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To encourage and assist Himalayan travel and exploration and to extend knowledge of the Himalaya and adjoining mountain ranges through science, art, literature and sport.



THE HIMALAYAN CLUB
HIMALAYAN CLUB CENTRE
314, Turf Estate, Shakti Mills Lane,
Off Dr. E. Moses Road, Mahalaxmi,
Mumbai--400 011, India.
Phone; (91 22) 2491 2829
E mail; info@himalayanclub.org
Web ; www.himalayanclub.org

President;
Suman Dubey

Vice Presidents;
Tanil Kilachand
Col. Ashok Abbey
AVM (Retd.) A.K. Bhattacharyya

Hon. Secretary;
Divyesh Muni

Hon. Treasurer;
Rajendra Wani

Patrons;
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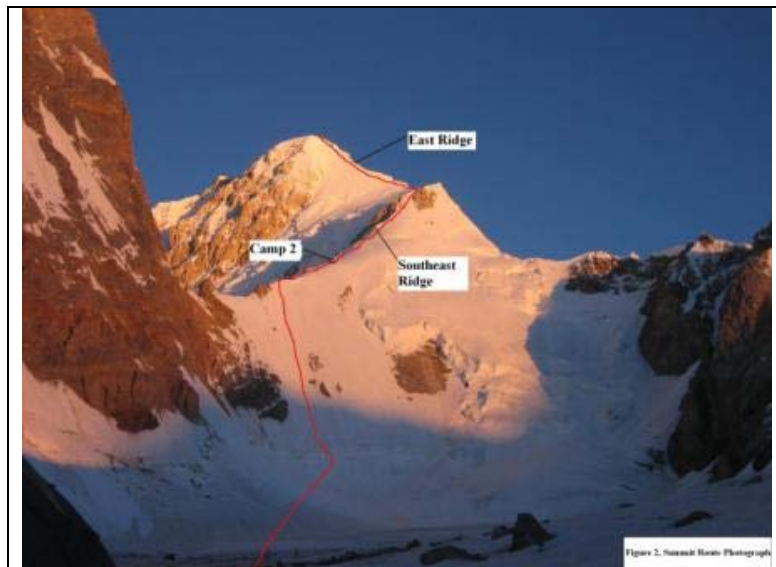
Hon. Editor for e-Letter;
Jasmine Hegde - jas4hc@gmail.com
Information Coordinator;
Maninder Kohli -
maninderkohli@gmail.com

Published for;
The Himalayan Club.
Please inform us at;
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A NEW ROUTE CLIMBED ON CHONG KUMDAN I

By Divyesh Muni

On August 20, 2007, 4 p.m., expedition members, Divyesh Muni, Donald Goodman, Marlin Geist and Chris Robertson; and Sherpas Neema Dorje, Ming Temba and Pemba Norbu (aka King Kong) climbed a new route on Chong Kumdan I (elevation 7071 meters [m]). Our new route climbed the Southeast Ridge to its intersection with the main East Ridge of Chong Kumdan I, and then followed the East Ridge to the summit.



Route taken for the summit

(Divyesh Muni)

This was the second ascent of this magnificent peak, the first being by an Indian British team led by Harish Kapadia in 1991. The Indian American Expedition to East Karakoram was sponsored by The Himalayan Club.

The team consisted of five India based members and five America based members. Mr Divyesh Muni, the Hon. Sec. of the Himalayan Club, Mumbai, led this expedition jointly with Mr. Don Goodman from U.S. The other members of the team were Mr. Rajesh Gadgil, Mr Shripad Sapkal, Mr. Nikunj Vora, Ms. Vineeta Muni. Mr.Christopher Alan Robertson, Mr. Juan Esteban Lira, Mr. Marlin Geist, Ms. Natala Goodman. The team was accompanied by Sqn. Ldr. G. Pawan Kumar of the Indian Air Force as Liaison officer of the expedition.

Chong Kumdan I is located close to Aksai Chin area of Jammu & Kashmir. The approach to this remote peak is from the Nubra Valley, which lies in the North of famous Khardung La. This region is sandwiched between Pakistan occupied Kashmir on the North West and the Aksai Chin area on the North East. The approach to the mountain is along the historic "silk route" to Yarkand over the famous Saser La (pass). The route was known as the "Skeleton's trail". The Chong Kumdan glaciers feed the notorious "Shyok" - the river of death.

