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WOMEN**

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A WEEK'S
HOLIDAY
IN FRANCE



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Crags for the locals

BENTLEY BEETHAM

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OVERSHADOW, F9a+

McClure's Malham masterpiece



Plus: Stone Circles: Woodwell, Weekend Alpinism: Furka, Young Guns: Ioan Doyle, Masterclass: Endurance

FUTURE HISTORY: INSIDE THE ALPINE CLUB

As part of *Climber's* on-going celebration of the Alpine Club's 150th birthday, **Anne Arran** interviews key British alpinists to explore their love of climbing and find out why the AC is special to them. This month she features **Julie-Ann Clyma** and **Simon Yates**.

Julie-Ann Clyma

Captivated by both rock and mountains Julie-Ann Clyma (46) has made some impressive ascents in high mountain ranges around the world, mostly in the company of husband Roger Payne. Calves of steel, and an ability to remain smiling while being dumped on by snow, leaves her well suited to more extreme mountain ascents, and she is one of the few women who have led difficult pitches at high altitude.

Up until starting climbing at university in Dunedin, New Zealand, aged 20 her interest had been ballet, so she describes the climbing as, "a bit of a turnaround to my family!" Attending a freshers' meet with the Otago University Tramping Club

led to a few treks and then climbing an alpine peak, Mount Sealy, in Mount Cook National Park. "A perfect day, with incredible views, and after that I was hooked on mountaineering."

Leaving New Zealand in 1985 to do the usual round-the-world experience, she landed in the UK. Since starting climbing a big influence has been her husband, with whom she has done many of her best climbs. "On the personal front, meeting Roger at a base camp party in the Cordillera Blanca in Peru was a life changing event! He's been my climbing partner ever since, and you couldn't ask for anyone more enthusiastic, reliable or fun to be with."



And the Alpine Club...?

The Alpine Club is often considered as different from other clubs because of its

broad range of interest, from the Alps to the Greater Ranges. An Alpine Club member from 1987, she vividly remembers her first club meeting, being introduced to Noel Odell, who must have been in his 80s by then: "It was incredible, coming from far-away NZ where I had read loads of expedition books and just dreamed about those adventures! Suddenly there was the Alpine Club giving me the chance to rub shoulders with people like Chris Bonington and Doug Scott. The sense of history, and being able to become part of that world, made me want to join. You get inspired and excited by sharing stories and adventures with like-minded people, having access to a wealth of practical experience you can learn from, and then hopefully pass on in return. I found the Annual Symposium particularly valuable, as it focuses on a particular mountain range or area."

