In Memoriam

COMPILED BY GEOFFREY TEMPLEMAN

The Alpine Club Obituary		Year of Election	
Sir Robert Charles Evans		1948	
Peter Bicknell		1931	
The Hon William Neil McGarel Hogg		1934	
Alfred Newton Husbands		1968	
Paul James Nunn		1980	(ACG 1964)
Geoffrey Anyan Tier		1979	
Hubert Adams Carter		1956	Hon 1983
John Reginald Allen		1967	(ACG 1953)
Michael C Davie		1992	
John Menzies Kay		1954	
Alison Jane Hargreaves		1985	
Hilda L Reid	LAC	1956	
Canon Augustine Thomas Isaac Boggis		1954	
Leonard Emile Frank		1958	
Sybil Washington	LAC	1962	
John Anthony Brooder		1975	
Robert James Brocklehurst		1926	
Hans Christian Bugge		1954	

I regret that it has not been possible, in the time available, to include an obituary for Sir Charles Evans. Several tributes will appear in next year's volume.

Obituaries are included for Fred Jenkins and J T M Gibson who both died in 1994. I would also like to mention José Louis Burman from South Africa who, whilst no longer a Club member at the time of his death, had previously been one since 1968.

1995 turned out to be a sad year for the Alpine Club, as we lost a number of prominent members including several active mountaineers.

Geoffrey Templeman

Frederick Llewellyn Jenkins 1914-1994

Fred Jenkins, who died in December 1994 aged 80, will particularly be remembered by the climbing fraternity for his institutional role as Honorary Padre to a host of mountaineering dinners. But as a member of the Alpine Club for half his life of four score years, Fred was first and foremost an alpinist who had climbed far and wide in unfamiliar places. And his was a disconcerting knack of trumping would-be claimants to priority.

Fred was born in 1914 at Aberdare, a scenic mining town deep-set amidst Glamorgan's uplands. This had also been the birthplace of General Bruce who led the 1922 and 1924 Everest expeditions. In his racy autobiography *Himalayan Wanderer*, Bruce recalled youthful excursions running around these homeland hills which were to impart 'a love and understanding of mountain country without my appreciating it at the time'. Close to the Brecon Beacons and within sight of Glamorgan's culminating scarp 'the World's Forehead', something of the genius of the place must also have touched the young Fred to sow the seed of his lifelong preoccupation with mountains.

After schooling in Aberdare, Fred graduated from St David's College, Lampeter, trained for Holy Orders at St Michael's, Llandaff and was ordained in 1938. For six years, from 1939 to 1945, he was curate of Bishop's Castle, Shropshire and it was to the village of Trefonen, set square on Offa's Dyke, that he and his wife Audrey eventually retired to spend his last years in sight of the Cambrian hills, with a panoramic view overlooking the Shropshire plain.

During the Second World War Fred combined pastoral duties with part-time service in the National Fire Service. But in 1945, aged 31, his career took an adventurous change of direction when he joined the army as a padre. In 1947 he qualified as a parachutist with the 6th Airborne Division and for the next 17 years travelled extensively on military service to Italy, Cyprus, Germany and India. It was during this period that Fred's mountaineering career burgeoned. He had already climbed in the Alps, Corsica, the Pyrenees and the Valais before a two-year posting to Trieste in 1952. From here, he systematically explored the local cliffs, combining rock climbing with numerous solo forays into the Carnic, Julian and Styrian Alps. Fred was developing a taste for mountain exploration in what were then little-known ranges such as the Turkish Ala Dağ and Picos de Europa. He also became heavily involved with the Army Mountaineering Association, visiting Sikkim, Tibet and the Rockies; he took particular pride in his Deputy Leadership of the 1959 AMA/Pakistan expedition to Malubiting.

Fred's interest in ski mountaineering was awakened with a solo ski ascent of the Cyprian Olympus in 1947 which was to preface a number of individualistic solo ski ascents. But his most fruitful mountaineering years on ski were with Jeremy Whitehead – a 16-year partnership which Jeremy affectionately recalls in his own tribute.

Fred was a committed climbing clubman and already a member of both the Fell & Rock and Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club when elected to the Alpine Club in 1954. In 1976 he was elected to the Alpine Ski Club; from 1977 to 1989 he served as that Club's Honorary Secretary and in 1991 became an Honorary Member. The brevity of Fred's minutes were rivalled only by that of his pre-prandial graces.

I owe a personal debt to Fred, for it was he who introduced me to climbing. In March 1954 he was the Guards Training Battalion's Padre at Pirbright when I was a 19-year-old Ensign. Discovering that Fred was something of a mountaineer, I enveigled him into taking me to the Cairngorms. I imagined that I was teaming up with Methuselah but Fred, at 40, was then at the height of his powers. During a week of seemingly interminable eight-mile marches in and out of invisible hills swept by unremitting blizzards and possessed by malign Old Grey Men, it was an educative introduction. Throughout the experience Fred was indefatigable and unflappable but invariably a kind, good humoured mentor embodying the wisdom of an Old Testament prophet without the homilies.

Fred's no-nonsense graces were a mirror of the man. Tough, stoical, commonsensical and tolerant, his religion was his staff but never a stave. He will leave behind a host of warm memories. We send our condolences to his family and his widow Audrey who was herself so courageous during his last months.

J G R Harding

Jeremy Whitehead writes:

Though I had encountered Fred Jenkins on various occasions, I did not get to know him well until 1960 when we met on a Ski Club of Great Britain tour of the Ötztal. During a week of memorable peak-bagging and ski-running he suggested that I should join the Alpine Club. Since that time, when he was chaplain of the Royal Masonic School, we skied and climbed together a great deal till he was forced to curtail these activities.

In 1970 Fred joined my guided ski tour in the Valais, and then between 1973 and 1983 he was a regular member of the ski tours that Jim Roche and I led for the SCGB. Thus we visited together most areas of the French Alps including three trips to the Dauphiné, the traverses Nice–Briançon and Briançon–Tarentaise (conditions preventing the continuation to Chamonix) and traverses in the Vanoise and Maurienne. Though he was never a very good skier, it was a great comfort, in a party of skiers often with little knowledge of mountaineering, to have Fred's expertise available if needed. His good humour and fund of anecdotes were always much appreciated.

In 1978 the pair of us initiated the custom of a tour in the French Alps during the Christmas/New Year period, often preceded by a week's resort skiing. These tours could be mildly adventurous. Our first essay resulted in an impromptu bivouac in a happily-placed ex-customs hut in the Queyras, the result of my leading to the wrong col rather too late in the day. On

another occasion, on Christmas Eve in the highest hut of the Beaufortain, an encounter with a large and hospitable French party led to our consuming almost all our provisions prematurely. In the next hut, Christmas dinner consisted of a packet of soup and some rice fortunately left by previous occupants. These trips continued after Fred's retirement, when he was the ideal person to take over as Secretary of the Alpine Ski Club. In company with a few other friends, we continued these Christmas tours until the last one in 1985.

In the summer of 1975 we climbed Pelvoux but failed on the Ailefroide in a memorable three-day excursion from La Bérarde. In 1978 we were in the Oberland when a knife injury to my hand, incurred on the Wetterhorn, resulted in the doctor's order 'No climbing, only walking!'. We still managed to 'walk' up the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn and the Blümlisalphorn. Later, the stitches out, we made the traverse of Palu and a double traverse of the Bellavista on the same day. From 1981 no Alpine meet seemed complete without Fred's little green tent, with him sitting under his umbrella drinking tea (or wine) in the rain. In that year we climbed the Weissmies and Dom. The next year we left the Chamonix meet and moved south, traversing Mont Pourri by the N ridge, visiting the Aiguilles d'Arves, climbing Pic de l'Etendard in the Grandes Rousses and finally Monte Viso by the E ridge. This was Fred's last major summit. He was going very slowly but reached the top by 4.30pm, while we still had a clear view of the Pennine Alps – Mont Blanc to Monte Rosa – territory we both knew so well.

Fred continued to attend the AC Alpine meets until 1989, though he often preferred to remain in the valley. But in 1984 we did the splendid walk over the three summits of the Wildstrübel, from the Lämmeren to the Wildstrübel hut. In later years he experimented with Nordic skiing in Scotland, but decreasing mobility after a hip replacement prevented his visiting the mountains he loved so well.

