

# ASIAN ALPINE E-NEWS

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From July 31st to August 8th, 2019, Graham Zimmerman, Steve Swenson, Chris Wright and Mark Richey made the first ascent of Link Sar (7,041 meters) in the Central Pakistani Karakoram via its 3,400-meter Southeast Face. Having been the object of at least nine expeditions, the first ascent of this peak has been a highly sought-after prize for the climbing community.

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edited by Nilay Chakraborty.

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## **THE HIMALAYAN CLUB E-LETTER**

**Volume 39 • May 2020**



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## Annual Programme 2020

*Wing Commander Sudhir Kutty  
Hon Secretary, The Himalayan Club*

The Himalayan Club held its Annual Programme on 15 and 16 February 2020. On 15 Feb 2020 the Annual General Meeting of the Club was held at SRCC Centre for Child Development where the General Body confirmed the appointment of Motup Chewang as the new President of The Himalayan Club.

As a curtain raiser to the Annual Programme, after the meeting we had a panel discussion on the subject: “Not Only Everest-Safety in the Mountains”. The session was moderated by Joanna Croston - climber, skier and the Programme Director at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. The panelists included Col R S Jamwal, an accomplished mountaineer from the Indian Army; - Steve Long, Chairman of the UIAA Training Standards Panel; Motup Chewang the new President of The Himalayan Club and owner of Rimo Expeditions; and mountaineer Sharad Kulkarni who while summiting Everest in 2019, suffered a tragic loss, when his wife lost her life on her return from the summit. The panelists and the audience had a lively interaction on issues such as overcrowding in the mountains, probable causes for climbing accidents, safety concerns and the options for sustainable mountaineering.





On 16 Feb 2020, the day long Annual Programme was inaugurated at Swatantryaveer Savarkar Auditorium, Dadar by Chief Guest Brigadier Ashok Abbey AVSM, who is the current President of the Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF) and past President of The Himalayan Club. In his welcome address, Motup Chewang presented his vision for the Club. Brig Abbey reiterated the need for synergy between IMF and The Himalayan Club to take up meaningful initiatives to promote sustainable mountaineering.

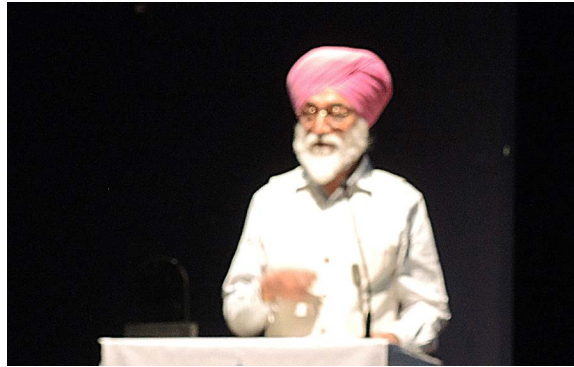
This was followed by the Kaivan Memorial Lecture by Joanna Croston. Joanna gave an insight to the audience about her life in the mountains and the history of the iconic Banff centre in Alberta Canada.



Joanna's talk was followed by Steve Long's talk titled "A mountaineering trainer's journey towards enlightenment". Steve started with his youthful quests for adventure and then moved on to discuss his quest for meaning and vocation, and finally capitalizing on the opportunity to act as an ambassador for adventure training and sustainable mountain leadership.

Steve's talk was followed by the Jagdish Nanavati awards ceremony.

The next session was the Kekoo Naoroji Book Award. Deborah Baker, the recipient of the award spoke on what motivated her to work on this book. The concluding session was an entertaining account of a lifetime of travels by Mandip Singh Soin.



## The Himalayan Club Awards

### Kekoo Naoroji Book Award for Himalayan Literature

Deborah Baker received the 2020 Kekoo Naoroji Book award for her book “The Last Englishmen: Love, War and End of Empire”. The Jury for the Award were Stephen Goodwin, Rama Goyal and Nandini Purandare. The Award was presented by Pheroza Godrej and Rishad Naoroji.





## Jagdish Nanavati Award for Excellence in Mountaineering 2020

The Jury for the Award comprising of Chairperson Lindsay Griffin, Akhil Bakshi and Anindya Mukherjee did not recommend any expedition for the Award as none of the entries met the standards of excellence in exploration and style.

## Jagdish Nanavati Garud Medal

The Garud Medal was presented to Nim Dorjee Sherpa from Darjeeling, for his service to the mountaineering community since 2005. The Citation for the Award is as follows:



“The Garud Medal is awarded to Nim Dorjee Sherpa for exemplary service to mountaineers over the last 15 years. He has assisted Indian Navy, ITBP, Police and civilian teams on Everest Expeditions in addition to several international Korean, Nepalese, Russian and Chinese teams in his formidable list of 15 Everest expeditions in this span of climbing. He also assisted the International climbing team to Mt Dhaulagiri (7500 m) in 2018. He has summited

Everest eight times which includes ascents from the North, South & South West Face. He has also summited Mt Manaslu (8156 m). He was also part of the World’s Highest Rescue Team on Everest during the tragedy of 2016.

Nim Dorjee is a strong mountaineer and a humble and diligent human being. His climbing prowess, professionalism and wonderful attitude during each expedition have brought success to his companions and clients alike.

The Himalayan Club is proud to honour Nim Dorjee Sherpa”

*Picture Credits: Alka Kedia*

## **In Memoriam**

### Joe Brown, British Climbing Colossus

**(1930-2020)**

*Alison Osius*

In 1964, at Curbar Edge on the gritstone of Derbyshire, Geoff Birtles started up the striking Elder Crack, which at mid-height widened to offwidth—just before a roof. He was forthwith so exhausted that he “slithered,” as he put it, back down the crack to the ground.

Joe Brown had established the route in 1950, protected only by slung machine nuts.

As Birtles wrote in *Hard Rock*, a book that inspired a generation, he later asked Brown, of the route:

“You did it, didn’t you?”

“Yeh!”

“Who did it with you?”

“Can’t remember!”

“It says in the old pink guide that it was VS” [5.7-5.8].

“Well, it is, isn’t it?”

Elder Crack was later boosted up beyond Very Severe (VS) and beyond Hard Very Severe (HVS) to Extremely Severe 5c, or 5.10+.

As Birtles, longtime editor of the great British climbing magazine *High*, informed Joe Brown “died peacefully at his home in Llanberis” on April 15. “He was arguably the greatest ever all-round climber,” Birtles wrote. “His new rock climbs in Britain commencing in the late 1940s were the hardest in the world.”

Brown was 89 and had been ill.

Birtles also listed the Fissure Brown on the West Face of the Aiguille de Batière, Chamonix Mont Blanc, done in 1954 with Brown’s many-year partner Don Whillans, as “possibly the hardest single mountain pitch



climbed to that date,” while Brown and George Band’s first ascent of Kangchenjunga (8586 m), in 1955, “was a great high-altitude achievement, along with other Himalayan climbs, such as the first ascent of Trango.”

Brown’s career had incredible breadth: Trango, done with Martin Boysen, Mo Anthoine and Malcolm Howells, was in 1976. He, Tom Patey, Ian McNaught-Davis and John Hartog had made the first ascent of the west summit of Muztagh Tower (7276 meters), in 1956—20 years earlier.

