

# POSTAL HIMAL

QUARTERLY OF THE NEPAL AND TIBET PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE



No. 33

1st Quarter 1983



POSTAL HIMAL is the quarterly publication of The Nepal and Tibet Philatelic Study Circle. Subscription dues are £4 for one year and £11 for three years or \$7 for one year and \$19 for three years in the United States of America. Dues should be paid to The Secretary or your closest Society Representative. Advertising rates and information may be obtained by writing the publisher.

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**OUR COVER ILLUSTRATION** for this issue is from the 15pa aerogramme which pictures Machapuchare (Nepali for "Fish Tail"). The mountain consists of two summits 22,958 and 22,935 feet high. It is part of the Annapurna range and is visible from Pokhara.

Dear Friends,

This issue, as planned, features the subject of "Mountains & Mountaineering," with emphasis on the philatelic aspects, naturally. Those who are interested in collecting souvenir cards and covers related to mountaineering expeditions in Nepal are advised to contact The Nepal Philatelic Society, GPO Box 342, in Kathmandu, or one of the various dealers there, as most handle these items. -- Mountaineering expeditions to the Himalayas via China are not so well publicized -- except, perhaps, in the country from which the climbing teams originate. Those interested in such matters are invited to write to the editor.

In the last issue of POSTAL HIMAL (p. 52) we reported changes in the 1982 Nepal Philatelic Programme. At that writing we mentioned that we had not seen a copy of a stamp depicting the late Balā Krishha Sama, scheduled for issue on 21 July 1982. We now realize that the stamp was issued, though we have not seen an actual date of issue, or a FDC. We have, however, received at least three letters from Nepal bearing the stamp -- one bearing a postmark as early as 1 September. The stamp features a handsome photo of the gentleman, but was issued in a denomination of 1 Rupee, rather than the value of Rs. 3.40, as listed in the original programme. -- Illustrations of the last two issues of the year (on FDC) appear in this issue, with thanks to Mr. Dhruva Rudra. -- We wish to express our thanks to him and to Mr. S. L. Shrestha for sending us copies of the 1983 Philatelic Programme. The first stamp to be issued this year is scheduled for release on 17 July.

We are happy to report that, as of this writing, Mr. John White, a former Study Circle member, has settled his obligations to the satisfaction of one of the three complainants (see POSTAL HIMAL No. 31, p. 34). We look forward to the day when we can report similar disposition of the two remaining claims. -- Two of our members have called to our attention a similar charge made against Mr. A. K. Dutta of Calcutta. A copy of one complaint, as it appears in the Journal of the Indian Stamp Dealers Association for April-June 1982, reads as follows:

"We received a complaint against Shri A. K. Dutta of C. R. Avenue (New address: 72 Potbari Lane), Calcutta, from the Trichur Philatelic Association for not settling their accounts in spite of repeated reminders. Members are requested to be cautious when dealing with the above person."

We note that Mr. Dutta placed an advertisement in POSTAL HIMAL No. 30, p. 30. In these difficult times of economic recession, a number of us, including your editor, have had difficulty in meeting our obligations at times. We recommend to all our members, both sellers and buyers, that communication will usually resolve the problems. Let us all be considerate of one another.

At a recent meeting of President Pierre Couvreur, Past President Wolfgang Hellrigl and Secretary Colin Hepper, it was agreed that our Study Circle should request members living in India to volunteer for the recently vacated position of Representative of the Study Circle for India. Members who may be willing to accept that responsibility should write directly to Mr. Hepper. Until a Representative for India is appointed, Mr. Dhruva Rudra, our Representative for Nepal, will take over the duties as India's representative. -- In a second action it was agreed that a President's Prize will be awarded annually to the author of the best article appearing in POSTAL HIMAL during the year. The first award -- a cash prize of £10 provided through the generosity of President Couvreur -- will be made in the Spring of 1984. The winner will be selected from among the authors whose work appears in the last three issues (Nos. 34-36) for 1983. Dr. Couvreur hopes that this award will stimulate our members to write articles for POSTAL HIMAL and your editor offers his aid to any author who feels that he, or she, needs help with translation into English. We thank Dr. Couvreur for this fine idea and urge all to send their articles to the editor at an early date.

1960 ISSUE

H. M.'s GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL  
SERVICE POSTAGE STAMPS (Overprinted  
'काज सरकारी' On Public Postage Stamps - Regular Series)

40 Paisa

100 Full Sheets of 45 Stamps each.

Examiner

Counter

Checker

Date

Asstt. Inspector



Mr. Surendra Lal Shrestha has sent us the illustrated copy of an overprinted stamp which was never issued by the Nepal government, but, apparently was prepared for use and held in the treasury until now ( a 100 sheet wrapper label is also shown). We note that the stamp is the 40p brown of the 1962-66 definitive series (Scott #148), but with the "Kaj Sarkari" overprint apparently in the same size as that used on the 1,2 and 5p definitive officials (Scott #012-014).

Mr. Shrestha also reports that the official stamps of Nepal (Scott #01-015) are available mint from the Philatelic Bureau, GPO Building, Kathmandu, Nepal. They will be sold at face value but are not valid for postage. They will be available until April 14, 1985. At that time remaining stocks will be destroyed.

The release of these items for collectors only has brought forth a protest from The Nepal and Tibet Philatelic Study Circle in the form of a letter by our Secretary, Mr. Colin Hepper to Postal Services Dept., Nepal.



THE NEPAL & TIBET PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE

4 Osric Court  
Peterborough  
Cambs. PE1 5LW  
England.

20 - 6 - 83

Postal Services Department  
Dilli Bazar  
Kathmandu  
Nepal

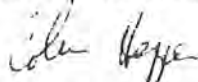
Dear Sir

Our society must protest strongly at your departments irresponsible action in selling off the large stocks of unused service stamps, including what used to be the scarce 1 Rupee overprinted stamp.

Until now the philatelic world has had the utmost respect for the stamps of Nepal because they had not resorted to the practice of dumping surplus stocks and so undermine the value of collections.

Now in one action you have destroyed their trust in you. Our society condemns this action and hope that you do not release any further unsold stocks you may have. The harm you have done will take years to repair, before collectors will be prepared to buy modern stamps again.

Yours faithfully



Colin Hepper  
Hon. Secretary.

