
Obituaries



'Everest from Rongbuk Base Camp', Rob Fairley, watercolour,
36cm x 55cm, 1987. (Liz Duff Collection)

In Memoriam

The Alpine Club Obituary	Year of Election (including to ACG)
Rick Allen	1975
Lutz Bormann	1994
John Brailsford	1962
John Burrows	1952
Lady Ann Chorley	LAC 1966
David John Ford	Asp 1975, 1991
Edwin Hammond	1977
Stewart Hawkins	Assoc 1962
Malcolm Howells	1977
Jim Milledge	1975
Piero Nava	1973
Ted Norrish	1975
Brian Peart	1996
Kev Reynolds	1979
Neil Sawyer	1988
Richard Sykes	1971

Rick Allen
1954 - 2021

On 25 July 2021 a series of avalanches swept down the east flank of K2 taking the life of Rick Allen. In an instant, Britain lost one of its finest ever mountaineers.

Rick was born in London on 6 November 1954. His father introduced him to the Scottish hills with ascents of Schiehallion and Ben Nevis. When Rick joined the University of Birmingham Mountaineering Club his rock climbing took off. Although Rick was a fledgling climber his determination instantly shone through. He quickly became proficient on rock and then developed a strong interest in winter climbing. He made ascents of *Castle Ridge* and *Tower Ridge* in 1975 with Robin Walker, and the following winter climbed *Point Five Gully* with Jim Fotheringham and Chris Duck.

Rick had a strong attraction to wild places and he became a regular visitor to the Alps completing many of the Chamonix classics. His finest early ascents were in the Bernese Oberland where he climbed the east-north-east ridge of the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn and the *Welzenbach* on the north face of the Gletscherhorn with Chris Duck in 1978, both big, demanding routes that are now rarely climbed. Further afield, Rick climbed the west ridge and *Diamond Couloir* on Mount Kenya with Roy Lindsay in 1980. Later that year he visited Nepal where he made the first ascent of the west face of Tharpu Chuli (Tent Peak) in the Annapurna Sanctuary.

Wild places also set the theme for his new routeing in Scotland. This often took place in the most inaccessible and serious of locations such as A'Mhaighdean (Scotland's remotest Munro), Ladhar Bheinn, Beinn Lair and Beinn a'Bhuird. Rick's finest contribution was the first winter ascent of *Raven's Edge* on Buachaille Etive Mor with Brian Sprunt in 1984, a spectacular route now recognised as one of the finest mixed climbs in Glen Coe.

In 1982 Rick visited the Himalaya for a second time on an expedition organised by Roy Lindsay when he made the first ascent of Kirti Stambh (6271m) in the Gangotri region of India. Climbing with longstanding partner Ernie McGlashan, the pair backed off due to dangerous snow conditions, but after the slope avalanched, Rick went back up and continued alone to the summit. During the trip Rick met Nick Kekus and two years later they visited Nepal and climbed a new route on the 2,500m south face of Ganesh II (7111m). They reached the summit on the ninth day in a storm and spent three days descending the face. Their route was a magnificent achievement, and although it was largely ignored by the mainstream climbing press, it made a big impression on the upcoming generation of British alpinists. A benchmark had been set. If your new route was not climbed in pure alpine style and did not take at least 12 days, then you weren't really trying hard enough.

Rick's ability to acclimatise and perform strongly at high altitude was extraordinary. This became apparent on Mal Duff's expedition to the north-east ridge of Everest in 1985 when, climbing solo, Rick reached the expedition's high point at 8,170m. The remainder of the 1980s were taken up



On the summit of Nanga Parbat after climbing the Mazeno ridge.



Back in base camp, Sandy Allan and Rick Allen celebrate their epic ascent, already one of the climbs of the century.

with another trip to the north-east ridge of Everest and Makalu. Neither were successful due to difficult snow conditions, but once again Rick reached over 8,000m on both mountains, confirming his strength at altitude.

In 1991 Rick went to the Tien Shan and made the first British ascent of Khan Tengri (7010m), and the following summer he visited Tajikistan and the Fann mountains, and made the first ascent of the difficult east ridge of Chimtarga (5489m) with Doug Scott and Russian climber Sergei Efimov. This was a significant turn of events because Sergei invited Rick to join an all-Russian expedition to Dhaulagiri (8176m) in 1993. The seven-man team were successful in forging a difficult new route up the north face. This was Rick's first 8,000m peak and an astonishing achievement on a gruelling and technical route. Rick learned to speak Russian before the trip and calmly adapted to their diet; the main sustenance on the seven-day ascent was cabbage soup.

In 2000 Rick climbed Everest with a commercial expedition. Rick's success was well deserved after his previous strong performances on the north-east ridge, but Rick soon realised that large organised expeditions were not where his heart lay. Rick moved to Tajikistan in 2006 where he climbed extensively, especially in the Fann mountains. Details of his ascents are incomplete since Rick did not leave a comprehensive chronology of his ascents but in 2006 he made the first British ascent of Pik Karl Marx (6736m) and the first ascent of the north ridge of Pik Ovalnaya (5780m) with Phil Wickens (see T Sparrow, 'Top Marx in Pamirs for AC Climbers', *AJ* 2007). In 2008 he made the first British ascent of Pik Korzhenevskaya (7105m). There isn't space here to detail this, but his long and impressive fell-running record undoubtedly helped keep him fit for the mountains. He once beat Pete Livesey in the Ben Nevis Race.

Rick's pairing with Sandy Allan was the defining climbing partnership of his life. In 1986 they made a brilliant five-day new route on the south face

of Pumori (7161m), a beautiful pyramid near Everest, and worked powerfully together the following year on the north-east ridge of Everest. Two years later they climbed the north face of the Eiger. In 1995 they joined an expedition to attempt the huge and unclimbed Mazeno ridge on Nanga Parbat (8126m), the longest ridge of any of the 8000m peaks. They were unsuccessful but in 2009 returned and climbed the mountain's Diamir face. This was Rick's third 8,000m peak, and two years later, he made it four by climbing Gasherbrum I (8068m).

By 2012, Rick, now in his late 50s, and Sandy had accumulated a significant amount of high-altitude experience and decided to return to Nanga Parbat and try the Mazeno ridge one last time. The 10km route had been attempted many times since the 1970s and was one of mountaineering's last great problems. To gain the main summit you have to traverse the eight Mazeno peaks – all over 7,000m – to reach the Mazeno Gap. An alternative strategy was devised where a team of six – Rick, Sandy, the South African Cathy O'Dowd and Lhakpa Rangdu, Lhakpa Nuru and Lakpa Zarok from Nepal – planned to traverse the ridge together providing more firepower for the summit push.

In the event, it took this strong team nine days to reach the Mazeno Gap, and after a failed summit attempt, only Rick and Sandy had the physical and mental energy to try again. As Cathy and the three Sherpas made a difficult descent of the dangerous *Schell* route, Rick and Sandy set off with minimal supplies for their summit bid. Deep snow meant it took two days rather than one to reach the top but it was the descent down the *Kinshofer* route where their troubles really began. Poor conditions that year meant that all teams had given up the on the Kinshofer so there was no trail in place, and they were unable to light their stove to melt water. The epic three-day descent in extreme avalanche conditions while being exhausted and dehydrated is one of mountaineering's great survival stories, described so memorably in Sandy's book *In Some Lost Place* (2015).

Rick and Sandy's 18-day traverse of the Mazeno ridge was widely acclaimed as one of the finest Himalayan climbs this century and hailed as the most important British success in the high Himalaya since Stephen Venables' ascent of Everest's Kangshung face in 1988. Rick and Sandy were awarded a Piolet d'Or but Rick was a humble man: rather than putting the trophy on display, he used it to prop up the creaking bookcase in his Chamonix flat.

Rick remained focused on big mountains and was determined to continue climbing them in good style. In 2017 he attempted a futuristic new route on the north-west face of Annapurna with Felix Berg, Louis Rousseau and Adam Bielecki. They were unsuccessful but came away with an ascent of Tilicho (7134m) as consolation. Later that year Rick climbed the two highest peaks in the Rwenzori mountains of Uganda with Mike Lean: prized and rarely climbed summits. In 2018, Rick climbed Broad Peak (8047m), his fifth 8,000er, although success was overshadowed by a 'rescue' aided by a drone.



Rick Allen climbing the Chardonnet in 2017. (*Simon Richardson*)

I've written about Rick the climber and the qualities that made him so successful: drive, skill, experience and an exceptional ability to perform at altitude. This was the Rick I knew best. But there was far more to Rick than mountaineering. He was an outstanding engineer and had a glittering career with Texaco culminating as safety manager for the huge Gorgon Natural Gas Project in Australia. Rick was also extremely generous. His first marriage to Alison ended in tragedy when she died of cancer in 1999. Rick remarried Zuhra in Tajikistan in 2006 and gained a step daughter Nazira and step son Farrukh. Sadly, the marriage did not survive, but Rick took on the responsibility for Nazira and Farruk's education, funding them through their degrees. Rick was

proud of their achievements and was delighted to walk Nazira down the aisle at her wedding in 2018.

But most of all it was Rick's faith that drove him. He recently attended a two-year course at the All Nations Christian College in Hertfordshire and supported Mhoira Leng's work with the Cairdeas Palliative Care Trust in Uganda. On his final expedition to K2 he was raising money for refugees and children in Myanmar.

