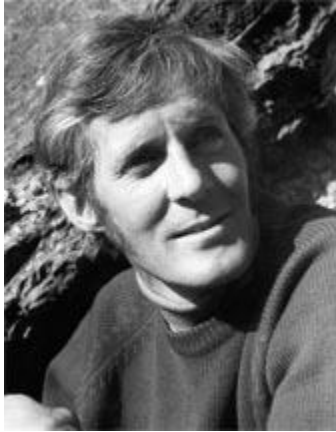


## 2008 SUMMIT OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

### DON VOCKEROTH

#### MOUNTAIN CLIMBING PIONEER



Don Vockeroth is a true mountain climbing pioneer. In the early 1960s, Vockeroth and his good friend Lloyd MacKay were the first born-in-Canada Canadians to climb at the forefront of the sport. Together, they established some of the hardest climbs in North America: Forbidden Corner and The Bowl on Yamnuska and the spectacular northeast buttress of Howse Peak. As an alpinist, his finest achievement was the first ascent of the northeast buttress of Howse Peak in 1967. Vockeroth also made first ascents of the north face of Mount Biddle and the north face of the south tower of Mount Goodsir.

Born in Drumheller in 1937, Vockeroth began his climbing adventures on the frozen banks of the Red Deer River. For over fifty years, he has devoted his life to the pursuit of his mountain passion, as a ski instructor and a mountain guide. In 1967, he was one of the first guides certified by the fledgling Association of Canadian Mountain Guides and for many years he led climbs for The Alpine Club of Canada at their General Mountaineering Camp. He was made an honorary life member of the Calgary Mountain Club in 1987. His climbing achievements and appreciation of mountain environments led to his designation as patron of the 16th annual Alpine Club of Canada Mountain Guides Ball in 2005.

Anyone who climbs in the Canadian Rockies owes a huge debt to Don Vockeroth, and it's perhaps the most telling thing about the man's character that that debt is often invisible to those who have followed in his footsteps, says climber and author Geoff Powter, a member of the Summit of Excellence selection committee. Several of Don's routes, especially on Yamnuska, were world-class technical and aesthetic achievements in their time, but Don climbed them quietly and humbly. As a climber, guide and mentor, he's a star of Canadian climbing who has left a great legacy of style and character, and every climber here owes him a nod.

Vockeroth and his wife Sheila have lived in Rossland, British Columbia since the early 1970s. Over the years he has owned and operated sports shops there and recently served as a town councillor. But Vockeroth's heart has remained in the outdoors - he's recently undertaken major ski expeditions in the Muskwa Ranges in the remote northern Rockies.