**STUDY CIRCLE OFFICERS AGREE UNANIMOUSLY TO CENSURE R.K. LODHA**

In a related matter, the officers of the Nepal and Tibet Philatelic Study Circle have informed Mr. R.K. Lodha that he will no longer be the representative for the Study Circle in India.

After many complaints about his pricing of the recently released official overprints it became clear that Mr. Lodha was attempting to take advantage of collectors by offering this material

at exaggerated prices while knowing full well that the overprinted sheets were available at face value and essentially worthless. Our Secretary has also informed Mr. Lodha that the Study Circle auction will no longer accept material from him.



## EXHIBITION NEWS

FRESPEX '83, held in Fresno, California, on 19-20 March, emphasized Asian area philately, as you all know, due to the efforts of member Bill McConnell to publicize this event. We are pleased to report that Larry Scott received a VERMEIL award for his exhibit titled, "Stamps of Nepal - The First Fifty Years: 1881-1930." Alan Warren exhibited "Tibet: Stamps, Covers, Cancellations," and received a SILVER award. We note, in the list of exhibits, that a SILVER-BRONZE award went to one titled "'Too Late' Rectangular Postal Markings of India, 1865-1907." While not involving Nepal or Tibet, we know that the exhibit is the work of two of our members, Frank Vignola and Russ Sanford. -- We wish to note that Larry Scott also received the Nepal & Tibet Study Circle Award for "the best exhibit featuring either Nepal or Tibet." Congratulations are in order for the winners.

One of the most important events scheduled for 1983 is the INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION, 4-13 August, in Bangkok, Thailand. (See report in POSTAL HIMAL No. 31, p. 35.) -- Our Nepal Representative, Mr. Dhruba Rudra reports that the following individuals are planning to exhibit at BANGKOK '83:

Mr. R. G. Raj Karnikar - Nepal Classics & Pre-stamp Covers

Mr. K. M. Mulmi - Nepal Classics & Pre-stamp Covers

Mr. H. Singh - Nepal up to 1962

Mr. S. L. Shrestha - Nepal Essays and Postal History

Mr. R. M. Rajbhandary - Postmarks and Specialties of Nepal.

And, in the Junior Division:

Master J. P. Singh - Used Postage Stamps. We look forward to reporting the successes of these exhibitors. -- Mr. S. L. Shrestha reports that the wives of the senior exhibitors will accompany their husbands to Thailand and that, in addition, Master J. P. Singh will be accompanied by his father (Your editor hopes than an international meeting of the Nepal & Tibet Study Circle can be arranged during BANGKOK '83 and regrets only that he will be unable to be present.)

## CORRECTION --

In the third paragraph of the first column under EXHIBITION NEWS (POSTAL HIMAL No. 31, for Third Quarter 1982, p. 35) a line of type was dropped. The phrase, "...mint and used examples on cover" should have referred to the 1912 issues, not to the China overprints. We offer our apologies to Alan Warren for this unintentional error.-- Ed.



## AUCTION ACTION

--Lester A. Michel

1983 has already produced several sales of interest to our readers. We report on some which have come to our attention.

Gold Medal Mail Sales (New York City) included 11 lots of Tibet in their first sale of the year. We noted two interesting combination covers (probably philatelic) from the 1950s which bore stamps of both Nepal & Tibet (none from India) and which probably went to Tibet from Nepal via Kodari and new Chinese road. -- The sale catalog for 15 April offered no lots from either Nepal or Tibet.

London & Brighton Stamp Auctions (England) held a Postal History Sale on 11 March -- including 20 lots of Nepal material. The first lot was a 1900 cover franked with 3 Nepal classic stamps (1a, 2a & 4a) -- an attractive rarity valued at £400. -- Six lots of Tibet were offered in this sale.

The Sun Philatelic Center (San Francisco) held its 39th Public Auction on 9 April, & included their usual variety of Nepal and Tibet offerings. The 43 lots of Tibet and 17 lots of Nepal embraced both stamps and postal history material, with a wide range of valuations from \$25 and up. We noted two unusual Tibet items: 1) a complete 4tr

sheet in deep blue (1914 imperf sheet of 6 valued at \$1,500 and 2) a similar sheet of the 8tr carmine valued at \$960. Among the Nepal lots we noted several interesting collections (one valued at \$700), a copy of the 1a emerald (COLOR ERROR) lightly cancelled, a copy of the 1r red lilac Official and two lots of mountaineering cards and covers.

Stamp Collector's Guild (Hewlett, New York) held a mail sale on 7 April which included 12 lots of Nepal stamps, all from the fifties onward, including 2 copies of the 1r red lilac Official.

**(See "STUDY CIRCLE PROTESTS DEPARTMENT ACTION" on page 2)**

David Feldman held another of his outstanding auctions in Zurich on 10-15 April -- a sale which included some important Asia material. The first item in the Nepal section was a block of 4 of the scarce ½ anna orange-vermilion with a neat strike of the common sub-office telegraph cancel. The 16 additional lots were dominated by sheets of errors, ranging from the 1941- Pashupati issues to the 1959 UPU 12p issue.

Tibet Collectors were offered 52 lots, primarily in the form of complete sheets which ranged in valuations from 100 to 2,000 SF. Three rare sheets were noted: 1) a 1912 1s green in a dull gray-green shade, 2) a 1933-59 2tr, deep brick red, shiny ink, and 3) a similar sheet in carmine brown on very thin paper.

Member G. M. Rosamond has sent us a copy of Auction Catalogue No. 22 for the China Philatelic Society of London, which offers no less than 560 lots of material -- mainly of China, but with some 43 lots of Tibet, including stamps of the 1912 and 1933 issues (no complete sheets), a variety of covers, including several interesting FPO items, & nine lots of forgeries. All lots have estimates ranging from £3 to £20. -- Only 4 lots of Nepal were noted, though the first of these is an example of the 1881 imperf 1a on white wove paper, with a small fault. We regret that delays in publishing bring this information to you after the closing date of the sale, but we note that a date of 5 August 1983 is listed as the deadline

for submitting material for the next sale. The next sale can be expected in late summer or early Fall.