The route on Chong Kumdan I involved 45 to 55 degree ice for 400 m to the crest of the Southeast Ridge. We fixed 500 m of fixed line on this section.

Further, we followed the crest of the Southeast Ridge a few hundred meters to elevation 6,450 m where we established Camp 2. The 20 to 30 degree slopes were underlain by hard ice. We spent nearly 4 hours excavating tent platforms.

From Camp 2, we climbed the remainder of the Southeast Ridge to where it intersects the East Ridge near 6,800 m. Above Camp 2 four ropes were fixed and the route continued past several gendarmes and passing a cornice to the right at the top of the slope. This part of the climb could be made without fixed lines, as the slopes were moderate. The maximum slopes are about 45 degrees near the intersection with the East Ridge.

The East Ridge is almost uninterrupted from its intersection with the Southeast Ridge to the summit. South of the East Ridge, 40- to 50-degree slopes drop uninterrupted 600 to 800 m to the Chogam 2 Glacier. In good conditions, climbing the East Ridge would require less than 2 hours. Our team had to stay well below the ridge to avoid large cornices that overhang to the north. The snow was knee deep or worse, with a crusty surface overlying loose granular snow over ice. Due to the poor condition of the snow, it took us more than 5 hours to negotiate the last section to the summit.

The major challenges faced by the team were:

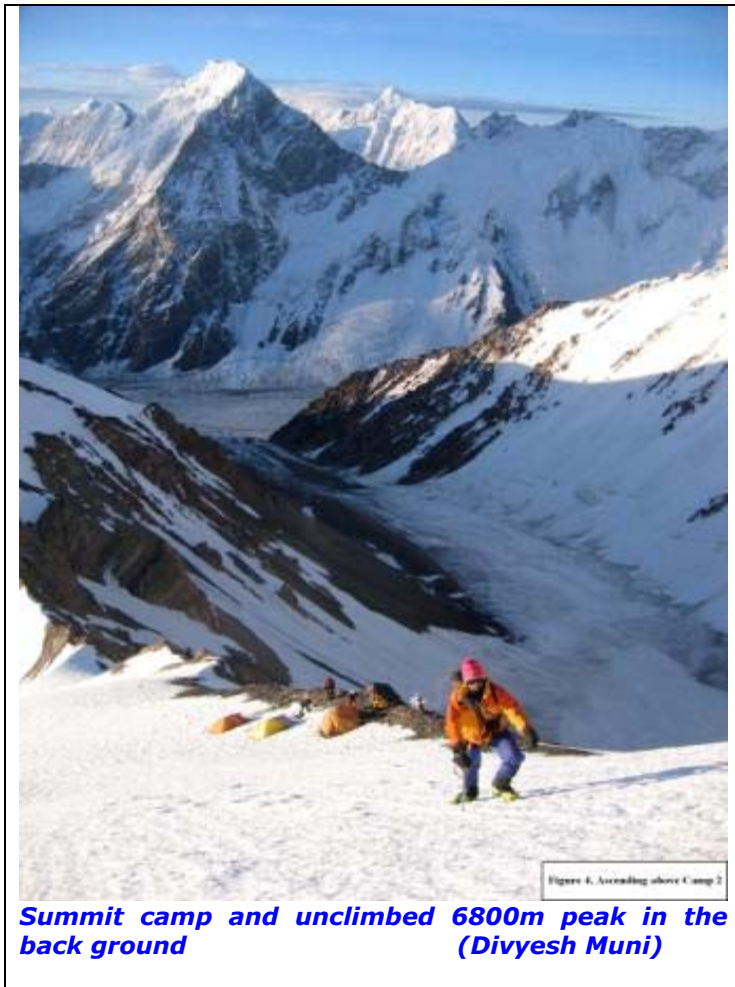
- To cross the high Saser La (5375 m) with nearly 2 tones of equipment and rations. These were carried on 50 horses. The team had a support staff of 4 Sherpas, 3 Nepali and Ladakhi cooks and 12 Kumaunies.
- The team had to cross two major glaciers (The Aqtash and the Thangaman) along with the horses. The horsemen, from Ladakh were of great assistance in finding a way across the ice and rocks of the glaciers for the horses. With great difficulty the horses managed to get across the glacier with the loads.
- The Shyok river brought the expedition to a halt at the other end of the Thangman Glacier. The river had blocked the route for the horses and it was no longer possible for the caravan to move ahead. The expedition members and support staff carried the loads from this point onwards over the rock slabs along the banks of the river.



