In Memoriam

COMPILED BY GEOFFREY TEMPLEMAN

The Alpine Club Obituary

Dame Freya Stark
Lady Susi Jeans
Jill Neate
John Callis Hawksley
Walter Abbott Wood
John Raymond Fearon
William Eric Radcliffe
Charmian Longstaff
Terence Dominic Leggett
Penelope Storey
Ronald James Wathen
Roland Arnold Rodda
Kevin Columba Fitzgerald
Frederick Paul French
Donald Ernest Lockhart
Sir John Laurence Longland
Louis Charles Baume

Year of Election
LAC 1935 (Hon1935)
LAC 1947
1988
1940
1930
1941
1954
LAC 1939
1975
LAC 1954
1957-65, 1982
1960
1973
1961
1973
1928
1952

In addition to the above, obituaries are included for Sir William Younger and Jo Kretschmer, who both died in 1992.

On a personal note, I remember the humorous letter I received from my predecessor when I took over the obituary section, packed with typical dos and don’ts and warnings of the pitfalls that might be encountered. It hasn’t been as bad as he painted, nor has it been possible to achieve the literary heights of his marvellous introductions. In Kevin Fitzgerald the Club has lost a great writer.

Sir William McEwan Younger Bart, DSO 1905–1992

Bill Younger, who died in 1992 after a long illness, outlived his climbing contemporaries, and it falls to me, who only knew him in the last 20 years of his life, to write his obituary. He was a great figure in the business world, especially in Edinburgh and in the Conservative Party in Scotland. He was elected to the Club in 1927 while still an undergraduate on the proposal of A M Carr Saunders and Geoffrey Winthrop Young, so totalling 65 years of membership.
On leaving Oxford he went straight into the family brewing business of McEwans and proceeded to build this up first by the acquisition of another family company, William Youngers, and later by the takeover of Newcastle Breweries and several smaller Edinburgh companies to form Scottish and Newcastle with about 10% of the market. He had an outstanding war record, enlisting in 1939 in a lowland anti-aircraft regiment of the Royal Artillery with which he served in the North African campaign, including the first siege of Tobruk, and in Italy, finishing up in command of the regiment. His double-barrelled name, evocative of beer, earned him the nickname ‘Colonel Screwtop’.

After the war he remained chairman of his company until 1969 and was also active as director of a number of other Edinburgh companies. He was Deputy Lieutenant of Midlothian and later of the City of Edinburgh and, in the seventies, Chairman of the Scottish Conservative Party. Through his charitable trust he supported many good causes, notably his college Balliol, of which he became an Honorary Fellow, many Edinburgh charities including the Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Mount Everest Foundation and the A C Irvine Travel Fund.

Bill Younger’s mountaineering record is largely lost in the sands of time, but his companions in his Oxford days included Douglas Busk, A M Binnie and Carr Saunders. In the thirties and after the war he climbed with John Tilney and Claude Elliott. There is a splendid portrait in oils, now in the possession of his daughter, showing him as a young man against the background of the Cresta Rey on Monte Rosa.

When I knew him, in the seventies and eighties in Edinburgh, in Glen Lyon and then in his final home near Henley, we were both past anything more than walks on the Scottish hills. I remember him best in his beautiful house in Moray Place, a swell but quite without pomposity, easygoing but suddenly coming out with trenchant criticisms of the good and the great, casually dressed with a glass of whisky and a cheroot in his hand, enjoying life.

Peter Lloyd

John Martin Kretschmer 1916-1992

During the last fifty years I numbered the Kretschmers, first Nully and then Jo, amongst my closest friends. During the war years Nully and I and John Barford climbed a lot together in Wales and the Lakes. Eventually, as we were successively bombed out, we three coagulated in a flat in London, only to be broken up again in 1947 when Nully and John were both killed in separate accidents in the Alps. It was shortly after that that I first met Jo.

During the war he served with distinction in the Royal Engineers in Africa, India and Burma and also as an instructor in winter warfare in Scotland where his skills as a ski-mountaineer were invaluable for teaching others.
In the 1950s probably the most potent influence on his climbing activities was his friendship with Wilt Noyce. He could not fail to have been influenced by Wilf’s qualities of leadership and climbing skills, so often concealed under a mantle of humility. Like Nully, Jo seldom left any record of his achievements, valuing them only for themselves or for the shared companionship they brought. In those days those of us in industry with our routine two weeks annual holiday had little chance to travel abroad, and air travel had hardly begun, so most of his climbing was in the UK. It wasn’t until we were much older, and indeed after we had retired, that I made many expeditions with Jo and Mike Low (another AC member, who died in 1990), when we climbed in the Pyrenees or trekked in Nepal or had three or four geriatric walks, carrying some 40lbs, for four or five days through the wildest parts of the western highlands of Scotland.

We were all engineers of moderate success and mountaineers of no great distinction, yet active enough to value the experience of stretching our powers to the limit. We were lovers of wild places, especially when approached by sea on the wings of the wind and enjoyed seeking out the wild creatures and flowers we found there.

Jo served the Alpine Club as Treasurer for three years and the Mount Everest Foundation for sixteen years.

As John Hunt has said in his note, ‘Jo was a wonderful companion and a person whom it was easy to love’.

Alan Pullinger

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John Hunt writes:

I don’t remember how or when I first met Jo. It must have been shortly after the War, when he had been demobilised. Probably it was Wilfrid Noyce who introduced us. However that may be, it marked the beginning of a friendship of over forty years. When I was appointed to launch the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme, he was one of my first choices, among the many friends on whom I could rely to promote its growth, in the voluntary role of an Award Liaison Officer. I fancy that one of the first climbs we did together was Crib Goch Buttress. In the following years we skied together in the Cairngorms, climbed on Arran, Lundy and in North Wales. We climbed in the Alpes de Provence; we traversed the Haute Route from Argentière and, on two especially memorable occasions, climbed the Matterhorn and the Aiguille Méridionale d’Arves in very bad weather.