George Alevizos has just sent us a catalog for a sale to be held on 3-5 May 1983 which features Central and Eastern Asia. The list of Nepal lots is shorter than usual but includes some fine material. Under the section headed "Stamps, Proofs & Essays," 31 lots of Nepal are offered, including classic material from 1886 onward, as well as a good selection of modern. Lot valuations range from \$35 to \$2,500 -- the latter item being an extremely rare sheet of the 1a, in dull gray blue (1898-1907) with four inverts. Five lots are illustrated. The Tibet stamps offered follow the Nepal lots and include a variety of stamps and full sheets from the 1912 and later issues plus 7 lots of Officials and four lots of Telegraph issues. Valuations range from \$60 to \$1,000, with five lots illustrated, including two with \$1,000 valuations: 1) a 1s block of 11 with clear double impression and bearing a violet wavy line cancel, and 2) an XF copy of the 5tr red Official (only 6 copies are believed to exist.). -- In the Postal History section, all but 4 of the 12 lots of Nepal are illustrated. Specialized items dating from 1875 to 1942 are offered, including a 1936 2p blue Siva card (H & G #24) originating from Kuti. -- Valuations in this group are \$50 - \$500. The Tibet material offered is more extensive, with 12 lots featuring the Chinese offices dating from 1847 to 1911, except for one lot of 56 modern commercial items. Five lots appear in a "British Offices" section, followed by 6 lots of 1915-29 covers and 8 lots of 1938-52 material. The Tibet offerings end with a few miscellaneous items, including 2 lots of currency. Valuations range from \$40 to \$3,500 and 13 of them are illustrated. As usual, all are meticulously and thoroughly described making the catalog of especial value.

The Alevizos sales nearly always offer a few items of philatelic literature, but the first section of this catalog, headed "Literature," offers, at net prices (overseas postage must be added), what is described as "The most comprehensive price list on Asian literature published." We note four full pages of material, which, besides some useful general items, offer

NEPAL & TIBET PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS (Michel)  
31 March 1983

INCOME

Transferred from C. Hepper	\$166.00
Cash at Bank 1982	<u>\$462.99</u>
	\$628.99

EXPENDITURES

Postage	\$ 49.31
Telephone call	\$ 2.60
Transferred to C. Hepper	\$ 29.88
Transferred to T. Matthiesen	<u>\$420.00</u>
	\$501.79
Cash at Bank 1983	\$127.20

NEPAL & TIBET PHILATELIC STUDY CIRCLE  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS (U.K.)  
22 April 1983

INCOME

Subscriptions	£187.00
Commission - Auction No. 19	45.52
No. 20	72.73
No. 21	63.90
No. 22	70.44
Donation	15.00
Bank Interest	71.25

Cash at Bank 1982	<u>341.08</u>
	£866.92

EXPENDITURES

Postage - Auction No. 20	£ 31.38
No. 21	38.15
No. 22	34.63
No. 23	34.55
All other postage	31.57
Printing Auction Lists	26.50
Envelopes	27.72
Bank Charges	3.14
Customs Charges	12.80
Transferred to L. A. Michel	96.84
Transferred to R. D. Skinner	490.21
	<u>£827.49</u>
Cash at Bank 1983	<u>39.43</u>
	£866.92

PHILATELIC PROGRAMME FOR 1983

His Majesty's Government, Postal Services Department, Nepal Philatelic Bureau has the pleasure to announce the Philatelic Programme for the year 1983 as follows:

S.N.	Date of issue	Subject/Occasion	Denom.
1.	17 July 1983	Silver Jubilee of Nepal Industrial Development Corp.	Rs.1.40
2.	Oct. 1983	World Communication Year (WCY)	Rs.1.00
3.	Oct. 1983	<u>Nepal Folk Musical Instrument Series.</u> (a) Sharangi .05p. (b) Kaota .10p. (c) Murchunga .25 (d) Narashinga Rs.1.00	
4.	Nov. 1983	<u>Visit Nepal Series.</u> (a) Khaptad .05p. (b) Barahchhetra .40p. (c) Mt. Choyu Rs.5.00	
5.	28.12.1983	39th Birthday of H.M. King	Rs.2.00

Note: (1) The Programme noted above is subject to change with or without notice, and (2) Details of each issue will be available from Nepal Philatelic Bureau, Sundhara, K.



AUCTION ACTION (continued)

8 dealing specifically with Nepal and 2 for Tibet. We know of no better source of material for our area of interest. -- Alevizos will hold at least two more sales this year: 1) No. 40 - Postal History of the World, on 28 June, and 2) No. 41 - Stamps, Proofs & Essays of the World, on 29 June. We recall that a sale featuring Asian material is usually offered near the end of the year.

Finally, Dr. A. E. Singer has sent us a copy of a listing of some 30 covers bearing Chinese stamps used in Tibet during the modern period, offered at a fixed price ranging from \$5 to \$20, on a first-come-first-served basis, under a letter dated 21 December 1982 -- from Roger Koerber, of Southfield, Michigan. ☉





## NEWS FROM KATHMANDU

**Mr. Dhruba Rudra, Nepal Representative for the Study Circle, has informed us of the death of his father, Shri Pushker Rudra Karmacharya, on 15 January, 1983.**

Although he was not a member of the Study Circle, he was, at age 75, the eldest local member of the Nepal Philatelic Society and will be missed by all who knew him, and especially by his son and family.

### CANCELLATION MARK ON SPECIAL POSTAGE STAMP

Minister of State for Communications Raghavendra Pratap Shah, Wednesday placed the first cancellation mark on the special Rs. 2 denomination postage stamp issued in connection with inauguration of the Kulekhani Hydro-Electric Project.

The four-colour stamp depicts the "Indra Sarobar." (FDC of this issue may be found in this number of POSTAL HIMAL.--Ed.)

### NAMING PEAKS

(an editorial from "The Rising Nepal" for 19 November 1982, sent by Mr. Dhruba Rudra, Nepal Representative for the Nepal & Tibet Study Circle.--Ed.)

The constitution of a 14-member committee by His Majesty's Government the other day to find suitable names for the unnamed Himalayan peaks and to rename those with foreign titles has been long overdue. For over the past 25 years, the country had made do with names that are neither local nor, indeed, national. The 800-kilometre long Himalayan range that, within the Kingdom, contains hundreds of major and minor

peaks, and many of them remain nameless or, after a foreign climbing expedition has had a go at them, carry foreign names. The problem of identification of Himalayan peaks has always remained problematic because of the lack, till recently, of a proper survey. However, many peaks at present have been identified, located, charted and many of the taller ones have been opened to climbing. The influx of climbing expeditions from far and wide in recent years has made it highly important that local names be given to Himalayan peaks that are open to climbing.

