ALPINE CLUB NOTES

OFFICE BEARERS AND COMMITTEE FOR 1988

President	G C Band
Vice Presidents	Lt Col M W H Day
	Sir Alan Pullinger
Honorary Secretary	S W Town
Honorary Treasurer	R A Coatsworth
Committee: Elective Members	Miss M Agrawal
	M E B Banks
	Mrs R Greenwood
	R J S Hoare
	A H Jones
	Mrs H Larsen
	Major D V Nicholls
	G W Templeman
	S M W Venables
ACG Co-opted Members	A V Saunders
	C Watts
Honorary Librarian	R Lawford
Honorary Archivist	E H J Smyth FRCS
Assistant Archivist	V S Risoe MBE
Honorary Keeper of the Club's Pictures	Dr C B M Warren FRCP
Honorary Editor of the Club's Journal	Professor E H Sondheimer
Assistant Editors	Mrs J Merz
	A V Saunders
	G W Templeman
Honorary Guidebooks Editor	G L Swindin
Chairman of the House Committee	G W Templeman
Chairman of the Library Council	M H Westmacott
Assistant Honorary Secretaries	
Annual Winter Dinner	Mrs J Merz
Candidates	A N Husbands
Lectures	S M W. Venables
Meets	M Pinney
Trustees	M Bennett
	A Blackshaw
	J G R Harding

HONORARY SOLICITOR	S N Beare
AUDITORS	A M Dowler Davey & Co.

GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB 1987

13 January	Tony Howard, *Climbs and Travels in the Sudan*
10 February	Pat Littlejohn, *Adventures on Rock from West Penwith to Norway*
2 March	Joint AC/RGS: Nick Clinch, *Great Ice Mountain*
10 March	John Brailsford, *Delectable Dauphiné*
14 April	Douglas Milner, *Mountain Travels in the Antipodes*
12 May	Lindsay Griffin, *Out of the Way Ice – Climbs in Greece and Venezuela*
15 September	Jim Fotheringham, *Menlungtse*
13 October	John Harding, *Turkey*
10 November	Andrzej Zawada, *8000 metres in Winter*
24 November	Prof John West, *The Life and Work of Alexander Kellas* (extra meeting)
30 November	Annual General Meeting: *Mont Blanc* (see below)

CLIMBING MEETINGS 1987

24–25 January	Lake District. FRCC Hut, Brackenclose, Wasdale.
14–15 February	ACG Winter Meet. Glencoe.
14–15 March	North Wales. Informal dinner with lectures by Graham Elson and Peter Stokes on the two most recent Alpine Club Himalayan Meets in Chogolungma and Gangotri.
16–17 May	Derbyshire. University of London hut, Fallcliffe Cottage, Grindleford.
18 July–1 August	Argentière. Joint Meet with Climbers' Club and ABMSAC based at Les Frasserands.
23 July–7 August	Cornwall. CC hut, Bosigran. Family meet held jointly with Climbers' Club.
July–August	Greater Ranges Meet: Cordillera Blanca.
26–27 September	Lake District. Informal dinner with lecture by Mick Fowler, *Spantik*.

CLUB REPRESENTATION AT OTHER FUNCTIONS

Peter Ledeboer was present at the opening, on 27 August 1987, of the exhibition *Les premiers photographes des Alpes* at the Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne. The display consisted of historic early photographs of the Alps, lent by the Alpine Club.

The President, Roger Chorley, John Hunt and Hamish MacInnes attended a conference on 'Mountain Wilderness', at Biella (Piedmont), on 31 October and 1 November 1987. This was sponsored by the Sella Foundation, and Vittorio Sella's magnificent panoramas of the Alps, Caucasus and Himalaya were on display.

Stephen Venables gave four lectures in Bombay at the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of the Himalayan Club (February 1988).

The Club was represented at Annual Dinners of Kindred Clubs as follows: the Fell and Rock Climbing Club (14 November 1987), George Lowe; the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club (21 November 1987), Tony Husbands; the Scottish Mountaineering Club (5 December 1987), the Honorary Editor. The last of these, with two ladies present, was a truly historic occasion.

THE DON WHILLANS MEMORIAL LECTURE

This meeting, one of a set of three, was organized by the Alpine Club on behalf of the Don Whillans Memorial Fund and was held at the Royal Geographical Society on 18 February 1987. It had the purpose of both commemorating a remarkable life and also raising funds for a memorial to Don Whillans. The proposed memorial is a camp-site for British climbers in Chamonix, ideally with toilet and washing facilities. This is particularly appropriate since Don spent many summer seasons camping at Chamonix.

