

*The Himalayan Club annually publishes [The Himalayan Journal](#) and [The Himalayan Club Newsletter](#). Between them they cover mountaineering and related activities in the Himalaya. Now with the availability of electronic media and its quick reach this is the first “E-Letter” sent to members and others. This will be ultimately posted on the Himalayan Club website for a permanent record. In the “E-Letter” series we intend to cover activities of the Himalayan Club members with other topical news. We welcome suggestions for this format, which the Club hopes to issue every quarter.*

- [Himalayan Environment Trust meet at Mussoorie.](#)



From right: Aspi Moddie, Capt. M. S. Kohli and Maurice Herzog (all Hon. Members of HC) on stage. To their right is a Secretary of Uttarnachal Government and Junko Tabie.

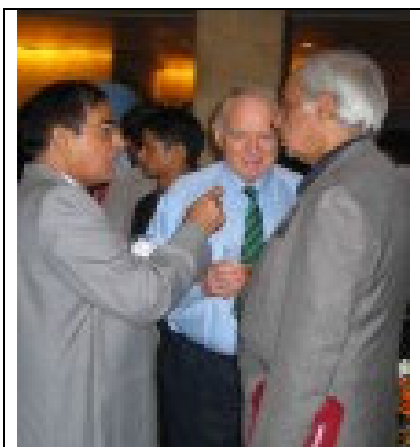
Capt. M. S. Kohli, Hon. Member of the Himalayan Club organized a meet at Mussoorie, a hill-station near Dehra Dun. Another of our Hon. Member's, Maurice Herzog (of Annapurna fame) was the chief guest. Many speakers, led by our Hon. Member Aspi Moddie held the stage with suggestions and comments about the present state of environment in the Himalaya. Full details are available on the website of the Himalayan Environment Trust. We reproduce part of speech delivered by Meher Mehta, Vice-President HC who resides in Kolkatta.

## ***“Getting Things Done”?: Reviving The Himalayan Club at Kolkata***

*I am a member of one of the oldest mountaineering clubs in Asia and certainly India. Founded in 1928, I refer to The Himalayan Club, which requires little introduction from the time of its British antecedents. The founding fathers numbering a solid 127, were men and women who by their stated ability, profession and standing were those capable of “getting things done”. “Things” meant a wide range of activity relative to the field of Himalayan endeavour. These early members had a sense of history about them, for against a backdrop of the formation of Empire, the role of the East India Company by then long disbanded and passed to the Government of India of the day for governance, the completion of the grand Trigonometrical Survey of India and its adjoining areas mapped, including the heights of peaks classified and determined, and in reverence to the names of the “glorious dead” associated with building of Empire and combined with exploration and adoration of the Himalaya, the objective of The Himalayan Club was formulated, in acknowledgement of all that had transpired before, to be remembered, enshrined and passed on to generations to follow. It read : “To encourage and assist Himalayan travel and exploration and to extend knowledge of the Himalaya and adjoining ranges through science, art, literature and sport”.*



*. Maurice Herzog (left) with Mrs Karan Singh and Mandip Singh Soin*



*Meher Mehta (Vice President, HC,) right, talking to Alan Blackshaw (, President of UIAA and a member of HC) centre*

*We, in a short time, have a new membership, retaining but a dedicated few from the past, and new ones comprising like minded people, through judicious selection, covering a wide range of expertise, discipline and activity, the commonality of purpose being that they are once again men and women of style and substance, dedicated in “getting things done”. We have with us already a wide range of speakers both within and those we invite from other parts of India and abroad to share experiences with us. Good scribes and writers and those who can effectively research, edit and produce souvenirs and brochures of quality People who are concerned with the Himalayan environment and are spreading awareness as much as they absorb them of the fragile ecological changes that are effecting our heritage in the Eastern Himalaya.. Our younger members who have begun reaching out to schools and collages to spread awareness, take initiatives of preservation on their treks and expeditions in the Himalaya.,*

*We pay attention to succession and development and give weightage to youth, with resulting changes in mindsets and attitudes. In the former, it is a fallacy to think that your organisation or club will not function as well without you, and in the latter, to realise that the greatest discovery of every*

*generation is that human beings can alter the quality of their lives and their environment by continuously altering the attitude of their minds.*

