

Fort William climber heads for new summits in distant Kirgызstan thanks to mountain men’s legacy



For the past three years, Sally Hudson’s climbing skills have helped the Ben Nevis North Face Survey team reach remote and near-inaccessible plant life.

Now the Lochaber-based astrophysicist – who also studied adventure travel management at West Highland College UHI – will draw upon that experience to study and report on the alpine plant-life high in remote Djenghi-Djer Mountains of Kyrgyzstan.

Her expedition will be supported by an award from the Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant – a memorial run by the John Muir Trust to celebrate the lives of two legendary mountain men from Edinburgh.

Bill Wallace died in the Alps in 2006 while skiing – with two artificial hips – at the age of 73. Des Rubens, a popular 63-year old teacher at Craigoyston High School, was killed in June 2016 in an Alpine climbing accident. Both men had been former presidents of the Scottish Mountaineering Club.

On returning back to Lochaber, 29-year-old Sally plans to visit local colleges and schools to describe her experiences and encourage future adventurers.

She said: “I am absolutely delighted to be a recipient of the Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant, and find it difficult to express just how grateful I am to be considered deserving of such an award.

“It has long been a dream of mine to climb new summits in an unexplored area of Kyrgyzstan. To now be doing it with the support of the John Muir Trust is an honour. The grant is a huge boost to the expedition and will go a long way to help myself and the rest of the team achieve our goals.”

