

Other Accomplishments of Sir Edmund Hillary

After tackling Mount Everest, Hillary continued to climb mountains and explore new areas, including mountains in Australia, Switzerland, and ten other peaks in the Himalayas that were more than 20,000 feet high.

Between 1955 and 1958, Hillary was a member of an expedition that crossed Antarctica over land, via the South Pole. They were the first group to travel to the South Pole using motor vehicles.



Tractors used by Hillary to get to the South Pole

Edmund Hillary was very concerned about the plight of the people of Nepal and in 1960, he established the Himalayan Trust. This international non-profit organisation helped to build schools, hospitals, bridges and even an airstrip, all in remote areas of the Himalayas. He continued to be heavily involved with projects in the Himalayas throughout the rest of his life and he led the Himalayan Trust until his death in 2008.

In 1977, Hillary led a team that followed the route of the Ganges River from its mouth all the way to its source high up in the Himalayas. They travelled on a jet boat called 'Ocean to Sky'.

From 1977 to 1979, Hillary was a commentator on many Antarctic sightseeing flights of Air New Zealand. On November 28, 1979, he was supposed to commentate on Air New Zealand Flight 901, but he opted out due to other commitments. His friend, Peter Mulgrew, took his place. Unfortunately, this plane crashed and killed Mulgrew along with 257 passengers.

Along with Neil Armstrong, Hillary landed on the North Pole in 1985. He was the first man to reach both the poles and also conquer Mount Everest.

Family Life

One of the most famous explorers of all time, Sir Edmund Hillary lived most of his life in New Zealand. He was born there, died there, and lived there between his trips all over the world to climb mountains, trek across Antarctica and help the Nepalese people.

Hillary married Louise Mary Rose in 1953, and had three children – Sarah, Belinda and Peter. Tragically, in 1975, after only 22 years of marriage, Louise, along with their 16 year old daughter, Belinda, was killed in an aeroplane crash whilst she was visiting Nepal.

In 1989, 14 years after Louise had died, he married June Mulgrew, a lifetime friend.

His son, Peter Hillary, climbed to the top of Mount Everest in 1990 and now continues his work with the Himalayan Trust.

Hillary had six grandchildren.

Edmund Hillary's Death

On January 11, 2008, at the age of 88, Hillary died of heart failure at the Auckland City Hospital at about 9 a.m.

A large state funeral was held in his honor at Holy Trinity Cathedral, and the country of New Zealand mourned their deceased adventurer climber.

Quotes

These two quotes by Hillary sum up his life's philosophy:

- It is not the mountain we conquer but ourselves.
- People do not decide to become extraordinary. They decide to accomplish extraordinary things.

Tributes to Sir Edmund Hillary

- Hillary's picture appeared on the New Zealand five dollar note in 1992. This made him the first New Zealander to appear on money during his own lifetime.
- He received an award from the government of India called the Padma Vibhushan, which is its second highest award for civilians.
- For his work with the Antarctica expedition, he was given the Polar Medal.
- On the fiftieth anniversary of his climb to the top of Mount Everest, he was made an honorary citizen of Nepal.
- In 1985, he was appointed the New Zealand High Commissioner to India.

WALT Retrieve and Record Information from Non-fiction Texts

How many of the following questions can you answer?

Other Accomplishments of Edmund Hillary

1. What did the Himalayan Trust do?
2. Which other places did Edmund explore?
3. How did Edmund Hillary meet Neil Armstrong?

Family Life

4. Who did Edmund Hillary marry and did they have any children?
5. What was the tragedy that happened to Edmund's family?
6. Who provided Edmund with support later on in his life?
7. When and where did Edmund die?