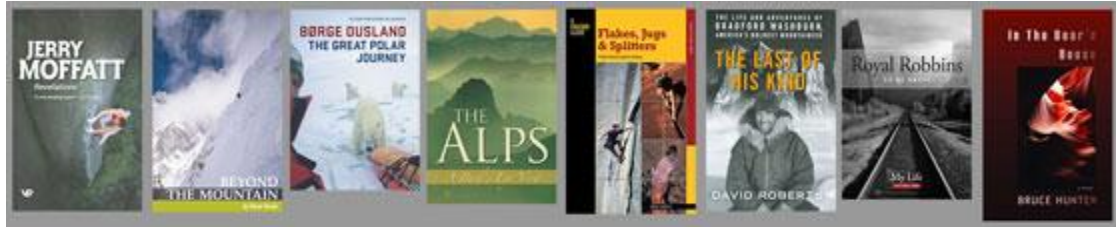


Winners of the 2009 Banff Mountain Book Festival



The Banff Mountain Book Festival thanks the writers, the photographers, their editors and publishers for entering this year's competition. We received 101 entries from 10 countries in this 16th annual competition.

The 2009 festival jury — Stephen Goodwin (United Kingdom), Jon Popowich (Canada) and Susan E.B. Schwartz (United States) — chose the following award winners. Awards will be presented at the book festival during the evening presentation on Thursday, November 5. Check back for photos from the awards ceremony.

Grand Prize

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

Revelations — Jerry Moffatt

Jerry Moffatt and Niall Grimes, Vertebrate Publishing (UK, 2009)

Margaret Thatcher's great contribution to pushing rock climbing standards in the 1980s can now be better appreciated: mass unemployment, climbers existing on the dole (welfare payments), dossing in caves and tumble-down shacks at the foot of crags in North Wales and the Peak District, and all the while, in Jerry's case, training, training, training, to produce (a random selection this) first ascents of Masters Wall, Cloggy, The Face, Frankenjura, the first X-in Germany, Messiah (E6 6c), hardest route on UK gritstone at the time, first one-day ascent of Kauk's Midnight Lightning boulder problem at Yosemite, a one-day ascent of The Nose in 1993, and Nelson's Column, Trafalgar Square, London, to publicize the plight of Canada's Innu people. Who would have thought there was a readable book to be got out of sport climbing, competitions and bouldering? Well this is it. What impresses, is Jerry's obsessive training regime and his sheer dedication, hauling himself back from injury and performing superbly across a range of rock climbing disciplines. He was the best, and not backward in saying so, yet this story is told with a disarming ordinariness, droll at times. There's none of the familiar ice-gripped "heroics" we've become inured to in climbing books, and instead of dark introspection, the diversions from the actual climbing are bikes, dossing, travel, having fun and becoming a businessman (a founder of Sheffield's The Foundry climbing wall.) Moffatt and Grimes have done climbing history a service in setting down the story of UK climbing in the "dole era" of the 1980s — a story that was quickly becoming forgotten.

— Stephen Goodwin

Best Book — Mountain Literature

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

Beyond the Mountain

Steve House, Patagonia Books (USA, 2009)

In *Beyond the Mountain*, leading alpinist Steve House uses gripping first-person narrative and internal reflection to explore the dimensions of a craft admired by many but truly understood by few. High-level alpinism is an art in which the stakes are high and the rewards can be great. Those who pursue it face the very real threat of death, to themselves and their partners. But even in moments of success when the training, preparation, intuition, and conditions overcome the odds there can be other costs. These are the gaping inner voids that emerge in the wake of intense experiences and achievement, the desires for new and more ambitious goals to fill the spaces, and the difficult longing for partnerships of connection, synergy, and shared meaning.... House brings us on a wonderful journey in this book connecting the stories of his ongoing growth and development as a climber, his dedication to climbing the hardest routes and the quest for simplicity of style, and shares deeper understandings and insights into failure, loss, and the elusive and ultimately transient nature of success. He writes as equally of the things that happen on the ground as those that happen on the mountain; what happens in the mind along with what happens in the body. In a world where climbing literature is often filled with details of heroic technical difficulty, or descriptions of the relationship between people and mountains as one of conquest, *Beyond the Mountain* takes the road less travelled. House takes the same approach he advocates for in alpinism — that of innovation, boldness, honesty and simplicity and uses it to produce a story of lasting depth. And just as it has been with his ground-breaking climbs, so it is with this book. He has risked and succeeded.

