



E-LETTER

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Contents

Annual Seminar February 2013	2
First Jagdish Nanavati Awards.....	7
Banff Film Festival.....	10
Remembrance	
George Lowe	11
Dick Isherwood.....	13
Major Expeditions to the Indian Himalaya in 2012.....	14
Himalayan Club Committee for the Year 2013-14.....	28
Select Contents of The Himalayan Journal, Vol. 68	30

The Himalayan Club Annual Seminar 2013

The Himalayan Club Annual Seminar, 2013 was held on February 16 & 17. It was yet another exciting Annual Seminar held at the Air India Auditorium, Nariman Point Mumbai.

The seminar was kicked off on 16 February 2013 – with the Kaivan Mistry Memorial Lecture by Pat Morrow on his ‘*Quest for the Seven and a Half Summits*’.

As another first the seminar was an Audio Visual Presentation without Pat! The bureaucratic tangles had sent Pat back from the immigration counter of New Delhi Immigration authorities for reasons best known to them ! The well documented AV presentation made Pat come alive in the auditorium !

Pat is a Canadian photographer and mountain climber who was the first person in the world to climb the highest peaks of seven Continents: McKinley in North America, Aconcagua in South America, Everest in Asia, Elbrus in Europe, Kilimanjaro in



Speakers: Left to right: Stephen Alter, Divyesh Muni, Bernadette MacDonald, Geeta Arun Samant, Anindya Mukherjee, Harish Kapadia, Col. Anil Goth.

Africa, Vinson Massif in Antarctica, and Puncak Jaya in Indonesia. This hour-long presentation described how Pat found the resources to help him reach and climb these peaks. Through over an hour that went past like a flash he took the audience through these summits and how he climbed them in different parts of the world. He included some fantastic photos from his new eBook, *Everest: High Expectations*, co-authored by Sharon Wood. This was a highly motivational presentation.



TWO CHIEFS: On left: General Ved Prakash Malik, PVSM, AVSM, (retd.,) (former Chief of Army Staff) - Chief Guest , and Admiral V S Shekhawat, PVSM, AVSM, Vrc, ADC, (retd) (former Chief of Naval Staff) - Member of the Jury Jagdish Nanavati Awards.

General Ved Prakash Malik, PVSM, AVSM,(retd.) (former Chief of Army Staff) graced the occasion to inaugurate the Annual Seminar. He addressed the members about the need to conserve the fragile balance of “Himalayan Ecology”. Gen. Malik served the Indian Army for 42 years. During his tenure, he had several postings in the Himalaya. He has observed the changing face of these mountains at very close quarters over a period of 40 years. He observed that the ecology of the Himalaya was under greater threat. The ecological degradation was a matter of National

Security and deserves far more pragmatic attention than it is receiving. Over a mesmerizing hour, he discussed, the natural, manmade and territorial threats and how the army could play a key role in monitoring and preserving these areas under ecological stress.

It was now time for the Kekoo Naoroji Book Award Presentation Ceremony and of course there are no guesses for anyone who has read Bernadette McDonald's book '*Freedom Climbers*'. It was fortunate that the author could come and talk about her book because the photos and her presentation did add dimensions to the already multi-layered and metaphoric book. The proof is that every copy of the book that was put up on sale was sold out within hours of her presentation.



Bernadette MacDonald receiving the Kekoo Naoroji Book Award from Jamsheyd Godrej.

Bernadette has a number of honours to her credit, including the Alberta Order of Excellence, the Summit of Excellence Award, the King Albert Award and several mountain literary prizes such as the 2011 Boardman Tasker Prize for Mountain Literature. She has authored many books including *Tomaž Humar, Brotherhood of the Rope, Freedom Climbers*, her latest book has won all the major awards for mountain literature including the 6th Kekoo Naoroji Book Award.

Nadir Godrej once more almost stole the show by his affectionate introduction of Kekoo Naoroji, the Award and this book ***all in verse!*** He is soon going to be a recipient of the Award himself (check his poem in the last E letter and this one to understand what I am talking about).

Bernadette talked about the process of writing *Freedom Climbers* including the interaction with various personalities in the book and the process of understanding the challenges faced by the Polish mountaineering community while achieving the great summits.

The book is a story of a group of extraordinary Polish adventurers who emerged from under the blanket of oppression following the Second World War to become the world's leading Himalayan climbers. Although they lived in a war-ravaged landscape, with seemingly no hope of creating a meaningful life, these curious, motivated and skilled mountaineers created their own free-market economy under the very noses of their Communist bosses and climbed their way to liberation.

The morning of 17th February started with the Arun Samant Memorial Lectures by Anindya Mukherjee, one of India's few professional mountain guides. His presentation was the path breaking 'Zemu Gap from South'.

Anindya has participated in more than 25 expeditions and numerous treks. He has also climbed and trekked in Tanzania, Greenland, Iceland, Caucasus, Sierra

Cascades, North Ireland and in the Swiss and French Alps. In 2008, he became the first Asian to participate in high altitude speed climbing competition on Mount Elbrus, Russia. But above all, his passion lies in exploring the less known and unknown valleys, glaciers and mountains of the Indian Himalaya.

Zemu Gap stands out as a sharp V shaped notch on the eastern continuity of Kangchenjunga before it links up with Simvu. While there have been several ascents including a complete crossing of the Zemu Gap from the north, there remained an uncertainty as to whether this cleft had been effectively ascended from the southern approach. Anindya Mukherjee was inspired to attempt the crossing this col from south, in the prime of winter. This area was visited after a long time.

Subsequently, Col. Anil Goth' lecture on the 'Ascent of Apsarasas' took the audience to the far reaches of the Siachen Glacier. Col Goth has been climbing in the Indian and Nepal Himalaya for more than 25 years and has many difficult ascents to his credit. Then serving as the Commanding Officer of the Mountain Training School of the Indian Army at the base camp of the Siachen Glacier, he was the leader of the Apsarasas expedition. The Indian Army team under the leadership of Col Anil Goth successfully made an ascent of this remotely situated mountain north of Siachen Glacier in the eastern Karakoram range.



Line of ascent through the second icefall to Zemu Gap.



On Zemu Gap, Nov 1937, John Hunt expedition and 2011 team, comparative photos.



Col. Anil Goth who delivered the Arun Samant Memorial Lecture, receiving memento from Geeta Samant.

Col Goth narrated technical and logistical difficulties surmounted by his climbers before reaching the summit. The audience were amazed at the army support that made this climb a unique exercise in precision and logistical planning apart from being a very significant mountaineering triumph.

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Kangchenjau from Giagong on the Plateau. HC Member Dr. P. M. Das was killed on these slopes.

After a much needed tea break, Sikkim was revisited by Harish Kapadia's talk on a 'North Sikkim Odyssey'. His vast knowledge of the area including its history, geography and local cultures laced with entertaining tidbits kept the audience engaged in the talk.

'The Plateau' is the northern most area of Sikkim. Bordering China in the north and the Chumbi valley to its east, it is very

sensitive and well fortified. Many high peak and passes like Pauhunri, Chommo Yummo and Donkhya La surround this remote area. The Gurdongmar Lake and Kangchenjau peak are at the edge of 'The Plateau'. In 2012 Harish Kapadia and two others obtained special permission to visit the area and to photograph research and record the area which has remained out of reach for several decades. The talk also recalled the early explorations, climbs and visits by Trevor Braham and Dr Kellas.



