

Santa Fe Reporter—Week of March 22



By Alex De Vore March 22, 2023 at 12:00 am MDT

Mountaineering

Anne and William Frej present their new Himalayan memoir/photo book

If you don't know about Santa Fe-based dynamic photographer/writer duo/married couple William and Anne Frej, we reckon you oughta learn, dear reader. Across a storied career spanning decades, the Frejs have trekked the globe, resulting in numerous books about Maya ruins, religious ceremonies, lesser-seen corners of the globe and other topics. As of late last year, they added to the list with *Travels Across the Roof of the World: A Himalayan Memoir*, a gorgeous new compendium culled from their 20 trips across the selfsame Himalaya Mountains over a 40-year period.

"We first went in 1981," William explains, "and we went with the Sierra Club because they were able to get a permit to circumambulate Manaslu, which is one of the eight highest peaks. There hadn't been a Western group who'd done that."

But do that they did, which kicked off the decision for the Frejs to visit the base camps of the world's 10 highest mountains.

"We were trekkers, not mountain climbers," Anne clarifies, adding that one trip resulted in William suffering from altitude sickness. "Bill was sick and out of it, and I found this yak; so this little lady who owned the yak and I got Bill up on the yak, and he rode it down [the mountain] for a day to a lower site. Then the next day the trail was too narrow for the yak, so we dragged him down the hill."

And that's just one of countless stories from the Frejs' fabled times. Not only will attendees of the presentation get a chance to see William's stunning photographic evidence of their many journeys, Anne will recount from her journals and memories through a conversation with moderator Joanna Hurley. The trips, Anne notes, still linger vividly in her mind.

"I seem to remember everything really clearly," she tells SFR.

The event will take place in person, as well as through a Zoom session available via the Collected Works website.

"The closing of the book is our reflections on the Himalayas today," William adds. "Where it's headed, how global climate change is affecting not only the climate and terrain, but a way of life for many of the people who live in all these distinctly different places [throughout the Himalayas]."

As if all that above weren't enough to pique your interest, note that *Travels Across the Roof of the World* has already won silver medals from the Tokyo International Foto Awards and the Budapest International Foto Awards. (Alex De Vore)

William and Anne Frej: Travels Across the Roof of the World: A Himalayan Memoir: 6 pm Thursday, March 23. Free. Collected Works Bookstore and Coffeehouse, 202 Galisteo St., (505) 988-4226