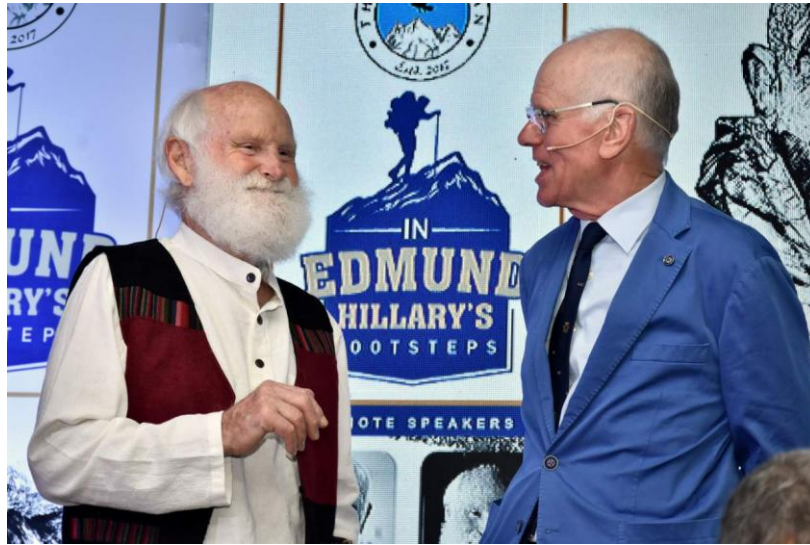




The Himalayan News

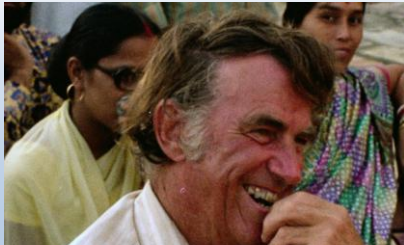
A NEWSLETTER OF THE HIMALAYAN



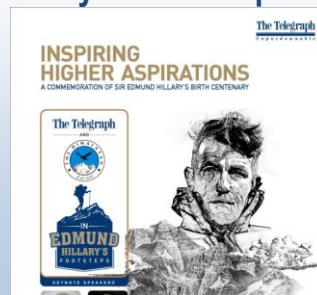
Jim Wilson and Peter Hillary in Kolkata for the Ed Hillary centenary celebrations

MARCH 2020 NO 6

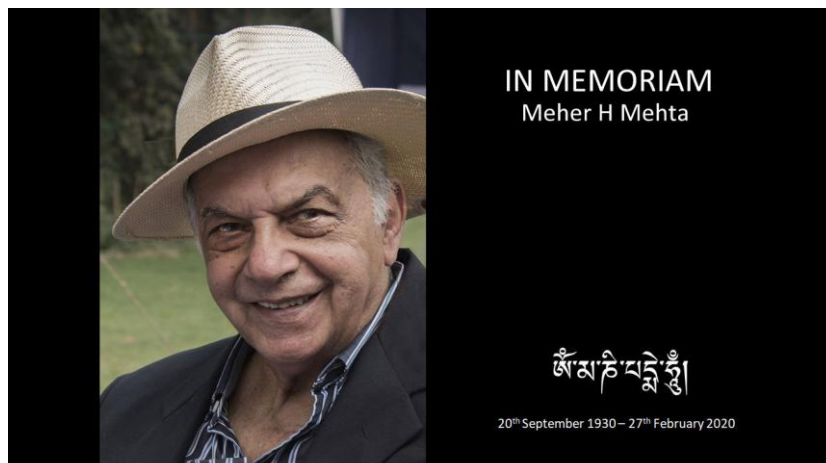
ED HILLARY – CLOSER MOMENTS Jim Wilson



INSPIRING HIGHER ASPIRATIONS Priyadarshi Gupta



BOUQUETS AND BRICKBATS Feedback from our Readers



Dear Readers,

We welcome you to the sixth issue of The Himalayan News.

