



AAC Publications

Tex Bossier, 1943 – 2015

Floyd Allen “Tex” Bossier, a key figure in Colorado climbing’s “golden age,” died in Saint- Joriez, France, on September 6, at the age of 71.

Tex was born far from the mountains in the oil town of Port Arthur, Texas, the youngest of four. When he was nine, his father, a pipefitter in a refinery, died of emphysema. The family had little money, but Tex was bright, curious, and unconventional. At Thomas Jefferson High School, the misfits tended to join the slide-rule club, whose members included Tex and fellow student Janis Joplin.

After his freshman year, Tex’s mother married a stonemason who did not like to stay long in one place. By the late 1950s the family was living in Colorado, where Tex learned to climb and earned a reputation for high-quality ascents in Rocky Mountain National Park, the Tetons, and elsewhere. His regular partners in the early 1960s included Bob Culp, Layton Kor, and Jim McCarthy. In 1961, at the age of 17, Tex and Culp established the route that is now considered the best climb on Hallett Peak: the Culp-Bossier. In desperate weather, he and Kor pioneered the Diagonal Direct on Longs Peak; together, they established several other new routes on Longs in the summer of 1963. Tex also took part in the 1979 Ama Dablam expedition led by Tom Frost.

In 1973, after a stint as an employment counselor for the state of California, Tex came to work for us in Ventura, first as manager of our retail store, then as one of the first sales reps for Chouinard Equipment and Patagonia (touring five states in a battered yellow Corolla), and eventually working as national sales manager. In 1987 he moved to Chamonix to help set up our business in Europe, and he lived the rest of his life in France.

We will remember Tex for his gifts as a climber and as a loyal and valuable colleague who helped build our company, but also for his capacity for friendship. He was a wonderful companion on the road or at dinner—his humor was wry, and he never told a bad story. Those of us lucky enough to be his friend will be forever grateful to have the cadence of Tex’s voice, and several of his stories, carried within us like a tune, and will forever miss the chance to hear something new to add to the repertoire.

Some of the qualities that made Tex such a good salesman and friend—equanimity, psychological insight, patience—also made him a first-rate teacher. For a decade, while managing the store and repping for Patagonia, he also taught climbing in Santa Barbara and then in the unlikely places of Wichita and Tulsa, at the invitation of dealers there. Hundreds of his “graduates,” including Phil Powers, CEO of the AAC, count Tex as one who taught them something to be valued. So does his son, Jack Miller, who survives him.

So do we.

– Yvon and Malinda Chouinard

Images



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