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## INTRODUCTION

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For the first time we are producing a Journal and hope to continue to do so once a year. The object is to give the many members of our flourishing Society, who for one reason or another are not able to attend the talks which the Society arranges during the year at the Alpine Club and elsewhere, a chance to read the text of some of them at their leisure; also to provide the more fortunate members who enjoyed the talks and saw the wonderful slides that accompanied them, the opportunity of renewing their pleasure.

Our thanks are due to our distinguished lecturers for their kindness in providing the material for this Journal.

It is a happy coincidence that our small Journal makes its first appearance in the year of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee.

ARTHUR KELLAS

**CONTENTS**

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**The Conservation of The Hanuman Dhoka Palace**

by John Sanday, B.Arch., ARIBA

**The Road to Everest - From Bananas to Edelweiss**

by A. D. Schilling, N.D.Arb

**Some Birds of the Himalayas**

by Lieutenant Colonel T. C. White, RE

**Incidents on Everest**

by Major Jon Fleming, The Parachute Regiment

**Notes on The Britain-Nepal Society**

# THE CONSERVATION OF THE HANUMAN DHOKA PALACE

## AN INTRODUCTION

A Talk given to the Britain-Nepal Society at the Royal Nepalese Embassy in London

by John Sanday, Esq., B. Arch., ARIBA

The Hanuman Dhoka Conservation Project was conceived in the middle of 1971 after various consultant missions, initiated by UNESCO, were carried out concerning the Conservation of Cultural Tourism in Nepal. The Project is only a small section of a much larger concept in conservation that at present only covers historic buildings and the care of museum objects. Hopefully the project will be expanded as a result of H. M. G.'s promotion of the proposed Masterplan for the conservation of the cultural heritage of the Kathmandu valley.

Nevertheless in the eyes of the local people and comparing it with other similar undertakings in the field of Conservation, the Hanuman Dhoka Conservation Project is a prominent undertaking; it is the first Conservation Project to be carried out in Nepal by His Majesty's Government of Nepal with UNESCO/UNDP collaboration. The prime purpose of this Project has been the establishment of a training programme for both administrative staff as well as building craftsmen and, ultimately, the office will be expanded to become a division within the Department of Archaeology, responsible for the maintenance and repair of historic buildings and their environment.

The group of buildings generally referred to as the Hanuman Dhoka Royal Palace, at present under repair, is claimed to be the first palace group to be constructed in the valley by the Shah dynasty and they commemorate the conquest of the valley. They are therefore buildings of both cultural and historic interest presenting a very fine example of architectural prowess in their magnitude on the one hand, and exquisite carved detail on the other.

The early history of the Hanuman Dhoka Palace is obscure; little information can be traced prior to the rule of King Prithivinarayan Shah. Prior to King Prithivinarayan Shah's reign the Kathmandu valley was divided into three separate kingdoms with Palace Durbars in Lalitpur, Bhaktapur and Kantipur, the major cities in the valley. In 1768 A.D. King Prithivinarayan Shah moved from his kingdom of Gorkha intent on unifying Nepal, and successfully captured the three cities of the valley which constituted the ruling power of Nepal at that time. To commemorate this achievement the 100 ft. tower, known as Basantapur, was erected in 1770 and supposedly completed in nine months. Recently discovered data, however, suggests that the tower was extended above an earlier structure. Later the Vilas Mandir enclosing the Lohan Chowk was extended, probably on an earlier foundation as well, at the request of Prithivinarayan Shah, and the work was executed by his son, Pratap Singh Shah. To complete the building as it stands today the three conquered cities of Bhaktapur, Lalitpur and Kirtipur, which was the last stronghold of the Mallas, had their craftsmen design and construct the three other corner towers in recognition of the unification of the valley. They now carry respectively the names of the cities that built them as a memento of this occasion.

Stage I of the Project which was completed at the end of December 1974 involved the repair of buildings overlooking the large rectangular courtyard known as the Nasal Chowk which has been the traditional setting for the Coronation of the Hindu Monarchs of Nepal since the time of King Prithivinarayan Shah. It was indeed the venue for the recent coronation of His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bickram Shah Dev, on the 24th of February 1975. The renovation completed during Stage I formed the back-cloth to this important occasion and gave our Project world wide recognition, as well as considerable local prestige.

In Stage I evidence of repair work to the Basantapur tower was visible from all over the Kathmandu valley. This tower, rising 100 ft., cocooned in bamboo scaffolding, was the centre of speculation for many months. Although outwardly no apparent work had been visible for some time, major structural repairs were undertaken to the topmost roof which was severely damaged during the major earthquake in 1934. A new structural base to the roof was inserted replacing the old damaged timbers; the pinnacle and base, seemingly the size of a matchbox from below, but in truth measuring 15'-0" long by 5'-0" wide and standing 10'-0" above the roof, was dismantled, lowered to the ground, repaired and afterwards re-erected in its former position.

One of the more fascinating examples of detailed repair and Conservation work was that carried out to the Kirtipur tower. This little tower, a copper roofed, dome-shaped construction, a form hitherto unknown in Nepal, was found in the most appalling state of disrepair and almost in a state of collapse. Under the guidance of Mr. Wolfgang Korn from Germany, a team of carpenters methodically dismantled the structure and copied in every detail the original timbers. The carved windows and struts were carefully examined and handed over to a skilled group of carvers from Bhaktapur for careful repair or for the defective parts to be recarved. The Kirtipur tower was stripped to a mere skeleton of its former self while this process of repair or faithful reproduction has been carried out. During this time major structural repairs to supporting timbers took place and some modifications carried out to strengthen the tower. In one instance a reinforced concrete lintel replaced a timber beam ravaged by beetle and wet rot.

The tower now reveals its earlier structure and carvings in their full glory, the latter having now been returned to their former positions after cleaning, repair and chemical treatment against further deterioration.

The copper roof covering posed a further problem. In terms of conservation, the original roof covering should have been replaced if its condition was satisfactory. But in this case it was considered that the copper had outlived its use as it was badly damaged as a result of splits and perforations. The copper sheeting was carefully removed and new copper sheets were fashioned so as to match the original in outward appearance and size. The fixings have been incorporated into the welted joints to avoid piercing the water-proof copper membrane — the main reason for failure in the earlier roof.

The repair work to the tower has been carried out so as to reproduce faithfully the original pieces even down to the metal fixings which have been handforged in the original manner.

The skills and techniques discovered and established in Stage I are now being used as a matter of course in the second stage. The original labour force and craftsmen have returned, despite six months interlude, to continue practising their skills and to enjoy witnessing the rebirth of a former art.