2019 was the birth centenary year of Sir Edmund Hillary. The Himalayan along with The Telegraph hosted Peter Hillary, son of Sir Edmund and Jim Wilson, a long time friend of Sir Ed, in Kolkata. The 350 plus audience listened spellbound to the presentations and videos by both these two erudite speakers.

In this our sixth issue, Jim Wilson, who was part of Ed Hillary's team and worked with him for many years, pens a personal tribute to him including some interesting insights into the projects which Hillary and the Himalayan Trust carried out.

We include here a photo feature, 'Inspiring Higher Aspirations', on the evening spent by Peter Hillary and Jim Wilson in Kolkata on 12th November 2019.

On another note, this winter has been unusually harsh in the mountains with repeated snow storms and plummeting temperatures well below normal.

Popular trekking routes have been iced over and a few days ago we heard that avalanches had swept away some Korean trekkers and their Nepali guides on the way to Annapurna Base Camp, a popular trekking destination which they were unfortunately attempting in winter.

Global climate change is affecting all of us and the Himalayas are bearing major brunt of this.

Forest fires, a naturally occurring phenomenon during the dry seasons, has devastated the rain forests in the Amazon and caused unprecedented loss of flora and fauna in Australia this season. Sadly, this year most of that in the Amazon are believed to have been started by farmers and loggers clearing land for crops or grazing cattle. May good sense prevail before it is too late.

As we go to press the enormity of the corona virus pandemic is sweeping across the entire planet. One does not know how long this will last. The climbing of Everest and other major peaks in Nepal and Tibet has been closed by the respective governments. In the peak spring season trekking companies, guides, porters, hotels, lodges will all be out of business.

And finally we have some sad news to share. Mr. Meher H Mehta FRGS and former Vice President of The Himalayan Club passed away in a Kolkata hospital on February 27th 2020. Mr. Mehta was an inspiration for all of us at The Himalayan and his presence,, advice and guiding force will be sorely missed.

Sujoy Das
Rupamanjari Biswas
Editors

ED HILLARY- CLOSER MOMENTS

Jim Wilson



I was a schoolboy in 1953 when Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hillary reached the summit of Sagarmartha /Chomolungma /Everest. I was already an aspiring mountaineer and Ed instantly became my hero. Little did I know then that ten years later he and I would meet and become close friends, and that later again, through Ed, I would also meet Tenzing.

The first ascent of Sagarmartha was a tremendous feat, and Ed and Tenzing richly deserved the fame that followed. But their most deserved fame is due to what each did after that, Tenzing with the Mountaineering Institute of India, at Darjeeling, and Ed with his aid programmes in Nepal. Tenzing's work I admired only from a distance, but I was fortunate enough to be involved with Ed in his

Nepal work for 45 years, from 1963 till his death in 2008.

Ed's aid programme began almost accidentally. In 1960-61 he led a large expedition to the Sagarmartha/ Makalu region of Nepal, conducting high altitude acclimatisation research, hunting for the elusive yeti, and narrowly failing on an attempt to climb Makalu without supplementary oxygen. About midway through this expedition Ed was sitting round a campfire with some of his Sherpa friends, in a moraine valley above the Tolambau glacier. Warm with gratitude for the help Sherpas had given him and so many other western mountaineers, he said to one of his friends: "Tell us Urkien, if there were one thing we could do for your village, what should it be?" "We would like our children to go to school,

sahib. Of all the things that you have, learning is the one we most desire for our children” replied Urkien. [Sir Edmund Hillary, *Schoolhouse in the Clouds*, Doubleday, New York, 1964, pp. 1 and 2.]

Not an easy request to respond to you might well think. Ed didn’t think so. He persuaded the American sponsors of that expedition to donate extra funds, he persuaded a Kolkata aluminium company to donate a prefabricated building, he had this flown to a high temporary strip the expedition had established under Ama Dablam and then carried to Khumjung village, and he and others stayed on after the expedition ended and erected the building on a prime site at the entrance to the village. Of course a school needs more than a building, but he sorted that also, locating and hiring from Darjeeling a brilliant Sherpa headmaster, Tem Dorje, who in turn hired other Sherpa and Nepali teachers. By the middle of 1961 Khumjung school was full of children from Khumjung and Namche Bazaar and Thami bursting with eagerness to learn.

