

RICHARD K IRVIN 1930-2006

Richard Irvin died on March 10, 2006 at his home in Boise, Idaho after a long battle with cancer. It was the end of an eventful life. Dick's participation in a climb frequently guaranteed success and always guaranteed a good time for his companions. I remember a late afternoon in 1951 standing on a ledge under the Second Tower of the East Ridge of the Grand Teton with Dick, John Mowat, and Leigh Ortenburger, who had taken a day off from guiding. We asked Leigh, our Teton guru, where the route went. "The route goes up there," he said, pointing to a difficult-looking chimney. "Dick, you lead." Irvin scampered up the chimney and soon we were at the top. Later we found out that the proven route traversed the Tower.

Leigh had seized the opportunity to use Dick's talents to make a first ascent.

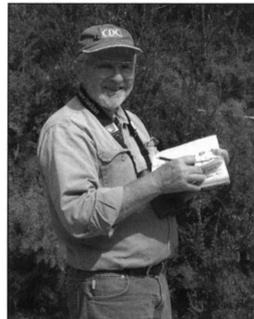
Born in 1930 in Berkeley, California, Dick's lifelong dedication to mountains and mountaineering began when he was five and his parents took him on a camping trip in the Sierra Nevada. Later he continued his camping with the Boy Scouts where he became an Eagle Scout. He climbed and hiked on his own throughout the Sierra, making an ascent of Mt. Ritter when he was 15. He started rock climbing with Sierra Club Rock Climbing Section in 1948 and climbed extensively in Pinnacles National Monument and Yosemite.

In 1951, Dick spent the summer vagabonding and climbing in the Tetons and the Canadian Rockies, making several first ascents and new routes. The trip triggered a lifetime of mountaineering around the world. From hikes in the Pennines in England to Rakaposhi and Hidden Peak in the Karakoram, Dick did anything anywhere. He climbed Mt. St. Elias in Alaska and Ararat in Turkey. He did scores of climbs throughout North America and the Alps. He did new routes on Mt. Aspiring and Mt. Cook in New Zealand, and early ascents in the Cordillera Blanca of Peru, including the second ascent of Chopicalqui in 1954. Accounts of his climbs would fill an entire *AAJ*. Pull out a map of the world and randomly stick a pin in a mountain range. Dick had probably climbed there. He was the mountaineering equivalent of Kilroy. No matter where you went, he had been there first.

Although he was a member of the successful Gasherbrum I (Hidden Peak) expedition in 1958, he did not get the opportunity to climb high on the mountain because of the early success of the party. But Dick's most remarkable expedition was the four-man attempt on Rakaposhi, 25,550 feet, in 1956. Dick, Bob Swift, Mike Banks, and Hamish McInnes tackled that giant with a budget of \$5,000. It was an epic. Among other things, everyone fell more than 100 feet at one time or another. Somehow they reached 23,500 feet, a new high point, before having to turn back. Later, when Dick was asked how close they had come to the summit, he immediately replied, "We were \$5,000 short."

Dick was also absorbed in the history and literature of mountaineering. With limited resources, he assembled an excellent mountaineering library. He was always thinking about books. When we reached Urdukas on the way out from Hidden Peak, he said to me with a sly grin, "One more expedition like this and we can put our names in our books and increase their value."

Later in life Dick led trips for Mountain Travel and then took up birding, which he pursued with his usual dedication until his life list included 6,002 species. It is hard to believe that Dick had another life, but he did. He graduated in 1953 with a degree in anthropology from San Fran-



Dick Irvin Kris Carter

cisco State University. For many years he taught math at Saratoga High School. Of all the many achievements in his life, he was most proud of the number of students he had inspired to go into science and mathematics. He was also proud of the four children he had by his first wife, Heidi Irvin. In 1998 he married Kris Carter, who warmed the remaining years of his life.

One's memory of him is good climbs and good times. Often when I think of a climb, I realize, "I did it with Dick Irvin." He was the kind of friend that when he went, a piece of you went with him. Now he has moved on. "The route goes up there. Dick, you lead!"

NICK CLINCH, AAC

SUE NOTT 1970-2006

In 2003, in Chamonix, France, conditions were good, and alpinists in heaven. I heard whispers in the lift lines of an American woman, an accomplished alpinist. The whispers carried awe, respect, and stories of the Croz Spur on the north face of the Grand Jorasses, the 1938 route on the north face of the Eiger, the north face of the Droites, Scotch On The Rocks—all names of routes I could only dream of ticking. I wanted to meet this woman. I want to *be* this woman. I think a lot of the people passing whispers wanted the same.

A native of Vail, Colorado, Sue was at home in the mountains, when alpine climbing, on expeditions, or big technical objectives. Wintering in Chamonix, for the ease of access to big, hard, alpine lines, Sue could only be found in town, or on the stair stepper, if weather was bad and avalanche hazards high. She was most commonly found in the winter rooms of the refuges or on snowy, icy, north faces.

Over the past few years I shared a rope, ski tours, bivies, many dinner parties, too many bottles of wine, and a thousand dreams with Sue. I watched her float down ski slopes in mountaineering boots, because they were more comfortable than ski boots. I watched her float up hard mixed climbs slow and steady, always in control. I saw her pass smiling and giggling, always in pink, up and down the West Buttress of Denali as she tackled Mt. Hunter, Mt. Foraker, and Denali in one month—climbing the Cassin on the first all-women's team. I received emails of a new route on Kalanka in the Gharwal Himalaya. Each note, each interaction, each adventure an inspiration.

In the spring of 2006, I shared a winter in the Alps with Sue and a spring in Alaska. Each morning in Chamonix, my phone would beep with a text: "Off running, call me when you wake up. We'll go skinning." Evenings we'd convene in her small apartment for a gourmet meal served on paper plates to a heaving crew of hungry mouths. She nudged us out touring on days so filled with snow we'd break trail downhill as well as up. We'd lust over topos of Mt. Hunter's Moonflower Buttress on bad weather days in coffee shops. Sue's motivation and drive were endless.

In April 2006, we landed on the Kahiltna basecamp, with over a 1,000 pounds of supplies. As John Varco and I, hypo-glycemic and lost in a sea of poles, attempted to construct the dome tent, Mamma Sue, affectionately referred to as "Grubby," produced a handful of cheesy, bacon quesadillas, her hands glistening with butter. In a few hours we had constructed our compound, which would be Sue's home for the next month and a half. Each day she unveiled a new



Sue Nott *Courtesy Mountain Hardwear*