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· Volume 22, Number I. April 1975. ·

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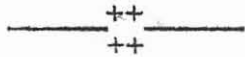
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Editor.
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EDITORIAL

This, my first newsletter, was destined from its conception to be affected by that old adversary "the cock up". It was as though I had Digger Williams looking over my shoulder when pen went to paper or fingers thumped heavily on the keyboards. Duplicating ink covers most of the walls at No. 88 and it's cost me a fortune in biro refills - Anyway, it's out and I hope you enjoy the reading.

On looking back over the previous editions the format of the newsletter hasn't changed a great deal and this one is no exception. However, I have given some thought to the possibility of changing the presentation in some way with particular reference to easier cataloguing and filing by each individual member. Therefore, should you have any ideas on the subject, drop me a line or have a word down in the pub (or on Meets if I'm there!!) I'll be only too pleased to discuss any ideas that you may have, but remember that cost is an important factor. The Editorial of Vol 18 No. 3 concerned this subject and Chris Radcliffe who was the 'spurge merchant' at the time put forward several comments but stated that the cost of elaborating, for want of a better word, would be high. This was back in November 1971 so you can guess as well as anybody that today the word money is spelt with a capital "M". To give you an example of what you are paying for, I went into a stationery shop about four weeks ago and purchased 500 sheets of the paper that you're reading from and the cost was £1.03½ (per box of 500). Exactly one week later I returned for a further 2,000 sheets and the price had shot up to £1.81 per box of 500. This week, well it wasn't so bad - £1.95 per box, but then again they get you on the ink!

Anyway - enough of moaning about inflation - let's get down to what's been happening recently within the Club. Since your last newsletter the Club has been fairly active but alas very few of you have taken the trouble to put pen to paper. I've received nothing on the Christmas festivities and activities although several teams were away. Club members have been pea-henning in Bormio, Medesimo and the Cairngorms, but again - not a word.

This newsletter is a bit of an odds and sods affair as you will see as you read through it. It has a smattering of the late Alpine visitors, a touch of the Bullstone bumlars and a dram of the presidents (meet) alcoholics anonymous. It has been a strange affair gathering up and piecing together what you will find in these few pages but you only have yourselves to blame if you find it as strange as I do. The only remedy is to switch the telly off and get cracking on some article, poem or perhaps a write-up on a recent meet, even if you didn't lead it. The floor is yours - use it.

The A.G.M. came in March and it gave us all a chance to air our views as well as to listen to the top table spouters who have run your Club in the last twelve months.

The new officers and committee that were elected are as follows:-

President:	Gordon Gadsby
Vice President:	Nat Allen
Hon. Secretary:	Colin Hobday
Assistant Secretary:	Dave Williams
Hon. Treasurer:	Laurie Burns
Welsh Hut Custodian:	J. Welbourne
Derbyshire Hut Custodian:	R. Squires
Committee:	D. Burgess S Firth P. Bingham G. Wright C Raddliffe
Editor (Newsletter)	D. Appleby
Meets Sec	K Gregson

One thing that did come up under A.O.B. was the Tuesday venue - a much heated discussion was finally settled by the committee agreeing to look into the subject. Well, the ball's put back into your court. At the last committee meeting it was suggested that suggestions should come from the body of the Club, so let's have your views to Colin Hobday. But one or two points must be borne in mind:

1. Easy access between Derby, Nottingham and M.1
2. Ample car parking
3. Plenty of room for an influx of up to 40 people.
4. Good ale.

Lets hope that the committee receive plenty of response to this and so finally put it to bed. If no response is forthcoming it can only be considered that everyone is satisfied with the Moon and wish to stay at the (b.....) place.

In conclusion, some apology must be offered for the delay in between newsletters. This has been caused through lack of material and to a lesser extent on the change-over between Paul Bingham and myself. It is to be hoped that an edition will be produced three times a year but this depends on material received, therefore I await your correspondence.

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Thought for the Oread.

There are more precious things that one can lose, in life than ones youth.

For Sale.

I pair of leather lightweight boots, as new, size 7-7½. Contact Ed.

Wanted.

Child's sleeping bag for a seven year old. Contact Ed.

(translated from a German Mountain Journal
by the writer)

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How mountain walking is 'in' again (the summer months are usually too hot for mountain walking) Four hundred people climbed on Saturday to the Benediktenwand (near Munich), a non-stop trail of people from bottom to top, like a caravan in the desert. The summit of the Alpspitze (Wetterstein) saw more than five hundred people. Somebody's remark 'it's like on the Matterhorn, only 5000m lower down', he really had hoped to find solitude and quiet.

As I said, 'Mountain walking is 'in'. Motorways are packed, restaurants and pubs are packed, the Alpenverein warns: Don't count on getting a bed in the huts at the weekends. Now even the last benches and tables become hard sleeping places for tired mountain walkers.

