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KIERAN MOREL (1976-2017)

Kieran Morel joined the AACZ in the year 2006, soon after he had taken up mountaineering. It quickly became obvious that he had real talents as an alpinist, as he took part in a whole spectrum of mountain disciplines with the club, including ski touring, alpine tours, rock climbing, ice climbing and mountain biking.

While living in Zurich, Kieran worked for the finance department of a big recruitment firm. This clearly did not appeal to him as a way to spend his life. In fact, alpinism rapidly became his top priority. Not even women could distract him from his addiction to high altitudes, although some probably tried their best. Just to show what mattered, Kieran notched up more than two hundred mountain days in less than three years during this time.

In 2009, Kieran gave up his job and started travelling without much of a fixed plan. His first destinations were in South America, where he climbed some 6,000-metre peaks to train for the Himalaya. A few months later he stood atop Baruntse, his first seven-thousander. After that, he headed off in a new direction which soon became his top priority: following on from his Himalayan summit, he spent several months in Pokhara (Nepal) to hone his paragliding skills.

The time off also helped Kieran find a new and more satisfying way of life. Returning from his year-long sabbatical, he started out on a training course to

become a teacher. Getting there may not have been as easy as he first thought, but the conviction that he'd made the right move gave him the power to persevere. In the end, he became a well-regarded and popular teacher.

Meanwhile, after moving to Lausanne, Kieran was fortunate enough to find the love of his life, Thérèse. Together, they enjoyed teaching as well as mountain trips, which they undertook on their long weekends. But before settling into a joint household, Kieran had one more sporting ambition to pursue. In 2017, he took another year off, this time to concentrate on paragliding. He went to Brazil to seek out the long-distance flights he had dreamed of. And it was here that he lost his life on a flight that went wrong.

Kieran made the best out of his far too short time here on earth. When one way of life didn't suit him, he had the courage to change. He achieved what many of us can only dream of achieving, by being focused on his goals, seeking what inspired him, and refusing to fritter away his time on trivia or to compromise on his dreams. He was a one-of-a-kind, warm-hearted, friendly, open, reliable and a happy soul. We will all miss our good friend, tour buddy, son, brother and husband-to-be.

Somewhere up there, I guess he is still flying.

Arne Sankovski



Kieran im Einsatz am Arbeitswochenende an der Windgällenhütte, 2009 (Foto Annina Arnold)



Kieran with his girlfriend Therése in the Alpstein (photo Arne Sankowski)