Perhaps the happiest memories which Joy and I shared with Jo and other friends were visits to various islands, partly to watch the sea birds at nesting time. Lundy was our favourite island, but Arran, Skomer Skokholm, Grassholm, the Farne Islands were all part of the repertoire, year after year, in late May or early June. Perhaps the most exotic of all those dream island days was a visit to the Galapagos archipelago. Sark, in 1991, was to be the last occasion, for when the time came to explore the Orkneys the following year, Jo was already too ill to accompany us. His love and knowledge of birds was considerable. I, who had first fired his enthusiasm, found renewed delight in learning from my former pupil. He rejoiced in coastal
scenery, as he did in mountains; with friends, we walked several of the coastal footpaths.

As a climber, Jo made no pretension to be brilliant; one of his most appealing features was his modesty. But he had done some hard routes with Wilfrid Noyce, and on a rope he was solid, dependable, unflappable: an ideal second. Above all, he was a wonderful companion, relaxed, sensible, interesting in conversation, informed and enthusiastic about many matters. Jo was a person whom it was easy to love.

Dame Freya Stark 1893-1993

Freya Stark was famous for her adventurous travels in the Middle East, Arabia and Persia, and for the splendid books she wrote about them; these achievements were fully described in other obituaries. But years before she made her name as traveller and writer, she had proved herself as a mountaineer, and of the many honours she received in a long life she was particularly proud and happy to be an Honorary Member of the Alpine Club. It is this side of her life that it is appropriate to remember here.

Freya started to climb before the 1914-18 war, with her adopted godfather (who was also mine), the scholar W. P. Ker, later Professor of Poetry at Oxford and a member of the Alpine Club. In 1913 he took her to the Gran Paradiso range; in 1919 they were again on the Italian side of Mont Blanc, climbing from Courmayeur and walking over the passes between the valleys that radiate from Monte Rosa, ending at Macugnaga in the Val Anzasca. In 1923 they returned to Macugnaga, and as they were climbing towards a minor summit, the Pizzo Bianco, 'W.P. gave a sudden cry and died'. His heart had stopped. He was buried in the old church at Macugnaga, under the great east face of Monte Rosa. A few days later Freya, with the Macugnaga guide Tofi, traversed the Matterhorn — up the Swiss side, down the Italian, back to Zermatt over the Theodul, a 17-hour day.

Back in Macugnaga the following year she decided to attack that formidable east face of Monte Rosa which, so W.P. had told her, had seldom been climbed, and only once by a woman. She recalled her climb — again with Tofi — in the LAC Journal of 1964. The crux was the Marinelli couloir that runs right up the face — 'the highway for the avalanches of Monte Rosa, which pour down with a dull soft sound as if they were milk' — which they traversed at midnight when the surface was frozen. Then up the Loccie glacier, in places so steep that 'when now and then we took a few minutes rest, we would sit by merely leaning slightly towards the gigantic wall'. (When, to the packed congregation at her memorial service, Colin Thubron said she had learnt to 'overcome fear', I reflected that this day on Monte Rosa must have given her an early lesson.) With Tofi, she had ambitions to make a new route up the south edge of the Loccie glacier next season. Illness prevented this, and Monte Rosa by the Marinelli remained 'the only really big climb of my life'.
In 1931, when travelling in Persia, she had hopes of climbing Takht-i-Suleiman, but was foiled by a Hungarian climber who bribed her shikari to lead her to the unclimbable side of the mountain. After she settled at Asolo, she often went walking in the Dolomites, crossing passes and staying in huts. Her delight in just being in the mountains endured. ‘Nothing will ever hold me like the mountains,’ she wrote me in 1975; and in her eighties she went ‘creeping round Annapurna – on a very peaceful pony’. In a letter of May 1979 she confessed to me that she was ‘not up to much (86)’ and old age meant ‘one has to be treated like luggage’, yet she had ‘an unreasonable but happy wish to look once more on the Himalaya’, and especially ‘to ride from Indus source to Oxus across Pamirs’. Would she need a Russian visa, she asked me; and would her heart hold out? I think she half hoped it would not, and that, like her beloved W.P., she would end her life suddenly, among high mountains.

On her election as an Honorary Member of the LAC in 1935, Freya wrote to the President, Miss MacAndrew, that no honour could have given her greater pleasure ‘since it is associated with mountains which have always meant so very much to me’. And after the merger with the Alpine Club in 1975 she told me ‘I am so proud and happy to be with you in the Noble Club’.

In 1982 the province of Treviso organised an Omaggio a Freya Stark at Asolo – a splendid affair, with a banquet, concert, films of her travels, and the band of the Blues and Royals, flown out at the expense of a local bank. The crowning ceremony was the presentation to her of the Keys of Asolo; and as the 89-year-old Freya appeared at the top of the steps of the piazza, the tune the band struck up was ‘The Maid of the Mountains’.

Janet Adam Smith
(Janet Carleton)

Jill Neate 1934-1993

The death occurred in May 1993 of Jill Neate, Alpine Club member and a leading mountaineering historian and bibliographer. She was 58. Her Mountaineering Literature, 1986, an enlarged version of an earlier work, is the internationally regarded authority on books about mountains and climbing in the English language. Booksellers the world over identify items in their catalogues by their ‘Neate’ numbers, and take immoderate delight when they are able to advertise some obscure piece of ephemera as ‘Not in Neate.’

