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 \* O R E A D M O U N T A I N E E R I N G C L U B \*  
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 \* N E W S L E T T E R \*  
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Volume 21, Number 1. February 1974

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It has been seven months since the last issue of the Newsletter in which I stated my hopes of going into print every four months. This time the delay has been my fault entirely - not due to a lack of material, since almost all the items in this issue have been in my hands since before Christmas. I apologise to contributors and hope the delay has not dampened your literary talents - they are needed for future issues!

The next major event on the club calendar is the A.G.M. Last year's was a quiet affair - was everyone really satisfied with everything ? What are your opinions on:-

1. The running of the club by the Committee.
2. The frequency and location of Meets.
3. Indoor Meets
4. Hut improvements.
5. The Newsletter!
6. The change to the Moon.
7. The location for the Photo Meet/A.G.M.
8. The Dinner.
9. The Alpine Meet.
10. The shortage of snow/petrol/money.

Let's have some good healthy, constructive criticism this year.

Attendances on meets during 1973 seem, as usual, to have been very varied, but it would appear that, on average, more members are getting out and about, especially when you take account of many "unofficial" Heathy Lea weekends and, of course, the summer Wednesday evening sessions which seem to be attracting increasing numbers. Of course some only go for the beer, but more rock climbing seems to be done during these evenings than during the weekends. Perhaps it is the knowledge of the time limitation.

The Alpine season saw the usual official and unofficial meets. In general, the Alpine weather was poor (yet again) whilst Oreads were there, but the Pyrenean team chose the right place and the Austrian meet made the most of mixed conditions. Special mention must be made of Chris Radcliffe's ascent of the Central Pillar of Freney with Pete Holden.

For many the big question mark hanging over both home and abroad meets in 1974 will be the cost of travel, but, no doubt, we will continue to get out on the hills somewhere.

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WELBOURNE'S WANDER - April 6th-8th, 1973

John Welbourne

Welbourne's Wander, resumed after an absence of years from the Meet's Card, most certainly appeared to stir the enthusiasm of club members. Twenty members camped at Wern Isaf farm beneath Dinas Bran. Friday night was spent at the bar of the Sun Trevor Hotel. This seemed to be the meeting place prior to the walk.

Saturday dawned cold with strong winds but clear skies. A quick decision to start the walk from the large lay-by on the A5 was taken. Over-enthusiasm at the starting gate soon found the party on a path which terminated at a quarry with a fifty foot drop; so twenty minutes walking found us two hundred yards from our starting point. A fair amount of criticism from H. Pretty and D. Williams was shrugged off by a completely cool, efficient leader (little did they realise what was in store for them later on).

The route to the Berwyn ridge provided us with superb views of the Dee valley, Clwyd Hills to the east; south to the Wrekin and Slipper Stones in Shropshire and westwards to Cader Idris. The party generally agreed that this section of the walk, and the views it provided, was well worth enduring the frequent hail storms and the constant north-west wind.

Good weather over the main peaks allowed us to linger awhile and allow the old sweats to take a well earned 5 minute snooze (Janes does look sweet, eyes closed, finger up nose.)

From the summit of Moel Sych (2715) at the S.W. end of the main Berwyn ridge the bog trotting commenced. Very wet conditions underfoot reduced the party to a speed of one mile per hour for the remaining 5½ miles to the Bala-Llangynog road. A sudden burst of speed by Fred Allen closely followed by Paul Gardiner left the rest of the field amazed. Fred caught the scent of a brew - the cunning old fox had arranged a secret rendezvous with Brenda and Betty. (The organisation of the Welbourne Wander was beginning to snow itself now). Hot mugs of tea and a biscuit were issued to each member and we stood and drank in a snowstorm.

The time was now 5-30 in the evening; the weather had deteriorated, and the Aber Hirnant forest still had to be walked. We all estimated this would take another three hours. By popular vote we called it a day. Fred took Barry, Pauline Wright, Jane Bache and myself back to Llangollen to collect our vehicles. By the way, three ladies completed and enjoyed the walk; Pauline was pushing Gordon all the way, Margaret Gadsby never appeared to be stretched, Jane Bache went well considering she was on new ground (Scotland is her country). Ann Hayes drove from the Bala campsite and picked up the rest of the party; so by 7-30 all the tents were pitched and people were preparing for the evening's entertainment. Janes and Pretty took dinner, washed down by claret, at a hotel in Bala, whilst Williams, Welbourne and Co. wresled with their soup and other potions in their cars and tents. I spent a pleasant evening thrashing out future club policy with Margaret and Gordon in the warmth of their tent. Gordon Wright supplied us with four

litres of his best ale to see us through the evening; however only one bottle was emptied, the jolly old "tabs and caps" stopped me from over-indulging.

Saturday night was chilly, snow fell during the night and poor old Digger Williams had forgotten his lilo. Gordon Wright was able to erect his tent although he was an "A" piece missing (remember the cheese in Bullstones cabin eh, you ode uns?)

Sunday dawned with the promise of another good day, snow on the hills, sunshine, but cold winds. Alas, misfortune overtook Gordon Wright; we all heard him call to Pauline for the toilet roll and the next minute he was stretched out in agony holding his back, his muscles shattered by the unexpected weight of the package, (someone said it appeared to be a roll of linoleum he was trying to pick up). He was driven home immediately after Pauline had flung all the gear into their vehicle.

Sunday was an unplanned affair as far as I was concerned. This provided our support party with an opportunity to get a walk in with the rest of the crowd, after all Betty and Brenda are the only two ladies in the club, who, over the years, seem to have been able to provide that little bit extra for us when required (they are now coaching Ann Hayes who seems to be taking it in her stride).

After enjoying the sheer delight of the walk up Cwm Hunant (we finally left the road after 5 miles) we took the forest track, this was to show the crowd what would have been the final three hours of the walk the previous day. Things started to go wrong; Brenda found herself hanging upside down from a gate after numerous attempts to pinch my ju-ju. (His ju-ju was eventually pinched by the hamster -Ed.)

A round trip of the forest would have taken us well into the afternoon so we about-turned and followed a route which headed back toward the campsite. Pretty led the party through the trees and headed for the high open country leaving his mark in the snow. Janes saw some paper fly up from the rear of a small cabin but failed to investigate. This was our parting of the ways with Pretty. We had the now rare sight of Laurie Burns back on the hills, lacking a bit of mobility perhaps, but still game to thrutch through knee high heather. We did eventually reach easier ground, so were able to stand and gaze awhile at the snow covered Arrans, Cader Idris and the hills of Snowdonia. A steep descent and we arrived at the campsite again.

All concerned enjoyed this meet. "I would not have missed this one.", said a few; for myself, two good days, a bit of raking the muck, a rollicking from Pretty, extracting the Michael by Janes, just to mention a few of the goings on and, of course, the company of a bloody good crowd.