The picture of course is not very different on the Olperer in the Tuxer Alps. All two hundred Alpinists which climb the 3500m high 'fashion peak' on one day brought along their ropes, ice axes and crampons. Of course most of it is then being deposited at the start of the rocky ridge. Here the scrambling starts and a lot of luggage is only of hindrance. A thief (who naturally doesn't exist amongst climbers) would have had a good haul: 6 ropes, 12 iceaxes, 7 pair of ski sticks, 17 rucksacks and 9 pair of crampons. On both Olperer ridges (the difficult north ridge and the easier north east ridge) people climb around like ants. There are rope commandos, shouts of delight, rather our of tune yodlers - each one in his own way. 'Now there is no need to be nervous any more, Theodore' - or 'Don't keep on standing on my fingers' - or 'For God's sake, let me pass if you must be so slow'. But the ridge is narrow, people hang on steel ropes like bunches of grapes.

The only chance of having the mountain to yourself is when one comes up by first cable car early in the morning from where you can be on the summit in one hour thirty minutes. However lots of people have the same idea in their heads and by the time it is 8a.m. (that is the time the lift opens) hundreds are already waiting, wanting to be the first ones. Naturally there are lots of summer skiers amongst them, as the whole area has been opened up for skiers by providing lifts and tows everywhere.

Another popular peak in the Zillertal is the Ahornspitze (2900m). The lift at the terminal covers the first 1000m climb up. The following conversation has been heard at the terminal of the lift, where the cabins bring up 50 summit candidates every 20 minutes, in front of a signpost saying 'Ahornspitze - 4 hours': 'Is that time for up and down or for up only, Henry?'. A local was heard grumbling 'It just depends, silly Madam'.

On the path to the summit we meet walkers of all kinds - their stomachs hanging over the top of their shorts, women in Dirndls showing lots of flesh young people in jeans and old gentlemen with wet handkerchiefs on their bald heads. The sun is hot. On the summit we can hear the shocked outburst: 'But Alfred, your shirt is wet through, you will get a chill'. From the top a view from the Grossvenediger right to the Zuckerhütl. Forty people are sitting on the summit rock - the summit book contains 2500 entries for this year alone. If you also count those that did not enter, there might have been well over 5000 people on this peak.

So, don't let anyone say we will develop into a lazy lot of cardrivers.

DOLOMITES - August 1974

Colin and Uschi Hobday

After spending a few very hot days in Munich and at the same time depositing the children for a week, we left in the early morning of August 20th in wet and misty conditions. Taking the old road over the Brenner to avoid the heavy toll on the new Motorway (£1.50p single for approximately ten miles) we soon reached Brixen or Bressano where we turned off into the lonely Villnösser Valley.

We had been warned of the Italian bandits who strip nearly every car parked in lonely areas so as we planned to park at the edge of the forest, everything moveable inside the car was transferred to the boot.

We got our rucksacks ready and set off for the Brogles Alm, situated at the foot of the massive Geissler Range and soon the high rock walls of the Fermeda Tower came into sight towering above the forest. Not long after our start a thunderstorm brewed up and we only just made it to the Brogles Alm (2045m) before the heavens opened. In the hut we sat in the dark for most of the afternoon with the shutters closed in fear of the hail damaging the windows and with just a little candle per table because there was no electricity supply. Upon enquiring for a Matratzenlager we were told that they had only a bed or the hay barn to offer. As the price for the bed was 2,500 Lire (£2.50p) and the barn only 300 Lire we decided on the barn. This proved to be quite comfortable until the farmer arrived very early in the morning to put the hay on which we were lying down through the trap door to the cows below. I don't know who had the bigger shock, he or us. The weather was fine and after a quick breakfast we were off up to the Pana Scharte by which one can cross the Geissler Range. Most of the peaks are actually climbed from the other side. Once on the Pana Col the view to the Dolomites unfolded, directly in front the massive Langkofel, to our left the Sella Group with the Marmolata in the background. We took a short descent across meadows and a steep climb brought us to the summit of the Seceda (2516m). Needless to say, a lift spat out a large amount of tourists coming up from the winter sports villages of St. Ulrich and St. Christine of the Grödnertal, so we turned our backs on them and took a long traverse across high alpine meadows with their many rare flowers which brought us to a secluded Alm, where we watched the owner woodcarving for the tourists in the valley. However, a rumble of thunder soon cut short our stay and sent us hurrying down to the Regensburger Hut (2059m). The hut, large by Alpine standards, proved to be a very pleasant place, with a friendly hut warden who poured out free 'Schnaps' for everybody at bedtime.

With the weather good again the next day we set off to climb the highest peak in the Geissler group which is the Sass Rigais (3025m). The usual walk up over high meadows was taken before reaching the scree gully of the Mittagscharte which we had to climb for several hundred feet before it was possible to traverse out right onto the East ridge. After a while the climbing gave way to easy scrambling before returning onto the exposed ridge which led direct to the summit. On the summit we were entertained by some perfect jodelling by a group of climbers, whilst we looked at all the rock towers which surrounded us. Most of them, like the Fermeda, Furchette, Torkkofel etc., looked inaccessible to us. We took the descent by the much steeper West ridge which soon brought us down to the Wasser-rinne (couloir). We returned to the Regensburger Hut for another night.