Jerry Gore, Rick's expedition partner on K2, wrote movingly about the aftermath of the avalanche. 'Pakistani guides Arshad, Shah, Waqar, Rizwan and Ahmed were at camp two when they got the news. They all knew Rick – he was a sort of legendary grandfather in these parts – and they came rushing down the mountain to help. We found Rick late that night and buried him the next morning. We stood together in the shadow of K2 with prayers in different languages and religions filling the air. It was a moment of total unity, and a good way to say goodbye to a Scotsman who loved these mountains and the people who call them home.'

This tribute has been hard for me to write. Rick was a close friend, and we had been climbing together for nearly 40 years. A few summers ago, we climbed a new route on the Grande Fourche in the Mont Blanc range. We expected to complete the route in a day and were travelling light, but we were caught in darkness near the summit. Despite a good weather forecast it rained through the night and we shivered and cuddled our way to a long-awaited dawn. Rick had survived two open bivouacs high on Nanga Parbat, so I was determined not to be the first to complain. Needless to say,

Rick remained infuriatingly cheerful all night and did not comment once about our situation. When we were safely down in Chamonix the first thing he did was take me to buy a new bivouac sack.

Rick Allen led an extraordinary life. He was one of the world's finest mountaineers and touched the lives of many. His bold alpine-style ascents in the high Himalaya will be remembered for generations. His final resting place, with the mighty K2 as his headstone, could not be more fitting.

Simon Richardson

Sandy Allan writes: Rick was a great friend and loyal companion to me. His death on K2 in an avalanche was untimely but K2 base camp is a suitable resting place for my good, respected and tenacious mountaineering companion. We were the best of friends and on our 8,000m climbs shared the same determination and commitment. We both had a high allegiance to the ethics and the art of mountaineering. We climbed worldwide together, sharing some outstanding adventures. He was a loyal, generous and trustworthy climbing partner and is sorely missed.

Lutz Bormann 1956 - 2021



Lutz Bormann.

Bormann was elected a member of the Club in 1994. He submitted an impressive list of harder Alpine ascents, mostly on rock, mostly led by himself. He was proposed by John Temple, who said, 'he has his finger on the pulse of German mountaineering at the grass roots'. Ed Douglas, his seconder, noted that with Lutz as the editor of the German mountaineering magazine *Berge*, the Alpine Club might expect contributions in the future.

In the event, Lutz appears only once in the *Alpine Journal* index. Ken Wilson in 'Traditional Climbing Values', *AJ* 1999, pp157-60, reproduces long letters from Lutz about the use of bolting on classic routes previously climbed free. Lutz had canvassed opinion in Germany and Austria and quoted comments which left no doubt where his own opinion lay:

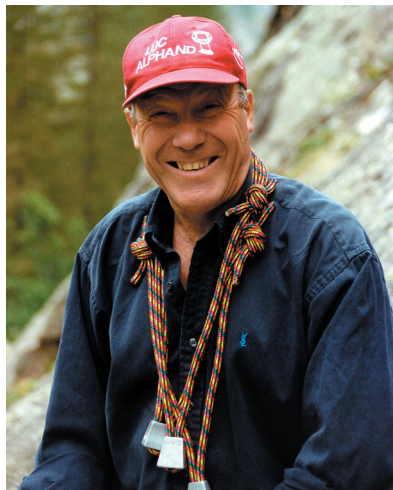
Bolting deteriorates the climbing standard, because lots of beginners go onto routes which are too hard for them. They rely on passive protection without having the capability of active protection. And active protection makes the climber. Self-responsibility, full awareness of all difficulties, the mastering of orientation are the peculiarities of mountaineering. The result is counter-productive of the bolting intention. ... Bolting spoils the routes and is the end of alpinism. ... I experienced climbing in Norway. Every route was like a first ascent. What a delight to climb there. Once in your life you are truly awake working your way up, thinking about the equipment very carefully, etc.

There is little information on Lutz's mountaineering activities in recent years. After his editorship of *Berge* ended in 2007, he became editor-in-chief for Gault Millau, publishers of several outdoor, fitness titles. More recently he wrote online:

My (new) marital status made the mountains steeper, the routes shorter and the texts longer, but now the work for ÖTZTAL MAGAZIN and the Tyrolean Mountain Rescue Service brings me closer to my passion for the mountains.

Roderick A Smith

John Brailsford 1934 - 2022



John Brailsford, with MOACs.
(Stéphane Pennequin)

I first met John in the Vallouise, the Écrins valley which he loved and adopted, and where he had lived with his French wife, Evelyne, for many years. At their home in Les Vigneaux I was plied with Yorkshire tea – with the emphasis on Yorkshire – whilst at ours he provided a little-known vintage of red wine: Chevalier Brailsford, locally bottled. The dinner conversation flowed freely; John was a great raconteur. His rich and varied life gave him much to relate, whilst his abiding enthusiasm brought all to life.

John's recent death has provoked a warm response across the mountaineering community, demonstrating just how well he is remembered.

His early career as a blacksmith in Sheffield, where he had grown up as an orphan, is best covered by Mike Parsons, who describes John's role as creator of the Acorn and the MOAC ('John Brailsford Obituary', *outdoorgearcoach.co.uk*). The Acorn, first produced in 1961, by which time John was teaching engineering technology, is recognised as the first ever purpose-designed climbing nut. Its successor, the MOAC, is now a collector's item. (See S Pennequin, 'Nuts' Story: 2001, a Nut Odyssey', *www.needlesports.com*). Less well known is John's contribution to the design of the Curver ice axe.

Moving into the world of outdoor education, his influence extended far beyond the classroom, which for him was the great outdoors. I recently stumbled on a tribute from a member of the Clogwyn MC: 'Today, as a result of John Brailsford showing and guiding some of the founder members into climbing/mountaineering, a small active club exists with a hut, the 'Old Stable',

in the Croesor valley.' John was instrumental in its purchase. Always proactive, he would see a need and make things happen.

That was in the early 1960s, whilst still living in Derbyshire, and before moving in 1966, after a spell at Loughborough College of Education, to Deiniolen where his young family grew up. As head of department at Bangor Normal College he introduced many to outdoor education; this too has elicited various fond memories and amusing anecdotes. His course 'changed my life forever', one ex-student wrote, reflecting the thoughts and feelings of many. He is remembered also for running the BMC's introduction to Alpine mountaineering course in the 1980s, recently described by another student as 'my true mountaineering starting point'. John was as demanding as he was committed but always enthusiastic. A few years ago a UKClimbing.com post included him in the 'top influential British climbers of his time'.

His new routes include *Scavenger* at Three Cliffs Bay in south Wales. He soloed it in 1955 but, as has recently been pointed out, the first nut placement above the crux is appropriately enough a perfect MOAC. He climbed with Joe Brown and others of that influential post-war generation, Don Roscoe and Doug Cook in particular. John was also a kayak senior instructor as well as a British Cycling Union coach. Father of Sir Dave Brailsford and himself a tough cyclist, he thought nothing of cycling from Bangor to Tremadog for a day's climbing and later of cycling out to the Alps, something he recommended to his charges. How many made it, I wonder.

The Écrins massif became a favourite venue. Here, despite the area being quite wild and inaccessible in the 1970s and 1980s, he made early ascents, often first British ascents, of many serious routes including the Gervasutti routes on the north-west wall of the Ailefroide and the south-east ridge of the Pic Gaspard, the south and south-west faces of La Meije, the south pillar of the Barre des Écrins and the west face of the Pointe de Bonne Pierre and the Couloir Chaud on the Trois Dents de Pelvoux, to name but a few. From that repertoire John developed an intimate knowledge of the area, unique among English-speaking climbers.

His guide, *Écrins Massif: Selected Climbs*, the most notable of a number of publications, was published in 1987 as the first of the Alpine Club's new series of guidebooks to the main Alpine regions. Over a 15-year period he was able to see it through two editions; it remained the best available source in English for decades. Many mountaineers of my own generation who started climbing in the 1970s will have similarly annotated copies; it is still the book I reach for if I want to remind myself of what we climbed in the Écrins back then. In *AJ* 2002 (pp187-98), Dennis Gray suggests it was the difficulties surrounding the production of English guidebooks to the Alps that brought together the AC and the ACG. Agreement on terms for their merger was reached at John's Derby home in June 1966, where he represented the ACG, of which he was a founder member, along with John Alexander and Terry Sullivan. A J Rawlinson in *AJ* 1967 (pp197-200) gives an interesting account. Here again we see John as facilitator, creating a fellowship that continues to serve generations of young climbers.



The Compagnie des Guides Ailefroide in 1984. John Brailsford is kneeling, centre.

I believe John Brailsford's career as a British guide – fully certificated in 1962 as an international mountain guide – to be unique. During the 2014 celebration of the 150th anniversary of Whymper's first ascent of the Barre des Écrins, John gave a well-received speech. I was with him in the square in Vallouise that evening following the day's commemorative ascent. He spoke in French (Yorkshire accent notwithstanding) and was clearly at his ease within that community, expressing gratitude for its acceptance of him. Back in 1975 John had played a key role in setting up the British Mountain Guides, becoming their training officer, formalising with Alan Kimber the early winter assessment procedures and making sure they were properly hard. In November 1977, with Peter Boardman and Colin Firth, he paved the way for the BMG's acceptance, despite initial resistance, at the general assembly of the UIAGM in the Val d'Aosta. Later, having worked for a while at ENSA in Chamonix, he figures in a 1984 photo of the assembled company outside the Bureau des Guides in Ailefroide. It is quite extraordinary that someone to whom successive generations of British guides – and their clients – owe such a debt should also have become part of the French guiding community: no easy feat and a tribute to John's character. A natural communicator, he certainly knew how to break down barriers.