Joe Simpson (UK) recalls: “Joe Brown was an amazing man, surprisingly quiet, shy even, but a gentle man for all his renowned hardness. He was probably my first British rock and mountaineering hero along with Don Whillans. Chris Bonington, Doug Scott and Dougal Haston were also in the loop but Joe and Don were at the very top. At the time, 1940’s to 50’s, his UK rock routes ranked as some of the hardest in the world and all were climbed with what today would be regarded as woefully basic equipment.

Brown had physical abilities on rock unlike those any of his peers had seen, such that he was revered nearly from the start. The great Scottish climber Tom Patey, in his classic and comedic *One Man’s Mountains*, published

a ballad about Brown. The refrain went:

“We’ve sung it once/ We’ll sing it twice / He’s the hardest man in the Rock and Ice / He’s marvelous—he’s fabulous / He’s a wonder man is Joe.”

In car parks years earlier or in his home, he was quiet, courteous and rather wide-eyed, almost innocent, with an occasional slow but big smile. I’d been told by one of his friends, Dave Alcock, chief instructor at the nearby Plas y Brenin mountain center, that



Joe Brown at the great sea cliffs Gogarth, North Wales. Photo John Cleare.

Brown was sometimes given to exaggeration, and when questioned, would insist, “No, honestly!”

Born in 1930, Joe was one of seven children in a family in Manchester. His father died when he was an infant, and his mother took in washing and later cleaned houses, eschewing the dole. Brown left school at 14 and started climbing at 16. He was a plumber and builder by trade, and put in a stint in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps. It was upon completion of that duty that he truly exploded on the rock, scooping the best lines in his region. He was inventive, too, taking nuts found on railroad tracks, threading them with sling, and placing them in the rock for pro—the first to do so. He and his friends—Whillans and their compatriots in the Manchester-based Rock and Ice club—climbed 5.10 and protected it (or ran it out) with pitons, slings over flakes and spikes, and threaded pebbles. Joe would tuck small stones into his balaclava and take them out to place and sling as chockstones.

Possibly his greatest route was Cenotaph Corner (5.10+), 1952, on which his first attempt, at age 18 in 1948, ended when at 90 feet he dropped his piton hammer (actually a mason’s hammer) and flattened his belayer; Joe had to hasten down the rope hand over hand to check the damage. The area is rife with Joe Brown routes, and when I lived there, and I am sure even now, if you were deciding what route to do and someone said, “Well, it’s a Joe Brown route,” that was enough.

As John Cleare says: “It’s the end of an era.

*Reproduced from Rock and Ice, abridged, with kind permission from the author. Full version available at : <https://rockandice.com/climbing-news/joe-brown-british-climbing-colossus-dead-at-89/?cn-reloaded=1>*

Photograph in the article reproduced with kind permission from John Cleare.

**Editors Note:** with kind permission from © Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) adding these three photographs of Joe Brown from the 1955 Kangchenjunga Expedition.



George Band (left) and Joe Brown (right)  
Possibly taken by John Jackson, Kangchenjunga Expedition 1955.  
Image courtesy:© Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)



Joe Brown climbing

Joe Brown on the summit

Taken by George Band, Kangchenjunga Expedition 1955. Image Courtesy:  
© Royal Geographical Society (with IBG).



## Magan Bissa

(1954-2020)

*Ramesh Sharma*

India has lost one of its best climbers, Magan Bissa . I have lost a good friend and a wonderful human. Apart from attempting Everest thrice in 1984, 1985 and 2009. He was Director of National Adventure Foundation (Rajasthan Chapter) and President of Rajasthan Adventure Foundation, World renowned parasailing controller Is gallantry awardee, has done his Masters in Commerce of Business Administration from Univ. of Rajasthan, Jaipur, worked as Officer (Adventure Programmes) in TATA Steel, Jamshedpur.

He did his Basic Mountaineering course and Advanced Mountaineering course from H.M.I. Darjeeling, and attended the IMF Advanced Climbing Camp held at Goumukh.

He did his basic Snow-Skiing and Water Skiing course at IIS&M Gulmarg in 1983. Learned Sky-Diving in 1982, from Indian Sky Diving Federation, Agra.

He was appointed as Liaison Officer with Spanish, Japanese Expedition to Mt. Bathartoli, Meru Mt. Chaturangi, and he was one of the members of



the Japanese Rescue cum Search team to Mt. Nandakhat to search for seven missing persons of Japan.

From 1979 to 1986 he remained Camp Leader, Establishment Officer and Joint Director of National Himalayan Trekking Programme.

He lead the very First Expedition from Rajasthan, named as Desert to Snow, to Mt. Gangotri II and Mt. Rudragara in 1981. In 1982 he lead the team for Pre-Everest Expedition to Mt. Gangotri I. He participated in the Indian Everest Expedition to Mt Everest, opened the route to South Co1, reached South Col thrice, reached upto 28,000 ft to support summit team in1984.

Lead Mt. Deo Tibba Expedition from Rajasthan in 1985.

Appointed Dy. Leader of Indo-Australian Expedition to Mt. Rimo (Karakoram Range) and opened the tough technical route (max) in 1985.

Participated in Indo-British Army Mt. Saser Kangri Expedition (Karakoram Range) in 1987 and climbed the mountain directly from the advance base camp in a single 8 hour push with 6,000 Ft. lead.

Lead Tata's Mt. ShriKailash Expedition in 1988. Explored as Climbing Leader and Summitter Indo-Russian Mt. NandaDevi East Expedition in 1991. He was hit by the avalanche during an expedition to Mount Everest, organised by the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering in 2009. Bissa was accompanied by wife Dr Sushma. Had they succeeded in scaling the worlds highest mountain, they would have been the first couple to do so. Awards honored to Shri Magan Bissa

1. SENA Medal by the President of India 1986
2. IMF Silver Medal 1985.
3. Rajasthan Meritorious Award 1987.
4. Rajasthan State JC's outstanding young person award 1991.
5. IMF Gold Medal 1993.
6. Youth Hostel Association Gold Medal 1995.
7. Maharana Pratap Sports award Rajasthan Government 1998.
8. Bharat Gaurav award at National Adventure Festival- Chandigarh 2000

## Nalni Dhar Jayal

(1927-2020)

*Debabrata Mukherjee*

An Officer and a Gentleman could be a cliché, but that's what comes to my mind whenever I think about Nalni-ji. An IAF fighter Pilot in his younger days Nalni Dhar Jayal was a good photographer too. And it was him who took the first all around aerial photo of Mt. Everest on 6th of June, 1953.

