

## A NEW, INSIGHTFUL AND ILLUMINATING LOOK AT THE LIFE OF SIR EDMUND HILLARY, BY A FELLOW MOUNTAINEER WHO WAS A CLOSE FRIEND FOR OVER HALF A CENTURY

This new and important biography of Sir Edmund Hillary, a truly great New Zealander, breaks new ground among previous accounts of his life. The author, Michael Gill, was a close friend of Edmund Hillary's for over 50 years, accompanying him on many expeditions, and becoming heavily involved in his Himalayan aid work. He was also granted access by Sir Edmund's children to a large archive of private papers and photos that were deposited in the Auckland Museum after his death.

Building on personal experience, and this new unpublished material, Michael Gill has written a wonderfully insightful and illuminating biography. He describes the uncertainties of the first 33 years of Edmund Hillary's life, as well as the always-fascinating stories of the early attempts on Mt Everest, all a prelude to the first ascent which brought him instant world-wide fame. But too, this biography reveals, in part through personal letters, the tender and loving relationship he had with his wife Louise. Her importance to him during their 22 years of marriage only underlines the horror of her death, along with that of their youngest daughter, in a plane crash in 1975. Sir Edmund eventually pulled out of the subsequent depression to continue his life's work building schools and hospitals in the Himalayas.

Affectionate, but scrupulously fair, Michael Gill has gone further than anyone before to reveal the humanity of this remarkable man. Edmund Hillary's life was shaped by both triumph and tragedy, and while he became famous through his mountaineering achievements, ultimately it was his humility and great compassion for the people of Nepal that has become his enduring legacy.

### AUTHOR INFORMATION

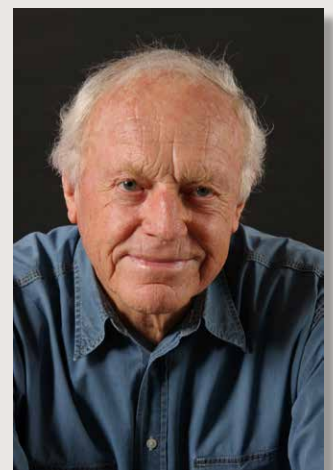
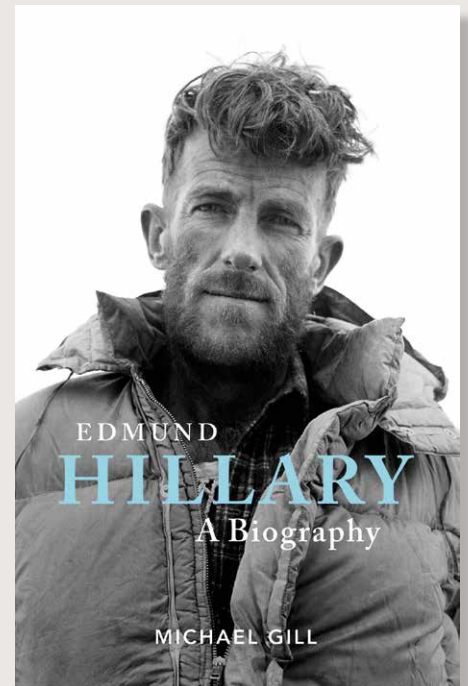
MICHAEL GILL was a 22-year-old medical student when he followed up on a newspaper statement in 1959 that Sir Edmund Hillary was looking for an additional climber for his next Himalayan expedition. As climber, photographer, doctor and writer, Mike was subsequently invited on nearly all the Hillary expeditions through to the last of them in jet boats up the river Ganges in 1977. He has written two other books, a mountaineering autobiography, *Mountain Midsummer* in 1989, and *Himalayan Hospitals*, 2011, an account of the experiences of the doctors and other volunteers who worked for the Himalayan Trust between 1961 and 2002.

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