Jill Neate had been born William Neate in London and qualified as a chartered accountant, working in management consultancy and company secretarial services for the Institute of Chartered Accountants. On the deaths of her parents, she moved in 1970 to the Lake District and embarked on a career of mountain scholarship. Soon afterwards began the long, lonely process towards a change in sexual identity.

The patient accumulation of often obscure detail suited her temperament and the peculiar circumstance in which she found herself. Increasingly
reclusive, she drew comfort from her correspondence with fellow bibliophiles, and set herself to chronicle the exploration and mountaineering history of those areas which receive little attention in the standard literature. *Mountaineering in the Andes* was published by the Expedition Advisory Centre of the Royal Geographical Society in 1987 as a source book for climbers. It was an astonishing assemblage of information that had taken seven years to complete. In order to track down elusive Spanish references, Neate had added a working knowledge of that language to the French and German she already possessed. A thorough revision of the work had just been completed at the time of her death.

In 1989 she brought out what many believe was her major work, *High Asia, an illustrated history of the 7,000 metre peaks*. It covered the mountains from the Pamirs to Assam, and all the little-known mountain groups of China and Tibet, listing their accessibility, history and climbing potential, and giving an extensive bibliography to each geographical section, with an even fuller general bibliography at the end of the book. It has been praised as a 'gem of research'.

Jill Neate translated many European books into English, including several Reinhold Messner titles and Friedrich Bender's *Classic Climbs in the Caucasus*, and she had produced a Readers' Guide to the Lake District. For several years she served on the Library Committee of the Alpine Club.

*Audrey Salkeld*

**Walter Abbott Wood 1908–1993**

Walter Wood died at West Palm Beach, Florida, after a long illness. He had been President of the American Alpine Club, the American Geographical Society and the Explorers Club of New York. He was a notable surveyor of mountain country and, while training in Switzerland, had obtained his Alpine guide's diploma enabling him to wear the *bergführer* badge of the SAC. After a number of seasons in the Alps, his first expedition was in 1929 on a mapping mission to the Kashmir–Tibet border.

From the thirties onwards, a private income enabled Wood to mount his own expeditions. These included the ascent of Mt Steele in 1935, and Mt Vancouver in 1949. Although Wood himself did not reach the summit of the latter, one of the four who did was Noel Odell. Whilst Wood was descending from the first ascent of Mt Hubbard in 1951, he received news that his wife and daughter had disappeared without trace whilst flying with the bush pilot Maurice King in the St Elias mountains.

From 1949 onwards, Walter Wood organised research projects in the Alaska/Yukon mountains, directing a programme of survey, geology, glaciology and mountaineering. In the early sixties, these programmes were extended to include a biological element which gave the Canadian Government much useful information for establishing the Kluane National Park.

*Geoffrey Templeman*
Charmian Longstaff 1907-1993

‘Professional painter’ was Charmian’s description of herself on her application to join the LAC in 1939. She had won a scholarship to the Slade School, where she was a contemporary of William Coldstream and Claud Rogers, and highly regarded by Tonks, the Principal. She met Tom Longstaff through a Slade contemporary who had married Tom’s brother. Immediately attracted to each other, in due course they married, and for all the 32 years difference in age, it was a most happy marriage. Tom used to say that Charmian, born in 1907, was his reward for his exertions on Trisul, climbed that year.

Charmian had enjoyed hill-walking and mild scrambling on family holidays on Deeside, but her serious climbing began with Tom. Before the war they had three seasons camping and climbing in the Carinthian and Julian Alps; in 1937 with the Courmayeur guide Adolph Rey they climbed the Grandes Jorasses and the Matterhorn, up and down the Italian side.

When Tom was discharged from the army in 1941, after the authorities, according to him, had discovered his real age (in 1939 he had cheated his way in), they retired to Achiltibuie, where they rented Badentarbat Lodge from the Cromartie estate. There they welcomed friends on leave from wartime duties, ‘escaping to that heavenly spot and to the wonderful welcome they gave us’ Peter Lloyd remembers. In those days Charmian was indefatigable — following Peter Bicknell and Tom Brocklebank across the trackless waste to Suilven, biking back to cook a huge dinner on a paraffin stove. After the war (and the welcome advent of calor gas and electricity) their hospitality to climbers, and to the children of climbers, made Badentarbat seem like an outpost of the AC and LAC.

In 1951 the Longstaffs visited his daughter Sylvia in Jordan, where her husband John Branford served in the Arab Legion. They all camped in the Wadi Rum; and, though lacking boots or rope, Sylvia and Charmian decided to climb Jebel Rumm. Scrabbling in gym-shoes up screes and gullies and along fearsome ledges, they followed Sheikh Hamdam up to the white domes of the summit. ‘I suppose it was very easy climbing,’ Charmian wrote in the LAC Journal, ‘but it was very exposed. This made us feel tremendously clever and accomplished.’

Back at Achiltibuie Charmian produced many paintings based on sketches made on the trip; she also painted their own hills, shores and islands, and portraits of her neighbours. Her portrait of Tom, painted for his daughter Jo Sancha, was given to the Alpine Club by Jo and hangs in the Committee Room. Charmian also drew the maps for Tom’s This My Voyage.

After Tom died in 1964, in his ninetieth year, Charmian went on living at Badentarbat, entertaining family and friends in the spring and summer, making winter visits to the South to paint portraits, see her friends, renew her wardrobe and enjoy the opera. One of her last visits was in November 1990 when — Tom having been a member of the 1922 expedition — she was
an honoured guest at ‘The Everest Adventure’ evening at the Royal Geographical Society.

