

BENJAMIN GREELY FERRIS, JR. M. D.

1919-1996

Ben Ferris, for more than half a century a respected member and official of the Club, died at his home in Weston, Massachusetts, on August 1. The son of General Benjamin G. and Margaret (Wright) Ferris, Ben attended Choate Academy and was a 1940 *cum laude* graduate of Harvard University and a 1943 graduate of its Medical School. He did postgraduate training at Boston's Children's Hospital and became a research fellow at the Harvard School of Public Health in 1948. He was distantly related to the one of the Club's first honorary members, General Adolphus Washington Greely, Chief Signal Officer of the United States Army for 19 years and a famous figure of arctic travails.

Dr. Ferris's studies in public health questions focused on environmental diseases endemic to the air pollutants associated with selected occupations—the paper workers of Berlin, New Hampshire, the jute workers of Massachusetts and India, the traffic policemen of Tokyo. As the Public Health officer of Harvard University after 1958 and professor of Public Health at Harvard after 1971, Ben Ferris gained wide recognition and international acclaim for the thoroughness of documentation in his studies—his personal dossiers on the affected employees were periodically revisited and updated at frequent intervals, some for as long as 30 years.

Typical of Ben's methods was his application of the Hippocratic principle, "First, do no harm." This he translated to mean, at least for minor injuries, "Leave it alone, it will take care of itself." Once, in Calcutta, one of his patients, an elderly but healthy Hindu, confessed to Ben that, for religious reasons, he bathed daily in the highly polluted Hoogly River, a deltaic arm of the sacred Ganges. "And how long have you been doing this," Ben inquired. "Oh, about 60 years," was the reply. "Well," said Ben, "if you've done it that long, I recommend you continue—probably do you good." Always practical and to the point—that was Ben.

As an alpinist, Dr. Ferris enjoyed a long career that extended from his college days, when he climbed extensively in Europe, to his final mountaineering venture in the Northern Selkirks in 1966. He participated in Brad Washburn's first ascent of Alaska's Mount Hayes in 1940. Then, in 1946, he was a strong member and medical officer of the Mount Saint Elias Expedition which made the second ascent of Alaska's most prominent peak. During the course of this expedition, he conducted medical research, much to the annoyance of his companions who had to carry the "step test box" to our highest camp and then be subjected to his analysis of our heartbeat rates and recovery period after performing a standardized series of steps. On this trip he also began his long relationship with one of the undersigned as collaborator in the construction of "colossal cairns."

Thereafter, Ben's mountaineering interests centered mostly on the Interior Ranges of British Columbia, where he made many climbs, including more than a dozen first ascents. His great legacy to this area was the construction in 1966 of a sturdy masonry cabin near the base of Mount Sir Sandford, in company with two of his daughters and New Hampshire's legendary game warden, Paul Doherty. Known for some years as the "Great Cairn Hut" because the masons used a nearby edifice (constructed a dozen years earlier) as a quarry, this cabin is magnificently situated in what had been the bed of the Silvertip Glacier during his first visit to this area in 1948. Since Ben's death, the Alpine Club of Canada has officially renamed this structure in his honor.

A member of several mountaineering organizations, Ben Ferris served on the Council of the Club from 1952 to 1955 and again from 1987 to 1990. After 1949 he was chairman of the American Alpine Club's Safety Committee for 25 years, during which period he established its

annual report as the world's premier source of data on mountaineering accidents. When he retired from the chairmanship in 1974, the Club honored him for his diligence by election as an Honorary Member.

Unlike many climbers who, despite great accomplishment, lack the golden touch of tact and diplomacy, Ben was invariably courteous and understanding in every variety of circumstance. He also possessed a vast repertoire of off-color limericks, with which he was able to lighten many a stressful situation. Tall, handsome, and physically strong, Ben was endowed with a gentle and quiet nature, coupled with the inventiveness of his heritage. A quintessential Yankee, Ben was a tenth generation New Englander who spoke little, but said much.

Ben is survived by his second wife, née Stefana Puleo, five daughters by his marriage in 1942 to Sarah Brooks Upham, and nine grandchildren, several of whom show promise as alpinists.

"We know the Lord his soul will keep
Among the mountain tops, asleep."

A. J. KAUFFMAN, II and W. L. PUTNAM, III

LEONARD A. KALAL
1919-1996

The embodiment of the spirit, the joy, all that is wonderful in mountaineering—that is the persona of Leonard Kalal, remembered by his many friends in the mountaineering community at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

He was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, to Joseph and Anna Jirik Kalal, graduated from Christian Brothers High School in Glencoe, Missouri, and St. Mary's College, Winona, Minnesota, then taught high school mathematics in Chicago and at Boys Town, Nebraska.

During World War II, he worked at the national nuclear laboratories in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. It was here that Leonard and the mountains found each other, and a lifelong bond was formed.

He then had an assistant professorship in philosophy at the University of California at Berkeley, did some graduate work at Stanford University, and worked with Dr. Jonas Salk on the development of the oral polio vaccine.

Further graduate studies, and his love for the mountains, drew Leonard to the University of Colorado in Boulder. With a masters degree in physics, he taught at the University of Colorado, then at Eastern Washington College, then returned to CU to complete a doctorate in the Philosophy of Science.

In the late 1950s, Leonard became Head Guide of the Mountain Recreation Department of the University of Colorado, a summer program that was started in 1920 to give the large numbers of students attending the burgeoning summer programs at the university a safe and rich experience in the high country of the Rockies. Under Leonard's superb direction, the program flourished for 25 years, with an unblemished safety record, and giving memorable and meaningful experiences to thousands.

Leonard's easygoing and philosophic style of leadership always kept the program on an even keel. Should mishaps arise, such as the breaking down of a university truck bringing supplies, or a sudden summer snowstorm, or a route traversing a long scree slope, Leonard would smile, and shrug, and declare, "This, too, is mountaineering!" And his followers would take heart, and follow, ungrumbling.