For Ed, this school was initially a one-off gesture of gratitude. But, back home in New Zealand, he started receiving petitions from surrounding villages. One read: “Respected Burra Sahib Sir Edmund Hillary. We the local people, the Sherpas of Thami, Khumbu, came to know that your honour, helping us in all respects, is going to open some more schools in Khumbu. So we Thami people are requesting your honour to open a school at Thami just like Kumjung. Though our children have eyes but still they cannot see.” [Schoolhouse in the Clouds, p. 3.]

Many might have thought: “I’ve done enough already.” Not Ed. He thought rather: “Why shouldn’t I?” And so in 1963 he led the first of 45 years of aid expeditions, eventually building and staffing and maintaining about 30 schools, and aiding in various ways more than 30 others. He established 2 hospitals and many outlying medical clinics, and two airstrips to service them. He installed water supplies, built bridges, was involved in

creating the Sagarmartha National Park ... the list goes on and on.

And it was not just that he aided, but also how he aided, that is so admirable. Unlike some western aid programmes, he never dreamed of telling his Sherpa friends what he thought they needed. He always responded to their requests, or asked them what they wanted. And he always worked with them, rather than for them, discussing with the villagers what voluntary unskilled labour they could provide, and paying the skilled stonemasons and carpenters out of funds he raised by endless speaking tours, and from funds raised by trusts in the USA, Canada, Britain and Germany, and by his own Himalayan Trust in New Zealand. Later, in keeping with his desire to work always with his Sherpa friends, he set up a Sherpa Advisory Committee in Kathmandu, to which, after a name change to Himalayan Trust Nepal, he handed over all the administration of the projects in Nepal. All these trusts continue to raise funds for Ed’s programmes, channelling the funds through the Himalayan Trust Nepal which is mainly run by former pupils of Ed’s schools.



Difficult loads for Sherpani porters to carry over mountain tracks for fourteen days.

Ed’s working with rather than for the local communities extended to how the schools and hospitals were built. The walls and the joinery were of traditional Sherpa style – thick unmortared rock walls, and timber floors, doors and window frames. Glass was added to the windows to provide light during adverse weather (wooden shutters were then used in Sherpa homes). All

of this, therefore, was easy for local trades people not only to build but also to maintain without costly visits by western trades people. But traditional Sherpa roofing was rock or timber shingles, the rock heavy, the timber subject to rot. In Sherpa houses, chimney-less in the 1960's, and occupied throughout the year, the timber shingles were well preserved by smoky tar from cooking and heating fires, though the effects on Sherpa lungs and eyes were not so beneficial. But the schools were closed for the winter, and had no cooking fires; wooden shingles would not have lasted long. So Ed introduced New Zealand style roofing, lighter rafters and purlins covered by corrugated aluminium or steel sheets interspersed with clear corrugated plastic or fibreglass sheets. These latter, along with the glass windows, made the classrooms much lighter than the cosy but dim Sherpa houses, and made them suitable for educational purposes. It was a brilliant marrying of Sherpa and New Zealand building methods.

Ed had an enquiring mind about the human condition and our place in the universe, but was not conventionally religious. Nonetheless, he admired and participated in the Tibetan Buddhist religious ceremonies of the Sherpas, and always had the school and hospital buildings, when completed, opened and blessed by lamas, preferably the Rimpoche (reincarnate Head Lama) of Thyangboche Gompa (monastery). He also responded to requests for roofing and other repairs from gompas and nunneries. Amongst many other such projects, at the Rimpoche's request he installed a better water supply for, and built a school at, Thyangboche.