Strong willed, knowing his own mind and not afraid to speak it, John generally achieved his self-set goals. Many have benefitted from those successes but he will above all be remembered for his generous and expansive character. I only met him on a few occasions but each was an unforgettable encounter. John Brailsford will be greatly missed by all those whose lives he touched.

John is survived by his family, Andy, Elaine and David and his wife Evelyn. I want to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Terry Lowry in preparing this obituary.

Susan Hare

John 'Nick' Burrows 1929 - 2022



John 'Nick' Burrows in 1992.

John, known as Nick to his more recent friends, was adopted at the age of four by the Burrows family, owners of a colliery near Macclesfield. In 1943 he entered Rugby School where he became interested in long-distance running and met fellow student John Tyson (*AJ* 2015, pp440-1) with whom he developed his love of the mountains. Leaving Rugby he started work in surveying as an articled pupil, a career interrupted by national service for both him and Tyson. They were both posted to Malaya in 1948 during the communist insurgency and participated in jungle operations in Penang, for which Tyson was awarded the

MC. Returning from Malaya, John instructed at the Eskdale Outward Bound School and White Hall Outdoor Pursuits Centre before graduating in estate management from the University of London and settling into a successful career in estate management and surveying, which turned out to be much to the benefit of the UK climbing scene.

John was elected to the AC in 1952, enjoying a remarkably long membership of 70 years. He was proposed by E F Pilkington and seconded by Eric Shipton whom he would have met as warden at Eskdale. His application form for membership records that his third route was the traverse of the Weisshorn via the north ridge, made with Tyson and a guide. Although guided, that would have been a long and committing route in 1950 for someone right at the very beginning of their Alpine career. His second season in the Alps records a bivouac at about 3,700m during the descent of the Zinal Rothorn in a storm, delayed by another party who were in difficulties.

John climbed and trekked extensively throughout the world but published only a very few details. In the 1960s he climbed in the Lyngen mountains in Norway and climbed Batian in Kenya. He visited the central Sahara where he climbed Djebel Telertheba (2455m), crossed the Arak gorge, and walked the Tassili plateau. In 1979 he visited Miyar Nullah in Lahaul on the unusual King's School, Ely Himalayan expedition (*AJ* 1980, pp154-7). Although a large party, only about one third of whom were adult, they minimised environmental impact by carrying lightweight equipment and using very little assistance from porters. All food was carried in from outside. Together with David Challis and schoolboys of age from 13 to 16, John made the probable first ascent of three peaks of heights between 5,425m and 5,912m.

In 1983 he was part of the Gwent Andean expedition attempting a new route on the north-east buttress of Nevado Veronica (5750m) in the Cordillera Urubamba. The report of this expedition (*AJ* 1984, pp161-4) mentions that John suffered badly from the altitude. At a similar period in his life, John participated in a physiological study of the affects of altitude, which involved the monitoring of various body functions of a group of climbers as they progressed in steps from the valley to the Margherita hut on the Signalkuppe (4554m). The study was run by an eminent physiologist who reported to me afterwards that the results were much as expected except for John's performance. 'The higher he got, the better he went.' This may come as no surprise to those who also find their performance at altitude to be variable. In 1992 he climbed Mera Peak and in 1993 trekked in Nepal, including a circuit of the Hinku valley, Hunku Drangka and back down the Lhotse valley and the Everest trail through Namche Bazar.

John was a keen member of the University of London MC (ULMC) and its senior relative, the University of London Graduate MC (ULGMC), to which he contributed enormously through his experience in surveying and estate management. When, in 1952, the Vaynol estate in Snowdonia was left to the National Trust following the death of Lord Penrhyn, John approached the NT on behalf of the club and obtained the rare and precious permission to build a new hut in the Ogwen valley. Funds were raised and, with the aid of a loan from the university, a new hut, Caseg Fraith, was built. Amongst the trustees were Sir Edwin Herbert, president of the AC, who was the London University solicitor at that time. In 1970 ULGMC decided to seek a further hut in Derbyshire. John did the crucial work in finding Fallcliffe Cottage near Hathersage, and obtaining planning permission to convert it to a climbing club hut. Thus, through the efforts of John, a club with fewer than 200 members created two very desirable huts, assets to the whole UK climbing community. In 1995 John was made an hon vice president of ULGMC in recognition.

John was a man of many parts. Not only did he climb and trek in many parts of the world but he was also a leading figure in the UK ballooning scene. He attained a balloon pilot's license, assisted in many charitable balloon events and festivals, but never achieved his ambition to fly across the Channel. His second wife, Valerie was also a well-known balloonist. Transcending all of John's accomplishments is the fact that he was the most kind and gentle of men, quiet and modest about his many achievements.

Mike Esten

Lady Ann Chorley 1931 - 2021



Lady Ann Chorley.

In her early 20s Ann Debenham was living with her mother in a Prince's Gate flat near the Royal Geographical Society. Her father, Archibald Scott Debenham, a director of Shell, had died when she was just one. She looked to her uncle, Frank Debenham, for advice on what she might do. Frank had been a member of Scott's Terra Nova expedition, 1910–13, and subsequently founded the Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge, becoming its first director. In 1931 he was elected the first Cambridge professor of geography and was extremely active at the RGS. It was he who asked Ann to take minutes for an RGS committee

which he chaired. In this way, Ann made interesting connections with the mountaineering and exploration world.

Ann must have impressed with her work and in due course was appointed secretary to the 1953 Everest expedition. Her nephew Rupert (Gen Sir Rupert Smith) recalls:

She would take me to the office, and I would wander around the building. I was able to inspect tents, boots, and other equipment such as oxygen sets that lay around the office; I expect they were trial samples. I tried dehydrated apple flakes and other mountaineering delicacies.

After Everest had been climbed, work at the office continued apace with the organisation of lecture tours, meetings and official receptions. The 1955 Kanchenjunga expedition was organised, and her team worked with John Hunt to pilot and expand the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Ann became close to George Lowe but their engagement was broken off. Lowe, *AJ* 2013 (pp310-11), subsequently married Susan, daughter of John Hunt. In 1964 Ann married Roger Chorley, the second Baron Chorley. Roger was a key figure in the mountaineering world (*AJ* 2016, pp370-5), whose mountaineering was curtailed after he developed polio during the expedition in 1957 to Machapuchare.

In 1966 Ann applied to join the Ladies' Alpine Club (LAC). In addition to some limited British rock-climbing experience, she had been to Arolla and climbed the Pigne D'Arolla. Her supporters for joining the LAC were Dorothy Pilley Richards and Katherine C Chorley. No doubt the visit to

Arolla stimulated sad memories of the accident in which John Hopkinson and his son and two daughters was killed on the Petite Dent de Veisivi in 1898.

Little can be found of any big mountaineering for both Ann and Roger later than a note on the LAC application of visits to Bernina and Bregalia and climbs of some minor peaks in 1969. Roger's strength and mobility were adversely affected by his polio but the couple travelled extensively to remote places, including north-west China, the Karakoram Highway, Patagonia and the Straits of Magellan in the company of George Band and John Innerdale together with their wives. Other trips were made in the company of Nick and Betsy Clinch. Norman and Enid Hardie and Bill Pachard in Australia received several visits.

Ann is remembered as a larger than life character. She loved a good party and was a generous hostess. She had time for everyone and the knack of finding something to engage with and making each meeting memorable and valued.

Roderick A Smith

David Ford **1947 - 2021**



Dave Ford in a typically good mood motoring down Loch Linnhe in 2013.

Dave was born in Bristol and spent his early childhood there with his mother Ena, his father Kenneth, his twin sister Sue, and his elder sister Maureen. He remembered his childhood fondly all his life and maintained a keen interest in the lives of his siblings, nephews and nieces. Maureen remembers him as 'a dear, thoughtful but mischievous brother' who, later in life, earned her respect and admiration.

His love of the outdoors began to develop when he spent holidays at his uncle's house in Chewton Mendip. As a youth, he joined local running and climbing clubs and climbed with club pals in the Avon Gorge and elsewhere, as well as travelling to

athletics competitions at venues across Britain and sailing with friends on the Norfolk Broads. Keen to try skiing, he even made a rudimentary (and not very successful) pair of skis out of wooden planks.

Martin Crocker, a close friend from this time, describes their adventures together:

Dave was a key friend of my formative years in the 1970s and we had great times together on the sea cliffs of Torbay, Lundy and Gower – as well as some memorable epics and close shaves, including in the Alps. I remember him as always positive and smiling with his endearing grin, loving the climbing and the mountains. He was a brilliant, optimistic partner, making you feel safe and inspired as together we discovered adventure in challenging places, dubiously transported in his shaky red van.

One of Martin's favourite photos is of the two of them on the summit of the Matterhorn.

We were both Alpine novices, but we grabbed that ascent one fine day between bouts of bad weather. Dave was super-keen and encouraging, yet solid and safe throughout, just the sort of partner needed to reach the top. One of his pet phrases used while climbing was 'Go, go, go but not like a yo-yo!' i.e. don't fall off!

Dave inherited excellent practical skills in joinery from his father and also learnt the difficult skill of bell ringing with his dad's team in various Somerset churches, an interest that was reignited after his retirement when he began to bell ring once more with the Tulloch bell ringing group.

After leaving school Dave trained as an agricultural engineer and later as a mechanical engineer. This was followed by work as a draughtsman for two companies in the Bristol area. However, eventually, the urge to spend more of his time outdoors became too strong and led to a complete change of career starting with a summer as an outdoor instructor, working with groups of young people at Outward Bound Eskdale in the Lake District. He began to combine summers at Outward Bound with winters working at a ski-training centre in Norway and made many lifelong friends at these locations.