THE PENNINE WAY - May 26th-June 3rd, 1972      Jack Ashcroft

When I mentioned, last year, doing the Pennine Way it was all going to be a leisurely affair; ambling down the backbone of England, admiring the scenery, photography, restful evenings in hostels, maybe a rest day or two. During the Lakeland meets in February and March Dave Penlington and Jim Winfield showed interest in doing the walk and the tempo changed. "It's not worth doing unless you follow all the tops." said Penlington. It was agreed, since the true Pennine Way does meander around the valleys a bit. The next stage was a unanimous acceptance that we should do the distance in as near to a week as possible and walk from north to south. We decided not to book accommodation but to carry essentially bivvy gear and just keep walking. The stage was set- and when Roy Darnell heard there was a bit of a challenge around he made a fourth member of the party only a week before we started.

We congregated on the Friday night at Deadwater Farm below Peel Fell, a couple of miles north of Keilder village. Dave and I had enlisted the support of our wives to establish a camp at this point, thus enabling us to walk a first day of 55 miles over the Cheviots, Carter Fell and Peel Fell without heavy sacs. Janet A. camped at the farm with the five children, whilst Janet P. came round to Kirk Yetholm where we bivvied soon after midnight.

We were away at 4.30 a.m. on Saturday, the weather indifferent with rain in the air. We were conscious that fine weather was essential for the first 120 miles, since the country we had to cover was remote, high moorland - the type of country that would prove difficult for navigation with persistent mist, or very wearisome, to say the least, should we get wet. There was relief in the party when by 9a.m. the rain stopped and the sky cleared. We were saved for our first day. We made good time on the Cheviots and arrived at Carter Bar about 3 p.m. We had found it thirsty work walking the crest of the Cheviots. Penlington promised that Joe's mobile canteen would be installed on Carter Bar road summit, but Joe must have gone into liquidation or something. He was not there. The near crisis situation was saved by a caravanner parked in the layby. We begged a jug of water, which was nectar to us and revived us for the remaining 10 miles of our day's walk over Carter Fell and Peel Fell. This proved tough walking, in addition to our traverse of the Cheviots, but we arrived at the campsite satisfied, though tired, about 8.00p.m. A good wash in the stream and a wholesome meal, we slept soundly that night.

On Sunday the weather was fine again as we walked from Keilder to Gilsland over Conniston Fells, Bighty Crag and Spadeadam Moor. We left Keilder about 7.30a.m. and arrived at a tent erected on a campsite at Gilsland by Ron Dearden and Mike Turner about 9.00p.m. The highlight of the day had been a cup of cocoa prepared with great patience on a bracken fire by Penlington. We had trouble in finding water and keeping the fire going but the hour's rest was appreciated by all and the cocoa was magnificent! At Gilsland we fed very adequately on the cache of food left for us by Ron and Mike.

7.00a.m. Monday morning found us threading our way through the restored sections of Hadrian's Wall. We had heavier sacks now, carrying food for the next two days on the tops. We found ourselves approaching Cold Fell about 10.00a.m. and there had a second breakfast by a stream in a pleasing situation. It was then a very long walk above the 2,000ft. contour over Cold Fell to Hartside Cross - a road pass between Penrith and Alston. It was here that we had what can only be described as a bonus. On attaining Black Fell (2179ft) and looking down on the pass, we saw a restaurant! It more than made up for our lack of refreshment two days previously on Carter Bar. It was about 5.30p.m. when we arrived at Hartside Cross. An hour later after 3 glasses of orange, 2 cups of tea, sausage, beans, chips, bread and butter, we were on our way again. We walked for a further two hours or so, finding a superb bivouac site at about 2,000ft. on the slopes of Cross Fell. We had another good meal and settled down to another good night's sleep.

The morning dawned brilliantly. We could hardly believe our good fortune, but in starting our 26 mile walk to the Tan Hill Inn, we appreciated that 5.30 in the morning conditions could change drastically during the day. Everything went smoothly until about 8.30a.m. between Great Dun Fell and High Cup Nick when our plans came as near to floundering as at anytime during the week. Briefly, I got parted from the other three. I had map and compass. The other three only had a compass with a bearing for High Cup Nick. The mist enveloped the complicated terrain about 9.30a.m. and persisted until well into the afternoon. I waited at High Cup Nick for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour and then realised we had completely missed each other and with the mist around it was completely useless. I cursed myself - cursed them - cursed the mist, as I took compass bearings and traversed Murton Fell, Little Fell and Warcop Fell. On reaching Shot Moss at 3.00p.m. on the Brough/Middleton - in - Teesdale road the mist cleared. I looked around in the vain hope that the others would appear, but no luck. The weather had become thundery and the direction in which I was due to walk was obviously in the midst of it. I traversed Iron Band and Stainmore Common in dark ominous weather conditions but the rain kept off and the cloud lifted from the tops. Further east the thunder roared. I wearily arrived at the Tan Hill Inn (the highest in England at 2,755ft) at 7.30p.m. as it started to rain quite heavily.

We had hoped to find a bed for a night's rest at the Tan Hill but, "Sorry sir, no accommodation.", in spite of "Residential" splattered everywhere outside the place. I supped a pint and spoke to a farmer of my predicament as I ordered beefburger and chips. He told me we could sleep in his barn, a mile down the road towards Keld - an old railway cattle truck - if and when I found my colleagues. I was just having another curse to myself about the utter chaos when I saw Roy walk past the inn window. I suddenly felt jubilant; map or no map, they had made it - and so we launched into double beefburger, chips and ale. Dave, Jim and Roy had just followed the High Cup Nick compass bearing - 8 miles of very rough walking through the mist. Without a map, the only way open to them on reaching the Brough road was to walk into Brough and then continue by road to the Tan Hill - about a 12 mile road walk. We had a conversation with three servicemen doing a west/east walk from

Ravenglass to Ravens Car. They were carrying tents (pitched opposite the Inn). We bade them goodnight and walked a mile down the road to our remote cattle truck bivouac about 9.30 p.m. It had been an eventful day with the outcome doubtful to the end; but as we settled down on our bit of straw we felt satisfied to have covered our 120 miles of remote mountainous terrain in four days. The crux was really over - we thought. From now on it was going to be the "acorn route". No bee-line routes, pulling in every 500ft. bump - though I suspect Dave still harboured a secret desire to draw a straight line from the Tan Hill to the Nags Head, just taking everything in sight!!

Wednesday, our fifth day out, dawned with heavy cloud. We were away by 8.30 a.m. and dropped down to Keld and then traversed Great Shunner Fell in a ferocious storm. It was dense cloud, windy, wet and cold. Certainly it was the worst weather we encountered during the week but it was short lived and, as we dropped down to Hawes, the cloud lifted and the sun came out. We took a well earned rest at the Green Dragon Hotel and enjoyed a very adequate three course lunch. We took our time wandering through the market town of Hawes before setting out on a further 1 1/2 mile walk to Horton-in-Ribblesdale. We had phoned from Keld and booked accommodation at the Crown Hotel in Horton. We arrived about 8.30 p.m., the last couple of miles we were all feeling the strain but once installed in the comfort of the Crown with a good dinner it was a comfortable feeling with 150 miles of our walk behind us. The day's walk had been through gentler country than the previous four days - a pleasing contrast - we were enjoying it.