Already, in the 1960/61, Ed's expedition had made a significant improvement to Sherpa health. As in New Zealand prior to the introduction of iodised salt, goitre, and children still-born or born mentally retarded and/or deaf, were major problems in the Khumbu. This was due to a lack of iodine in mountain streams and rivers. Iodised salt was not an option there then, but a New Zealand

medical specialist with the expedition had slow-release iodine injections brought in and administered. When, from 1966 onwards, Khunde hospital was in operation, these injections became routine and goitre and cretinism became things of the past. A personal story gives dramatic illustration of this. Ang Douli, wife of Ed's sirdar and close friend Mingma Tsering, had, prior to 1961, had thirteen pregnancies, from which only two children survived, one of whom was very severely mentally retarded while the other Temba, was very bright but profoundly deaf. After having iodine injections Ang Douli had two further pregnancies both of which resulted in very bright and healthy sons.

The hospitals, Khunde in 1966, and Phaphlu, lower down in the Solu region, in the mid-1970's, were again in response to requests. For both, Ed felt an airstrip to service them, and from which to fly critical patients to Kathmandu, would be desirable.



The Sherpa substitute for bulldozers levelling the Lukla airstrip.

Another tall order? Not for Ed. In my presentation at the November 12th function, I mentioned how Ann and I in 1964 were on Ed's behalf seeking a site for an airstrip as close to Khunde as altitude permitted. We were led by Lukla villagers to a site by their village. The site was long enough, but quite steeply sloping and divided into small horizontal fields with 6- to 10-foot rock walls between. Later that year Ed and Mingma, with a big team of Sherpas and Sherpanis, made short work of removing the rock walls and shifting tons of soil to make an even slope, all by muscle power alone. Ed had the

strip ploughed, then held a Sherpa party on it, with rhythmic foot-stomping dancing, which further smoothed and firmed the surface, and in came the first winged aircraft for a perfect landing. This strip continues to service Khunde hospital, and has also become one of the busiest in Nepal by providing a way for tourists to reach base camp on Sagarmartha without a two-week trek. It has also transformed the previously tiny village of Lukla into a tourist town - for better or for worse? – so the villagers had great foresight, and amazing knowledge of what fixed-wing aircraft need for landing and take-off at that altitude.

Phaphlu is a less sloping strip just below the hospital, but still a challenging one. And for Ed, building this hospital proved tragic. The whole Hillary family – Ed, his wife Louise, and his children Peter, Sarah and Belinda – were living in Kathmandu for all of 1975 while the hospital and airstrip were being created. Louise had always a great fear of flying, to the extent that she preferred to fly separately from Ed so that, in the event of an accident, their children would not lose both parents. She wanted to walk in to Phaphlu to join Ed there, but reluctantly agreed to Ed's suggestion that she and Belinda fly in. Due to the pilot failing to remove a restraint on a wing flap during his pre-flight checks the plane was uncontrollable and crashed immediately after take-off, killing all three on board.

Ed was devastated, both at the loss and because he felt directly responsible because he had persuaded Louise to fly in. It took many years before the old happy Ed fully returned to us, and they were dark years indeed. Some years later his recovery was greatly helped by his second wife, June, herself widowed when her husband, Peter Mulgrew, was killed in a dreadful plane crash in Antarctica. June and Peter had been close friends of Ed and Louise, Peter having been one of the team who drove tractors to the South Pole with Ed.

Ed carried on. With such a man nothing else was conceivable. The hospital was

completed. As with the earlier Khunde hospital it was initially staffed by foreign volunteer doctors from New Zealand and Canada. But as soon as Sherpa doctors became available, often former pupils of Ed's schools who had gone on to study medicine, they took over. Sherpa and other Nepali doctors and staff continue to run the two hospitals, and their numerous outlying medical clinics, to this day.



Ed, Graeme Dingle and the author enjoying a brief respite from battling rapids in Ganga's gorges.

