

# March 2008 Newsletter

## Editorial - AGM Notice

The AGM is in two weeks' time. This will be one of the most important AGMs in several years as we have to decide on the future of Heathy Lea: a present and long term viable asset, or an unused millstone round the neck of our club's finances consuming the time and effort of a minority?

This is my last newsletter – though I have yet to hear of anyone who is willing to take on the role of Newsletter Editor. I'm sure one of you will step up to the mark at the AGM!

It's not long before we move our clocks forward and we can get out climbing in the evenings. The weather has been so mild recently that parties have enjoyed several sunny afternoons on the crag already this year. Best wishes for a good climbing season long live the refrain and response "Climb when ready! Climbing!"

## Forthcoming meets

March	Tues 4 <sup>th</sup>	Indoor Meet - Royal Oak, Ockbrook	Tony Howard	01332 273307
	Tues 11 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting - Smithfield		
	<b>Saturday 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>AGM at The Bear Hotel, Alderwasley</b>	<b>Derek Pike</b>	<b>01332 - 670459</b>
	Wed 19 <sup>th</sup>	Wirksworth Evening Meet	Wall and Royal Oak Pub	
	16 <sup>th</sup>	Spring Stride	Rob Tresidder	01629 823953
	21 <sup>st</sup> to 24 <sup>th</sup>	Easter at Swanage and Portland	Sharon Fletcher & Roger Gibbs	07770 237 270
	29 <sup>th</sup> & 30 <sup>th</sup>	Patterdale	Stuart Haywood	01332 834449
April	Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup>	First Evening Outdoor Meet	Tony Howard	01332 - 273307
	5 <sup>th</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup>	Heathy Lea	no leader	
	Tues 8 <sup>th</sup>	Committee Meeting - Smithfield		
	19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup>	Tan-yr-Wyddfa	Gill Heys	01246 569134

## Sunday 16 March SPRING STRIDE... Rob Tresidder

... ex-president's exit/exodus/exegesis. A little, but not a lot, longer than last year. About 16k or 10 miles. I propose to walk from near Hathersage over the moors to the south via Foolow to Calver. We'll stop for a drink at The Bull's Head in Foolow. If you want to buy a bar meal, you'll need to be there before 2 o'clock. The walk has a wild feel at the start, but becomes a little industrialised as we approach Calver: we can check out how much of Longstone Edge we have saved.

This being a non-circular route, I shall try to make the most of the limited bus service on a winter Sunday in the Peak. I suggest outward:  
Derby Full Street (X6) 0850 6.1  
Matlock Rail station arr. 0955  
Matlock Rail station dep. 0955 (!) 174  
Hathersage 1050  
and return:  
Calver 1718 174  
Matlock Somerfields arr. 1752  
Matlock Somerfields dep. 1825 TP  
Derby Morledge (L3) 1910  
Coming from Derby this takes nearly twice as long as driving, but there are no parking charges or thieves and you can read the Sunday paper on the bus! If you prefer to travel by car, the best bet would be to park in Calver and meet the rest of us on the 174 bus at approx 1031 (Kingsgate adj. Riverside Drive). Or consider parking in Matlock. For car sharing, please contact me and I will put you in touch with someone lovely. I shall have my phone switched on so if you want to meet en route, you can find out where I am (reception permitting).  
Plans will receive final revision before Chris Radcliffe's lecture on 4 March. Pick up a flyer there, or at the AGM or ask to be put on my emailing/ snailmail list. I think the landlord in Foolow might welcome a rough idea of numbers from me. There were an awful lot of us on a bright fine day last year all over the tiny Packhorse in Little Longstone.

Rob Tresidder

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## **Patterdale – 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> March 2008**

As a 'perennial' in the Oread calendar this Meet will obviously not require any introduction regarding the delights on offer for the climbers, walkers, mountain bikers and even canoeists amongst us.

In recent years we've encountered blizzards and mild spring like days so as far as this year is concerned - who knows?

However, can I ask you to note the slightly later date than usual, a direct result of huts now being booked 2+ years in advance. Additionally please

note our new phone no (see below)

At the time of writing 18 beds are already booked so if you are interested in joining us please contact me as soon as possible.