Mist and drizzle greeted us as we left the Crown at 9.30 a.m. on the Thursday. We fumbled about in the mist and rain over Fen-y-ghent and Fountains Fell but, following the same pattern as the previous day, the weather cleared as we approached Malham Tarn and dropped down to Malham in the afternoon. Another meal was ordered here - (it was becoming a matter of principle not to pass any eating or drinking establishment). We then wandered through the meadows and along the side of the River Aire. At Gargrave we took refreshment at a local hostelry, giving us further enthusiasm for another two hours walking. We tried one farm in the hope of a comfortable barn, but no luck. We trekked on and finally found excellent hospitality offered at a farm just south of Elslack. We were invited into the farm and the good lady even offered us a meal but we didn't overdo the generosity and just enjoyed several cups of tea. The barn made available to us had H&C running water but no separate bathroom!

The morning dawned with brilliant sunshine. We were away by 6.00 a.m. It was Friday, our seventh day. We felt it essential to make good progress in an attempt to reach Edale for Saturday night. However, this wasn't to be so principally because we found a superb sun-trap for a lunch break and the time just slipped by! We then wasted some time in trying to take a short cut on Stanbury Moor - I must admit at my instigation. By 4.30 p.m. it was obvious, by studying the map, that we would not make Marsden, our original target, that night and so we wearily dropped down to Hebden Bridge and booked in the night at the White Lion Hotel - an ancient hostelry of some character. I think it is true to say we reached our lowest ebb



on reaching Hebden Bridge. However, after a good steak and some ale, life took on a rosy glow and the 35 miles or so of Bleaklow type country separating us from Ldale seemed all that much nearer. We decided first to lower our sights a little and make for Crowden Y.H. on Saturday night. We phoned and booked in. Next we emptied our sags of every non essential item, packing it solidly in Jim's extended bivvi sac and asked the manager if we could leave it for collection at a later date. A third decision was Jim's, who decided to leave his boots and walk the rest of the way in his Timpson's holiday slip-ons! He had in fact sprained his ankle earlier in the walk and the foot had become swollen and painful.

We left Hebden soon after 8.30 on Saturday, traversing Stodley Pike, Blackstone Edge, and Black Moss in dull, showery weather. And then Black Hill came into view. For me, and I'm sure, for the others, we were home: but there was a sting in the tail - for the traverse of Black Hill was undertaken in vicious conditions, similar to our traverse of Great Shunner Fell. We arrived at Crowden Y.H. about 7.15p.m. - soaked. The most vivid memory I have of the evening was when a bearded Youth Hostelling type who, when told of our walk, said, "I hope I can walk as well as that when I'm as old as you." We didn't reply.

It only now remained to scramble up Wild Boar Clough over Bleaklow and Kinder. We were away from the Y.H. soon after 7.00a.m. on Sunday. Seldom have I walked from Bleaklow Head over Featherbed Moss and on to Kinder in finer weather. The Peak certainly turned on the finest weather for our final stretch. We needed something like this since we were all suffering in minor ways - Dave with shooting pains up his spine when walking down hill, Jim with his painful ankle, Roy with blisters and myself with a sprained muscle above the knee. We descended Grindsbrook to arrive at the Wag's Head at 1.00p.m. It was a great moment, the 250 miles behind us full of memories more than it has been possible to relate here. Nothing has been mentioned of the alarm clock precision of Roy for early starts; the banter; the humour on route finding; Penlington's perpetual call, "It's the time, Jack, the time."; of the deer on Larviston Fells and fawn so near that we could touch them; of foxes and grouse chicks on Great Shunner Fell. It all added up to a magnificent week's walk in good company and in generally fine weather. One thing - don't believe the story that the route is worn out. There is very little trace of people having walked at all over considerable lengths. But I know: if people like me persist in writing about the Wag it will soon be worn out. Hard luck. But I think we are alright for the present. It's all boats now. Are boots becoming a thing of the past?

P.S. The record for the Pennine Way currently stands at 4 days 5 hours 10 minutes. We only played at the game but what a rewarding week it was.



### HOLIDAY ON THE SLATE HEAPS

Slate quarry waste heaps in a beautiful North Wales valley near Snowdon are to be transformed into a £8 million holiday recreation complex.

The waste heaps mar 235 acres of the otherwise lovely Nantlle Valley in Caernarvonshire. The area is also littered with huge holes in the ground, one covering 15 acres and 700ft deep.

Datblygwyr Dorothea Limited has bought 1,000 acres of the valley and will landscape the heaps and fill the holes with water for sailing and fishing.

Included in the complex will be 300 permanent homes, two hotels each with 150 bedrooms, a slate museum, and facilities for riding, hot air ballooning, falconry and archery.

There have been no objections to the scheme because it will clear up an eyesore, and provide 400 permanent jobs in the valley which has had a 12% unemployment figure since the slate industry declined.

An application for a £1,500,000 grant over four years has been made to the Derelict Land Unit of the Welsh Office. This Unit, set up after Aberfan to clear away industrial despoilation, has been dealing mainly with the coal tips of South Wales. But it is now turning its attention to the slate waste of North Wales.

Major John Griffiths, the company's managing director, said: "It will be impossible to remove the 25 million tons of slate that have been tipped on the land we purchased. But by careful landscaping this can be transformed into a positive quality."

The complex will be built between the villages of Talysarn and Nantlle. It will have Welsh signposting with English translations.

Local people will be encouraged to run pony trekking and take over the shops.

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### MOTHERCARE - CONTINUED

Congratulations to the Applebys, Burgesses, and Binghamms on the births of Elizabeth, Loretta and Michael respectively. More Oread events are expected later in the year.

MARSDEN - HEATHY LEA - June 8th-10th, 1973 - Jack Ashcroft

You might almost say the walk began and finished as a run. On Friday night Phil Faulkner led a party of Oreads across Manchester at a breathtaking pace in order to catch the train connection to Marsden. On Sunday afternoon a spirit of competition crept into the team and over the last few miles Rusty was witnessed to throw the Country Code to the wind and crash through hedges in an attempt to prevent President Nat from arriving first at Heathy Lea.

To briefly summarise the events of the weekend, the usual form of refreshment was taken at Marsden with Janes lucidly commenting on the finer points of interest to be witnessed in such a small industrial town as Marsden. It was then a walk up the wessender reservoirs, bivvyng behind a wall close to the site of the old Isle Of Skye Inn about midnight. Saturday dawned dismal and it remained so throughout the day; dense mist over Black Hill and a ferocious storm over Bleaklow. Saturday night was spent at Higgs Farm Hostel in the Snake Pass with evening refreshment taken at the Ladybower Inn. The amenities at Higgs Farm were much appreciated after the wet and cold crossing of Bleaklow. Sunday was pleasant walking conditions over win Hill and down the Edges with routes all the way inspired by the President.