Summit ridge of Chong Kumdan I

(Divyesh Muni)

- On reaching Base Camp, the team proceeded to explore a route through the South Chong Kumdan Glacier only to be faced by huge gaping crevasses, towering ice seracs and penitents. The top snow layer had disappeared due to the high temperatures caused by Global warming. The glacier was bare and exposed and it was very dangerous to travel along the glacier with the equipment and rations required. The team decided to shift focus to Chong Kumdan I. A safe route was located to cross the glacier and the route on Chong Kumdan I was located with minimum exposure to travel on the glaciers.
- One of our Kumauni support staff, Anand Ram passed away on 10th August due to high altitude sickness at the Saser Brangza Army camp. Accompanied by another Kumauni, he was on his way back when his health took a turn for the worst. He was treated by the Army medic at the Saser Brangza camp. Unfortunately no news of his deteriorating health was conveyed to our logistics support company nor to the team. The personnel at the Camp attempted to send him down on horseback on the 9th August but he was unable to ride the horse. He is survived by a wife and three children. The team has decided to start a fund to provide financial assistance to his dependents.
- Our Sherpa Sirdar, Ang Tashi took ill on 15th August at Camp I. He was accompanied down to ABC by members on 16th and when there was no improvement in his health despite being provided bottled oxygen and medication, an air evacuation was requested on 17th August. The Indian Air Force immediately sent in two helicopters and Ang Tashi was hospitalized at the Army hospital in Hundar. He was under intensive care for several days and is now recovering at Leh.



On 11th August 2007, most of the members of the team, reached the summit of Skyang (5770 m) in an acclimatization climb .

Vineeta Muni, Nikunj Vora and Divyesh Muni also reached a high col (6100 m) on the east ridge of Chong Kumdan V where we climbed to get a good view of our route on Chong Kumdan I.

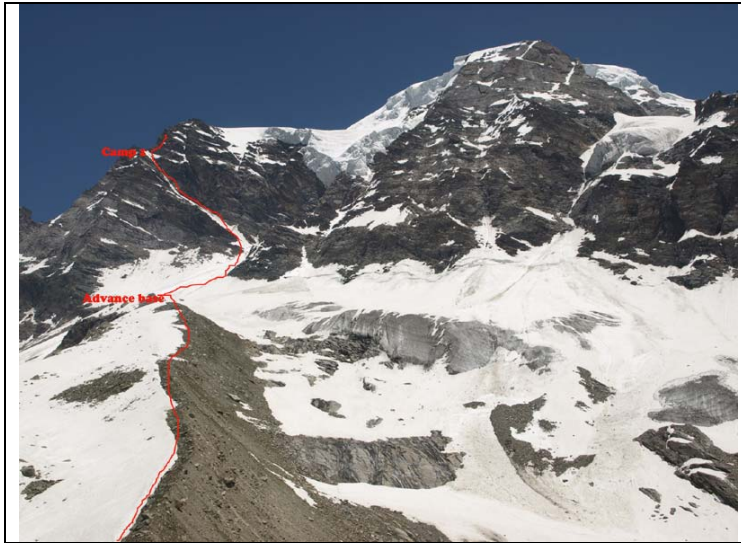
The expedition returned to Mumbai on 6th September 2007. Our sincere thanks, to the Indian Air Force for their prompt evacuation of Ang Tashi Sherpa and to the Indian Army for their support during the expedition. A special note of thanks, to Harish Kapadia who provided invaluable information to the team. Col. Ashok Abbey, Vice President of the Himalayan Club was of great assistance to the team in Ladakh.

EXPLORATION AND CLIMBING OFF THE PANGI VALLEY

By Chris Bonington

A small British expedition explored the upper Tiaso Nala and the area of the Sersank Pass in late June and early July 2007.

The team, consisting of Chris Bonington, Rob Ferguson, Graham Little and Jim Lowther with a support Team provided by Rimo Expeditions left Delhi by road on 17 June to reach Manali after a 16 hour drive. Two days were spent in Manali and on 20 June the team crossed the Rohtang Pass to reach Chery in the Chandra Baga Gorge, some distance beyond Kilar. The road had been swept away by a major landslip and looked as if it would be some time before it was rebuilt. The gear was ferried across in the dark and the next morning two jeeps took the team to the road head by the village of Tajana Adwar – a really beautiful camp site.