Andrea and I intend to arrive mid evening on Friday but no doubt others will arrive earlier in the day and hopefully will have the hut 'warmed and aired'. Accordingly look forward to seeing you in the White Lion.

Stuart Haywood 01332- 882331 (Mobile 07836 314403)

## **"Climb if you will"**

If you are not a long time member of the Oread then you may not realise the significance of this book..It was about one of your members, Geoff Hayes, who was killed at Dow Crag in The Lakes in 1971. I am reluctant to part with it until I have established whether or not someone in the Oread wishes to buy it. It is in good condition and still has the dust cover. I would post it to you or whoever for £10, please let me know.

Yours Sincerely, Stuart Allen

**The Outdoor Show** At the NEC, 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> March. [www.theoutdoorshow.co.uk](http://www.theoutdoorshow.co.uk)

I've 2 complimentary tickets, if anyone wants them, get in touch.

Simon Pape

## **Reports from past meets** **Cairngorm Meet 12-13 Jan**

The meet was postponed by a week due to a bad weather forecast. Then, thanks to my wife, Neil Weatherstone's mobile phone and the internet, late on Friday night we were saved from sleeping in our cars. The youth hostel didn't bother to ring me back to say that my phone booking made while their computer was down was not confirmed, so when I rang them at 9pm as we were approaching Perth I was annoyed to find that internet bookings meant that mine could not be made. Zero out of 10 for customer service from SYHA. However, it worked out for the best. Having been given a list of phone numbers following some internet research by my wife I booked us into The Laird's Bothy in Kingussie, which turned out to be nicer and cheaper than the YH.

5 of us arrived on Friday night, and we were away early on Saturday to take advantage of the good conditions that were forecast and climb in Coire an t Sneachda. The weather didn't disappoint and after the initial clouds in the corrie dispersed we had perfect weather conditions: blue sky, no wind (even on top), temp just below freezing and plenty of snow firm enough to climb but not rock hard.

Neil & I started on Aladdin's Couloir then met up with the other party of Mike Hayes, Steve Christian & Simon Pape on The Runnel. The threesome went on to climb Red gully and Aladdin's mirror. Neil & I climbed Aladdin's mirror and finished off with Jacobs ladder. All 5 of us met up on the walk down and we arrived at the car park as it was getting dark and in time to get to Aviemore to purchase local haggis & beer in anticipation of forthcoming Burns night celebrations.

Seven routes between 2 parties would be a good return over the course of a weekend, so we were all pleased to have managed it in one day. The forecast for Sunday was pretty definite 'ferocious winds will make mobility on the hills very difficult, sleet in the early morning will turn to rain for the rest of the day'. This meant that we could celebrate our fine day out in style without having to worry about jeopardising the next day's climbing as there clearly would be none.

Luckily our bunkhouse was right behind a pub/restaurant so there was no need to go far. There isn't much to do in Kingussie but the locals seemed to enjoy the 'entertainment' in the form of a singer, though we politely declined an invitation to join in the dancing.

The weather didn't disappoint on Sunday and was as bad as forecast so there was nothing for it but to head home, pleased that we had all pushed ourselves hard on Saturday.

James Tubby

## **AGM preparation**

### **Heathy Lea - Where do we go from here?**

I have been charged with the task of summarising the thoughts of Club Members regarding the future of Heathy Lea. Throughout this document I shall try to put forward an unbiased record of the notes and comments that I have received, my own thoughts I will leave to a more suitable time.

Notes from the Questionnaire responses.

So far I have received 15 written responses; this in itself is an indication of the level of interest shown by the body of the club. I don't intend to produce figures relating to the answers to the individual questions, since several of the questions overlap and others do not have simple yes/no answers. Rather I shall try to summarise the feelings and point out the arguments in favour/against the points of view that were recorded. Individual responses will be treated as confidential since those involved will have an opportunity to make their feelings known at the AGM.

