

# **namaste**



**May 2004**

**Vol 1, Issue 2**



**Climbing Denali  
Namaste Global Expedition Update  
...and more**

### Namaste!

Welcome to the May 2004 edition of Namaste News! Last month's first edition prompted a fabulous response so thank you to everyone who sent in feedback.

On 10 May, the Namaste Global Expedition completed the 6,800 mile traverse of Canada and Alaska. The rest of the month was spent preparing for and then climbing Denali, North America's highest mountain. (For more detail on the climb, you can also read the

Denali expedition report available at [www.namaste.co.uk/7-summits.htm](http://www.namaste.co.uk/7-summits.htm))

Feel free to send me an email with your suggestions and ideas for future issues. If you would like to receive regular monthly email updates from Namaste you can subscribe to Namaste News via the Contact Us page on the website.

*Cheers, Chris*

### Contents

Expedition Highlights	1
Expedition Update	2
Competition - Win a Holiday!	2
Expedition Coming Up...	2
Management & Productions	3
Website Update	3
Letters & Emails	3
Namaste in the News	3
In-Country News	3

## Global Expedition Highlights

<p><b>30/5/04</b> Day 56 Denali Camp 5 17200 ft</p> 	<p><b>1/5/04</b> Day 27 Jasper Mile 4229</p> 	<p><b>3/5/04</b> Day 29 Dawson Creek Mile 4300</p> 	<p><b>4/5/04</b> Day 30 Liard Springs Mile 4520</p> 	<p><b>6/5/04</b> Day 32 Whitehorse Mile 5494</p> 
<p><b>26/5/04</b> Day 52 Denali Camp 4 14300 ft</p> 				<p><b>7/5/04</b> Day 33 Burwash Mile 5690</p> 
<p><b>23/5/04</b> Day 49 Denali Camp 3 11200 ft</p> 	<p><b>9/5/04</b> Day 35 Valdez Mile 6170</p> 			
<p><b>21/5/04</b> Day 47 Denali Camp 2 9700 ft</p> 	<p><b>19/5/04</b> Day 45 Denali Base 7400 ft</p> 	<p><b>13/5/04</b> Day 39 Anchorage Mile 6655</p> 	<p><b>11/5/04</b> Day 37 Talkeetna Mile 6530</p> 	<p><b>10/5/04</b> Day 36 Whitethorn Mile 6210</p> 

### Expedition Trivia...

# of Days (overall): 31 (57)  
 Miles in month (overall): 2571 (6800)  
 Avg miles/day (overall): 83 (119)  
 Longest day (overall): 440 (440)  
 # countries (overall): 2 (2)  
 # of police stops (overall): 1 (5)

### Top Tips this month...

Top Tip: Jasper National Park  
 Favourite City: Anchorage  
 Adventure Spot: Denali National Park  
 Place to Stay: Chinook Cabins Talkeetna  
 Night Spot: West Rib Talkeetna  
 Wilderness: Kluane/Wrangell-St Elias

### Competition...

See page 2 for your chance to win a trip on the Namaste Global Expedition (worth up to £1,000). Anyone can enter and it's your chance for an adventure of a lifetime aboard the state of the art expedition vehicle. Where do you want to go?

### Global Expedition Update

After a great day skiing in gorgeous sunshine in Lake Louise, the road takes me north into Jasper National Park, where I meet a lovely couple and fellow travellers, Dave and Cathrine.



Cathrine cooks a lovely fish dinner on the stove in their Westfalia van, in which they've just driven from Baja in Mexico, while Dave shows me his wildlife

photography kit and lens - what an appendage...!

The following morning, I trek to the top of Whistlers Mountain, at times in snow up to my thighs, as the trail had yet to clear that early in the season. A well deserved relaxing soak in the 40°C Miette Hot Springs before dinner then camp at a horse-riding centre near Grand Cache finished a long day.

Continuing north to Dawson Creek, the start of the 1500 mile Alaska Highway, I soon realised that I had lost one of my main means of communication, mobile phone. Up in the Yukon and Alaska, I could not get a signal for a GSM phone, so I had to rely on landline comms when I could. I guess I'll have to wait until I'm back into British Columbia before a signal returns. While this is a problem, it does have the upside that my phone bill is markedly reduced!!

Whilst conceived earlier, the Alaska Highway was finally built in 1942 as a supply road to defend North America against the Japanese as it was deemed a military necessity following the bombing of Pearl Harbour in 1941. The Americans paid for the construction of the highway and turned the Canadian portion over



to the Canadian government in April 1946. The highway was officially opened to the public in 1948. It now provides the major transportation

route to the north as it winds its way through an amazing variety of wilderness areas.