It was a two easy day walk to base camp in the Hangrung Nala which was established on 23 June. There seemed two possible routes up Sersank Peak (Shib Shankar), either up its South Ridge by a series of glaciers and snow slopes, or more direct up its North West Ridge whose lower slopes were guarded by a steep rock buttress. The latter route was chosen. An advance base was established at the top of a moraine ridge below a gully that led to a ramp that reached up to half the height of the buttress. The Ramp was fix roped by Rob and Jim, supported by our two Sherpas, Ang Tachei and Samghyl. At this point the weather broke and after four days rain and snow the team dropped back to Base Camp.

On 3 July, Graham, Jim and Rob returned to the fray while Chris decided to go for a smaller, easier peak on the ridge to the North East of Base Camp. On 4 July Graham, Jim and Rob established Camp 1 at the head of the ramp on a large mushroom of snow overlooking the North East Face and started climbing the steep rocks above. After three terrifying pitches on very loose rock reaching a height of 5500 metres they decided the route was too dangerous but stopped for the night at Camp 1, enjoying superb views and a great sunset.

Chris and Raj Kumar established a camp on the ridge above base camp at a height of 4674 metres and on the following day scrambled to the highest point of the ridge, an elegant little peak at a height of 5027 metres.

The entire team reunited at base camp that evening, and since there was no time to reconnoitre an alternative route the team started back towards the road head reaching it on 7 July. Heavy rain on the 8th July caused over twenty major land slips on the road beside the Chandra Bhaga river and the team had to walk out, covering 65 kilometres to Udaipur in two days. Raj Kumar, Samghyl and Manbahadur did a magnificent job carrying loads of up to 40 kilos each.



It was an eventful and very enjoyable trip up a truly beautiful unspoilt valley. The local people were particularly friendly and helpful.

OUR TRIP TO THE HIMALAYAN CLUB

By Vibhav Mariwala,

[Std IV, The Bombay International School, Mumbai]

We, the children of Std IV, from The Bombay International School, visited the Himalayan Club on 31st August, 2007. This year, the topic of our project in school was the epic "Meghdoot" by Kalidasa. This epic is about a clouds' journey from Ramgiri to Alkapuri over the Himalayan mountain range. We had also studied about Global Warming in today's world and how it is impacting our earth. That is why my father, Ravi Mariwala, arranged the trip to the Himalayan Club, so we could learn more about both these subjects.



**Ravi Mariwala showing children the maps
(Harish Kapadia)**

In the Himalayan Club, we met Mr. Harish Kapadia. He spoke to us about the many famous mountaineers who have climbed and explored the Himalaya. He also showed us a big map of the Himalayan Range and pointed out the fourteen tallest peaks in the world. We also saw photos of a beautiful mountain called Nanda Devi and learned about the Nanda Devi Sanctuary. My friends and I saw one of the first maps of Everest and other maps, mountain passes of this region. We were very excited and happy to learn about the Himalaya. Most of us want to become mountaineers or at least explore the Himalaya and enjoy the beauty of mountains.

One of the students even wrote a nice poem about the Himalaya:

"Bright cold and green,
So tall and lovely,
A great place to explore.
If you have experience and an
adventurous dog's paw,
The Himalaya would be a great
place to go. "
(By Maya Patel)

"Thank you, Himalayan Club, for
this wonderful visit."
-From the children and teachers of
Std IV, Bombay International
School.



learning about Himalaya

(Ravi Mariwala)

INFORMATION ON SIKKIM

By Roger Payne

I am getting in touch now to make sure that members of The Himalayan Club have contact details for some key people in the Sikkim Amateur Mountaineering Association (SAMA).

During three visits to Sikkim I have had the pleasure to trek and climb with Kunzang Gyatso Bhutia (SAMA President) and Sagar Rai (SAMA Vice President and Treasurer), and also learn something about the excellent work SAMA is doing to train local guides, help visiting mountaineers, and provide climbing opportunities for young people in Sikkim. SAMA is a small and growing organisation, and I have been very impressed with their commitment and interaction with the Government of Sikkim. The contact details for SAMA are:

Kunzang Gyatso Bhutia
SAMA President
Below Zero Point SBI Bank
Development Area
Gangtok
Sikkim
INDIA 737101
kunzong_gtk@yahoo.com
Mobile: +91 (0)9832 377 575
Sagar Rai
SAMA Vice President and Treasurer
southspur@yahoo.co.in
Mobile: +91 (0)9434 357 471

