



September 2007 Newsletter

Editorial September 2007

Welcome back – I hope you all had a good Summer. Though the evening sun doesn't shine for quite so long, there are several evening meets in hand before we see the traditional curry meet to signal the lack of evening light for climbing. This year Tony Howard has taken on organizing the indoor meets., Do come along to the Royal Oak, Ockbrook on the first Tuesday of the month (starting October) for our winter indoor meets talks & slide shows.

Do look out for the Annual Dinner in November too – a venue where we can swap those epic tales from our Summer expeditions.

Forthcoming meets

Sept	Tues 11 th	C'ttee Meeting - Smithfield		
	15 th to 20 th	Lundy	Derek Pike	01332 670459
	Wed 26 th	Last Summer evening meet	Simon Pape	01629 822450
	29 th & 30 th	Heathy Lea BBQ & bonfire	Neil Weatherstone	01629 823953
Oct	Tues 2 nd	Indoor meet		
	Tues 9 th	C'ttee Meeting - Smithfield		
	13 th - 14 th	Tan-yr-Wyddfa	Tony Howard	01332-273307
	27 th & 28 th	Heathy Lea		
Nov	Sun 4 th	Dovedale Dash	Rob Tresidder	01629-823953
	Tue 13 th	C'ttee Meeting - Smithfield		
	Sat 24 th	Annual Dinner	Neil & Tracy Weatherstone	
	Sun 25 th	After Dinner walk		

Curry Meet – Wednesday 26th September

As has become traditional, we're planning to go to the Matlock Bath Balti for a curry to mark the end of evening cragging. The only difference this year seems to be that evening cragging hasn't started due to the rain. As in previous years, my plan will be for a quick route on Wild Cat (or maybe Willersley, High Tor or Black Rocks), maybe a sneaky beer in the County and Station before going to the curry house for about 8. If you want to come along, please let me know so I can book enough places.

Simon Pape

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Heathy Lea Bonfire and Barbeque meet - Neil Weatherstone

Heathy Lea is very topical

Winter Lecture Programme: Tuesday 2 October: Indoor Meet.

The winter season is upon us again with a series of slide evenings starting at 8:00 pm on the first Tuesday of each month at the Royal Oak in Ockbrook. We have a professional speaker already lined up for November and an Oread for February. However, if you would like to make a presentation to the Club please get in touch with me. The first evening talk will be by me – as I have not been able to coerce

anybody else into this slot. The title will be 'A Fun Evening'. I'll look forward to seeing you there.

Tony Howard
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Curry Meet - Tan Yr Wyddfa : 13th -14th October 2007

North Wales, curry and beer again! We could get sunny rock to climb, skid and slide our way around Ogwen or go walking in the rain. Whatever the weather we should have a good time and get some exercise, before returning to T-Y-W for the usual hot food, good company and plenty to drink.

I plan to organise a communal meal, again. The cost for the food will be about £5 to £6 per person. If you would like to come and join me, and especially if you would be willing to do some cooking, please let me know ASAP.

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The Oread M.C. Annual Dinner

You are cordially invited to the Annual Dinner, to be held in the Arkwright Suite, the Lion Hotel Belper on 24th November 2007 at 8.00 p.m

Guest Speaker has yet to be decided.
Menu

Ors d'heurves: Broccoli & Stilton Soup, or Oak Smoked Salmon with a grain mustard dressing and crispy leaves, or Chicken Liver Pate With toasted brioche and chutney.

Main course: choice of Braised Beef Casserole With creamy mash potato, or Smoked Haddock Risotto with shaved parmesan and mixed leaves, or Asparagus Risotto with flaked Parmesan and dressed leaves

Dessert: American Baked Cheesecake With Fresh Strawberries, or Cherry Bakewell Tart with vanilla mascarpone

Digital photo competition for the menu front cover.

All digital photo entries, as jpeg files, to be received by the judges by 6.00 pm on 12th November (via mail or email weatherstone@

ntlworld.com). The winning picture will grace the front of the menu. Neil and Tracey Weatherstone will judge, and the judges' decision will be final!!

Hut Bookings for September

HEATHY LEA

Sept. 14/15th. R. Larkam cottage/barn
Sept. 21/22nd Derwent M C. cottage/barn.
Sept. 28/29th. Oread meet.

TAN YR WYDDFA

Sept. 14/15th. Buxton M. C. 12beds.
Sept. 21/22nd. South Cheshire M C 16 beds.
Sept. 28/29th. P. Storer Whole hut.
Oct. 5/6th. Gention M C. 16 beds.