Jim Dominy, one of these friends, recalls him being 'an ideal person to be with when things got "interesting" (i.e. a bit too exciting). Whether sailing, climbing or cycling, he was the best of partners and when relaxing, he was the best of company.'

Early in the 1980s, following a long cycle tour of Europe with his then partner Judith, the pair decided to settle down as smallholders in Cornwall. But neither could overcome their love of the mountains and Dave soon returned to Outward Bound, working as an instructor and later, when he found this too stressful, as storeman and bosun at Eskdale and Ullswater Outward Bound. He finally settled at Loch Eil Outward Bound in 1989 as bosun.

During this time he developed a deep love of literature, art and classical music. The sound of Radio 3 could often be heard drifting from the Outward Bound boatshed on the shore of Loch Eil. By studying hard in his spare time he gained an Open University MA in English literature and soon books by and about the great English novelists and poets were filling and then overflowing the shelves in Burnside Cottage. It was lucky he had the joinery skills to be able to construct more bookshelves that soon covered several walls in the cottage.

After Dave retired from Outward Bound he maintained his interest in outdoor activities. He also joined a local art club and helped set up a local branch of Men's Shed, an association for retired men who, like him, wanted to continue to enjoy the comradeship they had found in their workplaces. When he was disabled by a stroke two years ago, he was determined to regain his mobility and people who met him out walking were impressed by his bravery, good humour and cheerfulness.

I think Dave would have listed amongst the most joyful times of his life summer months spent with friends climbing (and occasionally cycling) in the Alps and Norway and walking in the Pyrenees, winter trips skiing almost the whole length of Norway and also sailing trips with Outward Bound students and friends on the beautiful west coast of Scotland.

Dave was blessed with a lovely open and sociable character, and with wit and humour, and had a wide-ranging interest in the world around him. The many dear friends he made due to his personality must, I think, be considered the main joy and achievement of his life.

Jenny Ford

Edwin Hammond 1938 - 2021



Ed Hammond enjoying success.

I first met Ed at a British Mountaineering Council AGM in 1963 in London, where the BMC was based in those days. He was quite involved with the running of the BMC at that time and was guides secretary for some years. Over the next few years I became a wandering outdoor instructor moving between Plas y Brenin, Outward Bound and the odd education authority centre. Ed and I would meet up now and then, do a route or two, have a drink or two and annoy Chris Briggs at the Pen y Gwryd. Ed was the fellow who got things done and it was he who found and arranged the purchase of Waenhir, which became the climbing hut

for the Yeti Club, of which he was a member.

In 1966, with his Land Rover and trailer loaded, four of us set off for the Hindu Kush. Ed had organised another Ed – this one Ed McCreery, an American living in Kabul – to act as our host and ‘guide to life’ in Afghanistan. We climbed in the Mir Samir area and then went over the Anjuman pass to climb our first 20,000-footer in the Pagar valley. Edwin then took to getting

more done in north Wales and he and his wife Carolyn moved to live there. He bought, demolished and rebuilt the Waterloo Hotel in Betws y Coed after an amazing party in the old building, spanning three floors and the cellar.

With one expedition and one hotel chalked up Ed decided that it would be a good idea if we all did it again so in 1971 the grandly titled Anglo-Welsh expedition climbed another 20,000ft peak north of Jumla in western Nepal. He and Carolyn then moved to the Lake District and his next hotel was the iconic Wasdale Head Inn, which was in a sorry state internally. The occasional parties there gave some folk the opinion that Ed intended it to go the same way as the Waterloo. Not so, it was saved from the flames. The building is still recognisable from the old photographs but the interior is up to modern standards. Water always appears when you turn the tap on and mains electricity replaced the generator.

He was elected to Club membership in 1977, but by 2005 he realised his that his climbing days were over. He spent his later years in Switzerland, cruelly handicapped by ill health. Edwin passed away at his home in Verbier on 25 July 2021.

David Draper

Michael Baker writes: Ed Hammond and I in the 1970s were both members of the committee that advised the Sports Council on the running of Plas y Brenin, the National Mountaineering Centre. The business of the committee at that time was both interesting and controversial. The controversy centred on the mountain training dispute, which came to its height in the late 1970s. Sir Jack Longland, the chair, John Barry the director, and Ken Wilson and Dennis Gray representing the interests of the British Mountaineering Council were all heavily involved in the dispute – on different sides. Against that background, Sir Jack asked Ed to chair a team to produce a report on the role to be undertaken by the centre over the next decade. This was not to be an easy task. Positions were by then entrenched, and the characters involved had very strong views that they were determined to get across. The centre was potentially a battleground on which the controversy could be fought out. Ed, however, had a background in property development and business, which had honed his people skills, and he was intensely practical. Furthermore, his mountaineering qualifications, though not spectacular, were respected by the protagonists. In the end, the report ‘Plas y Brenin in the Eighties’ found favour with all concerned, which was no small tribute to Ed’s skills and character. I greatly admired him as a person who gave a lot to the mountaineering world, of which his role at Plas y Brenin was only a small part.

Stewart Hawkins 1938 - 2022



Stewart Hawkins.

Stewart John Hawkins was a life force whose enthusiasm, courage and capacity for friendship inspired all who knew him. Born in London, he was afflicted by asthma as a child but won a scholarship to Charterhouse where Wilfrid Noyce taught him French, introduced him to climbing and a love of mountains and proposed him for the Climbers' Club. Stewart subsequently repaid his debt by writing a superb and detailed biography of Noyce, *Far, Far The Distant Peak* (Curbans Books, 2014), reviewed in *AJ* 2014, pp344-6. (See also 'Letters from the Fish's Tail', pp51-60.)

National service with the Nigerian Regiment extended Stewart's bent for languages as he learned Hausa. At Balliol College, Oxford, he switched from law to Farsi and Arabic putting the latter to good use in 1960 when serving a one-year attachment as a Colonial Service political officer in south Arabia. Entirely in his element, he settled one longstanding tribal territorial dispute and scotched dissident Yemeni incursions.

After Balliol, Stewart worked in Nigeria with Shell during 1963-4 and for the Steel Company of Wales between 1965 and 1967. He joined IBM in 1968 with spells in Paris and the Gulf States when his Arabic was key to successful negotiations. In 1992 he took early retirement aged 54 to settle in the Haute Provence village of Curbans where he devoted himself to the care of his beloved first wife Alison and played a prominent part in local affairs. Alison died prematurely in 1998. Stewart's marriage to Sandra in 2004 was to be a source of great joy and comfort during his own long years of illness.

I first got to know Stewart when we shared a house in the Yemeni city of Mukalla, climbing its limestone cliffs and exploring the wild wadis of its hinterland. In 1962, we did several classic routes together in the north-west Highlands and in later years Alpine treks including a circuit of Monte Viso in 1994 to track Hannibal's route across the Cottian Alps.

Stewart's house in Curbans, where he and Sandra so generously entertained their families (including sons, spouses and grandchildren) and innumerable friends, was within an hour of the Dauphiné. While regular excursions included the Pic de Bass and the Pain de Sucre (3250m), Stewart's ascent of the Barre des Écrins was aborted at 3,800m when a chunk of falling ice broke his arm and necessitated a helicopter rescue.

In tandem with his professional life, Stewart served as the international commissioner of the UK Scouting Association and was awarded the Bronze Wolf Award for outstanding services to scouting worldwide. He also undertook several missions to Central Asia for the European Union's Technical Aid to the Commonwealth of Independent States and in 1999 climbed to 3,800m in the Kyrgyz Altai.

Such visits so stirred youthful memories of Wilfrid Noyce that Stewart resolved to locate the stone cairn in Tajikistan's Garmo valley that Russian climbers had erected as a memorial to Noyce and Robin Smith who had perished descending Garmo Peak during John Hunt's 1962 Pamir's expedition. During his first attempt in 2008 he and his horse narrowly escaped drowning when fording the Zen-i-Zamin river while the swollen Kyrgyz Ob river proved impassable. In 2009 he returned with Noyce's son Jeremy, Peter Norton and Barry Cooper to add a commemorative plaque to the Russian memorial (*AJ* 2010-11, pp464-7).

Stewart was elected an associate member of the Club in 2006: his grandson Angus maintains the mountaineering tradition. In later years, he battled valiantly with a succession of serious illnesses never complaining and ever cheerful. Of an evening, when he and Sandra sat together watching the sun sink beneath the hills, Stewart's 'A good day, eh?' exemplified his unconquerable spirit. We will miss him dreadfully.

John Harding

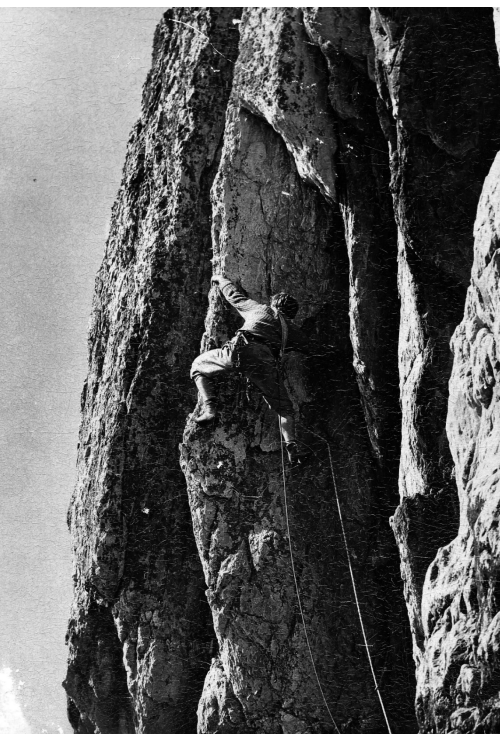
Malcolm Howells 1942 - 2021



Malcolm Howells.

