

Peter Hemming

"When the legend becomes fact, print the legend"

Ok, you all remember me? I was the crazy kid who went rock climbing. A hard thing to be the only climber in a school full of surfers. Now your kids and grandkids go to climbing gyms. Maybe I was ahead of my time? My folks and I moved to Laguna in 1965. My stepfather got a job writing the music for the Festival of the Arts. Our first house was up in the hills, far away from the ocean. So, I explored the many rock outcroppings that dotted the Laguna hillsides. I wanted to do roped climbing but there was nobody in Laguna to teach me so I ordered a few books and equipment from REI and suckered as many Thurston and LBHS students who would go with me. My last year in high school I persuaded the higher ups in the office to let me start a Mountaineering Club. I think it was disbanded a year later as being too dangerous. Like the dive club and ski club were safe? But it all paid off, because I went climbing all over America and the world. I took a few years off from school and took up scuba diving I bought a used Nikonos underwater camera from Scott Byington and began recording the marine life in the many kelp forests along the coast and submitted articles to various dive magazines of the day for some extra money. In 1974 I went to Saddleback College and got an AA degree in film and TV production. I went up at LA for a while and wrote some scripts and did a few acting gigs (I'm still in the Screen Actors Guild). But I flopped! You see show business was the family business. My dad was an Emmy winning comedy writer. My mom sang for the Glenn Miller Orchestra and acted in a few movies. My aunt Betty Hutton was a star at Paramount and my uncle Alan Livingston was CEO of Capital Records. So, what the Hell was wrong with me? Somebody later told me I had a perfect face for radio. With the death of my parents in the late 80's and with nothing to hold me in SoCal I fulfilled a long-held dream -- I moved to the Monterey Peninsula along California's central coast. And everything seemed to fall into place. It was a struggle for the first few years. But I got by. I got back into scuba diving and underwater photography again. I blew my last credit card on a Nikon camera, a few lenses and an underwater housing and started getting published again. A photograph of grounded icebergs in the arctic in 1991 made my career. In the next few decades, I traveled the world either freelance or getting assignments from magazines such as Outside, the Robb Report, Defenders of wildlife, the Los Angeles Times and lots of others. I did a few images for NatGeo, I've been exhibited in the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. I was a sponsored photographer for Nikon, Lexar and Lowepro and a member of the Explorers Club of New York. I slowed down when publishing took a down turn in 2008, but something always seems to pop up, like a few years ago when I was hired as a photographer for a cruise ship to Antarctica, Sure didn't expect that, nor was the cancer I got in 2018. But I was lucky as usual. They caught it in time and I just have to take pills and a few injections a month. My insurance pretty much takes care of everything so no money problems there. I have the best friends I've ever had. Though I've never been able to afford a house here I've managed to live in Carmel-by-the-Sea for almost 30 years. I still have adventures planned for the future, but I can quite honestly say I am a man in full. Most people seem to plan their lives out but I never did. I rather like not knowing. Funny where life takes you.

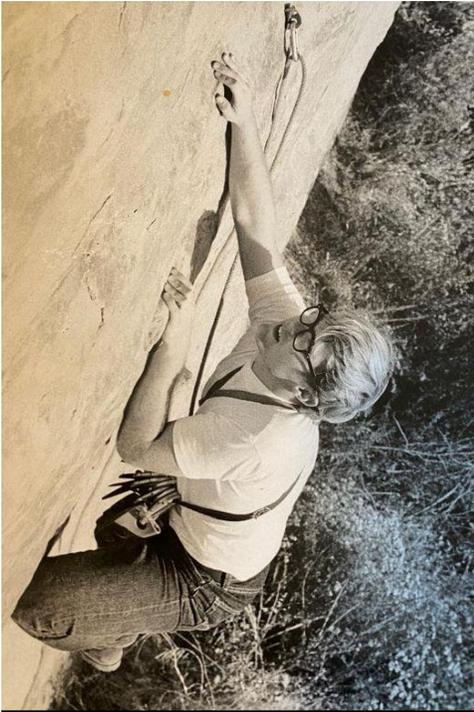


Me today



Me in Africa on the Serengeti

My website is: <http://www.peterhemming.com>



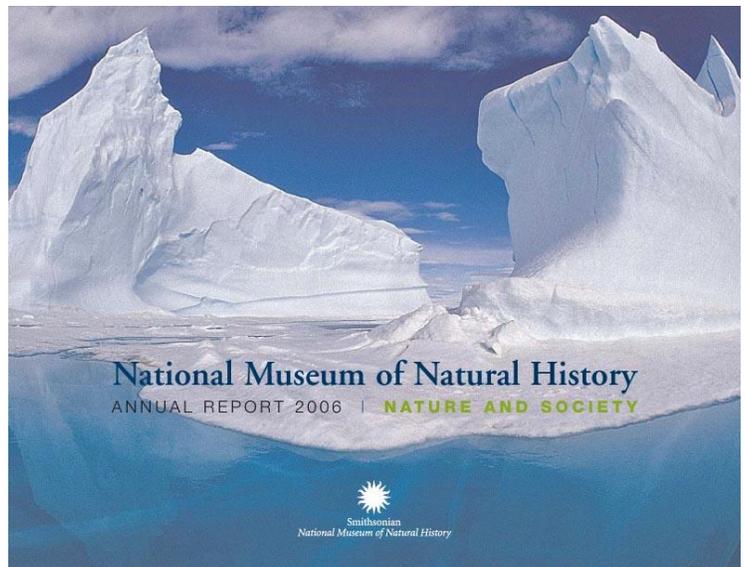
Me at 15 climbing the rocks above Laguna



Down from the Matterhorn



Diving the Arctic Ocean – Just going to work



Cover from report of the Smithsonian