

2016 SUMMIT OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

David P. Jones



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There are many people who love the mountains and have rich and wonderful adventures in them; there are far fewer who truly *live* mountains, have the threads of adventure woven fully through the fabric of their lives, and create adventures for the rest of us.

Few people fit that second class of climber better than Golden B.C.'s David Jones. If you have hiked, or skied, or sport climbed, or ascended a peak in Canada's mountain west, there's every chance you could do so because David Jones was there before you.

For more than half a century, Dave has been one of the great spirits of our country's mountains. He's dreamed and mapped and flagged numerous trails through the Interior, giving the rest of us access to ranges that we'd likely otherwise never have entered. In an unparalleled record, he's made the first ascents of nearly a hundred unclimbed peaks from the Coast Range to the Rockies to the great northern mountains of Kluane, many of them by notably hard routes, and he's made more than 100 first ascents of new routes on previously ascended mountains. He's been just as active a contributor to the world of rock climbing as well, pioneering some 250 sport routes across southern B.C.

As impressive as Dave's accomplishments have been, he's chosen, and managed, to fly mostly under the radar - and nowhere has this been truer than when it comes to his record on the great mountains: Dave has made four ascents of Canada's highest peak, Mount Logan - twice by new routes. His first ascent of Logan's massive and complex Warbler Ridge was a 27-day epic that remains unrepeated after 40 years. Dave also blazed Canadian trails in the Himalaya; he was the first Canadian to climb above 8000-metres, first on the world's fifth highest peak,

Makalu, where he came within just a few hundred metres of the summit via a new line up the hardest wall of the mountain; and then in 1981, on Everest, when conditions stopped him just below the top on what would have been the first Canadian ascent.

Few people know Canada's mountain west better than David Jones. He matched his prodigious exploration with meticulous cataloging of peaks and their climbs - and this commitment naturally led to a role as an author of several climbing guidebooks, beginning with a series of guides to his beloved Selkirk Ranges, and now expanded to the mammoth job of updating the long-out-of-print guides to the Rockies. The first volume of the new Rockies series came out this year, and it stands a beautiful testament to David's love, skill, and commitment. Like his Selkirk guides, Rockies Central is precise, complete, articulate - and best of all, inspiring; his thankless years of work have already started to spark projects for a new generation of alpinists.

David's commitment to exploration, discovery, and pushing started young. Raised outside of Revelstoke B.C., Dave was surrounded by mountains, and itched to explore. "At twelve and half," Jones says, "I really wanted to go to the Seattle World's Fair, and I kept bugging my father. He got fed up and finally said, 'Well, why don't you goddamn walk?'" Jones took that as permission to go, and he and a friend rode three-speed bikes all the way from Revelstoke to Seattle, taking ten days to get there. That journey, it turned out, would be quintessentially Jonesian; a grand cardio adventure that few others would dare to conceive, just because he wanted to see if it could be done. Dave followed it with decades and decades of deep backcountry exploration with exactly the same flavour.

56 years later, now retired from his job as the Assistant Director of the Industrial Liaison Office at UBC, and now back living in the Interior, he hasn't slowed at all. Retirement has meant double the days in the mountains, and his work on the guidebooks has kept him keener and busier than ever. He's often out soloing lines, but he's often tied in with his wife, Joie Seagram, who's also a fine climber, and who, well into her 60's, just returned from her third expedition to an 8000-metre Himalayan peak.

This year, the scope of the Bill March Summit of Excellence Award was opened to recognize climbers from across the country, and there are very few people who deserve to be recognized for a national contribution to our mountains as much as David P. Jones.

The 2016 Summit of Excellence Award was sponsored by Norseman Outdoor Specialist and Yamnuska Mountain Adventures.