Here then is a summary of the replies:

- Most were agreed that H-L is too close and that driving to and from Derbyshire within a day is more convenient. The possibility of future traffic restrictions and/or the likely rise in fuel costs were felt to be largely irrelevant. Only three felt that they would use H-L more often in future. However there was some interest in using H-L for "social events" (which argues against the idea of releasing use of the barn) and more meets, though attendance over the past few years has been sparse.
- There was an overwhelming (but not unanimous) feeling that H-L needs to be made more comfortable. Having said this, only three respondents said that they would make more use if conditions were to improve. In particular the damp in the bedroom and general run-down feel are given as reasons for non-use. *(It should be noted here that the damp problem in the bedroom and the state of the drive are items which have been raised with the Chatsworth Estate and are in hand – stop press: the water leak in the bedroom is reported to have been resolved)*
- All but three felt that money and effort spent on H-L was a waste of Club resources. However there was some feeling that it would be tolerable to subsidise providing the loss was not too great, and that our members were benefiting from its use.
- Of those with opinions about promoting the use of H-L to other clubs, most were in favour (8:4); though there was an interesting negative correlation between

this opinion and that of helping with the maintenance etc. It was also realised that providing a service to other clubs was not a prime aim and that this may prove to be a waste of voluntary resources. There is also the growing problem of liability and the possibility of prosecution by visitors.

- From the replies received the decision to maintain or release H-L is almost a 50/50 choice. There was some feeling for releasing the barn and one strong opinion for keeping it and releasing the cottage.

### Food for Thought

- In terms of working parties etc. maybe we should treat the HSC as a management committee that commissions work to be done, rather than organises DIY work parties. This would result in jobs costing more and being completed more quickly, but would reduce the load on the “Old Faithful Members” within the Club. However, it would still be necessary for members to carry out general cleaning, wood gathering etc.
- Do we have sufficient “younger” enthusiastic members to secure the viability of the Hut?
- Could/should we look for a “partner club”, or even the BMC to take over – possibly not for us to decide, but for the consideration by the Estate.
- Would we benefit from using H-L on a “Members (and guests?) only” basis, thus providing a facility which could be used without a long pre-booking, and ensuring that the facility could be maintained more easily? Twenty years ago there was an Oread presence there virtually every weekend and H-L was a useful meeting point. But the nature of the Club and lifestyle of its members have changed. If the Hut was run on this basis would it encourage family use, and other small groups – perhaps by segregating one of the bedrooms? There seems to be some enthusiasm for this.
- Would we regret losing H-L in the future?

### Information

Information re use and costs of bednights at Heathy Lea can be found in the Newsletter for February 2008.

### *Decision Time*

1. Is there any circumstance in which the Club would want to maintain a presence at H-L? If no then release the property.
2. What would constitute such circumstances?
  - Acceptable profit/loss
  - Acceptable comfort/health & safety aspects
  - Cottage + barn or cottage or barn
  - Acceptable lease terms
  - Means of management/maintenance
  - Self use or kindred clubs (negotiable)
  - Unlikely that we could reliably predict use – do we need time slot to evaluate the financial consequences?

Over to you!

Keith Gregson

### **MOTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE AGM**

As promised at the last AGM and flagged up in newsletters since then, there will be a discussion about the future of the two properties we rent, whose leases oth expire in March 2009. Rather than table motions on the night, the committee believes that it will be helpful to focus debate by having proposals set out beforehand. I should add that while the committee initiated this discussion, it does not have an opinion on the best way forward.

#### Motion1

This AGM instructs the committee, its officers and the club trustees to relinquish the lease on Heathy Lea cottage.

Proposer: Reuben Dakin. Secunder tba, if you wish to second this motion, please get in touch with me.

#### Motion2

This AGM instructs the committee, its officers and the club trustees to relinquish the lease on the barn adjacent to Heathy Lea cottage.

Proposer: John Green. Secunder: Derek Pike

Rob Tresidder

President, OMC

12 February 2008

## Scotch Corner - by Roger

The call came about Scotch Corner.

“Roger, it’s John. I’m in Waitrose. I’ve got the carpaccio, but do you want green olives or black?”

“Hill food, John, hill food.”

“Oh...”, he trailed off. It was going to be one of those weekends.