They had been able to buy Badentarbat in 1957, in Charmian’s name. So she became the laird, and took her duties seriously – she had to deal with planning permissions, fishing rights, the complications of the crofting laws. On Rent Days her crofter-tenants were offered hospitality which must have made a dent in the modest sums she received. After she died in a nursing home in Inverness in June 1993, a great contingent from Achiltibuie came over to the funeral; and for those who couldn’t come to Inverness, there was a memorial service in September in the kirk at Achiltibuie. Her ashes were scattered on the hillside above Badentarbat, where she had scattered Tom’s.

Janet Adam Smith
(Janet Carleton)

Penelope Storey d. 1993

My last memory of Penny is a fitting one. She asked me to lunch in her pretty Hampstead flat: it was a delicious lunch made festive by champagne. A few weeks later I heard that she had died.

She had to drop out of the climbing world (she was a member of the Pinnacle Club as well as the Ladies’ Alpine and later the Alpine Club) after a stroke that kept her in hospital for several years and permanently disabled her. She had always been good company for a climb or a concert, or a meal and a talk. She worked at the Foreign Office for many years.

She had done climbs like the Bishorn and Weisshorn, Obergabelhorn and Arbengrat, Aiguille du Chardonnet by Forbes Arête. Her last climb was Mount Olympus.

Margaret Darvall

Ronnie Wathen 1934-1993

I must write warily: I feel there may be a ‘most individual and bewildering ghost’ glaring with mock ferocity over my shoulder, a restless shade who would never forgive me if I tried to bury him with platitudes. Ronnie Wathen was quite spectacularly different: unpredictable, provocative, abrasive yet stimulating in argument, generous with himself, always able to see and articulate the quirky side of life. What can I really say of a man who did his National Service in his father’s smart cavalry regiment and passed idle moments in his tank knitting!

During our South Audley Street days I would know that Ronnie was in the club when a bicycle was chained to the railings and then, across the room, I would spy his tall, burly figure, a head torch in his tousled hair, hairy pullover and, sometimes, shorts. In a matter of moments mutual insults would be pinging between us, argument raging, friendship
abounding. He was an endangered species: the true eccentric; in other words different by nature and not for effect.

Outside his family there were three thrusts to Ronnie’s life: poetry, mountaineering and the Uilleann (Irish) pipes. He was differently good at all of them.

Ronnie was introduced to mountaineering by one of his Marlborough masters, pre-war Everest climber Edwin Kempson. Instinctively and correctly he spurned Oxbridge and went on to Trinity, Dublin, where the future pattern of his life took form. In Ireland he found what he had been seeking and it gave him a rich bounty. This powerful link once formed was never broken although he was to lead a wandering and gipsy life.

In Ireland Ronnie’s first poems appeared and many slim volumes were to follow. He had a most splendid, if unruly, facility with words. Usually he employed them seriously but he also loved frolicking with them, standing them on their heads just for fun. He wrote about anything and everything that caught his fancy, as a poet should. However, there is curiously little about climbing although his later mountain travels in Greece and Turkey are well recorded.

He laboured long and hard with his Uilleann pipes and must be one of very few Anglo-Saxons to become really proficient with them. He was to give very entertaining one-man shows, playing the pipes and reciting his poems in his strong, clear, declamatory voice; in the same league as Dylan Thomas. He was blessed with a prodigious memory and could, for instance, recite vast chunks of the tortuously difficult *Finnegans Wake*.

Emerging from Trinity he tried work and marriage, both experiences lasting but a few weeks! He therefore opted for independence on his small private income, living life on his own terms. Some while later, working on an Israeli kibbutz, he met Asta, a charming Icelandic woman of sterling mettle. This time the marriage was enduring.

As a mountaineer Ronnie had an early Alpine season with Chris Bonington and was a member of Simon Clark’s expedition to Pumasillo (20,490ft) in the Andes in 1957. He took a nasty fall while supporting the summit push, damaging his ankle. However, his upthrusting urge was undented and, recovering, he made the summit. Other expeditions led him to the Karakoram and Mt Kenya. He was a very steady climber and an uncannily good route-finder. He remained constant to his Irish climbing and described Dalkey as ‘my favourite climbing wall in the western hemisphere’.

Clearly Ronnie pursued his chosen activities with skill and dedication but it was the coruscating wit of the man himself that has left such an indelible impression on his many friends. The Ronnies of this world are of a rare and fugitive quality. He will be sorely missed and our condolences go out to Asta and his children, Sunna and Sean.

My last and very typical memory of Ronnie was at the usual Sunday morning gathering of veteran Irish climbers at Dalkey, just a few weeks before his sudden and final illness. Ronnie was being Ronnie: controversial, assertive, entertaining, rumbustious. Frank Winder, at 65 still a
powerful climber, was therefore assigned the task of sapping Ronnie’s energy by leading him up as many climbs as possible that were known to be at the limit of Ronnie’s ability to follow. To everyone’s delight, including Ronnie’s, this was duly done. Its success was only partial. After lunchtime drinks with Bill Hannon, the last I saw of Ronnie was when he strode off up the road to do a kindness to an old friend.

I must end with a grumble. Ronnie was an insomniac, never known to leave a party until very late. His parting prank was to quit the party of life far too early, at the age of 58, just to tease I like to think. It was a cruel jest. On Æsta’s inspiration, he held his final party at the little church of Calary, below Sugarloaf Mountain, in the verdant lap of his beloved Wicklow Hills. On that sunny autumn afternoon many, many friends crowded the church, farewells were spoken in prose and verse, laments welled up from three of the finest pipers in Ireland and a lone fiddler knelt by the open grave and hauntingly played the restless Ronnie to his rest.

Mike Banks

GLENDALOUGH, COUNTY WICKLOW

Ronnie Wathen was a shaman.
Only he knew what it was he blew
From the mountains of his life
Through his poems and his pipes.