Malcolm Howells died of pneumonia on 24 November 2021 in Berkeley, California where he and his wife Mary Anne had lived for many years. He had been suffering from Alzheimer's for quite a while: a cruel disease.

Malcolm was born in Brighton on 23 September 1942. He attended Patcham Junior School and later Varndean Grammar for Boys. In 1962 he went up to Hertford College, Oxford to study physics, spending three formative years as an undergraduate and was a member of the Oxford University Mountaineering Club. After graduating he decided he wanted to teach and took a teaching diploma at Leeds University where he met Val who would later become his wife.



Malcolm Howells on the first ascent of *Phaedra* in 1966. (Ken Wilson)

Malcolm moved to London and began teaching at a north London grammar but soon became disillusioned with the profession, deciding his true passion was for physics and so studied for a PhD at Westfield College, London. For the rest of his career, he would work in the field of high-energy physics travelling the world from one synchrotron to another: Oxford, Grenoble, Barcelona, New York and finally Berkeley.

I first met Malcolm in the 1960s in London where we shared a house together with a group of climbers, one of the leading lights being Ken Wilson. There was a close-knit social scene of climbers who would drive up to north Wales or the Lakes each weekend. We would meet on Thursday evenings at the Crown pub on Highgate Hill to have fun and arrange weekend transport. While this was a very London-centric scene, any climber finding himself in London on a Thursday night would likely find their way to the Crown.

In January 1968 Malcolm and Val were married and I was their best man. They bought a house in Crouch End, which became a late-night extension to Thursday evenings at the Crown. It was during this period that Malcolm and I began climbing regularly together, managing a number of new routes on Gogarth, including *Hustler*, *Ipsa Facto*, *Phaedra* and *Rat Race*. We also made a number of early ascents and one in particular nearly ended in disaster: an attempt on the second ascent of Naddyn Ddu on Cloggy. Malcolm was on the main pitch and after dispensing with the aid peg Pete Crew had used on the first ascent, he took a rest on a nut.

'What's the nut like?' I shouted up to him. Before he could reply he was flying through the air, falling about 60ft into the retaining wall. Luckily a runner held but he still shattered his patella and gashed his head quite badly. Fortunately, Dave Yates, who had a lot of mountain rescue experience, was above us on *The Mostest* and abseiled down to lower me, with Malcolm on my back, in two 150ft rope lengths to the bottom of the crag and to the waiting official rescue team.

In around 1972 Malcolm began work at the Synchrotron Radiation Facility at Daresbury necessitating a move north where Val and Malcolm set up home in Altrincham. At the time there was a large group of climbers living



The 1978 expedition to Choktoi in the Karakoram. Left to right: Malcolm Howells, Dave 'Pod' Potts, liaison officer Harri, Barry Whybrow and Jim Curran.
(George Lowe)



A bivy on Trango. Left to right: Malcolm Howells, Martin Boysen, Joe Brown and Mo Anthoine.

in the area: Chris Bonington, Martin Boysen, Nick Estcourt, Dave Potts, Dave Pearce, John Yates and Malcolm, to name just a few. This group became jokingly known as 'The Altrincham All-Stars'. At this time Malcolm climbed regularly with Dave Pearce making some difficult climbs on Anglesey. In the summer of 1974, they went to Yosemite in California where they climbed the north-east face of Half Dome, the Nose on El Capitan and Salathe Wall.

In August 1973 Val and Malcolm had their first daughter Lucy but sadly they separated in 1976 and soon afterwards he went to live and work in the States. I know he felt wretched about leaving Lucy and made every effort to see her whenever he could. Sometime later he met Mary Anne and they married in 1983 and not long after they had Laura, Malcolm's second daughter. Although he lived and worked in the States, he always maintained strong links with family and friends in Europe. He was a frequent visitor to Oxford and had a second home in Montpellier, France.

Malcolm was not just a very good rock climber he was also a fine mountaineer. He climbed extensively in the western Alps and we made a number of ascents in Zermatt and Chamonix together. His first Himalayan expedition came in 1974 with a trip to the Langtang Himal. In 1977 he went to Kishtwar Flat Top (6100m) and in 1978 to the Karakoram to climb Choktoi I (6166m). However, his most significant mountaineering exploit came in 1976, when he was invited to join Mo Anthoine's expedition to climb Trango Tower in the Karakoram (*AJ* 1976 pp184-5). Other members of the team included Joe Brown, Martin Boysen, Tony Riley and Jim Curran who made a film of the expedition and later wrote a book, *The Nameless Tower* (1978). Mo and Martin reached the summit first, followed a day later by Malcolm and Joe: a significant mountaineering achievement.

Malcolm was an enthusiastic skier. We made attempts on the winter Haute Route between Chamonix and Zermatt but were thwarted by bad weather.

We skied the Vallée Blanche on a number of occasions and Malcolm skied in many parts of Europe and North America until quite recently, when his illness made it no longer possible.

Malcolm was great fun to be around. What first comes to mind were his patience, generosity and unflappability. He could be quite argumentative though, usually egged on by friends; he was painfully logical with an underlying dogged determination. When skiing with a group of friends his jacket zip kept jamming, holding everyone up in cold and windy conditions. At lunchtime he was ordered to buy a new jacket. Malcolm returned wearing the same top but when challenged produced a pair of pliers: typical Malcolm.

Another anecdote that powerfully demonstrates his famous unflappability was while he was climbing *Shibboleth* on Buachaille Etive Mor in Scotland. He was leading the difficult traverse high up on the route when, to his second Dave Pearce's horror, Malcolm's rope just dropped off him. Dave had the unenviable decision, should I tell him? He decided he should and Malcolm's cool response was: 'Oh shit, I think I can make the peg.' Fortunately he did and was then thrown a rope from above by Nick Estcourt.

His wife Mary Anne and his two daughters, Lucy (on Zoom) and Laura, were with him when he died. He will be very sadly missed by his family, but also his many friends and colleagues all over the world. Farewell old pal.

Barry Whybrow

Jim Milledge **1930 - 2022**



Jim Milledge. (*Simon Currin*)

Jim Milledge was, as Dr Dave Hillebrandt described him, 'the father of mountain medicine'. His research was pivotal in informing climbers coping with the rigours of high altitude but despite his considerable professional success he remained modest and wry, a shrewd observer of his colleagues but also a generous one. He appreciated his luck, too, at being involved in some of the most important research expeditions of his era.

Jim was born in Tianjin, north China, where his father was a medical missionary and came to Britain in 1936. He was first introduced to the hills at Rydal School in north Wales where, he recalled, 'I was very happy, but being dyslexic (though the term had not been invented), I was considered just dim.' While at Rydal, a local family asked the headmaster if he knew of a reliable but not academically bright lad who would like to spend time learning about their raspberry jam business,

to manage production if they were away. Not appreciating Jim's enquiring and brilliant mind, masked as it was, the headmaster assigned him to this work-experience 'opportunity'. It made Jim determined never to work in such an environment again. Instead, he worked hard and 'just scraped the necessary results' to study medicine at Birmingham University. At Birmingham he caught the rock-climbing bug but was 'very average academically, until my final year when I was awarded the prize in Clinical Medicine, the only prize I ever won!' It was enough to start him on his long career of highly respected research, often on high-altitude medicine.

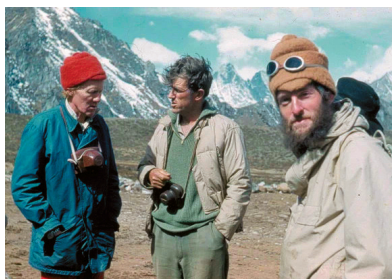
After graduating and house jobs, Jim had to do national service and joined the Royal Air Force as a medical officer. Posted to Hong Kong, he discovered his commanding officer was a member of the Alpine Club and they formed a mountain rescue team. Apart from local rock climbing, they made an expedition to Kinabalu (4095m) in Borneo in 1957. The following year, he and his first wife Betty made a two-week trek in Nepal, entirely self organised with just two porters and no common language. 'We fell in love with the country,' he recalled.

Demobbed from the RAF, Jim specialised in general medicine with an interest in respiratory disease, working in Southampton with William McLeod. They performed arterial blood sampling in the investigation of lung disease. In November 1959, he learned that Griff Pugh and Ed Hillary were organising an expedition to study the physiology of acclimatisation as well as attempting an 8,000m peak. The trip would last nine months, from the end of one monsoon to the start of the next. Jim wrote to Griff Pugh and when a member dropped out found himself on his way back to Nepal.

We set up the prefabricated hut on a glacier at 5,800m where we spent the winter doing the planned physiological projects there and at our base camp at 4,500m. On Makalu, we continued some physiology at 6,300m and even at 7,400m on Makalu Col, but we failed to climb the summit due to bad weather and illness. My wife Betty, an anaesthetist, worked in the Mission Hospital in Kathmandu for the 9 months we were in Solu Khumbu.

After this seminal life experience, Jim and Betty decided to return to Asia and try to find work that combined research and clinical medicine. Apart from a year's furlough in San Francisco as a research fellow with Dr John Severinghaus at the Cardiovascular Research Institute, they spent a decade at the Vellore Christian Medical College in south India, working with cardiothoracic surgeons just starting open-heart surgery and the attendant intensive care, as well as more conventional respiratory medicine.

