



AAC Publications

James F. Henriot, 1927 – 2016

On January 3, the AAC lost one of its past presidents, Jim Henriot. He will be much missed by all who knew him, on or off the mountains. A distinguished attorney, an outstanding outdoorsman and mountaineer, a wise counselor, a loyal friend, a leader of consummate grace and style—he left his mark in all spheres of his long and active life.

Naturally sociable, Jim always had a sympathetic ear, good advice, a ready smile, and an encouraging word. But when needed he could also reveal a core of steely resolution, a quality that served him in both litigation and mountaineering. I well remember the last time I climbed with him in the North Cascades, where steeper snow slopes are best negotiated *de bonne heure*. He was amiable enough while the rest of us wasted valuable time chattering at breakfast, but when we were finally ready to leave, as if in rebuke, he led off at a breakneck pace that soon absorbed any wind for chatter. Thanks largely to this corrective measure, our party was able to summit safely.

For most of his mature life, Jim was a partner in the eminent law firm of Eisenhower Carlson in Washington state, his specialty being employment and labor law, a field in which he gained national recognition. For many years he was general counsel to the University of Puget Sound, a post he enjoyed for the contact it gave him with higher education. He served on many committees of the bar—regional, national, and international.

At the AAC, he served on the board of directors and chaired the Expeditions Committee from 1974 to 1976, before becoming president in 1977. He also was a board member of a number of civic entities, including his alma mater, Seattle University, the Washington State Historical Society, Lowell Observatory, REI, and the Tacoma Mountaineers, of which he was several times president. At one point he represented the AAC in the UIAA.

During his presidency—the first of a member from the Pacific Northwest—Jim induced the board to expand its meeting places to more Western locales, which aided in recruiting new and younger members. A quiet campaign added much-needed funds to the club's endowment. Perhaps most importantly, he worked with Bill Putnam to strengthen our ties with the UIAA and increase our liaisons with the international climbing fellowship. During his presidency, the AAC first hosted the UIAA General Assembly, in 1977, in Pinkham Notch, New Hampshire.

Jim took an active part in encouraging mountaineering exchanges, such as that between the Russian Mountaineering Federation and the AAC, which began with the participation of an American team in the International Pamirs Camp in 1974 and continued with visits from teams of Russian climbers in 1976 and 1977. Following his presidency, Jim remained chair of the Climbing Exchanges Committee for 14 years.

Jim was so modest that even good friends were often unaware of many of his exploits. For example, in addition to climbing six out of the seven highest peaks on the continents, he once helped sail a brigantine from Hong Kong to the Philippines. His mountaineering philosophy is best summed up in his own words: "There's a personal satisfaction in reaching a summit; you get so close to nature and God. You are dependent on your companions and they are dependent on you, so you work together as a team." Isn't that what we all prize as climbers? Jim was its embodiment.

Green be the turf above thee, my friend of better days. None knew thee but to love thee, nor named thee but to praise. —Fitz-Greene Halleck

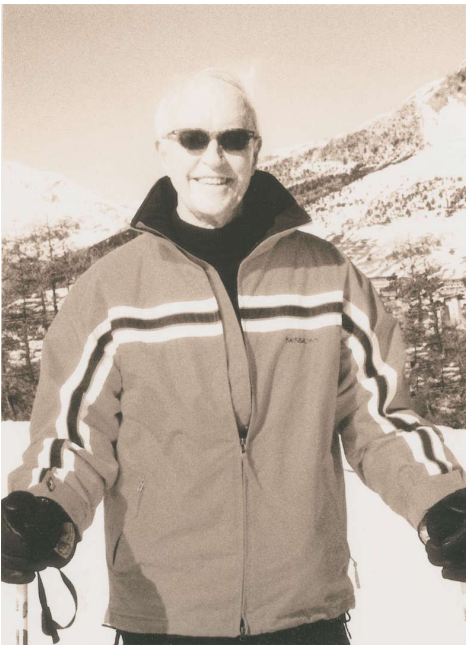
– **T. C. Price Zimmermann**

* For much of the information here I am indebted to obituaries in the Tacoma News Tribune and a memorial produced by the Eisenhower Carlson law firm, as well as to Jim Frush's 2002 AAJ article on past AAC presidents.

Images



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