Those doing the complete walk were Nat Allen, Pete Janes, Paul Bingham, Roy Sawyer, Dave Weston, Clive Russell, Ron Chambers, Les Peel and Tom Rogers. Those "on and off" the route, part-timers etc. were Jack Ashcroft, Dave Appleby and Derek Carnell. Phil Faulkner, the old (but fit) man of the party, only came out for the Friday night and Saturday. He was last seen heading over-Kinder by himself in a wet bedraggled state for Edale, on the Saturday afternoon. Hope he made it. It's his 50th birthday this year.

This year's meet was the 21st anniversary of this favourite Oread bog trot. The first meet was on October 24th - 25th, 1952. The party then consisted of Phil Faulkner, Geoff Gibson, Mike Moore and Dave Penlington. (Ron Dearden and Ken Wright started the walk but were way-laid in some way or other) The party slept the night at Marsden gas works and in the back parlour of the Nag's Head, Edale, on the Saturday. Edale had been the ultimate objective but they continued down the Edges to Baslow on the Sunday.

On this year's showing the spirit of the club for Marsden - Heathy Lea type walks has not declined over the past 21 years, but I hope the next time the weather is fine and the route done pure - over the tops - and that the scenery can be appreciated.

DAVIDS - June 29th - July 1st, 1973

Derek Carnell

It only rained on Friday night as two of us sat in the pub. Old One-eye came in, and we drank together, miserably. In the morning - sunshine - and the campsite STILL empty. The two of us departed down Dovedale and, lo, after a climb, a Nobby appeared AND WE WERE THREE! A proliferation of routes (all easy, you understand) followed, and in the late afternoon we wended our way back to the teahouse and the new Milldale (easy routes for beginners) Pinnacle

The sun still shone brightly as we forced our way through the jostling crowds on the George's field. I tripped over one of Reg Squires' boots, barely hidden by the long grass, and subsided heavily into the Oakden's nest of billies. My heavy rucksack held me floorbound and I was uncaringly trampled by the quartet returning from Beresford Dale. A plethora of wives, occupying sundry camp beds, lilos, spatz and chairs were spread over the field like "perls byfore the swyne", and Chambers was trying to fit himself into a Whillans' jockstrap that was obviously too small. The Oread had arrived, and from my prone position by a teacup, I surveyed it all with pride. Bare-footed children and dogs played frantically round the tents: reddening anatomies rotated sunwards, and scats of tea bubbled on the stoves. The President arrived back from "Cummerbund" with our K.C. friends, Shelagh and Denis, and much wine was spilt replenishing old friendships and glasses. As the sun set and the sky darkened an aura of respectability crept over the scene as numerous people dressed for dinner at the George and surrounding hotels. It was about this time that "Nitelite" Burgess arrived and set off for his one route of the day (Venery), and London-based Charlie Cullum was savagely scouring the country round the Isaac Walton for unsuccessful traces of the club meet! (Meet's Secretary please note: he found us Sunday night.....!)

The dinner was a great success, and afterwards our friends of the North Staffs M.C. joined us when much ale and information was bought and swapped, enabling the proceedings to continue until well after midnight.

Sunny Sunday brought the usual "bomburst" with parties of energetic people disappearing in all directions. A new influx in the shape of Mike Wran, George & Janet Reynolds and Mike Key bolstered the group. Colin Hobday was "discovered by the President's party in Dovedale, and remained reticent about how long he'd been there. Hortus, Simeon & Boomerang fell to this team. However Beeston Tor was the most popular venue, and Burgess tried Ron's "Patience" and then "Eliminated" him! The rest of us got stuck on, or into, the normal trade routes - Lynx, Ocelot, Buzz, Mollusc, Bertram's all felt the tread of many Oread feet, until eventually a truce was declared and we adjourned for tea.

Thank you all for coming, especially the ladies who, while turning golden brown(?) under the sun, performed remarkable feats of self control, and provided Cleavage. Altogether 42 Oreads and friends congregated for this meet, so it looks like I'm stuck with it into the Hereafter! No more sarcasm, turn up again next year, I'll be delighted!



WADDALE - July 6th-8th, 1973

Chris Radcliffe

Having for years been outspoken about the need to meet reports to the Newsletter and written vitriolic editorials about this, I now find myself in exactly the same position as everyone else - months gone by and nothing done about it. However my conscience has finally galvanised me into action, before the editor actually had to chase me.

The trouble was that I was climbing late both days and when on the campsite was so busy calculating the extortionate camp fees, that I have only a hazy notion of what anyone else did. (Incidentally, Ray Colledge, having reciprocal rights with the F.R.C.C., now claims it is cheaper to stay at Brackenclouse than to camp on the site - still, perhaps the prices keep the gobos off!

The meet was well attended despite atrocious weather on Friday evening. This made for a miserable journey up the motorway, but next morning it cleared and we had two very reasonable days. Parties disappeared in all directions - Scafell, Pillar Rock, Napes Ridges, Kern Knotts, Mosedale Horseshoe or round the lake. I was on Scafell on both days and found the rock greasy in places, but this didn't deter Gordon and Brian Wright who made an ascent of Central Buttress - the best route done during the weekend.

Altogether, everyone seemed to have enjoyed themselves so thanks to all who came to make the weekend a success: Ron and Kath Chambers, Pete and Sue Scott, George and Janet Reynolds, Derek and Pat Carnell, Ray and Maria Handley, Ev and Kath Abley, Gordon and Margaret Gadsby, Anne Hayes, Frank Goldsmith and family, Brian Cooke and family, Gordon and Brian Wright, Peter, Roland, Nigel, Mike Key, Ray Colledge and Les Peel.

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#### CLUB HANDBOOK

Preparation of the new Members Handbook is now complete and it is currently at the printers. The exact date of issue depends how quickly it can be printed, bearing in mind the current economic situation.

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CLUB LIBRARY

Reg Squires

The Club library, lately resident at Rhyd-ddu, is now in my hands for cataloguing and repair, before reinstatement at Heathy Lea.

I am resisting the temptation to syphon off the odd volume into my own collection - not very difficult as others got there first, and most of our best specimens disappeared long ago, including half a dozen copies of Mountain World.

Opinion seems to be that guests at Rhyd-ddu are to blame. It is also whispered that Oreads may have borrowed books, and (purely by oversight) not yet returned them. If anyone falls into this latter category, I should be grateful if he or she would return the book(s) involved to me IMMEDIATELY, if not earlier. As a special concession the new £1 per day overdue charge will be waived until the day after tomorrow.

Also new or secondhand additions to the collection would be welcome (for "addition" read "donation"). The spate of mountaineering literature over the last five years has included much of interest to Oreads - including references to members and their activities - worth having on the shelves of our country estate, so that those involved can re-live the past, and those without a past can re-live it anyway, secure from danger by the old Heathy Lea fireside on cold winter evenings. "Early" mountaineering books, broadly speaking, those relating to the pre Burgess/Allen period, will be considered on merit.

When the remains, the oversights and the donations have been collated, it is intended to house them in a new bookcase at Heathy Lea. All books will then be readily available for borrowing - a more secure and convenient arrangement than having them 150 miles away. To forestall complaints about an intellectual and cultural desert in Wales, all the Maigret and Agatha Christie masterpieces have been left at Yr Wyddfa along with one copy of Nasty Stories.