The following day we left early and took a path which brought us steeply over broken rocks and scree to the Wasserscharte (2645m) where we crossed the Geissler group again. The view was disappointing with patches of mist

swirling all around us. From the col a long descent brought us to the Kreuzjoch before we had to climb back up over the Sobusch and down again to the Schlüter Hut. Most of these huts are in Italian hands although they were originally all owned by Tyrolleans.

From this hut we climbed the Peitler Kofel which gives an excellent view of the whole Geissler group but again we were unlucky and had to stare at the mist instead. On the way to this peak we found the most gigantic Edelweiss plants. It is the only area that we have ever found with this rare flower in such great abundance and no tourists there to pick them. We had now come to the end of our time and descended back into the valley via the Hunkle Weg, one of the most beautiful walks on the Dolomites, always the gigantic rock towers of the Geissler group in full view. We found our car in good order and without being broken into which was quite a relief. We drove back to Brizen to have a look round the Italian market. Here we came across at least four stalls with nothing else but climbing boots for sale from infant size right up to adult size in all price ranges and qualities, so it did not take us long to find just the right pairs for our needs.

We were soon back in Munich eagerly awaited for by the children and after another few days swimming in the lakes it was back to good old England.

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THE ISLAND OF RHUM - JULY 1974

Gordon Gadsby

'There's a whale' cried the small boy, clinging tightly to the handrail as the ex-minesweeper, Loch Arkalg, pounded at full speed through the Sound of Rhum. After some excited discussions amongst the rest of the passengers, and a couple more sightings, it was generally agreed that this denizen of the deep keeping pace with us was in fact a large shark. It soon tired of the uneven race and was lost to sight against the dark swaying waves. An hour later as we slowly turned into Loch Scresort, some gannets and a great skua flashed across the upper deck as if to welcome us to our home for the next week, the Island of Rhum.

Landing was interesting on that perfect July evening as we were ferried first by motor launch and finally by rowing boat across the tranquil waters of the loch to step into the slippery seaweedcovered landing stage. A tractor complete with trailer was there to meet us and to accomodate the mountain of gear piled up on the slipway. It was a mottley crew, six of us from the Oread Mountaineering Club, a dozen Rover Scouts plus leaders, a couple from the Nature Conservancy of Scotland, some Scientists, Botanist and a lecturer from Bristol University with his family. The warden shook hands with us and offered a choice of two camp-sites, one by the seashore and the other in Kinloch Glen. (The Scientists etc. would be staying in the former servant's quarters of Kinloch Castle).

We chose the seashore and as we pitched our tents on this idyllic site we saw a small group of climbers from Lancashire packing their gear away ready for the early boat in the morning. Strangely, although it was by now a cool evening, they were all wearing shorts. I chatted to one about this and he said, 'You'll be the same if you have weather like we've had - it's rained non-stop for days'.

With this sobering thought in mind Margaret and I took an evening walk along the rough road embracing the head of Loch Scresort. The sky was a

delicate shade of pink, some oyster catchers chattered along the shoreline in the gloaming and further out to sea some eider ducks and black throated divers were sporting about. Several yachts were dotted across the bay and from one of them a sailor could be heard serenading his girl friend. The road took us by the Warden's house then in about a hundred yards we came to the entrance of Kinloch Castle, a magnificent building made of red sandstone specially brought from Arran at the turn of the century. The island was owned for over a hundred years by the Bullough family and the castle contains many relics and objects of art collected by Sir George and his descendants. On our last day on Rhum we were lucky enough to have a conducted tour of this outpost of luxury on an otherwise wild and desolate island. For tonight though we contented ourselves with a peep through the arched gateway and across what used to be extensive lawns, but are now used to grow hay for feeding the small herd of cattle and Rhum ponies on the bleak winter days. The soil for the lawns was all imported from Ayrshire in the early 1800s.

Returning to the road by the shore we soon reached the only shop on the island; this is also a Post Office and boasts the only link with the mainland. The shop stocks most small provisions, except bread - there is no need to worry however, as the back shelves are completely stocked up with whisky and canned beer.

Apart from visitors the island has a population of between 30 and 40 persons, all working for the nature conservancy, plus a school teacher. A far cry from the 1780s when the population was over 400.

After passing the shop the road curves round to the left up Kinloch Glen and continues over the hills for eight miles to Harris Bay where the Bullough family Mausoleum is situated, looking like some Grecian Monument, and seeming a bit odd in this wild and beautiful landscape. Margaret and I turned back on the fringe of the Glen and as we slowly retraced our steps the tranquillity of the place was really felt. The pink dappled water in the bay was now almost still and the twinkling lights of Mallaig (3½ hours away by ferry) were reflecting across the sea. Close by the shore the black velvety head of a seal kept bobbing up in its efforts to see if all was clear. As we approached the area set aside for camping, smoke from three camp fires was slowly spiraling upwards in the still night air. On Rhum all rubbish must be burnt so no excuse was necessary to start a fire. We joined Frank Shirley, Susan and Julia Goldsmith round their fire and spent a happy hour chatting and contemplating what the mountains of Rhum would have in store for us tomorrow.