Waking to a bright morning of white houses circling Dublin Bay, we rolled off the ferry and into the cloud-clearing hills of Wicklow, into the raised glacial arms of Glendalough. We passed St Kevin’s sixth century retreat, its round tower, rounded Celtic crosses, to walk through the Scots pines beside the lake dancing with grains of gold from the mines above. We pinched ourselves. Was this your latest trick? The day was so bright we must be crossing the water still, in some crag-walking dream.

Sweating up the big scree boulders we met goats. I memorised your eulogy. We rushed up a jinksy little slab climb of closed cracks called Expectancy, then abseiled off a metal ring against the deadline of your funeral. (Are you writing this?) You’d have laughed at the three of us changing in the carpark toilets. We heard you laughing as we circled round the Sugar Loaf Mountain searching, cursing, asking for the right church which was the first church we had passed.
*(Ted Maden) (p186)*
89. Sir William McEwan Younger, Bart., DSO. (1905-1992) (p323)
IN MEMORIAM

Poems and poignant pipes, words and weeping,
a fiddle and bright flowers sent you down.
In the quiet sunlight and open fields
by the mountain, the crowd could not leave,
could not come to believe that it was you
under that mound of wet Wicklow earth.
How the Irish understand the circle.
Exile and return. A tower, a round cross,
a ring of a hill. What you gave us was
Expectancy, a life that leaped circles,
as full of surprises as your death.

Terry Gifford

Roland Arnold Rodda 1917–1993

Dr Roland Rodda, who died in England on 17 October 1993, was a New Zealander and a well-known and much respected member of the New Zealand Alpine Club for 54 years.

If there are two words which characterised Rodda’s mountaineering career they are enthusiasm and perseverance: once he got a mountain in his sights he did not give up. But for all that he showed discretion. And you could be sure that, whether forced to retreat by unfavourable rock, snow or weather conditions, he would be certain to return and complete the climb.

Rodda did most of his mountaineering in the years between the mid-1930s and the end of the 1970s when there were still some virgin peaks in the remoter corners of the Southern Alps. It was in quest of such mountains that Roland Rodda did his best work and he became well known for his exploits among the peaks of NW Otago, the Central Darran and Milford Sound mountains of the Fiordland National Park. In his medical student days he made first ascents of peaks at the head of Lake Wakatipu. Later he climbed Mt Aspiring by the NW ridge and took part in the first ascent of the steep N buttress. These were only some of his Otago climbs. He led a party on a new route, predominantly snow and ice, up the Earnslaw Burn face of Mt Earnslaw. Perhaps the Darrans were one of his most favoured places, for there he climbed with Dr Lindsay Stewart, the doyen of the Southland Section of the NZ Alpine Club, on virgin Mt Patuki. In addition to the peaks such as Mt Christina in the Upper Hollyford valley, Rodda first ascended Mt Grave (named after the celebrated explorer of Western Fiordland) and made a pioneering ascent of the W face of Mt Tutoko, the highest peak in the Darran group. Roland Rodda did many climbs on New Zealand’s highest peaks, among them Mt Cook and Mt Tasman, and in winter he ski-mountaineered on the Franz Josef and the Upper Tasman glaciers.

During the Second World War Rodda served as a medical officer with the Royal New Zealand Air Force in New Zealand and in the South Pacific,
several times flying with RNZAF aircraft on bombing missions. At the end of the war he climbed on Bougainville, the largest island in the Solomons group, where he made the first complete ascent of Mt Balbi (8888ft) and Mt Bagana (5730ft). On his return to Dunedin, Roland Rodda not only went back to the hills but also served on the Otago Section Committee, the Central Committee of the NZAC, and on the board of the Fiordland National Park.

After graduation from the University of Otago Medical School, Dr Rodda specialised in pathology in which subject he gained a post-graduate degree and was a senior lecturer before he left Dunedin to become the foundation professor of pathology in the Medical School in Hobart. While in Tasmania he tramped and climbed extensively.

Retiring to Sale, Cheshire, Roland Rodda still kept up his interest in mountaineering through the Alpine Club, the NZ Alpine Club, the Alpine Ski Club and his frequent trips to the Lake District and the peaks of Snowdonia.

Roland and I were contemporaries and friends from our high school and university days; and we shared many mountains. We climbed together on the first ascent of Mt Grave in Fiordland. A remote rock peak of some consequence, we were overtaken on it during our descent by a nor'-west storm. J Ede, Rodda and I survived our enforced night out perched on the illusory and proverbial ledge.

To me, Roland Rodda's greatest attribute was his steadfastness under difficulties: I never knew him to flap. I was mindful of this when I wrote of him in one of my books: 'Rodda was a wonderful man for giving you strength on a mountain and you never had anything but the greatest confidence in him.'

Paul Powell
Dunedin

Kevin Columba FitzGerald 1902-1993

Kevin FitzGerald was a man of fine physique, 6ft 3in tall and strongly built. With names such as his he could hardly have been anything but an Irishman; and he might easily have spent most of his life in Ireland, where his father (whom, characteristically, he described as 'usually a rich man') had bought an estate in Tipperary which it was intended that he should manage and eventually inherit. But things worked out otherwise, and after four years at Seale Hayle Agricultural College he finally joined the Agricultural Division of ICI. He remained with that company in various capacities until his retirement after 33 years' service.