PLEASE NOTE: Colin will be away from 3rd Sept. to 28th Sept, so please make hut bookings through Chud Hooley.

Derby Arboretum Boulder

No longer will desperate climbers in Derby have to resort to climbing under St Mary's bridge, there is now a new boulder to clamber over in Arboretum Park. It was opened on Sat 18th Aug. I joined the local kids and gave it a go. Plenty of features and little pockets with some overhanging sections. Worth a go if you are in the area.

Reports from past meets

Alpine Meet 2007 – Cortina d'Ampezzo (the Dolomites)

Whilst the UK was flooding (again) in July, 28 Oreads and pseudo-Oreads headed south for the sunshine in the Dolomites. In contrast to the wet weather at home, we had almost unbroken sunshine for three weeks, only interrupted by a few afternoon thunderstorms. Of the original suggestions, only one person managed to travel by train and injury prevented participation in the Sky Race. Many of the regular Alpine attendees were there, as well as several new faces – it was good to see them all.

The good weather meant many long routes were climbed. In contrast to the higher Alps, most Dolomite climbs can be achieved from the valley in a day without the need of huts. For the most part the routes attempted were of a relatively easy grade, with a few harder routes thrown in for good measure. There were more than a few adventures, probably best related by those involved. Two

experienced Alpinists discovered the hard way that the old Alpine Club guide is full of inaccuracies when they struggled to find the start of the Fiammes Arete, the classic of the area. The top pitches of the same route were described as "quite exciting" by another capable party, admittedly in an afternoon thunderstorm. Our illustrious President had a minor accident, falling off a tree stump whilst trying to lace his boot.

As well as the climbing, the area is famous for the many via ferrata, many originating in the first world war when the border between Austria and Italy lay through the Falzarego pass. These provided sport for many of the party. Some found them to be an easy but long day out; others found them terrifying. Such is the joy of mountaineering.

This being the Oread, life wasn't all active. Since everyone was back in the valley every evening there was a lot of opportunity for socialising (and drinking). Several significant birthdays were celebrated during the week: Tom Hayes finally became a horrible teenager; John Dobson's now an old git of 40; Joan Pike celebrated her 21st.

There are a couple of items of lost property to report. A set of van keys was found in the restaurant after a particularly drunken meal: the owner probably can't remember enough to tell anyone about it. A wallet was lost descending from a via ferrata, due to equipment failure: the owner may wish to tell us about it himself, either in the newsletter or in the presidential address at the annual dinner.

Finally, can I take this opportunity to thank Sally Apple for organising the meet. Whilst I was there to take all the credit, she had done all the work in finding and booking the campsite. Thanks Sally.

Dolomites write up - from a different perspective:

BANG! The crash of thunder sounded so close I actually stopped climbing and looked over my shoulder to find the source of the noise. Rob and I were high on the Fiammes Arete and the mountain gods weren't really playing ball. Hailstones lashed down, the wind howled. Water was running off the rock and stones cascaded down into the gully off to the right. Suddenly an enjoyable romp in the sun was starting to look rather serious. I peered down through the gloom. Rob showed his concern for my wellbeing by pulling his hood more tightly around his face. Perhaps I had better get a move on. The

church bells in Cortina began to chime. "Ask not for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee." I thought about yelling down to Rob. I wasn't sure he'd find it funny.

Huddled in the tent back on the campsite, sheltering from the rain, Sharon heard the bells too. "For whom the bell tolls," she thought.

It was my last day in the Dolomites. We had got away reasonably early and walking through the woods in the dappled sunlight, the day promised much. Rob explained the heliotherapy techniques in use at the clinic where we had parked. Apparently it largely involves lying in the sunshine. There you are, it isn't being lazy, it's heliotherapy, and very good for TB too.

The approach was complex, but eventually we picked up a tiny path with occasional paint splashes. The route starts up compact slabs at a moderate standard where the crux is finding the correct line amongst many possibilities. After four pitches we reached a broad terrace. The classic "Via Commune" headed off left here, but Rob led off right towards the arête. This line had been teasing me from the campsite all week, and we were finally here. If only the weather will hold, I thought. I really wanted to bag this route and retreating was going to be very complex now we were committed.

Later, as the drizzle fell, I eyed an ugly looking black crack on the next pitch.