Peter Bicknell 1907-1995

Peter Bicknell had climbing in his blood. His father, Raymond Bicknell, was in the words of his *Alpine Journal* obituary 'in every sense a great mountaineer', renowned for his achievements in Norway and the Alps. Peter's own application to the Alpine Club in 1931 was supported by names famous in the Club's annals: Claude Wilson, Claude Elliot, Sydney Spencer, E L Strutt. In 1924 Raymond Bicknell took his family on holiday to Grindelwald, when Peter enjoyed his first mild Alpine excursions; in 1926 Raymond took Peter and his younger brother Claud on a high-level traverse from Chamonix to Grindelwald, on the way climbing Mont Collon, the Zinalrothorn, Finsteraarhorn and Wetterhorn. In 1927 Peter and his father made another high-level route, from Saas-Fee to Modane: then followed the attempt on the Southern Aiguille d'Arves and Raymond

Bicknell's fatal fall, probably due to heart failure, when leading the party of four up an icy couloir. In its account of the accident the *AJ* saluted Peter's courage in descending the couloir to release his father's body and then coming down as last man.

Peter was back in the Alps in 1929, when he and Claud led a Cambridge University Mountaineering Club meet in the Tyrol, and, in the following years, climbing with Claud, Dick Graham, Basil Goodfellow, Peter Lloyd and others; in 1931 he joined Jack Longland for the Younggrat of the Breithorn and the Mer de Glace face of the Grépon. Twice he was considered for Everest expeditions, twice he had to refuse – the first time because of temporary ill-health, the second, in 1936, because he was getting married. For his wife, Mari Scott Henderson, marriage also meant turning down an offer – in her case to audition for the Russian Ballet. Mari thoroughly enjoyed walking with Peter in the Alps or at home, but had no wish to put on a rope.

Peter's most celebrated achievement in the 1930s was the solo traverse, in 1932, of the entire Cuillin ridge, from Gars-bheinn to Sgurr nan Gillean, in twelve hours: a feat suggested and encouraged by Leslie Shadbolt who, in 1911 with A C McLaren, had first achieved the traverse in one day, but in a longer time. Two years later Peter and Claud repeated the traverse, in the opposite direction, breakfasting at Sligachan and returning in time for dinner. Peter's affection for our home mountains was apparent in his first book, *British Hills and Mountains* (1947). There had been many childhood holidays in the Lakes. In Wales he was a regular at Geoffrey Young's Easter parties at Pen-y-Pass, and an active member of the Climbers' Club, of which he was President from 1951 to 1954. Visits during the war to the Longstaffs at Achiltibuie led to fascination with Suilven, Cul Mor, and the other strange shapes of the NW Highlands: his pen and water-colour sketches of them appear in *British Hills and Mountains*. Sketching came to him as naturally as climbing.

Peter was back in the Alps in 1947, in the Engadine; and in 1949, with Claud, he led a party organised by the Alpine Club to introduce climbers who had been debarred from the Alps in the war years. After two successful weeks with the party in the Oberland, the brothers were free to climb on their own and had a splendid day on the N face of the Jungfrau, from the Guggi hut and over the Silberhorn. In 1951 they climbed the N ridge of the Grivola and other peaks from Cogne, then joined my party at Courmayeur. I have a vivid memory of starting out with Peter and Claud on the Rochefort arête, which that year had snow the consistency of caster sugar: after a few steps we recalled that between us we were responsible for twelve young lives at home, and retreated to the solidity of the Géant. Scorning the fixed ropes, Peter happily led us up to the summit where we were greeted by Lionel Terray with ironic congratulations on our careful British-style belaying. In 1955 Peter and Claud were able to complete the Rochefort arête, and went on to climb the Dent d'Hérens by its W ridge and, with a guide from Breuil, traverse the Matterhorn from the Italian side in fast

time: 'down to the Hörnli for breakfast and Breuil for lunch'. After this there were no more big Alpine expeditions, but still much climbing and walking in the Lakes and NW Highlands. It was there, in 1977, that we had a last climb of Suilven, when Peter's, Mari's and my ages totted up to well over 200.

Peter had studied architecture at Cambridge, and in 1935 returned there to the practice that became Hughes and Bicknell. Among the buildings he designed in Cambridge were Fen Court of Peterhouse and the extension to the Scott Polar Institute; elsewhere he built for the King's School at Ely, Peter Scott's Wildfowl Trust at Slimbridge, and many private houses. Among these were one for his sister Ellen at Brigsteer, with windows specially planned to show the western Fells, and a house for himself and Mari after the end of their lease of Finella on the Backs, scene of so much hospitality and memorable firework parties. At Newton Road he created a small masterpiece, his cunning design of house and garden making one feel miles from the city. Peter lectured at the Cambridge School of Architecture, and became one of the pillars of the Department. He was a Fellow of Downing.

It was a rewarding career; but when he retired from the practice in 1982 he had already started on another, which proved equally rewarding. A year before, at the invitation of the Fitzwilliam Museum, he had organised (and produced a scholarly catalogue for) an exhibition 'Beauty, Horror and Immensity – Picturesque Landscape in Britain 1750-1850', where there was much about the English Lakes. This led, in 1982 and 1983, to his organising, along with Robert Woof, two exhibitions at the Wordsworth Museum, Dove Cottage, Grasmere: 'The Discovery of the Lake District 1750-1810' and 'The Lake District Discovered 1810-1850'. So began a close association with Dove Cottage. He became a Trustee of the Wordsworth Trust in 1982, and had a hand in several later exhibitions, notably 'Gilpin to Ruskin: Drawing Masters and their Manuals 1800-1860' (1988), for which he was joint curator with Jane Munro, the exhibition being shared with the Fitzwilliam Museum. According to Robert Woof, Peter was 'the Muse – the best appreciator and the best responder' – to a later series of exhibitions, which included 'Wordsworth and the Alps' in 1990 (of which a full account appeared in *AJ97* (1992/93). He edited a new illustrated edition of Wordsworth's *Guide to the Lakes* (1984) and produced a masterly bibliography *The Picturesque Scenery of the Lake District 1752-1855* (1990). This began as a catalogue of his own collection of illustrated books, which he gave to King's College Cambridge in memory of Tim Munby, Librarian of the College, and of Professor Pigou who had often lent the Bicknells his house by Buttermere, giving them 'a glorious series of holidays that have coloured the whole of the rest of my life'. The bibliography has acquired such authority that 'In Bicknell' or (more rarely) 'Not in Bicknell' may be found to describe an item in a rare bookseller's catalogue.

At the Alpine Club, too, he was involved – along with Charles Warren, Bob Lawford and Frank Solari – in several exhibitions, notably that in 1981 of the Club's rare books and pictures, which he wrote about in *AJ88* (1983). He served on the Library Council and contributed generously to its Appeal. He did much for the Club, not least by reminding us that climbing a mountain can be part of a larger experience, in which art, poetry and history are also involved; and that we can still enjoy mountains years after we have had to give up climbing them. His humane and many-sided approach made him, on the mountains or off them, the best of company.

He was among hills, at his daughter Caroline's home in Provence, when he was taken ill last May. He died in hospital in Avignon on 31 May, peacefully and with grace, his life fulfilled.

Janet Adam Smith

Jack Traverse Mends Gibson 1908-1994

Jack Gibson scaled no 8000-metre peaks, did no north faces with hammock bivouacs, opened no fearsome new routes on seemingly smooth rock pillars. But he loved the mountains, being in them, climbing, trekking, camping, sitting by a camp fire swapping yarns, or singing, rafting, exploring, working out new routes, canoeing, yodelling, skiing. Above all, skiing. 'You will never convince a skier that there is any sport to compare with skiing,' he once wrote. And he had the great gift of being able to communicate his enthusiasms to youngsters. He was 'a completely natural schoolmaster' (so described by the Director of Studies at Sandhurst who met him in 1951) and that, perhaps, was his greatest achievement.

The son of a naval officer, Jack Gibson was born on 3 March 1908. He was educated at Haileybury and Cambridge, where he got a half blue for fencing. He joined the staff of Chillon College, near Montreux, with responsibility for winter sports, and spent three happy years there. He climbed and skied regularly with the Swiss Alpine Club; his climbs included the Javelle of the Aiguilles Dorées.

The depression hit Chillon College, and Jack, having decided that teaching was his vocation, taught at Ripon Grammar School for the next four years. In 1937 he joined the Doon School at Dehra Dun as housemaster, and India became his home until his death. During periods of special leave he served in the Royal Indian Navy Volunteer Reserve 1942-45, and as Principal of the Joint Services Wing 1949-1951. In 1992, the three Service Chiefs of India, who had all been his pupils at the JSW, helicoptered to Ajmer to pay joint tribute to him.

