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Robert P. Broughton In Memoriam

*John C. Unkovic**

Robert P. Broughton died on Sunday, July 31, 1977, on Nanga Parbat, a mountain located in the western Himalayas, which is the ninth highest peak in the world. At approximately 6:50 p.m. on that date, only ten minutes after we had talked to him by radio, Bob and companion George Bogel were directly struck by tons of rock which, unexpectedly and unpredictably, split away from a huge rock massif located some 150 feet above their tent. Immediately after the rock fall, we climbed towards their camp but we found no trace of life and we heard no response to our calls. In the morning we found George's body 1,400 feet below their tent site. We never found Bob.

Bob was a husband, father, teacher, member of the legal profession, and an outdoorsman, and he was able to harmonize full well the best qualities of all of these. His colleagues and his students know of his dedication and abilities as a teacher of law and as a friend and counselor. But Bob was also a teacher and a fast friend in the mountains and outdoors just as surely as he was in the lecture and seminar rooms of his law school.

His knowledge of the outdoors, the result of the love he felt for our natural environment, was impressive and he always shared it with those around him. His advice and counsel were sought and highly valued on every climb in which he took part. Although he had spent twenty years climbing, he was always ready to answer the questions of novices and he was always willing to help undo mistakes made by less experienced comrades. Further, he imparted his

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knowledge and skills not only to his peers and to his climbing companions, but he also enjoyed teaching groups of children the rudiments of outdoor living, mountaineering, and nature appreciation.

Bob shared a love and communion with his family which was solid and binding. Sue and Johanna and Carolyn were present with Bob in all but body on this summer's climb. He constantly wrote to them, spoke of them, and thought of them. Even when he was totally exhausted, as we both were one evening descending from Camp 1 to Base Camp, he insisted on frequent stops to collect unique rocks to carry to his daughters and to take the photographs of small flowers which were his trademark and which his wife so enjoyed.

Bob loved the mountains, their physical composition and their ethereal spirit, their raw force and their surrealistic beauty. But he was not merely a man experienced in outdoor lore and attracted to the aesthetics of his natural environment; he was also a tough, strong, and very capable mountaineer. He sought and embraced the challenge of mountains, he felt at ease with that challenge and, indeed, in that challenge he found fulfillment. His presence on Nanga Parbat was the natural and perhaps inescapable culmination of that challenge.

On the day of the accident, Bob was happy because he was ascending the mountain to help lead the way from Camp II to Camp III. It was important to Bob not only that he climb Nanga Parbat, but also that he help lead that climb. When given the opportunity to go to the lead, he accepted it eagerly. On July 31, then, Bob's climb was just beginning and he was pleased.

While his climb ended with awful finality, that climb was completely in the spirit of the values for which he had lived.

And while his departure has left a great void for his family, his students, his colleagues, and his friends, his lessons will continue to enrich us.