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NEW MEETS CARD

Meet leaders required for May to October 1974. Anyone willing to organise a meet please contact Rusty at his rural abode, Parwich 369, before March 1st.

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ZILLERTAL - ALPINE MEET, 1973

Gordon Gadsby

"The snow line is down to 3000ft.", said Uschi Hobday on the crackling line between our call box on the Munich autobahn and her mother's home at Linhornallee Munchen. "No wonder", I said, "We've been aquaplaning for over 600 miles." It was 7.30 p.m. on Saturday, 28th July, and despite Uschi's kind invitation for us all to spend the night at her mother's (3 car loads!) we had to press on as we had arranged to pick up the key to our chalet that night. Half an hour later, as we left Munich by the Salzburg motorway, the rain stopped and the dark heavens slowly cleared. In the west the sun glimmered briefly and then sank below the waves of night.

We forked right, past Kufstein and sped along the wide plain of the Inn valley, the shadowy peaks of the Karwendel on our right, and at 9.15 p.m. we arrived at Schlitters, a picturesque alpine village on the fringe of a great forest. After a little language difficulty we collected the keys for our chalet from Frau Hassler then motored with her husband, Hans, up the hill through the village to be shown the modern chalet which was to be our home for the next two weeks.

Sunday dawned bright and clear and apart from one or two showers during the first week, the weather remained so for the rest of the holiday. In fact, during the second week the weather became hotter and hotter and on one day reached 86° in the shade. After an exploratory walk round Schlitters we decided to visit the rest of the Meet who were supposed to be camping at Zell am Ziller, about 25 minutes drive up the Ziller valley. We (Margaret, my Aunt Madge, Uncle Albert, Stuart, Kath and Julie Bramwell, Frank, Shirley, Susan and Julia Goldsmith) arrived to find Charlie, Mary and Michael Cullum the only English campers on the site!

Charlie, whose sac was pecked ready for a hut, was very relieved to see us, but a little disappointed that we were not going to a hut until the next day. As we chatted beside Charlie's tent the Wright's Renault van appeared and Gordon and Pauline emerged looking fantastically fit. We were all eager for news of the peaks and Gordon was soon telling us of hair raising tales of 12 hour epics in waist deep snow and of having to crawl over crevasses in futile attempts to reach a major summit in the Silvretta and Stubai Alps. Together with Bev and Cathy Abley they seemed to have put as much effort into a week's climbing as I would manage in a month (watch out Radders!). As we left for our chalet and evening meal, Bev and Kathy drove in the camp entrance also looking very fit. However, when we told them our plans for the next day, Bev said that as far as he was concerned it was going to be a rest day (their first one!). I couldn't blame them.

Monday was glorious and in the late afternoon ten of us, including the Goldsmith's and Bramwells' children, arrived on the threshold of the Furtschaglhaus at an altitude of 2295m. The final hour's walk to the hut was very steep and



the kids did well to make it. Charlie Cullum was soon practising his German on the waitresses and it wasn't long before we were all enjoying some very tasty soup, price 10 schillings - 40sch to the £1. Whilst on the subject of prices in Austrian huts etc., the following may be of interest to members who intend to go next year, i.e. Mattrazenlagen for members - 20 Sch. or 50p per night, non members 40sch. (or 50sch. at the Berliner Hut - Ask Frank, he forgot his membership card!). Teawasser was 7Sch per litre, ein bier - 16sch or 18Sch. The same beer would cost 5Sch in the valley. A meal at the hut, e.g. Bergsteigeressen 28Sch or Rostkartoffle mit Ei und Salad 40Sch. (Short pause while I unravel my fingers after typing that little lot - Ed.)

As we finished our soup, Gordon and Pauline Wright came in, having bombed up in 15 minutes less than guide book time. Charlie then brought his enormous sac to the fore and proceeded to rumage through it for a lump of cheese to supplement his evening meal. Alas, despite having everything bar the kitchen sink, the cheese was missing. Gordon retrieved an ugly situation the same from his own sac. Charlie had left it behind at the campsite. We chatted away the evening, had one or two looks at the peaks, but no sunset.

The following morning, although we were up at 4.30a.m. it was nearly 6a.m. before we set off. This was due mainly to the teawasser not being ready - we resolved next time to go without. Our objective was the Muttentock, 3072m, a frontier peak rising from the Nofesattel. After 1½ hours steady walk from the hut we reached the edge of the glacier and formed into a rope of three (Gordon and Pauline Wright and Charlie Cullum) and a rope of four (Frank Goldsmith, Stuart Bramwell, Margaret and I). Due to the previous month of bad weather there were no glacier tracks, in fact an English climber I'd met descending from the hut told me that he'd been in the area for three weeks and that most peaks were still awaiting their first ascent of the season!

The Wright's team was ready first and Chris Radcliffe's rival to the title of Human Dynamo, led off following at first the tracks of a lone Chamoix across the otherwise virgin snow. We followed at a steady pace, the snow was crisp and still in the shade. The usual dry glacier was non-existent. High above us the sun danced and sparkled on the upper neve, below and behind us the large lake formed by building the Schlegeis Dam lay half in shadow. Above this lake towered the mighty Olperer, her ridges plastered in new snow, a splendid scene against a pale blue sky.

One or two large crevasses barred our upward progress, but these were soon overcome and within an hour we were up the fairly easy glacier and emerged into full sunlight on the edge of a wide snow basin. The team were well in front by now and we could see them on the steep section just below the saddle. After a short time Gordon started to traverse to the right where it seemed much more exposed. The reason for this became clear once we reached the same position - the ordinary

way to the col and then up the Mod-Diff. ridge was blocked by a bergschrund of enormous proportion. I agreed with Gordon it just wasn't on! we followed the A team's example and belayed before carefully traversing the curving bank of snow on our right. This was very exposed and immediately above a badly crevassed section of the glacier. Twenty minutes later we were ensconced on some rubble filled ledges on the East face of the mountain. We could see the summit tower a few hundred feet above. Gordon's team decided to press for the top, but we had a bite to eat and weighed up the situation. It was about 11 a.m. and it looked possible to reach the summit in an hour with luck. But even as we finished our ten minute snack the clouds started to billow over the col from Italy.

I set off up the grotty looking face composed of blocks large and small - rubble and deep snow - delightful! I was about forty feet above the others when a block the size of a piano, which the A team had climbed over, suddenly began to move with me on top of it! As an old Chinese proverb says, "Absence of body is better than presence of mind" - I jumped for my life landing in soft snow somewhat shaken. Minutes later, as I again got back on route, a rumble and crashing above made me look up just in time to see a two foot wide boulder, which narrowly missed me, almost land on the rope and then go hurtling and bounding to the glacier far below. It soon became apparent that third time lucky could easily work in reverse and after a quick word with Margaret, Frank and Stuart we decided to give the mountain best.

