

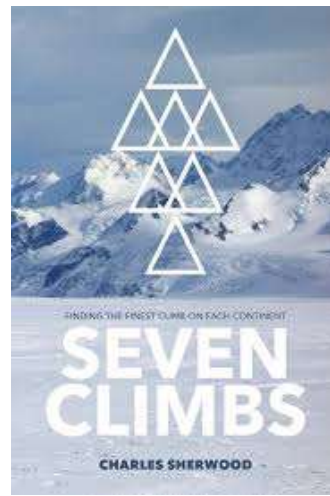


EARLY EVENING LECTURE

Charles Sherwood

Tuesday 13 October 2020

Seven Climbs or What Makes a good Climb



Cambridge is of course in the Fens, famous for being flat, wet and windy. There is nothing to climb. Well, not quite nothing...

These days, Cambridge is a demanding institution, or so I'm told by my two daughters, recent graduates from Corpus and Emma. But back in the late 1970s it was almost impossible to fail. There was only one thing you could do that meant automatic expulsion and that was climbing on the college buildings. This of course made the idea irresistible.

Life after Cambridge, and subsequently Harvard, offered rather fewer opportunities for climbing, but I embarked on a series of annual Alpine adventures that culminated in 2007 in an ascent of the North Face of the Eiger. It was as I came off that mountain that I conceived a project, which was to occupy a significant part of my leisure time for the next decade or more: could I find on each continent a climbing route that would rank alongside the legendary Eigerwand, offering a comparable combination of mountaineering challenge, aesthetic appeal and deep historical context? In short: the seven finest climbs in the world.

That quest was to take me from the Alps back to the Andes and on to Yosemite, Kenya, Nepal, New Zealand and Antarctica. I have now put pen to paper and written an account of that journey: *Seven Climbs*

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