

EDITORIAL

The current *Himalayan Journal* presents articles of a slightly different genre. This year being the 60th anniversary of the first ascent of Nanda Devi, the peak receives special tributes by Bill Aitken, an avid worshipper of the Goddess. T H Somervell's paintings, also covering Nanda Devi, are rare gems. The eastern Tibet with the enigmatic mountain Takpa Siri is visited from both the Tsari valley in the Chinese territory and the Subansiri from in the Indian territory. Both the holy mountains are serenaded in book reviews also. Memories of Robert H. Bates is a rare inclusion, and so is the history of early Indian mountaineering, a missing piece in a vast historical jigsaw. Himalayan earthquakes, Himalayan flowers, the human geography of Bhotias of Kumaun and aspects of Bhutan are some of the other subjects that are covered. We also have articles on the sport, our usual forte.

The most important event for the year without doubt is that the Himalayan Club has now been established in its own home, The Himalayan Club Centre. It is strange how physical space can influence intellectual inputs and also help in the practicalities of production work. Where do editors and designers meet to create a beautiful product? The printed HJs have to be sorted, packed and mailed. Space is needed for physical handling and storage of printed materials. This was earlier achieved by editors and members running to different venues, meeting in different homes and offices, causing delays and frustrations. With HC being established in its own rightful home we already have begun to feel a sense of belonging where we meet, discuss and design. 'Our own' space is already facilitating group work, coordination and enthusiasm.

As I was learning the ropes about editing from Soli Mehta, his charming wife Meheru offered me a sound piece of advice . 'The HJ will generate so much paper that you can be drowned in it'. Over the years it has been a challenge to sort them and above all, to store them. Editors before me and I have done this with care but it has occupied precious space so there was often great temptation to throw it all away. Now the Himalayan Club Centre has taken over this valuable asset for storage. One now feels assured that this material, with other rare collections, will now be available for future generations. Two letters, by Bill Aitken and Robert H. Bates, amongst many received, echo the sentiments of many.

Our President states in his inaugural address that this is a historic moment for the Club... may I add, even for the *Himalayan Journal*.

Mumbai, 15th August 2006

Harish Kapadia