We were awakened by the call of the eight o'clock boat - it was a glorious sunny morning, but the dazzling pattern of the cirrus clouds was full of foreboding for the day to come. There were now about fifteen of us left on the site, four lads from the Blackburn area set off at 9.30a.m. with the intention of doing the main ridge, having been thwarted by bad weather for many days, and we heard later that a group of Rover Scouts had set off at 6.00a.m. (very keen leader) also aiming for the six summits that comprise the Cuillin of Rhum. From conversations with various parties it appeared that no one had completed the traverse due to either appalling weather conditions, or the fact that some areas had been placed out of bounds (on otherwise good days) by the warden.

By the time Margaret Frank and I were ready it was nearing eleven o'clock, the weather was reasonable but fast clouding over. However we decided to have a look at it and set off along the track which starts from the Castle grounds and headed for the Bealach Barkeval, one of the main passes on the Cuillin.

Within the hour we reached a wild open corrie (coire Dubh) the westerly winds we already bringing a spattering of rain as they swept over Barkevals 1924 summit directly in front of us. Hallival, which lies on the left of the tract, was already swamped in waves of sombre clouds. We hurriedly donned our waterproofs and a few minutes later the rain came down in earnest. One hour later we reached the cairn on Barkeval, the wind was by now gale force and the rain content was unbelievable.

Our retreat from the top was impressive, bounding down on loose gravelly slopes with rivulets of water everywhere. Now and again we would startle a small herd of deer. (There are approximately 1500 deer on Rhum, but they would soon be lost to sight in the curtains of rain sweeping across both flanks). The rain continued unabated all that day and the following night with just a brief glimmer of sunshine around ten o'clock the next morning - enough to tempt Margaret and myself into another foray towards the main ridge. This time we took the pony track towards Glen Dibidil and at the highest point of the track we made our way across very boggy rising ground to reach the shores of remote Loch Coire Nan Grund situated below the saddle between Hallival and Rhum's highest peak, Askival. We had lunch here sitting amongst some of the most bizarre boulders I have ever seen - the rock is Peridotite and the grip it affords for climbing is almost as good (if not better) than gabbro. Before we had finished eating, the already low clouds enveloped us completely and we became just two more shapes in the mass of storm riven boulders by the loch side. Within minutes the rain started, sporadic at first and then as the wind increased it came driving down even harder than yesterday.

Reluctantly we decided to descend, but instead of going back the way we had come we made our way down to the sea at Bagh no Uamha, the bay of caves, also called Cable Bay, as the telephone cable to the mainland enters the sea at this point. The bay is made up of several small rocky coves, each with a fine sandy beach with fresh water running down at several points. This would be an ideal spot for camping, but prior permission would have to be obtained from the warden. The distance from here to the landing stage at Loch Scresort takes a good 1½ hours along a very soggy coast! We arrived back at the tents absolutely soaked through - no more really dry clothes left - so now we too were wearing our shorts!

As before the rain continued throughout the night only this time accompanied by gale force winds, and in the morning the fine sandy beach in front of our tents was studded with hoof prints of countless deer driven down by the gale. This explained the grunting we'd heard above the roar of the wind, and the drumming of the rain and the constant flapping of the canvas. By 9.00 a.m. the last of the rain had gone and a watery sun suddenly burst into full brilliance, the nearby rocks started to steam and the bedraggled campers quickly came to life.

Frank, Margaret and I were away by 10.45, complete with sweaters hanging on our sacs to dry. Even so we were almost an hour behind the Rover Scouts and our friend Roger Avery from Bristol. The weather remained fine for the next hour and a half as we slowly ascended the Dibidil track, pausing only once to watch the islander's launch setting off on its annual pilgrimage to the nearest church on the Isle of Canaa. Shirley, Sue and Julia were on the boat, so we waved vigorously just in case th

had the binoculars focussed on us.

It was great to be out at last on what looked like being a good day. Ahead of us the craggy top of Hallival was clear, although still glistening wet from the early rain. As we steadily gained the flanks of the north ridge we saw a figure outlined against the sky only yards away from the summit - we guessed it was Roger. A sudden increase in wind velocity and a few drops of rain made us keep well below the ridge crest, although we still continued to ascend the very broken flank of the mountain. Ten minutes later a clattering of scree made us look up and we saw Roger hurrying down towards the Bealach Barkeval. We shouted ourselves almost hoarse, but to no avail, our voices were lost in the wind.