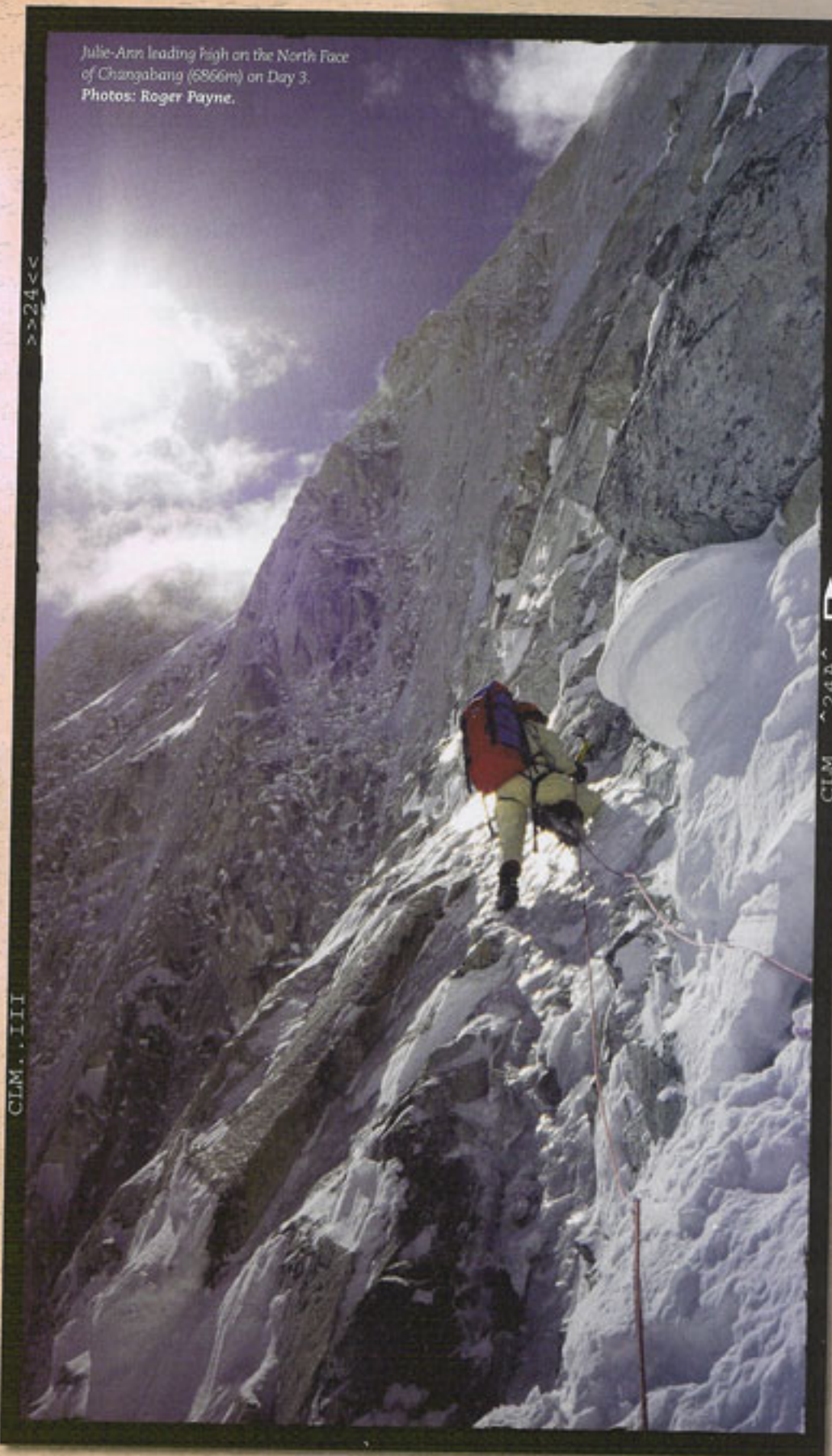
Memorable mountain experiences?

Trips to the North Face of Changabang: "the climbing was fantastic, and doing it alpine-style felt like the best of what expedition climbing can be. But when Brendan [Murphy] was killed on the descent, it was a terrible reminder of how harsh it can be too."

In her opinion the most beautiful mountain she's climbed is Nanda Devi East (7434m) in India, inspired by an *Alpine Journal* article by Tom Longstaff, who attempted the mountain 90 years earlier: "Climbing within the Nanda Devi Sanctuary, which had been closed since 1982 for environmental and political reasons, we were one of the first expeditions to benefit from a relaxation of the 'Inner Line', which meant we could approach the mountain from the Milam valley. We made the first British ascent of the mountain, and first Alpine-style ascent of the South Ridge."

"Chomolhari (7326m) in Yadong County, Tibet is very close to the Indian border and right on the border with Bhutan. We were thwarted in our attempt on a new route on the North-west Ridge by the strong winds, but managed on the penultimate day of the expedition to make the summit via the South Ridge."

Julie-Ann leading high on the North Face of Changabang (6966m) on Day 3. Photos: Roger Payne.



Julie-Ann approaching the summit of Nanda Devi East (7434m) on the first alpine-style ascent, with Nanda Kot (6861m) in the background.



Plans for the next 12 months?

"Summer will be guiding work; lots of climbing in the French and Swiss Alps until mid-September. Then Roger and I plan to head back to Sikkim to try some new routes, and possibly unclimbed summits.

Afterwards I'll make a trip back to New Zealand to catch up with family, and in December switch into guiding mode again for the winter season. I love the cycle of different activities with the changing seasons, so you never get bored."