Stage II of the Hanuman Dhoka Conservation Project involved the repair of the remaining two towers of Bhaktapur and of Lalitpur which form part of the Eastern range of the Vilas Mandir. The Lalitpur tower had become a familiar landmark at the western end of Juddha Sadak (New Road), the main shopping centre of Kathmandu. It had come to be known as the leaning tower because it was also severely damaged by the 1934 earthquake and was in fact leaning  $15^{\circ}$  from vertical. The design of the building permitted no diagonal bracing in the timber framed structure between its brick base and the very heavy hipped roof over it. Through lack of bracing the roof 'slid' horizontally and remained parallel to the ground fracturing, damaging, and exposing to the elements the delicate carvings.

The Bhaktapur tower, being octagonal in plan has a structural advantage over the remaining three towers and, not surprisingly, was virtually undamaged by the earthquake. Nevertheless the ravages of time, climate and the unfortunate coatings of paint have necessitated cleaning treatment and repair of the carvings and timberwork.

It was soon discovered that the earthquake had laid open the structure to the heavy monsoon rains and the resultant timber decay and insect attack had weakened the structure drastically. It therefore became necessary for major unexpected structural repairs to be carried out which necessitated the total dismantling of the Lalitpur tower and much of its associated structure. Our experiences gained in the first stage made this a simple matter and the timber work and carving was recorded and referenced prior to cleaning and repair, while the base to the lower was consolidated and linked in to the structural ring beam system set out in Stage I. The former tiled roof, which apparently withstood the earthquake, exemplified the quality of clay and tile roofing that could be achieved in previous times as it had afforded excellent protection to the roof structure, meaning that only minimal replacement of timber was necessary.

Throughout the rebuilding we have been aware of the inherent structural weakness of this tower and every opportunity has been taken to strengthen joints by metal plates or cramps and, at an upper level, steel angle irons have been incorporated in the structure to form a latticed beam to brace the building against horizontal movement.

The Bhaktapur tower, however, underwent mostly a major maintenance programme with only minor repairs and as before the replacement of the poor quality brickwork with the traditional Telia brick, one of the products of our research into materials. Most of the carvings were cleaned in situ. Although this takes longer the same quality of work can be reached obviating the theory that a building needs to be dismantled to be properly cleaned.

All timbers that are replaced in the building have been firstly immersed in the specially constructed bath filled with a chemical prepared to prevent any organic degradation of the timbers. Other vulnerable sections that cannot be removed from the buildings are sprayed in situ.

Roofs are always the most vulnerable part of a building and this vulnerability is accentuated in a monsoon climate and particularly in the type of roof construction used in Nepal. A roof covering of porous clay tiles bedded into a 10 cm. thickness of clay is obviously conducive to plant growth on the roof and unfavourable fungal conditions attacking the boarding and roof structure below.

A method has now been devised to combat this process of decay. The timber is treated, a water-proof layer of tarfelt is laid over the boarding; a specially selected clay (hopefully with no plant life) is applied over the tarfelt and the clay is sprayed with herbicides. Before they are laid, the tiles are soaked in a silicone preparation to prevent absorption of moisture. They are then laid in the traditional way. The lowest course of tiling has been drilled and nailed to the boarding to prevent falling out, another common failing, and to provide additional support to the upper roof tiles. These techniques are experimental and it is hoped that they may prove a more lasting protection to the previously vulnerable timber structure.

Among many other ambitions set out in the proposals for this Conservation Project, has been an endeavour to regenerate the former interest in wood carving, and to try to set up local or family wood carving Guilds that would be registered with the Conservation Project Office, as capable of producing artistic rather than commercial work. These people would be employed on an ever increasing scale, not only to carry out conservation and restoration work such as that described above, but also to work on any new religious buildings that may require carving. As a long term policy, this would not only maintain the original concept of Wood Carving in its traditional form, not only ensure skilled and willing craftsmen for conservation work, but also increase the income to these families over and above that which they manage to reap from the land.

Another notable achievement in the first stage has been the establishment of a technique for cleaning and conserving the beautiful carved timbers. Previously all the carvings and brickwork had been painted and in many cases there was evidence of up to eight layers of colours applied to the carvings. After initial cleaning experiments it was generally agreed that the carvings should not be repainted. Historical evidence for unpainted woodwork was fortunately discovered when part of an adjacent 19th century building was dismantled revealing older wood carvings which had not been painted with paint. The brickwork was also heavily painted covering over a very high quality glazed brick, a unique feature of the Malla building era and known as the Telia brick. It was only after closely examining the building that it was discovered that paint had been used to achieve unifying effects in building which were constructed in several phases and with different qualities of brickwork. Fortunately, the paint was mostly a distemper or water paint and could easily be removed by washing. Even so the building had to be washed from its top to the ground.

At first it seemed that we would only be able to clean a few sections on the building as it was thought that all the work would have to be executed in situ. It was soon discovered, however, that much of the woodwork of the windows and struts could be safely removed and more conveniently cleaned away from the building. The problem of dismantling, cleaning and replacing each piece of carving to its precise original position was overcome by a simple but effective referencing system and a fully disciplined cleaning group. Thus,

/every piece.....

every piece of carving, of which there must have been somewhere around fifteen thousand, was given a reference and identified on a diagram. Each piece kept its number throughout its cleaning, repairing and chemical treatment and the number was only removed once it had been replaced and had been checked against the diagram. In this way the principles of conservation have been faithfully followed and there has been no falsification of historical evidence.

The rediscovery of some of the earlier traditional building materials and techniques has been a particularly interesting outcome of research carried out in Stage I. A notable success was the establishment of the early technique for the making of the traditional Teliya brick. This brick which is a hand made wedge-shaped slip-glazed brick was last produced commercially over a hundred years ago and has long since been considered a 'dead' tradition. However, after exhaustive research and perseverance by our office staff and a brickyard in Patan, the original technique was finally evolved and bricks are now being successfully produced on a commercial basis. Because of our desire to achieve an exact reproduction of the original, bricks from the Basantapur tower were analysed by experts in London. The difference in chemical make up and quality were represented in terms of 1 or 2 percent; a very satisfactory conclusion to a lengthy research.

Although comparatively speaking, the Hanuman Dhoka Conservation Project is a drop in the ocean compared to the extensive repair works to be faced in the valley, a start had to be made somewhere. It is hoped therefore by the Project's experience and example that other structures at present crumbling and disappearing under the onslaught of each monsoon will be salvaged and repaired and that the future of the Nepalese Culture, so vividly depicted in her historic buildings and now in jeopardy, will be saved for the enjoyment of future generations.

Editor's Note

The Society is very proud to be associated in a small way with Mr. John Sanday's work by meeting the cost of restoring the very fine SURJYA (Sun) window in the HANUMAN DHOKA.