The reason for his haste was soon apparent as masses of cloud swept over the ridge, this was also accompanied by heavy rain and we cursed our luck. We heard later that the Rover Scouts had been midway between Hallival and Askival when the storm came and that they also had retreated from the main ridge. So although we did not know it at the time, we had the mountains of Rhum all to ourselves. As this was our last full day on the island we decided to try and ride out the storm for as long as we could. We huddled against some giant boulders about two hundred feet from the summit and had a bite to eat. An hour passed without too much discomfort and then lo and behold the rain stopped, the wind dropped to a whisper and glimpses of blue sky appeared as if by magic over the sodden landscape.

Frank rose and shook himself. "Let's knock this one off while we can" he said, as he drained the last drop of coffee from his flask (he always carries two!). The last two hundred feet were easy scrambling on rock called Allivite and soon the three of us stood on the mist-shrouded, gently rounded top at a modest height of 2,365'. We'd made it at our third attempt! The mist cleared for a few seconds and Margaret spotted the Mausoleum on sun-kissed Harris Bay, also a quick glimpse of cloud capped Skye Cuillin and the coastline of Loch Scavaig.

Five minutes later we were on our way down the ridge towards Askival - this was easy but with some interesting scrambling on the last two hundred feet to the col. The mist was still with us as we explored this unique grassy saddle. The grass is short as befits a bowling green and the whole area is riddled with the burrows of the small seabirds called Manx Shearwaters. The birds spend the daylight hours on the sea between Rhum, Skye and Eigg and then when it is almost dark they arrive at these holes in their thousands (there are an estimated 70,000 pairs nesting on Rhum). They are so ungainly on land that if they arrived in daylight they would be harrassed by marauding gulls and Rhum Eagles.

Soon the north ridge of Askival appeared through the mist, gently rounded at first, it soon gave way to rock scrambling of a similar nature to the easier parts of Skye. The rock is mainly Allivite, a light coloured rock with dark spots scattered over it. When seen close to - it seemed almost as good as gabbro. In the misty conditions the ridge occasionally looked very impressive with magnificent gendarmes, the main one being the famous Askival Pinnacle. This is undoubtedly the finest part of the main ridge traverse and was suitably enjoyed by us all;

a rope is not necessary although we carried one with us in case. The summit of Askival, the highest peak on Rhum, was finally reached by scrambling over large blocks to the Trig point at 2,659'.

Again we had no really good views because of the mist, but we had no difficulty in finding our correct ridge to descend and soon we were scrambling down towards the Bealach an Oir (the Pass of Gold). In no time we were in glorious sunshine with fine views of Glen Harris on one side and the beautiful shaped Glen Dibidil on the other, and we were also able to see several groups of red deer feeding on the slopes of both glens. The pass itself was wide with fine short grass and superb views of the Isle of Eigg four miles away across the Sound of Rhum.

We could easily have left the main ridge here and descended into Glen Dibidil, and as the time was almost 4.15 p.m. we did think seriously of doing this. However the lure of completing the traverse and making up for our earlier failures was far too strong, so with Margaret leading we made our way up the wide steep ridge of Trollaval. In less than an hour we were on the Peak of Trolls at 2,300', the most central of the Rhum Guillins. The summit ridge of this peak is very airy and requires care. Luckily the mist had gone and we enjoyed fantastic views of the surrounding islands and lonely Loch Papadil. This mountain has some of the longest and finest climbing on the island including a four hundred foot wall of gabbro called Harris Buttress. The main ridge now swings sharply to the South with a steep descent down the flanks of some very good climbing areas.

Our next objective, Ainshaval 2,552', now loomed impressively rising steeply from the Pass of Springs 1730' just below us, in a great rock buttress, followed by a sharp arete and a curving rim of short cliffs leading to the just visible summit. The cloud was again building up rapidly, and as we toiled laboriously round the buttress on its west side, the mist once more enveloped us completely, only this time it was accompanied by the finest drizzle. The rocks (mostly quartz felsite) quickly became treacherous and route finding very difficult, as the mountain tried to hide her secrets behind a clammy white shroud. We were now feeling very tired and it was a great relief when a short slimey gully led us through the cliffs and onto the final grassy top of Ainshaval, the second highest on Rhum. Frank followed us a couple of minutes later, even more relieved to see the top than we had been. He swallowed what was left of his second flask of coffee, draining the last dregs into his permanently parched mouth, and said "Is this the last peak, can we go down now?" When I informed him that there were still two more to go, a glazed look came into his eyes. "Can't you see I'm Chinese lacquered!" he gasped. I could but did not admit. Knowing that he had already done more peaks in a day than ever before, I sympathised and then convinced him that the only way for a true Oread was over those two last summits.

The first one we easily gained by following the rim of the Forgotten Corrie to the small cairn marking Sgurr nan Goibhreas 2,475' (not named on the map). On a fine sunny day this peak would hardly be noticed, but in misty conditions we experienced the cairn was a confidence booster and from here we took a compass bearing on the final peak, Sgurr nan Gillian. As the

swirled in ever thicker we followed the undulating high plateaux with a final rise to the large cairn at 2,503' the southernmost peak on Rhum - the time was 7.15 p.m. According to the excellend guide to Rhum by Hamish M. Brown, the descent of this peak towards Dibidil is not straightforward and the steep broken ground followed by a steep grassy flank merits V.S. grading at the end of a long day.