"In fact the IAF's team was requested by Royal Air force of UK to help them carry the Expedition team's luggage and take photographs. I was appointed for taking the photographs at the last monwnt. We had the plan to take the photos on 30th May", his eyes were glistening while telling me that story one afternoon at his residence. "But at the last moment we changed our plan when we learnt that the summit team of the Everest expedition will be attempting on those days. We thought that the sound of our aircraft might bring down the avalanches on those mountaineers. So we finally took those on 6th June. Back in Delhi IAF got the printed copies of those first aerial view of Mt. Everest and presented those to the members of that expedition when they were in Delhi on the way back home. All the members signed on those. And I got a copy of that too". He went upstairs to his bed-cum-study room and brought down that old a little bigger than A4 size B&W photograph with signature of John Hunt,



Image Courtesy: Mrs. Reiko Terasawa

Edmund Hillary, Tenzing Norgay and all other members of that 1953 First successful team on Everest. I can't tell my feelings now when I got to touch that original photo and the original autographs of all those Mountaineering legends. And even more overwhelmed when next morning we were in the market and he went to a studio for something. And in the afternoon I got a copy of that photograph with



the autographs on its side. I can always feel his voice ringing in my ears whenever I look at that prized possession of mine gifted by the photographer himself.

In 2009, Mrs. Reiko Terasawa my Japanese mountaineer sister asked me to accompany her to Dehradun to visit Mr. Nalni Jayal on his 82nd birthday. I felt so lucky and counted my days for that visit as I had always wanted to meet the person who was instrumental for India's Ministry of Environment and forming of the Nandadevi Biosphere and sanctuary. He came to Dehradun station and drove us by himself to his house in Vasant-Bihar area with a fantastic view of the lush tea garden of Dehradun. What a magnificent place to live for a Nature Lover and environmentalist. I had the chance to spend 5 days with him. (And next 6 consecutive years for similar periods). So about a full month of my life I had the luck to converse with him Breakfast till dinner. I learnt so many things from him about Mountaineering, Nature, Environment, Administration (He was the first DC of NEFA and later of Kinnaur) and what not. A storehouse of knowledge Nalni-ji had a delicate sense of humour and respect for all. I am nowhere nearby to his astounding stature yet he used to behave with me as equal. I felt elated when I visited him 2014 and he congratulated me for crossing the Chaukhamba col and asked about the details of the route, environment, flora & fauna etc. He

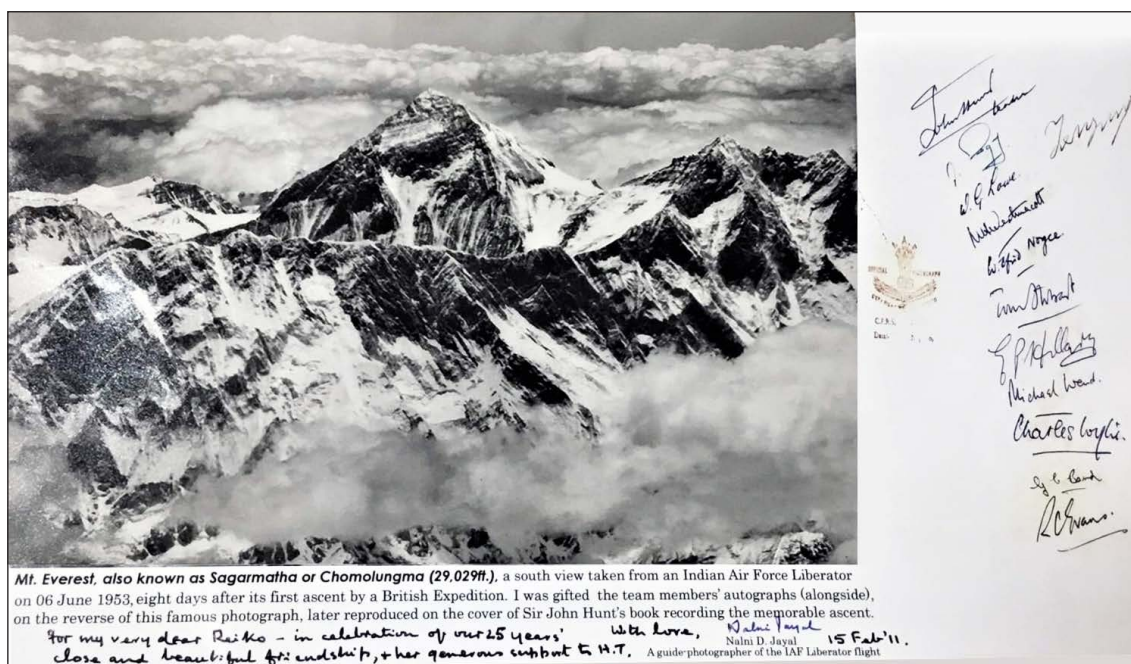


Image Courtesy: Debabrata Mukherjee

told me that, he studied on that expedition in IMF journal and was waiting eagerly to get information from me. He was always very passionate about the nature and environment. So many memories coming to my mind now. He took me to Doon school where he was a student of the first batch with his famous Mountaineer cousin Major Nandu Jayal and Amir Ali. He told us about the first Indian Mountaineering expedition with Gudial Singh to Trisul and his time with Doon school teacher Mr. Holdsworth (after whose name the Holdsworth col came into being). We used to go to Mussorie, watched movies, had ice-creams together and enjoyed walking in front of his house along the tea garden. It's hurting to know that those moments would never come back. I will remember you Nalni-ji as one of my Gurus who was a friend too.

I know you are now in your dreamland where is no environmental pollution.

*Oum Shanti.*

### Meher H Mehta, FRGS

**(1930-2020)**

*Prabhat Ganguly*

Meher was born in a Parsi family of Kolkata on 20th September, 1920. After graduating from St. Xaviers College, Kolkata he joined Llyods Bank which after merger with Grindlays Bank became ANZ Grindlays Bank where he served continuously for few decades. He retired from the bank as a Director of Human Resources.

Inspired by Aspi D Moddie, one of the pillars of The Himalayan Club, Meher became the member of the club in 1953. He served the club in various capacities. Became Hon. Secretary in 1971 and Vice President in 1981-82. He played a great role in raising funds for the first ever Scientific Expedition 'Neora Valley Biosphere Reconnaissance' in 1982 led by Kamal K Guha.

In 2003 Meher Mehta became the Vice President for the second term and continued for long 4 years till 2006-2007. During this period he took



Meher H Mehta (Photo Dr. Rupamanjari Biswas)

challenge to rejuvenate the Kolkata Section by introducing young and enthusiastic members to the club and started mountaineering expedition from Kolkata Section. Under the leadership of AVM (Retd) Apurva K Bhattacharyya expeditions were organised to Tinchengkang, Papsura, Kamet and Nilkantha.

In 2003, under his Vice President ship the 75 Years of the club was celebrated at Kolkata for three days where many distinguished speakers and guests participated. Jagdish Nanavati and Harish Kapadia came from Mumbai. An

exhibition of mountaineering books, equipments and other allied activities was also organised.

Next year in 2004, Meher took initiative to start Pandit Sarat Chandra Das Memorial Lecture. The first of such memorial lecture was delivered by none other than Aspi Moddie, the past President of the club. The Kolkata Section is still continuing this legacy and many notable speakers have delivered the memorial lecture.

Meher Mehta also celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the first ascent of Kanchendzonga at Kolkata in a day long programme which was attended by George Band, Norman Hardie and Antony Streather. The programme was also attended by Col. Narendra Kumar, Dorjee Lhatoo, Harish Kapadia and Dr. M.S. Gill.