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THE ROAD TO EVEREST - FROM BANANAS TO EIDELWEISS

A Talk given to the Britain-Nepal Society at The Alpine Club

by A. D. Schilling, Esq., N.D. Arb.

The talk, illustrated by two hundred and forty colour transparencies and supplemented with tape recordings made in Nepal, described a trek from Kathmandu to Kalapattar (18,500 ft.) and the base camp of Mount Everest at the head of the Khumbu Glacier.

The group started after two days in Kathmandu. Many of the street trees of the city are introduced species. Silk Oaks, Bottle Brushes, Eucalyptus species, Banyan Banyan trees and Jacarandas are the most commonly seen trees, but trees native to the Indian sub-continent such as Grape Myrtle, the Indian Bean Tree and the Holy Figs were also fairly frequent. The walk commenced, after a two hour journey by landrover, at Lamosangu in the Sun Kosi Valley and for the first week followed a route eastwards



through low hot valleys and across hill passes of approximately eight to nine thousand feet. People and plants seen en route were illustrated, and a tape sequence of school children singing was heard. Plants of the lower hot valleys included Banana, Long Needled Pine, the exotic Frangipani and the fragrant pink flowered Luculia gratissima.

Later, after crossing the 11,500 ft. high Lamjura Pass through mixed temperate forest, conifer forest, later seas of immense rhododendrons and finally masses of alpine gentians, the trek descended into the dramatic depths of the Dudh Kosi Valley and at last (after 10 days) turned northwards towards the Khumbu mountains. Three days later Namche Bazaar was reached and the next day (day 14) the trek arrived at the mystical Thangboche Monastery where two nights were spent in order to acclimatise. The next day was spent taking in the beauty of the situation. The autumn colour of Berberis and Willow contrasted with the more subtle tones of Juniper, Pine and Silver Fir. Wherever one looked the backcloth was always the mighty Khumbu peaks and far below could be heard the constant roar of Himalayan rivers. Then the party moved up the wilder Imja Khola Valley through Pangboche, below the wonderful peak of Ama Dablam and on to the windy Sherpa settlement at Pheriche.

From here Yumcho Peak was ascended (16,500 ft.) in order to admire the mighty peaks of Makalu and Baruntse - also to help the acclimatisation. After two nights at Pheriche the way led on to Lobuche at 16,000 ft. and finally on Day 19 Gorak Shep camp was reached at 17,200 ft. The party was now very close to the limits of vegetation. Dwarf edelweiss, alpine grasses and cushion plants such as saxifrage, and rosace, and sandworts were indicative of the harshness of nature at this altitude. In the afternoon of the same day Kalapattar (18,500 ft.) was ascended and a superb sunset was watched and photographed on Everest, Lhotse and Nuptse as the snows turned from pale pink through deepest amber. Descent to camp in the dark.

On Day 20 to Everest base camp up the strange ice-seraced "Phantom-Alley" of the main Khumbu glacier - an eerie experience. The notorious Khumbu Icefall was close above and most forbidding to contemplate.

The return was made via the Sherpa villages of Pheriche, Pangboche, Porche, Kumjung and Manche Bazaar and the flight out from Lukla brought the trek to an exciting close.

The lecture concluded with the strains of music recorded locally and a medley of slides summarising highlights of the journey.

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## SOME BIRDS OF THE HIMALAYAS

A Talk given to the Britain-Nepal Society at The Alpine Club

by Lieutenant-Colonel T. C. White, late R. E.

### Introduction

It is not my intention to show you a whole lot of slides of different birds but to show you only a few birds and to deal with them in some detail, and in order to illustrate a point I may digress to birds in some other parts of the tropics. Birdwatching is not only seeing a bird and ticking it off a list - although many people confine themselves to this least interesting part of the game - but it is also the study of habits, sociology, adaptations, evolution, the reasons why birds do certain things; this is the really interesting part of the business of ornithology.

It is of some interest to look at the world-wide scene of birds before looking more closely at the Himalayas. The world is divided into eight zoological regions - Nearctic, Neotropic, Palaeartic, Ethiopian, Malagasy, Oriental, Australasian and Oceanic - and these regions related to the world-wide avian distribution in groups of families when they were originally designated. The Avian population of the world is divided into 28 Orders, 154 Families and more than 8,000 species. 63 Families are common to both the Old and New Worlds (e.g. Swallows); 57 are confined to the Old World only (e.g. Minivets) and 34 to the New World only (e.g. Toucans). The great majority of species occur in the tropics and this is largely because of the Tropical Rain Forest - more of this later - there are for instance 3,000 of the total 8,000 species in the Neotropic region (South America) which has over 2 million square miles of Tropical Rain Forest, and only 750 species in the Nearctic region (North America) which has little or no Rain Forest. Compare this with the 450 or so species in the UK.

These populations are not stationary and are constantly altering as migration takes place, which brings us to the interesting position of Nepal which lies on the borders of the Oriental and Palaeartic Regions, and thus we find both the Flora and the Fauna representative of both European and Asian types. There are 750 species of birds in Nepal (compare with the UK, similar in size but with only 450 species) only one of which - The Spiney Babbler - is endemic to the country. So we find in Nepal many birds of the Palaeartic region which of course we know from our own country, like the Pipits, Starlings, Larks, Wrynecks, Bramblings, Kestrel and so on. Some of these are migratory like the Starlings. Some are winter visitors like the Wrynecks, Tree Pipits and the Cuckoo and some others are partly resident and partly winter visitors like the Lesser Kestrel. Then there are the many representatives of the Oriental Region such as the Barbets, Babblers, Minivets and so on. Most of these birds are resident in Nepal but some are summer visitors like the Indian Cuckoo. Enough of general terms; now for some details.

### Cuckoos - The Koel

First a recording of a sound you will surely know. The Koel, or Indian Koel as it should be known, is really a member of the Cuckoo family; is both a resident bird and a summer visitor from India and like our own European cuckoo is brood parasitic - i. e., it lays its eggs in another bird's nest and allows the host bird to bring up the young. Unlike our cuckoo which has a wide variety of host birds (up to fifty have been recorded) and a remarkable facility for making its eggs resemble that of its host, the Koel is a specialist and always lays its eggs in the nest of the Crow. Not surprisingly the Crow and the Koel are great enemies and this is why whenever you see a Koel it is being chased by a Crow. Whereas our European cuckoo normally lays only one egg in each host's nest, the Koel knows no such refinement and as many as eleven Koel's eggs have been found in one Crow's nest. It is indeed interesting to speculate why some cuckoos should vary the host and others concentrate on only one. The European cuckoo's egg hatches at about the same time as that of its host's or sometimes a day or so before and the young cuckoo in order to ensure that it gets a sufficient food supply always ejects either the eggs or the host's young from the nest. The Koel however has a different system. Its eggs take about 13/14 days to incubate whereas the host Crow's eggs take 17/19 days. The young Koel does not bother to eject the host's eggs because by the time they hatch he will be several days old and big enough to ensure that he will obtain all the food that the parent birds bring to the nest. The young crows, when they hatch, are steadily starved to death. The Koel has another clever trick which is designed to help this system; the fledgling Koel's plumage exactly resembles that of a fledgling crow and this is quite remarkable because the normal rule is that where sexual dimorphism occurs (i. e., where the plumage of the female bird is different from that of the male) the plumage of the fledgling, whether it be male or female, always closely resembles that of the adult female - for reasons of camouflage at the nest. This remarkable adaptation presumably provides added stimulus to the Crow to feed the young Koel.