We duly took our time and carefully descended in a southerly direction first down some scree slopes, then by two interesting gullies, and finally emerging from beneath the clouds at around the 1,700' contour into the full glory of an Hebridean evening, Eigg and Muck still sunlit, swam on a silver sea watched over by a crescent moon. Within an hour we had reached Dibidil bothy, a magnificent place to spend the night surrounded by mountains, yet less than a hundred yards from the turbulent sea - the time was 8.45 p.m. Alas we had not much time to tarry, already Shirley and the girls would be wondering where we'd got to. We ate our emergency rations (three Mars bars), fed Frank the last of the glucose tablets and then had a look in the hut book, quickly seeing the name of a fellow Oread, Jim Kershaw.

We were a little dismayed to find that most people had taken around three hours to cover the six miles from Kinloch and that in broad daylight! As we rather reluctantly shouldered our sacs and left this haven at 9.10 p.m. our eyes were immediately attracted towards the Bealach an Oir between Askival and Trollaval. The westering sun, free at last from the clinging clouds, was lighting the pass and the now mist-free peaks with its brilliant light. From the col the main watershed of the glen came down to our feet like a bubbling river of gold.

With this lasting memory of a fantastic end to a wonderful day, we made light work of the six miles back to Kinloch. As we entered camp it started to rain, the time was 11.45 p.m. The end of a very long day, but one we would remember for the rest of our lives.

The following day we sailed for the mainland and as we left Rhum we changed boats with a score of Gillies from the main estates of Scotland, going to the island to learn the art of deer stalking. We hoped they too would enjoy the beauties of Rhum as we had done.

The Presidents meet, like last year's, was held at Heathy Lea. It began on Friday evening, as most Oread functions do, in a pub.

Saturday dawned fine and after the barn was made ready for the evening's high jinks, the Gregsons, Les Peel, Rock Hudson, John Doughty, Denstone Pete and myself trudged across Burbage from "the Grouse" to spend a pleasant couple of hours climbing on Stange, returning via Padley Gorge and the Grindieford Cafe.

The nite began in the "Wheatsheaf" and some three drinking hours later sixty or seventy eager movers returned to the hut to demolish our now famous "Norweigan Table". This year, literally creaking with savouries and goodies. As advertised, the dancing was to "Big Belly Carnel's Disco", spot prizes and novelties followed, until the moment all eagerly awaited: Handley, now flushed with Scotch courage, challenged Appleby for what sadly may be the last time. To say he was thrashed in a sequence of trials of strength by this younger, fitter man was putting it mildly! Eventually we got to bed, and after a 10.30 dawn, the barn was mucked out and the debris successfully disposed of. Grudgingly a group of us chased "Foxtrot Ashcroft" to Froggatt and back in a torrential downpour.

What do I remember? A good day out on Saturday, the session in the pub, the grub (many thanks girls) and the laughs. So what did we miss, not much I think. Probably one of Margaret Hooley's rubber mince pies. My thanks once again to all who came and gave it hell!

Copy of letter sent to Mr. W. Hayes from Mr. T. Daffern,
106 Wimbledon Crescent, Calgary T3C 3J1, Alberta.

Dear Mr. Hayes,

The book "Climb If You Will" has arrived safely. We very much appreciate your efforts to get us a copy. Glad to hear the book's a sell out - it certainly got good reviews in the Climbing Magazines.

We knew some of the Cread very well - George Sutton, Eric Byne, Harry Pretty and Jim Kershaw who was up in Spitzbergen with us in 1950. It's interesting to find out what they are doing these days. I was also considerably surprised to find myself on a photo taken on the 1958 Marsden-Rowsley Walk!

We're returning to England for a holiday at Christmas and are wondering how we'll find things.

Copy Climbing over here in the Canadian Rockies is very much in its infancy - few huts, few people and every climb an expedition - still many, many unclimbed peaks. Actually, I can't wait to get back and have a good bash over the Derbyshire Moors!

Dear Mr. Hayes,

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The book "Climb If You Will" has arrived safely. We very much appreciate your effort. Our best wishes. Glad to hear the book's a sell out - it certainly got good reviews in the Climbing Magazines.

Gill and Tony Daffern.

We knew some of the Cread very well - George Sutton, Eric Byne, Harry Pretty and Jim Kershaw who was up in Spitzbergen with us in 1950. It's interesting to find out what they are doing these days. I was also considerably surprised to find myself on a photo taken on the 1958 Marsden-Rowsley Walk!