The fact that the committee is headed by Dr. Harkha Gurung, a long time mountain lover, climber and geographer, bodes well for the christening of such peaks. It would be worthwhile here to ponder over the present names of the peaks and how best new names can be given to them. Many times in the past, peaks seem to have been named haphazardly without giving due consideration to local names. This is perhaps chiefly because the department concerned with mountaineering had no other function than to grant permission, appoint liaison officers and periodically disseminate news relating to them. Many climbing expeditions in the past, because of the apparent non-availability of names, named them on their own and in this way was spread the names of foreign christened peaks. The damage that has been done in the past now must be rectified. The committee should therefore be able to find local names of peaks as far as possible and adhere to these names for use by the national and international media. Peaks like Sagarmatha, Dhaulagiri and Annapurna do not, of course, need any change; others such as Peak 29 and Fang, do. What should be the criteria for naming such peaks? Obviously, the most preferable would be to find their local names, failing which, the valleys they overlook could be used.

Another suggestion is that the names of the rivers and glaciers that flow from the peaks could similarly be used. But what would not be suitable would be to christen the peaks with some fancy urban names that neither reflect the character of the Himalayas nor the romanticism associated with climbing.



## THE MOUNTAIN RANGES IN NEPAL

--Colin Hepper

One of the fascinations of collecting the stamps and postal history of any country is the "side-line" collections that can be made, which have connections or have originated in that country. Nepal and Tibet are no exceptions, being divided by the massive Himalayan mountains. There have been climbing expeditions to the major peaks since the 1920's. A collection of the covers used by these expeditions with their special cachets and signatures of the climbers can run into several volumes.

This popular pastime of mountaineering has seen a dramatic increase over the last ten years, of climbers going to Nepal to attack some of the major peaks. To climb Mt. Everest would be the ambition of many climbers & its popularity is shown in the fact that there is a five year waiting list for teams wanting to attempt to climb it. The increase in expeditions has also seen a steady increase in the special cards and covers which help towards financing these climbs. As collectable as these covers are it is my personal opinion that the prices asked are often far too high.

For collectors of these covers, some knowledge of the mountains and their location may be of assistance when mounting them. There are eleven separate ranges along the high Himalayan massif with peaks over 20,000 ft. Running from East to West, the first range is the Kanchenjunga Himal. This range stands on the border point forming a natural boundary between Nepal and Sikkim and contains the third highest peak in the world -- Kanchenjunga (28,168 ft.), first scaled by a team of British Alpinists in 1955. West of the Kanchenjunga Himal lies the valley of the river Tamur, said to be one of the most beautiful and picturesque areas in the Himalayas, with the upper reaches of the Tamur being studied with delightful little villages set against the Himalayan background. Major peaks in this Himal are: Kanchenjunga, Kangbachan, Jannu, Jangsang, Dome, Tent, Twins, Nepal, Pyramid, Tahung and Kabru.

Kumbhakana Himal is dominated by the fifth highest peak in the world -- Makalu I (27,807 ft.) and is the next range running Westward from Kanchenjunga. It includes

the upper reaches of the Arun river which has its source in Tibet, where it is known as Phung Chu. Major peaks in the Himal are: Makalu I & II, Chagu, Jumeur, Makah and Peaks 2, 5, 6, and 7.

Khumbu Himal -- also known as the Muhalan-gur Himal, stretches from the Barun river to the Dudh Kosi and from Ralwaling Himal in the West to the Kumbhakama Himal in the East. This is the largest, most rugged and varied in the whole of the Himalayan chain -- dominated by Mt. Everest (29,028 ft.), the highest peak in the world. The Dudh Kosi valley sprawls right through the heart of the Khumbu Himal group with the mountain villages being inhabited by the Sherpas. The largest Sherpa village being Khumjung with the nearby Namche Bazar. There are 36 major peaks in the area with the most well known being Everest, Lhotse, Nuptse, Gyachangkang, Ngojumbu Ri and Ama Dablam. Ama Dablam is generally regarded as one of the most beautiful peaks in the world.

Rolwaling Himal, to the West of the Khumbu Himal, has, as its highest peak, Mt. Gauri Shankar (23,442 ft.) which is named after the Hindu God Shankar or Shiva and his Consort, Parvati or Gauri. This legendary abode of Shiva and Parvati is viewed as the holiest peak by the Hindus, and can be seen from Kathmandu. There are sixteen other major peaks in the Himal, with the prominent ones being Manlungtse (23,560 ft.), Chobuts (21,870 ft.) & Choba Bhanare (19,550 ft.). The approach to the group is from the village of Charikot, the headquarters of the Dolakha district.

The nearest Himalayan range from Kathmandu is Jugal Himal and its peaks are seen in all their grandeur from the city itself & from many points in the Kathmandu valley. The three principal peaks are Phurbi Chyachu (21,844 ft.), Leongo Gang (23,238 ft.) and Dorje Lakpa (22,929 ft.).

Langtang Himal stretches from the Jugal Himal in the East to the Rasa Garhi Pass in the West, with the highest peak being Langtang Lirung (23,771 ft.). There are many unnamed peaks over 20,000 ft. in this area. In the group there are more very

beautiful Himalayan valleys and there is an endless choice of walks, excursions, traverses and climbs of great interest. At the southern foot there are the popular trekking resorts of Helambu and Gosainkund.

Another area offering magnificent views, many walks and climbs with picturesque villages in the southern foot of the Ganesh Himal, the next range to the West of Langtang Himal. The major peaks in the group are: Ganesh (or Elephant God) Peak (24,299 ft.), Paldor (19,351 ft.) and Charmar (23,545 ft.).

Continuing Westward you are in the Gorkha Himal area, which, apart from its eight high peaks, there are three lakes at an altitude of 12,000 ft. The largest is Kalchuma (Kal Tal) and the other two

kes of Dudh Pokhari and Barah Pokhari. It is from this last lake that the whole of the Gorkha Himal can be seen with the principal peak being Manaslu. (The latter is one of the eight thousanders and was first climbed by a Japanese team.)