He was also instrumental in bringing many notable mountaineers and scholars to Kolkata to meet the young mountaineers here and show slides of their climbs and explorations. Thus, we were lucky to have speakers like Tom Nakamura, George Rodway, Col. Ashok Abbey (now Brig) and others.



Meher was ailing for last few years and left suddenly in the morning of 27th February, 2020 leaving his wife, son, daughter and grandchildren. He was 89.

At his sad demise, the members of The Himalayan Club lost an efficient organiser and a good administrator. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved members of the family.

**From the Editor's collection:**



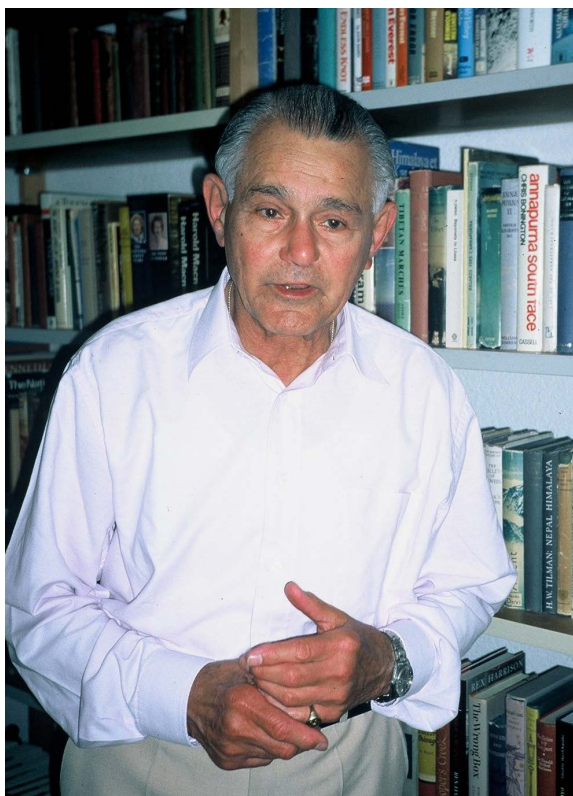
Mr. Mehta handing over the National and Club flag to the Neelkantha expedition team.

Picture courtesy: Late Mr. Guenter Wehrmann-The then German Consulate General in Kolkata and The Himalayan Club member.

## Trevor Braham

(1922-2020)

*Harish Kapadia*



Trevor Braham (Photo Harish Kapadia)

Mr Trevor Braham, Hon. Member of The Himalayan Club, passed away on 2 March 2020 peacefully at Switzerland, aged 97 years. He was born on 22 March 1922.

Mr Braham was a member of the Club since 1946 and was associated in many capacities: Hon. Secretary (1950-1955), Member of the Managing Committee (1956, 1967 to 1974), Hon. Librarian (1957), Hon. Editor of the Himalayan Journal (1957 to 1959), Vice President (1958 to 1965). The Club had elected him as Honorary Member.

He visited Mumbai for the 80th Year celebrations of the Club. I and all editors before me had many exchanges of letters with him. It was an honour for me to meet him few times at Switzerland, visit his home and interact with him at Mumbai.

He wrote two best selling books; Himalayan Odyssey and When the Alps Cast Their Spell each a major reference on his Himalayan exploratory treks and early climbs-explorations in the Alps, respectively

He was also Hon. Member of the Alpine Club (London) and honoured by many other world organisations. Funeral will take place at Lausanne, Switzerland.

## **Climbs, Treks and Explorations**

### IMF Trishul Expedition 2019

**28 August - 25 September 2019**

*Col Anil Goth (Retd)*

As a prelude to the planned Everest Massif Expedition 2020, the IMF decided to conduct a climbing cum selection Camp to Trishul Peak with two aims.

#### **One**

To expose and train the participants on Trishul Peak to prepare them for the Everest Massif Expedition.

#### **Two**

To attempt the Peak and select the team out of 53 participants who had been selected for the second stage of the preparation after the screening camps held at NIM, Uttarkashi and JIM, Pahalgam in June 2019.

The handpicked and strong team of 40 young boys and 13 girls' representing 14 states/UTs from the country assembled at IMF over 25th and 26th Aug. After collecting the expedition stores, followed by a motivation talk by President, IMF Col H S Chauhan, SM, VSM (Retd) and Shri Prem Singh DIG, ITBP on 27 Aug, the team left for Dehradun on 28th morning in two chartered buses. Anshu Jamsenpa, Iqbal Khan, Chander Negi, all mountain instructors at JIM and self-made up the IMF reps accompanying the expedition. We reached Ghat after dark trans-shipping from the buses to jeeps for the last 35 kms of road journey through Sital, eventually reaching Sutol village, the road head at around midnight after a 15 hour long journey, to be received by the NIM Advance Party.

The team spent a day at Sutol (2200m) to give rest to our jolted bodies after the bus journey. We also took a short acclimatization walk till Tatra village above Sutol and carried out preparations for the approach March next day. Dr. Parag Shah, our MO carried out a medical check-up of all members and took stock of the medical stores. The teams strengthen with



joining of Sub Maj Limbu, SISS Bhandari, Deep Sahi, Anil Kumar and the advance party from NIM, and was to go up further to 80 with Shri Loveraj, Asst. Comdt BSF, Col IS Thapa, SM VSM, Principal JIM who would join us a few days later... the kitchen staff and HAPs / porters in themselves made up a strength of 15... making us a very large group, perhaps the largest most of us had been with in the mountains.

Sutol had a road built a few years back, electricity supply, running tap water, net connectivity for which one had to walk up just 15 mins, a primary school, some fine shops and newly constructed houses with RCC roofs... making an odd remaining old house with slates, stone masonry and intricate wood work stand out for its natural beauty and old time charm.

Sutol to Lata Kopri (3085m) was a gradual uphill walk of 4-5 hours ,initially through cultivated fields of Amaranth (Rajgira) and Kidney Beans(Rajma) in the vicinity of Sutol and Tatra and then through a beautiful dense green forest of Spruce, Oak, Texas, Blue Pine, Tosh, Rhododendron and Dwarf bamboos . The slush we encountered during the approach was a small price to pay for the great natural beauty of the trail. Lata Kopri is a gently sloping, fairly large clearing about the size of a hockey field which was covered with leafy wild Rhubarb family plants- during the season. On the way back, Loveraj identified these plentiful plants as edible and they quickly went into our cooking pots to be relished as the most delicious fare on the expedition. Lata Kopri also had a proper metal sign board indicating the place and elevation, a cemented area the size of a badminton court which we used to set up the cooking and dining area and also a make shift mandir erected out of small rocks. The stream being lower, the water source was a natural spring close by which just about sufficed the needs of our large group.

The trek from Lata Kopri to Chandniya Ghat (3685m) was shorter than between Sutol and Lata Kopri but very wet due to rain. We had to build a bridge over the stream formed from the waters of the Shila Samundar glacier and Nanda Ghunti snows.. out of birch tree logs, the trees growing in abundance in the vicinity, giving us and our ponies safe and dry passage over the stream, leading to Chandniya Ghat camp site, about 50 metres

above the bridge. The route between Lata Kopri and Chandniya Ghat led us across slopes of wild flowers,numerous waterfalls and streams which we could step across.