P. C. Sahoo making presentation

Pradeep Sahoo, was next to complete the Sikkim Trilogy with a lecture of his very significant climb on 'Jongsong and Dome Khang'. Pradeep is presently stationed in Harare, Zimbabwe. He has organised and participated in over 10 Himalayan expeditions including Sri Kailash, Shivling, Kamet, Panch Chuli, Mamostong Kangri and Saser Kangri.

The Kolkata Section of the Himalayan Club had organised this successful expedition. The team made ascents of two high mountains located in the Sikkim Himalaya. The east peaks of Jongsong (7462 m) was climbed by a new route and Dome Khang (7260 m) received its first ascent from the Indian

(eastern) side. It was indeed a moment of pride for the HC that this milestone had been reached under its flag.

Divyesh Muni, who has earned the reputation of being one of India's finest mountaineers, next took the stage. His 'Explorations and Climbs in the Angtung Valley' deserve recognition. His small team visited the Angtung valley, in Ladakh during August 2012. This was the first expedition in the valley and the four member team explored the region and achieved two first ascents above 6000 m. An exemplary exploration and climbing effort in Shipton – Tilman mould! The expedition was organized under the guise of the Himalayan Club.



Divyesh Muni talking about his recent climb.

Divyesh has set his sights on lesser known but technically challenging peaks in the East Karakoram and Ladakh. Among his 27 Himalayan ascents, 15 are first ascents.

The evening concluded with a lecture by Stephen Alter - 'Sacred Waters, Sacred Mountains'. The connection between rivers and mountains is obvious to anyone who has travelled in the Himalaya. Imposing, snow-covered summits like Shivling above Gaumukh, are matched only by the extreme depths of tributary valleys like the Jadh Ganga gorge, near Gangotri. Stephen has walked through much of the Himalaya, exploring the watersheds of rivers like the Ganga and Brahmaputra. He traced their origins to many-storied mountains, such as Nanda Devi and Kailash.

Peppered with tongue-in-cheek humour, he talked about the various facets of these beloved rivers and mountains, their mythology and their stories. This presentation was a preview of his forthcoming book.



Stephen Alter

Stephen Alter was born in Mussoorie, Uttarakhand, where he continues to live and write. Apart from an acclaimed author, he is currently Curator of Winterline Centre for the Arts at Woodstock School.

The unrelenting efforts of Divyesh Muni, Rajesh Gadgil, Rajan Mahajan, Nandini Purandare and a generous support by Cox & King Made the 2013 Annual Seminar possible. The program was

sponsored by Cox and Kings, one of the oldest and well established travel agents in India. This was first Himalayan Club Seminar sponsored by a private agency with full freedom given to the club to select and arrange the talks.



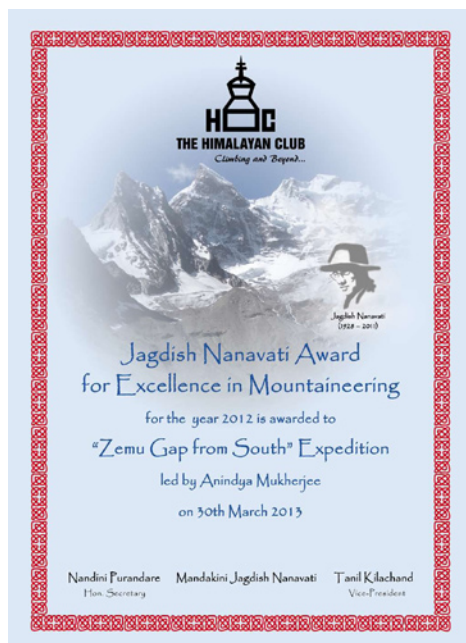
First Jagdish Nanavati Awards

The First Jagdish Nanavati Award for Excellence in Mountaineering was awarded to 'Zemu Gap from South' Expedition led by Anindya Mukherjee and the First Jagdish Nanavati Garud Medal was awarded to Harsinh Mangalsinh Harkotia on 30th March 2013 during the Banff Film Festival.

'ZEMU GAP FROM SOUTH: THE FIRST DOCUMENTED ASCENT, DECEMBER 2011'

(The expedition that won the first Jagdish Nanavati award for excellence in mountaineering)

The primary challenge of climbing Zemu Gap from south has always been its remote and complicated approach. Many failed just to reach the foot of this col. To add to that, seemingly impregnable icefalls, ceracs, crevasses, and the danger of avalanches took Zemu Gap to an interesting level of exploratory climbing. In March 2011, Thendup Sherpa and Anindya Mukherjee did Claude White's 1890 route in the reverse. It took them 12 days to reach Yoksum in West Sikkim from Mangan in North Sikkim.



The 'Jagdish Nanavati Award for Excellence in Mountaineering' certificate.



Anindya Mukherjee receiving the Award from Mrs Mandakini Nanavati.

In November 2011, Anindya Mukherjee, Arjun Saha, Arindam Sarkar, Thendup Sherpa crossed Guicha La and reached the confluence of Talung chu and Tongshyong chu. Making a base near the confluence they entered Tongshyong glacier traversing from its snout. Their intention to proceed further towards the head of Tongshyong glacier and thereafter to Zemu Gap was foiled by five days of nonstop snow storm. They escaped the valley by following Claude White's route to Sanklan Sampo and Mangan in five days.



Anindya Mukherjee

Sanklan Sampo and Mangan in five days.

In December 2011, Thendup Sherpa, Anindya Mukherjee and Pemba Sherpa reached the confluence of Tongshyong Chu and Talung Chu again. Making three more camps

beyond that point in Tongshyong glacier they climbed Zemu Gap on 15th December, 2011. **This is the first ‘documented’ ascent from South.**

The Jury selecting the JCN award recipient, found the report of this journey most appropriate in keeping to the true spirit of exploration rather than the hardest-fastest-highest approach to mountain adventure in today’s times.

The team, represented by the leader Anindya Mukherjee was presented the award on Saturday, March 30, 2013.

The Himalayan Club wishes to thank the members of the Jury for their time and attention. Jury members were: Mr Lindsay Griffin (Chairman) (Editor of ‘Mountain INFO’ for decades), Admiral V S Shekhawat, PVSM, AVSM, VrC, ADC, (retd) (former Chief of Naval Staff) and Dorjee Lhatto (celebrated mountaineer from Darjeeling).

About Garud Award Winner Harsinh Harkotia



Garud medal and Award Certificate

Harsinh hails from a remote village of Harkot in the Danpur area of the eastern Kumaun. True to its name, people in the area are generous and have served many expeditions since years. Harsinh trained as medical assistant and he serves the entire village and the area with help for minor ailments. He has been

associated with trekkers and mountaineers since 1979. In 1984, Harsinh served as the cook and porter on the Ruinsara Expedition, organised by Jagdish Nanavati. He looked after and cooked for a 16-member team including many children. Once, in 1985 during the first ever Indo-British expedition to Rimo, in the Siachen glacier local porters deserted the team but Harsinh and his two companions carried the entire load of the expedition in many load-ferries for several days. He was also chief cook of the Indo-British expedition to Panch Chuli in 1992. Led by Sir Chris Bonington and Harish Kapadia, he performed the Herculean task of rescuing an injured climber, Stephen Venables.



Award Certificate

Over the last 10 years, he has worked as porter and cook in the remote areas of Arunachal

Pradesh, reaching the borders of China and Burma with Harish Kapadia. These were difficult trips as the trails had to be made in rain, snow and malaria infested thick jungles, bridges had to be built and different sets of local porters with different cultural sensibilities had to be managed.