The next group is the Annapurna Himal which sends out three major spurs -- Nilgiri Himal to the Southwest, Mukti-nath-Damoda Himal to the Northwest and Lamjung Himal to the East. Principal peaks are Annapurna I, II, III, IV, Nilgiri East and West, Lamjung and Machhapuchhare, known as the Matterhorn of Nepal with its peak V-shaped like a fish tail. To the South of the Annapurna group lies the Pokhara valley, the next most popular tourist resort in central Nepal, after the Kathmandu valley.

Dhaulagiri I, at 26,975 ft., in the Dhaulagiri Himal, is the highest mountain in central Nepal and drops sharply to a height of 8,000 ft. over a direct distance of seven miles. The prominent peaks in the Himal are Dhaulagiri I, II, III, IV, V, VI, Churen Gurja, Putha Humchali and Tukuche.

The final two groups are in Western Nepal--being Karjiroba Himal and Sarpal and Byas Rishi Himal. These two groups have some important peaks with Kanjiroba being 22,583 ft., Nampa - 22,164 ft., Api - 23,399 ft. and Saipal - 23,080 ft. The whole of the Southern part of the Api-Nampa-Sarpal group forms a magnificent trekking and mountaineering area. (C)

Chapter 3 - Postal Finance (6 pages) with eleven numbered items:

1. The author points out that he is designated as an expert in postal organisation, not in postal finance.
2. At present, postal finances are treated in the same way as those of most other government departments. Expenditures are voted for the department as a whole; but revenue is credited to the treasury directly from local offices, making it difficult to attempt to strike a balance between the two.
3. The total expenditure is known with reasonable accuracy--85 lakhs of rupees (8,500,000) for the last financial year. For the same year revenue was reported as 40 lakhs, but it omits a number of significant items. Particularly in a developing country, the postal service is not expected to show a profit, but there is value in obtaining more comprehensive figures.
4. Commenting on internal postal rates, the author notes that the present internal basic rate is 25p (increased from 15p two years ago) but does not fully meet costs. However, a higher rate would cause undue hardship or would lead to a reduction in traffic.
5. He points out that an increase in traffic is desirable from the standpoint of economy, since a letter posted in one of the main cities can be delivered in another city at a cost of less than 25p, whereas handling mail to remote areas costs considerably more than 25p. (This is certainly true in the USA, as well, so is not a problem faced only by developing countries.)
6. The external rates are a different matter, since the UPU sets upper and lower limits for surface postage and requires that airmail rates bear close relation to the actual costs involved. Curiously, the present (1970) surface rate is 50p, whereas the prescribed rate set by the UPU is now the equivalent of 66p (minimum) and Rs 1.32 (maximum.) The author recommends raising



the surface rate immediately. (Perhaps the fact that a good many Nepalese people live in India and make extensive use of the mail service was a factor which Mr. Ward overlooked.--Ed.)

7. Concerns official mail which is handled without charge. Mention is made of the fact that Mail Centre alone handles more than one million Ka Sa items each year and states, "Since all Ka Sa is treated as registered, the minimum charge per item would be one rupee..... It is highly desirable either that the former use of service postage stamps should be resumed," or that some method of accounting should be made available.

8. Emphatically recommends that the treatment of every Ka Sa item as registered is unnecessary and should be abolished. If only items of special importance were registered, staff costs in the post office could be reduced immediately.

9. Points out that, although the UPU principle of allowing the administration at the origin to retain postal charges simplifies international accounting, developing countries are at a disadvantage, since the amount of incoming mail is a veritable flood, while relatively little flows in the outward direction. He mentions that, in Nepal, the largest single quantity comes from Peking---often more than 100 bags in a single dispatch! The amount of letter post traffic into Nepal is not less than ten times the amount sent. (One wonders what the situation is today.--Ed.)

10. Points out that there is, at the time of the report, no provision in the Postal Services Department for collecting and classifying statistics of postal operations.

11. States that attempts to introduce simple statistical records of postal traffic have failed due to the difficulty of obtaining regular and reliable returns from a large number of offices, and recommends that a small statistical section be set up to collect and coordinate the information which is already available.

(to be continued)

## JOURNEY TO TIBET

--Armand E. Singer

I was fortunate enough to spend 3 weeks in Tibet this past September-October (1982). A few observations may be of interest: As we all know, the Chinese have completely taken over the Tibetan postal service, and stamps, with no alterations or overprints for use there, are exclusively regular Chinese issues. Since China has for hundreds of years (not just since the 1950s) considered Tibet to be part of China under Chinese sovereignty, all this makes perfect sense to Peking. The mail service in Lhasa, Gyantse and Shigatse, the only towns where I tested it, was efficient in sending off to Europe and the U.S. all my postcards (I could not say about possible censorship of sealed letters), none being lost or delayed. The Lhasa office consisted of a single large room, quite busy for a city and a country where, traditionally, few send or receive letters. On my two trips there, no stamps were available for foreign mail -- only low values for local use (I obtained my supply from a convenience store located in our guest-house compound). The one clerk I had dealings with was indeed friendly. My sign language convinced her to let me use her canceller to prepare my own batch of souvenir covers. I wanted to be sure that they bore clean cancels.

When the Chinese first took over the country, collectors learned about the installation of air service between Lhasa and China proper. But the planes were said to be DC-3s and there was some doubt whether their ceiling would get them over the high Himalayas between the Tibetan capital and the Chinese lowlands to the east. The maximum for these small planes is not much above the elevation of Lhasa itself (somewhere around twelve thousand feet -- it depends on whose readings you accept, but 11,800' is not far off). I tried without success for several years to obtain a cover on which the dates on the departure & arrival cancels would be close enough to prove airmail usage rather than surface mail. Today there is no doubt. However, the plane does not land at or near Lhasa. The airfield then and now lies some sixty miles to the north, where the valley configuration makes for safer landings, although the elevation is only a bit over three hundred feet lower than Lhasa. Ser-



vice is several times a week (via Chengdu or Xian). The planes, at least those I saw or flew in, are Ilyushin-18s, sturdy old Russian jet-props holding some one hundred passengers. Lhasa seems to have the only airport in Tibet, by the way.