In 1953 he was appointed Principal of Mayo College, Ajmer. In his 15 years there he revitalised that moribund institution, making it one of the foremost schools in India. In 1960 he was awarded the OBE by the British Government and in 1965 the Padma Shri by the Indian Government.

He celebrated his very first summer in India, 1937, with a seven-week expedition in the Himalaya with John Martyn, when Tenzing – recommended to them by Brigadier Osmaston – accompanied them. Tenzing was with Gibson on two further expeditions and they formed a close friendship which was unaffected by Tenzing's later celebrity. 'He was quite unchanged and unspoiled,' wrote Gibson after having Tenzing and his daughter to lunch at the Gymkhana Club in 1961.

Jack Gibson was in the Himalaya almost every summer for many years, and often in Gulmark in winter for the skiing. But his great achievement was the initiation of dozens of youngsters to climbing and skiing. Several well-known Indian climbers – Nandu Jayal, Gurdial and Jagjit Singh – had their early experiences with him; he regularly took parties of schoolboys to the mountains, and Har-ki-Doon in the Garhwal Himalaya became his favourite stamping ground. It was from here that he made the first ascent of Black Peak.

Gibson was President of the Himalayan Club from 1970 to 1973 and he represented it at the Meet in Darjeeling to celebrate the Twientieth Anniversary of the first ascent of Everest. 'I feel greatly honoured,' he said in his speech. 'Though not an Indian, I have lived in India for 36 years.'

And he had lived there for 57 years when he died in October 1994. The 'completely natural schoolmaster' was mourned by thousands of his former students all over the country; he will continue to live in their hearts and minds.

Aamir Ali

William Neil McGarel Hogg 1910-1995

Neil Hogg, who died in 1995 aged 85, was a man of exceptional talents and an all-round alpinist who was largely responsible for the revival of British ski mountaineering after the Second World War.

Neil was born into a mountaineering family on 21 February 1910. His father, the first Lord Hailsham, was himself something of a mountaineer and it was he who, in 1921, introduced his two sons to the Alps while they were still barely into their 'teens. The London Polytechnic chalets near Lucerne were used as a base for walking and climbing and from then on, bitten by the climbing bug, both brothers embarked on a regular succession of Alpine seasons. Neil's elder brother Quintin – our Honorary Member Lord Hailsham – tended to favour the French-speaking Western Alps while Neil preferred German-speaking Switzerland. Neil was an asthmatic, which ultimately led to his being removed from Eton by his parents for health reasons. However, by the date of his election to the Alpine Club in 1934 at the age of 23, he had already completed ten mainly guideless Alpine seasons with an impressive tally of classic routes to his credit, ranging over the Oberland, Pennine Alps and Mont Blanc massif.

Neil was to spend the greater part of his working life as a diplomat. At Eton he had been a scholar, as was his brother Quintin, but he subsequently achieved the almost unique distinction of passing into the Diplomatic Service without attending a university. A consummately talented linguist, who spoke German, French, Italian, Portuguese and Arabic fluently, for almost 30 years he pursued an eventful diplomatic career, with postings to Lisbon, Baghdad and Washington. He was also a gifted if self-effacing poet.

In the aftermath of his father's death in 1950 Neil retired from the Foreign Service. After an interlude in the West Indies he took over the management of the Hotel Seeburg, Lucerne, a former Jesuit convent which had been owned by the family for over a hundred years. Thereafter, the Hotel Seeburg became the centre of his domestic life – a hostelry of convivial and gastronomic excellence where Neil dispensed legendary hospitality.

It was at about this time that Neil reverted to his passion of early youth – ski mountaineering. The British had originally been at the forefront of Alpine ski mountaineering under the leadership of an outstanding exemplar, Arnold Lunn. But between the wars Lunn's vision – that this branch of the sport might provide a bridge between skiers and mountaineers – had met with formidable opposition from the Alpine Club's establishment. Moreover, in the immediate post-war years, travel restrictions imposed by currency controls, together with a dearth of younger people with the requisite skills and experience, had brought British ski mountaineering to its nadir. In the early 1950s the Eagle Ski Club had considered closing and in 1958 the Alpine Ski Club's President reckoned that that Club had no active functions to perform.

This defeatist mood changed when, in 1958, the Chalet Herrenschaft at Grindelwald became the centre of Neil Hogg's ski mountaineering operations. Neil provided the impetus and leadership to galvanise British ski mountaineering into renewed activity. Following his appointment in 1960 as the Eagle Ski Club's Honorary Swiss Secretary, he introduced a systematic training programme under the aegis of such Swiss guides as the peerless Hermann Steuri; he also promoted a wider-based membership of the ESC and encouraged ambitious ski tours. In 1962, on the joint initiative of the ESC and the Ski Club of Great Britain, Neil organised the first post-war ESC high alpine ski mountaineering training meet at Koncordia, thereby establishing what was to become a key feature in the Club's training programme for aspirant ski mountaineers. The fruits of these initiatives were a number of ambitious, unguided Alpine tours such as the 1972 British Ski Traverse of the Alps, led by Alan Blackshaw, and a spate of ESC ski mountaineering expeditions to the Greater Ranges.

Although, in the words of his elder brother Quintin, Neil was 'the most talented man I knew', no one could have been a kinder or more considerate mentor, wholly sympathetic to novitiate failings – as I came to discover on my first ski mountaineering essay on his 1964 Oberland meet. An ebullient host, his was spontaneous generosity and I particularly treasure his gift of

Christoffel's *La Montagne dans La Peinture*, which he presented to me at Grindelwald after a 1968 summer saga on the Schreckhorn with Nick Allen.

Imbued with the skills and confidence that derive from youthful experience, Neil became the embodiment of the Alpine sage with a prodigious knowledge of mountains and mountaineering. He was a member of the Alpine Club for 61 years and an Honorary Member of both the Alpine and Eagle Ski Clubs. Twenty-one years ago, on the occasion of the ESC's Golden Jubilee in 1975, he predicted a revival of ski mountaineering with an extension and coalescence of langlauf, nordic and alpine techniques and equipment. He believed that the future of British ski mountaineering was assured provided the climbing fraternity overcame the prejudice and ignorance against ski which had characterised the inter-war and immediate post-war years. His prophesies have largely been realised

British ski mountaineering will always be indebted to Neil Hogg for his vision and determination in reviving the sport he loved so much and which he adorned and proselytised with such charm and style.

J G R Harding

Tony Newton Husbands 1921-1995

Tony Husbands died in Derby on 3 January 1995. He was educated at Charterhouse and Clare College, Cambridge, where he did a chemistry degree in 1941/42 in a compressed course before being employed in North Wales on chemical warfare production for the remainder of the war. It was at this time that he was introduced to the hills and learned to climb. He joined the Climbers' Club in 1945 and will always be associated with Snowdonia. In later life he became an active officer and then a trustee of the Snowdonia National Park Society. After the war he worked for a drugs company in Slough. On his father's death he took over the family business of yeast merchants in Burton on Trent, selling the yeast to distilleries and food manufacturers. Active in many aspects of Burton life, he was past Chairman of the Allied Brewery Traders Association, President of the Burton Club and Burton Regatta and was Freeman of the Cities of London and Glasgow. He followed his father in becoming Master of the Worshipful Company of Coopers in the City of London.

He joined the Swiss Alpine Club in 1947 and was elected to the Alpine Club in 1968. He was a competent rock climber and at home on mixed Alpine routes. He was active on the AC Committee from 1983 to 1985 and was meticulous as Membership Secretary from 1984 to 1991. In the Alps he often climbed with a guide. A telephone call would establish the state of the route and arrangements were made to meet. These lightning forays ensured success on a number of routes: the Grépon, the Weisshorn traverse, the Dom/Täsch traverse and the Forbes arête.

Tony had a detailed knowledge of Snowdonia and many parts of Scotland where he was a frequent visitor and had a wide circle of friends. He was an excellent oarsman and shot and had great patience for deer-stalking (when not bird-watching). Unfortunately, he never fully recovered from a blood disorder contracted on an expedition to the Kangchenjunga region in 1985, but he walked the British hills to the end. He was also a very hospitable and sociable member of the Alpine Club who will be sadly missed both by his contemporaries and by a younger generation to whom he was a thoughtful and kindly companion.

Tony & Suzanne Strawther
Richard Coatsworth

Paul James Nunn 1943-1995

So the unthinkable has occurred. Paul Nunn, indestructible, cunning, cautious Paul, has been killed with Geoff Tier descending from the summit of Haramosh II (6666m) by a random sérac fall. They were two of my closest friends, and for twenty years we had all shared climbs, tents, holidays, expeditions, meals, drinks (in plenty), stories and much laughter.

