

Alfred Borowicz In The Tatra Mountains



This is my picture, taken in the Tatra Mountains in the late 1960s. I always loved mountains, I have some interesting adventures connected with them. I became an active mountaineer when I was a teenager. I had this friend from Wieliczka, Tadeusz Pelc, a year my senior, the son of a Wieliczka pharmacist, later he became a pharmacist himself. Every year, we went together to climb in the Tatra Mountains. My parents didn't like that. They worried about me. They had nothing against me going to Zakopane to stay there, but they didn't want me to climb. They tried to control me by reducing my budget, but we put food aside all year and took it with us. Later we were admitted to the Polish Mountaineering Association but we weren't any big-time climbers. Of course, we had a rope and climbed rope routes, but rather the easier ones. Once we were on the Czech [Slovak] side with Tadek and were returning to Zakopane. We hurried to spend the night in the lodge in the Hala Gasienicowa alp where we had booked beds. It was afternoon, under the Zawrat, we see a trekking party, only boys. We tell them, 'It's late, don't go.' 'No, no, the Zawrat's easy' - the leader says - 'and we are from Bedzin, from Szomr'. A Jewish group. We went our way. In the middle of the night the lodge manager wakes us up and says there's been an accident on the Zawrat. We decided to go there. We arrived and one of those boys is dead. It was the same group that we had met before. We gave one of those guys a piggyback, took several of the stronger ones with us and went down with them to Gasienicowa. There we fetched a bamboo stick with a net hammock for saving people and went back to the Zawrat. Tadek said the dead guy couldn't be touched before the police saw him. We took the manager down with us and the three or four remaining boys. When we arrived at the lodge, the head of the mountaineering association was already there, his deputy, and the local police chief. And the head of the alpinists says, 'As a reward, you are awarded honorary membership in the PTT, the Polish Mountaineering Association. Any time you come to Zakopane, you report your arrival and you can sleep for free in all the lodges.'