Ed's initial fame, which made possible raising funds for all these projects, was due to him being above all an adventurer. He made a name for himself with daring climbs in the New Zealand alps, then joined with three other New Zealand mountaineers on an expedition to the Garhwal Himal in India, during which Mukut Parbat, about 23,000 ft., was climbed. This in turn led to him and Earle Riddiford being invited to join Eric Shipton's reconnaissance of the Nepalese approach to Sagarmartha, Nepal having just opened its borders to foreign mountaineers. Then Ed and George Lowe were invited on the 1953 British Everest expedition, with the result that we all know. Thereafter Ed led a large number of major adventures, including driving tractors to the South Pole in support of Fuch's Trans Antarctic Expedition, a New Zealand Alpine Club expedition to the Himal, the above mentioned 1960/61 high altitude research expedition, and, of course, the Indo-New Zealand expedition which travelled in jet boats up Mother Ganga from Ganga Sagar to Nand Prayag, near Badrinath.

But it was a very endearing characteristic of Ed that for him an adventure didn't have to be major or heroic. He delighted just as much in smaller less notable adventures. Keen to share his love of adventure and of the outdoors with his fellow New Zealanders, he led a group of close and adventurous friends in a New Zealand TV series titled "The Adventure World of Sir Edmund Hillary". We sailed to and climbed some striking sea pillars at the tip of an island offshore from his home city of Auckland, we drove jet boats up two challenging South Island rivers, and we canoed and rafted down another wild South Island river then made a first ascent of a 3,000 foot rock wall on a high southern mountain. The film bug captivated him, and we also made a film of climbing a peak and rafting down a river in Fiji, and another travelling through India, by a variety of transport including camels and ox-carts, from Cape Comorin to the Kulu valley. This was during the time when he was the New Zealand High Commissioner to India.



The waterfall in the Alakananda which our boats couldn't leap up

But adventures didn't even have to be this big, or be filmed. Any little challenge could be responded to with delight. The families of two of Ed's closest friends, Mike Gill and I, were camped with Ed's family by a beach on the island offshore from Auckland. Two miles away another much smaller island reared boldly out of the open sea. We had with us a trusty inflatable rubber dinghy, acquired from the American firm Sears Roebuck, to which Ed was camping and adventure advisor, and used on previous adventures and films. One

morning Ed was looking at this island with a bright gleam in his eye. As I joined him on the shore he said: 'Why don't we try to sail to Arid Island and back in the dinghy?' "Well for a start it doesn't have a mast or sail" I suggested mildly, "or a rudder". "But we can rig an oar as a mast, a tent fly as a sail, and the other oar as a rudder" he responded, undaunted as ever. And so we did. We sailed to the island downwind on a gentle breeze, then, fortune favouring the brave as usual; we scored a wind shift to sail downwind back again. Had the wind remained as it was our ability to tack the dinghy upwind would have been severely limited, but we could have rowed back. Ever after Ed and I would reminisce laughingly about our "great" adventure, and jokingly wonder why it never made front page news!

I have written a lot about what projects and adventures Ed led, but nothing yet specific about his style of leadership. His style was in wonderful contrast to my image of 'stiff upper lip' British leaders such as Fuchs and Scott of the Antarctic. They tended to keep themselves aloof from their 'underlings' lest it weaken their command and lessen their dignity; and tended to make important decisions on their own then order the others to carry them out. Whereas Ed was what I think of as a 'kiwi' leader. [A kiwi is a curious flightless bird unique to New Zealand. It has become our national symbol, and we fondly refer to ourselves as 'Kiwis'] We Kiwis are an independent, even a 'bloody-minded', lot, and we don't take kindly to being ordered around, nor have much truck with some people thinking themselves superior to others. So Kiwi leaders are much more one of the crew, discussing plans and asking people to do things rather than deciding on their own and ordering others. Ed was a perfect example of this. He would discuss plans with us, we would decide together, then we would happily carry out our part in a plan we had contributed to. In all my expeditions with Ed, over 45 years, I remember only one time when Ed ordered us to do something, and that time was fully justified. In 1963 we

