglas says of the book.

The Canadian Rockies Award, sponsored by Deuter and selected by a local committee, was awarded to Alberta climber, alpinist, photographer, and artist Glen Boles. His book *Glen Boles: My Mountain Album* (Rocky Mountain Books, Canada, 2006), is a spectacular photographic account of a life spent exploring the Rockies.

The jury awarded a special mention to Lincoln Hall's *Dead Lucky* (Random House, Australia, 2007). A writer, editor, and mountaineer, Hall's climbing partners on Everest in 2006, thinking he was dead, left him on the mountain for a night. The next morning, another expedition team found him alive. This is the story of his time on Everest, and the aftermath of this remarkable incident.

The Banff Mountain Book Festival, held at The Banff Centre in Banff, Alberta, Canada, is the largest mountain book festival in the world. Each year, the festival brings the spirit of outdoor adventure and the tradition of mountain literature to Banff, featuring guest speakers, readings, seminars, an international book competition, a book fair, and book signings and launches. This year, the 14th annual Festival (October 31 to November 2) welcomed authors, athletes, artists, and photographers including David de Rothschild, John Harlin III, James Tabor, Ed Viesturs, Dick Dorworth, Bernadette McDonald, Steph Davis, John Earle, and Mike Libeck.