### The Indian Cuckoo

This oriental cuckoo looks very like our own European cuckoo, the main difference being a sub-terminal black bar on the tail. It is both resident in Nepal and a summer visitor from India where it breeds widely. Its call is well known to all who have visited Nepal. Now birds, like people, have their dialects and the call of the Indian Cuckoo in Malaysia, although substantially the same call has certain differences that are easily heard, the main difference being the pitch of the last note. The reason I am playing these two recordings to you is in order to try to show you how very bad we are at describing the calls of birds. I have extracted the descriptions of this call from all the major ornithological works covering the Oriental region and in eight separate works there are no less than eleven quite different descriptions! Most of them are onomatopoeia, no bad thing in itself but not in such profusion. All bird books suffer from this almost total inability to accurately describe sound. The written description is only accurate to whoever wrote it. There are other methods; the musical Sol fa notation can easily be used for many simple calls and nearly everyone can read music to some extent. But there are many sounds that birds make that cannot easily be represented by this method. The use of sound spectographs is now becoming more common and we will certainly see more of these in use in bird books in the future. A sound spectograph, or sonagram as

it is sometimes called, is a graphical representation of sound, the axes of the graph being time in seconds and frequency in cycles per second or kilohertz as we must now call them. With a little experience in reading sonagrams it is surprising what can be gleaned from them. After that diversion let's have a close look at the Hoopoe, common enough in the Himalayas and a rare visitor to England.

### The Hoopoe

An interesting bird right from the start because it is biologically in a family of its own; it is the only species in the family. The Hoopoe has a long pedigree in human culture and we first hear of it as a hieroglyph in ancient Egypt; Jereus, King of Crete was transformed into a Hoopoe as a punishment; Mohammedans regard this bird as the favourite and confidante of King Solomon; it is the Lapwing of the Bible and has been prominent in literature for its magical and medicinal properties from ancient Egyptian times right up to the 1750's; it is referred to in Dr. R. James "pharmacopoeia universalis". The Hoopoe has a foul nest, unlike most other birds, and the nest is easily found by its smell. The usual form of avian sanitation is imperfectly practised and indeed the Hoopoe, and the young birds in the nest have a gland that will secrete a foul smelling substance to augment the already foul smelling nest when danger threatens. Birds normally practise nest sanitation only as an aid to camouflage and it is an interesting adaptation that the Hoopoe should use an entirely different method to ward off predators. From an unclean bird to a particularly clean one:

### Hornbills: Giant Hornbill

This is a huge hornbill, 44-47 inches from tip of bill to tip of tail and with a wing span of some six feet. One of a family of 45 species confined to the Old World and one of four that occur in Nepal. Hornbills are particularly interesting because of their biological peculiarities. Firstly the remarkable bills the purpose of which is imperfectly known but it seems likely that there are a large number of reasons for this particular piece of evolution. The huge bills are extremely light and of a fine cellular construction which has great strength - masterpieces of engineering. Another anatomical peculiarity is that the first two vertebrae are fused together, unknown in any other bird, and one can but speculate as to why this is so. Finally hornbills are remarkable for their beautiful eyelashes - eyelashes most ladies would be proud to have. Most birds get along well without them - so why the hornbill?

One fascinating aspect of hornbills is their nesting habits. They generally nest in large holes, high up, in trees very often where a large branch has broken off. As soon as the eggs are laid the female walls up the entrance to the nesting hole with herself inside. She does this with beakfulls of wet mud and dung and grasses brought to her for this purpose by the male bird, leaving only a narrow slit through which food can be passed. The female then undergoes an extensive moult losing all her flight and tail feathers. The male attends her assiduously during this incubation period, frequently feeding her; up to fifty small fruits may be brought to her at a time, each one regurgitated separately for her to eat; sometimes flower petals are also brought!

Some hornbills are fruit-eating birds and some are meat-eating, i. e., insects and small mammals and the number of eggs laid varies according to the diet. Fruit-eating hornbills

tend to lay only one or two eggs and in this case the male bird can normally find sufficient food to feed both the young and the female parent until the young are ready to fly; so the female stays walled-up in the nest with the young fledge and then breaks down the exit to the nest - she may be in the walled-up nest for anything up to five weeks! Insectivorous hornbills, however, tend to lay more eggs, generally up to five, and sometimes six, and in this case the male bird is unable to cope single handed with feeding both the female bird and several young (insect being more difficult to find than fruit) and so the female breaks out of the nest a few days after the eggs have all hatched, and as soon as she has recovered from her moult in order to supplement the food supply - and now the most remarkable thing happens. The first thing that both parents do is to bring a supply of mud, wet dung, grasses, etc., to the nest and feed it in to the young nestlings who entirely on their own proceed to wall up the nest hole once more in exactly the same way as the parent birds had originally done! A truly remarkable technique on the part of a half-fledged nestling. There they stay, being fed by both parents until they are ready to fly when the parents will break down the entrance once more and persuade the young to fly. All this raises many unanswered questions; most hole-nesters manage to defend their nests without walling-up so why should the hornbills, apparently well able to defend themselves, have acquired this habit? Why should the insect eating hornbills have a large brood when their food is difficult to find and the fruit eating bird have a small brood when their food is comparatively easy to find?!

