

Flap About a Baby Climbing

About a week before the climb a Denver radio station called me to check on the progress for the Climb. I told them the oldest climber was 75 year old Jerome 'Bud' Weiser who would climb Mt Harvard. And the youngest would be Lee Remick, 10 weeks old whose parents would carry her up Mt Sherman.

A political uproar happened as many women called Governor Lamm's office and claimed they would be killing the baby, etc, etc. The Governor called me. I told him the Remick's came in wanting to climb simple Mt Sherman, they were experienced climbers and the baby was healthy. But I said I would get other advice. Once again Enjoy Colorado's resources saved the day. For I looked up the names of top Colorado Mountain Climbers who were ALSO Pediatricians. They said that if the baby is healthy, does not stay on top more than an hour or two, there should be no problem if the parents are well prepared.

They were. So I stuck to our guns, and little Lee Remick climbed with her family as the B team on Sherman. The story and picture is below. All went well.

And on several cases of very technical climbs being necessary and I had any doubts about the qualifications of the climbing party - I was able, using Enjoy Colorado's

lists to consult with top climbers, such as several from the Ad A Man Club, who certified all of those attempting the hardest 10 peaks.

My Family's Climb of Mount Sherman

While I was so busy getting everybody else hooked up to a mountain, I almost forgot I wanted to climb that day too, with my two sons.

But since I had to be in Colorado Springs by 2:30 PM that same day to preside over a Centennial event I had to pick a 14er that was both close enough to drive to the start point before and drive back over no more than 3 hours, and climb up and down in 3 to 4 hours. So I picked 14,036 foot Mount Sherman, that was just south west of Fairplay, only about 70 miles away.

I thought I would just take 13 year old Edward and his older brother David up, take the picture, as the A Team for Sherman, and get down quickly. I was still quite fit, so that would be no problem, and the boys were fit, though Edward had never climbed a 14er before.

But then everybody else got into the act and a number of local men and one woman wanted to climb, and join my team.

US Senator Gary Hart wanted in, as did

several prominent businessmen. One Colorado Mountain Club member, a stockbroker, told me all Club members were prohibited from representing themselves as 'CMC members' if they climbed. He climbed.

Then a local television station wanted to go with us and film up on the climb and on top.

By the time everybody was aboard there were 17 in my team.

With all the other teams we met at the Governor's Mansion in Denver to get our 'packets'. I had designated young Edward as Mt Sherman "A" Team Leader. Here he is with Governor Lamm and I. When the picture was taken we had only 4 members signed up with us. That ballooned to 17 by the climbing day.

The Bicentennial (7) The Great Centennial 14er Climb

Category: Centennial- Bicentennial (1975-1976)

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As it happened the television cameraman who begged us to include him was NOT in shape, and the rest of us, especially strong son David Jr had to trade off carrying his camera gear while he struggled up to the top.

After the Centennial we put together a Book consisting of

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one typed page for each Climbing Party, describing their climb, and including a photograph of their party on top.

It was printed, and at a gathering again at the Governor's Mansion all the parties came together again and each got a copy of the printed "GREAT COLORADO CENTENNIAL FOURTEENER CLIMB"

Here are the pages from the Centennial Fourteener for both Sherman climbing parties.

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MOUNT SHERMAN 14,036

EDWARD HUGHES TEAM

The Centennial climb of 14,036' Mount Sherman was an exhilarating success. Because the peak is easy and close to Denver-Colorado Springs, it attracted an interesting group of 17 climbers. This climb was planned as a rush to the top, as everyone had to be back in their respective cities early, to participate in yet other events on Colorado's 100th Birthday.

Thirteen year old Ed Hughes, son of David R. Hughes, organizer of the statewide climb, acted as team leader. United States Senator Gary Hart, was a distinguished and fit climber together with his assistant, Lon McCain. Ryer Hitchcock, a Colorado Springs stock broker and Chamber of Commerce President Elect, and his son Ed, camped out the night before, in a driving rain, above 12,000 feet, near the Hilltop Mine. John and Barbara Welles, and friends, Bertand Marty Moore from Denver, climbed as they said as "senior citizen representatives." John Herzog, Colorado Springs advertising man, and Mor-

rie Baker, president of the Colorado Springs chapter of the Colorado Mountain Club, joined in. Douglas Krentz, and David Cornwell, reporter and photographer from the Rocky Mountain News, climbed to cover the story for Denver. Also from Denver, Doctor Karl Stecher, Denver General Hospital, joined in at the last minute. Jim Whiting, KKTU Television, Colorado Springs, who had never climbed a 14er before, came to score a television first, recording directly on video tape the whole climbing experience. This was to take 100 lbs. of equipment, arranged on three old Army packboards. So, strong young David Hughes Jr., climbed and carried 40 pounds of this load all the way up and all the way down.

The three of us coming from Denver and Colorado Springs rendezvoused at 5:45 a. m. by car at a road junction outside Fairplay and drove to the Dauntless Mine at 11,500', where the sun was just rising after a rainy night. The sun revealed a bright mantle of new snow all along the upper ridges. Beautiful, but how deep, we wondered. We joined up with the six climbers who had camped out the night before. Ryer reported it had rained



From left: Kneeling — Ed Hitchcock, David Hughes, Sr., Ed Hughes, Dr. Karl Stecher, Barbara Wells; Crouching — Jim Whiting, Ryer Hitchcock, Herb Moore; Standing — David Hughes, Jr., Lon McCain, Morrie Baker, John Herzog, Senator Gary Hart, John Wells, Doug Krentz, Marty Moore. Photo by David Cornwell.

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hard until 4 a. m. and that they heard rock-falls in the night. All but 4 of the 17 climbers started their climb at the abandoned Dauntless, while Dave Hughes Sr. drove further over the rough, wet jeep road to the Hilltop Mine to start the heavy TV load at a higher point.