His other trips include expeditions to Rangrik Rang, the Siachen Glacier and climbing Lungser Kangri (6666m) the highest peak of Rupshu in 1995. He participated in difficult long treks to the Darma valley, Kalabaland glacier, Girthi Ganga valley, Hansbeshan in Kinnaur amongst many others. He selflessly served members on such trips with a broad smile and a positive attitude.

Harsinh has helped and inspired many a youngster from his own village to excel in mountains with honesty and integrity.

Above all he has been a companion to Jagdish Nanavati on many trips. Harsinh was with Jagdish Nanavati during his last trek in Garhwal.

Harsinh was presented the first ever Garud Medal on 30th March, 2013 and a cash prize of Rs 11,000

The first J.C. Nanvati Awards were given by Mrs. Mandakini Nanvati, wife of late Mr. Nanvati. Mrs. Nanavati had also accompanied Jagdishbhai on many of his outdoor adventures.

Message from Stephen Venables

'Harsinh is a true gentleman and I count myself fortunate to have enjoyed his company on three expeditions - to the Siachen Glacier in 1985, to the Panch Chuli massif in 1992 and to Kinnaur in 2006. He also accompanied my parents on their last Himalayan trek. He has a phenomenal capacity for hard work, he cooks wonderfully and his smile is as uplifting as a Himalayan sunrise. I will always remember him and his Kumauni



Harsinh on treks and expedition.



companions carrying giant loads over the flooded Terong river, barefoot amongst dashing ice blocks, as we made our way back to the Siachen Glacier in 1985. Without their cheerful hard work, we sahibs would have got nowhere on that expedition. He richly deserves this award.'

Harsinh had been with Stephen Venables on several Expeditions



Mrs Mandakini Nanavati, (88), wife of late Jagdish Nanavati presenting the Garud medal and the Certificate in her husband's memory to Harsinh Harkotia

Message from Sir Chris Bonington

Harsinh, I have so many good memories of how you have cared for me and my friends on so many different expeditions with Harish. Congratulations on your well deserved medal.

Warm good wishes
Chris

Annual Banff Film Festival

The Himalayan Club in association with The Consulate General of Canada in Mumbai and the Banff Centre, Banff Mountain Film Festival had organised screening of the Banff Mountain Films

On Saturday, 30th March, 2013, at Pracharya B. N. Vaidya Sabhagruha, Dadar, Mumbai

It received an overwhelming response with more than 150 people attending the same.

11 short films were screened included

- Reel Rock 7: Wide Boyz
- Mountains In Motion: The Canadian Rockies
- Endless Roads
- Industrial Revolutions
- Crossing The Ice
- The Gimp Monkeys
- Strength In Numbers
- Moonwalk
- Flow Hunters
- Ernest
- Reel Rock 7 : Hannold 3.0

The auditorium was packed with more than 500 persons who paid for their admissions. This event is now very popular and annually the attendance is growing. The Club thanks volunteers, specially Divyesh Muni and Rajendra Wani for the organisation.

The first J.C. Nanavati Awards were also presented at the same meeting.

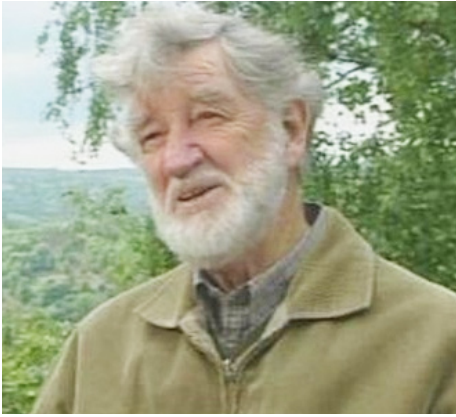


Consul General Canada in Mumbai, Mr. Richard Bale inaugurated the Banff Film festival

Remembrance

George Lowe

CNZM and OBE. Life Member, the Himalayan Club 1952.



George Lowe

Wallace George Lowe was born in Hastings, on New Zealand's North Island, on January 15 1924, the seventh of eight children. His father was a fruit grower. Aged nine he shattered the bone in his left arm just above the elbow after falling off the steps of the veranda at home. The bone would not set correctly, and had to be re-broken seven times. His subsequent skill as an ice-climber was all the more remarkable as the accident left the limb almost entirely without strength.

He was educated in Hastings and developed an interest in photography,

After qualifying as a schoolteacher, Lowe spent the immediate post-war years teaching at a primary school. In school holidays, however, he trained as a mountain guide, frequently teaming up with Hillary, five years his senior, in the Southern Alps, where they perfected their technique on such peaks as Mount Cook and Mount Tasman.

In 1951 the two men joined a four-man, four-month, New Zealand expedition to the Himalayas. The team had hoped, before setting off, to conquer one 20,000ft-plus summit; in the event they scaled six. On the strength of this experience, he and Hillary were invited in 1952 to join Eric Shipton's assault on Everest's neighbour, Cho Oyu (26,850ft), a journey which would also involve exploring the Barun Valley in the same region. Their talents ensured that both secured their places on what was to prove the historic Everest expedition of the following year. However, planning in 1952 was not always up to the meticulous standards that Hunt would set. Running short of supplies on the return journey to the Indian border, Hillary was forced to bargain with locals for one abundant foodstuff: bananas. According to Lowe, an ensuing competition saw Lowe consume 120 in a single day. Hillary won their battle by eating 134 !

Lowe played a crucial part in the party's success, displaying phenomenal strength and stamina to ferry kit up to the South Col, just shy of the peak, from where his fellow New Zealander and friend Edmund Hillary, with Sherpa Tenzing Norgay, pushed on to the summit itself. Spending day after day at altitudes of more than 23,000ft, Lowe often had to wade through waist-high snow to ensure everything was where it needed to be.

According to John Hunt, the expedition's leader, Lowe "put up a performance which will go down in the annals of mountaineering as an epic achievement of tenacity and skill". It was nothing less, Hunt added in his memoir *The Ascent of Everest* (1953), than an "astonishing feat of endurance". Such was the effort that at one point Lowe himself felt "hollow and weak".

When Hillary and Norgay were descending from the summit of Everest, it was Lowe, coming up from the South Col camp, who was the first to meet them. He handed Hillary a mug of warm lemonade and heard Hillary's famous exclamation: "Well we knocked the bastard off!" Hillary also passed Lowe a fragment of marine limestone. Millions of years previously the rock had formed part of the sea-floor; by 1953, however, it was a souvenir from the highest point on the planet.

Lowe had displayed superb ice-craft over 10 days in spearheading a route up the Lhotse face, immediately below the South Col. But he was not just a climber. He also carried with him a Kodak Retina II, capturing many images that effectively made him deputy to the official expedition cameraman, Tom Stobart. And when the party reached altitudes that Stobart, weakened by a dose of pneumonia, was unable to endure, Lowe provided the photographic record.

Lowe was recruited as official photographer in the Trans-Antarctic Expedition of 1957-58, which made the first successful overland crossing of Antarctica via the South Pole.

Lowe joined the 12-man party of the expedition leader, the British explorer Vivian Fuchs, which set out from Shackleton Base on one side of the continent, while Hillary led the support party from the Scott Base on the other side dropping supplies and establishing depots.

Fuchs relied on Lowe's expertise to spot crevasses that were, Lowe later noted, "wider, deeper and harder to detect" than any he had previously encountered, and which posed a mortal threat to the tractors, dog-teams and snowmobiles they used to get around.

In the event Hillary reached the Pole first, on January 3 1958. The teams met when Fuchs arrived on January 19, but while Hillary flew out, Fuchs continued on overland and arrived at Scott Base on March 2 after a journey of 2,158 miles.

