



AAC Publications

In Memoriam 2024: Contributors and AAC Members

The following international climbers who passed away in 2024 wrote many articles and reports for the American Alpine Journal. Here, we offer brief tributes to these friends and contributors.

ARCHIL BADRIASHVILI not only was among Georgia's leading alpinists, he also contributed immeasurably to the world's knowledge of Georgian alpinism and the Caucasus Mountains, with many in-depth articles in the *AAJ*. A physician and mountain guide, Badriashvili died in a fall from Shkhelda in the Caucasus precipitated by a lightning strike.

JOHN CLEARE, a British photographer and author, captured memorable images of rock climbing and mountaineering from the Old Man of Hoy to the Eiger and the Himalaya. He wrote and edited many books, including *The World Guide to Mountains and Mountaineering*, which is still useful to *AAJ* editors 45 years after it was published, and he himself climbed throughout the world.

MARTIN FEISTL fell during a free solo in the mountains of the Austrian Tyrol in May. Feistl was a wide-ranging climber whose many new routes in Greenland in 2023 were highlighted in two *AAJ* reports. Capturing both his ethics and his drive, one of these began, "In every part of [our] expedition to the Mythics Cirque, we placed the 'how' above the 'what.'"

TOMAS FRANCHINI, a guide from the Brenta Dolomites of Italy, died in a fall from a bivy site on Nevado Cashan in Peru. Franchini's reports appeared frequently in the *AAJ* for over a decade—from Patagonia, Peru, India, China, and the Karakoram, including solo new routes on big peaks in China and Pakistan.

EVGENY GLAZUNOV from Russia died during the descent from a solo winter attempt on Ak-su in Kyrgyzstan, having climbed the extremely difficult Chaplinsky Route on the north face. Glazunov described numerous new routes on the granite peaks east of Lake Baikal in several recent *AAJ* reports.

ONDREJ HÚSERKA, one of the leading lights of Slovakian alpinism, died in a crevasse fall while descending from the first ascent of the enormous east face of Langtang Lirung in Nepal. Húserka's new routes ranged from the Tatra Mountains to Patagonia and Kyrgyzstan; he wrote about a new route on Phaalkan Meenaar in India for *AAJ* 2023.

VITALY "RAGE" KOMAROV, a Kazakh climber and ski mountaineer, died in an avalanche on Tuyuk-su at the start of the 2023–2024 ski season. Komarov accomplished many new routes and first ski descents, and published a skiing guidebook in his home country. For *AAJ* 2018, he wrote about the first ski descent of Talgar Peak (4,973m), with American Brody Leven.

KEITA KURAKAMI died on Mt. Fuji in his home country of Japan as a result of a preexisting heart condition. Kurakami was a bold and adventurous rock climber whose achievements included a roped solo free ascent of the Nose of El Capitan. In *AAJ* 2017, he wrote about the first ascent of the Moai Face on Mt. Mizugaki, a 5.14a with huge runouts.

KAZUYA HIRAIDE and **KENRO NAKAJIMA** died in July during an alpine-style attempt on the west face of K2. One of the strongest alpine partnerships of recent times, the two Japanese climbers made

many first ascents in Pakistan, including the north face of Tirich Mir in 2023, the northwest face of Karun Koh in 2022, the south face and southeast ridge of Rakaposhi in 2019, and the northeast face of Shispare in 2017, all of which they described in [AAJ](#) stories. Hiraide earned the first of his three Piolets d'Or for the first ascent of the southeast face of Kamet in India, with Kei Taniguchi, in 2008.

NECROLOGY

In addition, we remember the following AAC members who passed away in 2024:

Jon Anderson

Burt Angrist

James Baker

George Basch

Jeffrey Benfield

Alan Durfee

Jeremy Freeman

James Gehres

Stanley Goldberg

John Harkness

Roger Hedlund

Mihaela Gabi Ianoși

Robert Linck

Austin Mallet

Janel Mathews

Gurdon Miller

John Reilly

Manel Casanova Rutllant

Mary Jane Sainsbury

Robert Schuster

Dr. Michael Wiedman

Warwick Williams

T.C. Price Zimmermann

Images

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