
Mount Everest Foundation Notes 1986-87

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The following notes summarize reports from expeditions which have received the approval of the Mount Everest Foundation, and this is in most cases accompanied by a grant. MEF approval is generally an essential first step to seeking assistance, financial or otherwise, from other organizations. It should be noted that the MEF only 'sponsors' expeditions in exceptional circumstances, e.g. the 1981 Mount Kongur Expedition.

Copies of the full reports of these expeditions are lodged, when available, with the Alpine Club Library and the Archives Section of the Royal Geographical Society, and may be consulted in these places. Some expeditions will already have been described in the *Alpine Journal* and other mountaineering periodicals.

The expeditions summarized in the following notes, with one exception, took place between April 1986 and August 1987. These notes are based on reports received up to 1 December 1987.

North America, including Arctic

84/29 *Cambridge British Columbia Expedition* (June-August 1984)

This two-man two-woman team of geologists studied the internal hydrology of the SW Bridge Glacier, and the relative dating of the late Quaternary glacial deposits in the vicinity (Lillooet area, near Vancouver). The climbing team made first ascents of Bridge Peak and another unnamed peak, also Stanley Peak and Mt Fugora, using skis over the Lillooet Ice Cap.

86/7 *Sunderland East Greenland Expedition* (July-September 1986)

After a four-day storm in the first week out, this four-man team abandoned their objective of the SW face of Laupersbjerg in favour of Rodbjerg, an attractive red-rock peak, on 16th September Glacier. Two attempts by different routes failed to reach the summit.

86/14 *British Universities East Greenland Expedition* (July-September 1986)

After making first British ascent of Mt Forel by the S ridge (used by Roche in 1938), this four-man team continued into the largely unexplored country of Schweizerland by the Franche Comté Glacier. On their return to the coast a lichenometry study in the Tasilaq Valley was carried out.

87/7 Greenland 'Two Summits' Expedition (July–August 1987)

All four members made the third ascent of Greenland's highest mountain, Gunnbjornsfjeld, from the previously unvisited N side of the Watkins Mountains. In the course of the 180-mile trek, stores from the 1935 expedition were found in good order.

87/35 British Tasilaq East Greenland Expedition (June–August 1987)

Skiing out for two weeks from the head of Tasilaq Fjord, three members of this party attempted the NE face of Laupersbjerg, but the climb was abandoned when two climbers were swept down the face by an avalanche (only minor injuries), a short distance below the summit. Some geological work (lithological and structural data) was carried out S of the mouth of Tasilaq Fjord and some glaciology 30km N on Ningerte Fjord.

South America, including Andes*86/30 British West face Salcantay (6271m) Expedition (July–August 1986)*

Altering their objective from the W face, this five-man team made the first ascent of the technically difficult and avalanche-risky SW ridge, reaching the lower summit (6030m) on the fourth day, descending by the E ridge in 1½ days. This objectively dangerous route is well illustrated with topos drawn soon after the climb.

86/37 Cambridge High Andes Expedition (August–September 1986)

Three glaciologists and two geologists carried out research in the areas of Cotopaxi (which was climbed), of Sangay, a highly active volcano, and in Loja Province of Ecuador. Specialist studies included 'cross-sectional studies of glacial margins' and 'transition of cryoconites to dirt-cones'. A short film was made of Sangay, on which a safer route than that taken in 1976 (when two were killed by the eruption) was reconnoitred.

86/38 'Janka Raju' 1986 (June–July 1986)

Climbing teams from this six-man group achieved first ascents of the NW face of Nevado Cayesh and of P5420 to S of Nevado Cayesh; also attempted the unclimbed E ridge of Nevado Caras II.

86/46 Anglo-Scottish Women's Andean Expedition

This party retreated at 5500m on Cololo in Bolivia. On the descent one member became very ill. Their camp was looted and one member was threatened.

86/47 Venezuelan Lost World Forest Resources Expedition

This team of seven British and three Venezuelans succeeded in their objective of making the ascent of an unclimbed *tepui* (a sheer-sided table-top), Padapue Tepui, also carrying out surveying, ornithological, geomorphological and zoological work in this area of SW Venezuela. A TV film was also made.

87/30 Glasgow University Andean Expedition (July–September 1987)

This four-man team climbed the NE ridge of Vallunaraju (5868m) and made the first traverse of the SW-NW ridges of Nevado Huandoy Este (probably first British ascent).

87/33 Laguna Paron (Cordillera Blanca) (July–August 1987)

This four-man team spent five weeks at 4000m, studying the bathymetry of this glacial lake, and the glaciology of the ice-filled moraine (Hatunraju) at its foot. Findings will be made available to Electroperu. Some mountaineering was attempted on the SW face of Artesanraju (6025m) and the N face of Pisco Este.

