

1998 SUMMIT OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

JOHN MARTIN

CLIMBER AND MOUNTAIN LOVE

John Martin is one of the most prolific contributors to sport climbing and mountain exploration in the Canadian Rockies. Perhaps best known for his prodigious output of guidebooks, he has climbed over 460 different peaks, in doing so creating over 100 first ascents and 60 new routes. He has also established more than 500 rock-climbing routes in the area. In the Cougar Canyon climbing area alone, 160 of the 180 recorded routes have been created by Martin, his favorites being *Byzantium* and *Critical Mass*. Interestingly, John has not created any new routes in Canada's National Parks, since he is concerned about the environmental impact that new sport climbing areas would bring.

A native Calgarian, John's love of the mountains began in childhood while fishing with his father. After being inspired by the climbs of Frank Smythe and from reading John Hunt's *Ascent of Everest*, he began climbing in high school and lists Brian Greenwood, Don Vockereth, and Lloyd MacKay as his early heroes. Since 1963, he has climbed an average of 50 days a year, focusing on routes with a healthy quota of exploration. He has evolved a fast and light mountaineering style that allows day trip ascents of remote peaks, multiple peak enchainments and long traverses over new ground. John's one-day climbs of Lunette Peak, Mount Goodsir and Mount Amery all testify to his level of fitness, experience and confidence.

An environmental consultant, he often climbs alone, although his all-time favorite partner is his wife, Lynda Howard. In 1992, John became a founding member and director of The Association of Bow Valley Rock Climbers (TABVAR), a volunteer organization dedicated to the development and maintenance of local sport climbing areas. He has been involved in 10 rock climbing guidebooks, including *Sloping Climbs* (1985), *Kananaskis Rock* (1987), *Bow Valley Rock* (1988), *Bow Valley Update* (1991) and *Bow Valley Sport Climbs* (1993). He is co-author of the current guidebook, *Sport Climbs of the Canadian Rockies* (1995). In addition, the *Canadian Alpine Journal* has published over 40 of his neoclassical articles, which describe his non-heroic style of mountain exploration.