*[The above is an excerpts of the talk on “Role of Mountaineering Clubs” by Meher H Mehta (Vice President) delivered at the Mountaineering & Tourism Meet, Mussoorie – May 26-28, 2005. Within it was a stirring example of how the Late Jill Henderson, past Hony. Local Secretary, Darjeeling, “got things done”. We intend to “profile” her in a future issue.]*

### ***• EVEREST CELEBRATIONS AT NEW DELHI***

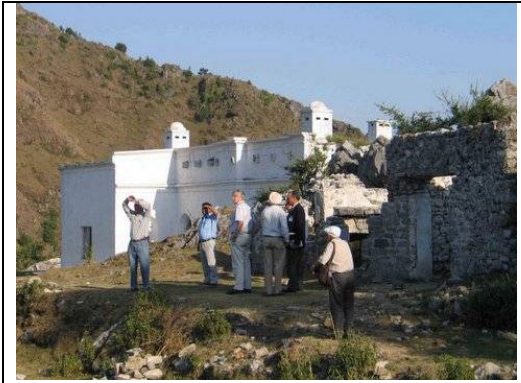


- . Nawang Gombu, (Hon. Member, HC) with Dr Karan Singh, chief guest at dinner in Delhi.*

*The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniverssary of the ascent of Everest by an Indian team in 1965, was celebrated in New Delhi. The expeditions consisted of several members of the Himalayan Club, including its leader Capt. M. S. Kohli. In the afternoon of 29<sup>th</sup> May 2005, the Indian Mountaineering Foundation organized a felicitation. First Mr N. N. Vohra, while congratulating 1965 Everest team, drew attention to the need for Indian mountaineers to explore new areas and attempt small but challenging climbs. Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, India’s political leader gave a speech that reminded the audience of the Himalayan heritage and the need to protect it.*

*On the same evening a special dinner was held in New Delhi where many Himalayan Club members were present.*

## EVEREST HOUSE



. Everest House below Hathi Pau hill near Mussoorie. Office of Sir George Everest.

*Taking advantage of the visit to Mussoorie for the Environment Meet, some members visited “ Everest House”. Hon.member Bill Aitken, who lives in Mussoorie during summer was best guide one can hope for ! Aitken was responsible for re-discovering this deserted house and office belonging to the father of the Survey of India and after whom the highest peak in the world is named. Bill Aitken’s articles and books cover many aspects of Sir George Everest, including his work, the naming of Mount Everest and Everest House.*

## 1<sup>st</sup> Successful Indian Expedition to Everest, 1965 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations

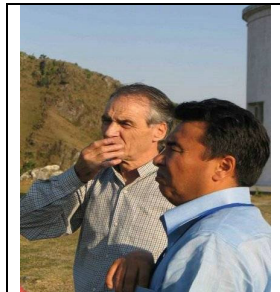
*The achievement we are honouring today has few parallels in our sporting world. I am delighted to participate in the celebration to mark 40 years of the first Indian expedition to climb Everest. Putting nine people on the summit, was not only testimony to the ability and fitness of our climbers, but a feat of organization that remained unsurpassed for many years. I am told that climbing Everest today is no longer the preserve of the skilled and capable, it has become something of an industry, but four decades ago, when this was only the fifth expedition to succeed on the mountain, - climbers who met the challenge, were pioneers and needed exceptional powers of mind and body. It was a feat whose impact continues to be felt to this day. Those of you who participated in that expedition, can be justifiably proud. The loved ones of those who are no longer with us, must know that their memory will endure and their names will long be remembered.*

*Every society needs role models to look up to and emulate, especially the young who are idealistic and can be impressionable and impatient. What better arena of endeavour, can there be to prove themselves than sports.*



*Mountaineering may not attract mass participation or adulation in the way, for example, that cricket does. But surely it nurtures qualities of character that are vital. Being so close to nature, in all its power and beauty, to have the courage to test oneself in the mountains, to approach them with humility as well as confidence, to have endurance and self-reliance – all this must inevitably make for better human beings.*

*This was well recognized by our ancients, who revered the Himalaya as the abode of the gods. From small temples and holy sites to the major pilgrimages, the mountains have drawn our people from the earliest times. It is hardly surprising, then, that Indians should have taken to the sport of mountain climbing with such keenness. Indian mountaineering is usually said to have begun with the ascent of Trisul in 1951 by Gurdial Singh, but mountaineering in India received its biggest fillip after the first ascent of Everest by Tenzing and Hillary in 1953.*



Bill Aitken (Hon. Member of HC) and Motup Chewang Goba (Hon. Local Secretary, Ladakh) at Everest House.