This leads me on to say just a few words about what birds eat and the effect this has on their daily lives; some birds eat only insects and some birds eat only fruit. In between are the great majority who eat a combination of both. Birds who eat only, or mainly, insects have to spend most of their lives searching for insects who do not want to be eaten and who spend most of their lives trying to avoid being eaten by birds. Birds who eat only fruit (who live in the tropics) spend hardly any time searching for food because it is always readily available and easy to find - it wants to be eaten in order to propagate. Insect eating birds therefore have to establish a territory sufficiently large to provide enough food for themselves, their mate and a family. In these cases one bird alone can seldom feed the family by itself and it is normal to find pair-bonding among these birds for this reason. It is also usual to find that pair-bonded birds have similar plumage in the male and the female so that neither will appear unduly conspicuous at the nest. Fruit-eating birds seldom form pair bonds as one bird - the female - can easily feed the family on her own and it is in these birds that we normally find a difference in plumage between the male and the female. Very often the male bird in such a situation is particularly brightly coloured and this is sometimes an aid to his effective display tactics in his attempt to find a mate. For a male bird of those species who do not form pair bonds to persuade a female to mate with him may be a particularly competitive affair and effective display is an important attribute. The effects of what birds eat can be carried much further and sometimes determines the type of nest they build - but this is really a separate subject altogether.

### Tropical Rain Forest

I said at the beginning that I would say something about Tropical rain forest and why it was that so many birds live there. Tropical rain forest is not the impenetrable mass of rotting vegetation that Errol Flynn would have you believe. The popular conception of having to hack your way through the tangled undergrowth with the help of many natives with parangs and machots who also ward off marauding tigers, snakes and crocodiles is

but a celluloid fiction. The jungle is really a clean friendly and comparatively uncluttered place through which progress is really relatively easy. Unlike temperate forests there are a great many different species of trees in Tropical forest and they all grow to different sizes, shapes and heights. This means that in a vertical sense the jungle is very dense. It is also extremely old and is what is called a climax habitat and in the millions of years that it has remained unchanged it has been thoroughly exploited by every living thing that can find an ecological niche that it can use. The birds have been no exception and they have exploited it to the full - there is not a corner of the forest in the tropics, from the very floor of the jungle to the crown of the canopy that is not used by some bird or other. Unfortunately man is rapidly destroying the tropical forests with some disastrous results, and possibly some results that have not yet made themselves felt. What is quite clear is that a number of tropical species of birds are endangered because of it.

Talking of the jungle floor brings me to an interesting call made by a bird that lives on the floor in the forest, the Rusty-cheeked Scimitar Babbler. As you listen to this call you quickly realise that it is made up of three separate notes; the first two about an octave apart are very rapidly followed by the third which is at about the same frequency as the second. The gap between these two notes is only about one third of a second and you would never have reason to think that the whole call was made by anything else than one bird. In fact it is two birds; the first two notes are made by the male and the third note that follows on with hardly a gap is made by the female - almost unbelievable as you listen to it. True all the same and this type of duet is used by a number of birds who live in thick undergrowth normally found near the ground. These Bblers feed on the ground by rummaging about in the leafy undergrowth and they use this call as a method of keeping in contact with one another. There are many other remarkable calls of this nature.

#### Himalayan Barred Owlet

I really have no other reason for mentioning this charming little bird than for its delightful call and to watch the bird making the call cannot fail to raise a smile on anyone's face. He literally blows himself up first and you can see him taking a great breath and puffing out all his feathers and then as the call progresses he gets smaller and smaller and the call gets weaker and weaker until it fades away altogether and the bird is left absolutely breathless and dishevelled!

#### Barbets

An ancient family of some 76 species which probably originated in the Old World - although there are some species in the Neotropic region they are most specialised in the Ethiopian region. They are somewhere in between the Kingfishers and the Woodpeckers in the anatomical and biological order of development.

The name Barbet comes from the bristles, or barbs, that most barbet species have round their nostrils and bill. The purpose of these is imperfectly understood but as they live in dark holes an acceptable explanation may be that the bristles are useful when feeding their young - but not all birds that live in dark holes have them!

Barbets generally live in the top of the jungle canopy; they are clumsy fliers and tend to sit motionless in the same place for long periods. They have loud monotonous calls that sometimes have a ventriloquial effect, perhaps due to the fact that they mostly call with the beak shut and turn their head from side to side. More often heard than seen they are nearly always gaily coloured, and indeed some of them are positively gaudy - and one has the name of Gaudy Barbet! Many Barbets are duetting birds and some have most complicated duetting song; these songs are unlikely to be contact calls and the reason for their duetting is obscure. They are normally fruit-eaters and live in holes in trees which they excavate with their strong chisel-like beaks.

They are secretive birds about which little is known and they will repay much study.

#### The Coppersmith Barbet

Particularly interesting for its call which sounds exactly like someone hitting a copper pot with a hammer for hours on end. It also sounds like one of those old single cylinder oil engines that are still used to drive sawmills in the jungle in Malaysia and I regret having spent a whole morning stalking such an engine with all my recording equipment at the ready - much to my embarrassment. The Coppersmith has a patch of bare skin on either side of its throat which blows up like a golfball when it calls - with its beak tight shut. As it calls its whole body shakes and convulses and the tail is slowly waved from side to side.

#### Great Himalayan Barbet

Also a duetting bird - here is its call. Although gaudily coloured it is nevertheless difficult to see and like other barbets sits motionless for long periods. When alarmed he has an interesting habit of dropping like a stone, with wings closed, from his perch right down to almost ground level before opening his wings and flying quickly away.

#### Blue-Throated Barbet

This call is well known in Kathmandu valley - but beware, it can easily be confused with that of the Green Barbet, also present in Nepal.

Finally I want to play you two recordings of really remarkable bird song. First, the Lesser Racquet-tailed Drongo which has an extraordinary range of unusual metallic sounds and secondly the song of what is surely the best song bird of all - The Common Shama. A truly beautiful blue-black and scarlet bird with a white tail who outdoes the Nightingale at his own game!

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INCIDENTS ON EVEREST

A Talk Given to the Britain-Nepal Society at the Kensington Central Library

by Major Jon Fleming, The Parachute Regiment

Of course, looking back on it, I should have realised that something was wrong. Tony Streather (our Leader), Henry Day and Geordie Armstrong were sitting on a mound of stores, looking disconsolately about them. Two sherpas were brewing up outside their tent. Why else should five fit men, bent on getting to the top of the world's highest mountain, be sitting around glumly at 1100 in the morning in Advance Base Camp? Anyway, where was the sixth man, Terry Thompson? An icy wind whipped down the cwm. We turned our backs ineffectively against it; the spindrift still found its way into our faces. "Jon", said Tony, as I struggled up to join the triumvirate, more preoccupied with my own fatigue than anything else, "I am afraid Terry is dead". I was stunned; flabbergasted; angry and sorry, deeply sorry for Tony all at once. The memories of all the tragedies of last year's expedition on Nuptse, when I carried the responsibility of leadership, came flooding back. With my heavy load I sat down clumsily on a pack of compo. "Tony", I mumbled ineffectively, inanely, "I am sorry; so very, very sorry". What are words at a time such as this? My mind, never the sharpest at best and now even more dulled by the high altitude, grappled to answer all my questions simultaneously. Why? How? When? What about poor Pat? Has the body been recovered?..... Tony was saying "Would you come up to stay here tomorrow to allow the three of us to return to Base for a spell; Henry will go down today and the sherpas the day after tomorrow". Luckily neither Nigel Gifford nor I had entirely lost our acclimatisation properties from last year so that, despite our short time on the mountain, we were able to nod in reply. I dared not trust myself to speak. Without even a brew to nourish our emaciated bodies we headed down the cwm, the icefall and to Camp I. Our first visit to Advance Base Camp, Camp II at 21,800' had not been a happy one. We all slept badly that night.