There was also a large snow patch before the log bridge after which the trees gave way to alpine vegetation. The campsite at Chandniya Ghat was in a hollow besides a stream . It was also marked by a sign board similar to the one at Lata Kopri and had remnants of bamboo frames for poly shelters... left by villagers who occupy the camp site for collection of 'Kira Jadi ' in May - Jun. Due to administrative reasons,we decided to split the team into two groups for the moment leading to occupation of Chandniya Ghat by the first group on 2nd Sep.



Scree shute between Homkund and Camp 1

BC (4212m) a little short of Hom Kund was occupied by Col Amit with the first group on 4th Sep at yet another beautiful camp site with the imposing Nandaghunti forming the backdrop. Before leaving the mountain on 7th Sep for his visit to Chamonix, France, Col Amit gave speed and energy to the team drawing on his experience of climb of Trishul in 2013...for our benefit. Loveraj, with seven times ascent of Everest to his credit joined the next day while Col IS Thapa, SM, VSM Principal JIM, an outstanding sportsman, a decorated soldier and a very experienced mountaineer reached BC,on 12th Sep. At the BC we had divided the team into five balanced ropes on the basis of age, experience, gender and state representation. The administration,route opening, fixed route and setting up of camps

being pre decided and organized efficiently by NIM we decided on the following broad outline plan.

**One** - A simple plan for all individuals to be given an opportunity to climb. Acclimatization and minimum one load ferry to Camp 2 before occupation of Camp 2.

**Two** - Summit attempts by each rope on consecutive days subject to weather -involving one day stay at Camp 2 -move up to Camp 3/ Summit Camp next day -a short bivouac at Summit Camp - Summit attempt after midnight -upward climb latest till 11 o' clock and descent to lower camps thereafter in coordination with remaining ropes for them to move up and take their slots for following summit bids.

**Three** - Each rope to carry own butane gas and climbing food for use above **Camp 2 from BC** for in built administration.

The weather so far had been anything but clear on any day, with rain on most days. The overcast sky did not interfere with our movement on the mountain. Rather, the team felt that the conditions were more in our favour since they helped us conserve energy.

**Camp 1 (5055m)** was occupied on 7th Sep. The route involving a climb of three - four hours lay over an obliterated trail from BC along the ridge leading to Hom Kund and then along a steep scree chute to the East over the ridge line separating the Ronti glacier from Hom Kund valley. The Camp was a few metres below the ridge, in a flat area with rock slabs on the west bank of Ronti glacier .

Camp 1 provided adequate space for camping and easy availability of water. From the camp, looking East across the Ronti glacier we had a grand view of ramparts of the Trishul with the ridge connecting Bethartoli (6352m) towards North . Our route to Camp 2 lay along the head of the Ronti glacier fraught with danger of hidden crevasses which had to be negotiated carefully, roped up. **Camp 2 (5920 m)** with three tents was occupied by Anil's rope on 10 Sep. However, due to bad weather, it was called back to BC the next day. On 12th Sep, weather being clear, with forecast of further fair weather conditions obtained from our weatherman





Camp 2

Wg Cdr Sudhir Kutty at IMF, the next rope under Iqbal occupied Camp 2. Anshu, a very strong climber, with five ascents of Everest, including a repeat of the climb in astounding five days, who was earlier with Anil's team had joined Iqbal's team in the meanwhile. By now, the four HAPs had fixed the route to the Summit Camp (6300m) using nearly 2 kms. of fixed rope. As planned, Iqbal's rope occupied the summit camp on 13th Sep, spent a few hours for some rest and preparation, setting out for the summit bid at 2.30 am to reach the top by 7 am of 14th Sep, the remaining section being fixed on the way. The main difficulties of the final climb was the very corniced ridge a little below the top. Following the same pattern, we made four more summit attempts out of which three attempts were successful on 15th and 19th while the attempt on 18th Sep had to be called off from 6850 m due to high winds and bad weather. The climb by Anil's team was made in one push directly from Camp 2.

The team also wound up all the higher camps and concentrated safely at BC on 19th Sep itself. We were a very happy team with large number of participants having climbed their first 7000 m Peak. The team left BC on 21st Sep and was back at Sutol on 23rd for celebrations and camp fire. The next morning had the peculiar strained atmosphere of parting and return to civilization.



View of cornice and Trishul 2 and 3 to the left

### **List of Summitters –**

**14 Sep** - Iqbal Khan ( Rope Leader), Anshu Jamsenpa, Gyalbo Sherpa, Pitamber Chandola, Chaman Lal, Uday Veer Singh, Stanzin Chosdan, Tikam Ram, Karan Sachu, Manik Slathia, Manita Pradhan and Nanda (12).

**15 Sep** - Chander Negi (Rope Leader), Ranveer Singh (HAP) Skalzang Rigzin, Wallambok Lyngdoh, Dr Lalit Mohan, Nischay Attri, Parveen Dahiya, Rajendra Singh Nath, Gaurav Pant and Sheetal (10)

**15 Sep** - Anil Kumar (Rope Leader), Dawa Norbu Sherpa, Nawab Moazam Khan, Kamal Joshi, Amit Negi, Stanzin Desal, Hemant Gupta, Prince Kumar, Jigmat Tharchin, Savita Kanswal and Sabita Mahato (11)

**19 Sep** - Shri Loveraj Singh Dharmshaktu (Rope Leader) Indra Rai (HAP), Stanzin Norboo, Shahid Khan, John Mohammad Iqbal, Lalit Kumar (UK), Dr Rajan Chhetri, Parmender Sharma, Manish Kashniyal, Palkesh Kalma Baljeet Kaur, Stanzin Youthog and Gunbala Sharma (12).

**18 Sep** - Members who climbed to 6850m Deep Sahi, Hem Raj, Khimi Ram, Gh Mohammad Wani, Montu Kumar, Parmender Sharma, Dhruv Joshi, Shanti Rai, Unnati Pandey, Ambreen Fatima and Amrita Das.

### **Support Members –**

Dr. Parag Shah, Priyanka Chinchorkar, Neeraj Chaudhary, Maneesh Kumar and Bhupesh Kumar. These participants climbed high on the mountain as climbing members initially. It was only incidental that they had to take on the support role above Camp-I and Camp-II subsequently.

### **Permanent Adm and Kitchen Staff –**

Shishpal Singh and Vijaypal Singh (cooks), Narendra Sahi (helper), Himmat Singh, Prabal Sahi, Kulendra Sahi, Ramesh Sahi, Naru Sahi, Dhan Sahi, Tirth Sahi, Hira Singh and Surinder Singh.

### **Org Committee from IMF / Mountaineering Institutes –**

Col Anil Goth (Retd), Col I S Thapa, SM, VSM, Principal JIM, Col Amit Bisht, SM Principal NIM, SI SS Bhandari, Sub Maj Limbu and Shailendra Semwal (NIM).