The first passion of his life was books. He was an immensely literary man, very widely read and with a retentive memory; and he possessed a library of several thousand books, of which he had read all but a very few. He was a master of words, whether spoken or written, humorous or serious, and during the Second World War, and in the years after it, he did a
lot of casual broadcasting – readings and short talks – for the BBC. During
the 1950s and early 1960s he wrote perhaps a dozen thrillers which were
quite successful at the time, although they would nowadays seem fairly
dated. Incidentally a mountaineering interest begins to appear in some of
them, with occasional references to ‘Christopher Higgs’, the thinly dis­
guised proprietor of Pen-y-Gwryd. Later, he wrote a book on the Chil­
terns (where he lived), and also an official history of the Farmers’ Club on
the occasion of that club’s 125th anniversary. But it was not until he was
over eighty, and his eyesight was failing, that he wrote *With O’Leary in the
Grave*, which can fairly be described as a little masterpiece – a brilliantly
amusing account of his own youth and a vivid picture of his eccentric
father. Later still, when he was completely blind, he dictated a continua­
tion of *With O’Leary*, which he called *Walking the Prodigal Way*; but this
was never published.

Kevin did many good works by stealth; for example, he was once a
prison visitor, and so long as he could drive a car he went into Oxford
once a week as a helper at meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous. At one
stage in his life, he himself had been so serious an alcoholic that he was
warned that he had only a few months to live. It must be extremely rare to
give up, as he did, without assistance or treatment of any kind.

Mountains meant nothing to him until shortly after the War when,
already in his late forties, he had a spell as ICI’s General Manager in Ire­
land. One member of his staff there, Brian Hilton-Jones, persuaded him
to come with him on weekend trips on the overnight Dublin–Holyhead
mailboat, and it was then that he was introduced to Pen-y-Gwryd. From
that time he became a lover of the Welsh mountains, and even of Welsh
rock-climbing, for which it is fair to say he had no aptitude whatever; and
this improbable passion soon extended to anything to do with mountains
or mountain literature.

He was an immensely entertaining after-dinner speaker, and naturally
was in great demand at the Annual Dinners of different British climbing
clubs. He was an Honorary Member of the Climbers’ Club; and he must
have been one of the few people to have been elected to the Alpine Club (I
am not sure under what rule) without ever having climbed in the Alps or
any other high range, in disregard of all the normal election qualifications,
simply because of his great love of mountains. He contributed three or
four characteristic articles to the *AJ* and for two or three years in the 1970s
was in charge of its obituary section, which he introduced with a few
apposite lines of his own writing.

He was married to Janet Quigley, the creator of the radio programme
*Woman’s Hour* which is still running, and it was a tremendous blow to him
when she died six or seven years ago. By that time Kevin had become
totally blind, and his deafness was becoming increasingly serious. He will
be widely remembered for many reasons, and not least for the dignity and
the courageous, uncomplaining way in which he faced the handicaps of
his last few years.

*David Cox*
Sir Jack Longland 1905–1993

Jack Longland died on 29 November 1993 aged 88. He joined the AC at the unusually early age of 22, proposed and seconded by Claude Elliott and Geoffrey Young. He was on the Committee in 1939, Vice-President in 1961 and President in 1974. He was President of the Climbers' Club 1945-48 and Honorary Member in 1964; he was made an Honorary Member of various north country climbing clubs. I was two years junior to him at Cambridge but since he stayed on after taking his degree, as a Fellow of Magdalene College responsible for the Pepys Library, we overlapped for four years and remained friends ever since. As to the last years at Bakewell, I have depended on help and advice from his daughter Jo and from Jim Perrin.

At Cambridge Jack was a brilliant all-rounder taking a first in the History Tripos and first-class honours with special distinction in English, while also winning an athletics Blue as a pole-vaulter and inevitably becoming President of the Cambridge University Mountaineering Club, a distinction which Basil Goodfellow used to equate to a Blue. In the mountaineering club he was contemporary with Lawrence Wager, with whom he did many of the major Alpine routes, and with Gino Watkins, Wyn Harris, Freddie Chapman and Ivan Waller, all names to conjure with. But the father figure for some of us, and certainly for Jack, was Geoffrey Winthrop Young whose house and whose Easter parties at Pen y Pass were great gathering places for the climbing fraternity. Jack was a dashing figure on these occasions, active on the hills, a witty and stimulating companion, excelling also with his compact muscular figure at such gymnastic contests as arm wrestling and climbing round an upright chair without touching the floor. But it would be a mistake to make too much of Geoffrey Young's influence, for the tradition of guideless climbing was already strongly established in the Club. He was incidentally also a roof climber but deplored the publicity which this activity later received. 'The whole point about roof climbing,' he said, 'was its quietness and anonymity and the University authorities would not take any strong action, such as sending you down, if you kept quiet.' This versatility was a foretaste of what was to come in his professional life.

The high point of Jack's rock-climbing achievement, and the most famous, was certainly the first ascent of the climb which bears his name and which he pioneered and led on the West Buttress of Clogwyn du'r Arddu over the Easter and Whitsun weekends of 1928 when he was still at Cambridge. The Easter visits to the cliff were essentially for reconnaissance, exploration and preliminary gardening, in which Frank Smythe and Graham Brown were also involved. They abseiled off in bad weather halfway up the climb and came back at Whitsun, Jack with Frank Smythe, Ivan Waller and Peter Bicknell. When they got to the foot of the climb a party from the Rucksack Club, led by Fred Piggott, were on the point of starting up it but they recognised that Jack's party had prior rights and encouraged Jack to lead a combined attack. He described what followed...
in an article he wrote in old age for the magazine *Clogs* (No 18, p15): ‘We had a sort of toss up to decide who was going up and who wasn’t and Ivan Waller and Peter Bicknell stood down which was very gallant of them, and we linked together – myself, Frank Smythe, Fred Piggott, Bill Eversden and Morley Wood. I thought Piggott was going to lead it, but he said that I’d been on this one first, and I was simply flung the end of the rope and told to get on with the business.’

