

Just a month before his departure for Makalu, RD proposed a ski trip into Yosemite's backcountry. "Can you get the maps?" I asked. "Yes, no problem" RD replied. The weather turned worse, a couple of feet of snow fell overnight, and we now had to navigate by compass in falling snow. Pretty soon we left the map quadrangle we were on. "RD—do you have the next map?" Unfazed, he whipped out the Yosemite Park tourist brochure we'd picked up at the entrance station and pointed to its ridiculous map. Needless to say we were soon hopelessly lost. We ended up close under the south face of Half Dome, and had to climb down a series of rock steps, lowering our skis and packs down as best we could. Next day, now overdue, RD hit an unseen rock, took a spill and cut his forehead. We stopped the blood, bandaged him up, and off we went. At a lunch stop the battered RD handed out smoked oysters. "This is so great" he said, grinning from ear to ear.

And so it was. Thank you RD for all the great times that so many of us have shared with you. We'll have to carry on without you now. In closing, I am reminded of a letter that Ernest Hemingway wrote to close friends on the death of a young son: "It is not so bad for Baoth, because he had a fine time, always, and he has only done something now that we all must do."

CHRIS JONES, AAC

#### EARLYN DEAN 1939-2002

Earlyn Dean died in her sleep at her winter home in Singer Island, Florida on March 31. Raised in Edmonton and Toronto, Earlyn spent most of her adult life in New York, New Jersey, and Vermont, where she was a part-owner of manufacturing businesses. She retired on January 1, 2002. In recent years she traveled extensively, including a climbing expedition to Tierra del Fuego with Olaf Sööt.

An AAC member since 1971, Earlyn will best be remembered as an indefatigable volunteer for the Club and the New York Section. Among the projects she organized and undertook was the cumulative index of the American Alpine Journal from 1929-1976, an immense and time-consuming undertaking. Each year without fail, we in the New York Section could always rely on her willingness to get up early on Sunday morning and make pancakes for a bunch of hungry climbers at our Annual Section Outing at the Ausable Club in Keene Valley.

Earlyn's climbing extended back into the 1960s: hence she knew and climbed with many of the legendary figures of Eastern climbing during those colorful decades. It was therefore appropriate that she wrote the AAJ obituaries for such Eastern luminaries as Ed Nester and Chuck Loucks, both of whom died in climbing accidents. She was part of the support team when Ted Church, her former husband and business partner, did the first ascent of the east ridge of Mount Sir Sandford in the Selkirks in 1968.

PHILIP ERARD, AAC

#### KENNETH ATWOOD HENDERSON 1907-2001

Mt. Rainier, Pinnacle Peak, Unicorn Peak, and Castle Rock in the Cascades. Yukness, Odayay, Huber, Victoria, Lefroy, Mumm, Whyte, Thompson, and The Mitre in the Canadian Rockies. In Chamonix: Aiguille de l'M by the face, Aiguille des Petits Charmoz, a traverse of the Mont Blanc massif, including an ascent of Mont Blanc du Tacul and a forced descent in bad weather to the Grands Mulets Hut. In the Zermatt district: Matterhorn, Zinal Rothorn, Unter Gabelhorn,

Monte Rosa traverse via the Dufourspitze and the Zumsteinspitze, a traverse of the Liskamm from the Lisjoch to the Felikjoch, the Dent Blanche by the Wandfluh, and the Tête Blanche. The Jungfrau and the Mönch in the Bernese Oberland. Explorations in the Wind River Range.

That's a pretty good climbing résumé, especially for a climber of the 1920s, when a trip to the Alps was a time-consuming affair, involving ocean-going ships. And it's even more impressive when you realize that this is only a partial list of the climbs that Ken Henderson submitted on his application to join the American Alpine Club. Ken was 22 at the time, and many of his best climbs lay in the future.

Kenneth A. Henderson passed away on September 13 at the age of 95, in Lebanon, New Hampshire. He was a world-class climber, explorer, and film-maker. He edited Appalachia, and wrote the first guidebook to the Wind River Range. Henderson Peak (13,115') in the Winds is named after him.

I spoke with Ken in June of 2000 about some of his favorite climbs. In 1926 he went to Europe for his first Alpine season. He and his partner Percy Olton hired a guide—which was standard practice at the time—arranging to meet in Zermatt. The guide was late in arriving, however, and the two climbers, itching to get started, climbed the Matterhorn guideless, as a sort of warm-up.