There are serviceable dirt roads joining Lhasa with Shigatse, Gyantse, Nangartse, Chushul, Tingri and Shegar (this latter town not mentioned in Waterfall), all places I stayed in or passed through, as well as several other roads leading to less well-known areas to the east or west. The major passes run over 17,000'. It might be mentioned, in reference to the scarcity of many cancellations, that places like Chushul and Nangartse are rather minimal villages, scarcely hotbeds for commercial or personal correspondence. Even Gyantse is hardly more than one not-so-long street. Shigatse is a genuine town, and Lhasa, according to the new Britannica (1974) has a population of over four hundred thousand. If true, the poor souls must be packed incredibly close together. I would have guessed a ballpark figure of well under a hundred thousand, experienced demographer that I am. Even accepting the higher count must involve the realization that well over half the buildings hold Chinese occupation troops (some half million are said to be on duty throughout the whole country, whose total population is reportedly no longer over six million).

Our Chinese liaison officer and I both being collectors, we looked for stamp dealers, unsuccessfully. Little privately run shops are common enough, along with street stands with vegetables and meat, and the like; and illicit hawkers (under no very close surveillance!) of hand-wrought silver boxes, bracelets, etc., are legion. But nothing as refined or as specialized as philately seemingly flourishes. Of course, the week we spent in Lhasa was doubtless insufficient for establishing contacts. The Chinese, in any event, do not encourage activities devoted to resuscitating Tibet's past glories or olden ways (philatelic or otherwise). Monasteries are again open, but not independent. The Chinese hand, however thickly clad in velvet, is always in evidence. Not that the occupation has not had its good side, in schooling and health care, for instance (I actually witnessed successful open heart surgery being performed

in a Lhasa hospital -- something beyond belief twenty years ago), and only a confirmed romanticist would argue that Tibet's theocratic government was an unmixed blessing for the populace. But emphasis on things like philately, no!

Maps of Tibet are not as accurate, inclusive, or trustworthy as they might be. The 1980 National Geographic "People's Republic of China" sheet is about as good as anything easily come upon. Tibet coverage is adequate, though I do note that place-name spellings often differ from those used by most philatelists, and locations are not always exact. For example, Tingri is shown as another name for Xegar, whereas in reality, the former is a village, the latter a small town, miles apart. I have seen, but do not possess or have other information on, a much larger, better, and more detailed map of Tibet, even supplied with contour elevations. Such cartographic inaccuracies and omissions, of course, go with the territory. The Potala, for another instance, widely reputed to rise a thousand feet up into the thin Tibetan air, actually is barely a few hundred feet from street level to summit, the building itself perhaps two hundred feet in all, this despite its admittedly huge, spreading dimensions.

What else can I add? Perhaps that Col. Younghusband's famous fort constructed during his occupation of Gyantse in 1904 is no longer in evidence. Its remains, I was given to understand, have by now been incorporated into commercial and residential structures. For the benefit of mountaineering cover collectors I will note that Rongbuk Monastery, which all the early British expeditions attempting to climb Mt. Everest would pass on their way to the nearby Rongbuk Glacier base camp, now lies in ruins, its inhabitants killed and the buildings destroyed by the Chinese Communists. We camped a few feet from it for five days. We also visited the base camp itself about two miles up the valley, some five hundred feet higher at 17,000'. Expeditions still use this camp; we had the pleasure of talking with German and Dutch teams attempting climbs in this area. Myself, I wound up no higher than 17,500', well up on the glacier itself, in full view of Everest's magnificent north face, almost cloudless during our whole stay. To do honor to my philatelic leanings, I

Singer, JOURNEY TO TIBET, continued:

prepared seven covers carried to this elevation and two more where we camped, on the north slopes of Chichapangma (formerly called Gosainthan, lowest of the 8,000-meter giants) and climbed to over 17,000'. These great rarities, who knows, may some day fetch thousands of collectors' dollars at auction.



#### MOUNTAINEERING IN NEPAL

(Our thanks to Mr. Dhruba Rudra, Nepal Representative for the Nepal & Tibet Study Circle, for a collection of newspaper articles dealing with this topic.--Ed.)

AUTUMN MOUNTAINEERING - an editorial from The Rising Nepal (English language daily) for 8 September 1982.

"A large number of mountaineers from all over the world are attempting to scale various peaks this season. The Canadian Sagarmatha expedition, with an elaborate communication system, is trying to scale the peak from the unclimbed South Pillar route. Unfortunately, the expedition suffered early setbacks due to the death of three high altitude Sherpa guides and one of its members. This appears not to have deterred the expedition from its set goal of climbing the world's highest mountain by a new route, although seven members have given up.

"Sagarmatha is also being attempted by a Spanish expedition this year but these climbers are taking a different route: the North Face route. Indeed, all the major mountains in Nepal, with the exception of Mt. Kanchenjunga, are being attempted by one team or another. Nor have the minor peaks been left alone. Thus many an expedition has teamed up with Nepalese in trying virgin peaks which are much lower than the more reputed peaks which rise to over 8,000 metres.

"Despite the fact that climbers face the real threat of death due to various factors, of which the avalanche hazard is only one, mountaineers keep thronging to Nepal to try their luck against the mountains. Mountaineering was romantically

looked upon once as the ultimate battle between man and nature. Unfortunately, in the past several years, man has been gaining undue advantage over the mountain, thanks mainly to the new and more sophisticated equipment. Oxygen cylinders have become almost redundant as there are now very small cylinders available. And, despite the alpine style of climbing, expeditions in Nepal are still well manned, with hundreds of porters carrying up the equipment and food. Left alone to the mercy of the elements, man has still to wage a battle to climb even an inch in the high mountains. Perhaps it is for this reason that men keep coming back to the Himalayas. For all those who take mountaineering as a great sport, the lure of the Himalayas will not be dimmed. In fact, ultimately, as many different ways and routes for climbing a mountain will be devised as there are climbers. The autumn mountaineering season has shown that the lure of the Himalayas will continue despite occasional dropouts. For the dare-devils and the courageous, mountaineering will ever remain the supreme sport.

EARTH STATION TO BEAM SAGARMATHA CLIMB (a photo under this caption shows "an earth-station dish at the Everest Sheraton Hotel which will feed satellite broadcasts of the Sagarmatha climb to Canada.")

