

SITE RECOMMENDED FOR INCLUSION IN THE LIST OF HISTORICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS IN ANTARCTICA

Introduction

This paper was introduced during the XXVI ATCM at Madrid. As per the Report of the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEPVI), paragraph 155 it is recommended to submit the paper to CEP VII. Comments received from the CEP and it is incorporated accordingly.

Proposed site: Plaque and Monument at INDIA POINT, Humboldt Mountains, Wohlthat Massif, central Dronning Maud Land.

Location: 71°45' 08"S Latitude and 11°12' 30"E Longitude

Description: Memorial plaque erected in memory of three scientists of Geological Survey of India (GSI) and a communication technician from Indian Navy - all members of ninth Indian Expedition to Antarctica, who scarified there lives in this mountain camp in an accident on 8th January 1990.

Background

In pursuance of the scientific goals set for the Ninth Indian Antarctic Expedition to Antarctica, a mountain camp was established on 6th January 1990 to facilitate geological mapping of Humboldt Mountains and related studies. The following expeditioners inhabited the camp:

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|---------------------|----------|--------------------------------|
| 1. V. K. Srivastava | 33 Years | Geologist (GSI) |
| 2. B. L. Sharma | 46 Years | Geologist (GSI) |
| 3. A. K. Bedi | 42 Years | Geophysicist (GSI) |
| 4. N. C. Joshi | 27 Years | Naval Technician (Indian Navy) |

It was in the remote parts of the mountains in Central Dronning Maud Land, that camp inmates lost their lives on 8th January 1990 in a tragic incident of gas poisoning. Their bodies were recovered next day during a routine visit by the leader of the expedition and flown home after about a moth for necessary rituals. A black dolerite plaque engraved with the names of the departed was erected at the campsite in the memory of the departed souls in February 1991. The polar community and entire nation mourned their sacrifice in the cause and pursuance of science.

Management Guidelines

Declaration of the site as a monument aims at ensuring that the site of the tragic death is kept inviolate and preventing unnecessary human disturbance and allowing for appropriate visitation.

A detailed map showing the exact location of the mountain camp and the site of the commemorative plaque is prominently displayed at the Indian station "Maitri" and a sign displaying the historical importance of the area will be placed and maintained near the site.

Use of vehicles around the site should be carefully managed.

All visits to the area for any purpose should be made recognizing the values to be protected in the area.

Description of the site

The memorial plaque is constructed on the foothills of northwestern side of Flanuten peak in the southern Humboldt Mountains.

The peak lies east of Somovken glacier in central Dronning Maud Land. The site is situated at an altitude of 1900m at 71°45' 08"S Latitude and 11°12' 30"E Longitude within the error limits of the manual observation. The accuracy of the exact location of the plaque remains pending till confirmation by GPS observations. Total area recommended for protection around the memorial plaque is around 63 km².

The area is marked by high rising jagged peaks exhibiting typical Alpine topography. The hills that lie towards northeast, east and south of the site, rise to the altitudes varying between 2725 and 2855m above mean sea level. The maximum elevation (2855m) being east of Vindigghallet glacier. A number of mountain glaciers originate from these hills and descend towards west to join the Somovken glacier. Some of the prominent glaciers are Storeidet, Kvomskvervet, Skarskvervet, Livdebotmen and Vindigghallet glaciers. A prominent ice field with flat to very gentle slopes exists north of the site. Perched and erratic boulders and the moraine trails are evidence of the retreat of the mountain glaciers since last glacial maxima.

Geologically, the area around the site exposes Proterozoic metamorphic rocks bearing the imprints of Grenvillian and Pan-African orogenies. Gneissic rocks including Quartzofeldspathic gneiss, quartz-biotite gneiss, garnet-sillimanite gneiss and sillimanite-cordierite gneiss dominates the area. Foliation parallel bands of 2-pyroxene granulites and calc-silicates run occur within the country gneiss. Late stage intrusives of pegmatite, quartz veins and basic dykes are frequently observed. The paragneisses exhibit khondalitic affinity. The rocks exhibit a polydeformational and polymetamorphic history with at least 3 major phases of folding with associated metamorphism.

Maps and photographs are available for this site as follows

1. Topographic map (CI = 100m) of part of southern Humboldt Mountains near the site with inset showing approximate location index. The map is on 1:250000 scale published by Norwegian Polar Institute, Oslo, 1968. [Sheet No. L5 HUMBOLDTFJELLA]
2. Enlarged portion of the area showing details of the site memorial plaque.
3. Photograph of the plaque erected in the memory of the dead.
4. Photograph of the persons who met the tragic accident at the campsite.