After an overnight stay in Fort Nelson on 4 May, I make my way along the Highway to Liard Hot Springs, where I enjoy a delightful

experience of bathing in the hot, sulphurous waters in the middle of the forest. The atmosphere is augmented by the surrounding peaks and the long daylight hours where it doesn't get dark until after midnight.

Arriving in Whitehorse the next day, I decide to stay for a day or two to relax, stock up on some extra gear that I will need in the mountains, and enjoy the company of some interesting Whitehorse folk, including Hector, a Scottish climber who spends much of his time in the Canadian Arctic Wilderness, such as Baffin Island; and Karen, Dave from Jasper's niece, who cooks a lovely salmon supper. The hospitality of Yukon folks is fabulous! I also enjoy a night out "on the tiles" with the media folks from Yukon News.

On the way to looking for a place to camp and go mountain training somewhere in the Kluane National Park, I run into 4 girls on route to Burwash. They suggest I join for some beers as a lot of folks, mostly native,



were arriving there that night to gather for the funeral and 'potlach' (lunch festival) for one of the most loved and respected senior elders of the native community,

Jesse Joe. At 93, Jesse had experienced phenomenal change from before the "white man" to now. Skipping the training, I decide to join them for a fun evening of beers, laughter and stories, past and present. The funeral and ceremonies the following day on 8 May were a testament to Jesse's popularity and the love and esteem that she was held by her friends and family. Though the sadness was very tangible, it was an incredibly touching day! About mid-afternoon, I say goodbye to Odessa, who had been very kind, friendly and my host at the potlach, and we agreed to meet in a couple of months when I pass through Vancouver, where she lives.

That evening I finally reach the Alaskan border, the crossing of which was remarkably simple, and made camp in the heart of the Mentasta Mountains. Waking up the next day, the weather was poor, so no training today either. My mood was lifted, though, when I spotted a lynx only 30m from my camp. It was fantastic to see this beautiful big cat so close, but no chance to grab the camera

Go to Page 3...

### Competition

#### Win a £1,000 holiday..!

Now that the Namaste Global Expedition is under way, this is your chance to join it for free. If you win, you can join the expedition anywhere in the world for up to 2 weeks, subject to availability\*.

All your expenses will be paid for, including flights, accommodation, food and activities up to a value of £1,000. You are free to share this prize with up to 2 other people if you choose.

#### What do you have to do to win?

To enter, you must get as many people as you can to complete the enquiry form on the Namaste Contact Us page ([www.namaste.co.uk/contact-us.htm](http://www.namaste.co.uk/contact-us.htm)). Be sure to tell them to fill in your name in the "Where did you hear about the Namaste website?" box. Each enquiry form completed in this way will be logged against your name.

The prize winner will be the person who gets the most number of legitimate contacts by the end of August 2004\*\*. An update of the competition league table will be shown here in each month's Namaste News.

\* You can claim your prize any time between 1 November 2004 and 30 April 2005 during a period when there are available places on the expedition.

\*\* The closing date for the competition will be all contacts received by midnight, expedition time, on 31 August 2004.

### People

#### Fellow Adventurers...

Freddie Wilkinson, 24, from New Hampshire, USA and Tom Torkelson, 35, from Jackson Hole, USA were excellent as AMS mountain guides on the Denali expedition.



Len Holmes, 56, Professor of Bio-Chemistry from North

Carolina, USA, reaches 16,200 ft on Denali, 4,000 ft higher than ever before on only his 4th big mountain expedition.

Sven, a policeman from Bergen, Norway makes it to Denali Pass (18,400 ft) with another member of his team.

*"To lead, you must first learn to follow..."*,  
Len Holmes, 29th May 2004

#### Along the way...

A big thank you to all those people who I've met along the way in May, including:

Dave & Cathrine (Jasper), John (Liard Hot Springs), Cliff (the Highway), Karen, Larry, Sally, Chris, Krista, James, Hector (Whitehorse), Odessa, and all the folks at Burwash, Marilyn, Cathy & Suzanne (Glenallen), Wern, Ollie, Michele & AMS crowd (Talketna), Tom, Freddie, Edward, Len, Dave, Andy, Melis, Sven, Bethan, Troy, Bob and all the Denali crowd, and the pilots from TAT...

### Coming Up...

#### June 2004

Top of the World & Dempster Highways Northern Alaska, Yukon & Arctic Sea Paragliding, horseriding, trekking and more in British Columbia, Canada The expedition is now open to all...

#### July 2004

Vancouver and Seattle Outdoor sports in the NW USA mountain states, including Montana, Idaho, Wyoming Nevada desert and Las Vegas California coast, incl San Francisco & LA

### continued from page 2...

unfortunately.

Guided by a friendly service station attendant in Glenallen, I decide to head down to Valdez, situated at the mouth of Prince William Sound. An amazing setting with snow-capped mountains all around. I had now made a complete traverse from east to west coasts of North America, covering some 6,170 miles.