Himalaya

86/5 Lhotse Shar, South Face (April 1986)

Mal Duff and Sandy Allan, the climbing pair of a five-man team, attempted the S face of Lhotse Shar in alpine style, reaching 7100m when Duff was hit on the head by a falling block of ice, suffering a fractured skull. They descended successfully.

*86/13 British Seligman Harris Mt Everest NE Ridge Expedition
(July–October 1986)*

This large and strong team under Brummie Stokes established Advanced Base at 6400m on 18 August. Making a new approach to the NE ridge, they placed a snowhole camp below the first buttress; two weeks later ropes were fixed to 7770m and the foot of the pinnacles at 7900m was reached on 15 October. Violent winds prevented the high-level team of two from crossing the pinnacles and, after four heavy snowstorms, the expedition retreated on 19 October.

86/15 British Bhutan Expedition (September–November 1986)

This team of six aimed to make the first ascent of Gangkar Punsum, highest mountain in Bhutan (7550m) by the S ridge. They turned back at 6700m in view of strong winds on the heavily corniced ridge. Beyond this point there are two near-vertical rock-steps before the summit.

86/33 *Sickle Moon* (August–September 1986)

Persistent bad weather in the first half of September prevented this team from getting much beyond their Base Camp at Sattarchin at 3440m.

86/34 *Paldor – Ganesh Himal* (October–November 1986)

This team succeeded in first ascents of the W ridge of Paldor (5928m) and of the satellite peak, the Fang (5894m). One member suffered from cerebral oedema; the party was robbed on its way out.

86/40 *British Kishtwar Expedition* (August–September 1986)

This light-weight alpine-style party succeeded in their objective of the first ascent of Peak 6230m, tentatively named 'Kishtwar Weisshorn', by the SW face direct. The peak's substantive name is Dandao Purum.

86/43 *British/Indian Police Himalayan Expedition* (August–September 1986)

Parties from this team of 18 British police and, as it turned out, one Indian policeman succeeded in the first British ascents of Jogin I (6465m) and Jogin III (6342m) in the Gangotri area. Bad weather forced retreat from the N ridge of Peak 6529m.

86/49 *American-British Pumori (7145m) Expedition* (October 1986)

The two-man British team operating independently under Sandy Allan climbed the S face of Pumori by a steep ice couloir, gaining the crest of the SW ridge just below the summit. Six bivouacs (14–19 October). A new and technically difficult route, alpine-style.

87/11 *Kharcha Kund N Ridge Expedition* (August–September 1987)

Four members of the Oread Club made the first alpine-style (and first British) ascent of the N ridge of Kharcha Kund (6612m) in the Gangotri area, descending by the normal W ridge. Useful topos of the pinnacled N ridge.

87/12 *Menlungtse Norwegian-British Tibet Expedition* (February–May 1987)

Bonington and Fotheringham and their four Norwegian partners approached Menlungtse (7182m), designated in Chinese as Qiao Ge Ru, from Tingri and the north. After inspecting the N side of this magnificent mountain, they moved to the S and tackled a buttress, reaching 6100m before being forced off by abnormal weather and thunderstorms. Tracks of a 'chuti' or small yeti were seen.

87/13 *Anglo-French Garhwal Geological Expedition* (March–May 1987)

Eleven British and four French geologist/climbers visited the Bhagirathi and Shivling area of Gangotri, collecting granite samples. The climbers made three unsuccessful attempts on the NW ridge (up to 6250m) of Shivling (6543m) and one, also unsuccessful, on the NW face.

Karakoram

86/21 *British Fullers K2 Expedition* 1986 (May–August 1986)

In a year when nine expeditions were given permits and 13 climbers perished on the mountain, this strong team of prominent British climbers, led by Al Rouse and John Barry, were forced by prolonged and violent storms to abandon attempts at a first British ascent of K2, first by the NW ridge, then by the Abruzzi Spur. Al Rouse made a further attempt with members of other expeditions and, after achieving his ambition of reaching the summit, tragically died, storm-bound, on the descent.

86/45 *St Mary's Hospital Expedition to Lobsang Spire* (July–September 1986)
(Second Dr Peter Thexton Expedition)

Eleven members went to the Baltoro area with the scientific objective of ascertaining, using specially designed equipment, whether small blood-vessels are affected by altitude; and with the mountaineering objective of a new route on the W ridge of Lobsang Spire. The latter was successfully accomplished in (mostly) good conditions, using some fixed ropes.

87/2 *Latok 2 Karakoram Expedition* (May–July 1987)

This strong team, after climbing to over 7000m on their objective – the W ridge of Latok 2 (7145m) – were forced to retreat after three days stormbound at the highest camp.

