



Medex Newsletter 20

May 2007

Introduction

Wonderful news this week from Nepal. Mike Grocott's Xtreme Everest Expedition has enjoyed spectacular success. After many years of hard work and planning Mike and many of his team have summited over the last few days. Very many congratulations to them all. Full details can be seen by clicking the link below.

http://www.xtreme-everest.co.uk/news_detail.php?newsid=607

Jim Milledge has recently returned from the Base Camp of Everest where he dropped in to give a talk. Jim and some of the Xtreme Team are pictured below.



Lt to Rt, Luanne Freer, Chris Imray, George Rodway, Jim Milledge, Paul Richards all in the Mess tent of the Cauldwell Xtreme Everest Expedition.

Medex West Nepal Expedition, October 2008

The 2008 Expedition is now just around the corner and we are firming up our plans for this trip. During last autumn's meeting at the Old Dungeon Ghyll we decided to scale back the major traverse of West Nepal that we had previously planned. Instead we will be concentrating our efforts in the Dhaulagiri area which has a number advantages for us:

- It is still a seldom visited and very spectacular region
- The itinerary fits into 4, 5 and 6 week schedules rather than the 60 days required for a full traverse
- The ascent profile of this itinerary is far more amenable to the scientific contingent than the full traverse which would have created a lot of difficulties for the researchers.

The Expedition will start in Kathmandu on October 1st and from there we will fly to Pokhara for a day or two before departing on foot to Beni. Those coming for 4 and 5 weeks will probably want to drive to Beni in order to catch up. We will then trek clockwise around the Dhaulagiri circuit to establish a scientific base camp at over 5,000 metres in the Hidden Valley. From there groups will either stay at Base Camp or depart with one of the following objectives:

- Ascent of Damphus Peak 6,035m
- Ascent of Sita Chuchura 6,611m
- Trekking exploration of the region to the north west of Dhaulagiri possibly up towards the Sangda La?

After returning to the Hidden Valley Base Camp groups will descend via the Damphus Pass to the Kali Gandaki. Those that are on the shorter itineraries can then fly back to Pokhara from Jomsom whilst those that have more time can trek into the Mustang Valley before flying out from Jomsom for lakeside recreation at Pokhara.

The Expedition altitude profile will look something like this:

(All heights are very approximate)

Kathmandu 1,300m

Pokhara 915m

Route in Green is the route to be taken by 6 week trek

Lumie 1,610m

Tirke Dunga 1,480m

Gorepani 2,750m

Poon Hill 3,193m

Ripu Danda 3,232m

Those on shorter treks will drive to Beni

Beni 830m

Babichor 1,000m

Phedi 1,100m

Phala Gaon 1,900m

Zukapani 2,000m

Baghar 2,400m

Dhobang 3,400m

Salaghari 3,900m

Italian Base Camp 4,500m

Dhaulagiri Base Camp 4,900m

French Pass 5,500m

Hidden Valley 5,000m

Optional Peaks

Damphus Peak 6,035m

Sitra Chuchura 6,611m

Damphus Pass 5,200m

Yak Kharka 4,000m

Marpha 2,670m

Jomsom 2,720m

Those with more time available may opt to visit Mustang as set out in blue

Kagbeni 2800m

Samar 3,600m

Ghami 3,600m

Charang 3,500m

Lo Manthang 3,700m

Ghami 3,600m

Samar 3,600m

Jomsom 2,720

Pokhara



Sitra Chuchura 6,611m

We have now appointed a Trekking Agent who is researching other trekking opportunities around the Hidden Valley. He will be presenting us with a detailed itinerary in time for the Hyssington BBQ on July 14th. We will also have a firm idea of prices by then. We intend to start taking bookings from July on a first come first served basis. Stefan Sanders and Andy Grieve are heading up the research component of the trip.

We strongly advise that if you want to get involved in this Expedition then you should come to either our Hyssington BBQ in July or the Langdale meet in the autumn.

Medex Altitude Medicine Book

Chris Smith and Denzil Broadhurst have been hard at work since October putting together this book. Using the considerable medical resources of Medex Members they have edited this handbook for mountain travellers and made sure that it is written in simple English. Hopefully all jargon has been banned. The idea is that they have produced a handbook that can be read and understood by non-medics. This book will be downloadable free of charge from our website and will be printed and distributed free of charge in key trekking areas such as Kathmandu. Chris tells me that it will be finished in time for the Hyssington BBQ in July.