I then back-tracked to the Whithorn Glacier to make camp for the night in amongst the snowy mountains. I rise early the next day, 10 May, to make an ascent of a nearby peak, before driving the 320 miles to Talkeetna, which was to be my base for the climb of Denali.

For the next week, I completed my preparations for the climb, whilst getting a lot of work and writing done as I holed up in the pleasant Swiss-Alaska Inn, hosted by Wern and his family. On one beautiful evening, I take the opportunity to shoot some aerial footage of Denali while taking a plane flight over the mountains - a spectacular experience and my first ever ski-plane landing on a glacier!

On 17 May, I met the team who I would be climbing with, including Tom and Freddie, American mountain guides; Len, a bio-chemistry professor, Dave, a Maths lecturer, and Edward, a radar software engineer. During the day our team of six organised all of the kit, including food, tents, technical and personal gear (about 820 lbs in all). The facilities at AMS, which organised all the logistics, equipment and guides, was excellent.

Though we were due to fly onto the glacier that day, the weather had deteriorated so we were forced to wait for 48 hours for a window to clear. By that time, the volume of climbers waiting to get to base camp on the Kahiltna glacier was increasing rapidly. However, once the weather window opened, the glacier plane companies have an incredible ability to fly a lot of people to base camp very quickly. We arrived after the short 30-minute flight around 10am on 19 May.

Thereafter, we spent the next 2 weeks carrying our loads and pulling our sleds up the mountain. Day by day we moved backwards and forwards up and down the mountain, caching supplies as we went, until we finally arrived on 30 May at high camp (Camp 5) at 17,200 feet, ready for our summit bid...

by Chris Charlton

## Productions

### Namaste Books

The following Namaste books are now in production:

- *The Essence of Balance - the art and application of project management* (target completion March 2005)
- *The World of Management*, a study into the core components of management including interviews, comments and cultural observations from managers of companies from over 110 countries.
- *The World of Food*, which is a collection of great national recipes from over 100 countries
- *The World of Adventure*, which is a collection of adventure ideas and locations across all seven continents.

### Namaste Films

The following Namaste films will be available on DVD in the Namaste online shop from September 2004:

- *Crossing Canada*, the first film from the Namaste Global Expedition
- *Denali*, the first of the 7 summits series

To find out more about the above books and films, please send an email to enquiry@namaste.co.uk

## Letters & Emails

Thank you for all your letters, emails and faxes. Each month, a few excerpts will be printed here...

"Hi Chris, its Krista from the hotel restaurant. I leave in a month to go to Ecuador for two years, maybe your travels will bring you there. Well write back so I know you didn't fall off the mountain!"; Krista, Whitehorse, Canada

"I am an old friend of Chris Charlton's who is currently climbing Mt McKinley can you give me a progress report on him and tell him Clive says hello and will see him in California for some sun, sea and fun"; Clive, England

"My friend, I am in Bangalore, having gotten here a couple of weeks ago. The traffic is out of this world. My god. The pollution, the cows, the rickshaws, and the people. It makes Alton Towers look a tranquil pond. Malaysia was great. A very nice place to be, with friendly people, good food, and a relaxed atmosphere. How are you? How is the adventure progressing? Give us a line when poss."; Francis, Bangalore, India

"Hi Chris, I'm bowled over by the news letter, well in actual fact I'd expect nothing less from you Sir.....!! I've been away myself over the past month, Alps ski mountaineering and to Egypt doing my PADI open water diving, now the learning begins. Off to Morocco in July and all being well Kili again in August."; Phil, London, England

## Website Update

### Stage 1 Development

New PDF's now available on the site:

- Scuba-Diving (Past Adventures)
- Overland Touring (Past Adventures)
- Denali Expedition Report (7 Summits)
- Expedition Vehicle & Guide (Global Expedition)
- How to Join the Expedition (Global Expedition)
- North America Plan (Global Expedition)

The next batch of PDF's to be created:

- Expedition Cent & S America Plan (June)
- Other Past Adventures (June)
- Management Case Studies (June)

### Stage 2 Development

Plans for the development of the Namaste online shop are now progressing, with the first Namaste Management Guides and Namaste Fun Films now in production.

These should be available in September, as the target go-live date for the shop is 31 August 2004.

### Statistics

May hits: 31,202 April hits: 34,808

## In the News

### Namaste in the News

Coming up in June, stories to appear in the the Yukon News, and plans for a mini-presentation on CBC Radio...

### In-Country News from the Expedition

Heading into Alaska, the US news is dominated by the presidential election and continuing stories from Iraq, notably the turmoil caused by the tragedy of mistreated Iraqi prisoners...

### Previous Newsletters

Previous issues of Namaste News are also available:

April 2004