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The scenery on the march-in from Kathmandu was superb. It all seemed to be much greener this year than last. Certainly the colours of the red rhododendrons and the purple primulae were more vivid. Brightly coloured, long and short tailed birds flashed across our fronts squawking excitedly. Sometimes we could hear the monkeys chattering in the jungle. The narrow track, the main route from Kathmandu to Namche Bazaar, pressed relentlessly on. Over high passes; down into deep gorges. Our packs at 40 lbs seemed heavy; but at least this would get us fit for the rigors to come. We were always up at 0545. After early morning tea we walked in the cool for three or four hours before our appetites were satisfied by a huge breakfast. More walking, more excitement, more magnificent scenery before camping up for the night at 1600 hrs; invariably beside water. A huge 'bhat', then bed at 1900. What a marvellous life! Far from fumes; from avarice; from pretentions. Free! 'Walk quietly in any direction and taste the freedom of the mountaineer' wrote the poet, John Muir. After eight days of switchback travel the thin trail turned through 90°, abruptly north. We now walked parallel to the huge Dudh Kosi - Milky River - as it hurled itself down towards the

/Bay of Bengal.....



Bay of Bengal through jungles and narrow rocky gorges in a white, green, boiling, tumbling angry torrent. Through Namche Bazaar, the capital of the Sherpa community, where we collected our expedition Sherpas. To the famous monastery of Thyangboche high on its 13,000 foot pedestal directly facing the EVEREST massif, bashfully hidden in cloud because it is late in the day. Here we have a 'puja' or prayer session. Sahibs and Sherpas and porters alike we process in to a dimly lit inner sanctum. The Leader and the Sirdar place their contributions on the 'altar'. We take our places and sit on cushions round the four walls of the room. We do not look dressed for church; a variety of hair styles, our beards are two weeks old, our dress is motley and dusty from the journey. We admire the fine tapestries around us, the hand painted walls, the rows of handwritten parchment prayer books. The reverend silence is suddenly rent assunder by a cacophony of clashing cymbals, ringing bells and the rude 'fart' of a crude, bamboo sackbut. The high Priests are offering up prayers for our safety on the mountain. The scent of incense pervades the atmosphere as we endure the priests' heavenly offerings - we are invited to eat Indian sweet biscuits and drink copiously of chang (local beer) throughout the 'performance' which lasts for two hours. Flash guns sear the dark interior in an effort to capture the atmosphere of this bizarre business. Mercifully we are now released; once outside, our eyes blink uncertainly in the bright sunlight as it is reflected off the glistening, fluted, white pinnacles which surround this ordinarily tranquil shrine. Now we head for Pherichi, Acclimatisation Camp, 14,000' and the mountains. Five years of planning, training, joy and disappointment are about to be put to the final test - Mount EVEREST, 29,028'.

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I woke up slowly having slept very badly. It was the 31st March; Crispin Agnew, Tim King and I were at Camp I on Island Peak at 19,000'; we were on the acclimatisation phase of the expedition. We had been out of Pherichi for eight days. During that time we had revisited the Nuptse Base Camp and while there had put up a stainless steel plaque to the memory of those who were so tragically killed on the south face of that mountain, when we were so close to success, last year. We had been up high passes and onto high peaks; we seemed to be getting fitter all the time. This particular morning we had a quick breakfast of Alpen and two mugs of tea. We struggled unwillingly out of our sleeping bags; this was always the worst part of the day; luckily this morning we escaped from the tent before the sun caused the rime on the inside to melt which usually resulted in a deluge of water cascading onto the occupants. Once outside we realised why we had been so lucky. The sky was overcast, there was an insidious, light but bitterly cold wind blowing. With numbed fingers, despite our inner gloves, we prepared quickly for the climb. To be honest none of us felt like doing it but each concealed this from the other two. We did not rope up until we reached the snow. The rock scrambling up to this point warmed us up; the positions were exhilarating on the knife edge ridge, the boulders were huge, rough and stable. Once at the snow line Crispin began filming. This took a perishingly cold 15 minutes before he went down because he was not feeling well and anyway..... Tim and I roped up and headed out for the summit of the mountain; through the sastrugi which broke off with a deafening crack at every footfall. There was a sudden, sharp tug on the rope. "Jon", gasped Tim, fighting for air, "slow down for God's sake and I can't possibly keep this pace up!" "Sorry, Tim, why don't you go in front!". He did. We climbed on for perhaps another half hour - time meant nothing there. At length after a steep pull up of about 40 feet we found ourselves on a platform, separated

/from the main.....

from the main mountain by a large crevasse - a bergschrund. This provided an excellent excuse to stop and take stock of our position. "Tim do you want to go on?" "No, not really," he said. "Let's have a small snack and then we will return to Camp I". "OK, it's a lousy day and the weather is going to break in an hour or so anyway," he said. At last it was settled then! Needless to say we went on; we couldn't really give up that easily on a 20,300' peak! It was the liquid that did it - one must drink lots at altitude; at least 8 pints a day and all the water has to come from melted snow. There had been so little snow last winter that we climbed on ledges of dry ice. In a way it was disappointing, but our crampons bit comfortably into the steep mountainside.

Gone was our lethargy; the summit was in sight and attainable. We climbed together, quickly and well. Behind us the bad weather advanced upon us like a great black blanket. Heedless of this and of the big, silent snowflakes, we reached the summit. More to drink, more to eat, a few photos and we were on our way to Camp I, Base Camp on Island Peak, thence to EVEREST. Tomorrow it would be April Fool's Day. We had been out from Kathmandu for 26 days.

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The notoriously dangerous Icefall had been the most frightening place I had ever been in. Consequently I spent as little time as possible there. The heroes of the team, for us, were those who had to keep this death trap, this 2000' of rumbling, tumbling frozen chaos, tame: Pete Page, Roy Francis, Brian Martindale and Phil West had to keep the route open.