The passing of Paul leaves a void in British climbing that is too big to comprehend. President of the British Mountaineering Council, Paul had served on just about every important committee within the climbing world – a list that would easily fill the space available for this tribute, and one that would be doubled by including even the sketchiest inventory of his climbs and expeditions. But it is Paul himself who will be desperately missed. That great guffaw, the hand on the shoulder, the sideways glance, the sheer presence of Paul in a pub, on a climb, at a trade show, or in a meeting was for so long an integral part of our lives that we assumed he would last for ever. Hard to imagine now, the gritstone evenings without him, or the myriad Highland hostelries where Paul managed to be a local in every one. No more lounging on Sennen beach in Cornwall with wives, children and dogs when Paul, after climbing all morning, would immerse himself in an historical text, quoting incomprehensibly learned criticisms with bellows of laughter to a bewildered audience.

And now no more wisdom – Paul was a mentor to many of us. Shrewd advice, freely given to anyone who asked for it under any circumstances, Paul had one of the brightest minds I have ever encountered. A natural curiosity, combined with rigorous academic discipline and a prodigious ability for hard work, meant that there was a vast breadth and depth of knowledge that he could call on to deal with day-to-day existence.

Paul studied at Sheffield University and eventually completed a Ph D – an academic undertaking that competed for his attention with guidebook writing, articles, reviews, and all the many diverse subjects in which Paul

became involved. He was for many years Principal Lecturer in Economic History at the University of Hallam. His deeply felt socialism made him a staunch defender of student welfare; it also made him an astute political animal and his untimely death has robbed the BMC of a personality who was capable of seeing a broad picture, of accommodating many different factions and opinions. He would surely have become President of the Alpine Club at some future date and his loss will be deeply felt by many in the Club who valued his incisive judgements.

Paul was born in Abbeyleix, Co Laois, Ireland, on 6 January 1943. He was adopted at an early age and brought up in Macclesfield, Cheshire. His parents, kind, gentle and supportive, indulged Paul's early passion for the outdoors, fired by the Boy Scout movement in Macclesfield where he was introduced to hill walking and rock climbing at the age of twelve. From this introduction he never looked back, making frequent forays beyond the Peak District, where he did his first climbs, to the Lake District and Wales.

In the formative years of his climbing, Paul and his friends were already showing signs of burgeoning talent. Their solo ascents of routes on The Roaches and Hen Cloud were viewed as foolhardy in the extreme by the older generation of climbers. In the 1950s the foremost club of the day was the Rock and Ice, with Joe Brown and Don Whillans the leading lights. For years they had dominated the British climbing scene, providing a breakthrough in standards which was to become a bench-mark for others. In the late 1950s another club began to emerge which was to provide a leap forward in standards: the Alpha Club. One of its leading lights was a Manchester climber, Alan ('Richard') McHardy. Through Richard, Paul joined the Alpha Club and so began new partnerships and friendships which endured the changes and ravages of time. The Alpha Club was a loose-knit organisation with no particular geographic base, its only rule 'if you ask to join, you can't'. Entry was by invitation only, and the membership list of its early days reads like a Who's Who of climbing in the 1960s. The Alpha Club's philosophy was, to say the least, iconoclastic, mocking, self-critical and of living life in the fast lane. To experience the full weight of them on some weekend crag was chastening, deflating of egos, but above all inspiring, which might seem curious to the outsider; it provided the spur, you climbed harder and harder, you improved in standard almost overnight, or slipped into climbing obscurity. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Paul and other members of the Alpha Club produced a string of hard routes in the Peak District and beyond.

As a climber Paul was influenced at an early stage by Tom Patey, and he became the supreme opportunist, grabbing routes in the most unlikely circumstances; his new routes ranged from Cheddar to Cape Wrath with lots in between. He could be extremely devious – sometimes hedging so many bets for a weekend's climbing that he would succeed in outwitting himself. But his loyalty, kindness and friendship were absolutely unswerving, and he worked hard to maintain long-standing climbing

partners up and down the country. In the last year, I have had more cause than most to value his care and concern as he single-handedly pulled, pushed and exhorted me down miles of frozen Scottish hillside with a broken leg, delivering me safely in the wee small hours to Fort William hospital.

It was Patey who, in a way, provided Paul with a spiritual home: the remote vastness of the NW Highlands of Scotland. Paul and Tom were both restless spirits, feverish almost in their pursuit of new challenges. They were not disappointed; the traditional cliffs provided endless new challenges all taken and accomplished. The NW Highlands, however, became a spiritual retreat for Paul and friends during the Whitsun holiday; he almost turned it into his particular fiefdom.

During the 1960s Paul never missed a season in the Alps, his ascents too numerous to mention here, and quickly established a reputation as a mountaineer. In the 1970s he was invited to join a succession of international expeditions: to the Caucasus in 1970 with Hamish MacInnes and Chris Woodhall, when they established a new route on the N face of Pik Schurovsky; and to Baffin Island in 1972 with 'Tut' Braithwaite, Dennis Hennek and Doug Scott, again establishing a new route, this time on the East Pillar of Mount Asgard. He returned to Russia in 1974 with Doug Scott, 'Tut', Clive Rowlands and Guy Lee.

Paul was of course a superb all-round mountaineer; like so many big men, he was beautifully neat and precise on rock, his technique honed by years of gritstone and limestone pioneering. Off the rock he was spectacularly clumsy, with a list of impressive breakages to his name. The sight of him leaving a tent, absentmindedly tucking the flysheet into his trousers and blundering across the campsite towing the tent behind him ranks with the occasion when he managed to drop an entire Chinese meal onto a moving record turntable. And the Great Bristol Sculpture Disaster is best left to the imagination.

Paul's life had many interconnecting strands, but running through everything was his devotion to his wife Hilary and two daughters Louise and Rachel. The rediscovery of his own Irish roots and the tracing of his family gave him great joy. It was also typical of Paul that his gregariousness should have been rewarded in his forties by a completely new set of relatives! Visits to Ireland became increasingly frequent, though it is with a pang of regret that I now realise that our Irish climbing holiday will never happen.

But the Karakoram remained, to the end, his first love. He must have worn his own path to and from the Latok peaks, which exerted a fascination for him despite (or perhaps because of) the death of close friends Don Morrison and Pat Fearnehough on early explorations.

There was a marked contrast in Paul when he was on an expedition. His extrovert restless dynamism would be quickly replaced by a quiet reflective single-mindedness as life became simple for two months of the year. He was the most wonderfully tolerant companion to share a tent with, and over the years we made hours and hours of long rambling conversation,

about anything and everything. His wily, shrewd judgements made him the safest of climbers, possibly even depriving him of success on some expeditions, though in the last few years he had redressed the balance with some fine first ascents. Last year, his expedition with Chris Bonington and Harish Kapadia, making the first ascent of Rangrik Rang, and, shortly afterwards, the third ascent of Manirang, was probably his most fulfilling trip, and one I am proud to have accompanied him on. And, of course, on Haramosh II he was also successful before the final curtain so quickly and cruelly descended.

There is no easy way to say goodbye to Paul, no brave words to hide the loss. I will always miss him. I will always remember him. So, thank God, will many others. Sharing the memories is the only comfort we can offer each other, and Paul Nunn, climber, writer, lecturer and friend provided a superabundance of these.

Jim Curran

Doug Scott writes:

Paul Nunn was at the centre of British climbing, its affairs and development. He was involved in every aspect: its literature, guidebooks and social life. He was a great yeoman of the climbing world and its servant. At the time of his death he held a leading post in the sport, as President of the BMC.

He pioneered an enormous number of new routes on Derbyshire limestone with members of the Alpha Club, in Borrowdale with Paul Ross, and in the NW Highlands, making the first ascent of the Old Man of Stoer in 1966 with Tom Patey, Brian Robertson and Brian Henderson; and the first ascent of Eastern Stack at Whiten Head with Patey, Brian Fuller, David Goodwin and Clive Rowlands. It was here, on the descent, that Patey died. Patey was Nunn's mentor – as he was for so many other climbers – and imbued him with a love for the NW Highlands. Nunn established scores of new routes, such as *Megaton* on Skye with Paul Braithwaite and Martin Boysen, *Pilastre*, again with Boysen in 1973, on Foinaven; and *Emerald Gully* on Beinn Dearg with Fuller and Tony Riley.