The death in an avalanche Tuesday morning of three Sherpas of the Canadian Sagarmatha expedition underscores a point that might well have been lost in the tinsel and glitter of the high-tech satellite communications that is accompanying this climb. The tragic accident which took place in the treacherous Khumbu ice-fall has brought to the fore the fact that mountain climbing is dangerous business---where even the best climbers are exposed to 'objective' dangers like avalanches.

It is, perhaps, this factor that makes the general (non-climbing) public take an interest in climbing news. When it is the highest mountain in the world, the interest is, of course, compounded---especially because Sagarmatha climbs are traditionally nationalistic ones.

This autumn's Canadian expedition to Sagarmatha has several firsts to its credit. It is the first Canadian expedition to the world's highest peak and it is also the first time that television coverage ('live' in the final stages) will be available to viewers during the actual climb.

For the most part, the Canadian climbers

will be "shooting their own progress" up the mountain, according to Mr. Nevil Pike, the director of Can-Ever-Ex, the promotional company that is handling the expedition's publicity. "While there have been many films made of Everest, only on-the-spot video can actually capture and share the conditions and drama of the climb," he adds.

Getting the necessary hardware to provide on-going video coverage of the climb was a challenge, and technicians have managed to use the latest technology, including tiny video cameras that are not yet on the market to make this possible.

What do the climbers feel about all this publicity? "Half said yes and half said no," recalls Pike, "and most of them would be using 35 mm still cameras anyway."

Despite the seemingly overpowering involvement of media coverage, the climb will not be "staged." "They will climb and we will only observe," says Peter Hollidge of Advertel, the firm that has worked out the physical and technical logistics for the television broadcast.

The climax of the television coverage will be the 'live' telecast (weather permitting) of the summit bid. An astronomical telescope with a 12,000 mm lens is to be set up at the Everest View Hotel in Syangboche and will allow viewers to follow the climbers up the last eight hundred meters of the South Pillar. The signals will be beamed by microwave to the Everest Sheraton Hotel in Kathmandu, from where a 3.7-meter dish antenna will feed them to an Intelsat V satellite 40,000 kilometers above the Indian Ocean, which will, in turn, relay the images to an earth station in Madely, UK. From there the signals will race by submarine cable across the Atlantic to Nova Scotia and back into space to Canada's own television satellite, which will transmit summit shots to television viewers all over Canada. The 9 hour, 40 minute, time difference will mean, said a technician, that most Canadians will be sleeping when this happens." (We wonder if any of the Canadian members of our Study Circle saw any of this video 'spectacular' or, indeed, if it actually took place!--Ed.)

#### MT. SAGARMATH REMAINS THE MOST FANCIED PEAK

Kathmandu, April 26:

The 8848 metre high world's highest peak---Mt. Sagarmatha---continues to be the most

fancied peak to various expeditions world over.

Apart from a number of expeditions to this peak from various countries of the world in the past, this peak has drawn increasing numbers of expeditions every year.

The Ministry of Tourism has so far received applications from as many as forty expeditions seeking to scale this mountain in the next decade.

However, the number of expeditions permitted to scale the peak up to the end of 1988 stands at eighteen. The rest are not permitted for want of relevant particulars, it is learned from the ministry. Should the rest furnish all the formalities, they might be permitted too, the ministry sources said.

This number covers the expeditions attempting the mountain during all the three seasons.

His Majesty's Government, it may be recalled, has permitted expeditions to different peaks in the Kingdom during the spring, autumn and winter seasons.

Among the teams so far permitted to scale the peak up to 1988, three Japanese and two American expeditions are included.

Among the rest, Mt. Pumori (7145 metres) and Mt. Ama Dablam (6858 metres) have drawn more expeditions than other peaks. However, the 8598-metre high Mt. Kanchenjunga, in the eastern part of the Kingdom, has been applied for by thirteen expeditions up to the end of 1986. Only four expeditions are permitted, however.

Likewise, Mt. Lhotse (8511 metres) has been applied for by sixteen expeditions so far. However, the ministry has permitted only five of them.

The number of expeditions seeking permission for Mt. Makalu (8484 metres) is even higher. So far, 29 expeditions have applied for and seven have already got permission.

Two expeditions have been permitted to Yanglungkang (8420 metres) up to 1983, although there were ten applications seeking permission to the peak.

Similarly, as many as nine applications have been made to the ministry seeking permission for the 8383-metre high Lhotse Shar up to 1985. One only is permitted to scale the mountain next year.

Dhaulagiri (8167 metres) and Manaslu (8156 metres) have been applied for by twenty-six and twenty-seven expeditions, respectively. Only seven each have been granted



permission so far.

Mt. Cho Oyu (8153 metres) has been applied for by 35 expeditions. However, no expedition has been permitted as yet. It is recalled that Mt. Cho Oyu is open only for a joint expedition with the Nepalese climbers.

Mt. Annapurna (8091 metres), in western Nepal, has been applied for by 19 expeditions up to 1986. It will, however, be attempted by only five expeditions till 1985.

Any expedition seeking permission to scale any peak in Nepal has to submit all the particulars of their members and other relevant particulars with respect to the expedition two months before starting for the mountain.

In the circumstances, the actual number of expeditions going to a mountain might, in fact, be even higher, the ministry sources said.



#### MOUNTAINS MUST HAVE A CHANCE . . .

Interview: Sir Edmund Hillary

"The Rising Nepal" dated 28 May 1982:

Edmund Hillary was in Kathmandu last week on his way back to New Zealand from Solu Khumbu. Our reporter talked to him about mountaineering and the mountains.

Question: You have been living in Solu Khumbu off and on ever since 1951. How much ecological degradation have you seen there in that time?

Edmund Hillary: There has definitely been a lot of deforestation. Especially the forests around Pangboche, which used to be thick forest. Even higher up, the juniper shrubs are disappearing and this has been very noticeable in recent years.

Question: What is the contribution of tourism to this?

Edmund Hillary: I think the very large expeditions are responsible. Large expeditions have hundreds of porters moving up the valley and they need fuel to cook their food and keep warm. The large numbers of trekkers have naturally contributed to this, although it is a good sign that groups entering the National Parks will now be required to carry their own kerosene.

Question: How has the traditional Sherpa attitude towards conservation been able to cope with all this?