Being based in India meant easier access to the Himalaya and during these years Jim made a number of trips to Solu Khumbu. In 1964, Dr Sukumar Lahiri, an Indian physiologist from the Silver Hut expedition, organised a small physiological wing as part of Hillary's second 'Schoolhouse' expedition. Their aim was to study physiological differences between Sherpas and themselves in a camp above Lukla where the expedition built the now busy airstrip.



Griff Pugh, Ed Hillary and Jim Milledge on the Silver Hut expedition.



The Silver Hut, landmark in mountain medicine.

Repeating studies he had done in the Silver Hut, on the changes in the chemical control of breathing with acclimatisation, Jim found to his surprise that the Sherpas had significantly lower hypoxic ventilatory responses. It was after these experiences that he published in 1967 what he regarded as his most significant paper, 'Respiratory control in lowlanders and Sherpa highlanders at altitude', coauthored with Lahiri and published in *Respiratory Physiology*.

Jim and Betty returned to Britain in 1972 and he took a job with the Medical Research Council at the new Clinical Research Centre at Northwick Park Hospital in Harrow. A year later, he shifted jobs into a split between research work and consultancy in the hospital, which he regarded as ideal and thought himself fortunate to have continued in this way until retirement in 1995, by which time he was first medical director. One junior member of staff described him as 'the best medical director he has ever come across; he was always building bridges and reconciling groups in conflict.'

During his 23 years at Northwick, Jim pursued his interest in high-altitude physiology and while research funds for work in the Himalaya were lacking in the 1970s, he did work in the UK and Switzerland on the effects of prolonged exercise and altitude on fluid and electrolyte balance and the hormones controlling them. The 1980s began much more brightly. In 1981 he made two trips to high altitude combining climbing with research. The first was to Kongur (7719m) with Chris Bonington's expedition, part of a research team led by Michael Ward. The second was to Everest with an American research expedition led by John West. Both leaders had been on the Silver Hut trip 20 years earlier. Later scientific expeditions took Jim to Kenya in 1987 and Bolivia in 1989. On these expeditions he was able to do further work on the hormones involved with fluid balance at altitude in relation to acute mountain sickness. The same year he went to Bolivia, he also published, with co-authors Ward and West, *High Altitude Medicine and Physiology*, now in its sixth edition.

Jim's work is still appreciated around the world and he represented the British Mountaineering Council on the International Climbing and Mountaineering federation's MedCom, including a period as president. Not only was Jim an accomplished researcher, he was also a very competent climber and mountaineer in his own right. This stood him in good stead during



Jim Milledge at work, studying exercise.

the Silver Hut expedition in 1960. He went on to reach 7,000m on Makalu and then had to evacuate Hillary who had become ill. He joined the Alpine Club in 1975 and was an active member, and of the Climbers' Club too.

Jim and Betty brought up their two children in the outdoors and their interest continues to this day. Betty died suddenly in 1991 and in 1993 Jim married Betty's friend Pat

who cared for him during his final illness. Problems with his short-term memory caused him some frustrations but he was still able to describe potential routes in remote valleys in Nepal, holding court in the bar at Plas y Brenin on a mountain medicine course or at the Alpine Club. Being aware of his own failing intellect he took steps to make his final wishes known and arranged power of attorney. Alas, our health system failed to treat him with the dignity of a peaceful death that he had so richly earned.

Jim used to joke that his life was a perpetual mountain holiday. 'I have tried to follow my mother's aphorism, "to seize the opportunity of a lifetime, in the lifetime of opportunity"'. He remains much respected in medical circles. As Dave Hillebrandt wrote soon after Jim's death, 'one is struck by the number of young researchers, medical students, doctors and expedition mountaineers who are indebted to him for the time he gave them to encourage, guide and mentor them in their ventures.'

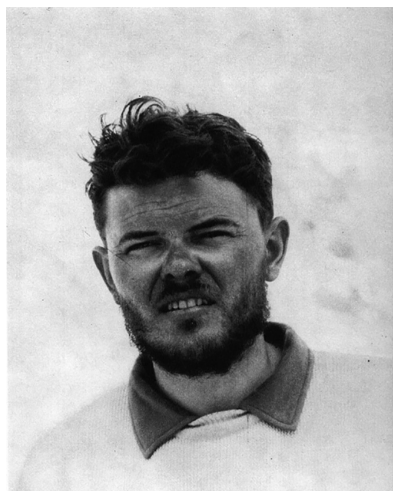
Ed Douglas & Roderick A Smith

Prof Sir Andrew Pollard writes: One of my favourite memories of the past 30 or so years of knowing Jim was a trip to a high-altitude conference in Japan, where we had an exhilarating international group excursion up a snowy peak, followed by recovery in a traditional Japanese hotel. The entertainment for the assembled 'rugged' medical mountaineers including communal bathing followed by dinner, wearing a (too short) Japanese style bathrobe cross-legged on the floor. Our after-dinner performance was fuelled with flowing Japanese wine and we led the international karaoke competition together singing 'On Ilkka Moor Baht 'at' in parts, followed by 'Let It Be'. Not sure if we won, but at least it sounded good to us! Thanks for all you have taught me about physiology, the mountains and enjoyment of life, without taking it too seriously.

Dr Nick Mason writes: I had *High Altitude Medicine and Physiology* out on almost permanent loan from our hospital library as a junior doctor and so it was with some trepidation that I first met Jim Milledge, author, researcher and veteran of the Silver Hut and the American Medical Research Expedition to Mt Everest (AMREE) at Plas y Brenin in April 1993. Little did I realise

that within months Jim would be providing generous advice, not to mention an insightful and rigorous critique, for the projects that I was involved with on the 1994 British Mount Everest Medical Expedition. He would become a valued mentor and friend to those of us taking our first tentative steps in the world of high altitude research on that expedition.

Piero Nava **1932 - 2021**



Piero Nava on Kanjut Sar in the Karakoram in 1959.



The young Piero Nava in the Dolomites.

Piero Nava passed away on 2 September 2021 in Bergamo, Italy at the age of 89. He was a longstanding member of the Alpine Club, joining in 1973, and was part of the prestigious *Groupe de Haute Montagne*.

His love for the mountains started as a young child when his parents would take him to spend the summer months near Courmayeur on the Italian side of Mont Blanc. This kindled a passion for the mountains, which he retained throughout his life. He started climbing in the Alps when he was a teenager and went on to climb important peaks in the Alps, sometimes as first or second ascents. On 30 July and 30 August 1961 he made a double ascent of the north face of the Matterhorn with companions Jean Bick and Piero Pression. This outstanding route had been climbed only 15 times in the previous 30 years since its first ascent.

He participated in 15 overseas expeditions often as a leader or with organisational responsibilities. Notably he was deputy leader of the 1973 Italian expedition to Everest that saw the first Italians reach the world's

highest summit. This expedition was carried out on a grand scale. Two military helicopters were airlifted to Kathmandu, assembled and flown, first to base camp, and then beyond up the Khumbu Icefall. One crashed and was abandoned. Base camp was luxurious, carpeted and supplied with leather sofas: a luxury not to Ed Hillary's liking when he visited the site. Maybe this, 20 years after the first ascent, was the Rubicon of Everest madness?

Also at a very young age, Piero Nava developed a passion for mountain books and applied the same intense interest he had for climbing to his collection of rare antique books and prints, predominantly about the Alps, painstakingly putting together a library of more than 4,000 volumes throughout his life. 'I believe that his is the largest bibliography of the mountains in circulation,' Agostino Da Polenza of Orobie said, 'with books, photographs and postcards. There was no expedition I participated in that he didn't ask me to send him postcards. I believe that his library of mountain books is unparalleled.'

Piero also expressed the love for the mountains in all its aspects through the camera lens as a very competent photographer and recognised filmmaker. A respected and principled lawyer in his working life, he leaves his adored wife Giovanna and three children Donatella, Nicola and Armando. He had been a member of the Club Alpino Italiano since 1952 and was according to Paolo Valoti, president of CAI Bergamo, 'a man of great mountain culture and with truly exemplary intellectual honesty.'

Armando Nava

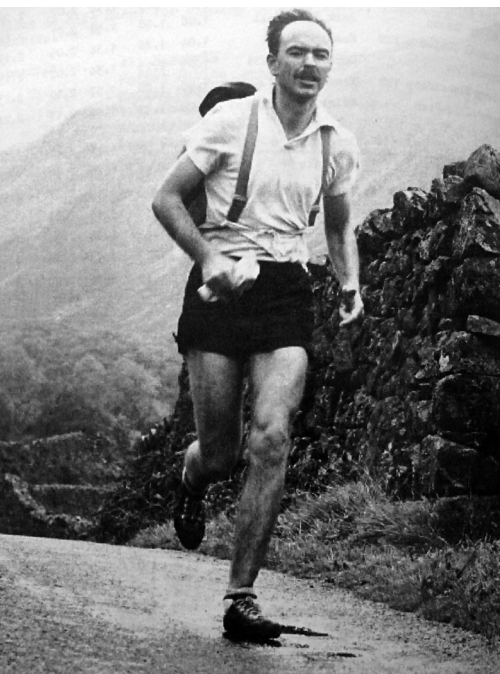
Ted Norrish 1935 - 2022



At Jasper after the ascent of Mount Robson in 1961. From left to right: Olaf Soot, Ted Norrish, Willi Pfisterer, Bill Roberts and Mike Keen.

Edward Wreyford Norrish, a member of the Club since 1975, died on 11 March 2022. He read classics at Brasenose College, Oxford, where he enjoyed three Alpine seasons, an expedition to Arctic Norway in 1955, and, in 1958, organised and part led the Oxford Chitral expedition. As classics master at King Henry VIII School in Coventry for nearly 30 years, from 1959 to 1987, Ted was much admired by his pupils, not only for his teaching but also as an inspirational athletics and orienteering coach.