In the Alps and/or the Dolomites, Nunn climbed many of the classic hard routes. In 1959 he climbed the *Cassin route* on the Cima Ovest in 4½ hours and in 1963 made the first British ascent of the *Phillip-Flamm route* on the Civetta with Boysen, then considered the hardest rock climb in the high mountains of Europe. Four pitches from the top Paul was hit by a large rock which broke his leg. With Boysen's help and by using slings to take the weight off his injured leg, Paul made it to the top for a bivouac and descent next day with assistance from other British climbers in the area.

In 1970 Nunn and Chris Woodhall joined Hamish MacInnes in the Caucasus. MacInnes led them up a steep new route on the N face of Pik Schurovsky. This was the first time MacInnes's great invention, the terrordactyl ice axe, was used on a high mountain route. They achieved a very fast time to the astonishment of Russian friends in the area. On the

descent, Nunn suffered from a combination of asthma and the altitude, problems that were to dog him intermittently on the highest mountains.

In 1972 he joined Paul Braithwaite, Dennis Hennek and myself to make a new 4000ft rock climb on the East Pillar of Asgard up on the Arctic Circle in Baffin Island. In 1974 he was back in Russia with Clive Rowlands, Guy Lee, Paul Braithwaite and myself for a new route on Pik Lenin. At about 6500m Nunn had to descend with altitude sickness. In every other way Paul Nunn was the ideal expedition climber. He was not given to homesickness, he was always supportive of other members of the group and was a craftsman where technical climbing was concerned. Undeterred by his problems with altitude, he simply threw himself into expeditions to lower peaks, principally in the Karakoram. He returned to Pakistan or India almost every year, with the occasional visit to Nepal.

But this list of his climbs outlined – and those not – hardly does justice to Paul Nunn's contribution to world climbing. He sat on many important committees at the Alpine Club, the Mount Everest Foundation and the British Mountaineering Council. In the 1960s he was instrumental, along with Nat Allen and Dave Gregory, in reviving the BMC's commitment to producing climbing guides to the Peak District. He contributed to all the main magazines and international Alpine journals. In particular, his book reviews were always refreshing to read. He was a leading contributor to the influential *Mountain* magazine from its inception. His balanced views helped the founding editor to raise the standards of mountain journalism to new heights. It is well worth reading his essays as collected in *At the Sharp End*, published in 1988. Paul Nunn was also a formidable economic historian. He was an expert on the management of eighteenth century estates and did his doctorate in this field. He contributed to the prestigious publication *Essays in the Economic and Social History of South Yorkshire* (1976). Through original research he was able to solve the mystery of where capital originated to finance the Industrial Revolution. Together with John Salt, he developed an independent history degree course at the Sheffield Polytechnic, a very lively course specialising in regional history.

Paul Nunn had time for people and he really cared for those down on their luck. He made time to visit me in hospital recovering from broken legs after the Ogre climb and while languishing in a Nottingham isolation hospital with a mystery disease in 1980.

Just before setting off for Haromosh II he found time to write a warm and sympathetic letter on the death of my father. He was generous with his time, never had a bad word for anyone, was always positive and, most of all, kind.

It was these qualities that encouraged the climbing fraternity to vote him in as President of the British Mountaineering Council. He had half completed his term of office but had already made his mark, making the BMC a much friendlier organisation than formerly.

Geoffrey Anyan Tier 1944-1995

Geoff Tier was killed with Paul Nunn on 6 August 1995 as they descended from the summit of Haramosh II (6666m) by a random sérac collapse only minutes from the safety of their top camp.

I first met Geoff in 1977 when we drove overland to attempt Barnaj II in the Kishtwar Himalaya. It was actually Paul Nunn who introduced us and he was with us as we sat out a prolonged storm high on the mountain before making an unpleasant retreat. This cemented a lasting friendship between the three of us, and over the years we shared many and varied adventures, though never all together again.

Geoff was born and bred in Lincolnshire, attending De Aston School where he was head boy and captain of rugby and cricket, later playing scrum half for Lincolnshire. He studied Geography at Woolwich Polytechnic and became a town planner living in Reading and working in Slough. This was always a subject of some mirth to both of us, as he was never able to give me a convincing explanation of what the job entailed, let alone lay claim to a town he had actually planned.

Geoff came to climbing late, via a course at Plas y Brenin. Despite this, he was a more than competent rock climber, with a long list of Welsh classics at around E1 to his credit. In Scotland he systematically worked his way through the great winter routes including Point Five and Zero Gullies when their ascents were still highly rated. We only climbed twice together on Ben Nevis but both were fine outings to the NE and Observatory Ridges, the latter being something of an epic in dire conditions in which Geoff's tenacity and skill saw us safely through in the wee small hours. Geoff became President of the Reading Mountaineering Club and, even after his move to Derbyshire, he retained many close friends from that club.

Geoff was, at heart, a mountain explorer in the classic English tradition, shunning publicity and reluctant to write any more than expedition reports. At college he had led a geography expedition to the Atlas mountains, and the Kishtwar expedition was as much to satisfy his curiosity as to climb a mountain. This was a curiosity that probably found its greatest fulfilment in 1985 when I accompanied him to Peru to the (then) little known Cordillera Apolabamba north of Lake Titicaca. Here, in the company of Andy Maskrey, a friend of Geoff's living in Lima, we made the first ascent of Palomani Tranca, 5633m. It was not exactly at the cutting edge of Andean mountaineering, but on the long summit ridge Geoff led calmly and carefully over unstable snow and quivering piles of loose rock. It was without doubt the best climb I did with him, and I treasure the memories of this and our subsequent walk on the Inca Trail to Macchu Picchu.

Geoff and his wife Barbara moved from Reading to Hayfield. Here Geoff ran the excellent Bridge End restaurant, where several Club members have enjoyed its superb cuisine after long days on Kinder or Stanage. Geoff combined a multiplicity of interests, ranging from house restoration,

planning consultancy, fatherhood and climbing – a life that for some years precluded any more than two or three-week Alpine holidays. But here, normally in the company of Dave Soles, Geoff chalked up a long and impressive list of climbs, ranging from the Brenva Face of Mont Blanc to hard sport climbs around Chamonix; from the Walker Spur to the complete traverse of the Aiguilles, a route rarely completed by Brits and not often by anyone else. Geoff was a wonderful companion on the hill or in a tent. His eccentricity and absent-mindedness were legendary and for years I assumed it was all an act. Recently I came to realise that no one could play the part that well.

At Geoff's 50th birthday party Paul Nunn invited him to Haramosh II and in the months before his departure the old gleam of excitement shone out again. It is some small consolation to know that both Paul and Geoff found a profound fulfilment just by being in the wild places of the world. Geoff made the very most of his life and lived it with an admirable honesty and integrity. His loss, to Barbara and his children, Georgina, Joanna and Andrew is immeasurable: to his many climbing friends the memories of Geoff will always remain, surfacing at the end of a long day in Scotland, or as the sun sets and the shadows lengthen over the Derbyshire moors. I am proud to have known him and been his friend.

Jim Curran

Hubert Adams Carter 1914-1995

Hubert Adams Carter was affectionately, yet respectfully, known as 'Ad' by everyone from Nanda Devi in the Himalaya to the Andes of Peru.

He died instantly, painlessly and unexpectedly on 1st April 1995 of cardiac arrest, while he was lunching with his beloved Ann at their long-time home in Milton, Massachusetts. He had just returned from a refreshing weekend of skiing in Franconia, New Hampshire with his grandchildren – and, the week before, had given to the printer the complete and final page-proof of his 36th edition of the *American Alpine Journal*. If you were an editor, a downhill ski enthusiast and a happily-married mountaineer – and you *had* to die – this was certainly the way to go. But for Ann and all the rest of us it was a shattering moment.

Ad was born in Newton, Massachusetts, on 6 June 1914, the third of four children in the family of Edith and Hubert Carter. His father was one of the leaders in New England's paper industry. While summering in the Carter's almost-ancestral summer home in Jefferson, New Hampshire, Ad started his mountain career well above timberline by climbing 6300ft Mount Washington when he was barely five years old!

During a year at Kandersteg in the Bernese Oberland a dozen years later, he had his first lessons in mountaineering and in the German language, led by the best Alpine guides of the day and living among the local people. He graduated from Milton Academy in 1932, and went immediately to Harvard

where he at once joined the then-infant Mountaineering Club. It was there that he met Bob Bates, Charlie Houston and me – and helped us to build the club's first mountain cabin halfway up Mt Washington. In 1933 and 1934 Ad was an active member of my two expeditions to attempt the first ascent of 12,700ft Mt Crillon in the Alaska Coast Range, one hundred miles west of Juneau. Together, on 19 July 1934, Ad and I made the evasive summit of Crillon together – and then, during the winter and spring of 1935, he postponed his college education for a half-year to play an important part in our National Geographic Society Yukon expedition which explored and mapped 5000 square miles of mountain wilderness in the heart of the St Elias Range on the frontier between Alaska and Canada. It was on this trip that we all learned a lot about sub-zero sub-arctic camping and survival – and Ad firmly cemented a lifelong friendship with Bob Bates and me.