After his return from the Antarctic in 1958, Lowe went on expeditions with the John Hunt Exploration Group for young people to Greenland, Greece, Ethiopia and the Pamirs. Then, after a decade spent as deputy principal, then principal of the Grange School, Santiago, Chile, he settled in England and joined the Department of Education and Science as an Inspector of Schools, which he remained until his retirement in 1984. In 1989 he helped found the Sir Edmund Hillary Himalayan Trust in Britain, established to improve conditions for Sherpas in the Himalayas; Lowe served as chairman until 2003.

With his ready wit, mobile face and gift for mimicry, George Lowe was an entertaining and amusing companion. Few of his companions will forget his imitation of Cheyne-Stokes breathing patterns, a condition suffered by some people at high altitude.

In his book *Because It Is There* (1962), Lowe recounted his experiences on his two major expeditions. He contrasted Hunt's open style of leadership with that of Fuchs, who appeared to him to reach all decisions in camera. With other members of the

Trans-Antarctic Expedition, Lowe received in 1958 the Polar Medal (with Antarctic clasp). He was also commemorated in Mount Lowe, a 3,000ft peak in the Shackleton Range.

He was appointed OBE for services to mountaineering and exploration.

Lowe's home in Derbyshire was filled with boxes of souvenirs from his climbing adventures – slides, press clippings and the like. But above all he treasured the fragment of rock from the summit that Hillary had given him, and which he kept on his desk. "It was always fairly simple," he noted recently, "The mountains were a deep source of real happiness. They dispense a lion's share of sorrow too, but it's the joy that always wins out."

He is survived by his second wife, Mary, and by three sons of his first marriage.

George Lowe was elected as the Honorary member of the Himalayan Club in 2007.

George Lowe, born January 15 1924, died March 20 2013

Adapted from the Telegraph UK.

Richard (Dick) Isherwood

Dick Isherwood, who was Life Member of the Himalayan Club since 1969, started his climbing career in early 60's with some fine routes in Northern Scotland. He was described by his friends as *a prolific and a superb climber*. His climbing record includes various buildings in Cambridge, lots of old-fashioned routes on Cloggy, a number of obscure Himalayan peaks, and a new route on the Piz Badile (in 1968).

Notably in Himalaya he led the 1969 the British Hindu Raj Expedition and approached Thui II from the north, by way of the Shetor glacier. Attacking the South-east ridge, the onset of bad weather robbed them of success close to the summit. His team made a number of 1st ascents in the Thui II group.

In 1973, he was a member of Rob Collister's team which made an attempt on South Parvati (6127 m) from the Rakti Tapta valley in the Sainj nala, trying to get on to the northwest face. Unable to come to grips with the mountain from that side, the climbers crossed over the watershed to the Parvati side via a 5180 m col to the northwest of Snow Peak (5605 m). Subsequently in a frenzy of climbing, summited 6 peaks in 10 days, including the plum of the area, South Parvati (6127 m) by a route on its south face with a bivouac near the top. This was a very fine achievement, executed in tremendous style.

He also made the first ascent of Kanjiroba in Nepal Himalaya.

Dick was a member of Alpine Club since 1970. He followed 'Tilman's dictum' about old men on high mountains and limited his efforts to summits just a little under 20,000 feet.

Richard (Dick) Isherwood died on February 24, 2013. He is survived by his wife Janet, son Sam and daughter Marion.

Major Expedition to the Indian Himalaya in 2012

Compiled by Harish Kapadia

In 2012 totally 107 expeditions were organised in the Indian Himalaya. Out of these 40 teams were from foreign countries but 24 of them were either commercial teams or to routine peaks, not covered here. Of the 67 Indian teams 43 attempted routine peaks. However few new peaks from the list of 104 'Newly Opened Peaks' were climbed. Most of them are in Ladakh.

A healthy trend that has developed is that some climbers are attempting small but challenging peaks. These peaks, of heights around 5500-5900 m, are attempted by steep rock faces and in remote areas without any bureaucratic control. It is not certain what is the official position.

A note of caution should be noted in a different way. The Indian Himalaya has a common international border with Tibet (China) and Pakistan. Some climbers who made political comments publicly were banned from entering India despite a valid visa later, as it happened in one specific case. Unfortunately no reasons were given, and the immigration authorities at airport would not know the reasons even, except to say that the person is listed as *persona non grata* by the Ministry.

Sikkim

Jongsong East peak (7462 m)

Dome Kang (7264 m)

North Sikkim

This was a significant major expedition to the remote area of North Sikkim, generally not open to climbers. The Kolkata Section of the Himalayan Club had organised this expedition, led by Pradeep Chandra Sahoo. The team made ascents of two high mountains located in the Janak Himal of the Sikkim Himalaya in 12-days of climbing from the base camp, both by new routes.

The east peak of Jongsong (7462 m) was climbed by a new route and Dome Kang (7264 m) received its first ascent from the Indian (eastern) side.

The east-southeast ridge, rising above the Jongsong La (6145 m) on the Nepal-Sikkim border, was first attempted in 1983 by the Slovenians followed by other teams – but all from Nepal as permission to climb from the north and east is possible only for the Indian teams. The main summit of Jongsong forms the highest triple border point in the world (India-Nepal-Tibet).

The team passed through Sikkim to the Upper Lhonak valley, and then onto the Jongsong glacier leading southwest to the Jongsong La. The expedition established base camp on 17 September at 5525 m, close to a large lake on the north side of the glacier.

Access to the crest of the east-southeast ridge via the east flanks of Jongsong was barred by steep rocky walls and hanging glaciers. However, two Sherpas finally located a steep gully through these walls. Above was, 200 m of broken rock at 40-50°, followed by a difficult 200 m rock tower, whose the last part was very steep and loose, leading to an upper icefield. All these sections were fixed with ropes.

On the 26th a team of six climbers moved up from Camp 1 carrying four days' food and fuel, and two tents. Over the ensuing days, climbers moved up the ridge and established three higher camps, the highest at 6874 m. On the 29th five climbers reached the 7257 m col between Dome Kang and Jongsong, and then split. Ang Dorji, Phurba, and Sahoo set off for Jongsong to the northwest, while Dawa and Mondal headed east for nearby Dome Kang.

Dawa and Mondal left the col at 10:15 a.m., and in 35 minutes reached the top of Dome Kang.

The Jongsong group followed the knife-edge southeast ridge leading toward Domo (Jongsong's southeast summit) and then on to Jongsong, but decided conditions were too dangerous at that time of day. They returned to the col, and Sahoo waited there while two Sherpas Ang Dorgi and Phurbu descended to Camp 4, collected a tent and several coils of rope for fixing, and then came back up. All three spent a chilly night, then left at 5:30 a.m. on the 30th. In better snow conditions, it took three hours to ascend the ridge to Domo. The only previous ascent of this rounded top had been in 1930 by Günter Dyhrenfurth and Lewa Sherpa, who made the round-trip from Jongsong's main summit in one hour.

The three decided not to continue across the plateau to the main summit (7462 m) and made a quick descent of the mountain, reaching Camp 1 just after dark.

(Pradeep Sahoo)

The Plateau North Sikkim

'The Plateau' is the northern-most area of Sikkim. Bordering China in the north and the Chumbi valley (China) to its east, it is a very sensitive area and well fortified. Many high peak and passes like Pauhunri, Chommo Yummo and Kangchenjau peaks surround this remote area. These peaks are well known for climbs and visits till 1960s by likes of Trevor Braham, Dr Alexander Kellas, Bill Tilman and John Claude-White.

