

FRIENDSHIP NEWSLETTER

For Thai English Students

The First Men who Climbed to the Top of the World!

At 11:30 a.m. on May 29, 1953 (over 50 years ago), Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay became the first men to climb to the top of Mount Everest in Nepal. Mt. Everest, the tallest mountain in the world, is 8,848 meters (or 29,028 feet) high.



Edmund Hillary was born in New Zealand. He had climbed several other mountains before he was asked to join the team of 13 British climbers. They took along 350 Sherpas (a group of people who live in the area of Mt. Everest) with them. These men carried their oxygen tanks, food, tents and everything else that they needed to live in the very cold weather. Tenzing Norgay was one of the Sherpas. The group climbed on the ice and snow of Mt. Everest for over two months. Of the more than 360 men in their group, only Hillary and Norgay climbed to the top!

Every day they were in danger. In the cold, mountain air, there was little oxygen and they had to use oxygen tanks so they could breathe. One day, Hillary and Tenzing were climbing together. Hillary jumped onto a loose piece of ice and it fell off the mountain. Hillary fell with it but he and Tenzing were tied together by a rope! Tenzing quickly pulled Hillary to safety and saved his life. Teamwork is very important when climbing a mountain.

On September 3, 1953, Hillary married his girlfriend Louise Rose. They had three children, Peter, Sarah and Belinda. A sad thing happened in 1975 when his wife and their daughter Belinda (15) were killed in a plane crash in the Himalayan Mountains. They were on their way to be with Hillary who was in Nepal helping the people he had come to love.



Edmund Hillary became famous because of climbing Mt. Everest! Queen Elizabeth II of England gave him the honor of being called Sir Edmund Hillary. He went to many other places in the world and did many exciting things but he says that climbing to the top of Everest and becoming famous is not the happiest part of his life. His happiest times were with his family, camping and doing other fun things together.

We can learn from Edmund Hillary that loving and enjoying people is more important than being famous and doing exciting things!

Questions:

1. When did Hillary and Norgay reach the top of Mt. Everest?
2. How high is Mt. Everest?
3. Who were the men who climbed with Hillary?
4. What did the group of Sherpas do during the climb?
5. Tell about the dangers when climbing Mt. Everest.
6. Tell about Hillary's family.
7. What did Hillary say gave him the most happiness?

Did you know that ... ?

- a. Over 1,200 climbers have reached the top of Mt. Everest.
- b. Hillary's son Peter has climbed to the top of Everest twice.



By Arlene Sorenson

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