It was in his senior year at Harvard that Ad became deeply involved in the British–American expedition which made the first ascent of 25,645ft Nanda Devi in the Garhwal Himalaya, which was to be for fourteen years the highest peak ever climbed anywhere! On this expedition he started a life-long friendship with Bill Tilman and Noel Odell and renewed his Alaskan partnership with Charlie Houston.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, Ad married Ann Brooks of Boston and thus began a wonderful partnership of 53 years. Throughout the war he was one of the key cold-weather and intelligence experts in the Special Forces Section of the office of the US Quartermaster General – which redesigned the antiquated clothing and special equipment of the US Army right in the middle of hostilities. At the war's conclusion, Ad, still working for the US military, travelled to Germany and Japan where he carried out a thorough investigation of the new military equipment of the Axis powers. It was at this time that his fluent knowledge of foreign languages paid off in a big way.

In 1945, Ad Carter joined the faculty of Milton Academy, only a stone's throw from his house for many years. He taught German, French and Spanish there for over 30 years – the rest of his regular working career. But as one recounts what he did in teaching, climbing, and in the military, one tends to forget that Ad was an excellent skier, having captained Harvard's ski team for two years while he was in college, competed in the Fédération Internationale de Ski World Championships in 1937, and captained the US ski team in the Pan American Championships in Chile in 1938.

Ad Carter loved to teach, whether it was in the mountains or in the classroom. His students clustered around him in one way or another throughout the rest of his life. He and Ann and their children constantly intermingled with this wonderful stream of youngsters (many of whom are now well over 50!) on the ski slopes, in the mountains, and at Jefferson.

But, above all else, Ad Carter was the Editor of the *American Alpine Journal*. Starting as Assistant Editor under the famed Francis Farquhar in 1956, Ad took on full responsibility for the *AAJ* in 1960. As the years went by

and Ad's active climbing career ebbed gently away, he became more and more totally involved with the Journal. What it was and what it might become were his passion: what it should or should not contain, how it was illustrated, whether or not it should include advertising, how accurate every detail in it must be.

His fluency in languages, as well as his competence as an editor, made the Journal what it is today – a thoroughly world-class publication. Although his language base was English–German–French–Spanish, he could visit any country in the world for a few days and then, through correspondence and on the telephone, in no time he would emerge reading, writing and often speaking that tongue fluently! Furthermore, after his retirement, he was able to travel repeatedly to attend international meetings in Europe and Asia, and thus established a remarkable network of sources of mountain information, which flowed steadily into Milton and Jefferson to create his ever-more-distinguished publication. It was his 36th Journal that he put safely to bed the week before he died!

The *American Alpine Journal* of 1995 was one of Ad and Ann Carter's greatest editing accomplishments. The mountain world owes them both a unique debt of gratitude.

Bradford Washburn

Evelio Echevarría writes:

In the late fifties, already settled in the United States, I sought to establish contact with writers on the staff of mountaineering journals of the English-speaking world. Two people took an interest in my Andean background: D F O Dangar, then Assistant Editor of the *Alpine Journal*, and H Adams Carter, then a member of the Board of Editors of the *American Alpine Journal*. Correspondence with both was decisive in the development of my mountaineering interests. Both writers had a great knowledge of mountaineering history and both were interested in properly recording the development of the exploration of the great foreign ranges. H Adams Carter, then in his prime, had a particular interest in the Andes of Peru. He and I used to exchange information, maps and opinions. When he was elected Editor of the *American Alpine Journal* he grew to become a leader in world mountaineering. His contribution, sustained for more than thirty years, was impressive. His knowledge of six or seven different languages enabled him to make direct contact with mountaineers in distant lands, who soon became his correspondents and friends. He also defended mountaineering ethics, always demanding deference for the culture of the mountain countries being visited by foreign expeditions. On many occasions he flatly refused even to publish the inappropriate names with which mountains were at times baptised. He himself used in Peru very apt Quichua names for the peaks he ascended for the first time. For more than thirty years, Ad was the soul of the *American Alpine Journal*. With his passing, who will be able to fill his unique post?

John Reginald (Nat) Allen 1928-1995

Mention the name Nat Allen almost anywhere in the world and you will find someone who knew him and will regale you with some story or other about him.

He served an apprenticeship in plumbing and joined a firm along with another young lad. 'What's your names?' asked the foreman. Both said John. 'Right,' said the foreman. 'You're Fred and you are Nat!'

My first encounter with Nat was in 1947 when I was assistant warden of Capel Curig Youth Hostel. He says 'That bastard always made me clean the self-cookers' kitchen at least twice before he was satisfied.' Since then we had a friendship going which grew stronger as time went by, although we almost fell out in 1957 when I rolled up in my shiny black Standard 10. He leant on the wing to chat and pass comment on my new acquisition. Several karabiners on slings round his neck fell out of his Helly-Hansen and clattered onto my pride and joy. Words were exchanged, and he hastily buffed up the paintwork with his sleeve.

He was one of the founder members of the ACG, the group set up specifically to encourage membership of a British equivalent of the French GHM, where qualification for membership was climbing ability. Eventually the ACG merged with the AC. It was over many years that Nat somehow liaised between the two groups and brought them ever closer together, being respected and trusted implicitly by both the up-and-coming young climbers from all backgrounds of life, and the mandarins of South Audley Street. He was a true ambassador of the climbing world.

Nat's memory was quite incredible. I can never remember whether I've done a climb or not.

'Let's go and do *Whistling Crack*,' said Nat.

'Have I done it before?'

'You were on a Karabiner Mountaineering Club meet and did it with Bowden and myself', and he would give the month and year. 'Don't you remember?'

He could talk you up a route he had not done for ten years and explain, hold by hold, how to do it. He might also say (when I was on *Medusa*) 'No Dennis, I think you'll find that route too strenuous for you.' He would know exactly your capabilities.

I recall climbing on Cloggy with him when he met some of the young hard men in the afternoon who asked what we had done: *Pedestal Crack*, *Chimney Route*, *Sunset Crack* and *Longlands*; they were quite taken aback when Nat said we didn't start until after lunch. When you climbed with Nat you knew you were in for a hard time, and often a half day was more than enough.

He dabbled a bit in fell running; although he was never a great runner, he always liked to take part. He was one of the instigators of the Dovedale Dash. They used to go to Ilam Youth Hostel for bonfire celebrations. After

a hectic night, the climbers threw down a challenge to the cyclists to have a run on the Sunday to work off the alcohol. There were about twenty of them in all who ran. At the end, they all went off to The George at Alstonfield. Each year a few more people joined in until it reached just over a hundred entrants and was becoming very competitive. Nat never did very well in it and explained that when he wanted to run faster, all that happened was that his knees came up higher, but there was no change in speed. In more recent years the numbers swelled to over 1600 entrants. He only missed a few of these runs since its inception, and always reckoned that if you didn't run you didn't deserve a drink at The George afterwards.

In a fell race from the back of Cat Bells on a very wet day, he set off, wearing plastic bags on his feet to cross the river at the start. He lost his way over to Honister Pass and knew he had to traverse. This took him to the top of a crag, at the bottom of which he could see a track. He set off down the crag, came to a steep crack and hand-jambed down it, much to the surprise of two lads at the bottom.

'We've been trying to get up this for the last hour.'

'Oh sorry,' said Nat, 'I was in a hurry as I'm in a fell race.'

Nat climbed a lot with Joe Brown and Don Whillans and perhaps never quite got the recognition that he deserved. He was a mountaineer of great ability and talent. He would climb with anyone, whatever their standard, and would lower his standards to accommodate whoever he was with. He spent many years, giving up a lot of his time, on the guidebook committee. His efforts and contributions will be sorely missed. Completely unselfish in his own wishes and desires, he just got a lot of pleasure from being on rocks. Yet, come to new areas, he was the first to spend days cleaning crags and putting up some spectacular new routes. A typical example is *Armorican Wall* in Pembroke and there are dozens more. I always felt that Nat should have been climbing much harder routes, as he led me up most routes without using any protection, but he always climbed to the standard of his companion.

Whether in an Alpine hut or on a campsite or in a pub, he would start talking to people on what they had done, and often get onto tales of yesteryear, and people would gather around to listen. 'It's like listening to tales from a history book,' one said. He was respected and admired wherever he went. A great compliment was to be mistaken for him.