At Brasenose in the mid 1950s Ted was a lively participant in college and university life, becoming a member of the Oxford University Mountaineering Club (OUMC), the college cross-country team, and the Oxford Bach Choir. Many years later he wrote his autobiography, *Cursus Honorum*, a lengthy and extremely detailed account of his life which he published privately. In it he wrote, 'I have had many fine times in my life, but the five years at Oxford were equal with the best.'



Norrish2: Norrish in the 1970 Karrimor Mountain Marathon.

His first expedition was the British Oksfjord (Finnmark) expedition of 1955 to Arctic Norway during which virgin peaks were climbed. He was organiser of the Oxford Chitral 1958 expedition to Saraghrar (7349m) in the Hindu Kush. Two members of the team reached a high point of about 7,000m but the climbing leader, Peter Nelson, a young mountaineer of great promise, fell on the descent (*AJ* 1956, pp104-7). Nearly 60 years later, Ted wrote an account of this expedition 'Chitral 1958', *AJ* 2016, pp254-64). One is astonished at either the retentiveness of his mind or his access to detailed notes made at the time – or both. In 1961 he climbed Mont Robson (3954m), highest peak in the Canadian Rockies, in a party of five that included Bill Roberts, who had also been on the Saraghrar expedition. Once again, Ted wrote a detailed retrospective account (*AJ* 2014, pp239-43).

A period as an instructor at Eskdale Outward Bound School followed the Chitral expedition, then six months in Austria before he took up his post in Coventry. Once in harness at King Henry VIII School, athletics and orienteering became a major focus but he continued to travel adventurously. He was in Turkey's Ala Dag in 1960 alone. In 1963 he visited Persepolis and climbed Mount Damavand (5609m) and in 1967 travelled to Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia, reaching Lake Tana, source of the Blue Nile. There were three trips to Greece in 1964, 1978 and 1981, during which, Ted claimed, 'I climbed every mountain in Greece except Mt Kolykas.' In 1979, with a companion, he crossed the Afghan Hindu Kush by the Anjuman pass. After retiring from King Henry VIII School, he was in Tasmania, climbing Mount Anne and Mount Cradle and then he crossed Chitral again, this time alone and then spent six months in China. Latterly he spent a lot of time in the Balkans, particularly Bosnia, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania. As a guide to friends between 1996 and 2006 he climbed in north-west Bulgaria Midjur and beautiful Kom 'about 40 times'.

Ted's was an extremely busy, active and fulfilled life, not easy to summarise. I leave conclusions about Ted, to his old climbing partner Bill Roberts, and an old pupil of his and colleague of mine, Hugh Shercliff.

Roderick A Smith

Bill Roberts writes: I first met Ted at an OUMC meet at Brackenclouse in the 1950s. We then went to Arctic Norway together and climbed unclimbed peaks and glaciers together. Next was Saraghrar (7349m) in the Hindu Kush. He got to about 7,000m on this; it was climbed by an Italian expedition a few years later. We were together again on Mount Robson in 1961.

He became a popular trainer of athletes at King Henry VIII School in Coventry. Then he was ill and recovered, went to Bulgaria, married Emi and organised courses on mountains and monasteries. He was an extraordinary man, lively, full of energy, passion. We will miss him and so will Emi.

Hugh Shercliff writes: As for so many of us at King Henry VIII School in Coventry, Ted Norrish introduced me to orienteering, backpacking, bothies, and fell running (including the 18-mile night races he organised). He founded the orienteering club Octavian Droobers in the very early days of the sport: 'Octavian' for King Henry VIII School, 'Droobers' being a Midlands term for running through mud. He was known as 'Droob' at school. Apart from our camping club he ran athletics and cross-country, and was a leading light in Coventry and West Midlands running. The former 5,000m world record holder Dave Moorcroft wasn't at our school but gave a tribute citing Ted's influence on his career at Ted's memorial.

For me personally, one intervention proved significant. He gave me a copy of Munro's Tables when I was 14 and challenged me to climb 50 before I was 21, or the lot before I was 26. This I duly did and, typically, was rewarded by Ted with the promised case of champagne, 12 years after the challenge was issued. His widow Emi and I have agreed to scatter some of his ashes on a suitable Munro in the north-west Highlands, with old friends from the school camping club.

I lost touch for a while but visited him and his wife Emi after he returned to Coventry, and also gave one of the tributes at his memorial. He hated the description 'eccentric', but did things in a unique style, with a healthy disregard for both the rules and the sensitivities of his colleagues in the staffroom. However, he was very modest and the focus was always on the achievements of his charges. The recurrent theme at the memorial – be it from runners, hillwalkers, or his classics pupils – was that he enabled us to achieve more than any of us thought possible of ourselves. This may have been largely by sheer force of expectation and personality, but most look back with the greatest fondness and respect. Certainly, he was a great influence on many lives.

Brian Peart 1937 - 2022



Brian Peart.

Brian died at 85 having been accepted into the Club aged around 50 when he had achieved plenty to qualify as a full member. He much enjoyed coming to London from his native North East, for lectures and swapping tales. He was distinguished for his social as well as his altitudinal vigour: his climbing evolved from organising charitable walks for the Round Table, 41 Club and Rotary and he was keen to share his love of the mountains with friends, encouraging and enabling our progress.

After completing all of Wainwright's 214 Lakeland tops, he became enthralled with Scottish snow and ice climbing, following the estab-

lished path to Clachaig Inn where he enjoyed animated talks by Chris Bonington and others. Scotland also triggered a habit of taking out friends on the rope, before getting his first taste of the Alps on a family summer holiday to Saas-Fee. During a haircut at Dora's Salon, he learned the owner's husband was the mountain guide Herman Bumen and Brian was promptly signed up for his first Alpine ascents, like the Alphubel and Nadelhorn.

Once he had learned the vital skills, Brian led his own climbs, starting with the Lagginhorn, Weissmies and Stecknadelhorn. Well-respected by the Supersaxo family who run Saas-Fee's Alphubel hotel, he made a total of seven ascents of the Allalinhorn with various companions. He was perhaps most satisfied with the various summits of Monte Rosa, especially Dufourspitze. Mont Blanc was climbed with friends when a recce took them so high it was judged not worth turning back.

The Himalaya were a natural evolution, initially with his wife Pauline, then two more serious treks. He trekked to Jomsom and hoped to climb one of the Annapurna Sanctuary peaks but his local guides were deterred by a forecast of heavy snow. On a second trip with the late George Band, they reached the southern base camp of Kangchenjunga. In between, he visited Georgia – despite war with Russia at the time – climbing Kazbek and Elbrus. In Africa, he climbed Toubkal and Kilimanjaro twice. Other adventures included a 21-mile day-walk and scramble up Mount Robson in British Columbia and the Bright Angel Trail in the Grand Canyon National Park.

Meeting Brian was transformative for me. Introduced to Lakeland in 1998 at half his age, I could barely keep up with him leaping bogs above Langdale. He nurtured my own passion for the mountains, patiently talking

me out of early freezes first on Sharp Edge one balmy June evening and later my first proper alpine ridge. At 80, he saw me through Honister to the final leg of my Bob Graham Round, correctly telling me I would reach Keswick within 24 hours despite the scepticism of some others. What gave him the most pleasure was the Coast to Coast Walk with Pauline, carrying his young son Craig on his back. 'The simple things are often the very best.'

Edmond Jackson

Kev Reynolds **1943 - 2021**



Kev and Min Reynolds in the Rätikon.

Kev Reynolds was well known for his walking and trekking guides. I am looking at his first book, *Walks and Climbs in the Pyrenees*, a modestly produced book from 1978, certainly in comparison with the current seventh edition, complete with colour photographs and neat maps. In a prolific career that produced over 50 books, Kev covered many varied terrains from the South Downs Way and the Cotswold Way to the Himalaya, via the Swiss Alps, the Bernese Oberland and the Valais.

An Essex boy, Ken left secondary school in 1958 to begin work in local government as a filing clerk. The hills of the Lake District, Snowdonia and

Scotland provided his escape and he quickly developed into a strong, safe climber. In 1967 he married Min Dodsworth and the couple worked in a hostel in St Moritz. Back in the UK they took over the running of Crockham Hill youth hostel in Kent and Ken began writing articles for magazines. His guidebook career took off 10 years later when he began his long association with Cicerone, initially through his contact with Walt Unsworth.

Much of Kev's early output focused on Europe, but eventually he broadened his horizons to the Himalaya. A first trip to the region came in 1989, when he went on a trek to Kangchenjunga, the third-highest mountain in the world, and over the next 30 years he made nearly 20 visits to Nepal and bordering areas in India. Min, too, became a Himalayan trekker, joining Kev on many trips, and books naturally followed, guides to Annapurna, Everest, Kangchenjunga, Langtang and Manaslu, the last of which Kev regarded as 'the most beautiful walk in the world'.

Opinion on which books represent his best work will vary. As a trekking guidebook I would choose the fifth edition of his *Tour of Mont Blanc*, (2020),

a real stimulus to lace up your boots and go. The second edition of *Walking in the Alps*, (2005) has been described as ‘probably the most important guide to walking abroad that has been published in Britain.’ Writing in the *Alpine Journal*, to which Kev was a frequent contributor, Ernst Sondheimer wrote: ‘If I wanted to do everything listed in this marvellous book, I would need to live to just over 400 years and remain fit to the end.’ The book is simply stunning and certainly a most worthy successor to J Hubert Walker’s classic, *Walking in the Alps*, (Oliver & Boyd, 1951). But my own favourite is not a guidebook but *Abode of the Gods* (2015), tales of trekking in Nepal that amplify Kev’s sympathy and love of Nepal’s mountains and people.