youngsters were let loose for an attempt on Taweche, a fierce peak towering above the village of Pangboche where we were building a school. Ed and some older and more construction savvy members of the expedition remained below to continue working on the school. The weather was not favourable to either enterprise, brief fine mornings giving way to grey mist and drizzle and rain and snow. Our progress on the mountain was painstakingly slow, as was progress on the school. Each evening we would radio our progress, usually very little, to Ed. After about a week, one evening we radio-ed as usual, and received a reply from Ed which we claimed not to understand, though it would be more truthful to say we didn't want to understand it. Mike Gill grabbed the microphone and improvised wildly: "Understand you to say continue the assault." Ed's reply was so emphatic it seemed to bypass the radio and boom straight into our ears: "Negative, negative, come down to Pangboche immediately to assist with the building." We came down to Pangboche, immediately, and during a week of continuing bad weather, during which we could have made little if any progress on Taweche, we were able to speed up progress on the building before returning in better weather to the mountain.

Another amazing thing about Ed's leadership was his organizational ability. Before all the expeditions I was involved we would all receive several sheets of lined foolscap paper covered in Ed's distinctive handwriting. For each day of the three month expedition what we would be doing on that day was carefully noted. If we hadn't already known Ed well we might have thought: "Oh dear, he sounds like an inflexible martinet." But we did know Ed well, and we knew that if circumstances in the field required a change of plan, Ed's meticulous plan would be abandoned in a flash and a new plan produced in consultation with us. (We had been well-consulted already during the drawing up of the original plan). It became a standard joke with us: "Which plan are we on

today Ed?" we would ask. "Plan 47b" Ed would reply, laughing.

Laughing – apart from the dark period after Louise's and Belinda's deaths, my dominant impression of Ed is of him laughing, which of course made him a very enjoyable friend indeed, one who could lift his friends out of momentary low moods by the inspiration of his infectious laughing spirit. He loved a good laugh, even if it was at his own expense.

Which brings me finally to Ed Hillary as a friend. I can imagine none better. Once you had earned his trust and affection – which was easy if you worked hard and got on well with everyone and loved a good laugh – he was loyal and supportive even if you made mistakes. I mentioned in my talk that nine years before the Ocean to Sky expedition I had sunk half his fleet early on a jet boat expedition in Nepal. Not a word of recrimination – he knew I had done my best in difficult and dangerous circumstances, and that was enough for him even though my best has been a complete disaster! And of course he drew up plan 47b and we completed the adventure with the one remaining boat. Nine years later on Ocean to Sky, with the best jet boat driver in the world, Jon Hamilton, at the wheel of the lead boat, and his very experienced son Mike in charge of the second boat, whom did he choose to drive the third? – the still very inexperienced me! At least it made for good footage for the film. Jon and Mike made it all look easy, whereas I managed to make it look difficult and dangerous indeed!

And it wasn't just that he was a loyal friend. It was also that he was always such good fun to be with, always dreaming up new adventures, always laughing, always inspiring us to new levels of daring and competence, while at the same time always judging risks soberly and tackling them carefully. It is no wonder that we all love him dearly, and would leap at any opportunity to join him on a new adventure, or simply to sit round a campfire with him enjoying each other's company, and laughing at ourselves.

INSPIRING HIGHER ASPIRATIONS

Priyadarshi Gupta



Commemoration of the Birth Centenary of Sir Edmund Hillary in Kolkata, on the 12th November 2019
(A joint program between THE TELEGRAPH and THE HIMALAYAN)

'On this lonely planet of freeze-dried food, computer generated fabrics and commercialised mountain climbing, it is almost impossible to imagine the earth-shaking impact that Hillary and Tensing's achievement had in 1953. For many it represented the last of the earth's greatest challenges. It placed Hillary in the lineage of great terrestrial explorers such as Marco Polo, Christopher Columbus, Lewis and Clark, Stanley and Livingston, Perry and Scott and Amundsen, Sir Richard Burton, Ernest Shackleton, Charles Lindbergh – explorers driven to find, step, see, go and endure, where no person had gone before.'