— Jon Popowich

Best Book — Adventure Travel

\$500

The Great Polar Journey — In the Footsteps of Nansen

Børge Ousland, Ousland Design AS (Norway, 2009)

In this compelling narrative of his 2007 expedition recreating the original route pioneered by Nansen and Johansen in 1895 through Franz Joseph Land in their attempt to reach the North Pole, Børge Ousland does a terrific job at an inherently complex task. Interweaving accounts of Nansen's journey, general polar history, and his personal expedition, Ousland is a crisp writer with the added benefit of being arguably the contemporary authority on polar exploration. The result is alternately fascinating, delightful, insightful, inspiring, and frank and the stunning photography is another plus. Ousland doesn't shy from providing graphic details into the physical challenges of a polar expedition (an explorer on an early American expedition slept next to the body of his dead comrade for three months until the ground softened for burial) or probing uncomfortable personal truths about the pull of expeditions versus personal lives back home, and what we gain versus what we give up in modern lives. The result is a tome that soars for the reader on many levels.

— Susan Schwartz

Best Book — Mountain Image

\$500

The Alps — A Bird's Eye View

Matevž Lenarčič, Panalp d.o.o. (Slovenia, 2009)

What a mind-blowing project! The price on this book — just under €50 — makes no sense in publishing terms, but then commerce isn't Matevž Lenarčič's purpose, is it? Instead this Slovenian biologist/mountaineer/aviator/visionary wants us to see the Alps as the birds do — not divided into eight countries or anyone's possession but a world of marvellous beauties; and through these fantastic aerial images to provoke action to preserve the Alps for its communities, its wildlife and for the rest of us who love those mountains and fear the loss of any more ground to ski resorts, motorways, power plants and the like. I was all set to find a contradiction in Lenarčič's desire to save the Alps and the seemingly carbon-profligate act of flying over them for hours on end. But then I realized how green his method had been; an ultra-light motorglider, so that all the flying amounted to about the same CO2 emissions as a businessman's car in a year. To have captured all these images while piloting such a sensitive little craft is awesome. But then so is everything about this project. Lenarčič and his team presumably think it is necessary for the gesture to be on grand scale in order to open people's eyes beyond their selfish designs on the alpine space. One stunning mountainscape follows another, from the Barre des Ecrin in the west to Triglav in the east; jewelled lakes, forests and glacier surfaces viewed from above have a startling abstract quality, while the mark of man is there in the harmony of red-tiled rooftops on Italian hillsides to the brutal canalisation of rivers such as the Durance. Lenarčič rightly says that the preservation of the Alps begins and ends with acknowledging and respecting them. And that is the cumulative force of these images — to engender respect for a mountain range that, in our thrall with the Himalaya or Alaska, we might have thought a little passé. Together, Lenarčič's photographs stack up to make a powerful statement about the Alps and what we stand to lose if we just shrug and permit "business as usual." It's much more than high quality mountain images on gigantic-Art-book-scale, it's a mountain manifesto, a call to arms.

