

## CRAIG MORRIS MERRIHUE

1933 - 1965

On March 14th, 1965, Craig Merrihue, along with his climbing partner Dan Doody, was tragically killed in a long fall in Mount Washington's Huntington Ravine in New Hampshire. They had nearly completed the Pinnacle Gully ice-climb, a fairly difficult though standard route, but the exact cause of the fall will never be known. Others in the Ravine came immediately to their aid, but death was nearly instantaneous.

Craig grew up in Schenectady, New York, attended Phillips Exeter Academy, and graduated from Harvard College in 1956. His enthusiastic love of the mountains, along with his gymnastic ability on rock, soon became evident at Harvard, where he made many strong friends and became President of the Harvard Mountaineering Club in his senior year. He took part in expeditions to the Selkirks (1953), the Karakoram Range (1955), Peru (1957) and the Coast Range (1961), and was helping to organize a Hindu Kush expedition at the time of his death. He originated several new routes at the Shawangunks in New York State, but never in a competitive vein, for his was the quiet, low-pressure approach, always with full confidence in his skills.

His commitment to physics grew with his years in graduate school at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and later at the Berkeley campus of the University of California, where he became interested in the rare gas content of meteorites as a means of dating the age of the solar system. He met his future wife Sandra in 1957, and they were married in California. A son, Jeffrey, was born in 1959. Craig's work with meteorites attracted the attention of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory in Cambridge, and following the completion of his Ph.D. thesis at Berkeley in 1963 he accepted a position at the Observatory as the start of a promising research career.

Craig will always be remembered among us as the compact man with the deep voice, full of gentleness along with great strength, aware always of others and giving of himself to them. Daring at times, he was always entirely rational in his approach to the mountains and never demanded of them an experience at the edge of survival. It was this that made news of his death such a shock. We can hope only that his memory will emphasize in us that the only valid purpose in technical climbing is not the risk of life, but the enhancement of living.

JOHN S. HUMPHREYS