Since 1962, after the Indo-China War, the area was restricted. In 2012 Harish Kapadia and two others obtained special permission to visit the area and to photograph, research and record the area which has remained out of reach for several decades. Visiting the Gurudongmar lake, Chholamo lake, Donkhya la, Dorji la and photograph them along with the above peaks was a rare coverage.

Uttarakhand

Semartoli Valley, various ascents

Members : Joanna Campbell, Michael Cocker, John Kentish, Paul Padman, Michael Pinney, Stuart Worsfold, and Derek Buckle , all members of the Alpine Club.

They reached Semartoli valley (this is the correct name, broadly it was known as Kagbhusandi valley in the past) from Govind Ghat, the starting point for trekkers to the popular Valley of Flowers and for pilgrims visiting the holy lake of Hem Kund. Within three days they had established base camp alongside the river at Raj Kharak (3815 m).

Unsettled post-monsoon weather plagued the expedition, but on 25 September, from an advance base camp at 4505 m, Cocker, Padman, Worsfold, and Buckle made the first ascent of the highest summit in the sub-range north of the Kankul Khal: Peak 5301 m (a.k.a. Kagbhusandi Parvat). We climbed the mixed northeast face and north ridge. Kentish and Pinney made the second ascent two days later.

From separate high camps to the east of the Kankul Khal, various members of the team subsequently made first ascents of two other peaks adjacent to Kagbhusandi Parvat. On 1 October Campbell, Padman, and Worsfold climbed Peak 5201m by its east couloir and north ridge and on the 7th Pinney and Worsfold climbed Peak 5120 m from the Kankul Khal via a rising traverse of the west face.

Meanwhile, to the east of the Semartoli glacier, Cocker, Kentish, Pinney, and Buckle assisted by two high-altitude Sherpas, established a high camp at 5010 m, then next day, 2 October, made the first ascent of Peak 5515 m, located to the north of Peak 5855 m. They climbed a steep, west-facing snow couloir and mixed north ridge.

(Derek Buckle, *Alpine Club, UK*)

Arwa Spire (6193 m), north face Garhwal

On 28 September Simon Gietl and Roger Schäli stood on the summit of the Arwa Spire. The climbing was challenging, route-finding extremely difficult, and placing solid nuts and cams often impossible. It was a cruel struggle with cold fingers and toes. They were thirsty and felt the altitude, so staying focused was a demanding task. Schali carried a medallion in memory of Daniel, his friend who had died on the mountain during an earlier attempt. They fixed it with a sling on the summit. Simon and Schali climbed the entire route free and none of the rock pitches on the headwall was less than 6c. Ten years after the first ascent Schali had climbed it again.

Kamet (7756 m), southwest face Garhwal

The French team attempted Kamet via a most difficult route on the SW face. Base camp was at 5300 m on the Paschimi Kamet glacier. Advanced base was situated

on the upper glacier at 5800 m. From their advanced base on the Paschimi (West) Kamet glacier, they had a good look at the southwest face of Kamet, which they found steep. But the southwest face was in excellent condition.

For further acclimatisation Sébastien Bohin, Didier Jourdain, Sébastien Ratel, and Sébastien Moatti climbed on the west ridge of Mana Northwest (7092 m), spending two nights at 6300 m and reaching 6500 m. Three days later they made the attempt on Kamet.

All four left advanced base at 3:30 a.m. on 22 September, and only a few hours later were at grips with vertical ice pitches. They took the easiest route up the nearly 2000 m face, a succession of steep snow traverses linked by good soft-ice gullies

Nowhere it was flat bigger than a magazine size, and it took plenty of time and energy to create tent platforms. They free-climbed throughout. Last bivouac was on the south face/ridge at 7500 m, and we reached the summit the following day, their fifth above advanced base, after overcoming unexpected difficulties on the final section. Summit was reached on 27 September 2012.

The top was as flat and large as a cricket pitch, and they appreciated the superb panorama over the Himalaya and Tibetan Plateau. After another night at the top bivouac, they descended the narrow, hidden, south face. At the bottom of the south face they rappelled the icefall to the west, reaching advanced base in the dark.

They named the route '*Spicy Game*' after searching for spicy hotels in Delhi !

Thalay Sagar (6904 m) Garhwal

Chinmoy Pal (Kolkata) led a 10-member team to this high pyramid in the Kedar Tal bamak, Gangotri area. From the Gangotri temple they followed the route to Kedar Tal where the base camp was set up. Over the next ten days they slowly built up supplies to higher camp in good weather. Finally Camp 4 was set up at 6400 m. On 29th June they climbed a steep rock wall and a chimney to reach the western ridge where the slopes eased. After 6 and half hours of climb summit was reached at about 2 pm. Summiteers were: Parijat Samanta, Santanu Basu, Sherpas Phurba Gyalgen, Pasang, and Dawa Wangchuk.

Exploration of Jadhganga – Alaknanda Watershed

This is a highly restricted valley not visited much by trekkers and climbers. J. B. Auden surveyed the valley in 1939 during the Great Trigonometrical Survey of India. Heinrich Harrer and Peter Aufchnaiter had escaped to Tibet from Tsang Chok la (5240 m) at the head of this valley to begin their 'Seven Years in Tibet'.

R. D. Bhattacharjee trekked in the area in 1985. In 1990, a two member team of Harish Kapadia and Monesh Devjani, climbed Trimukhi Parvat East (6280 m) and following Mana Bamak reached Saraswati Col, (5900 m) overlooking the Alaknanda valley. Two army teams attempted/climbed Trimukhi Parvat (6432 m).

In 2012 Ashutosh Mishra, obtained the rare permission to trek in the valley. From the main road to Gangotri they bifurcated along the Jadh Ganga and later followed the Nilapani gad. Instead of turning south as the other teams had done, they proceeded east along the Ghora gad, establishing camps en route. They found several grass lands and no major glacier. Finally they reached the Basisi Col at the head of the valley and descended to the Alaknanda valley and arrived at Deo Tal, just few kilometre below the historic Mana Pass the famous trade route of the past. They walked down the motor road from here to Badrinath. This was major traverse of the Gangotri (Jadhganga) – Alaknanda watershed, an exploration in mode of the early explorers.

Himachal Pradesh

Shiva (6142 m), northeast ridge, The Prow of Shiva. Pangi valley

Paul Ramsden and Mick Fowler from UK climbed one of the finest routes in the Indian Himalaya this year on peak Shiva in the Pangi valley. They set up a base camp at 3900 m in the Tarundi Valley, from Sainchu in October.

After acclimatisation they began attempt by taking two days to get through the complex glacier terrain leading to the foot of the east flank of the ridge. The next section, gaining the crest of the ridge at the start of the meat of the route, caught the morning sun. They climbed it during the night, reaching a great bivouac spot at 9 a.m. the following morning. Challenging snow and ridge climbing led to what looked to be an impasse. The crest of the buttress was indeed granite, but the hoped-for ice on the smooth slabs of the north side was, at this point, too thin and intermittent for to climb. The crest was very sharp, and dismissing the northerly slabs left only one other possibility: aiding an overhanging crack on the east side and hoping that the fault line, which eventually crossed to the north side, would continue in a climbable fashion. Fortunately it did.

After a fine bivouac on an undercut rock balcony, with several hundred meters of space beneath their feet, the climbing continued up off-vertical, ice-choked cracks, fortunately with good protection. The climbing ranged from numerous pitches up icy cracks.