— Stephen Goodwin

Best Book — Mountain Exposition

Sponsored by Yamnuska Mountain Adventures: \$500

Flakes, Jugs & Splitters

Sarah Garlick, Globe Pequot Press (USA, 2009)

Rock climbing, by design, is a close-quartered, intimate activity. Fingers are crimped on edges, corners are laybacked, toes are torqued into cracks, whole bodies are wiggled into chimneys. Most climbers have relatively little knowledge about the rock on which they spend their time, but they do have many questions. Sometimes these questions are based on natural curiosity (like wondering how strange features like Devils Tower were formed), and other times they have a real utility in climbing (like wondering the real reasons why some kinds of rock protect better than others, or are weaker after rainfall). Discovering the answers, however, was often time-consuming. Fortunately climbers now have *Flakes, Jugs & Splitters: A Rock Climber's Guide to Geology* by Sarah Garlick. This innovative new book sheds light on the science behind the stone that supports our fingertips. In it, Garlick describes the various processes of rock creation from the cooling of hot magma, layering of ancient sea beds, and compression of quartz sand crystals as well as the continental collisions, crust folding, glacial erosion, and wear and tear that continues to shape the rocks and mountains. Informative, fascinating, and useful, *Flakes, Jugs & Splitters* brings the rock alive, giving us a new perspective on the dramatic mountain landscape around us.

— Jon Popowich

Best Book — Mountaineering History

Best Book — Mountaineering History

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

The Last of His Kind: the Life and Adventures of Bradford Washburn, America's Boldest Mountaineer

David Roberts, HarperCollins (USA, 2009)

David Roberts's *The Last of His Kind* is an exemplar of the biographer's craft. Brad Washburn was one of the towering figures of mountaineering in the 20th century and his multi-faceted life has been extensively documented, not least by the man himself. What more was there to say? Yet Roberts's affectionate portrait reads with such a freshness that you feel you're learning of Washburn anew, placed in the wider context of his time, his friends, family and a few foes. It flows. Roberts was a Washburn protégé and I particularly enjoyed the latter part of the book where the passion of author and subject for mountain exploration intermingle — Roberts's acknowledging Washburn's influence on his own Alaska climbing, paying a due that on a less personal level is owed to Washburn by mountaineers worldwide.

— Stephen Goodwin

Special Jury Mention

Royal Robbins: To Be Brave — My Life, Volume One

Royal Robbins, Pink Moment Press (USA, 2009)

It is interesting to know the background of our climbing legends, and in this powerful memoir, Robbins provides that and more. Robbins obviously had a tricky childhood, brought up in relative poverty by a single mom unlucky with two waster husbands. A poor student and sorry school athlete, he was a juvenile delinquent until he discovered climbing, which opened up a world of possibility and achievement. Robbins tells his story straight, simply, and with great honesty, while providing a window into the world of Yosemite in the late 1950s and early 1960s where every first ascent pushed climbing into uncharted territory and was fraught with meaning. Robbins provides fascinating and historical details about aid climbing in the Eisenhower era and also his much publicized rivalry with Warren Harding. The book starts and ends with his bold, landmark 1963 solo ascent of the West Face of the Leaning Tower. To his long list of achievements, Robbins can now add skilled memoirist along with climbing legend and clothing manufacturer. This is only volume one of a planned series of a seven-volume autobiography, and Robbins leads off on a high note, inspiring us to look forward to number two.

— Susan Schwartz

Canadian Rockies Award

Sponsored by Deuter and selected by a local committee:

In the Bear's House

Bruce Hunter, Oolichan Books — A Literary Publisher (Canada, 2009)

In The Bear's House captures the transformative power of the Rocky Mountains. The Rockies are a crucible for change; anyone who has camped, climbed or even driven through the Rockies feels differently about the world and themselves after the experience. Bruce Hunter captures the angst, alienation, love, and ultimately self-belief a young deaf man finds in himself during and after a summer spent on the Kootenay Plains beside the North Saskatchewan river. But the book is much more than a mountain tale; it's a well-told mountain tale. Hunter writes clearly and with what always feels like honesty. We initially had a hard time selecting this book for the Canadian Rockies Award as not all of it occurs in the Canadian Rockies. But the major transformations do, and the writing is as solid as the limestone in the Rockies isn't.

— 2009 Committee Member Will Gadd