I shared a great privilege to have been with him on his last visit to Pembroke just three weeks before he died. He still climbed and even put up yet another new route during those last memorable days. He could still laugh and joke and share a drink.

NAT, we shall never forget the enrichment which you brought to our lives. Our visits down there can never be the same, but we shall drink with you in your favourite hostelries. You will never be forgotten and will be in our minds always.

Dennis Davis

Derek Carnell writes:
When, on the next Bank Holiday, I travel down to Pembroke, it will be in the knowledge that a major strand in my life is broken and that an era has ended. With the death of Nat Allen in June 1995, the interwoven pattern of our lives ended, and the spirals of our rope forever severed. Now, whilst I grieve his loss, the many notable memories of the 46 years I spent climbing and socialising with Nat remain at least to cheer me. I remember my first climb with him – *Black Slab* on Stanage – then many more on gritstone, limestone and granite peaks: in Wales, the Lakes, Scotland and Ireland too. The main Alpine holidays: rock climbing and mountaineering routes among the great and lesser ranges. In good or bad weather, scorching heat, frozen, wet, or baked – we tried them all; but always his enthusiasm, skill and indomitable spirit, coupled with an innate stubbornness to achieve his goals, made Nat a cherished partner.

From the 1960s until his death we found a common purpose on the Pembrokeshire sea cliffs, climbing regularly together, doing new routes (some 200 plus) and, with others, exploring the possibilities. Nat's enthusiasm was boundless, he always had ideas on where to go, what to do, and was a source of inspiration, if not to say competitiveness, amongst our little group. 'Secret crags' abound there, and we hugged ourselves each time we forged another route.

My final memory of Nat is of us climbing together in Pembroke on the last day of May last year; neither of us was in the best of health – me with a knee op, he with the debilitating effect of his illness. We both crept (in every sense of the word!) away from our friends doing their hard routes, to climb a couple of slabby V Diffs in a secluded bay – *Summers End* was to be the last climb Nat did in Pembroke. We sat, watching the setting sun pointing a rosy finger along the sea in Ramsey Sound, and I saw a serenity in his face, and felt with him his pleasure at having done the routes despite his illness. Others had joined us and we laughed and talked easily in the euphoria of just sitting there, in the grass, above the crag, above the sea, reliving earlier times and making plans to visit Ireland again before too long. Just over three weeks later Nat was dead.

With his death, the climbing world loses a most active, erudite and friendly man; one who had managed to mix easily with people of all levels, ages, and experiences while still remaining true to his own principles. On the personal side, I lost the truest, closest friend that I have ever had. Thank you, Nat, for your steadfast and reliable companionship in the hills, for enriching my life; giving, not just for me, but many others, a different perspective on Life itself, an enthusiasm for it, and an even greater satisfaction from it. I am proud and happy to have known you. You live forever in our hearts.

Michael C Davie 1964-1995

I well remember the first time that I met Mick – on a trip to Beeston Tor in Derbyshire. We were the only beginners amongst a group of university students and so naturally we found ourselves lumped together in the back of the minibus. There was a calm assuredness about Mick that contrasted with my nervous chatter. Mind you, when he did speak he had a way of getting everyone around him to listen.

After sharing the back seat of that minibus, we moved on to a first season in the Alps, and ever afterwards the big mountains were always to be the main inspiration for Mick's next venture. His innate ability certainly got us up more routes than any amount of my amateurish fumblings. Not surprisingly, as I took to the quiet life, he went on to many notable achievements. Whether soloing in the Himalaya or new routeing in South America, he seemed to be able to blend the risks with an element of certainty; so much so, that we would never feel any qualms when, for instance, he decided to take a novice up the NE face of the Droites in winter, or to trek through dubiously hazardous territory in Peru. It was not so much that Mick would court danger as the fact that, as he grew more and more competent, he needed different challenges.

Outside the climbing world, he just seemed to breeze through life, not so much free from care as untroubled by distractions. In this way he acquired three degrees and a successful career in computing that gave him the time and energy to get out into the real world as much as possible. Though he was obviously good at his job and highly valued by his colleagues, he would always somehow manage to minimise the time spent in Watford away from the hills.

He also had this curious ability to be able to juggle relationships and still maintain friendships; though never a bad lad, he certainly had some fun. Eventually, in Jo Newton, he found someone of like drive and ambition; and she readily gave up her own job to go on that last fateful trip. On 18 July they were attempting Peak 5445m above the Kayndy valley in the Tien Shan when Mick fell through a cornice. After an extensive search, only Mick's watchstrap was found and it was believed that he had fallen into a bergschrund.

Mick, though not the most modest of people, never sought personal publicity. Each trip was a reason in itself, and whether it was to the deserts of Jordan or a wintry day on Stanage with a bunch of novices, he brought with him as wide a repertoire of tales as would carry a bar along all night. Though he could have opinions on any subject, he would rarely bother himself with the ins and outs of the 'great bolt debate' say, or that of the talk on 'new winter grades'. He was at his happiest just being left to do his own thing without really bothering anyone, and expecting the same likewise.

Which, all in all, makes me feel a bit of a fraud writing this for an audience that, in all probability, didn't know Mick. He would certainly be the first to

see the funny side of it and take the mickey! But if you have climbed on the crags of Britain or elsewhere, and you remember the loudest and most strident belay calls ever heard, then I'm sure that you will have met him and so perhaps will miss him this year and the next ...

For those of us who were fortunate enough to have known him, it was a cruel blow when, for the first time, fate got the better of him. Our thoughts go out to Jo and his family.

Phil Woolrich

John Menzies Kay 1920-1995

Professor John Kay, nuclear engineer and mountaineer, died in Bristol on 14 November 1995 aged 75. He was born on 4 September 1920. John was a traditional product of the Mechanical Engineering School at Cambridge in the 1940s. While he always regarded himself as an engineer in the broader sense, his name will be particularly associated with the major constructional developments in the nuclear energy field which marked the post-war years. He was a keen mountaineer and was elected to the Alpine Club in 1954, being proposed by another distinguished Cambridge engineer, A M Binnie.

John was educated at Sherborne and Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and graduated in 1941. He served during the war in the Royal Navy, returning to Cambridge to take up a Demonstratorship in the Department of Engineering in 1948. His zest for climbing dated from this time, when he joined the Cambridge University Mountaineering Club. An associate of Sir Christopher Hinton in the Atomic Energy Authority, Kay became Chief Technical Engineer, and Director of Atomic Energy Production at Risley in 1952, where his outstanding technical ability and qualities of drive and confidence were vital in the major decisions which the nuclear programme demanded at this crucial time. He returned to the academic world in 1956 when he was appointed the first Professor of Nuclear Power at Imperial College, London. In 1961 he moved back to industry, first as Director of Engineering Development with tube investments and then as a director with the British Steel Corporation from 1968 to 1976. His involvement in nuclear matters continued throughout this period: as a member of the Nuclear Safety Advisory Committee (1960-1976), the Radioactive Waste Study Group (1974-1981) of which he was Chairman, and the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Nuclear Installations (1980-1083). His early involvement with undergraduate teaching bore fruit in two publications on Fluid Mechanics and Heat Transfer, the first of which (1957) remains a standard textbook for engineering students.

John spent his vacations in the hills, rock climbing in Wales and the Lakes with the Climbers' Club, interspersed by winter mountaineering in Scotland and, from 1947 onwards, in the French Alps, the Oberland and

the Valais. He completed good classical routes both guided and guideless with B W Ridley and the writer. In later years he was increasingly drawn to the peaks of northern Norway, beyond the Arctic Circle, where solitary expeditions north of Bodo and out to the Lofoten Islands gave great satisfaction. He learnt to speak some Norwegian and relished being debriefed by the Norwegian Travel Bureau in London on his knowledge of these remote regions.

John was very musical, and his abiding love of Wagnerian opera found expression in the annual pilgrimage to Bayreuth which continued throughout his life. He remained a bachelor, and visitors to his solitary farmhouse in St Briavels, overlooking Offa's Dyke, will recall his grand piano, telescope scanning the heavens, a world of books and a discriminating cellar stocked with fine claret.