87/3 *Plymouth Polytechnic Kurdopin Expedition* (July–September 1987)

From a Base Camp near the snout of the Kurdopin Glacier, an unnamed peak of 5800m was climbed, believed to be a first ascent. Exploration of the Virjerab Glacier area revealed other peaks believed unclimbed.

87/6 *British/New Zealand Gasherbrum Expedition* (May–July 1987)
(Nationwide Estate Agency Karakoram 8000)

Following the Austrian 1956 route on Gasherbrum II (8035m), two members reached the summit on 28 June, but on skiing down J P Hefti skidded on ice and suffered fatal injuries from a fall. A further three members reached the summit on 9 July; one completed a ski descent for a film.

87/8 North London Mountaineering Club Spantik Expedition 1987
(July–August 1987)

Fowler and Saunders succeeded in climbing the formidable NW Pillar of Spantik (7027m), a monolithic feature rising in a continuous sweep of 1800m, approaching it by the Barpu Glacier from Nagar.

87/9 Markhun Karakoram Expedition (June–July 1987)

This five-man team succeeded in the first ascent of Tupopdan (6106m) in the Karun Koh area.

87/10 Leeds Bublimotin Expedition (July–August 1987)

After establishing Base Camp at the foot of the Bublimotin Spire, this party was forced by severe food-poisoning to abandon their attempt on the SW face.

87/15 Cambridge & St Andrews Karakoram 1987 (July 1987)

This four-man team made first ascents of Hobluk (5360m) by the NE/N ridge, of 'The Goblin' (5670m) – their name – and Ghur (5790m) by the N face – all in the Biafo Glacier area.

87/16 Karakoram Hushe Valley 1987 (September–October 1987)

This two-man team made successful first ascents of 'Crested Peak' (5560m) from the Buesten Glacier (tributary of the Chogolisa Glacier) and of the SE ridge of 'Raven's Pyramid' (5300m). This involved 1000m of technical climbing, much of it on perfect granite.

87/19 Bublimotin 'Hopefuls' 1987 (July–August 1987)

Although failing to make much impact on the 1100m SE face of this remarkable spire (c6000m), the Hopefuls produced a useful profile of the spire and analysed possible routes to other peaks in the Ultar Group.

87/27 Indo-British Mt Changuch Expedition (August–September 1987)

Six Indian and four British members found their objective, Changuch, unapproachable from the Pindar Valley and instead made the first ascent of the N ridge of Laspa Dhura at the head of the Kafni Glacier, descending by the W ridge.

87/28 British Expedition to Broad Peak (8047m) (May–August 1987)

This four-man team included Norman Croucher, the remarkable double-leg amputee. The party, including Croucher, reached 6900m, but avalanche risk and weather conditions put a stop to further progress.

Elsewhere

(Norway, East Africa, China)

86/17 *Oksfjordjokulen Sheffield University Expedition* (July–August 1986)

Eight graduates and four students undertook an extensive survey of the Oksfjordjokulen ice-caps and of the 'Fall-Jokul' (detached glacier cones), in particular their geomorphological impact. The head of the Jokul Fjord in the Troms District of N Norway was described by Kennedy in *Peaks, Passes and Glaciers* (1862) as 'one of the strangest glaciers in the world'.

86/41 *Manchester University Expedition to Shira Plateau* (June–August 1986)

This party conducted botanical fieldwork (distribution of giant groundsel – *Dendrosenecio Johnstonii* – and regeneration of *Phillipia Trinera* after burning), collected small mammals and made a census of birds on the Shira Plateau, on the W slopes of Kilimanjaro, which was climbed by way of the (now destroyed) Arrow Glacier Hut.

87/5 *Royal Navy/Royal Marines Mountaineering Club Joint East Africa Expedition* (January–February 1987)

Most of this large group of 22 succeeded in climbing Nelion of Mt Kenya by the normal route. Some teams did more difficult routes, including the Diamond Couloir and the Ice Window. Others climbed glacier routes on Kilimanjaro. A medical research team of three, including Dr Milledge, studied various aspects of acute mountain sickness, including hypoxic ventilating response, capillary fragility and fluid balance.

87/29 *British Amne Machin Expedition* (August–September 1987)

This party succeeded in the first ascent of Amne Machin IX (5690m), the prominent S outlier of this range in NW Central China. A thorough exploration of the E side of the 30km-long massif was carried out. They failed in a first British ascent of Amne Machin I (6282m), owing to deterioration of the ice-falls since the Japanese ascent; and in a first ascent of Amne Machin III, turning back 600m below the summit.