We started climbing at 6:30, just as the sun began to disperse the cold air, and moved quickly past the late summer snow cornices to the Sheridan-Sherman Ridge, overlooking Leadville. There was slick fallen snow, but nothing deep, all the way up. The climb was steady and simple, slowed only by the three loads of TV equipment.

On top, Ed Hughes, displayed the Colorado Flag topped by a tiny U.S. Bennington Flag on a flag pole at exactly 7:58 a. m., making the Sherman group the first up of the 100 groups on Colorado Day.

The entire party closed on top by 8:15.

The view was magnificent in every direction. There were many clouds to be sure, but for this hour and area, at least the surrounding mountains were clear and bright.

John Herzog surprised everyone by producing from his pack, a bottle of champagne which, while rolling to the TV camera and news pictures, popped the cork and made a toast to Colorado Centennial Day.

The day being glorious with a cold, but not bitter wind, we tarried on top nearly an hour signing the flag, other memorabilia, inventorying the view, finishing off the champagne, and getting to know one another. Ed Hughes selected a stone to bring back. It was a great feeling to be on top of one of Colorado's mighty fourteeners in the morning sun, on this historic day.

Senator Hart left first, trotting down the slope, with the flag to get to Denver in time for the Governor's noontime ceremony at the State Capitol. The rest of us followed down at a more leisurely pace, animated, only moderately tired and very happy.

As Jim Whiting said on camera for his closing high altitude documentary, "Purists regard Mt. Sherman as an easy climb, but for one who has never climbed this high, mountain climbing is a personal experience. And for this reporter, this was a very personal experience."

I think he said it all for us.

DUANE RENICK PARTY



From left — Top — Duane Renick, Rosie Backes and Steve Kaye. Bottom — Gayle Renick holding Jill Renick, Diane Albi and Mike Albi.

The climb to the top of Mt. Sherman on Colorado's 100th birthday was made even more special for Duane and Gayle Renick because their ten-week-old daughter, Jill, accompanied them. Since she loves to be walked, this was her idea of a perfect day. She only complained when the big people had to stop and rest.

As was the case all over the state, our day was less than perfect weather-wise. We began our climb at 11,700' at 8:30 under blue skies and bright sunshine. But by the time the three Renicks and Mike Albi reached the summit at noon, clouds had moved in, preventing the rest of the group, Diane Albi, Rosie Backes, Linda Lambert and Steve Kaye, from making the top. Our descent was made in heavy rain, with only Jill staying dry and warm inside her father's coat. We all took refuge in a miner's cabin, where a roof over our heads felt like a real luxury. Lunch was had by all - this time Jill was quite vocal on this point.

Then in typical Colorado fashion, the sun burst forth, warming our drenched bodies, and lighting up the freshly washed mountains around us. A good time was had by all.

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These write ups were typical of the 80 written stories with photos we got and printed in the book.

The Great Big Thompson Flood Tragedy.

As bad luck would have it, a great rainstorm covered all

of Colorado on the evening before that August 1st day. Near Estes Park the Great Thompson river crashed down killing 144 people, destroying much property and grabbing ALL the state AND national attention.

But the Centennial Climb's Success

In SPITE of that tragedy, and REAL hard rains all 100 Climbing Parties with over 645 individuals, set out, some having to reach the remote peaks and camp out two days before. In spite of rain all night before, and rain during August 1st climb EVERY team but two made their Summit! Both on peaks - El Diente and Snowmass - lightning was so severe near their peaks, there was too much risk in getting struck. But 98 of 100 teams succeeded! Even the ones on Longs Peak in Estes Park where the great flood took place! There was only ONE injury on one mountain when a falling rock lacerated a climber's leg, but a doctor was in the team and he got patched up! So much for the dire warnings by the Colorado Mountain Club.

Then, when the 92 page Book about the climb was printed, all the teams were once again invited to the Governor's Mansion and everybody partied on the large garden lawn, and everyone was given a copy of the book. The Great Colorado Centennial Fourteener Climb was a smashing success - and all the predictions of doom were proven wrong.

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Below is some of what I wrote in the preamble to the book, that justified my faith in Coloradoans good sense.

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ing a profession. They were weekend climbers with some very untypical mountaineers mixed in - from 10 week old Lee Renick carried to the 14,036 summit of Mount Sherman by her father, to the amazing 75 year old Francis "Bud" Weiser who scrambled to the top of Mount Harvard, fourth highest peak in the U.S. - and after a younger party had failed!

There were kid's groups, women's groups, young couples, college chums, school faculties, family groups, business and profession-



The Sponsors: Climb Chairman Dave Hughes, Colorado Governor Dick Lamm, Centennial Commissioner Alexis McKinney. al men, retired military, middle-aged housewives, seasoned natives, experienced climbers and novice newcomers. Even a few dogs. The climbs ranged from festive outings up less demanding peaks like Gray's and Torrey's to arduous and technical climbs on such formidable peaks as the Crestone Needle, Pyramid, El Diente and the Maroons. The smallest party was 2, the largest 20.

The Centennial Fourteener Climb dramatically revealed, as nothing else in recent history has, Coloradoans' love affair with their mighty mountains. But it also revealed the maturity of that relationship, as virtually every group showed enough prior planning, skill, stamina, and judgment to enjoy a very high rate of climbing success, without injury, in the face of really dangerous and difficult climbing conditions.

This was a far cry from a half century earlier when a formidable woman in light clothing set out with her husband to conquer Pikes Peak only to be found days later, frozen in Windy Point - a victim of the always dangerous elements, the altitude, and her own foolish bravado.

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THE GARDEN GATHER AT THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION.