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A man stood hitting his head against a brick wall and was asked why, he replied "well its great when its stops". Sitting in the dining room of the Church Hotel, warmly contemplating gammon & chips, we knew just what he meant. The thirty-six hour trauma of rain, sodden clothes a wind that left staggering bodies all the way up Margery Hill, and knee-deep oozing peat marked us all. Even the veteran masochist and slavedriver Ashcroft was keeping quiet (except in the cabin where he insisted on talking on the subject he inclines to—all bloody night.) But maybe this was a suberecus protest at the conditions. Certain ageing members of the club were absent from the meet, the result of a reconoitre the previous week-end, it was stated by Bingham that they were degenerate. By Sunday it was evident that they were merely cunning, such were the thoughts engineered by a few jars of ale and the previously mentioned gammon.

An element of competition entered into the crossing of the moor on the Friday night, possibly occasioned by the rumour that we were booked into Lockerbrook on the Saturday and not the Friday! The result however was fairly normal—a shambles. Once more, Williams rising cry of " Follow me, this is the way", was heard, whereupon he disappeared alone and was not seen for some hours. Jhon Dench, straight from the bush in tropical greens and solar topee, fell by the wayside in Golden Clough following a four hour sundowner in the Nag's Head. Eventually, Lockerbrook was reached where Pete Scott (after breaking into the place) performrd the last rites.

Saturday's stroll turned into a grueller. It started pleasantly at first, up the path from the Derwent Dam, then Abbey Brook until the waterfall near the top was reached. Here a cold, wet lunch was taken in the cabin. Ever onwards, we flogged up Featherbed Moss and eventually met the wind on Margery Hill. With infated cagovles and bodies leaning drunkenly, loose rocks flying away at the touch of a boot we finally arrived, via Bull Clough and a long slog up the Derwent track, into Lower Small clough. No sympathy was offered to anybody—from anybody.

The serio-comic situation of having twenty-five bodies in the Lower Small clough cabins sent a breakaway group over to an abode in the West End. It was adequate (and only just) for five bodies, but around 10.0pm a knock on the door, greeted by a chorus of "sod off", was followed by Kershaw's dramatic entrance, who looked somewhat haggard after searching for Small clough for some six hours without map or compass, or even torch. Back at the cabins in Lower Small clough the usual social stratification was evident with Chambers, Radcliffe and company in the lower refuge and the plebians (supervised by Scott from his now traditional perch on the table) in the upper one. There was no escaping water, it was running down the wall and right through the hut. Jim Winfield 'cast off' on his lilo and declared water beds to be just the thing. Graham Slater (on his first meet) wondered why no one slept in the corner and Rusty slept under the table, which is a position he is not used to.

Sunday dawned at the crack of 9.0am, wet and with the clag right down. A good day did not seem likely, so it was agreed that a rapid retreat down into the West End was on. A pleasant stroll down to Alport, and one hell of a flog up Blackden brought us into the clag again. Small, but numerous parties could be spotted running about in all directions, but all eventually arrived back in Edale for the gammon & chips.

Thanks for coming -see you next year.

Attendance-23 members and 4 prospective members.

SYMONONDS YAT. (April 11th-13th)DAVE APPLEBY

Judith, Elizabeth and I arrived early on the Saturday morning to meet up with Keith Gregson and Stuart Firth on the campsite at Christchurch. The latter two set off for the crags while we were settling in, meeting up in the Sargacen's Head, down by the river at lunch-time. After some refreshment the three of us returned to the crag, leaving Judith to make her own way back to the campsite with the nipper.

We were all in an 'attacking mood' when we arrived below the Seven Sisters - Gregson threw himself at the crag with a certain amount of alcoholic aggression, followed by Stuart who talked non stop. It was not until he went into total silence that we realised that Keith had on the end of his rope a five pint barrel of scrumpy in the obriptive body of Stuart. It went on like a panto-mime, but eventually all was well and a return was made to the foot of the crag.

Not having a guide book didn't help, especially when the meet leader was forced into taking the other two on what Keith said "had better be a good route or else! One was selected which could only be described as suicidal (the meet leader not knowing prior to leaving the ground). It was like climbing a vertical book case - if you didn't like the hold you put it back. It was agreed by all that it was O.K to stand to stand on a loose block so long as you didn't give it an outward pull. Scrumpy Stuart was wishing he'd had another couple of pints as he set off, throwing loose blocks far and wide. The route finished up a vertical 'choss' of mud, crowned by an unsurmountable tree that had to be circumnavigated by using ones teeth! The meet leader was told in a very direct manner, and with very few words that he wasn't to pick another route until we had all sobered up.

Several more climbs were done (on very sound rock) before a hasty return was made to the campsite. A meal was consumed as the sun went down, followed by a two hour stint in the boozer. A good day indeed.

On the Sunday Keith and Stuart returned to the crag and gave it more punishment while Judith, Elizabeth and I went for a walk in the forest.

It was a very small turn-out but the weather was good and the campsite pleasant which made up for the lack of interest shown in the meet. Lets hope that more people turn up next year.

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Wanted for this years annual dinner- actors, strippers, plastic boobs, wigs and G strings. Also some good ideas and preferably a script.

Contact Sir Raymond "Delicat" Handley as soon as possible (who actually stated after the last dinner that he would organise the next cabaret. Ed.)