Once the decision was made, it didn't take us too long to get back across the difficult section and then make all haste down the glacier. Even as we descended the lower part of the glacier we heard three substantial rock falls down that grotty face. We reached the hut at 1.30 p.m. The A team staggered in at 5.10 p.m., - Charlie described one section of the descent as extreme! It was a good thing we retreated when we did.

The Goldsmiths, Bramwells and ourselves decided to go down and give the snow time to improve. As we prepared to leave, Bev and Kathy Abley arrived, having scrambled up the Schonbichlerhorn en route for the hut. Charlie at first said he was too shattered to go down, but later after a bite of his cheese, he started to enthuse over the possibility of doing another peak the next day. We said Auf Wiedersehn, wishing them luck with the weather, then set off down the steep zigzags back to Ginzling and Schlitters. We heard later from Bev that the next day the three men climbed the Grosser Moseler (a major Zillertal peak), stayed at the hut for yet another night, then traversed the Furtschaglispitze, whilst Kathy made her second ascent of the Schonbichlerhorn with Pauline Wright.

Our party spent the next few days soaking up the sun, swimming in our local pool and walking in the forested areas near Schlitters. We also had an excellent day in Innsbruck (apart from when we thought an Austrian tram had run off with Frank) and went to a Tyrolean evening beneath the Golden Roof.

By Saturday we had worked up enough enthusiasm for another hut walk. Margaret was not well and had to stay behind, but Shirley was very keen to accompany Frank, Stuart and me (she nearly changed her mind when it came to saying goodbye to her daughters!). The four of us set off from Breitlahner for the Berliner Hut at around 10.30 a.m., the weather being fair but improving rapidly. The walk to this very large old hut (the dining room had seats for 200 people - all full) passed through some fine mountain and forest scenery until, on arrival, the hut itself was set in a commanding position above the confluence of two glaciers and dominated by the jagged ridge of the Berlinerspitze, the Turnerkamp, 3478m and the Zsigmondyspitze. Of the following day I don't wish to comment too much as Frank Goldsmith has promised to write this up. (Next issue? - Ed) Suffice it to say we had a magnificent day's mountaineering. Frank achieved his first Alpine peak, the Berlinerspitze 3273m, which we traversed by the difficult N.W. ridge and down the ordinary route (an Austrian Alpine Club guided party followed us up). Shirley unfortunately pulled a muscle on the approach and had to return to the hut.

After celebrating our peak we returned to the valley and the lure of that super outdoor swimming pool. During the rest of that second week we paid a visit to Val Gardena in the Dolomites (just looking) and also drove to Pertisau and the lake of Achensee in the Karwendel Mountains. On the penultimate day of the holiday, Margaret, Stuart and I scrambled to the summit of the Gschollkopf 2039m, from the Erfurter Hut in the Rofan Mountains. This last peak was a fabulous viewpoint ranging from the Gross Venediger, Zillertal, Stubai, Otztal, and finally as the sun gleamed silver on Achensee, the jagged tops of the Karwendel just across the gulf beneath our feet.

That evening, as arranged, we joined up with the Cullums and their son, Michael, for a celebration meal at the Hotel Jaeger in Schlitters. Michael had plenty to celebrate, having just climbed the wildspitze in the Otztal with his Dad, Kathy, Pauline, Bev and Gordon. Later, with the sounds of the local brass band ringing in our ears, the fourteen of us went back to our chalet for coffee and biscuits and to face up to the fact that the holidays were over until another year. For myself it had been the laziest Alpine holiday ever, but a very enjoyable one. My Aunt and Uncle had covered practically all the paths between Schlitters and Mayerhofen, sometimes going part way on the train to either Rugen or Zell am Ziller. They had also climbed the steep and magnificent waterfall in the forest about six times, on one occasion going well beyond this to the hamlet of Schlitterberg at the top of the mountainside. Charlie and Mary were in no doubt that they had had a great time and Charlie climbed seven peaks in a fortnight. In terms of sheer effort the final accolade must go to Gordon Wright and Bev Abley and their long suffering wives. In three weeks (one of them bad) Gordon climbed eleven peaks, eight of them with Pauline, and Bev ascended nine summits, five with Kathy. Beside these peaks the foursome also attempted two more in bad weather! Following this report is a list of all peaks climbed. Thank you all for coming. I hope you enjoyed yourselves as much as I did.



Peaks Climbed On Alpine Meet 1973

Zillertal Alps

Muttenock 3072m  
via N. Ridge

Gordon and Pauline Wright,  
Charlie Cullum.  
Gordon and Margaret Gadsby,  
Frank Goldsmith, Stuart  
Bramwell.

Grosser Moseler 3478m.  
via W. Ridge

Bev Abley, Gordon Wright,  
Charlie Cullum.

Schonbichlerhorn 3135m.  
via S. Ridge

Bev and Kathy Abley, Charlie  
Cullum, Gordon & Pauline  
Wright.

Furtschlaglspitze 3198m.  
traverse N and W Ridge.

Bev Abley, Charlie Cullum,  
Gordon Wright.

Berlinerspitze 3273m.

Gordon Gadsby, Frank Gold-  
smith Stuart Bramwell.

Karwendel

Gschollopf 2039m.

Gordon and Margaret Gadsby,  
Stuart Bramwell.

Silvretta Alps

Hohesbad 2954m.

Bev and Kathy Abley,  
Gordon and Pauline Wright.

Vermuntkopf 2851m.

Bev and Kathy Abley.

Stubai Alps

Gross Trogler 2902m.

Bev and Kathy Abley,  
Gordon and Pauline Wright.

Peilspitze 2676m.

Bev Abley & Gordon Wright.

Otztal Alps

Fluchtkogel 3500m.  
via S. Ridge.

Bev Abley, Charlie Cullum,  
Gordon and Pauline Wright.

Kesselwand 3414m.

Gordon and Pauline Wright,  
Bev Abley, Charlie Cullum.

Hoch Vernagtspitze 3539m.

Gordon and Pauline Wright.

Wildspitze 3772m.  
traverse N & S Peaks.

Gordon and Pauline Wright,  
Bev and Kathy Abley,  
Charlie and Michael Cullum.

Also attempted were the Dreiländerspitze in the Silvretta and the Zuckerhüttele in the Stubai, the latter peak giving the

Gordon Wright - Bev Abley teams a 12 hour day with waist deep snow! Not a bad tally when you consider there were only 18 persons on the meet and of these, two were over 73 years and four were under 15. Finally, my congratulations to Michael Cullum on having achieved a major Austrian Alpine Peak at such an early age.

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PRE PRANDIAL PYRENEAN PEREGRINATIONS

Derek Carnell

The spot on the map picked as a possible campsite - Soques - turned out to be just that - a spot on the map. Accordingly we turned the car round and tiredly descended the gorge past the Fabreges lake and down to Laruns. Three campsites later, Nat Allen determinedly laid his tent on a perceptible slope, and we had arrived. The journey had taken us 18 hours, but, once the tent was up, bedding arranged, and the inner man satisfied, we could spare time to appreciate our surroundings.

we were at the junction of two valley systems and the cloud hung low on the tree lined slopes; long escarpments of limestone jutted like beetling eyebrows over grassy meadows. It was cold, as cold as the "en pression" beer we sank before going to bed.