On their sixth day out from base, mixed climbing up steep grooves and exciting detached flakes led to below the final area of vertical rock. A ledge system leading right, around the crest, gave hope of side stepping this obstacle and reaching the summit that night, but an unexpected impassable gap and afternoon bad weather forced them to bivouac again. After a struggle, by 10 a.m. on day seven they reached a final snow ridge and broke through a cornice to reach the summit. The panoramic view south was glorious.

After a bivouac not far below the top, they descended the south ridge, which was also challenging. They arrived back at the base camp on day nine. They named their route 'Prow of Shiva'.

(Mick Fowler, Alpine Club, UK,)

Deo Tibba (6001 m)
Japanese

A four-member Japanese expedition, '2012 Roshan Masters Expedition' climbed this dome shaped peak in the Kullu area. The summit was reached on 14 July by all four members: Hiroaki Kanada (64), leader, Kazuo Kouzu, (65), Akio Kurita (63) and Youtchi Fujit (65).

Tharang I (6066 m)
Miyar nala
Lahaul
British – Irish Expedition

This 12 member team was led by Philip Mark Thomas, a mountain guide. One member, cameraman Richard Thomas was Irish and rest were all from UK. They travelled to Udaipur and into the Miyar valley to Urgos and Khanjar. After two camps the summit of Tharang I was climbed on 25 September, via south ridge. The leader, Steven Birch and Richard Mocklier reached the summit.

Peak 5500 m
'Shakkar Peak'
Pangi Valley

Ian Cartwright and Steve Burns climbed this isolated small peak near Shiva. They left the base camp of the main expedition in the Tarundi valley and into a valley in the east. This is the highest peak in this area. They climbed the northwest face and descended partly via the east ridge to join the route of ascent..

Papsura (6451 m)
Tos Nala
Himachal Pradesh

1. Dr. L. Surjit Singh led a 12-member team from the far away Manipur, Northeastern state of India. This expedition was organised as precursor to their planned attempt of Everest next year. They followed the route via the Tos nala to Sara Umga la. They fixed ropes till higher up and made an attempt 14 September. However about 200 m below the summit they had to stop due to terrain difficulties and poor snow conditions.

2. Subrata Chakraborty led a large team from West Bengal. This was their second attempt on the peak. They followed the route from the Tos nala and finally climbed the north-northwest ridge, via Sara Umga la. Three members and four Sherpas reached the summit on 28th July.

ZANSKAR AND LADAKH

Spangnak Ri (6380 m)

Kiager Ri (6100 m)

Ladakh

These gentle places are situated on the western rim of the Kiager Tso in the newly opened list of peaks. The base camp (4856 m) is a day away from the road that circumvents the Tso. Spangnak Ri was previously climbed via SW face.

The team reached a col between the two peaks and a team consisting of Chinmoy Bhattacharjee, Nilanjan Chatterjee, Indranil Mukhopadhyay and leader Debabrta Mukherjee reached the flat summit dome at 1530 on 26 June.

The other group consisting of Raka Mandal and Puspall Kundu followed the SW ridge from the col to climb Kiager Ri at same time. Both teams descended to the common col and returned to the base camp.

Kundanma Ri (6140 m)

On Manali-Leh Road

Ladakh

A West Bengal team climbed this recently opened peak. They approached from Sasoma village on the Manali-Leh highway which they reached on 17th August. Next day they established a base camp at 5166 m across the Kundanma river. On 21 August they started climbing on the SE face over boulders and turned to join the east ridge. They reached the rocky knob on the highest point of the ridge and this was the summit.

Peak 6165 m (Lenak nala, Zanskar)

Japanese

A five member team led by Ohori Taisuke climbed this peak via the north face on 2nd September. They followed the route from Darcha, Ramjak, Gumborjan to enter the Lenak nala. The peak is at the head of the nala. All five members reached the summit: Mitsui Kensei, Kubota Shimpei, Takayama Tomoyuki and T. Yuichiro. They also attempted Peak 6045 m nearby via north face on 5 September. All members were aged of around 21 years and from the Japanese Alpine Club.

Zanskar

Namka Topko

Scottish Team

A six member team from Scotland reached the Namka Topko valley, following the report by Kimikazu Sakamoto (Japanese) about the peaks in this lovely area. They reached Padum by road from Kargil and ahead to Dordzong. From a high camp on the glacier they climbed peaks G 22 East, 5705 m via the east ridge, G 23, 5800 m

via the west ridge and G22 West, 6150 m via the west ridge. All peaks were climbed on 17 August. Susan Jensen was leader of this six member team.

Nga Tsoey Kangri
L-13 (6080 m)
Zanskar

A team of four students from the Kyoto University climbed peak L-13 (6080 m) near their original peak L-15 (6070 m), which was with dangerous snow. They travelled to Padum, Dorzong (by road) and to Sanka and the base camp.

These peaks are located on the west branch of the Lenak nala. They climbed the south face to the summit on 15 September. They named the peaks Nga Tsoey Kangri. Hiroaki Ogihara and Yusuke Morimbo were summiteers.

Zanskar Explorations

Kimikazu Sakamoto, an explorer from Japan continued with his explorations of the southern Zanskar valleys. He has been instrumental in recording several unclimbed peaks in the area and it has led to many teams climbing in these valleys.

He explored the Temasa, Gompe, and Haptal valleys, in 2012. This was his third expedition to the area, to explore valleys in these mountains and identify unclimbed peaks. South Zanskar is an exciting mountain area with many virgin peaks.

Temasa nala is the next valley north of the Raru, and has been used by locals to reach Udaipur via the Kang La (5468 m) and Miyar valley, and also to go to Kilar via the Poat La (5490 m). Gompe Tokpo is the second valley north of the Temasa and runs southwest from Padam. Team consisted of four senior members (between ages 64 to 72 years). They identified almost 21 unclimbed peaks in the area and photographed them. They also explored the Haptal Topko valley.

EAST KARAKORAM

Rimo III (7233 m), southwest face, attempt;
Dunglung Kangri (6365 m)
East Karakoram

Indian-British expedition comprised of Satyabrata Dam (Indian leader) and Malcom Bass (British leader), Paul Figg, Simon Yearsley (both U.K.), Dan Singh Harkotiya, Tashi Phunchok, and Konchuk Thinless (India), the British artist Rachel Antill, and liaison officer Raj Kumar.

They reached the base camp on the North Terong glacier. After exploring a route up the horribly boulder-strewn glacier and icefall to reach the basin beneath the southwest face of Rimo III, they acclimatised by climbing to 6400 m in the couloir between Rimo III and II. Then, from a high camp at 5775 m below the southwest face, they climbed a couloir left of the elegant central buttress of Rimo III to a bivouac at c.

6200 m, but descended in the morning in a snowstorm. As snowfall continued they concluded that the face would not be clear anytime soon. They decided to attempt an attractive unclimbed peak at the end of a ridge southwest of the Rimo group, west of previously climbed peaks Sondhi and Sundbrar.

On 13 September they scrambled 500 m to a bivouac on a rocky spur at 5600 m. It snowed overnight, but they left to climb a south-to-north rising line across two icefields (hard, brittle ice) and two, loose snow covered rock spurs to a final icefield, which they climbed direct to a gendarmed ridge at the top of the southwest face. Following a attractive crest east to reach a c.6180 m col between the forepeak and summit pyramid. Moving together climbing three harder pitches they reached the summit. The ascent was 700 m from the bivouac, 1200 m from the glacier They named the peak Dungleung Kangri, (6365 m) which in local Ladakhi means 'sharp, windy mountain'.

