



THE VILLAGE OF LIONS BAY HISTORICAL PASSAGES FROM THE 1790S TO THE PRESENT



Map indicating names and locations of islands in the vicinity of Lions Bay.

Watch for the winner of our August 18th croquet tournament in an upcoming issue of *The Seagull*. There was no meeting in August. Everyone is welcome to attend our next meeting September 24, 7:30 PM in the library. Remember to purchase your copy of *The Village of Lions Bay (Historical Passages from the 1790s to the Present)* published by the Lions Bay Historical Society, July 2001.

\$8.00 at the Village Office and Lions Bay General Store.

Suzanne Spohn

Looking Back: Ascent of the Lions

Here is Part Two of an account of the first ascent of the East Lion and the second ascent of the West Lion during an extended September Labour Day holiday in 1903. The ascent was made by the three brothers – William Smith Latta, John F. Latta and Robert Peter Latta. Published by the City Archives, Vancouver, in 1953, and reprinted here with permission.

Tuesday morning we had planned to see some of the country lying to the north. But as we were passing the ice field lying against the north flank of the eastern peak, Will suggested taking a look at the side of the mountain. Chopping steps in the ice with the little axe he worked his way up to the top of the ice ridge, and from the vantage point shouted to us that he thought the peak could be climbed from that side. So dropping our packs, we followed in his steps. By this time he had gone down the reverse slope, and was standing on the edge of a crevasse some five or six feet wide which separated the ice from the rock. It was not much of a jump, but the speculative part of it was: would you bounce back when you hit the other side? There was not much of a foothold to land on, and the act called for some exact timing. It was necessary to grab for a handhold at the same time as your

feet hit the rock, to prevent bouncing backward and taking an unscheduled tour down three or four hundred feet under the ice. Will being the most venturesome, took the first jump and reported back that it was dead easy. Bert went next, and Will grabbed him as he landed. Then they started to pull themselves up by the bushes. I, being of no consequence whatever, was left to get across as best I could.

Bert did not quite make good his first attempt, and slid back until his feet were about two inches from reaching the ledge he had just left. Hanging on to the root above he called to me to do something about it. My suggestion that he hang on until I went back to North Vancouver for a plank did not seem to strike him as funny. However, I soon had him by the legs and boosted him up to where he could get a better hold.

It then occurred to me that we might have some real climbing to do and it was in order to use the rope. So we got hitched up in approved alpine style, one on each end of the rope and the other half way between. We struggled upward for a short distance, fumbling with the rope which would get caught on every sharp corner and root on the mountain. Once Bert got his leg in a bind and was in danger of being up feet first. Finally, after having the rope whip smartly past my head, nearly severing one of my ears, we concluded that ropes were meant for professional mountaineers. For us it was more of a menace than a help. So we got unhitched, coiled up the rope and dropped it where it could be recovered on the way back.

The rest of the climb to the top was unexpectedly easy. There was plenty of brush to grab. It was a wonderful feeling of security, hanging on to a friendly bush, rather than risking your safety on a projecting piece of rotten rock that may come away in your hand.

Will was the first up and searched about for evidence of any previous climbers, but there was none. Over us came that feeling of reverent awe that one experiences when treading for the first time a spot that has never known man since God raised it up out of the sea.

Having a small diamond nose chisel in my pocket and using the axe head as a hammer, I chipped our name on a granite slab. It was a clear day and we lingered there for some time enjoying the superb view, the clean uncontaminated air, and that feeling of spiritual exaltation one seems to find only on a mountaintop.

The climb down was pleasant and uneventful, and on reaching the lower levels again we were entertained for a while watching a herd of about twenty mountain goats clambering about on the cliffs the other side of the glacier. As there was still some of the afternoon left we pushed on for about an hour before making camp. I was now becoming deeply concerned about the condition of my clothes from the waist down. My shoes had been

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