"What do you reckon *risskamin* means, Rob?" I asked as set off towards it. Staring into its gaping depths, the answer floated up.

"Chimney, perhaps," opined Rob from below. The benefits of a classical education were clear. Fortunately the black chimney (clearly visible from the campsite in Cortina) gave elegant, exposed and well protected climbing. The grey crack a little lower down, just after crossing from the left to the right of the arête, is another superb pitch. It had Rob licking his lips and wishing it had been his lead. The whole route had excellent quality rock and bolted belays. Once on the arête the line was unmistakable and pretty exposed.

Perched in the sunshine on the summit as the wind whipped the last of the storm clouds away, we could have been in a different world. Four kiwis appeared in Via Ferrata kit, eyeballs bulging. They had clearly had an interesting time clipped to lots of metal in the middle of an electric storm. The

girls chattered on about how they had only agreed to hire the kit "if it was going to be really exciting." They looked excited. We wolfed down sandwiches, suddenly ravenous after our adventure.

Rob plunged into the giant scree gully and soon the kiwis were far behind. We paused and snapped the tiny figures as they laughed and slid their way through the lunar landscape. Back on the path in the pleasant evening sunshine, Rob entertained me with fantastic and moving stories. We compared notes on mutual acquaintances. I have met a few alpine superstars in various bars and bivis, while Rob has mostly climbed with their fathers! Of course Rob really knows these guys, while I've just read about them or embarrassed them by asking "Are you *the...*"!

"I think we had better make the most of it. It feels like we have today." I said. He agreed fervently. Rob told me about his and his son Esmond's ascents of the North Face of the Eiger. Es' ascent was rather different to Rob's continual strafing by all accounts. The only thing Es saw fall off the North Face were two base jumpers. The first guy used his wing suit to fly clear before pulling his chute safely. Unfortunately the second one misjudged it, pulled his chute in panic and crashed into the face. Es contemplated traversing across to see if they could help, but in no time a rescue party had emerged from the railway. He never did find out if the jumper survived.

We set off back to the hospital where we had left the car. Now Rob really doesn't like retracing his footsteps – a fine attitude to life! With the memory of plenty of jungle thrashing fresh in my mind, however, I was reluctant to stray off the easy path. We compromised and hit on a beautiful path, which emerged exactly at our destination. Something about today seemed fated.

All that was left was a fine feed to celebrate Joan's 30th birthday and John's 40th and then the long drive home, leaving the rest of the crew to more adventures.

Despite having to leave earlier than the rest of the crew, the Oread advance party had had a fine trip, ticking off lots of lower grade classics in perfect weather. The advance party's first three routes involved a tortuous jungle thrash, long queues on the descent abseils and going miles off route. Fortunately these weren't all on the same day! We didn't seem to have any problems in negotiating the

route to the bar afterwards. The South West Face of Monte Averau, IV+, included a superb and very exposed traverse pitch. As the leader arrived at the start of the traverse a friendly German face peered out from the other end.

"We are four here, no room," he called. So we waited. As we waited and stared, the holds got smaller and the angle of the rock leaned ever more alarmingly. Eventually our friends cleared out of the cave at the far end and we set off. The climbing turned out to be quite reasonable with good protection, but I wasn't allowed to take photos! The South Rib of Hexenstein, IV+, gave a fantastic romp up exposed but juggy terrain. Sharon enjoyed leading the top pitch to belay on the summit cross. The descent through a maze of Great War fortifications was fascinating. And I thought the western front was the last word in military madness! Perhaps the finest single pitch was the "black streak" of "Via M Speciale" on the West Face of Piccolo Lagazuoi. Steep water-worn rock, reminiscent of the finest on offer at Pembroke, protected with lots of threads. Sport climbing comes to the mountains! A splendid trip and there is masses to go back for. The Brenta anyone?

Black Sail Meet 6/7/8th July 2007

This was another excursion to the Ennerdale Valley by a party of willing mountaineers from the Oread. Friday saw cars leaving from morning to dusk for the wilderness of the Honister Pass, well 4 anyway. The weather forecast was less than perfect but as we are made of sturdy stuff we went anyway. The walk in was an adventure for some. Having turned right instead of left, the leader's party descended to the hut direct down some brilliant steep scree. One member never made until Saturday morning after spending the night in his car, such was his determination. Saturday dawned dull and dry but seemed to promise rain. A team led by the redoubtable West forced a route up Pillar and managed to climb Old West Route and Slab and Notch in the day, ascending green and dangerous chimneys en route. A second team went over the Scarth Gap into Buttermere whilst a third walked from Steeple to Great Gable, a cool 13 miles of mountain terrain, before settling down to dinner with lots of beer and wine at the hut. Sunday saw some returning in glorious sunshine to the pass after climbing on High Crag, while others took

in Brandreth and Grey Crag as their route back. An excellent meet with great company. Thanks to everyone who came. Brian West, Nick Moyes, Tony and Barbara Smedley, Simon Pape, Derek Pike and Roger Larkham.

