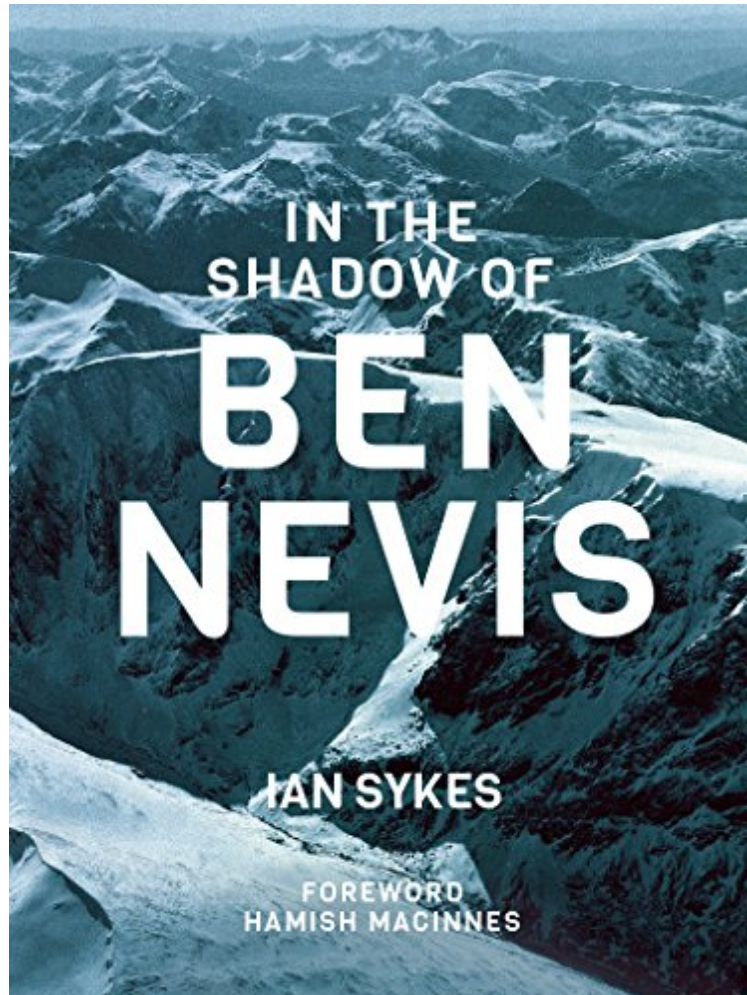


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## In the Shadow of Ben Nevis

*Ian Sykes*

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**Ian Sykes : In the Shadow of Ben Nevis** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised In the Shadow of Ben Nevis:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy eric hollistergreat read...

In 1959, sixteen-year-old Ian Sykes left school and, after a short period of work at Leeds University, joined the RAF. Already a keen climber, he signed up on the promise of excitement and adventure and was posted to the remote RAF Kinloss Mountain Rescue Team in the north of Scotland. It was the beginning of a journey which would see him involved in some of the most legendary call-outs in Scottish mountain rescue history, including the 1963 New Year tragedy on the Isle of Skye. In the Shadow of Ben Nevis tells Sykes's story from growing up in Leeds in the aftermath of the Second World War, to his time with the RAF during the cold war. After leaving the RAF, he remained an active member of the Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and was involved in the first lower

down the north face of Ben Nevis - an epic 1,500-foot descent to rescue stricken climbers in the middle of winter. Following a two-and-a-half-year stint on Antarctica with the British Antarctic Survey, he returned to the Highlands and opened the first Nevisport shop with his close friend Ian Sutherland. Together, they brought Sunday trading to Fort William and were one of a small number of shops to revolutionise outdoor retail in the UK. Later, he was a key player in the development of the Nevis Range ski area. Over many years, and against all odds, the project became a reality and a great success. Recounted within these pages are a great many lively tales of adventures and mishaps, told with immediacy and charm. With a foreword by legendary Scottish mountaineer Hamish MacInnes, a close friend of Spikes, *In the Shadow of Ben Nevis* is a must-read for anyone with an interest in Scottish mountaineering and mountain rescue.

About the Author Ian 'Spike' Sykes was born and raised in Leeds during the Second World War. A climber since his youth, he joined the RAF at sixteen, working on the Kinloss Mountain Rescue Team in the Scottish Highlands during a number of dramatic rescues. After leaving the RAF he worked with the British Antarctic Survey on the southern polar ice cap, where he ran a dog team and worked as a guide for the Survey's field scientists. Back in Scotland, Spike and Ian Sutherland identified an opportunity for a climbing and outdoor equipment shop in the Highlands, and the first Nevisport shop was born. Both remained as members of the Lochaber Mountain Rescue, the UK's busiest team. Spike was also instrumental in the development of the ski area at Nevis Range on Aonach Mor, where he stayed on as managing director for twelve years. He is currently a director of Nevis Range, which is now also internationally renowned as a mountain biking centre. Spike was awarded an MBE in 1990 for services to sport and mountain rescue, and in 2011 he received the Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture. His first book, *Cry Argentina* (978-1-846248-71-9), a semi-fictional account of the build-up to the invasion of South Georgia in the Falklands War, was published in 2013. *In the Shadow of Ben Nevis* is his second book. Spike lives in Fort William with his partner Gay, and has a daughter Eilidh.