Edmund Hillary: The basic philosophy is still there. But what we have seen in the past few years is the impact of tourism money perverting the old methods. There is a need to be moderate with tourism and, if we can, see that this is controlled, so the mountain environment will have a chance. We have seen that, in the last few years, that the volume of trekkers in the Khumbu has stabilised. It is certainly not like six or seven years ago when there were just too many of them.

Question: How many schools and hospitals have been commissioned so far in Solu Khumbu?

Edmund Hillary: The Khumjung School has just been completed, and we tried to make the minimum use of timber for the construction, which was out of rocks and cement. So far we have built eighteen schools, including two high schools. There are now two hospitals, one in Khunde and the other in Phaplu. We have always asked the Sherpas themselves what they wanted and have not tried to impose our own ideas. Right now, for example, we are engaged in the expansion and renovation of the courtyard of the monastery at Thami, at the request of the Rimpoche himself. This kind of assistance is important for the social life of the Sherpas--and it is one of the many ways to conserve the social environment.

QUESTION: How has mountaineering changed since the first ascent of Sagarmatha?

Edmund Hillary: Mountaineering has always involved the relationship between man and mountain. The latest trend in climbing in the Himalaya--climbing Alpine style--heightens that relationship. And, channelled with more common sense, it is the ultimate type of climbing. The classical large expeditions with powerful, well-equipped climbers, still tackle Himalayan peaks, but the future is not in that type of mountaineering. The success of small, compact groups of climbers tackling a major objective, carrying their own loads, is always more impressive. Ascents of that nature are more impressive than ones where the mountain has no chance.





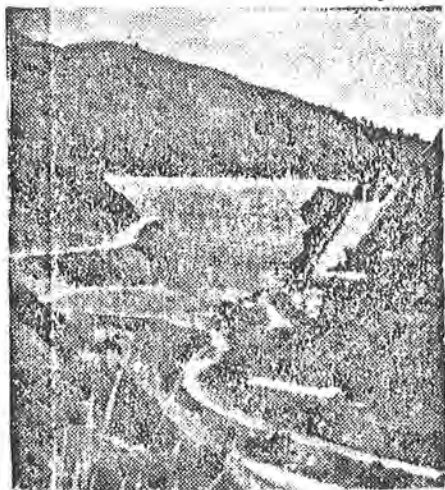


Souvenir cancel of the 1982 Canadian Mt. Everest Expedition.

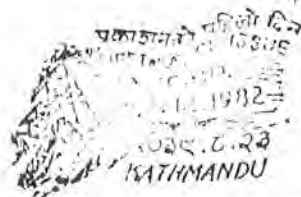


Souvenir cancel of the Special Post Office in the Hotel Everest Sheraton, Kathmandu, dated on the occasion of the first video transmission from the climbing party of the 1982 Canadian Mt. Everest Expedition.

प्रथम दिवसीय आवरण (F.D.C.)



कुलेखानी जल विद्युत आयोजना  
KULFKHANI HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT.



A FDC of the Rs.2 stamp issued in connection with inauguration of the Kulekhani Hydro-Electric Project.

At the time of writing an article on Baglung post office only a passing reference was made to Thak post office, since none of the sources available at that time helped to deal with this question in detail. But, while going through a book written by Eden-Vansittart, I found an earliest known list of post offices compiled by a foreigner without Thak post office. (1) As the book was published in 1915 A.D., it would not be wrong to conclude that Thak post office was established only subsequently. Moreover, a sanad (government document) dated 1977 Ashwin B.S. (1920 A.D.) lends its support to the above statement by not mentioning the post office under study in its long list.

The earliest Thak postmark recorded so far is of 1930 A.D. (2) So attempts are being made to trace the origin of Thak post office between 1920 and 1930 A.D. As a result of an in-depth analysis, a round, negative name stamp bearing the inscriptions 'Shri/ Thak Hulak/Adda/84' (Thak post/office/84) is found to enlighten us on this remote post office. The inscriptions inside the circle (33 mm in diameter) are in 4 lines and the honorific symbol 'Shri' on the top line has the Sun and the Moon on its left- and right-hand sides, respectively. The digits '84' on the bottom, which is just below a straight line and flanked by two small ornamental designs denote year 1984 B.S. Apart from this, there exists Shri 3 Chandra's Khadga Nishana (a government document with the Rana Prime Minister's decision) dated 1981 Bhadra 31 B.S. ordering the establishment of Thak post office.



The credit for opening the first post office at Thak region should be given to the untiring efforts of Captain Dambar Jung Rana, the then officer of Thak Dana Bhansar ko Sachhi Adda (Office of the wit-

ness to Thak Dana Customs). His last effort in the month of Poush 1980 B.S. was successful in convincing the central authorities. Reasons behind recommendations made by Hulak Goswara, the then postal directorate, also seemed to have exerted considerable influence in favour of the decision for establishing Thak post office. As they are of immense value to research scholars, the literal translation of an extract is given below:

There is need of opening a post office in accordance with the survey made by Palpa Gauda (District Administration).

That the flow of information from the adjoining district bordering Bhot (Tibet) be maintained.

That the post offices at Tatapani, Terathum, Taplejung and Anarmani had already been established although they incurred losses.

That the government will earn revenue though it may be meagre.

That the general public will get postal facilities.

That all correspondence connected with the government offices will be exchanged by post, thus keeping them inside the mail bag.

The post office in Thak region was opened first at Tukuche, a trading centre and probably with a customs office. This guess is made because of the fact that the arrangement of stages (hulak chowkis) were made to be fixed from Baglung post office to Tukuche. Some hold that officials concerned used to change the post office from North to South, i.e., from Thak Tukuche to Thak Dana and vice-versa, according to the changes of the seasons. Again, it is supposed that, at last, Thak post office ceased to operate at Tukuche and that it was ordered to be stationed at Dana permanently. Still today the post office at Dana, which is at present in Mugu district, has the postmark with the name 'Thak' inscribed on it.

#### References:

- (1) Lieut-Col. Eden-Vansittart, "Gurkhas," Calcutta, pp. 230-231 (1915 A.D.)
- (2) Dr. Hellrigl, W.C. and Hepper, Colin, "The Native Postmarks of Nepal," England, p. 41 (1978 A.D.)