Second summit on 15th



## First Ascent of Link Sar

*Steve Swenson*



Link Sar



Climbing towards the Summit



Graham Zimmerman on Summit

From July 31st to August 8th, 2019, Graham Zimmerman, Steve Swenson, Chris Wright and Mark Richey made the first ascent of Link Sar (7,041 meters) in the Central Pakistani Karakoram via its 3,400-meter Southeast Face. Having been the object of at least nine expeditions, the first ascent of this peak has been a highly sought-after prize for the climbing community. The team is calling their route the Southeast Face (M6+ WI 4 90°, 2300m), but the grade does a poor job of portraying the challenge of this route that Karakoram veteran Swenson calls “one of the most complex and difficult routes I have ever climbed.”

***Editor’s Note:*** A detailed report of the climb will be published in the forthcoming *Himalayan Journal*.

## Articles

### 2019 Banff Mountain Photo Essay Competition Winner





## Matagi

*Javier Corso*

Matagi are traditional hunters living in small villages and settlements in the highlands of northern Honshu, the main island of Japan. From its origins, back in the middle of the XVI century, they have made a living by selling meat, skins and other products derived from the hunting. Its main prey is the Japanese black bear, a subspecies classified as vulnerable and threatened according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Nevertheless, the matagi never face hunting as a recreational or sporting activity. They only capture what is necessary for regulated sale and self-consumption, or for the purpose of protecting rural and agricultural settlements from wild animals. These communities recognize nature as a conscious presence that sustains them, but expects responsible behavior in return. Matagi believe that they can hunt because the Mountain Deity (Yama-no-Kami) allows it, and therefore, hunting is carried out with a sense of utmost reverence and respect for the natural balance.







Following the Fukushima incidents in 2011, the State banned many matagi communities from marketing bear meat, mostly in the prefectures of Gunma, Tochigi and Fukushima itself, because of the high risk of being intoxicated by radiation. Recently the Japanese authorities lifted the veto, and the matagi have been able to resume what has been their main economic activity for centuries.

In the context of a highly globalized, industrialized and metropolized Japan in the midst of the 21st century, matagi face a more than likely extinction of their cultural heritage. The global aging of the Japanese population, legal and regulatory limitations on hunting, and attachment to values that no longer germinate among the younger generations - who migrate massively from the rural to the urban environment - are some of the main reasons that leave these hunters without much hope of preserving their legacy.

**“The unforgiving, unrepentant compositional style seems to reflect the photographers sense of urgency and conflict in documenting these hunters and their practice. Corso questions us - what do we value - the “vulnerable” species of bear or the endangered cultural tradition? These are delicate questions and in each image Corso has masterfully uncovered different layers of regard to help the viewer probe the territory.”**

*– 2019 Banff Mountain Photo Essay Jury*

### Pahari Wilson’s Palatial Cottage

*Bill Aitken*

In the Mahabharat the Pandavas stayed in a Palace of Lac which though situated on the banks of the Yamuna could not prevent it from being burned down by their enemies. In the 1850’s also in Garhwal a palace fashioned from the sacred deodar was built in Harsil alongside the Bhagirathi Ganga and would suffer a similar fiery fate. The magnificent log mansion was built by the legendary Angrez adventurer Frederick Wilson (1816-1883) known locally as “Hulson Sahib”. In a 2010 review of



Robert Hutchinson's fictional life of this rags to riches Raja of Harsil, Dilip Bobb writes "the higher you go the taller the tale" and almost everything written about the versatile larger than life Wilson adds to the deliberately distorted legend of a foreign environmental carpet bagger accused of single-handedly stripping Tehri Garhwal of its forest cover, rare wildlife and modest maidens.

The fictional life of Wilson proves that fake news was in vogue as early as Queen Victoria's reign and used effectively by the colonial administration in India to damn the reputation of any Gora like Wilson who let the side down. This Wilson had done when he married hill women of the lowly drummer caste and went on to become a successful timber contractor and money lender. Accused of having brought the prestige of the white rulers into disrepute Wilson needed to be taught a lesson. By sowing slander about him the colonial power guaranteed almost everything written on Wilson thereafter would damn him as a dangerous subversive who deserted from the East Indian Company army under murky circumstances. The insinuation was he had bolted to the hills after murdering a fellow officer. As a parting colonial kick in the ribs an updated version of Pahari Wilson's shortcomings (to accommodate his wealthy status) made him out to be "a womanising capitalist".

The only reliable version of Wilson's life (minus the masala) is to be found in the biography written by D.C. Kala (2006) which went on to win jointly the Kekoo Naoroji Award of the Himalayan Club. As a Garhwali and former news editor of the Hindustan Times Durga Kala's sifting of the evidence reveals Wilson's image of unregenerate macho scoundrel is ludicrously off target. Born in Wakefield in the West Riding of Yorkshire Wilson was an ensign in the John Company army whose weak constitution and sickly looks was the occasion for him to be invalided back to England. [I can claim a fleeting criminal connection with Wilson's home town after I was sent to do time in the famous high security Wakefield jail. When my Leeds University lecturer was indisposed he sent me as a stand in for an Adult Education course teaching comparative religion to the prisoners. They displayed a rare sense of humour suggesting they would have preferred a Tibetan Lama who keeping in view the height of the prison walls could have given them practical lessons in levitation.]

Photos of the bushy bearded Wilson reveal a bright eyed pragmatist and though small and physically frail he was the archetypal Yorkshireman possessed of a steely resolve worthy of Geoffrey Boycott. After his discharge in pursuit of a commercial idea Wilson would sail again to Kolkata under his own steam employed as the ship's purser. To prove further intent he walked all the way from Kolkata to Tehri Garhwal to hatch his plan to export furs and exotic birds. When Dr Salim Ali boasted of shooting eight sparrows in seven days as a ten year old he was applauded as a budding scientist but if it had been Pahari Wilson he could expect to be reviled as a mass slaughterer. Wilson was in fact a well-informed wild lifer who contributed information to the famous ornithologist Allan Octavian Hume in Shimla and was also an accomplished taxidermist. He co-authored the book *A summer Ramble in the Himalayas* and acted as guide to shikhar parties.

Part of the dismay Wilson aroused was caused by envy of his Midas touch. Whatever he put his hand to he made a fortune out of. As a multi talented individual Wilson's genius ranged from natural history expertise and do-it-yourself engineer to financial wizardry and property magnate.

**20 Garhwal Post** Dehradun, June 24, 2009 • RNI No. UTTENG/2006/17959 • Postal Regd No. Dehradun/300/2007

**"Raja of Harsil"**

## Book on "Pahari" Wilson to be released in August

**By AJAY RAMOLA**

**MEISSOORE, 23 June** On his recent visit to Mussoorie, eminent Canadian born Swiss author Robert Hutchison informed media persons at a formal meeting here that he was looking forward to launch of his book, "Raja of Harsil", on Frederick Wilson popularly known as "Pahari Wilson". The book will be out in early August, this year.

Hutchison said he was glad that Rishi Bhatia would launch it from New Delhi on Thursday. Inspired by the character of Pahari Wilson, he recalled how the adventure seeker had carved out a kingdom for himself. Throwing more light on Pahari Wilson, Robert recalled he was a fugitive from the Army and made Pahari and Malabar his home.