In the morning it was different, the sun had us drinking tea at seven, and our spirits rose with it - how many times we were to curse that golden disc in later days as it rose, day after day, for fifteen consecutive days!! We girded our loins and took the car back up the gorge for a training walk. Leaving the car at a large park behind the restaurant on the Col du Portalet frontier, we started off along a footpath across the grassy slopes leading to the Pic d'Estremere. We crossed some limestone rubble and made towards the boulders. The whistle, when it sounded, was not only unexpected, but near. The frontier guard blowing it was red-faced with his exertions and non too pleased. My companions, as usual, voted me into the vacant position of linguist, and we turned doubtfully down the hill towards the guard.- "Passeport" - "Dans la voiture, M'seur". The pile of limestone rubble we had crossed was the frontier "wall" and we were on Spanish territory! "I'll fetch the passports" I said, moving back across the rubble in the direction of the car park. The French customs men, having been alerted by the whistling, loosened their guns in their holsters and made threatening gestures at me. Dourly I trudged across the slope above them, waiting for the bullets and thenking that Les Peel's love of Franco was hardly likely to be improved by a fortnight in gaol, and how easy it was to become a Stateless Person, destined to stand forever on a pile

of "eboulis" (rubble). I got the passports and we met at the frontier post; the French didn't seem too annoyed, but the Spaniards turned out their best man (in mufti) to back them up. He snatched the passports and disappeared into the dark recesses of the post. All was well, however, because he eventually came out and handed them back..... perhaps we weren't yet on his list of hashish smugglers!! We therefore continued on our way light-heartedly, but panting in the thin air and heat, to the summit of the Pic d'Estremere (or Pountalet) 7036 feet, continued over and down a valley at the back, swung round to the car park in France seeing no-one on the way. Such is the idiocy of frontier posts.....

The view from our training peak had been magnificent, despite the haze. Large rocky limestone peaks rose from the grassy slopes, while, 4 miles to the north-west, the brown massif of the Pic du Midi d'Ossau, 2885m. (9,376ft.) rose above everything. My 1949 guidebook had it mentioned as "the most abrupt, the richest in difficult climbs." We were there tomorrow.

Tomorrow saw us driving back up the now familiar valley gorge towards the Col du Portalet. There are four ways to reach the Refuge Pombie, and by driving to the south we had craftily cut the walk-in to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours. We parked the car a mile below the col, and followed the excellent path across the hillsides to the hut. The 40-place hut squats on a rock promontory by the edge of a small lake at the foot of the towering south walls of the Pointe d'Aragon and Pointe Jean Sante. The two main points of the massif, the Petit and Grand Pics, lie to the N.W. of these, separated from them by a large rubbish-filled couloir and cirque. In recent years some technically hard routes have been pioneered on the Pointes Aragon and Jean Sante, and the scenery is certainly impressive. The "old" maestros of pre war days had concentrated more on the north faces of the Petit and Grand Pics where the rock, though as steep, has more ribs and cracks. One of the classic climbs is the traverse of the Four Points of the massif, which can be made hard, or harder, depending on the itinerary chosen: modern time, 6-10 hours.

As we wished to traverse the massif if possible, we decided to climb the two major points, the Petit Pic by the Peyreget arete, descend to the Fourche, and climb the Grand Pic by the West face (dalles blanches) route, returning to the hut by the voie normale, if we could find it!

During our evening meal, soup, with "anglais additive" (corned beef to the uninitiated), we were charmingly entertained by three young French schoolmistresses who were sharing our soup bowl. They told us that the area abounded with "Izards" or small chamois (about 30,000, they said), but that the bear population was down to 50! The expression on Nat's face when the news was conveyed to him was difficult to interpret: he doesn't even like "dicky-birds" on his climbs, so the prospect of bridging up a chimney past one of the few remaining European Bears hardly bore thinking about!



We set off at 5.45 a.m. for the Col de Peyreget and the start of the route. We saw plenty of izards but nary a bear. We climbed the Peyreget ridge after a false start (me), keeping pace with a French party on the adjoining "Flammes de Pierre" arete. Graded II with pitches of III, both led to the summit of the Petit Pic (9,139ft) on perfect granite all the way. The temperature by now was hotting up and, after a quick drink, we descended the slabs on the east side, and abseiled into the Fourche and welcome shade.

Nat led across the Dalle Blanche and round into the chimney. Seen from across the other peak, this section had looked steep and unnerving, but proved in fact to be very pleasant climbing, the holds and angle perfect. A succession of short walls, chimneys and grooves led to the summit of the Grand Pic. A large fat man in sagging vest grabbed me by the hand as I emerged from the final groove onto the summit, helped me belay, kissed four pretty girl walkers who arrived with their escorts, and burst into song! When Nat arrived on the summit there was a full scale choir going, the quality of which deteriorated as the cognac flowed around! We ate, drank and took in the views, then moved off down the well cairned voie normale. In cloud it could be tricky, but today was a heady blue and the haze was caused by heat. It was a long way down, though, swinging from the occasional iron stanchion, and we arrived back at the hut at about 1.00p.m. with terrible thirsts .....of course.

From Laruns, we moved our base round to the Arrens valley. At the end of the road, Porte d'Arrens, is a large car park and the trail leading to the Refuges Larribet and Ledormeur. We chose the Larribet, having decided on the Palas (9,672ft) as our next climb. The valley walk in the afternoon was without doubt one of the most beautiful I have been on; crystal clear streams and pools in grass meadows, pine trees and granite scenery made it a place to savour; we had it almost to ourselves - six or eight walkers in the whole place and not a plastic bag or tin in sight. The helicopter droned across the backdrop of snow and rocks, landed at the hut above us and left as we turned to the final zigzags. Bernard was still the guardian (see C.C. Journal 1969, p29.) but whether the two girls were the same, I couldn't say. The hut holds about 30, but there were only seven others beside ourselves:- a young couple in love, a weirdo Parisienne lad with legs like an elephant, and a group of would-be-tigers trying to work up the courage to do the NW ridge of the Balaitous. (They climbed the mountain by the ordinary route the next day.) Conversations are never easy at huts, but in the Pyrenees we found everyone charming and willing/eager to talk with anyone who had an appreciation of the mountains.

We went to bed at 9.30pm., thick mist swirling round the hut, had our eight hours of nudging each other to stop us snoring, drank tea at 5.30am., and were away for 6.00am.

Pyrenean summer mornings, after the Alps, are to be treasured. Starts are generally 5-6am instead of 2am., and soft light floods the valleys. Due to temperature inversions, these



are usually filled with mist, and one looks down on to peaks and spires jutting from a sea of it. As the sun rises higher it boils off the upper surface of the mist into the blue sky, creating haze and problems for the photographer. We straggled up to the col (the Port du Lavedan) in the, by now, familiar heat, and scuttled into the shade of some boulders. The SE arete of the Palas forms one side of the col. All the avoidance moves round gendarmes and ressauts were, happily, on the south side of the arete, so we were able to keep getting out of the sunshine. Combined pitches of III with the perfect granite made the whole ridge a delight, and we arrived at the summit, minus one of Nat's slings and karabiners, to splendid views and a bollocking!

