

# Sydney Midwinter 2006

Haberfield Rowing Club

## **Greg Mortimer - Guest Speaker NSW MWD - 1st July 2006**

Greg Mortimer is one of the world's foremost mountaineers: an eminent Antarctic mountaineer and adventurer and a pioneer in leading travel expeditions to the Antarctic. On October 3rd 1984 Greg Mortimer and team mate Tim Macartney-Snape became the first Australians to climb Everest (8850m, Nepal). They not only did this without bottled oxygen, but via a new route (North Face - Great Couloir). Greg's other climbing accomplishments include the first ever summit of Annapurna II (7937m, Nepal) via its South Face (1983), the first Australian summit of Antarctica's highest peak, Vinson Massif (4897m in 1988), and the first Australian ascent of K2, the second tallest mountain in the world (8611m, in 1990; North Ridge, Pakistan). To keep his hand in, he ascended Mt Manaslu (8156m), the eighth highest mountain in the world, just several weeks after Andrew Lock, the first Australian to summit, in 2002.

In 1988 Greg organised and led the Australian Bicentennial Antarctic Expedition. These journeys have been covered in two documentaries which have been distributed world-wide: "The Loneliest Mountain", by Film Australia and "Everest - The Australian Assault", by the Channel Nine television network.

In a listing of the first ascents of the fourteen 8000m peaks by Australians, interestingly the only ascents NOT via the accepted 'standard' routes were Greg and Tim's on Everest in 1984 and Greg Mortimer and Greg Child's on K2 in 1990 - ie the highest and the hardest! Both were achieved without supplementary oxygen.

Greg originally trained as a geochemist. From 1979 to 1984 he worked as a geologist, a survival-training instructor, and a Scientific Affairs Adviser for the New Zealand Antarctic Division. Greg co-founded Aurora Expeditions with his partner Margaret Werner in 1992 and has been taking visitors to the world's polar regions ever since. Greg and Margaret are deeply committed to education and the preservation of the environment. They are veterans of almost three decades of Antarctic research, private Antarctic mountaineering expeditions and polar travel. Greg has personally led over 80 voyages and Antarctica is his abiding passion. Greg believes that people return as ambassadors to ensure the polar regions are looked after for the future. He is a very motivational speaker.

Greg Mortimer's remarkable accomplishments have been recognised by the Australian government with the Order of Australia Medal for mountaineering. He is also the recipient of three Australian Geographic Society medals.