

EDITORIAL

Life, most of the times, is a tale of missed opportunities. There are many things one 'just' wanted to do but somehow couldn't do it or there were valleys that one 'always' wanted to visit but couldn't, but there is always hope while one is alive, of doing these things. However, there is one regret that can never be rectified, that is about people you wanted to 'meet' but somehow opportunities slipped by and now they are gone.

One person I wanted to meet was Prof. Ardito Desio, that legendary mountaineer-scholar, a rare person who lived in three centuries; born in 1897 and passed away in 2001. His explorations, scholarly studies and enthusiasm were legendary. He had contributed several interesting articles to the *Himalayan Journals* and was someone I admired a lot. Twice, plans to visit him had to be postponed, as the professor was busy travelling or later, unwell. I stayed in Bath, England, a few times but could not meet C. E. J. Crawford who lived there. He was former President of the Himalayan Club who turned the fortunes of the Club for the better during the tumultuous period in Club's history. HC owes a lot to people like him for survival.

Last year during the Himalayan Club reunion dinner in London I was looking forward to meeting Sir Peter Holmes who was expected to be present. I had received valuable guidance from him for my visits to Spiti, an area in the Indian Himalaya, which he was first to explore. Unfortunately he could not come and I missed the opportunity of meeting him. I met Robert Hotz at his lovely bungalow in Kasauli briefly. Many early expeditions had received help from him, many wonderful mountaineers had sat on those chairs before me. Later we exchanged letters and many times he invited me to visit him again. Though I passed through the Shimla Hills, I could not visit him. Similarly Passang Phuttar Sherpa was present during the Himalayan Club special tea party in Darjeeling at the turn of the century. That brief meeting was not enough to know him well, it was not like sitting with him in a restaurant and sipping *chhang* late into night. I am sure he had many a tale up his sleeve.

Now they are all gone and this journal covers tributes to them, by way of *In Memoriam* and photos. I guess time is never enough to do justice to all your desires in a single lifetime, but these persons lived their lives to the full and loved mountains as much as anyone.

The Himalayan Club is passing through one celebration after another; year 2000 was for the 'Millennium Celebrations', 2001 'International Year of the Mountains' and now it is time to prepare for celebrating the 75th year of the founding of the Club in 1928. The *Himalayan Journal* plans to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee year 2003 with the Club and possibly, with new ideas.

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