The reports about our climbs in 2006 are on my website <http://www.rogerpayne.info/climbing.htm>. Perhaps the most important point is that the Home Department of Sikkim has designated five newly opened Alpine Peaks to encourage small expeditions. They are:

West Sikkim	Frey Peak 5830m	(Chaurikiang valley)
	Tinchenkang 6010m	(Thansing valley)
	Jopuno 5936m	(Thansing valley)
North Sikkim	Lama Wangden 5868m	(Lachen)
	Brumkhangse 5635m	(Yumthang)

The peak fee is relatively modest at USD350 for a team of four. The regulations for climbing these peaks can be found at <http://sikkim.gov.in/>. Go to the section Government and click on Old Gazettes. Then click on 2006 and all the gazettes for that year will appear in a PDF document (http://sikkim.gov.in/asp/Misc/sikkim_govtgazettes/GAZ/GAZ2006/GAZ2006.pdf). Go to page 90, and the gazette dated 29th March 2006. This contains the application forms, guidance notes and schedule of fees.

Also, SAMA has a good link with Sikkim Holiday Tours and Treks which is a reliable tour operator in Gangtok. Their contact details are:

Sikkim Holidays Tours and Treks
Housing Building
Opposite Sadar PS
Sonam Gyatso Marg
Gangtok – 01
India www.sikkim-holidays.com
sikkim_holidays@yahoo.com
tel: +91 03592 320095
fax: +91 03592 220430

I hope this information is helpful to you and members of the Himalayan Club. Please let me know if you have any question or require any further information.

NEWS AND VIEWS

By Harish Kapadia

- **MOTHER'S MOUNTAIN – ON Julie Tullis and her Life**

[A Broadcast on BBC World Service on Fri 31st August 07]

In August 1986 Julie Tullis became the first British woman climber to reach the summit of K2, one of the most challenging Himalayan peaks. Unfortunately, she died during her descent. During her climbing expeditions she made hours of diary recordings, including one cassette which lay lost on a glacier until it was discovered by a mountaineering party more than two decades later. It eventually found its way back to the family via her climbing partner **Kurt Diemberger**.

At one time, Julie held the record for the British woman mountaineer to have climbed highest and reached the summits of both Broad Peak and K2 - mountains which, at well over 8,000 metres, are amongst the highest and most challenging of the Himalayan peaks. Leaving two teenage children at home, she started mountaineering late in life, achieving more in a few short years than many climbers do in a lifetime.

Sara Parker has been given exclusive access to the diary tapes and to the Tullis family - Julie's husband Terry, her daughter Lindsay and her son Chris.

- **GURDIAL SINGH honoured with Life Time Achievement Award**

Recipient of the Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award for Lifetime Achievement at the age of 83, mountaineer and trainer Gurdial Singh defies old age. Though he gave up active mountaineering a few years ago, Singh is still involved in delivering lectures, particularly about the problems in Siachen, in different parts of the country. Singh's tryst with mountains began in 1948. In 1951, he led an expedition to Trisul and became the first Indian to climb a major Himalayan peak. In the 60s, he was a member of the Indian expedition to Everest.

"I feel safer while on expeditions rather than on roads of Delhi or Mumbai. I was among the very few who climbed mountain peaks without oxygen cylinders. In fact, I stayed for six days without oxygen at a height of 8,000 metres."



- **Life Time Achievement Award to Soli Mehta**



Soli Mehta, was Hon. Editor of HJ for several years before he passed away in 1989. With his detailed studies of the mountains and work for the Himalayan Club, the federation of Maharashtra Climbing Clubs honoured him with the Life Time Achievement award. It was presented by Rajesh Gadgil to Mrs Meheru Mehta, who could not receive it personally earlier at the large gathering. The Himalayan Club is proud of Soli Mehta's achievements.

