

After leaving our Board, Raffi turned his energies to the California Blacksmiths Association and became its guiding light. Indeed, at the Celebration of his Life, there seemed to be as many smiths as climbers. But the secluded and delightful home in Orinda, whence their children have now gone, remained a transient hotel for visiting alpinists and other strays from all over the world. The warmth and generosity of the host, aided by the calm incisiveness of his wife, made every moment memorable.

His terminal illness was known to close friends for over two years, but it was nothing to him—the same groaning truckloads of gifts and groceries, the same overstrong handshake, the same hearty welcome for an old “horse’s petoot.” It was very hard not to love Raffi Bedayn.

WILLIAM L. PUTNAM

JOHN M. WATERMAN
1952-1981

In April John disappeared while attempting a solo climb of the east buttress of Mount McKinley. Crevasses were common on the route, and other climbers reported a period of frequent avalanches.

John was a climber of great natural ability who, for personal reasons, never fit into the mainstream of American mountaineering. He began backpacking and rock climbing with his father in the mountains of New York and New England. At a time when teenagers were rare at the Shawangunks, he led his first 5.10 (Retribution) at age 15. His first taste of the snowy mountains came on an Appalachian Mountain Club trip to the Northern Selkirks. The following summer, at age 16, he climbed McKinley’s west buttress with a group of AMC friends.

John might have coasted through the mountains on sheer natural ability, but he took the craft of climbing seriously and trained himself to be a fast, safe, consistent climber on any terrain. He loved to lead, but his piton placements were wonderfully considerate of his seconds.

After high school graduation his climbing career blossomed: a trip to England, Scotland, the Alps and Turkey (with Dennis Memhet); a second ascent of the south face of Snowpatch Spire; a first solo ascent of VMC Direct on Cannon Mountain; the Nose of El Cap; a solo ascent of the north face of the Grand Teton; the first south-to-north traverse of the Howser Towers (with cousin Dane Waterman); a first ascent of the north face of Mount MacDonald; a first ascent of the east ridge of Mount Huntington; a third ascent of Mount Robson’s north face; and in 1973 the first ascent of Mount Hunter’s south face.

After 1973 John moved to Fairbanks and became a member of the Alaskan climbing community, but increasingly he preferred to climb

solo. He had always had trouble finding partners of equal ability and commitment, and the partners had to cope with his bright ideas that could turn a hard climb into a "suff." As the years passed John lost a crushing number of friends and partners to accidents in the mountains: Boyd Everett (an early mentor), Dave Seidman, Howie Davis, Warren Bleser, Niels Andersen, Rocky Keeler, Chuck Loucks, Ed Nester, Leif Patterson, among others. Their deaths did not make John careless, but he came to speak of his own prospects with stark realism.

Like some other young climbers, John was suspicious of the American Alpine Club. He joined it late, in comparison to his accomplishments, and he was sometimes behind in his dues. Yet the *American Alpine Journal* was the forum he wanted for his account of the southeast spur of Mount Hunter in 1978 (*A.A.J.*, 1979 pages 91-97).

The Hunter climb defies being put in perspective. It was a new route, a first solo ascent of the peak, and the first traverse. The second ascent of John's route has received wide coverage as a very serious undertaking. (See, among other articles, Peter Athans' account in *A.A.J.*, 1981.) Who can imagine how it felt to go first and solo? Yet when other superior climbers were concentrating on ever faster and lighter styles, John devoted an incredible 145 days to one of the slowest and heaviest climbs in history. He freely admitted to bouts of loneliness, rage, frustration and tears, yet he held himself together, nursed his food supplies, and completed the climb.

It is said of some climbers that they were truly alive only in the mountains. This was intensely true of John—his friends will always remember him against that backdrop, enthusiastic and confident. It is also said, when death comes so prematurely, that "that's the way he would have wanted to go." It is true that John knew the great risks of solo climbing, and he knew his own limits better than most of us ever will. Still, he loved to climb and come back and tell about it, and his friends will always wish that he had.

A memorial fund to aid winter expeditions in Alaska has been established, and contributions may be sent to the Alaska Alpine Rescue Group, 3641 Sandvik, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701.

BRADLEY SNYDER

EVERETT L. DARR
1907-1981

Everett L. Darr died June 21, 1981, at the age of 74. He had been active in the mountain climbing and skiing scene around Mount Hood for over 50 years. He started his Mountain Shop in Portland, Oregon, in 1937. Later, after World War II, he moved the store to Government Camp at the base of Mount Hood. Many younger climbers and skiers