

# The ACC community gives back

## David Toole

BY JOLENE LIVINGSTON

Nearly 40 years ago, David Toole was living in Montreal and searching for people to share his passion for outdoor adventure. With The Alpine Club of Canada, he discovered much more than a club that “just organized trips”. He found a genuine community, friendships that have lasted to this day and a forum where he could contribute to the enjoyment of nature’s playground for all.

“The ACC is a place where you meet people and they become your friends. Friends that last a lifetime,” Toole said.

Now in his mid-70s, Toole lives in Vancouver and has carried his love of the outdoors into an active retirement with his partner, Lue Crawford. A world traveller, he remains an engaged ACC member, sharing his adventures by blog and serving as a volunteer and generous donor.

Through his affiliation with the Club, he’s enjoyed cross-country skiing, hiking, climbing, snowshoeing, biking and canoeing all over the world. In fact, while being interviewed for this article, he was checking off items on his packing list in preparation for a trip to the jungles of southern Mesoamerica.

Recalling his early days with the ACC as formative for his family, Toole said, “My son, Simon, now an avid mountaineer on Vancouver Island, was a young teen at that time, and quite involved.”

The Montreal Section’s Val David ski house in the Laurentian Mountains was one of their favourite places. “We’d arrive at the ski house, meet up with friends,



David and Simon Toole wait for a ride on their way to the Tatshenshini River, Yukon. PHOTO: DAVID TOOLE

rise early the following day, and enjoy ski outings that lasted from sunrise to sunset,” Toole recalled.

At the end of the day, everyone would pitch in to prepare a meal, share tales and often partake in some friendly board-game competition.

“It was a real community. That was one of the best times of my life,” he said. Toole’s ACC friendships have endured for decades.

“A few years ago, I recall looking around the room at my birthday celebration in Vancouver, and many of my guests were friends who were part of those early ACC memories,” he said.

He has also been dedicated to shaping the Club’s future. For more than three decades he’s lent the skills he honed from an accomplished career in engineering, planning, management and finance to ACC volunteer roles.

In the late ’80s, he served on the ACC Montreal Section Executive, later joining the national Board of Directors as Vice

President, Services. Since then, he has held national Board roles as Secretary, Treasurer, Facilities Committee member, Director of Planning and Development, and then as ACC President from 2000 to 2005. Three years ago, he was named Honorary President. For his many contributions, Toole has been recognized with the Club’s A.O. Wheeler Legacy Award and the Distinguished Service Award.

“Over the years, I’ve worked with a very competent ACC leadership team who have kept a healthy balance sheet, but there were times in the past where the Club had been financially vulnerable,” Toole said.

He recognizes the critical value of contributions from donors and their estates to the ACC’s endowment—something he’s planned for in his own estate.

“The ACC has played a major role in my life,” Toole said. “I want to play a part in securing our legacy as a significant national organization.”



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