

**GINO WATKINS MEMORIAL FUND
PRELIMINARY REPORT FORM**

EXPEDITION LEADER:	EXPEDITION NAME:	EXPEDITION DATE:
Thomas Harding	Renland, Greenland 2019	26th June 2019 to 31st July 2019

The objective of the expedition was to travel to Renland, on the East coast of Greenland. Two unclimbed peaks had been identified from a previous expedition to the area in 2016 (British Renland 2016 MEF-16-25) and we aimed to make ascents of both.

Based on the recommendations of a previous team we planned to arrive early in the season to take advantage of lower temperatures and hopefully less rockfall. On arrival in Greenland though we were unable to take our planned boats to base-camp as sea ice in the Scoresby Sund had not yet broken up sufficiently – this delayed us by 4 days and we spent them walking the local hills around Constable Point. Two small boats arrived on the 2nd July and took under 4 hours to cover the 180km to a beach-camp in Renland. The next 8 days were spent finding a route and hauling gear to a high-camp at 1300m. This was in a previously unexplored area and gave access to a huge number of worthwhile objectives. We spent 11 days at this camp where good weather and high-quality rock lead to a very productive trip.

The team made ascents of 5 previously unclimbed peaks including both of our initial objectives. We were particularly pleased to climb the large tower that dominates the whole valley – naming it ‘Northern Sun Spire’ (1527m). We also climbed 3 long rock routes up to AD+ 5a 55° 480m mostly following impressive features via perfect crack lines and aesthetic ridges.



The lower valley - the team made the ascent of the Spire on right ('Northern Sun Spire') and the peak behind to the left ('Peak. 1881').

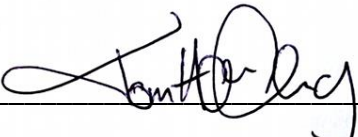
Unfortunate home commitments meant Neil Cox left the expedition on the 16th July via a helicopter flight from high-camp to the airfield at Constable Point. He covered the cost of this transport. On the 22nd Jul we received a message from our home contact warning of an incoming bad weather – something we haven't had for the entire trip. That night we received a huge amount of snow and we beat a hasty retreat, spending the next 4 days moving all our kit back to the beach-camp. The poor weather also stopped the boats from picking us up on time and we travelled at the last minute, arriving at Constable Point at 5am with our flight at 2pm. In the end this flight was cancelled as heavy rain had turned the dirt runway to mud - fortunately, flights back to Iceland resumed the next day.



The team descending from the first ascent of 'Peak 1881' & 'Peak 1763'. Later we climbed a steep buttress in the centre of the face on the left.

Overall the logistics all came together. We only used an agent for transport in country and the hire of some equipment - this meant permits, insurance and all other travel logistics were done ourselves. There was relief when the permit was secured just 6 weeks before our departure, but we had no problems regarding paperwork while in Greenland. Doing all of our own organisations was a long and complex process but was ultimately hugely rewarding and saved considerable amount of money. Hopefully this will influence teams in the future to go down this route.

All in all, the team had an incredible time and feel very fortunate to visit such a beautiful area.

Signed:  Date: 18/08/2019

Please return this form within one month after the completion of your expedition, together with 1-2 photographs, to:

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