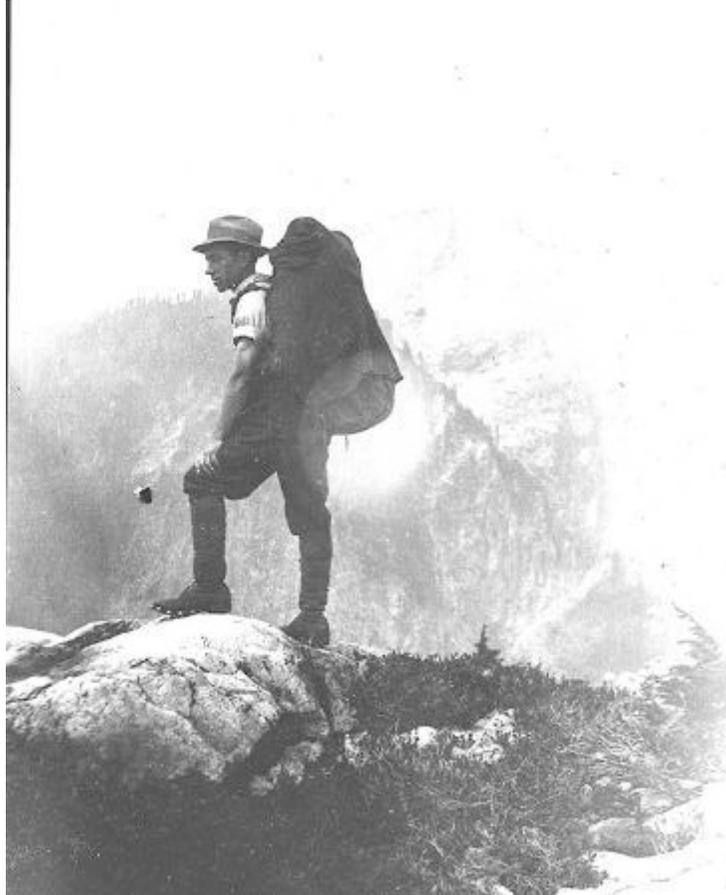


# North Shore siblings climb in their grandfather's footsteps



CLIMBING HIGH - Setting off in the early 1900s, Charles Chapman and four friends made the first recorded ascent of Mt. Seymour.

*Chapman family photo*

By [Michaela Garstin - North Shore Outlook](#)

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Over a century ago Charles “Chappy” Chapman lugged a heavy camera up Mt. Seymour while wearing layers of thick wool, old clothing and leather hobnailed boots.

He made his way through the rough mountainside, navigating streams, cliffs and snow with four other mountaineers, until the team reached the peak.

At the very top, he took a panoramic photo of his friends, their arms raised victoriously.

The year was 1908 and with his detailed journal and boxy Kodak camera, Chapman made the first recorded ascent of the North Vancouver mountain.



“In those days you really had to rely on yourself and your colleagues,” Chapman’s granddaughter Lid Hawkins tells *The Outlook* in a West Vancouver café, adding First Nations people were the very first to climb the mountain.

Her interest was piqued after finding his journals in the bottom drawer of a bookcase she inherited. Along with her brother Hugh Kellas, she has been researching her pioneering grandfather for the North Vancouver Museum.

Hawkins remembers visiting her grandfather at his printing shop downtown where he wore a big apron, visor and plastic over his shirt to keep clean. His job as a printer took Chapman from England to New Zealand, Australia and Italy before he finally settled on the North Shore.



“I got the feeling they were so happy to be out in the wild, so happy to be on top of the mountain,” says Hawkins, looking at a photo her grandfather took of Pump Peak, a mountain he named after noticing a log on top that looked curiously like a water pump.

“It’s still called Pump Peak,” says Kellas, explaining how the name confuses climbers because the log is now long gone.

On the 100th anniversary of the inaugural climb, the brother and sister traced their grandfather’s footsteps, standing in the exact spot to take a photo of Pump Peak.

“The camera’s weren’t light back then,” says

Kellas, referring to Chapman’s Kodak, one of the first affordable, portable, easy-to-use cameras on the market.

While doing research, Hawkins realized how tough mountaineers in the early 1900s had it compared to their contemporaries. In one journal entry, Chapman noted his team brought up two pounds of bacon and one pound of sugar, along with a Dutch oven to cook it.

“On one trip, a female friend delivered a pie to them. They carried it all the way up the mountain and, of course, they had to carry the dish back down,” says Hawkins smiling.



Back then, there was no one to call if the team got in trouble, says Hawkins, so they had to travel fully equipped to look after themselves.

Chapman passed away in 1960 at 76 years old, but his passion for mountains has lived on in his family.

Kellas, an urban planner, and Hawkins, a costumer for TV and film, both belong to the B.C. Mountaineering Club, which their grandfather joined in 1908. Their father, also a member, claimed the first recorded ascent of Silvertip Mountain near Hope and met their mother at a BCMC meeting.

Today, Mt. Chapman in the Lillooet Icefield, 90 kilometres northwest of Whistler, sits as a testament to their grandfather, who played an instrumental role in getting Garibaldi Park protected as a wilderness park.

“We’ve basically had a family member in the BCMC since it formed,” said Hawkins proudly.