Medex Antarctica Expedition 2006

I know that this was last year's expedition but I am aware that we haven't formally written it up. Needless to say we had an amazing expedition and managed a smattering of ski-mountaineering, kayaking and diving in one of the most wonderful places on earth.

We sailed to the Antarctic Peninsula on board a 55 foot steel charter yacht from Chile. The 500 mile crossing of Drake's Passage proved to be just as stormy as expected and we were all glad to sail through Neptune's Bellows into the sheltered heart of Deception Island. An overnight crossing from the grey volcanic island brought us to a dazzling sunrise just off the Antarctic Peninsula. We then spent the next 4 weeks pottering around within the shelter of the archipelago and in amongst the icebergs and penguins.

Unfortunately our engine failed just north of the Antarctic Circle and we were forced to beat a tenuous retreat to Port Lockroy where we tied ourselves securely in until a spare part was brought to us by another charter yacht some ten days later. The skiing we did was fantastic as was the diving and the kayaking and we were very fortunate to have been able to experience this stunning

continent at a leisurely pace from the relative comfort of a sturdy yacht. I have included a smattering of photographs to give a flavour of what we got up to.



Mount Francais



Chinstrap Penguins



Antarctic Tern



Sea Kayaking at Prospect Point



Mount William



Crabeater seals on Icebergs



Pelagic anchored at Damoy Point



Sea ice and ice bergs off the Fish Islands



Ski depot on ascent of Jabet Peak



Ski touring on Doumer Island



Gentoo Penguins



Pelagic at Charcot Point

This year we have sailed our wonderful new boat, Shimshal II to the Orkney Islands where it is poised for a 6 week voyage to the Arctic starting in June. We hope that our landfall in Norway will be the Lofoten Islands on or around mid summer's day.



Shimshal in North West Scotland May 2007

Diploma in Mountain Medicine

The lively Diploma Faculty continued to flourish during David Hillebrandt's recent illness. Thankfully David is now recovering and is once more engaged with the Diploma which goes from strength to strength. More information is now available on the Medex website as well as a full list of diplomats. www.medex.org.uk

Scientific Meetings

Mountain & Wilderness Medicine World Congress 2007

Aviemore, Scotland. Wednesday 3 October - Sunday 7 October 2007

<http://www.worldcongress2007.org.uk/>

Jim Milledge, the current President of the International Society of Mountain Medicine, is hosting this biannual conference in Scotland this year. Charles Clarke is the Conference Organiser and George Wormald is heavily involved in the administration. A large Medex contingent will be in Aviemore this autumn!

Social

Hyssington Summer BBQ 14th July



The annual mid summer meet comes with no guarantee of good weather. Come along for our BBQ on the Saturday evening and stick around for some walking / mountain biking on the Saturday and Sunday. Please bring some food and drink and let us know if you are planning to come.

Old Dungeon Ghyll in the English Lake District 17th November 2007



Langdale

Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel, Lake District Weekend. This is the annual Medex event. We normally arrive on the Friday night, spend Saturday on the hill with dinner in the evening. B&B accommodation can be booked direct with the Hotel (tel: 015394 37272) and camping is available nearby. If you want to attend the dinner on the Saturday evening this must be booked direct with Medex as places are limited. A cheque for £30 will secure your place for dinner, made payable to Medex and sent to the Pinfold, Hyssington, Montgomery, Powys SY15 6AY

Pay either by cheque or direct bank transfer into the Medex account: contact simon@medex.org.uk for details. Unfortunately at present we do not accept credit cards.

Engagement Party, Bletchington – 9th June!!! Hog Roast and Live Jazz Band

“We have just got engaged, and would love you to come and celebrate with us. We’re having a party, hopefully in the garden if the weather’s OK, but the village hall will be on stand-by just in case there’s a downpour!

An invitation with details and directions is attached.

Hope to see you there, Annabel & Brian”

Annabel and Brian are getting married in Salisbury 25th August 2007.