(Malcolm Bass, *Alpine Club, U.K*)

**Ang Tung Range,
Petze Kangri (6130 m)
Lugzl Pombo (6414 m)**

In August, Aditi and Rajesh Gadgil, Vineeta Muni, Lt. Col. Shamsheer Singh, and Divyesh Muni visited the Ang Tung range, northwest of Pangong Lake. The Ang Tung is a small group of peaks west of the Koh Lungpa Valley. This valley had never been visited by any mountaineering expedition.

We trekked two days up the Koh Lungpa from the village of Yurgo and established base camp at Vimgul (5210 m) on 4 August. We first chose to attempt a peak of 6130 m, and set up an advanced base at 5675 m on its southern slopes. Leaving at 7 a.m. on the 9th, we climbed the east face together with Sherpas Pemba Norbu and Nima Thondup; all the party except for Aditi reached the top at 11 a.m. We named the summit Petze Kangri, Petze meaning 'baby yak' in Ladakhi dialect.

We now set up another camp at 5850 m, on ice and to the northeast of Lugzl Pombo. On the 17th we climbed a steep ice slope to the 6000 m col between Lugzl Pombo and Petze Kangri, fixing 100 m of rope. After ferrying more equipment from base camp, on the 19th we explored the northeast ridge, passing the first big gendarme on the left, and climbing the second (c. 6250 m). On this section we fixed 250 m of rope. On the 20th we left camp at 6 a.m., fixed a further 300 m, and a little before midday Rajesh, our two Sherpas, and Divyesh reached the top after climbing through a cornice onto the final north-south summit ridge. We returned to camp at 3 p.m., having recovered most of the fixed rope and gear.

(Divyesh Muni)

Rongdo (Rongdu) Valley, first ascents. East Karakoram

The Rongdo valley was first explored by the Indo-American mountaineering expedition in 2005, led by Divyesh Muni and Don Goodman. This team descended the valley in two days from the Satti area to the north.

This Indian-Canadian team entered the Rongdo valley on 5 August, from the village, following the south side of the river. Base camp was at 4802 m, and advanced base at 5181 m just below, Ngapo Kangri ('blue sheep' in Ladakhi) or Rongdo I (6350 m).

On the 18th, after several reconnaissance trips, eight members of the team climbed the west sub-summit (6000 m) of Balden Lhamo (named after a female goddess) or Rongdo III. They reached the col between Rongdo III and IV, then continued up the southwest ridge, returning to camp in a 10-hour round-trip.

On the 22nd, six climbers ascended Chamba (the future Buddha, 6170 m) or Rongdo II via the southeast glacier (10 hours round-trip). On the 23rd, Nangang and Joei climbed the upper west rock ridge of Ngapo Kangri to about 60 m below the corniced summit (12 hours round-trip). At the same time Andy and Arvind were ascending the same peak via its south-facing slopes, first on talus and rock ledges, then up the avalanche-prone southeast aspect to easier-angled slopes, from which they finally gained the summit (14 hours round-trip).

On the 27th, Arvind, Dawa, Kunzang, and Joei headed up the main glacier to attempt the true summit of Balden Lhamo (6120 m). From a high camp at 5690 m, they reached the col at 6060 m above the icy headwall but retreated in the face of poor weather.

On the 29th, Andy and Nangang left a high camp at 5181m, several kilometres northeast of advanced base, to climb Gazgazri (Ladakhi for the lammergeyer vulture, 6160 m). They ascended the southwest ridge, then traversed onto the icy south face. Several short pitches, the last being 70° hard ice, led to the summit dome, and thence the highest point. They returned to base camp after a 14-hour day.

Members: Dr. Jeff Dolinsky, his wife, Joan, and Joie Seagram, all from Canada, along with Andy Selters (USA). Indian climbers Kunzang Sherpa (Sirdar), Nangang Bhote, Danuru Sherpa (Dawa) and Arvind Raman (LO).

(Joie Seagram, Canada)

Apsarasas I (7245 m) Siachen Glacier East Karakoram

Apsarasas is group of high peaks situated on the Teram Shehr glacier, which is in a side valley of the Siachen glacier. This group consists of several peaks of 7000 m located on the border with the Shaksgam valley to its north. The main peak was first climbed by the Japanese team in 1976 entering the glacier across Bilafond Ia before

the start of the Siachen war. Subsequently Indian army team climbed the peak in 1980. The present team, led by Col. Anil Goth, then the Commanding Officer of the newly established Mountain Training School of the Indian Army at the base camp of the Siachen Glacier.

They followed the route through the Siachen and followed the Teram Shehr glacier to the east. The logistic difficulties were solved by regular helicopter flights and plenty of reeve was also done through air. A team of 30 soldiers fixed ropes till high camps. Various camps were established: ABC to Camp 3 (6900 m) between 15th to 29th June. First attempt to climb the peak was made on 30th June but the party had to stop due to difficulties of terrain. They spent the night at the high spot and on 1st July eight soldiers reached the summit. On 3rd July summit was reached by 15 more soldiers. They all climbed from the western approaches to the peak.

ARUNACHAL PRADESH

BURMA BORDER

Trek to Chaukan Pass on India-Burma Border

In the Second World War, during the Japanese advance in Burma in 1942, two major retreats into India were disastrous and hard. In both cases several civilians had to trudge through deep sticky mud, a speciality of this frontier. Without much food, ravaged with malaria, monsoon and a variety of ailments they had to cross the Burmese frontier into the British India over high passes to safety from pursuing Japanese troops. A large numbers of refugees came across the Pangsus Pass, which was a steep climb and through knee-deep mud.

The second group fleeing the Japanese army consisted of the British who were trapped at Fort Hertz (now known as Putao) in north Burma. They came across the Patkai range, through the Chaukan pass. . More than 230 Britishers crossed over to India, led by Sir John Rowland. They had to flee in June- warm but at height of monsoon, suffering flooded river and leeches, snakes and malaria mosquitoes. Later food was airdropped to them and a party led by Gyles Mackrell, from Tea Association of Assam, mounted a rescue with several elephants. This efforts by men and animals saved many though about two dozen perished. This was the Epic of Chaukan Pass. After almost 70 years, as he first civilians to do so, we followed their trail into India, and experience some of the difficulties they faced.

To Pangsus Pass and Lake of No Return

In the first part we reached the eastern-most point of India along the India-Burma border. We went by the oldest and eastern-most train route in India to Ledo from where the famous 'Ledo Road' or 'Stillwell road' started. The goods for the Burma War effort were loaded on trucks from here and were carried to Kunming, China- then an ally of the British. After spending nights at Jairampur and Nampong we went

across into Burma through the Pangsua Pass, the historic gateway to and from Burma, which was nicknamed as 'Hell Gate' . It was nostalgic to see 'Lake of No Return' , a vast lake, the only clearing in thick forest, where some of the planes flying across the 'Burma Hump' tried to land when in trouble. None of them returned to tell the tale.

From Miao and Namdafa National Park, we followed the 'MV Road' –hardly road as it was covered with deep mud- making even walking difficult. After five days of hard walking we reached Vijaynagar, starting point of final trek to the pass. We were between the Patkai range to our southwest and Kumon range in northeast, about which F. Kingdon-Ward has written about.