J.Green

**Golden Oldies July 26th/29th 2007 - T-yr-W
– Keith Gregson**

I'm still not old enough, but I've nearly finished my apprenticeship! And the Meets Sec. is still short on volunteers so you'll have to put up with me.

I intend to go to Wales on Thursday and make a long weekend of it, so feel free to join me early. **Please note that we can not use Tan-yr-Wyddfa before the 26th** because it is booked out to another group.

Possible activities will be: walking over Craigiau Gleison (Carneddau) because I've still never been there, walking back from Llanberis over Moel Eilio etc. because it's there; and climbing in the Moelwyns or at the secret crag near Croesor (its got holds that you can't see your face in) because the climbing is fun.

Of course, if you don't like any of those we could hold long discussions and decide on other schemes, like installing a hot tub, a wind turbine, solar heating, or nuclear power. Alternatively we could discuss the finer points of life with Graham in the Cwellyn, or simply relax in Beddgellert.

Whatever, it's an opportunity to meet up and do something so I look forward to good company.

For beds etc. give me a ring on 792147.

DORGARD EQUIPMENT AT THE WELSH HUT

There have been some misunderstandings and minor technical problems with this equipment to a point where it is generally in disrepute. We believe that the technical problems have now been resolved and that the holding devices should now function reliably, bearing in mind the following points.

The door units are mechanical devices; the battery operated microprocessor control is intended to release them when it 'hears' the fire alarm. It can

mistake other noises (e.g. a vacuum cleaner) for the alarm.

The way to lock the doors open is to hold them open against their stop and firmly press the plunger vertically downward with a foot, then gently try the door towards closure to check that it has locked open.

The way to release the doors is to gently ease the plunger towards the door as indicated by the arrow, it will then spring up and release.

Note the unit on the door to the washrooms is fitted at the top. It is therefore hand operated but the principle is the same.

Fault conditions

The unit will 'bleep' if it is defective i.e. has developed an internal fault of some kind.

1. The door plunger has not released on receiving a closure signal i.e. it has stuck down for some reason.
2. The battery is approaching its usable life (at least one year).

There are two operational points to note.

1. If a battery is changed or removed and refitted the unit will self test twelve hours later. Obviously the time of change is important in order that the self-test occurs at a sensible time i.e. not in the middle of the night. The test is preceded by a gentle bleeping and involves closing all the fire doors.
2. After the initial self-test of twelve hours the unit will go into an every seven days self test regime.

In the near future it is intended to replace all batteries at 21.00 on a Thursday. The units will then self test at 9.00 on Friday and thereafter at this time each week. This will ensure that self-test occurs at a sensible time and gives us the maximum time with the doors open for ventilation purposes. It is intended to repeat the battery changes annually. In future please do not open battery compartments for any reason. If a unit is continuously bleeping first contact the Hut Warden to describe the circumstances and obtain advice.

We must know exactly what is happening, as this equipment is part of a safety system.

Hut Sub-committee.

A new committee in 2008

It is not quite "all change" on the committee but there are bound to be some changes with some

members indicating they do not wish to continue after next year's AGM. But in any case, if you fancy a turn at something or maybe believe you could do a better job, why not volunteer? Derek Pike has indicated he no longer wishes to be Secretary. Tony Howard and I come to the end of our two-year stints as vice-President and President. I do not wish to become vice-President, at least partly because I have done that job before. So we are *definitely* seeking a new President, vice-President and Secretary. If you would like to nominate someone please speak to me or any member of the committee. If you would like to talk over possibilities with me in complete confidence, I will prove a good listener.

Rob Tresidder
President, Oread MC

Future newsletters - call for reports and notices of meets

Please send me all articles, notices of future meets and reports of past meets by *25 September 2007*.

In particular I would like to receive reports from James Tubby on the Esoteric Grit meet; and from Rob Tresidder on the Summer Stroll, Poetry Recital and Climbing triathlon!