There were four speakers who covered different periods and aspects of Don's climbing life. Nat Allen gave a fascinating portrayal of Don's early days with a mass of early pictures from the 1950s when Don Whillans and Joe Brown were pioneering a series of routes enormously harder than anything that had been done before. Chris Bonington took up the story from the first British ascent of the SW pillar of the Petit Dru in 1958, to Don's attempts on the N wall of the Eiger and the first ascent of the Central Pillar of Frêney, and on to the first ascent of the Central Tower of Paine in Patagonia and the S face of Annapurna with Dougal Haston in 1970. Completing the lecture, Doug Scott told the story of some of Don's more recent Himalayan expeditions – SW face of Everest in 1972, Shivling in 1981 and Broad Peak in 1983. Joe Brown acted as Master of Ceremonies and linkman with a host of amusing and, at times, poignant stories.

Chris Bonington

MONT BLANC 1787–1987: A BRITISH BICENTENARY

Following the bicentenary celebrations of the *first* ascent of Mont Blanc in 1786, the Club felt it appropriate to mark the occasion of the *fourth* ascent of Mont Blanc on 9 August 1787, since this was the first British ascent in the person of Col Mark Beaufoy.

Accordingly, a small exhibition was organized on the Club premises by Jerry Lovatt and Bob Lawford. It was opened at the AGM by the President in the presence of Mrs Guild, great-great-granddaughter of Col Beaufoy. Short accounts of the role played by British climbers were given by the President, Jerry Lovatt, Mike Banks and Roger Payne. Exhibits included a number of historic documents, notably Col Beaufoy's narrative of the ascent, a letter by his guide, Cachat *le Géant*, a certificate of the ascent of Mont Blanc issued by the *Compagnie des Guides* of Chamonix, as well as a memorial urn of Col Beaufoy's scientific achievement presented to him by the Royal Society. In addition, there was the usual excellent photographic display, illustrating British ascents in the area over the 200 years.

Col Beaufoy was Colonel of the Tower Hamlets Militia, a scientist by profession and a philosopher of considerable eminence. He made the first British ascent of Mont Blanc purely for the pleasure of doing so while on an extensive tour of Europe. An account of his ascent is illuminating as described in extracts from a letter from his son written in 1837, following a visit to his guide:

> 'Scarcely had [de Saussure] quitted Chamouni, when an English gentleman named Beaufoy, his wife, a nurse maid and infant daughter arrived; and as usual with the guides, Cachat and others waited on the Colonel at the Inn . . .
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> On descending the rough and difficult mountain to the source of the Aveiron, which must have been a most fatiguing trial to our mother as in those days no footpath existed, Cachat was surprised by the lady who was leaning on his arm telling him "my husband has a strong inclination to ascend Mont Blanc and I would wish you to spare neither money nor precautions in order that the excursion may be accomplished safely and successfully". That same evening the Col spoke himself to Cachat, who having consulted with a comrade and written down every article which was requisite, then fixed up 10 guides as sufficient; each to carry between 25lbs and 30lbs of provisions, and ladders, ropes, etc. And the preparations being all made, the party started at seven o'clock the next morning and returned in three days to Chamouni, having been favoured with weather without a cloud.
>
> Cachat told me that the Colonel walked as boldly and actively as any of the men with him, that his only anxiety was to arrive on the summit before twelve o'clock in order to measure the height of the sun with his Quadrant; and that they did reach the highest point at eleven of the second day, having slept in the rock of the Grand Mulet, where they also passed the second night on their

return. They remained about one hour and a half on the summit, and what Cachat told me was unusual, the whole number of ten guides were also able to reach the top of the mountain. When I asked him if the Colonel's lady was not afraid at the dangers her husband might experience, he said "how could she be fearful when she encouraged the Colonel to make the attempt, for she was as eager as himself".'

Peter Ledeboer

ALPINE CLUB SYMPOSIUM 1987: CHINA

Around 100 people congregated on Saturday 28 November 1987 at the National Mountaineering Centre, Plas y Brenin, at this meeting entitled 'Climbing in China'. This followed the very successful meetings of previous years – 'Lightweight Expeditions to the Greater Ranges' (1984), 'Climbing in South America' (1985) and 'The Karakoram' (1986).

The President of the Alpine Club, Mr George Band, chaired the meeting. The speakers were: Chris Bonington, Mike Banks, Bill Ruthven, Doug Scott, John Town, Michael Ward, Dickon Bevington, Nick Clinch and Henry Day.