But Jack was no mere cragsman; he left the further exploration of Clogwyn du’r Arddu to others and turned his attention to the Alps, doing many of the classic ridge climbs and some new routes. Like the rest of us, he had his eye on the chance of getting to the Himalaya, and when the 1933 expedition to Everest was being planned his climbing record made him an obvious choice for it. Not having been at high altitude before, he was at a disadvantage compared with Frank Smythe, Eric Shipton and Wyn Harris and was not in either of the teams chosen to go for the summit. But he played a big role in establishing Camp 6 and had the formidable task of bringing down a party of exhausted Sherpas in a blizzard – a real feat of route-finding and leadership. Needless to say, he relished the whole experience of the expedition, the rivalry and companionship, the physical challenge of high altitude, and the mutual trust between sahibs and Sherpas.

Jack’s next major project was, in contrast, a journey to the Watkins Mountains in Rasmussen Land, the biggest mountain mass in Greenland which had first been seen from the air by Gino Watkins in 1930 when on a survey flight in a moth aircraft. The expedition was under the leadership of Lawrence Wager and was very much a Cambridge party with August Courtauld, who had chartered Shackleton’s old ship *The Quest* to get them there, Lawrence’s brother Hal and Dr Fountaine, a geologist. Bad ice conditions forced them to land 70 miles short of their intended starting point and the approach to the mountain required a nine days march hauling sledges over very difficult country before reaching the peak which they successfully climbed, measuring its height at 12,250ft – the highest mountain in the Arctic. Jack described the expedition in his second paper to the Club (AJ58, 1936).

He was invited by Tilman to join the 1938 expedition to Everest but had just undertaken a new job and felt obliged to decline.

The course of Jack’s professional life was decided in the depressed years of the early thirties when he was first a lecturer in English at Durham University and then director of the Durham Community Service Council. He took an immediate liking to the Durham mining community and was deeply moved by the injustice of their life and hardships. This caring idealistic side of Jack is one that, in my experience, he never made a show of. His motivation to enter the field of state education is best expressed in his own words from an address he gave in 1970:

‘I came into educational administration at the end of the squalid and hungry 1930s after some years working with unemployed Durham miners and their families. I think that those underfed children, their fathers on
the scrapheap, and the mean houses under the tip, all the casual product of a selfishly irresponsible society, have coloured my thinking ever since. They were one main cause of my entering the statutory education business. I had been shunting about in social sidings for long enough, helping men to move mountains with little shovels. I wanted the mainline express to a new world and fair shares all round.'

After a spell as Deputy Director of Education in Hertfordshire (1940) he moved to the top job in Dorset (1942) and then to Derbyshire in 1949, a post he held till his retirement in 1970. Despite his own elitist background he was an enthusiastic supporter of the move to comprehensive schools and played a crucial part in introducing them in Derbyshire. An initiative which was particularly his own was the establishment at White Hall near Buxton of an outdoor education centre run by the county. It was the first of its kind and its success led many, indeed most, counties to follow suit. This led, in turn, to the establishment of the Mountain Leader Training Board of which he was Chairman from 1964 to 1980 and to his active membership of many committees and commissions dealing with sport and outdoor education, notably the Outward Bound Trust Council, the Central Council for Physical Recreation and the Sports Council of which he was Vice-Chairman 1971-74. He was also a member of the Royal Commission on Local Government, 1964-67.

In parallel with all these activities, Jack had in effect a second career as a broadcaster on various brains trusts and similar programmes. His erudition, quick wit and sense of fun made him an immediate success in this role and, in particular, he was for no less than 20 years the chairman of the famous programme My Word, one of the high spots of sound radio.

The knighthood awarded on his retirement as Director of Education both surprised and gratified him but here I agree with another obituarist that the Establishment had missed an opportunity; for Jack had been a long time in the Derbyshire job and was surely overdue for a move to bigger responsibilities and opportunities. Perhaps he just didn't want to move on or maybe he had given offence in high places, for he had a sharp tongue and could be quite combative, ever ready to stand up for what he thought right even at the risk of unpopularity. Back in the thirties he had been active in the behind-the-scenes dispute over the leadership of the 1936 Everest expedition, a stance which effectively ruled him out from joining the party. In his valedictory address to the Club he spoke out strongly in a way that, to my knowledge, no one else had done against the decline in manners and moral standards among some young British mountaineers. Later still, in his last years as head of the Mountain Leader Training Board, he got at loggerheads with the BMC and a deadlock resulted which the Sports Council was quite unable to resolve. It fell to the President of the Alpine Club to intervene as honest broker to get the contestants to agree to an impartial enquiry.

After retirement Jack continued with his many activities and in 1974 was elected President of the Club. I have already referred to his valedictory address and at the end of it he recalled what Leo Amery had said on
the same occasion: 'For myself I echo the voice of a more distinguished President, that he was prouder of being elected to that office than of being appointed Privy Councillor. I would put up the ante a bit and say I'd be prouder of the Presidency than if I were to become Archbishop of Canterbury.'

As to Jack's last years, he had a great circle of friends whom he saw at Bakewell or in the Savile Club or at North Country dinners and events. For a man of his active disposition old age was bound to be a frustrating time and two strokes further cramped his style, robbing him of the use of the car; but there were always friends at hand to provide company and transport. He had great inner resources and retained his mental activity almost to the end. Then, in the nineties, came the great sadness of the deaths in quick succession of his son John and his wife Peggy.

He will be sorely missed by many of us.

Peter Lloyd

John Hunt writes:
Jack was numbered among a small group of brilliant young men who emerged from the old universities with double firsts in the mid-twenties; they included John Wolfenden and John Redcliffe-Maud, who played leading parts in extending the perspectives and scope of formal education beyond the classroom and into outdoor experience beyond the confines of school playing fields. Those ideas had their genesis in the private sector of education; Abbotsholme and Gordonstoun both preached the equal and complementary values of academic or technical learning on the one hand, and outdoor activities additional to, or instead of, competitive organised sport on the other. This was a concept of education by no means generally accepted in the years immediately after the War.