PROFILE

GEORGE RHODES

George "see em off" Rhodes is first on our list in this reinstatement of PROFILE.

He is known by most Oreads but probably our recent generation recognise him as the man who comes up well with the leaders in the Dovedale Dash. George set the early record for this event and donated the trophy which is competed for each year.

He joined the club in 1962 at the age of 67 just after having major transplant surgery, namely two bullocks legs in place of the common or garden sort that we lesser mortals have to put up with. It was not long after this that Handley gave up serious running.

George's natural ability, his ever will to win along with stamina, guts, competitive spirit and mile after mile of training, led him to represent England at the Empire Games in 1934 (that dates him and a few more besides!) It can only be to his credit that he has run in many major events up and down the country, always with splendid success. But the Dash always remains his favourite and we can be sure that for many more years we shall see his stocky figure weaving its way up to the front of the field where it belongs. George will be changed back into his whistle and flute having consumed at least three pints of the 'girlies' tea before Tom Green and Dave Williams turn into the bottom of the drive for the final tortuous finish.

Last year he was still tucking them under his belt by taking three major 'veterans' titles. First was the Three Peaks Race (Pen-y-Ghent, Ingleborough and Whernside); secondly in the Edale "Skyliner" which I believe takes in Grindsbrook around to Brown Knoll, Lords Seat over Mam Tor, Losehill, Winhill-about turn, right hand up a bit over the edges and so back to Edale. Last but not least he went on and took another over-40's title in the Three Towers Race which I believe is a mere 20 mile amble around Cannock Chase.

On the climbing scene, and that's why he joined the Club, George has always been a competent mountaineer, and I'm sure he will agree, he has never claimed or even desired to be one of those fearless tigers that one finds in climbing who get more pleasure at it than Fisher does throwing bricks at plate glass windows. He spends a lot of time in Wales, with his family, where he has a delightful cottage in the Betws-y-Coed area. As well as the Oread he's also a member of the Rucksack Club.

In between all these activities he runs a very successful garage and motor car concern - altogether a most delightful companion, a first-class athlete and a valuable asset to the Oread Mountaineering Club.

I trust you have enjoyed this edition of your newsletter - if so, just put pen to paper, send it off and I'll get my fingers worn down to the bone again - with pleasure.

ASHES TO ASHESDUSTIN KRAPPMAN.

Since 'our mans' last visit to that most celebrated mountains of all mountains, the Matterhorn, certain facts have come to light. It appears, on talking to an official from the Ministry of Tourism in Basle that he has set them a bit of a problem, causing much confusion as well as some considerable cost. It all revolves around his last ascent of the Hörnli ridge. So much congestion was caused by his habitual and selfish 45 minute stint that something just had to be done. Consequently, the ministry have poured in thousands of francs into a rare convenience- a fully functional gas-powered lavatory which converts human waste into dust. It is situated just below the fixed ropes above the shoulder. As most of you know (either by actual ascent or by guide book) there are seven in number therefore the loo has been situated at the side of the rope that is popular with the Americans (he never has liked them since the day they entered themselves into the last war).

Recent statistics show that on a good day some 150 climbers attempt the peak so you can imagine the problems, the hold-ups 'our man' causes on that knife-edge ridge. So after many months of research & development they came up with the gas-powered loo. A trial run was made in the latter part of the '74 season but the loo was not an unqualified success due to a temmental burner setting, a rarefied atmosphere and failure to supply operating instructions in several languages.

An official explained, " as soon as you have finished you put down the seat lid and the contents start burning- there's an electric battery, a cylinder of compressed gas and a 7foot chimney. We are using this type of loo every day in the valley, and have done for many years but since your mans last visit to the mountain the ministry had to do something". He went on " It took the International Enviroment Corps seven weeks to get it up there and a further two weeks to get it going". He looked at me with a pained face- " Weve heard he's coming back this year, can't you suggest to him that he goes to another area ". "I'll see what I can do ", was my reply, " But he has this thing to prove to Wilson- something to do with the older generation and all that "

The official mopped his brow and then raised his head and looked up at the mountain. " Then theres the telephone ", he said. "What telephone", said I, looking rather enquiringly. "Whats this about a telephone", "Well, a couple of years ago a violent storm hit the ridge and blew away his pigeon loft (used for worldwide communication), It was situated just behind the Solvay Hut, pigeons were scattered everywhere- in all directions, it was a disastrous affair. Well, your man came along and insisted that we make amends or offer an alternative system of some kind. He kept on shouting, ' Do you know who I am ' and started mentioning names like Herr Pettigashen and Frau Welbunz. Are they polititions in your country", he asked, "No" I said, "but they can be just as amusing".

The last report is that instructions in seven languages have been fitted to the loo (under the seat) and may be used by all, but the telephone is for the use of 'our man' only, unless someone returns the last breeding pair which were last seen in the bar at the Lady-Bower Inn.

Post script. See next mag for actual details on the loo & telephone.