- Paul Stanley Ward

Keynote Speakers - Peter Hillary and Dr James Wilson

'In Edmund Hillary's footsteps...'

'His legacy, Everest 1953, the Ocean to Sky jet boat expedition up the Ganges'

&

Our relationships with Ed Hillary as father and friend'

On the 12th of November 2019, all roads led to the Kalakunj Auditorium in Kolkata for the much awaited commemoration of one of the most renowned personalities of the twenty first century – Sir Edmund Hillary. A full house and widely covered by THE TELEGRAPH and ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA as well as the TV channel ABP ANANDA, it was a most enjoyable as well as inspiring program and the speakers kept the audience spell bound as they reminisced through the life of Sir Edmund Hillary (1919–2008). It is not surprising that he had been honoured with the Knight of the Order of the Garter, Companion of the Order of New Zealand, Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire.



Jim Wilson delivering his presentation and an image from "Ocean to Sky"

His adventurous feats and mountaineering achievements was followed by remarkable philanthropy activities (that are also continued today by the Himalayan Trust in Nepal), for the then impoverished Sherpa community of Nepal - this legacy was narrated by his mountaineer son Peter Hillary and close friend Dr James Wilson, rather lucidly and animatedly – with the backdrop of rare and old images and video clippings from the past.



A packed auditorium at the presentation



Veteran mountaineer Bhanu Banerjee speaks to Peter Hillary and Jim Wilson



Jim Wilson being felicitated by The Himalayan team



AVM (Retd) Apurba Bhattacharyya introduces the evening



Debraj Dutta and other members of The Himalayan felicitate Peter Hillary



TIME PASSAGES - MEHER H MEHTA

Priyadarshi Gupta



Some members of The Himalayan team at Mr. Meher H Mehta's residence

It is not often that one comes across a personality whose motivational skills would magnetise young mountain lovers and climbers to dream of achieving Himalayan excellence. He would stimulate the intellectual yearning of the erudite mountain lover, as well as kindle the fertile mind of the incorrigibly romantic young mountaineer.

It was way back in 2004 that I had first met Mr. Meher H Mehta, FRGS (affectionately referred to as MHM by us). I had just returned from a family trek in Sikkim, and was introduced to him by Dr Rupamanjari Biswas. He radiated great aspirations and seemed to be someone who was in the process of turning a moribund Kolkata section of mountain club into an active and dynamic happening place.

I had joined the club out of curiosity and stayed on as its member for many years, learning many things from MHM in the process. MHM could attract the young and old, with his articulate speeches and phenomenal organisational ability. He would burn the mid night oil communicating globally with renowned mountaineers and environmentalists whilst chalking out programs of International standards. Even the Kolkata Newspapers began covering these programs and seminars.

I realised that this tall and straight talking person, one who had worked his way up in the banking industry to the top echelon of ANZ GRINZLAYS Bank (with several years being overseas) in his

professional career till his retirement, was someone of immense personal integrity and charisma. Most admired him for these traits as they set him apart from most. He could appear to be condescending at times towards many, but his intention was always for the development of the movement he had started. He was also one not to cower down when his ideas of freedom of self-expression was not looked down upon kindly by many detractors. It caused heart burn in many but he would remain unrelenting due to his unflinching self-beliefs.

MHM was an astute visionary who found ways and means of building his enterprise with infectious support from the likes of the late Russi Mody, late Aditya Kashyap and the late Guenther Wehrman (past Consul General of Germany in Kolkata). He attracted many more who sought to support him without any expectations in return.

On the mountain front, he found acumen and support in the planning and execution of 7000m peak expeditions in the form of AVM (Retd) Apurba Kumar Bhattacharyya. With the induction of late Pradeep Sahoo (an engineer and dreamy eyed mountaineer) into the management of the local section, he was able to kindle interest in attempting difficult peaks in the Himalaya and the Karakoram, since Pradeep was able to support his fund raising activity. He propagated the ideals of thinking differently and thinking high - of thought and action.