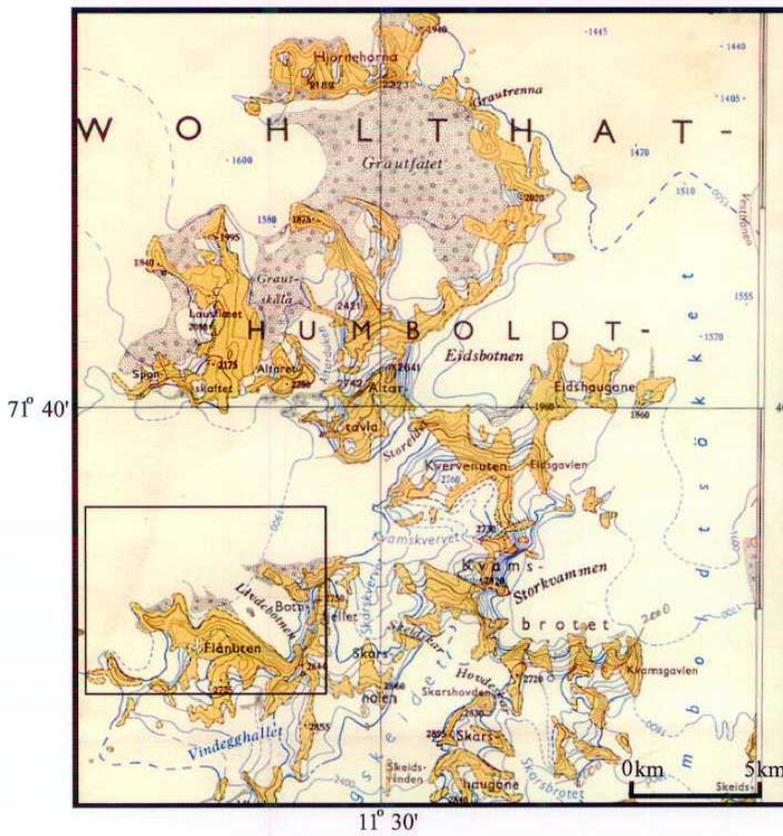
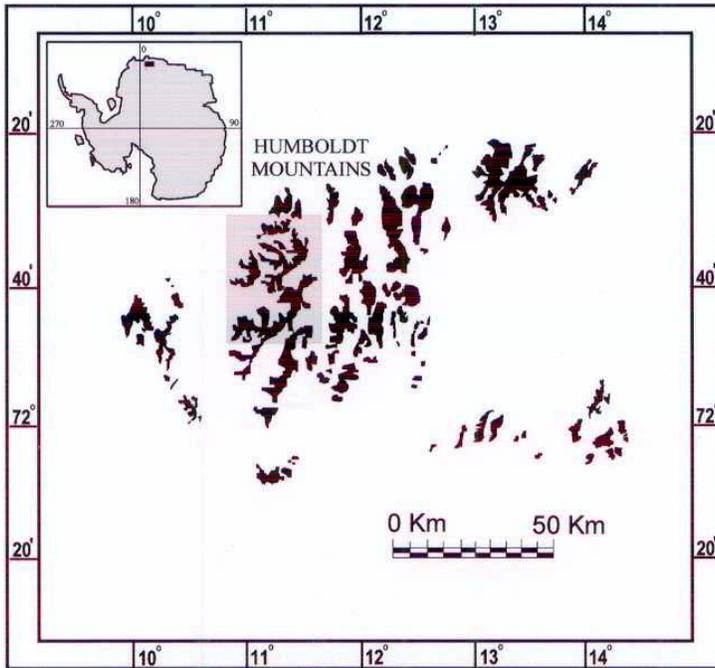


Plate 1

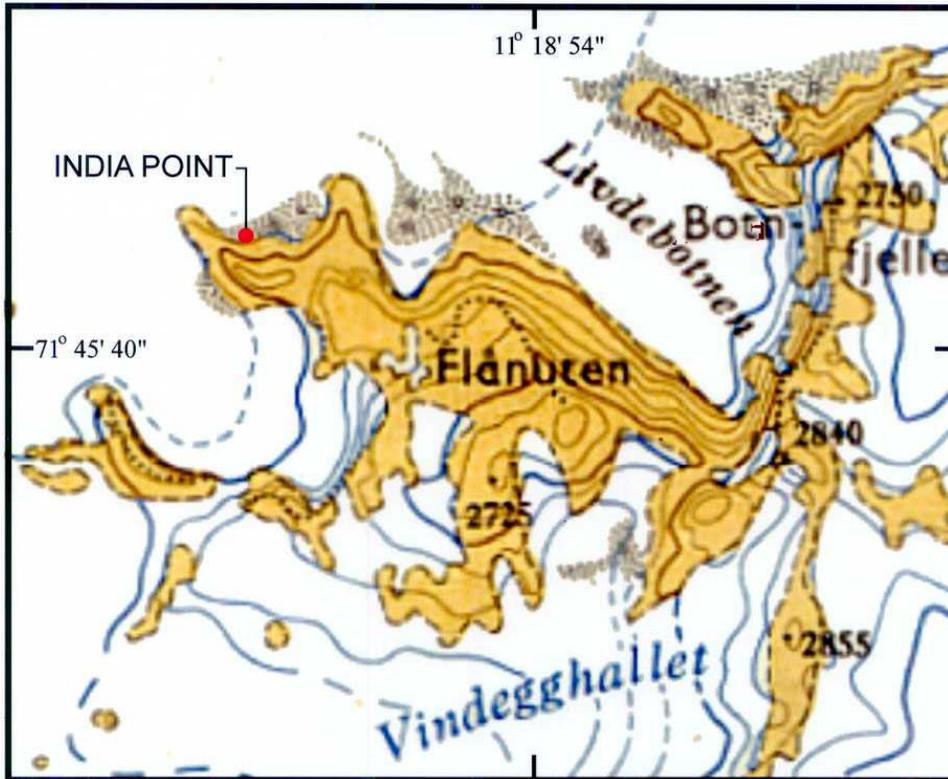


Plate 2



Plate 3



Plate 4