James H Turnbull

George Band writes:

My friendship with John Kay dated from a CUMC Easter vacation meet in 1950 at the CIC hut below the cliffs of Ben Nevis. The first day we climbed *Gardyloo Gully* together; it was my first ice climb and I was duly impressed. In 1951-52 John became Senior Treasurer of the CUMC and many young climbing undergraduates came to enjoy his good humour and hospitality at his house in Cambridge. Indeed, when in 1957 I began a post-graduate course at Imperial College and had difficulty finding acceptable accommodation, he very kindly lent me a room in his sumptuous suite in Onslow Gardens. He apologised that next week he would be out four nights attending a complete cycle of The Ring at Covent Garden, but explained that he had booked the seats months previously. I went round to the box office and very luckily got a returned set of 5/- tickets up in the gods, so my own love of Wagner dates from that time.

One felt that John's genial nature and cultured lifestyle had much in common with the early Victorian academic mountaineers. His professorial duties would, on occasion, involve enineering conferences in Geneva where, on arrival, he would first hand the cloakroom attendant his suitcase and overcoat and then, with a wry smile, his ice axe and climbing rope for use '*après la Conférence*'.

Alison Jane Hargreaves 1962-1995

Alison Hargreaves will be rememberd in the history books as the first British woman to climb Everest without supplementary oxygen, but that bland, statistical label represents just one incident, albeit momentous, in a life devoted joyfully to mountaineering

She was born in 1962 in Micklethorpe in Derbyshire. Family holidays in the mountains instilled a love of wild country and by the age of 14 she had

started rock climbing, inspired by the outdoor pursuits teacher at Belper High School, Hillary Collins, who later married Peter Boardman. Naturally athletic and very determined, Alison became a competent climber and was soon comfortably leading E3. She left school at 18 and rather than go to university she set up a mountaineering equipment company with the man she later married, Jim Ballard. Convinced of her climbing talent from the start, he adopted a supporting role, encouraging her to fulfil her potential.

In the mid-eighties it was still very unusual for British women to push themselves hard on Alpine climbs and in 1984-85 Alison made first British female ascents of several ice and mixed routes, including the North Face of the Matterhorn. Other Alpine successes followed and then, in 1986, came an invitation to go to the Himalaya with leading American climbers Tom Frost, Jeff Lowe and Marc Twight. The expedition made several ascents in Sola Khumbu, most notably a difficult new route on the NW face of Kantega.

Himalayan success threw Alison into the limelight and opened the door to eventual professional success. But first there were other things on her agenda. For a while Himalayan ambitions were postponed, while she concentrated on motherhood, but she still managed to fit in some impressive Alpine climbs, including, in 1988, the first British female ascent of the Eigerwand, when 5½ months pregnant. Later that year Tom was born, followed by Katie two years later. Then, in 1993, when the children were a little older, she embarked on a remarkable series of high profile ascents, starting with solo ascents of all the six classic Alpine North Faces in a single summer. Those climbs were recorded in her book *A Hard Day's Summer*, but what most impressed the climbing world was the postscript to that summer: perhaps conscious that The Shroud had been a bit of a cop-out for her Grandes Jorasses solo, she returned to the face in the autumn to make a brilliant one-day ascent of the much harder Croz Spur Direct. With only one day's good weather to play with, she flew in to the start of the climb by helicopter, with attendant photographer, and was lifted off the summit seven hours later, just as clouds rolled in. An astute manipulator of the media, she was playing the French at their own game.

The following year, in autumn 1994, she finally tackled the mountain that had been an ambition for many years – Everest. Climbing without oxygen, she reached about 8500m on the South Col route, before retreating, anxious to save numb fingers and toes. Six months later her patience was rewarded when, in warmer conditions, she climbed the North and East-North-East Ridges to the summit, unsupported, without oxygen and as alone as it is possible to be on Everest these days.

Alison's Everest ascent proved beyond doubt her competence, determination and remarkable adaptability to altitude. Little wonder that, at 33, at the height of her powers, she wanted to capitalise on that ability, and complete the Himalayan Trilogy of Everest, K2 and Kangchenjunga.

Exactly three months after reaching the summit of Everest, at 6pm on 13 August 1995, she stood on top of K2. Almost immediately a violent storm broke and Alison, along with six other climbers, perished on the mountain.

I only climbed with Alison a few times, but I saw enough to appreciate her genuine love of the mountains and her calm competence, based on long experience and good technique. I also admired her ambition, which was so transparent and thoroughly un-British. She knew that, as a woman playing what is still overwhelmingly a man's game, she could make a name for herself, and she went all out to fulfil her goals. True, she *did* sometimes allow the media to make exaggerated claims about her achievements and this drew considerable criticism from the climbing establishment, with its ethos of disingenuous understatement. Her overt professionalism was perhaps not quite pukka, yet at the Alpine Club she drew a record crowd to her lecture a few months before she died.

Alison Hargreaves enjoyed climbing at any level, whether it was taking her father ice climbing on Kinder Downfall on her seventeenth birthday or, later, running novice climbing courses for women; and, most remarkably, she achieved the impossible feat of combining high-standard mountaineering with motherhood.

Like most people, I was thrilled by her brilliant success on Everest and devastated by the news of the freak storm which snatched her so cruelly from the summit of K2, three months later. For those who wanted to criticise, the accident provided perfect fuel, reinforcing the notion that she allowed herself to be ruled by self-centred ambition. I would dispute that assessment and I stick with my memory of the last time I climbed with Alison, on 22 November 1990. I can place the date precisely, because it was the day Margaret Thatcher resigned. The high drama at Westminster seemed irrelevant in Derbyshire, where the sun shone and Alison was at home, playing in the kitchen with her son Tom – a picture of contented domesticity. She made it quite clear that any climbing would have to fit around Tom's schedule, and only after he was safely settled in his regular nursery could we set off for High Tor. She also insisted that, as she was now several months pregnant with Kate, I should do the leading. Our chosen route was *Darius* and I failed at the crux, jibbering incompetently as the cold shadow of a winter afternoon advanced across the cliff, freezing the rock. After about two hours of numb-fingered dithering it became obvious that I would never complete the climb before dark, so I had to admit defeat and descend. Throughout this lamentable performance Alison sat patiently, shivering in stoic silence, never once complaining at her leader's lack of moral fibre. It was that patience, underlying the hard ambition, which explained her success in the mountains – that and a serene confidence which inspired everyone around her. Far from going to her head, success seemed to make her a gentler person, cheerfully at ease with the world.

Stephen Venables

John Hunt writes:

As one of her Patrons in her quest to climb the world's three highest mountains, unaided and without oxygen, within twelve months, I would like to pay my tribute to Alison Hargreaves. Her astonishing record of climbs in the past twelve years, following her first Alpine season in 1982, will be known to most readers of the Alpine Journal. Those achievements resulted from her quite exceptional mountaineering and rock-climbing skills and stamina, her total commitment to climbing and her indomitable determination. She was an incredibly 'gutsy' girl.

I like to think of Alison in her early years, before the pressures of fame had begun to bear upon her. She was introduced to the hills while a Derbyshire schoolgirl whose first expedition at the age of 15, with a British Schools Exploration Society expedition to Arctic Norway, fired her imagination for climbs on higher mountains and impelled her to confront the serious challenges they present.

I recall our first meeting, before publicity attaching to her achievements had begun to change her life: in Chamonix during the celebrations to mark the 200th anniversary of the first ascent of Mont Blanc. 12 August 1986 was the date designated for the 'Rassemblement Mondial des Femmes Alpinistes'. A group of tough young women from many countries had arrived in the town after traversing Mont Blanc from Courmayeur via the Voie Major. There was dancing in the streets and I, as an Honorary Citizen, found myself leading a unique *cordée* of this enchanting and boisterous group; Alison was among them.

In 1993, when she 'bought herself' (her words) onto a British expedition to Everest in an independent capacity, I shared with Alison some doubts about the publicity which the expedition, apart from herself, derived by having, as one of its aims, 'to put the first British Woman on the Summit'.

Alison voiced these doubts in a last recorded interview with Matt Comesky at K2 Base Camp, following her first, aborted attempt on the mountain. She spoke of her disillusionment with the direction in which climbing was going; she referred to the 'dishonesty of modern climbing'; of competition 'getting a bit silly' in the search for new and ever more demanding mountaineering challenges.

Clearly, Alison was under great pressure to add K2 to her brilliant ascent, solo and without oxygen, of the North/ENE Ridges of Everest. Hers proved to be an ill-judged decision to have another 'go': to add K2 to Everest before moving on to Kangchenjunga, against the advice of other respected mountaineers who were on the mountain or at Base Camp at that time. It is ironic to learn that she had told her interviewer that, owing to the pressures and her feelings of disillusionment, she was considering giving up climbing to devote herself to her family.

But when all is said and done, there remains the memory of a very human person, whose courage was an inspiration to us all.