*I believe that our nation will be stronger, our society more resilient if more and more of our young people can experience the joy and exhilaration as well as the challenge and hardship, of being in the elemental wilderness of the mountains. Schools and universities must be encouraged to send more of their students to walk in the valleys and to climb to the summits.*

*At the same time, we must remember that the Himalaya are a fragile ecosystem. Many of these places are sparsely inhabited, but population pressure is growing. There are other problems that circumstances have imposed upon us, such as the impact of large military presence in the high mountains, including the Siachen glacier.*

*I would like mountaineers to be messengers in the battle for a better mountain environment, for the protection of the high wilderness areas of snow and ice. This has to be a partnership between government authorities and private and community initiative. It is only by working together, by concentrating on education, and increased awareness, that we can succeed. After all, the mountains are not simply barren wilderness; they are home to people who have as much right to livelihood as we do.*

*(From speech by Ms. Sonia Gandhi on  
29<sup>th</sup> May, 2005, Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi)*

#### IN MEMORIAM: John Jackson

We have just received news that John Jackson who delivered the Kaivan Memorial Lecture in 2005 is no more. The Club expresses its heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.



John Jackson in Mumbai during the Kanchengunja seminar.

John Jackson was associated with the successful Everest expedition of 1953. Since then he has been, along with his wife Eileen, to all the Everest reunions.

In the world's great mountain ranges he has been on many expeditions. He was a climbing member of the team that made the first ascent of [Kangchenjunga](#), 28,208 feet. He was on the Daily Mail Yeti Expedition, made the first solo traverse from Everest to [Kangchenjunga](#), and led an expedition to the Garhwal Himalaya.

He has traveled widely on photographic journeys in Canada, U.S.A., Ladakh, Zaskar, Kashmir, India, Nepal etc. For 18 years he was director of Plas-y-Brenin Mountain Centre in Wales.

#### MOUNTAIN MATTERS

##### *Some news from the mountain world:*

- *An Indian Air-Force officer Sqd. Ldr Caitanya was lost on Everest after scaling the peak. It is presumed that he fell to his death. His body could not be recovered.*
- *Three mountaineers from a team of the Indian Navy, sustained a fall on a peak in the Siachen glacier area. They were seriously injured. The team had planned to attempt, Laxmi on the edge of the Teram Sher Plateau. However they decided to take on another peak as time was running short. We await detailed news.*
- *A Punjabi lady was stuck on the higher reaches of Everest. She could not climb the peak 7000 m onwards and would not descend to safety. The reason: She said that ijjat (prestige) of her family was at stake if she failed, putting her own and other's lives in danger. She finally came down only after her family gave permission to do so via satellite phone!*
- *And a happy event on summit of Everest too: A Nepali couple, during their 10-minute stay on the summit in inclement weather, exchanged marriage vows and became the first couple to marry on the summit. It is hoped that their marriage does not run into rough weather.*



Col. Ashok Abbey (HC Committee Member) arrives for dinner after climbing Shisha Pangma, a 8000 m peak. He is celebrating with Suman Dubey, (Vice President of HC on the right)

What next for this highest blob in the world?

- *Divyesh Muni and Don Goodman along with other team members are going for an Indo-American expedition, sponsored by our club, in Nubra Valley, East Karakoram region during August month. The team will be distributing clothes to porters and locals as part of their bit for mountain people. Those wishing to donate clothes which they no longer require may contact the club office for more details.*
  - [CORRIGENDUM : In \*The Himalayan Club Newsletter 58\* published March 2005.](#)
1. In the 58th Newsletter - 2005, a caption appeared in the article "In August Company" under the photograph (on page 31) of Harish Kapadia, John Jackson and George Band with Dr Andrew Hall, British Deputy High Commissioner, Kolkata, as "**Speakers talking to US Vice-Consul**". We sincerely regret the inadvertent error and extend our apologies to Dr Hall and to all else for any embarrassment caused.
  2. On p. 22 the first para on right should read: "For his journey, started in 1848 and lasting for three years , he disposed off a grant by HM Treasury of yearly Pounds 400, for the first two years with an additional Pounds 300 for the third! " --- Ed.

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