

In Memoriam

PHYLLIS BEATRICE MUNDAY
1894-1990

With the death of Phyllis Munday on April 11, 1990 at Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, the American Alpine Club lost an Honorary Member (since 1967) and the Alpine Club of Canada lost its Honorary President.

Phyl was born in 1894 in Ceylon (Shri Lanka) where her father managed tea estates and was a tennis champion. When the family moved to Vancouver in 1901, she was drawn to the mountains. Her first climb was Grouse on the skyline across from Vancouver when she was about sixteen.

She met her husband and future climbing companion, W.A. Don Munday, while he was convalescing from World War I wounds at a military hospital where she was working as a nurse. Their friendship developed on outings with the British Columbia Mountaineering Club. They were married in February 1920 and spent their honeymoon climbing in the Mount Robson area. Their daughter Edith was born the following year and was taken climbing when she was only eleven weeks old. The Mundays joined the Alpine Club of Canada in 1921. At their annual camp in 1924, Phyl became the first woman to climb Mount Robson.

It must have been in the late 1920s that I as a toddler first became aware of the Mundays. My father, Rollin T. Chamberlin, reminisced about his 1924 and 1927 expeditions with Allen Carpe and A.L. Withers into the Caribos in British Columbia, battling bush, devil's club and mosquitoes to reach some attractive peaks where they made first ascents. The Mundays were attempting the same thing at the time and there was a bit of rivalry.

Phyl was a recent widow when I first met her in 1950 at the Alpine Club of Canada camp at Maligne Lake. Her talents as a nurse were much in demand, especially for taping blistered feet, and she led some short excursions. She shared her knowledge and love of alpine flowers and her genuine passion for mountains. Phyl attended at least 35 summer camps, often serving on the climbing committee, plus several ski camps, for as long as was possible, in spite of physical problems in later years, especially painful knees.

In June 1925, during an ascent of Mount Arrowsmith on Vancouver Island, Phyl, using binoculars, spotted a peak in the Coast Range "shining like a beacon through a break in the clouds." Don estimated it to be about 250 kilometers north of them in an unmapped, unexplored area. They called it "Mystery Mountain," but it was later known as Mount Waddington. This discovery led to years of endeavor—to locate the peak, gain access and hopefully to ascend it, as well as to gain knowledge of this unknown region. The Mundays made eleven trips in twelve years, spending a total of fifteen months under incredibly difficult conditions on this project. Others sometimes accompanied them, including Henry S. Hall, Jr. on an expedition in 1933.

Arranging for small boats to travel up the inlets, the notoriously bad weather, weeks of beating their way through thick British Columbia bush, dangerous stream crossings, insects, grizzly bears, relaying 70-pound packs without modern equipment or food, miles of glacier travel, plus a lack of financial resources, all required unusual perseverance. Phyl always carried at least her share; Don was hampered by war injuries. They gathered data on flora, fauna, insects and glaciers. Don drew up maps based on compass readings and photos they both took. He published *The Unkown Mountain* based on these experiences in 1948. It was republished in 1975 by the Seattle Mountaineers.

They made various first ascents on these expeditions, including the north-west peak (13,200 feet) of Mount Waddington. The true summit was close and only 60 feet higher, but the gap between them seemed impractical. In 1934, they repeated the northwest peak but still couldn't reach the main summit. A handsome adjacent mountain, one of their first ascents in 1928, was named Mount Munday in their honor.

Phyl was active with the Girl Guides of Canada from 1910 on, serving as an adviser, training leaders and receiving their highest award, the Bronze Cross, for her part in the rescue of a boy who fell from a precipice.

In the 1950s, Phyl was hostess at the Alpine Club House in Banff and was Editor of the *Canadian Alpine Journal* from 1953 to 1969.

She was an honorary member of the Ladies Alpine Club (London), Carlisle Mountaineering Club of England and the Appalachian Mountain Club, as well as the American Alpine Club. Her honors included Order of Canada, Centennial Medal, Dame of Grace, Order of St. John (for ambulance service), Honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Victoria and the Leaders' Silver Rope of the Alpine Club of Canada (one of three women to achieve this).

She is survived by her daughter Edith, son-in-law Brad Wickham, two granddaughters and her sister Betty McCallum.

FRANCES C. CARTER

ERIK F.B. FRIES
1899-1990

Erik F.B. Fries died on November 7, 1990 at the age of 91 years in Falmouth, Massachusetts.

Dr. Fries received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1930 in biology. After working for a publishing company as a consulting editor, he joined the faculty of the City College of New York 1933 and taught biology there until his retirement in 1966, except for his service in the Navy during World War II. He was also a research assistant at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. He published papers on pigmentation cells and color changes in fish.

Dr. Fries joined the American Alpine Club in 1961. He climbed in the Wind River Range and the Tetons of Wyoming, the Rockies, Bugaboos, and Selkirks of Canada and the Alps. He was active in the Shawangunks of New York State. He is survived by his wife Eleanor and two step-children.