Longland was fortunate in finding himself, on beginning his career as an education administrator, appointed to Durham Education Authority as deputy to another of the elite progressives, John Newsom. He followed Newsom to Hertfordshire and helped him to institute Kurt Hahn's County Badge scheme which, in turn, led to the creation of a far more successful project, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. I count myself fortunate to have been associated with that small band of Chief Education Officers: Alec Clegg and Jim Hogan, Newsom and Longland; for they provided me with much help and encouragement in the difficult task of launching Prince Philip's challenge to youth. From Hertfordshire Jack was promoted to the post of Director of Education for Dorset and, in 1949, to the same senior position in Derbyshire where he remained until his retirement 21 years later. The establishment of the first local authority Outdoor Activities Centre in Britain, at Whitehall, is a monument to the inspirational lead which Jack Longland gave to a more holistic concept of education.

One consequence of this was the greatly increased numbers of people walking, scrambling and climbing on our British hills and crags. Jack described it as an 'avalanche'. As President of the British Mountaineering Council, he appreciated the need to set standards of safety and to establish
levels of adult competence in hillcraft. He took the initiative in codifying standards of leadership, which would be operated by a training board. The Mountain Leadership Certificate was established which could be earned through the channels of mountain centres approved by the board. I was privileged to be closely involved in that work, and recall the disapproval and criticism which were voiced by some of our fellow climbers at the time. Happily, time and circumstance have proved its value and the need to enable all young people to experience adventurous activities in the hills, and to gain that experience with proper safeguards.

In these and other ways, Jack Longland rendered a great service to youth.

Charles Warren writes:
My memories of Jack, as he was always known to us, date from my Cambridge days in the late twenties in the heydays of the CUMC. With Lawrence Wager as our president, we were strictly brought up. Any form of notoriety in respect of our mountaineering activities was frowned upon and considered to be in bad taste. If you were involved in an accident, however trivial, you kept quiet about it. I remember an episode when I slipped off a hold on the bottom slab of Central Buttress on Tryfan and landed safely on a grassy ledge laughing, only to be soundly ticked off by Lawrence.

I also remember an occasion when a party of us in the CUMC dashed up to Derbyshire to climb on Black Rocks, near Matlock, under the direction of our member Ivan Waller. Here I was encouraged to climb a sandstone chimney, only to find that the exit involved a hand traverse and a pull up to safety onto a mantelshelf over rounded holds. As my hands slipped back, Jack, who had seen my predicament, tried to grasp them from above but could not secure me. I slipped through his fingers and fell some 50 feet or so through a small tree, landing on my back between the rocks on a grassy patch unscathed. In the CUMC tradition of those days, I was immediately taken up another hard climb.

But Jack will, of course, always be remembered first and foremost for Longland's on Clogwyn du'r Arddu - that classic and most original route up the cliff. I was not on the first ascent but have memories of my own of the 'faith and friction slab' and the following pull-up over the overhang - a wonderful route up the cliff in its day!

I was not with Jack on Everest in 1933; that year I was climbing around the Gangotri glacier. But all of us in the mountaineering world at that time knew about his famous descent with a group of porters from a high camp down to the North Col in bad weather.

Post-war I climbed with Jack in Zermatt on the Dent Blanche and on the Zinalrothorn at the AC centenary meet.

I am unable to dilate upon Jack's academic activities except to say that I knew that he was, for a time, the Pepysian Librarian at Magdalene College, Cambridge. But Jack, the great mountaineer and our very distinguished Past President, will always go down in my memory as Longland of Longland's on Cloggy.
Oliver Turnbull writes:

This may be the occasion to record an account of an accident involving my uncle, Professor H W Turnbull, later FRS, AC member and President of the SMC, and Jack Longland.

In a letter in June 1960 my uncle wrote to me:

'... you have completed what the family vainly tried many years ago! It was March and there was some ice about on the bottom pitch of the slab. I remember it was hard, but nothing like the difficulty about halfway up the climb where one has to step across onto another slab on its right – the Faith and Friction Slab according to Smythe, who was in the party of the first ascent with Longland leading. I was third in a party of four, with Longland again leading in his second ascent. He went up all the pitches rapidly each time, until he reached that step: and he took a good quarter hour or more over that pitch, having first fixed a stone in a crack for a running belay. When my turn came I took even longer – in fact I missed my footing and came off, and dangled 70 or 80 feet below, about 15 feet from the nearest point of Wales, for 25 minutes before someone had time to climb up to my level and lassoo me with a spare rope. Then, as I beat a retreat, alas our number two Paul Sinker (now Sir Paul) badly burnt his hands with my running rope as he tried to save my fall. He and Longland had fixed a piton at the top of the pitch, which was a merciful safeguard, for they told me that their grass footing had slid down a good 12 inches during the tension on the rope ...'

There is a family tradition, recently confirmed as fact by my cousin Derwent, which throws light on a possible cause of the accident. Before setting out for the climb my uncle, being a competent but modest rock climber, had no rubbers of his own so had to borrow from others. The best he could obtain consisted of two right-footed shoes, and these had to do. When he came to the crux move the curve of the shoe caused him to slip off as he swung up and round on his left foot. On my ascent in the 1960s I had the benefit of a pair of matching PAs, but it is not hard to see how he was inconvenienced by his ill-matched footwear.

The Professor at least was none the worse for his experience. He was known to carry a small flask of brandy in his sack and when asked later if he had felt in need of a reviving nip replied: 'Oh no, I only take the brandy in case of emergencies.' But I hope he offered the flask to his leaders who had saved the party from a catastrophe which would have devastated the climbing world.