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Nigel and I had buried Terry in a crevasse, using words from the Army Prayer Book short burial service. It was a poignant moment on a cold blustery, overcast day. Afterwards we picked up a load and plodded slowly, sadly up the Western Cwm for 2 hours to Camp II.

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Today is Monday 26th April. The alarm watch explodes at 0500. It is cold at Camp II - 23,000'. I light the gas stove. Our meagre breakfast is soon over and we dress uncomfortably in the cramped tent. Our numb fingers fight to control the crampon straps. We are out of the tent; it is going to be a hot day when the sun hits us. Monday is a detestable day - wherever one is! Crispin and I plod slowly up to the bottom of the Lhotse Face. Sometimes this takes half an hour, sometimes fifty minutes. We gasp and rasp in the raw, cold air as we fight our way up the fixed rope put there only yesterday by our partners, Geordie Armstrong and Nigel. Today we are in the lead; our moment of glory on this historic part of the route. This spurs us on to greater activity. Perhaps this Monday will prove to be a little different. At the end of the fixed ropes we look with eager anticipation at the next part of the route. We rope up and this seems to give us combined, renewed confidence. Crispin adjusts his oxygen set and leads off. I take the rope in my gloved hands and round my back to safeguard him lest he slip and fall. He walks all too nonchalantly along the knife edge twixt mountainside and crevasse. From time to time he stops, drives in another stake and attaches the rope to it. When the rope has run its length he stops, takes a belay and shouts for me to join him.

/I pick up.....

I pick up my enormous sac full of rope, stakes and mountaineering hardware, adjust my own breathing apparatus and follow Crispin's ample footsteps. By this time the sun is on us. It gets very hot; the oxygen mask is very claustrophobic, my sunglasses pinned against the bridge of my nose hurt; I cannot breathe. In desperation I hurl the whole damned thing away. Then I join Crispin more comfortably. In silence we each prepare for the next pitch. We are in "the van" and this feels good. While we smear our exposed skin with glacier and lip cream the radio bursts into life. "Hello 3 this is 2, Tony speaking. Over". "3 send. Over". "2. The route looks clear from where you are if you continue to go up diagonally left. Over". "3. Roger. In fact we have to go straight up the ice here as there is a crevasse in the way.....". We put the radio away until the next hourly schedule and continue on our way. Crispin leads this difficult ice pitch superbly and then hits deep, soft snow on the top of it. Geordie and Nigel come up behind us improving the route, cutting 'bucket' steps in the ice to make things easier and safer for the load carriers to come. We wade, knee deep up the soft snowy slope. A sharp pull up and we gaze upon a huge expanse of mountain, less steep now, which takes us to Camp IV at 25,000'. But now it is 1500 hrs and we have to call it a day. We don't realise how utterly spent we are; our moment of glory is at an end.

In fact it took 3 more days of plodding and fixing to establish Camp IV and then we had to hand over to another set of lead climbers.

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Bronco Lane writes:

TIME: 8 am Sunday 14 May 76.  
PLACE: South Col, MT Everest.  
OCCASION: The British/Nepalese Army Expedition  
INTENTION: Summit bid.  
PARTICIPANTS: Brummy Stokes and Bronco Lane.  
WEATHER: Fair, some cloud and light wind.

Carrying 30 lbs each of personal gear and oxygen we slowly drew away from our cluster of tents and headed for the right hand couloir which would give us access to the SE ridge and our final camp. Shortly our support party, Jon Fleming, Dick Hardie, Henry Day, and Geordie Armstrong followed, heavier laden with all the requirements for Camp 6 and spare oxygen for our bid the next day.

In short order Camp 6 took shape upon a small snow platform hacked out of the ridge. After helping us set up the small assault tent our support party departed amidst a flurry of camera shots, handshakes and best wishes for the next day. The situation of Camp 6 can only be described by that overworked adjective 'fantastic' with our front door only 5' from Tibet.

The sudden storm gave us strong cause for concern as it probably meant a 'no go' on the 15th, which in turn would mean using precious oxygen to wait another day.

By early afternoon the wind had decreased enough for us to be optimistic that, all being well, we had a chance the next day, 16th May. On the radio we discussed our assault plans with Henry on the South Col who relayed them to Tony Streather, Expedition Leader.

/Using half a bottle.....

Using half a bottle each to sleep on still enough, one and a half bottles, to make our assault.

With the decrease in windspeed life became more enjoyable, we were even able to take notice of our magnificent surroundings, Makalu, afloat in a sea of cloud. The steep ramparts of Lhotse and Nuptse, the latter bringing back painful memories of the year before. Then east into Tibet, range after range of snowcapped peaks. Will Westerners ever get the opportunity to climb them?

On the evening radio call I had a chat with John Scott who together with Pat Gunson formed the second summit team; they would move up and occupy Camp 6 as we left for the summit, providing in doing so an immediate backup should we need it. 7 p.m. saw us asleep, planning to rise at 3 a.m., reckoning on  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours to brew up and dress. So well did we sleep that it was 4 a.m. before Brum nudged me awake and remind me that it was my turn to make a drink. As speedily as possible we got ourselves sorted out and crept out into the frozen dawn. The weather looked fair, we were in with a chance!

Moving together on favourable snow conditions we gained height in good style, reaching the base of the South Summit ridge by 8.30 a.m. Here we changed over to our full bottles of oxygen, cacheing the others which still contained a small amount to form an emergency reserve for our return. Underway again the snow conditions deteriorated rapidly until we found ourselves on a 55 degree slope up to our thighs in soft unconsolidated snow and avalanche prone. Casting about for better going we gained a rock rib on our left, unfortunately this petered out after only 75 feet leaving us no choice but to force a way through the mush.

Moving in such conditions at this altitude, 28,000' plus, was extremely exhausting and we changed over the lead every 50 steps. The weather now showed some signs of deterioration again with clouds billowing about us and reducing visibility. We reached the South Summit some 4 hours later. In anything like good conditions the gain of 700 feet from where we changed bottles would have taken less than half that time. Knowing that we would be late down we agreed a turn round time of 2 p.m. in order to have sufficient daylight for our return to Camp 6.

From the South Summit stretched the heavily corniced traverse ridge, steepening at the Hillary step and up again to the Summit ridge by now half hidden in cloud. I, vitalised by a view of our goal, dropped slightly, past where Dougal and Doug had bivouaced after the momentous SW face climb the previous autumn, marked now by empty oxygen bottles. Snow conditions improved as we edged our way along the cornices towards the step, our speed was slow as the mush below had sapped our strength considerably and we took up belays on the more exposed sections in recognition of this. It was now 2 p.m. but we were now too committed to turn back with the Expedition goal so very close.

