



TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

# Intrepid Women

Six foot in her socks, the glamorous Aloha Wanderwell bestrides the world in jodhpurs: one of the highly visible female adventurers of the early 20th century and the inspiration for later generations of women through film. Join BFI National Archive curator Bryony Dixon and Dr Sarah Evans (Royal Geographical Society) for this illustrated talk introducing some of the early women explorers and their films, including Rosita Forbes, Hettie Dyhrenfurth, Osa Johnson and aviation legend Amy Johnson.

## Clips programme

### **Alpes par le Telescope** (1906)

Comic film in which a man and his wife view an Alpine climbing party through a telescope.

### **Red Sea to Blue Nile** (1926)

Rosita Forbes' film of her journey to Abyssinia (Ethiopia Eritrea), photographed by Harold Jones.

### **Excelsior** (1931)

English version of the German film *The Himalayas, Throne of the Gods*. Hettie Dyhrenfurth was the German-Swiss mountaineer wife of famous mountaineer G.O. Dyhrenfurth. A record of the international attempt to climb the mountain Kangchenjunga in the Himalayas in 1930. The ascent approached the summit from the Kangchenjunga Glacier (Sikkim) rather than the Zemu (Nepal) side. The attempt failed but the Jongong Peak was successfully achieved

### **Copenhagen Dock ANGMAGSALIK Greenland** (1927)

Isobel Wylie Hutchison's journeys in Greenland.

Scottish Screen Archive: <https://movingimage.nls.uk/film/5359>

### **Java** (1931)

Amateur colour film by Mrs Patrick Ness from the collection of the Royal Geographical Society, taken in Java during her travels and showing Batavia (now Jakarta), Mount Papandayan, Kawah Kamojang and Borobodur temple. Scenes include women washing clothes, Batavia market and canal, market porters, terraced rice fields, rice drying, hot springs and geysers, flower market and a procession, oxen and market porters, harvesting cereal crops, temple architecture, women planting rice, ploughing rice paddy, a waterfall and jungle goats.

Elizabeth Ness (also known as Mrs Patrick Ness) died in 1962. She was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society in 1918 and was the first

woman to become a Member of Council. In 1953 she endowed the Mrs Patrick Ness Award, to be presented by the RGS 'either to travellers who have successfully carried out their plans, or to encourage travellers who wish to pursue or follow up investigations which have been partially completed.' A competent photographer, she was one of the first travellers to use 16mm cinematographic film in colour. (See BFI Player for the RGS Collection)

### **Baboona: An Aerial Epic of Africa** (1933)

The Johnsons, Osa and Martin, flew over 60,000 miles in two amphibious planes, taking aerial images of the landscapes, mountains jungles of Africa, gaining access to locations previously unavailable to white explorers.

### **River of Death** (1934)

The explorer and aviatrix Aloha Wanderwell's only sound film, covering the trip she and her husband Captain Wanderwell made to the Mato Grosso region of Brazil in the Amazon jungle to try to find traces of British explorer Col. Percival Fawcett. She learned to fly a seaplane and almost lost her life in an emergency landing in the jungle. Walter had to hike out, leaving Aloha and the cameraman behind to stay with an Amazonian tribe.

### **Dual Control** (1932)

Charming short film with the famous flier Amy Johnson in which her fiancé aviator Jim Mollison lands in a field in rural England, having run out of petrol. He has already attracted a crowd by the time Amy flies in to meet him. She takes a schoolboy up in the plane, while they wait for fuel. He is impressed enough to admit to having been piloted by a woman.

Johnson and Mollison, never quite at ease with such scripted fare, had announced their engagement in May 1932. They first met during Amy's victory tour of Australia in 1930, when she achieved international fame by becoming the first woman to fly solo from England. In 1933 the couple completed a transatlantic crossing in their plane Seafarer, surviving a serious crash-landing, but eventually separated in 1936.

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## CLIPS PROGRAMME

### Alpes par le telescope

*Production Company:* Pathé Frères

France 1906

5 mins

### Red Sea to Blue Nile

*Production Company:* Britannia Film Company

*Producer:* Rosita Forbes

*Photography:* Harold Jones

UK 1926

5 mins

### Excelsior

*Director:* G.O. Dyhrenfurth

*Production Company:* Transocean-Film

*Script:* G.O. Dyhrenfurth

*Photography:* G.O. Dyhrenfurth, Charles-Georges Duvanel,

Hermann Hoerlin, Ulrich Wieland

*Music:* Wolfgang Zeller

*English introduction and commentary:* L.S. Amery

Germany 1931

3 mins

### Copenhagen Dock ANGMAGSALIK Greenland

UK 1927

13 mins

### Java

*Filmed by:* Mrs Patrick Ness

USA 1931

4 mins

### Baboon: An Aerial Epic of Africa

*Production Company:* Fox Film Corporation

*Supervisor:* Truman Talley

*Photography:* Martin Johnson

*[Photography]:* Osa Johnson \*

*Editors:* Lew Lehr, Russell Shields

*Film Cutter:* Lillian Seebach

*Sound:* Robert Moreno, Walter Hicks

*Chief Pilot:* Vern Carstens

*Narrator:* Martin Johnson \*

USA 1935

3 mins

### River of Death

*Director:* Aloha Wanderwell

*Photographed by:* Aloha and Capt. Wandwerwell

USA 1934

14 mins

### Dual Control

*Devised and Directed by:* Walter Summers

©/*Presented by:* British International Pictures

*Assistant Director:* Arthur B. Woods

*Photography:* James Wilson

*Film Edited by:* Walter Moss

*Sound Recording:* J.A. Murray

*Made and Recorded at:* Elstree Studios

*With:*

Mollison (*himself*)

Amy Johnson (*herself*)

Lionel Hoare (*boy*) \*

UK 1932

3 mins

\* Uncredited

With live piano accompaniment by Meg Morley

Presented in association with Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)



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## TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

### Scott of the Antarctic

Sun 2 Jan 12:30, Mon 24 Jan 18:00

### The Conquest of Everest

Mon 3 Jan 16:10, Wed 12 Jan 20:40 (+ intro by explorer Mark Wood)

### The Great White Silence

Mon 3 Jan 18:20, Sun 23 Jan 12:10

### Touching the Void

Wed 5 Jan 20:30, Sun 23 Jan 18:30

### The Fight for the Matterhorn

**(Der Kampf ums Matterhorn)**

Thu 6 Jan 18:00 (+ intro by BFI curator Bryony Dixon), Sun 23 Jan 15:20

### The Red Tent (Krasnaya Palatka)

Tue 11 Jan 18:00 (+ intro by BFI curator Simon McCallum),

Sun 30 Jan 18:00

### YES & NO Salon: Exploration Now

Wed 12 Jan 18:30

### Encounters at the End of the World

Sat 15 Jan 15:00, Tue 25 Jan 20:30

### Talk: Silent Cinema: Intrepid Women

Sun 16 Jan 15:30

### To the Ends of the Earth: The Transglobe Expedition

**+ Q&A with Ranulph Fiennes**

Tue 18 Jan 17:45

### Antarctic Crossings: Postwar shorts + intro by

**BFI curator Patrick Russell**

Tue 25 Jan 18:00

### The Epic of Everest + live score by Simon Fisher Turner

Sat 29 Jan 19:00

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Programme notes and credits compiled by the BFI Documentation Unit

Notes may be edited or abridged. Questions/comments? Email [prognotes@bfi.org.uk](mailto:prognotes@bfi.org.uk)

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