Last year Jagdish Nanavati, President Emeritus of the Himalayan Club had also received the same honour

- **Much awaited, 'THE HIMALAYAN JOURNAL VOLUME 63 (2007)' is expected to be published in November 200**

CONTENTS

1. Kipling and Kim

Rasoul Sorkhabi

2. Seven Years in Tibet

William Mackay (Bill) Aitken

3. The Himalaya and Himalayan Birds

Lavkumar Khacher

4. An Inquiry into 'Fragile' Himalaya

Rasoul Sorkhabi

5. The Promised Land

Harish Kapadia

6. Exploring the Neora Valley

Chinmoy Chakrabarti

7. Three Weeks In Paradise

Martin Moran

8. More High Passes In Kumaun

Krishnan Kutty

9. Kamet, 2006

AVM Apurba Kumar Bhattacharyya (Retd)

10. AC 150

Dave Wynne-Jones

11. A Ringing Revolution

Harish Kapadia

12. Exploration and Climbing off the Pangri Valley

Sir Chris Bonington

13. Kajaqiao

Mick Fowle

14. Expedition Autumn 2006 to East Tibet

Tamotsu Nakamura

15. Shishapangma

Colonel Ashok Abbey

16. Traversing the Glaciers of the Karakoram

Ryuji Hayashibara (*Translated from Japanese by Kei Kurachi*)

17. Searching For The Real Tibet

Vijay Krishna

18. What on Earth is happening?

Meher H Mehta

19. Expeditions and Notes

1. A Frontier Land and its People (Wing Cdr. V K Sashindran) 2. Jungle Trail (Ravindra Apte) 3. The Himalayan Meltdown (Syed Iqbal Hasnain) 4. HMI Instructors on Top of Kabru I (Major Kulwant Singh Dhami, SM) 5. Climbing The Dream Mountain : Shivling (Rupesh Khopade) 6. Parvati Col - the Google Way! (Tapan Pandit) 7. Pamir Tales (Luis Miguel López Soriano) 8. ARJUNA - 1983 (Zbigniew Skierski) 9. Saraghrar SE, First Ascent (Yves-Alain Peter) 10. The six great glaciers exploration in the Karakoram Epilogue (Hirofumi Oe) 11. Ski Expedition to Lhagu Glacier (Kaneshige Ikeda)

20. Book Reviews (total 24 Book reviews)

1. Brotherhood of The Rope (Bernadette Mcdonald) 2. An Eye at the Top of the World (Pete Takeda) 3. Frederick Wilson (Hulson Sahib) of Garhwal (D.C.Kala) 4. Spying For The Raj (Jules Stewart), Spying For Empire (Robert Johnson) 5. On Top of the World (M.S. Kohli) 6. Birds Of Prey Of The Indian Subcontinent (Rishad Naoroji) 7. Water For Pabolee (Robert C. Alter) 8. India in Mind (Edited By Pankaj Mishra) 9. The Caves of Meghalaya (Daly B.D.K.) 10. The Heart of the World (Ian Baker) 11. Travelers' Tales India (Edited by James O'Reilly and Larry Habergger) 12. A Long Walk in the Himalaya (Garry Weare) 13. Buddha's Warriors (Mikel Dunham) 14. Summit- 150 Years Of The Alpine Club (George Band) 15. On My Own Two Feet (Norman Hardie) 16. Travels in Far - Off Places (Michael Clarke) 17. Asia ki Peet Par - Pandit Nain Singh Rawat (Uma Bhatt and Shekhar Pathak) 18. Bhotan and the Story of the Doar (Dr. David Field Rennie) 19. Tourist & Trekking Guide To Ladakh And Zaskar (Manmohan Singh Bawa) 20. India Through Its Birds (Edited by Zafar Futehally) 21. India Tibet And China (Ajay B. Agarwal) 22. Lost in Tibet (Richard Starks and Miriam Murcutt) 23. Silent Roar - Searching for The Snow Leopard (Documentary written and produced by Hugh Miles and Mitchell Kelly) 24. Beyond Everest 2000 - The On Going Climb (Directed and produced by Michael Dillon)

21. In Memoriam--1. Charles Geoffrey Wylie, Obe 2. Aditya Kashyap 3. Chandra Lal Sah Thulgharia 4. Durga Charan Kala 5. Henry Arthur Osmaston

OBITUARY

It is with great sadness that we pass along word of the passing of **Bob Bates**. Bob, teacher, author, mountaineer and first Peace Corps director in Nepal, died Thursday, Sept. 13, 2007, in Exeter, NH. Bob's list of accomplishments is long and varied. In his mountain life he will be remembered primarily for his two early expeditions to K2, in 1938 and 1953, with Charlie Houston. He was a member of the Harvard Five (Bates, Carter, Houston, Moore, Washburn), and past president of the American Alpine Club.

