



AAC Publications

Jocelyn "Jock" Glidden, 1935–2020

Jock Glidden passed away on July 29, at his home in Ogden, Utah, after the balance of pains outweighed the sum of pleasures, and he determined there was no longer any purpose in continuing the struggle against Parkinson's disease.

Jock was born and raised in Connecticut until his early teens, when his family purchased a cattle ranch near the Verde River in Arizona. Here, the family began a romance with the American West and the outdoors which they never abandoned. Jock spent several years on the ranch before attending high school and college in Vermont, graduating from Middlebury in 1958.

While pursuing a master's degree in philosophy at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, he took up climbing and skiing in the Highlands and the Alps. Jock became a highly accomplished mountaineer, with many new routes in Canada, South America, India, and the United States. In 1968, he made the second ascent of the north face of Mt. Robson in Canada, via a more direct route. Three years later, he and four others did the first ascent of the north face of Huandoy Norte in Peru. In 1972, Jock and George Lowe III climbed the north face of Mt. Alberta in the Canadian Rockies, a route that is still considered one of the great prizes of the range. That same year, he set the speed record for summiting the Grand Teton from the Jenny Lake climber's camp, running up and down in 4 hours 11 minutes, a mark that stood for ten years. In 1974, he was invited to join the USA-USSR Pamir Expedition to climb Pik Lenin (now Ibn Sina) in what is now Tajikistan, a diplomatic effort during the Cold War. Although considered a success, it was also met with tragedy, when eight Russian women died during a summit attempt.

In 1969, Jock obtained his Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Colorado Boulder. During his time in Boulder, he married Roberta Bannister. (They were later divorced in 2000.) They had a son, Jesse, in 1969, and Jock was offered a professorship at Weber State University in Ogden. He taught philosophy at Weber State for 29 years, retiring in 1998. He almost never drove to work, preferring a bicycle or cross-country skis. He also ran three marathons—his best time was 2:59. He liked this observation from Epictetus: "It is difficulties that show what men are." Though he loved a good challenge, he nevertheless would bring others along who weren't nearly as capable. Whether teaching philosophy or how to place protection in mixed rock and ice, he was generally good-humored and patient.

Jock was a dedicated environmentalist and helped found the Ogden Group of the Sierra Club. He brewed beer, grew wine grapes, and loved apple trees. As his health declined, Jock spent more time at his family cottage in Tabusintac, New Brunswick. There, he took up sea kayaking and was instrumental in donating significant migratory bird habitat to the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

Jock served as a hospice volunteer for over 15 years after retiring, and one of his patients was a sheep rancher, with whom Jock felt kinship because of his teenage years on a cattle ranch. Jock met the rancher's daughter, Josette, and they fell in love. Josette became a cherished member of the family, who unconditionally devoted herself to Jock's welfare during the final years of his life.

— Jesse Glidden

Remembering Jock Glidden

Last night Jock Glidden died peacefully in his sleep.

Jock was the real deal, a true adventurer and mountaineer of the old school. He was a go-for-it climber. He did not need “excessive protection”— a piton or ice screw at waist level for every move. He depended on his superior skill, which was the code of the climbing culture during the 1960s, '70s, and '80s.

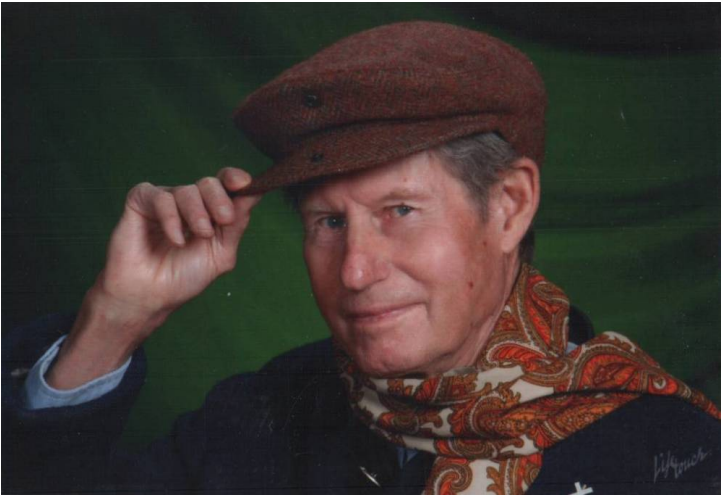
Having attended graduate school in Edinburgh, Scotland, Jock had that “stiff upper lip” British attitude. On several occasions, when things were starting to look grim on whatever route we were on, Jock would say, “Lets brew up some tea.”

Being a philosophy professor, Jock always made sure there was good intelligent conversation when we were tent-bound during storms, as well as providing useful commentary at critical moments on climbs.

I first met Jock when we were both at the University of Colorado in Boulder in the early 1960s. We have been friends ever since. I already miss him.

— Peter Lev

Images



Jock Glidden in the Canadian Rockies.



Jock Glidden on the north face of Mt. Robson in the Canadian Rockies.

Article Details

Author	Jesse Glidden and Peter Lev
Publication	AAJ
Volume	63
Issue	95
Page	213
Copyright Date	2021
Article Type	In memoriam