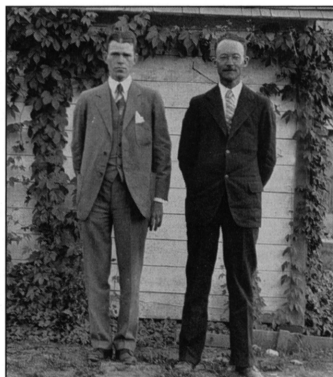
They did many routes that summer, but eventually Olton had to return to the States. Ken stayed on, and decided to traverse Monte Rosa with the guide. Arriving at the hut, they encountered a group of Japanese climbers and guides. Ken said, "The Japanese of course were talking Japanese all the time, so we couldn't understand them." Over dinner, everyone conversed in their own versions of High German, and it turned out that one of the Japanese was Prince Chichibu, the second son of the Emperor, and the younger brother of the man who would soon become Emperor Hirohito. "His father told him he had to have two guides." He also had four retainers, and they each had two guides; so the hut was occupied by two clients, four retainers, and eleven guides. That night, Ken had the honor of sharing the top bunk with Prince Chichibu.

The next day, the whole party climbed together, and they feasted upon fresh patisserie that the guides had hauled up from the valley. "The nice thing about climbing with the Japanese was all that carrying power."

Before the war, Ken participated in the first ascents of a number of classic climbs, including Standard Route on Whitehorse Ledge, Northeast Ridge of the Pinnacle in Huntington Ravine, and the East Ridge and Lower Exum routes on the Grand Teton. He made the first ascent of Mt. Owen, last of the high Teton peaks to be climbed.

Ken told me about that ascent of Owen. Several parties had been close to success in the late 1920s. However, the final, smooth 100-foot summit knob had turned back all attempts. In July of 1930, Ken, with Underhill, Fritiof Fryxell, and Phil Smith, made it up to the previous high point.

While his three companions discussed the difficult rock climb they faced, Ken decided he needed a little privacy. "I had to take a crap, so I went down on the north side a little bit, and then came back up, and I took a look over the ridge, and I could see a continuous grassy ledge.



Kenneth Henderson (left) and Robert Underhill at Billy Owen's house in Jackson, following their first ascent of the east ridge of the Grand Teton, 1929. William Owen

So I went over there, walked on the grassy ledge, and there was a crack in the dome, and I walked up onto the summit standing up. No climbing at all.” He stood on the summit, and looked down on his partners. “They were getting ready to put on their sneakers.” After his friends had joined him on the summit, it was time for a lesson. “Bob Underhill and I and the others roped down, and we climbed the face. Neither Phil nor Fryxell had ever heard of or seen a rappel. So we introduced them to the rappel. We rappelled down to where our packs were, and we climbed the face, and made a second ascent. We did Owen up proud that day.”

As he grew older, Ken shifted from putting up first ascents to mentoring younger climbers. William Putnam, who would go on to become president of the AAC and write several guidebooks to the Canadian Rockies, was an undergrad in the early 1940s. He told me, “Ken was the godfather of the Harvard Mountaineering Club. Between him and Henry Hall, we had all the guidance we could use. Ken was more practical; Henry, more theoretical. Ken took us on a number of good climbs—inspired us, cajoled us, played with us.”

It was at this time that Ken shot several 16mm films of rock and ice climbs in New England. In the 20s, he had purchased a Pathé 9.5mm camera in Europe, which he used to shoot motion pictures of Zermatt. By 1938, however, he had moved up to 16mm, and he had a new idea: “I wanted to make a film which would tell a coherent story from start to finish.”

The seven films that Ken made in this era are carefully shot and well-edited. Each film tells the story of a party ascending a now-classic climb, ranging from the Whitney-Gilman on Cannon to the Pinnacle Gully ice climb in Huntington Ravine.

At the beginning of World War II, the government needed a book to assist the army in its plans for the training of mountain troops. The result was what Putnam calls “Ken’s greatest claim to mountaineering fame: his *Handbook of American Mountaineering*.” This classic how-to book, published by the AAC in 1942, introduced American climbers to rock climbing, ice climbing, rope techniques, and outdoor survival.

Ken climbed in an era of adventure. The best available ropes were made of Italian hemp. There were no specialized rock climbing shoes. Ken said, “Once on Mt. Willard, on the upper friction slabs, we got hit by a tornado-like storm. I was wearing crepe-soled golf shoes. I took them off, tied them together, and gave them to my second, who carried them in his teeth. I felt confident that I could lead the slabs in my stocking feet.”

Much has been made of Ken’s elegant attire when climbing. He generally wore a coat and tie, and often a fedora. Ken said that in those early days no one had specialized athletic clothing—you simply climbed in what he called “just ordinary old clothing.” He was an investment banker; hence, his old clothes were business suits. I asked Putnam about this. He allowed that everyone just climbed in their old clothes; however, he added, “I don’t think I wore a tie. Didn’t add a great deal to warmth or water protection.”

In 1997 Craigen Bowen and Bev Boynton climbed Sulphur Peak, in the Wind River Range. Summiting on a beautiful day, they found, lying on the ground, between a couple of rocks, a small glass jar with a metal lid. They unscrewed the lid, and out fell an engraved visiting card—with no address, only a name: Kenneth A. Henderson. It had been there since 1932, when Ken made the first ascent. As far as we know, it’s still there.

WILLIAM CLACK