

THE RANT AND RAVE GAZETTE

A Music Newsletter

Issue 10

Welcome to the tenth issue of the Rant - the bushwhacking issue. NOTE: the most recent rant comes up first with the past issues following. Cheers!

THE HOKEY POKEY

"AND YOU SHAKE IT ALL ABOUT"



"This shaking business ... This ain't gonna stop any time soon is it?"

I'm covered in mud and I've managed to drag half of the rapidly changing fall leaves into the house with me on my return from pounding through the toolies. I was wondering why my neighbour gave me that look as I dragged my pack out of the back of the car. I really should shake myself off before I return to civilization. It would be much easier on my tribe.

One of the things that balances out my peculiar life of sitting on my arse cradling a board with strings on it is my love of the bush. Along with living off the grid in my little cabin on the Yukon border for part of the year, I manage to spend a lot of time bushwhacking through the local west coast rainforest. And that means ... you guessed it ... no trail. It's an odd way to have fun, I'm the first to admit it. But there it is.

When I arrived on B.C.'s west coast from England as a nine year old, I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. I had two new buddies, John and Jamie Stephen, who found themselves in the same boat. In fact, they'd lived a bare few miles from me on the other side of the Tyne River before emigrating. We were gobsmacked by the possibilities offered by the ocean and mountains surrounding our new home, and we wasted no time in becoming the worst of bush rats.

The real serious hiking, however, started with two new pals, Conrad and David, who were fearless bushwhackers. In the day, the area north of Vancouver had few trails, and those that were still there were from the 40's and 50's were overgrown and difficult to find. Heading for a mountain peak or hidden lake in those days meant one thing - bushwhacking.

Bushwhacking in the west coast rainforest is hard work. There are many tricks o' the trade, but on the whole you end up crawling through this, climbing over that, sinking up to your knees in mud, getting raked by devils club, then limping home stinking of skunk cabbage. What fun! Half the time you can't see where you're placing your feet because of the ground cover, and the other half you can't find out where you are going because you can't see the landmarks through the canopy. It's hard to imagine why anyone would do it. Still ...

It all started for me with that first trek to find long a long lost cabin on Palisade Lake in the old Vancouver watershed. Conrad asked me before we left,

"So you're in pretty good shape then?"

"You bet!" said I. Of course I was in good shape. I was in my prime wasn't I?

Oh shit oh dear.

... TO BE CONTINUED ...

And now a word from the muse:

If you're not at least marginally insane
Then you are not paying attention

LITTLE GEMS

ADVICE THAT WAS WORTH ITS WEIGHT IN GOLD



"Playing fast is just playing slowly, FASTER."

THATS ALL FOR NOW FOLKS! SEE YOU NEXT TIME