Now was the real stuff; trek on thin trail along the Noa Dihing river (here known as the Diyun river). Nothing had changed here in last seven decades in terms of trail and difficulties en route. Climbing steep ridges, descending wooden ladders, crossing single log bridges required a good balance and strong heart. We also had to construct about 10 small bridges to cross the river between different banks and avoid steep climbs. It was tiring as at many places trails had to be cut, log bridges installed at sides to cross along the bank and crossing on many fallen tree trunks were a challenge. We stayed at three camps next to the river.

On the 27th January 2013 we left early and climbed almost a 1000 m to top of a ridge. Then we descended along the forested ridge more than 500 m and traversed through Burma. Finally after a 10-hour day we descended to the historic Chaukan Pass (2419 m) to camp near the Border Pillar no. 183. Next day we reversed the trail from the Chaukan pass, and then systematically and carefully covered the return trail. After a two day wait we were able to catch the helicopter sortie which supplies materials here. It was a 60 minute ride to Mohanbari /Dibrugarh, the route which otherwise would have taken us at least a week to cover.

Members: Harish Kapadia, Rajendra Wani, Ms. Lakshmi R. and Nanak Bhagat.

Period: 7th January to 3rd February 2013

(Harish Kapadia)

*I am specially thankful to **Lindsay Griffin**, editor of Mountain Info and the American Alpine Journal. He is an authority on the Indian Himalaya specially as many climbs are not known here and with efforts he has recorded them for posterity. He has generously shared the information.*

Thanks are also due to the Indian Mountaineering Foundation and the Editor, Himalayan Journal.

Other News

Jagdish Nanavati, who was President Emeritus of the Himalayan club, passed away in 2011. Two awards have been instituted in his memory by the Club in association with

his family. The first award, a certificate and generous cash grant, is for an expedition which is well organised, conducted and the final report is well presented. This was dear to Nanavati's heart, more than any climbing achievement. The first award was won by Anindya Mukherjee for his expedition to reach the Zemu Gap in Sikkim. The Jury consisted of Lindsay Griffin, Chairman, Admiral V. Shekhawat, (retd) and Dorjee Lhatoo.

The 'Garud Medal' is to be awarded a person who has supported an expedition or exploration well. This is a Life Time achievement award. The first medal was awarded to Harsinh Harkotia, a simple villager from Kumaun who has supported expeditions of Sir Chris Bonington, Harish Kapadia, Mark Richey and many others. He was instrumental in the rescue of Stephen Venables on Panch Chuli in 1992.

'Tensing Norgay Adventure Award', was presented to Mandip Singh Soin (Life Time achievement) and Col. Anand Swaroop, both well-known climbers. First Joss Lynam medal (Ireland) was received by Harish Kapadia. The Kekoo Naoriji Book Award for literature was received by Canadian author Bernadette MacDonald at Mumbai for her book *Freedom Climbers*. She gave a fitting presentation on the book at the award ceremony.

Few persons, well known in Indian climbing circles died during the year. Nawang Topgay Sherpa passed away at Darjeeling. He had a long climbing career and was awarded 'Tiger Badge' by the Himalayan Club. As an instructor he taught many Indian mountaineers. News have reached now that Nanda Singh Chauhan, passed away on 8 March 2008. He was companion of Frank Smythe during his trips to research of Valley of Flowers and carried botanical samples for onward despatch to Edinburg.

Roger Payne, who died in an avalanche while guiding in the Alps, was instrumental in helping the state of Sikkim is implementing various policies for environment protection and adventure. He with his wife Julie-Ann Clyma, made several outstanding ascents in the Indian Himalaya. The British mountaineer, Richard Isherwood, known as Dick to many, was one of the early explores of ranges in Kullu and his first ascent of South Parvati peak was major ascent as the peak had defied many teams. He passed away in the US where he had migrated.

Many Indians have now settled in the USA, UK and Europe, colloquially known as NRIs (Non Resident Indians- a term for tax purposes!). Now returning to India for a holiday as US/UK citizens, well equipped and trained in modern methods, they have been climbing several serious routes on smaller peaks, especially in the Zanskar area which suits their holiday months. This had led to improvements in climbing skills of Indian climbing friends who join them. One such couple also made several treks and climbs in the northern areas of Pakistan, which is otherwise banned to the Indian citizens.

A small film of the Siachen Glacier, made for the Indian army, was released on YouTube. In brief it covers the genesis of the conflict, mountains and future of the area. It can be viewed at the following link: [<http://youtu.be/W8u5X6Qvock>]

Short News of Expeditions to the Indian Himalaya in 2012

UTTARAKHAND		
Kalanka (Garhwal)	Swiss and The Netherlands. William van Megdenburg and Cas Gevel - two member team.	Poor Weather. Stopped at 5500 m. Heavy rains in August.
Unnamed Peak 6565 m on eastern rim of Shyamvarna glacier (Gangotri).	A joint expedition of the British Army- ITBP	Could reach 6050 m and gave up due bad conditions.
Nanda Devi East (7434 m) (Kumaun)	Four member team from Karnataka led by B.C. Upadhyay	They attempted the peak from the Milam valley and Longstaff Col. They made two camps and stopped the climb at 6350 m as difficulties were beyond them.
HIMACHAL PRADESH		
Menthosa (6443 m) Lahaul	Ordinance Factory team led by Prosenjit Bagchi	Following the traditional route from Urgus they climbed the east ridge. Nine members and four Sherpas reached the summit on 21 st July.
Manirang (6593 m)	Ten member team from West Bengal led by Chanda Gayen	On 28 th July two Sherpas led a eight member team to the summit from Manirang pass, a traditional route.
Lousher and other peaks in Suvita nala (Spiti)	Seven member team from Mumbai led by Rajan Rikame	Travelled to the valley from Kunzum la. Three unsuccessful attempts were made On 1 to 3 August.
Indrasan (6221 m)	Team from Kolkata, led by Tapan Kumar Mukhopadhyay	They followed the route from Duhangan Col and fixed ropes on the NE ridge. Two members and two Sherpas reached 100 m below the summit and stopped due to bad weather.
Manirang (Spiti)	Dora Khan with guide Sita Ram.	Bad weather and sickness.
ZANSKAR – LADAKH – EAST KARAKORAM		
Peaks in the Raru valley (Zanskar)	Four member Greek team led by Nikolaos Kroupis.	Climbed peaks: Katkar Kangri (R35, 6148 m), Muktik Skal (R26, 6243 m), Lama Soo (5947 m); Skilma Kangri (5979 m), east ridge.
Pk 6095 m (Ribil nala) Ladakh	35 member Sainik School team led by J.S. Gulia	They reached Sumdo Ribil from Leh to set up base camp at 5200. After one more camp at 5900 m peak was climbed. 30 members reached the summit.
Saser Kangri I (East Karakoram)	Indo-Spanish team led by Carles Figueras,	in July 2012. Bad weather prevented any serious attempt.

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Select Contents

1. Nanga Parbat by Sandy Allan
2. The Unaccommodated by Amrita Dhar
3. Zemu Gap from South by Anindya Mukherjee
4. The Plateau by Harish Kapadia
5. Auden's Trail by Ashutosh Mishra
6. Irish in Himachal by Paddy O'Leary
7. Peaks of Ang Tung by Divyesh Muni
8. Caving in the Abode of Clouds by Brian Daly
9. Scottish Zanskar Expedition by Geoffrey Cohen
10. Through Tibetan Jungle by Tamotsu Nakamura
11. Temasa Nala, Gompe Tokpo and Haptal Tokpo by Sakamoto Kimikazu
12. Michel Peissel by Rasoul Sorkhabi
13. Icing on the Lakes by Sankar Shridhar
14. Meru by Jimmy Chin

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