He was introduced to the legend of Pahari Wilson by eminent environmentalist Sunder Lal Bahuguna in Mussoorie in April 1987 while staying at the old Chateaufort Hotel. During a hail storm, Sunderlal Bahuguna rushed into his room and said, "Did you hear the ghost of Pahari Wilson walking on the roof, Robert?"

Robert became intrigued about Robert Wilson and began researching the person. The research went on for 3 years and many new things about Frederick Wilson came to light. For instance, he learned that Frederick Wilson had married — or at least flirted — the Garhwalite, naming it, mentioning to some, after his middle son Charles. He had hoped the lad would play a role in the management. Unlike the father, Charles Wilson was a founder of the same order and never showed a flicker of interest in the hotel. This was probably a good thing for the Charleses, as it went on to become the

**The Raja of Harsil**  
Frederick "Pahari" Wilson, a Wilderness Legend  
By Robert Hutchison  
Richard Wilson

**Frederick Wilson during time of Pahari Wilson**

a brown taken with a hole in the crown. Unfamiliar to him, naming ours was considered a royal prerogative, a fact that prompted local folk to call him the Raja of Harsil and indeed he lived amongst a local tribe whose members treated him as a Godfather. Such was the reverence that he at Tehri Garhwal.

Although Robert looked up to Wilson, he was denied acceptance by the local establishment, and within a generation of his death he was all but forgotten. Some one in this the madhouse dream of Garhwal's patron deity, Raja Bheru Shah, cousin of Mother Goddess, who Wilson was said to have angered. Robert says that getting to know Frederick Wilson — to understand the sort of man he was — had been on his mind for a good twenty years and this book was the result of that love and affection for that character. The book is in the form of a sometimes fiction, which will be

Mixed — not brilliant years by any means. In fact, rather unhappy ones. And then he left the Army, under a cloud of sinners, at the time of the First Afghan War.

Around 1840, he arrived in Mussoorie, some say a fugitive, others an adventurer in search of fortune, but left town in a hurry, having decided to follow the Ganga to its source above Gangotri. First he settled at Pindari, one of the most prominent hillside villages on the Bhagirathi, on the Ganga is called in its upper reaches. Second, he married there and raised a family. Robert Hutchison goes on to say that Pahari Wilson began his new existence by poaching musk deer belonging to the Raja of Tehri and selling the quack called from the animals the

He brought prosperity to the Harsil region introducing apples and potatoes and the Wilson apple is still going strong in the local orchards perhaps the only reminder of his residence apart from the rupee coins he minted (something that not even Bill Gates or Jeff Bezos can hope to aspire to). Sadly, Wilson's splendid Harsil home the greatest work of his career skillfully designed and constructed by its owner almost entirely of fragrant deodar timber no longer stands. Referred to misleadingly as "Wilson Cottage" it was in fact a magnificent timbered palace, the largest and most aesthetic log building in the Himalaya and ultimate ode to sylvan architecture. I stayed in the rambling mansion for a night in 1983 as the guest of an army officer and saw framed photographs of the Wilson family on the wall. It seems the official custodians were unaware of or indifferent to the building's provenance as a unique heritage building and of the need to provide proper safeguards against fire. As a result in 1999 this aesthetically outstanding but vulnerable structure despite being near the river shared the fate of the Pandava Palace of Lac and succumbed to fire.

In the strait laced Victorian age Wilson had unforgivably married into the drummer family at Mukhba the winter seat of Ganga Maharani downstream of Gangotri. When his first wife could not have children, following local custom Wilson married her rosy-cheeked niece by which the latter became known as Gulabi. During the annual procession between Mukhba and Gangotri the doli of Ganga Maharani had to make the dangerous descent between Lanks and Bhaironghati to the confluence of the Bhagirathi and Jadh Ganga. To avoid this hazard Wilson built a bridge and to prove its safety (and encourage the pilgrims to pay to use it) he galloped his horse across. Legend has it that Gulabi was so thrilled at the inaugural puja ceremonies she gave birth to Natthu (her first of three sons) nearby. As child birth in the hills signifies the worst kind of pollution the Gangotri priests are said to have invoked a local god to curse Wilson's mleccha progeny.

Even more infamy has attached to Wilson's contract with the Maharaja of Tehri to fell whole stands of mature deodar (Himalayan cedar) whose virtues made them in the first flush of the railway age highly sought after as track sleepers. Those who have traveled in the comfort of a railway



carriage who denounce Wilson's knack to make profits forget they are the beneficiaries of his enterprise. Sunderlal Bahuguna the Chipko leader who hails from Tehri lambasts Wilson's rape of Dev Bhumi overlooking it was the custodian of the sacred Badri-Kedar shrines - the Maharaja of Tehri - who shared the proceeds.

Following his successful career in timber logging and floating the logs down to his saw mill in Rishikesh, Wilson shifted his business to Dehradun and Mussoorie. He became a banker and acquired several large properties including the Astley Hall complex in Dehradun and Charleville (now the Lal Bahadur Shastri Academy of Administration) in Mussoorie. Wilson and his wife Gulabi are buried in Mussoorie's Camel's Back cemetery as a reminder that Gulabi in her own right was as remarkable as her enterprising husband. The ease with which she landed on her feet having being flung from an interior village into the whirl of high society is commendable and with so many grand properties at her command she was chosen to be hostess to the very picky Vicereine Lady Dufferin (notable for remarking that Victoria Terminus in Mumbai was "too good for the natives.") It is amusing to read in Robert Hutchinson's fictional life of a supposedly murderous deserter that because of his wealth Wilson may have received an ungazetted pardon by the British Raj. Despite British social censure he was simply too important to be ignored. Folklore prefers the masala version of his life but with a variation. Pahari Wilson is viewed as a deserter but from British snobbery.

## News & Personalities

### Motup Chewang Goba, (Padma Shri)

*Harish Kapadia*



Photo from Lt Nawang Kapadia Collection

The Himalayan Club elected Motup Chewang Goba as its new President of the Club. It was proud moment as Motup is from the mountain area of Ladakh. A fine climber himself, he was recently honoured with Padma Shri award, one of the high honours in India. A new beginning with a young new President for the HC to usher in a new era.

Hailing from then remote village in the Nubra valley of Ladakh, as a young boy he crossed the high pass of Khardung la on foot many times to go to Srinagar for studies and back. He worked for a trekking agency for a few years where he met his wife Yangdu, daughter of legendary Nawang Gombu Sherpa. They both established Rimo Expeditions and since then they have never looked back.

He has remained a mountaineer at heart- crossing the dreaded Khumbu Icefall almost 25 times in one expedition in 1985 at a young age, carrying full loads. He has climbed and trekked in almost all parts of the Indian Himalaya and travelled to many countries in the world. A well-known name in foreign and Indian mountain circles, he has done lot for his own Ladakhi Community. He organised Ice Hockey tournaments for Ladakhis and training for young children of Ladakh for long distance running. In last Mumbai Marathon, Ladakhi youngsters stood 5th in ranking.

All this growth in one generation, from a village boy to be a world citizen, Motup is a great achiever. I am proud to call him our family friend. More strength to you!!