The Hillary step is a small rock buttress of about 50 feet with a cornice on its right side. At a lower altitude it would present no problem but here it demanded some degree of respect. Firmly belayed by Brum I inched up the snow on the right until I saw an inviting rock ledge on the buttress proper about 20 feet up. Barring the way however was a section of the very loose granulated ice which gave me a moment or two's work before gaining the ledge. From here a short scramble led to a firm stance from which to belay Brum.

/During the previous.....

During the previous hour the weather had steadily closed in, visibility had dropped to less than 100 feet and a light snowfall had started. All that remained now was a seemingly endless rising traverse of the Summit cornice upon good hard snow. Moving together with Brum in the lead we slowly, oh so slowly gained height until after what seemed like forever Brum stopped and half collapsed on his axe. Joining him I saw the reason why. The slope dipped downwards. We had made it, we were there!

The Summit of Everest at 3.15 p.m. in worsening weather is not a place to linger, therefore after a cursory glance around for the Chinese survey pole we quickly photographed each other and with warnings to each other to be b.....y careful retraced our steps down. Leaving our abseil rope fixed on the Hillary step for John and Pat we tried to make a speedy descent back to the South Summit. I was absolutely bushed but as has happened before when climbing together, when one of us is exhausted the other feels that little bit stronger and can cajole, bully and browbeat the other into keeping on moving. Now was such a time and we kept going, albeit slowly.

Looking for our steps down from the South Summit we had a very disturbing 10 minutes casting about in the gathering gloom. Finding our deep steps at last we lurched off down, once again thigh deep in snow. By the time we had reached the foot of the South Summit it was getting too dark to safely go any further. In vain we looked around for our oxygen cache as the bottles on our backs were all but empty and with an enforced bivouac imminent they were our passport to survival. Just as we had nearly given up searching the clag lifted momentarily and 80 feet away I spotted them.

To further complicate matters Brum's oxygen system had failed and as we started digging a hollow in a snowbank to sit out the night it meant taking turns with my system. About 10 p.m. the cloud cleared and it turned colder with a large moon. We contemplated starting off down again in the moonlight. But we decided against a move as we thought it marginally safer to stay until daylight. What now followed was the most miserable 10 hours of my life. To keep warm we rubbed each other's bodies and kept a constant check to ensure that the other didn't fall asleep; as if he did it would have been his last. We knew the risk of frostbite was great, especially in the feet; unfortunately they went solid fairly early on and to take off boots would only have exaggerated the problem. Only a mild wind blew, even that was sufficient to chill us to the backbone, gone was all the elation of climbing Everest, this was survival with the highest stakes possible, our lives.

After what seemed an eternity the eastern sky began to brighten. Slowly at first, as if reluctant to show itself, the sun at last appeared. I'm not a strong nor practising religious person but we both reckoned that we must have had friends in high places to witness that life-giving dawn.

Sitting in our bivouac site until 8 a.m. we lapped up the heat back into our bodies and allowed the sun to melt the layer of ice that had formed around our faces. Knowing that everybody would be apprehensive as to our whereabouts we in vain tried to make contact with the South Col camp, shouting and waving. Moving slowly and carefully we then started back to Camp 6 and had only been underway for 30 minutes when going like trains John and Pat appeared around a corner.

/They had been.....

They had been requested to have a look for us, up to the Summit if conditions allowed. Now completely disregarding their own excellent chance of making the summit they fed us drinks, gave us their own oxygen sets and clothing and started off down with John taking myself and Pat looking after Brum. Firstly to Camp 6 where John produced mug after mug of hot fluids which bucked us up enormously and then after a couple of hours rest down to the South Col, meeting up with Steve Johnson and Phil Neame, the support party for Pat and John.

These four, the next day, escorted us down. Unfortunately somewhere along the line Brum had lost his goggles and had contracted snowblindness, making the evacuation that much more difficult for all concerned. Eventually reaching Base camp we were choppered out to Kathmandu with frostbite to our feet and some fingers.

Ours was a happy expedition due largely to the leadership of Tony Streater and the absence amongst the climbers of any prima donna attitudes. As none of us rely upon mountaineering for a livelihood, none of us was under any pressure outside of climbing the mountain.

We two who represented the team on the final push are aware more than anyone of the immense amount of hard work and danger faced by every member of the team, sahib and Sherpa alike. In recognition of this and an incredible experience we ask the reader to remember it takes unselfish teamsmanship of the highest order to put a pair on Everest. Also that a pair do not conquer a mountain, you sneak up and down when Nature has her back turned."

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Of such incidents is the climbing of a mountain like EVEREST composed. I can only speak for myself when answering the question, "Why?" There is no one simple reply. The simplicity of life; the comradeship; the experience of nature in the raw; the challenge, exercise, danger; the superb views; and, of course, for a time, it is so nice when it stops! But we shall be off again.

## BRITAIN-NEPAL SOCIETY

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Patron: H.R.H. PRINCE GYANENDRA OF NEPAL

President: Mr. A. R. H. KELLAS, CMG

Our aim is to promote and foster good relations between the peoples of the United Kingdom and Nepal.

The Society was founded in 1960, under the patronage of His late Majesty King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva of Nepal during his State Visit to London; Lord Hunt became the first President.

British and Nepalese subjects, and business firms or corporate bodies resident in Britain or Nepal are eligible for membership.

Members include serving and retired Gurkhas, mountaineers, schoolmasters, members of the Diplomatic Service, doctors, nurses and businessmen.

Ordinary members pay a subscription of £2 per annum.

Life members - a single payment of £40.

The "Yetis" - Nepalese Students in Britain are honorary members during their stay in the United Kingdom.

Our strength at the present is:

Ordinary Members	-	346
Life Members	-	126
Corporate Members	-	5
Honorary Members	-	8
Yetis	-	65

The Society's programme includes:

Monthly lecture meetings and films from October to May.

An AGM in November, an annual supper party in February, and an outing in August to a place of interest - this year Cowdray Park.

We keep in touch with the Nepal-Britain Society in Kathmandu which the late H.H. Field Marshal Sir Kaiser, a Life Member of our Society, founded shortly before his death.

The Britain-Nepal Society is unique in that although we do not have a very large membership there is tremendous enthusiasm for Nepal; our meetings, which are usually attended by about 100 people each, provide an excellent opportunity for us to get together over a drink.

The Chairman of the Committee is Paul Broomhall and Brigadier A. B. (Tony) Taggart, MC, is Vice-Chairman. The Honorary Treasurer, Lt. Colonel H. C. S. Gregory, OBE ('Greg'), is also editor of this Journal.

The Committee welcomes new members amongst people with a genuine interest in Nepal. The address of the Hon. Secretary is:

Miss C. M. Stephenson  
17 Sydney House, Woodstock Road, London W4 1DP