Very considerable experience and expertise were assembled, with speakers who had visited all the mountain regions of China since these began to be opened in 1980. Two themes recurred throughout the Symposium – financial difficulties caused by the high price of Chinese mountaineering, and the cultural differences between ourselves and the many different ethnic groups within the Peoples' Republic.

Climbing in China is expensive, but speakers from smaller expeditions (John Town) indicated ways in which money could be saved and pointed out that they had been able to run small expeditions to 6000m peaks for around £2000 a head from Britain.

The cultural differences, together with the high cost, have led to discord with the Chinese authorities on several trips. Other speakers indicated how helpful and efficient the Chinese had been, and it would appear that an acceptance and an understanding of our differences by visiting mountaineers would ease these problems.

Even after the recent troubles in Tibet there is no indication that the Chinese authorities are 'clamping down' on expeditions, though the single traveller may find it more difficult to visit remote areas.

C R A Clarke

THE ALPINE CLUB LIBRARY

1987 was a year of steady progress. Renovation of the older volumes continued, with the valued help of the National Association of Decorative and Fine Art

Societies. Faster progress was made with the cataloguing of the 'tracts' – bound volumes of miscellaneous printed documents dating from the 1870s onwards – with the help of Mrs Sonia Jacobs, a visitor from Boulder, Colorado. The work done on the photographs in recent years by Bob Lawford has paid dividends, with loans for important exhibitions in Canada and Switzerland bringing both favourable publicity for the collection and a financial contribution.

The first steps towards computerization have been taken, in initiating design of a cataloguing system. Implementation of such a system, leading to publication of a catalogue supplement and later to more complete mechanization, will, however, require paid assistance, and hence further funds. Thanks to Bill Risoe and to his successor as Honorary Archivist, Edward Smyth, the Archives are now prepared for a major cataloguing effort, which will also require further fund-raising for completion. Fund-raising efforts with companies and grant-making bodies continue, but the response this year has been disappointing. Members' donations of books and money, and their covenants, are much appreciated. We also received a substantial bequest from the late Henry S Hall, who during his life was a frequent and most generous benefactor.

Michael Westmacott

ERRATA

The following errors in *AJ92* have been noted:
p206, line 4. The climbers were Sandy Allan and Rick Allen.
p208, line 6 up. Manirang was first climbed by Dr J de V Graaff, Mrs Clare Graaff and Sherpas Pasang Dawa Lama and Tashi.
p260, line 21. Melchior and Jakob Anderegg were cousins, not brothers.
p287. Tenzing Norgay did not take part in the 1933 Everest expedition, but did join the expeditions in 1935, 1936 and 1938. He was sirdar to the French expedition to Nanda Devi in 1951, himself climbing Nanda Devi East, and for the two Swiss expeditions to Everest in 1952. Angtharkay was Eric Shipton's sirdar on the 1951 Everest reconnaissance, and again in 1952 on Cho Oyu.
p301, line 30. For 1959 read 1956.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Again I have to thank many people for their interest, moral support and practical help. Tribute should be paid to Phil Bartlett and W L (Robin) Robinson, who have 'retired from the fray' after five years' hard labour as Assistant Editor and index compiler (respectively). I express a particular word of thanks to Victor (Tony) Saunders, Phil's successor, and to Geof Templeman, Assistant Editor for many years past (and, I hope, to come), whose patient labour and sound judgement have been crucial. Johanna Merz has once again been a tower of strength, and has become a third Assistant Editor. Sheila

Harrison and Pat Johnson have quietly and efficiently produced much important information; and Peter Ledeboer has continued with the task of organizing the advertisements. We depend heavily on the information provided by our regular contributors who form a long and distinguished list: Chris Bonington, Evelio Echevarría, Lindsay Griffin, Harish Kapadia, Bill King, Paul Nunn, Edward Peck, C A Russell and Ted Whalley. We are delighted that they have been joined, this year, by Adams Carter, Zbigniew Kowalewski, Józef Nyka, John Porter and Andrew Wielochowski. Finally, a special word of thanks to Paddy Boulter for keeping the Editor in good repair, and to Janet Sondheimer for advice, support and forbearance. To all the above, and to many other helpers not specifically named, I express my gratitude and appreciation. At the time of writing, important changes are under way in the arrangements for producing and distributing the *Alpine Journal*. These – it is hoped – will give us an even better product and a bigger circulation, whilst preserving all that is best in the journal's tradition.

Ernst Sondheimer