## Tanil Kilachand

*Harish Kapadia*



Photo from Lt Nawang Kapadia Collection

Tanil Kilachand was President of The Himalayan Club for last six years. These were crowded six years and as the President he did a lot for the Club. Thanks to Nileemaben, his energetic wife, an annual dinner was held at his home in grand style. He loved the Himalaya deeply and even at age of 80 regularly treks to the range.

Being a leading industrialist, he used his contacts deeply to raise funds for the Club. He loved the Club and cared for it, never forgetting the historical aspects of the Club.

He was always polite, maintained a good balance between the old and the new and guided the Club away from any potential conflicts.

He has many other interests too. A leading patron of the arts, specially the Indian Classical music, you will find him at most concerts. As the Presidents of few trade organisations he participated in many events. Many major projects were initiated by him for the Club and completed.

Tanil has handed over the club to his successor in robust shape and grounds ready to push it ahead.

## Talk at Fort William, Kolkata

*Editor*

The Indian Army Eastern Command HQ at Fort William, Kolkata, invited Harish Kapadia, Editor Emeritus of the Himalayan Club, to deliver a special lecture to its officers in March 2020. The talk was held at the historic venue, “The Kitchener House”, past residence of several British Viceroys during the Raj.

Harish Kapadia spoke on “Life and Times of Sir Frances Younghusband”, a great explorer during the Great Game in the West Karakoram, and he later led the Mission to Lhasa, “The Younghusband Mission”, which opened Tibet to the world.



The illustrated lecture was hosted by the GOC in C, the Eastern Army Commander Lt Gen Anil Chauhan and was attended by all Core Commanders of the area. It was broadcast live to all units in the Eastern Command.

Few members of The Himalayan Club, Kolkata Section were specially invited to attend.



Harish Kapadia at Fort William, Kolkata



The Kitchener House

## [You can now see Himachal's Dhauladhar mountain ranges from Jalandhar, thank the lockdown](#)



The Dhauladhar range in Himachal Pradesh is now visible from Jalandhar. (Express photo by Anju Agnihotri Chaba)

The elevation of the Dhauladhar ranges widely from 3,500 m to nearly 6,000 m. The range curves towards Mandi from the banks of the Beas river in Kullu. It then passes through Barabhangal towards the north and joins the Pir Panjal range after which it moves into Chamba.

*Express Web Desk | New Delhi | Updated: April 4, 2020 12:21:47 pm*

## [Brit scales 'indoor Everest' - with help from frozen peas](#)

The anti-coronavirus lockdown may have left plenty of Britons ready to scale their walls in frustration, but runner John Griffin has put his pent-up energy to better use by climbing the height of Mount Everest up his staircase. It took Griffin four days to climb 41,000 steps at his three-story house in West Sussex, equivalent to the 8,850 metres that the world's highest mountain measures. His effort has so far raised £3,500 (\$4,340) for a charity that supports more than 1,200 UK food banks. Using a computer programmed by his neighbour to track his progress, he almost came unstuck on day three when his knee began to hurt, but took his wife's advice to tape frozen peas to it and managed to push on, finally reaching the 'summit' after 29 hours of 'climbing'. His family was waiting on the rooftop terrace when he ran up the stairs for the final time. "It was a real sense of achievement," he added.

*Reuters*

## Club News

### Arun Samant Memorial Lecture Series 2020

*Wing Commander Sudhir Kuttu  
Hon Secretary, The Himalayan Club*



The Arun Samant Memorial Lecture for the year 2020 was organized on 11 Jan 2020 at Sathaye College Auditorium, Vile Parle. A packed audience was enthralled by the 3 illustrious speakers..

“Polar Woman” Dr Madhubala Joshi Chinchalkar was the first speaker, whose talk titled “Amazing Antarctica” gave an insight to her experience of spending a year in Antarctica at the Indian Research Station Maitri. She accompanied the 36th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica as the Doctor, providing

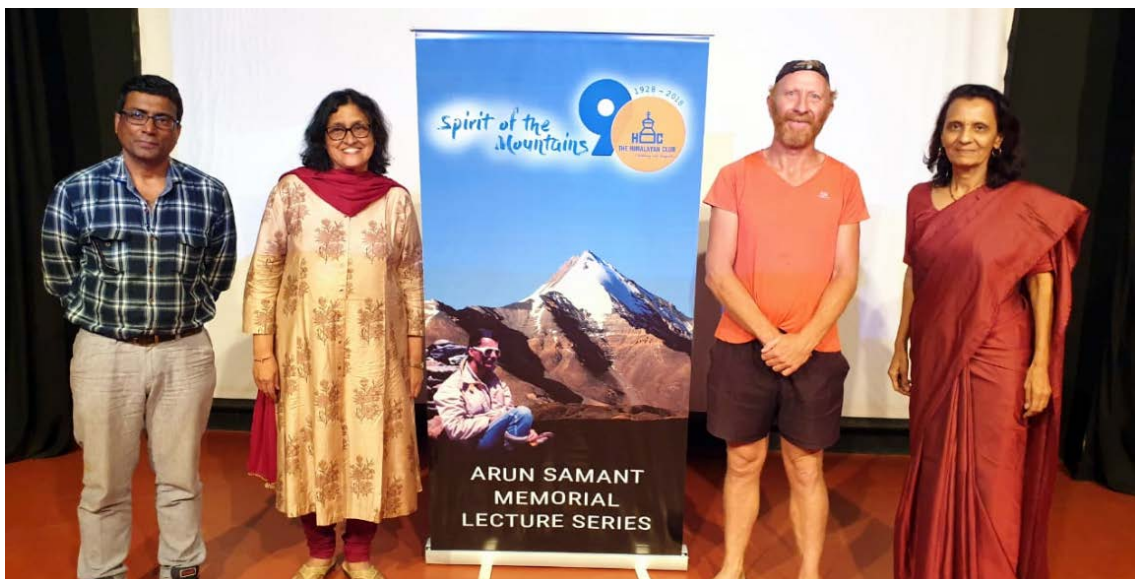
medical care to her team members. The highlight of her talk was her account of the Polar night is for 3 months, when the sun does not rise.

Peter Van Geit had the audience spellbound with his incredible story of exploring 120 passes across Uttarakhand, Himachal and Ladakh in as many days (4 months). The entire journey was alpine style - self planned, self-supported, mostly solo and minimalist ultra-paced. It was an amazing journey through mesmerizing natural beauty and unseen hospitality with shepherd's and mountain tribes.





The last speaker for the day was intrepid explorer and alpinist, Anindya Mukherjee, who shared highlights from his two expeditions to climb Nanda Devi East (7434m) in 2013 and 2014. He also capped off a review on the various happenings on Nanda Devi East during the summer of 2019 including details of Martin Moran's ill-fated team and a Polish expedition which succeeded in putting two climbers on the summit.



Caption





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Edited by : [Nilay Chakraborty](#)

Email: [nilay24@gmail.com](mailto:nilay24@gmail.com)

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Himalayan Club Centre, 314, Turf Estate, Shakti Mills Lane,  
Off Dr. E. Moses Road, Mahalaxmi [West], Mumbai 400011, India.

Phone: [91-22] 24912829

[www.himalayanclub.org](http://www.himalayanclub.org)

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