He wrote/co wrote:

Five Miles High
K2: The Savage Mountain
Mountain Man
The Love of Mountains Is Best
Mystery, Beauty, and Danger

A partial list of Bob's expeditions include:

1932, 1933 Mt. Crillon
1937 Mt. Lucania
1938 K2
1941 St. Elias Range
1942 Mt. McKinley
1951 Mt. Hubbard and Mt. Alverston
1953 K2
1956 Ojos del Salado
1965 Mt. Russell
1970 Mt. Ararat
1985 Ulugh Muztagh



Bob will be greatly missed.

With his passing away, two great American mountaineers have passed away in quick succession: Bradford Washburn and now Bob Bates.

Message from Dr Philip Finch-- Re; Death of Brig. Finch, an old member of the Club:

I am writing to inform you of the death of my father, Brigadier J R G Finch at the ripe old age of 96 on 3 July 2007. As you know he had a great love of the Himalaya and climbed extensively, especially in the Karakoram. He served in the Bombay Sappers and Miners and fought in Burma during World War II. His climbing activities continued in England and during his retirement. He was also a contributor to the Himalayan Journal in the late 1930's and founded the British Army Mountaineering Association, which is still very active today. Late in life, he with my late mother migrated to Australia to joint the majority of his children.

I am sure he would like to express his best wishes to the Himalayan Club for the future.

Yours sincerely
Dr Philp Finch

[SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT --here is the way we can keep our mountains clean.](#)

This is what Heidi Schumann suggests in her article in the New York Times;

Quote: "From the granite immensity of Mount Whitney in California to Mount Rainier in Washington to Zion National Park in Utah, a new wilderness ethic is beginning to take hold: Hikers are now required to carry out their waste in gear like a Wagbag

The privy, which sat about 14,494 feet above sea level, and two other outhouses here in the Inyo National Forest — the last on the trail — have been removed within the last year. The 19,000 or so hikers who pick up [Forest Service](#) permits each year to hike the Whitney Trail are given double-sealed sanitation kits and told how to use them — just as they are told how to keep their food from the bears along the way, and how to find shelter when lightning storms rake the ridges.

The kits — the most popular model is known as a Wagbag — are becoming a fixture of camping gear. On high western trails, Wagbag is now as familiar a term as gorp (a high-energy mix of nuts, seeds, dry fruit and chocolate) or switchback (a hairpin turn in the trail). Other options, like burying waste, are ineffective where there is too little soil, too many people or both. The pack-it-out ethic has long been practiced by Grand Canyon river rafters, who used old ammunition cans.

The Wagbags (WAG stands for Waste Alleviation and Gelling) are manufactured by Phillips Environmental Products in Montana and have been adopted by agencies including the Pentagon and the [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#). Their appearance in places like the John Muir Wilderness or the Grand Canyon is one more indication that park stewards want visitors to take responsibility for themselves. For several years, the [National Park Service](#) has required visitors who need helicopter rescues to help pay for the cost of sending in the copter.

Hikers on the Mount Whitney trail, in most cases, willingly shoulder the burden of the new sanitation regimen. So far this year, more than 4,500 pounds of waste in Wagbags has been deposited in receptacles at the Whitney Portal trail head, all of it headed for landfills, where the bags are designed to biodegrade over six to nine months.

Backpackers have accepted the new pack-it-out policy, said rangers who have distributed Wagbags in Sequoia National Park to the west and the Inyo National Forest to the east. (The Wagbag is actually two separate plastic bags. The inner one is a funnel-like bag with powder at the bottom. Water causes the powder to gel, encapsulating anything in the bag.)

So among the visual images of the 103-year-old Whitney trail — myriad tiny holes that hikers' poles make in the trailside or the winking headlamps of predawn hikers heading up 99 rocky switchbacks — add one more: olive drab bags netted outside hikers' backpacks." : **Unquote.**

[P.S.....INDIA OPENS SIACHEN TO TREKKERS.](#)

In a clear signal to Pakistan that the Siachen Glacier-Saltoro Ridge region will remain "non-negotiable" till it accepts Indian conditions, India is now actively encouraging mountaineering and trekking expeditions to the forbidding glacial heights. The expeditions are also meant to show to the international audience that Indian troops hold "almost all dominating heights" on Saltoro Ridge, which is the highest watershed in the area and towers along the western edge of the glacier. And, of course, those Pakistani troops are nowhere near the 72-km-long Siachen Glacier.

+ _____ +