Great climbs were achieved in the bargain - especially on Saser Kangri IV in the Karakoram, Nilkanth peak in the Garhwal, Jongsong peak in the Sikkim Himalaya, amongst so many others. The crown in the jewel was the first ascent of Mt Plateau (7287m) in the Indian Karakoram by his band of intrepid climbers.

MHM was concerned by environmental degradation and climate change effects on the Himalaya. He pushed us to organize many a seminar on the climate change to bring awareness amongst the people. MHM loved to read and write. He maintained a phenomenal collection of books on the Himalaya or of Himalayan adventure. I had the good fortune of helping him edit several publications on different mountain peaks. He always had an incredible eye for perfection and detail. These publications were well received in the fraternity.

MHM has now moved on and become a part of the twinkling stars that adorn and glitter in the night sky! Yet his inspiration that led to the formation of THE HIMALAYAN in 2017 by a handful of us close to him, would seek to continue the meaningful work initiated by him, for the times to come...A vision that encompasses ventures outdoors and indoors, along with the incorporation of a balanced and incisive dissemination platform for the reporting of Himalayan Activity— Of Climbing, Science, Literature and the yonder.

And, if I ever have the good fortune of seeking a shooting star flash by in the nocturnal sky, I would silently wish - Abou Ben Adhem! (May your tribe increase)

For such humans are not born every day!

DEAR WARM WISHES, RAJAN,
OF THE KEYNOTE
SPEAKERS OF THE
HIMALAYAN IN EDMUND
HILLARY'S FOOTSTEPS.
BEST WISHES WITH
LOVE, MEHER.
20. NOVEMBER 2019

PETER HILLARY / DR. JAMES WILSON,
THE SPEAKERS, c/o RAJANMANJARI,
"THE HIMALAYAN"
KALAKUND ADHORIUM
KALAMUNDRA
48 SHAKESPEARE SARANI,
CALCUTTA

The last letter received from Mr. Meher H Mehta on the occasion of The Himalayan event
"In Edmund Hillary's Footsteps".

BOUQUETS AND BRICKBATS

AVM (retd) Apurba K. Bhattacharya

Bhanu Banerjee's piece on "OF CHIVAS SCOTCH, SCHOOLS & HOSPITALS IN SOLUKHUMBU" was most illuminating & interesting. Look forward to hearing more from him on 20 Jul 2019. Keep it up Raja & Editorial group of TH.

Bill Aitken

Most appropriate to read of Sir Ed's auction of the bottle Chivas whisky for Sherpa welfare. A neighbour presented me a bottle of the genuine stuff recently for my 85th birthday and as I have a prostate condition I take a snifter before lunch. The Chivas Regal blend is a beautifully balanced experience that enlarges being and heightens inner vision. In an age that swears by the seaweed cum iodine flavour of Single Malt Islay it is fitting this distillation of the essence of Highland rivers and mountains should have found its way into Everest history. The ultimate tribute to Chivas is that it enjoys premium popularity in the Punjab despite both its bottle and contents being a million miles away from Keith in Scotland.

It made interesting reading. Some of the photos are superb and a delight for the mountain lovers. My sincere appreciations to the Editorial team. They have done a marvelous job. Thanks once again and Best Wishes for future endeavours.

Tom Nakamura

Many thanks for sending the Himalayan news letter No.5. I have delivered it to some 300 Japanese readers. All good wishes,

Subhankar Paul

Thank you for the publication of a nice issue of the newsletter. It's a very good reading with multiple excellent articles by eminent writers.

Just a small typing error caught my eyes. On the top of the title page of Bhanu Banerjee's article the publication issue was shown as June 2017 instead of 2019, as shown in all other pages.

Debolin Sen

Thank you! Enjoyed reading it. Does it mean henceforth I should expect a newsletter every month?

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