We descended the SW ridge, coil in hand, climbed down the von Martin couloir, went across the Spanish face on snow patches, and back to the Port du Lavedan. The descent to the hut followed its usual pattern, and the old "sweats" were finishing their "Lourdes Water" when Les got in.

It was about this time that Lunacy set in, and we began to discuss plans for looking at the mountains of Andorra, with a view to climbing there with Don Cowan who was on the Costa Brava, drinking Bacardi & Cokes all day (Ashcroft, please note!) In any event we were due to see our womenfolk in Spain at the weekend for some ritualistic mumbo jumbo, so we set out eastwards to the promised something-or-other.

Andorra is the Duty-Free shop of France and Spain of course; and suffice it to say that, after a morning of trying to get into the place, we spent the remainder of the day trying to get out again. Diverting stuff... but we did manage a tankfull of half price juice to get us all the way to Spain the next day, the odd photo and some Izards cheese!

After a very pleasant interlude in Franco-land, during which time Cowan refused to be parted from his B&C facemask, snorkel and flippers; Les Peel refused to be parted from his shirt, and Nat Allen clumsily filled various portions of his anatomy with sea anemone spines, we eventually cruised, still in sunshine and heat, up to the Dauphine and La Berade. We arrived at the end of the day and a rainstorm, and, after the plains the temperature was definitely "duvet". Next day we screamed up to the Pilatte hut (3,415ft), delivered a present to the hut guardian, Christian, ecoute'd la musique de la montagne - which was thunder, and were soaked as we rushed down again to La Berade! That decided it; down tent next morning and off to Dinant and the Belgian Alpine Club pastures. Weather back to what we had grown accustomed to, heat and sun, and we drank and climbed and drank and climbed on hot slippery limestone all Friday before returning home on Saturday. Please don't go to the Pyrenees, we want to keep it for ourselves!

Route summary overleaf.

Col du Portalet 1794m	By car	Very difficult without passports.
Pic d'Estremere 2165m.	By border post, descent by couloir d'Arraille thus missing border confrontation.	Training climb, good for polishing up the "Anglais" image with border guards.
Petit Pic du Midi d'Ossau. 2812m.	Ascent by Peyreget Arete, II. Descend E slabs and abseil to the Fourche.	In our state it seemed almost as long as its name - 2½ hours.
Fourche 2605m.	The col between the Petit & Grand Pics.	Reached by abseil from the Petit Pic.
Grand Pic du Midi d'Ossau. 2885m.	Ascent from the Fourche by the west face (Dalles Blanche) II sup. Descent by Voie Normale I.	Beware of summit cans. 1 hour. 1½ hours.
Port du Lavedan.	The high col below the SE arete of the Palas.	
Palas 2967m.	Ascent by SE arete, III. Descent by SW ridge and Von Martin Couloir, II.	Perfect granite all the way.
Freyr: Belgium	L'Al-Legne. AD sup.	Lizards ahoy, and stand by to repel boarders...
	Depart-Duval. PD.	Drunk.
	Le Merinos. AD (Slippery Jim)	A sobering experience.

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SYMONDS YAT

August 24th - 27th, 1973

Nat Allen

Despite alternative attractions of "The Angry Brigade" in the Duddon Valley and the "twilight groups" gathering at Tan-Y-Wyddfa, trips round the bay being offered with the "Plywood Cavalier", a good crowd of Oreads camped and climbed in the Wye Valley.

The weather was perfect, if not a little hot. The Ashcrofts were first there, combining a fortnight's snorkelling and golfing in Devon with the meet. (He did visit his old college at Princetown whilst in the area.). Saturday saw sessions of climbing, swimming and ice creaming in the Seven Sisters and Yat areas. On Sunday most of us managed two or three of the high quality routes on Wintours Leap - the brewing tackle working overtime in the layby at the top of the crag, Charlie Cullum defecting to the pub for lunch. Monday was a hazy, steamy day and all the able bodied climbed up and "abbed off" the isolated pinnacle in the woods. Three or four of the routes on the main cliff were done, before we grudgingly packed up for home and work.

I personally enjoyed the meet very much, and I know others did also. It was good to see Ashcroft (alias Hebog, Crampons and Ashcloths) hard at it on the crag; and Charlie Cullum, PAs and crash-hatted up, going like a bomb. It's amazing what a "set of new nuts" will do for a man.

Another basically social meet, I suppose. Well, what's wrong with that. Plenty of good climbing was enjoyed by all. It was good to see old friends. My thanks to all who came.

Those present:- Mary and Charlie Cullum, Janet and Jack Ashcroft, Derek and Pat Carnell, Frank and Shirley Goldsmith, Colin and Uschi Hobday, Gordon and Margaret Gadsby, Les Peel, Laurie Burns, Jim Kershaw, Nat and Tinsel Allen:  
Guests:- Brian Gadsby and family, Shelagh Manning and fifteen kids of various shapes and sizes.

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NORTHUMBERLAND - September 14th-16th, 1973

Paul Bingham

Following the success of Rusty's Blencathra meet earlier in the year, I concluded that the basic requirement was pub yard camping. Having scoured the area in August, I found the necessary ingredient in the form of the Cart's Bog Inn. This pub had plenty of surrounding grassland and a stream with ducks - for the kids - although Mike Key would have had one for supper had he been able to operate his new primus.

Saturday saw a mass assault on Crag Lough in fine weather, whilst the walkers sought culture along Hadrian's Wall.

- March 13th Wednesday. Doug Scott Lecture on Baffin Island - Guildhall, Derby. Including movie and Derby launching of "Climb If You Will"
- March 14th Thursday. Publication day of "Climb If You Will". a commentary on Geoff Hayes and his club the Oread Mountaineering Club."
- March 15th - 17th Oread Meet at Tan-y-Wyddfa. NB change of date.
- March 18th Monday. Alpine Meet Venue Meeting at Ron Chambers, 9, Croft End, Little Eaton. All interested parties should attend armed with maps, travel brochures, persuasive arguments etc. No time given, assume 7.30pm.
- April 2nd Tuesday. Indoor Meet, Royal Oak, Ockbrook. Slides of area chosen for Alpine Meet.
- November 23rd Annual Dinner, Green Man, Ashbourne.
- March 2nd National Mountaineering Conference, Buxton. Includes films, slides, discussions. Participants include Sir Jack Longland, McNaught-Davis, Royal Robbins, John Cleare, Dave Cook, Robin Campbell, John Wilkinson, and Colin Mortlock during the day session. In the evening Kurt Diemberger presents slides and films entitled "Summits and Secrets"  
Fee is £2. including buffet lunch and evening session. Evening session only, 60p.  
Fees to be sent to The Sports Council North West Region, Byrom House, Quay Street, Manchester M3 5FJ. Cheques etc payable to The Sports Council.