My own queries to Kev were always rapidly and enthusiastically answered. His friendly nature came through even in a telephone call. His was a full and active life and outdoor exploration and writing were only parts of it. As a husband, father and active member of his church and community in Crockham Hill, he touched many lives. He will be sorely missed. After a lengthy battle with cancer, he died on 10 December 2021. He is survived by Min, their daughters Claudia and Ilsa, and grandchildren Charlie and Billy.

Roderick A Smith

Neil Sawyer 1961 - 2021



Aiguillette des Posettes on Neil’s birthday Christmas day 2015.

Neil joined the Club in 1988, already an experienced and competent mountaineer. He had Alpine experience, having climbed Mont Blanc du Tacul, the Midi-Plan traverse, Aiguille d’Argentière and the Aiguille du Chardonnet, among others. In Britain, he had already rock and ice climbed, especially in Scotland. His winter routes included the now rarely formed Steall Falls, the north-east ridge of Aonach Beag and *Observatory Ridge*. His rock routes, mostly HVS leads, stretched from Pembrokeshire to Skye. He enjoyed soloing routes from *Classic Rock*. In his view, if he was confident he could down climb the route then he was happy to continue up it. At much the



Neil on the summit of the Aiguille du Bionassay.

same time he climbed and backpacked over many Munros. Finally, he was already an accomplished skier, having skied all the hardest runs in ski resorts like the Trois Vallées, including off-piste.

Neil grew up in Yorkshire and had an adventurous upbringing. His father was associated with the scout movement and wasn't afraid to let Neil have his fair share of outdoor activities. The family holidayed frequently in Scotland and always took a dinghy to sail off the north-west coast. His secondary education was hampered to say the least by the reorganisation of his school into a comprehensive but Neil did develop

a strong interest in geology, which led him into the coal-mining industry: a job he loved. Neil was always a practical, hands-on person and his work at British Coal helped him develop into a skilled engineer. He progressed to pit deputy manager and would have risen further but for the collapse of the coal-mining industry during the Thatcher years. To continue in mining engineering, Neil would have had to travel abroad so instead he completed a MBA and took up a succession of jobs, mainly in sales.

Many people can claim Neil as one of the best friends they had. I am just one of those. It was always a memorable experience climbing with him. The mountains became our playground and we went looking for adventure. There was always a competitive edge to our excursions. Neil always wanted to get to the summit before anyone else. One such example was our ascent of Pigne d'Arolla (3787m). Normally parties climb up to the hut and next morning climb the mountain. We decided to climb from the valley straight past the hut and onto the summit. Some climbers had already set off from the hut when we passed by. Neil was determined to get past them and arrive at the top first. When I caught up with Neil on the summit and thought we might go back, he had other ideas. Why didn't we continue to the next summit over there? The way ahead was pristine untrodden snow, so off we went. That took us to La Serpentine (3789m) and still Neil wanted to carry on, to take in Mont Blanc de Cheilon (3870m). He would have but I declined, and we then dropped down into a valley that we had to climb back out of again to reach where we had camped: a great day out and typical of Neil. Through all the trips Neil and I made, I found him easy company, reliable in those trickier situations you often end up in when mountaineering, always enthusiastic and patient with those less gifted than he was.

Enthusiastic about all aspects of mountaineering, Neil was keen to test his limits and extend his abilities, whether it was snow and ice climbing,

rock climbing, Alpine peaks, cycling or walking. He attended many of the Club's summer Alpine meets and also led one summer meet to Pralognan. But his biggest contribution to the Club's meet programme was undoubtedly the winter Alpine meets. For a number of years, Neil led this annual excursion to Chamonix. Activities included ice climbing, snowshoeing, on and off-piste skiing and iglooming.

By now Neil and his wife Moira, having both retired from work, had moved to Chamonix and were living their dream in the mountains at the foot of ski slopes with access to all the Chamonix ski areas, where Neil skied like a local and in the summer had plenty of peaks to go at. Neil had tried to sell the idea of the Club buying a hut in the Alps as the next logical development for the Club. He went one better by buying a home there instead.

Neil and Moira had met in Leeds through the outdoors and married in 1991. They had a shared passion for the mountains, climbing Kilimanjaro for their honeymoon. Moira joined Neil for many of his Munros, often waiting patiently while he went off to tick subsidiary tops. They also enjoyed many happy adventures with Neil's other hobbies, his rally car and Land Rovers over the years. Moira had to get used to Neil's need to be first on the summit, overtaking as many parties as possible. On one occasion climbing Alphubel (4206m) she had to lie down on the top to recover. Following this same pattern, Neil climbed his last 4,000m peak Grand Paradiso on 2 September 2021 with Moira. They overtook several parties who had left the hut before them and were second on the summit, beaten only by a party who had bivouacked higher up.

Neil died 21 days later on 23 September 2021 in a cycling accident near his home in Les Houches. It was a warm and sunny September day and he was surrounded by the mountains he loved. At the end of his life Neil had climbed 37 of the 4,000m peaks, including the Obergabelhorn, Dürrenhorn, Dent Blanche and Lyskamm, all graded AD. Of those 37, 21 were in the company of his wife Moira. He climbed in the Himalaya in the Kashmir region and the Karakoram. He completed all the Munros and associated tops, the last being Stuc a'Coire Dhuibh Bhig in February 2004. In total Neil climbed over 1,800 summits ranging from Himalayan and Alpine peaks to Marilyns.

So many of us feel, with great sadness, the loss of Neil, none more so than his wife Moira who shared his love and passion for the mountains. She continues to live their dream in Chamonix knowing 'he has only gone ahead to recce the biggest route of all and will be there to guide me when it's time.'

Paul Russell

Anthony Kinsey writes: I was hugely inspired, as well as intimidated, by Neil's incredible passion for mountaineering. When I met him, I was an over-confident mediocre skier and after a few hours on the mountain with Neil I realised just how much more there was to discover. I could tell a thousand stories of the many adventures we shared after that, but in short they were all unforgettable, educational, frightening and exhilarating. Safety always

came first, but then a close second was pushing the envelope and taking on the potential dangers. All the while the banter and ridicule was constant, as well as lots of chat about our other shared passion, which, of course, was music.

Frank and Cath Procter write: Neil was a larger-than-life character with a sense of adventure that inspired us all. His skiing skills were legendary, maybe even kamikaze at times, but he always came up smiling after his mishaps. He seemed invincible. He also had a great sense of fun and is fondly remembered for his New Year antics in L'Igloo, particularly the Scottish ginger wig he donned on one occasion. He was a much-valued friend and we shall miss him dreadfully.

Paul Riley writes: Neil always needed a project; he wasn't one for sitting around. Sometimes we had to say, 'Neil just stop now and have a beer.' He had a real love of life and a need for adventure. Moira and Neil worked so well as a team, cycling together in the Dordogne and Chamonix and mountaineering throughout the Alps.

Richard Sykes 1932 - 2021



Richard Sykes.

Richard, known as 'Dick', grew up in Bristol where his father was a clergyman. The Sykes family consisted of five children including Richard who also had a twin brother. Following Bristol Grammar School, where he played on the first teams for rugby, cricket and hockey, he read classics at Cambridge. He was an active member of Cambridge University Mountaineering Club. He was a member of the 1957 Manchester expedition that attempted the first ascent of Masherbrum from which Bob Downes sadly did not return, (*AJ* 1958, pp169-84). He gained a PhD at Princeton in 1959 and further developed his keen interest in mountaineering.

For a short time he worked in the City, but that was not really for him. Instead, he trained as a social worker and worked in the Manchester area before moving back to Bristol where he founded a couple of charities, Bristol Home Plus, supporting families with children under five, then Westcare

which provided support for those suffering from myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME), also called chronic fatigue syndrome. He sought to educate medical professionals who for many years dismissed the condition. He was among the first to take ME seriously and set up a national task force on the illness which reported in 1994, its conclusions feeding into the Chief Medical Officer's report.

He spent considerable time climbing and skiing in the Alps and regularly led ski tours for the Eagle Ski Club and Ski Club of Great Britain often using his British Association of Ski Instructors qualification to offer instruction. He was a member of the Climbers' Club as well as the AC and was a fine rock climber both in the Alps and throughout Britain, including climbing the Old Man of Hoy a couple of times with Mike Banks, so Mike could claim to be the oldest person to do so. He climbed regularly all over Britain as well as Spain and the Alps, latterly concentrating on Pembroke where he had a flat. Richard was also a member of the British Alpine ski traverse led by Alan Blackshaw that went from Kaprun in Austria to Gap in France requiring some six weeks of serious endurance (*AJ* 1973, pp13-22).

I remember an occasion on Skye when Richard took a day off from climbing and was asleep in the hut when the call came for help with an accident in Coire Lagan. This was in the days before formal rescue teams so anyone who was around was called on to help. Richard got up quickly and was to spend the rest of the day on the cliff helping to get an injured climber down. Several rescuers were still on the face at nightfall and Richard spent an uncomfortable night on a ledge before helping to retrieve a body the next day. So much for his rest day. At that point a couple climbers were reported missing and a fresh call went out for search parties. Richard went to bed. By then it was Sunday with no ferries running. After two days with just volunteers, the RAF mountain rescue arrived to assist.

Richard had considerable unassuming charm. He lived a simple life and became a regular attender at Quaker meetings. I last visited him in his residential home just before the pandemic as he was starting to write his memoirs, which are unfortunately unfinished and unavailable.

Robin Quine