It had started out pretty well, my lift had arrived on time and we’d had a good run north with the obligatory interruption for barely edible service station food. Then the German member of the team went missing. Well not missing exactly, we knew where he was, but unfortunately it was in a bothy a good hours’ walk from the road. We peered out at the darkness and listened to the howling wind. We pushed on further North, hatching ever more complex plans to unite the team, with a deafening silence from our European friend. We grabbed a pint in Ballater and decided that we would have to split up into two teams. After a refreshing night’s sleep in one of the Royal Estate’s premier car parks, John and I headed for Lochnagar, while Andy headed into Bob Scott’s bothy to find himself a climbing partner.

It was already getting light and the new car park was busy with teams kitting up. John and I forced down some of Mr Waite and Mr Rose’s finest hors d’oeuvres (very reasonable priced John assured me) and set off. It was gusting fairly hard into our faces but the sky was bright and there was a good covering of snow on the hills. I stopped and looked around: it was stunning. I breathed a bit deeper and my shoulders relaxed. John and I grinned at each other: it was great to be back. A couple of hours saw us into the corrie despite the headwind and the crag looked in sparkling winter garb. I’d already counted fifteen other climbers ahead of us and I was starting to regret the extra half an hour in bed. Still, I thought at least we’re not stuck behind a load of students.

As we approached the first aid box, the unmistakeable sight of Edinburgh University’s fresher meet in all its chaotic glory greeted us. It became a frantic dash to get kitted up. Now John will freely admitted that he doesn’t really do frantic dashing. I raced off up the snow slopes to the base of the snow ramp. Half way there I paused, sweat streaming into my eyes. Hang on, I think I’m

supposed to be enjoying this. I laughed at my own stupidity and greeted the lads ahead of us on the belay with a big grin.

The first belay was not very accommodating and devoid of gear so I pushed on up the gentle snow ramp past the team ahead without roping up.

“We’re not pushing in lads, we’ll just wait out of your way in that little bay up there.” Of course the little bay had no belay and we ended up perched next to a little rock spike while they climbed all over us. Very alpine.

Maybe the students’ incompetence was rubbing off on us. Still there was no rush, I could still see two teams just up ahead. The snow ramp ran out at a real belay complete with a peg festooned with ancient tat.

“I see all the gear is in place,” I joked weakly to the guy belayed in front.

He warmed up and we chatted while John came up. “Might as well be civil if we’re going to be spending the next few hours in pretty close company”

The route curved out of sight across easy but exposed ledges where the protection left a little to be desired. A long pitch ensued with 60m ropes just getting me to a decent rock belay. And then the waiting began. The next pitch was the crux on rock and the recent departure of a block had made it a little trickier. After watching three people struggle furiously up it I was starting to get a bit worried! Eventually it was my turn. A solid looking peg and good wires gave reassurance. A solidly torqued axe and walk the feet up. A high step and a reach for a solid hook. I was nearly up. A few more moves and my axes whacked into solid turf. I belayed rapidly on a big rock spike. We needed to get a move on if we were to have any chance of getting to the top in the light.

Another easy snow pitch led us up to a solid belay. A superb, complex turf pitch got us into a small bay as the light faded. I raced off, barely pausing as I passed the team ahead. They had opted for the harder direct finish but we scooted past them on easy snow. From the col it was only a short pitch to the top but there was a keen wind and the moon was obscured by cloud. John and I shook hands and grinned. What a superb route! We threw the kit into our ‘sacs and headed off around the corrie rim, staying well clear of the cornices. The moon

came out as we trudged down. I swear the stovies in the pub in Ballater tasted better than anything from any posh Edinburgh supermarket. To cap off the day Andy arrived with wild eyes and wilder stories. There are plenty more adventures to be had in Scotland. The Aspirant.

## BMC News

### Houghton Quarry clean-up 8th March

Houghton Quarry, near Blackburn,

(<http://www.multimap.com/maps/>

?&t=l&map=53.7335561326014,-2.5699098703809|16|4&loc=GB:53.7335561326014:-2.5699098703809:16#t=l&map=53.74038,-2.59635|14|4&loc=GB:53.7335561326014:-2.5699098703809:16)

consists of an amphitheatre of quarried gritstone rock which has the potential to rival the likes of Millstone Edge in the Peak District.

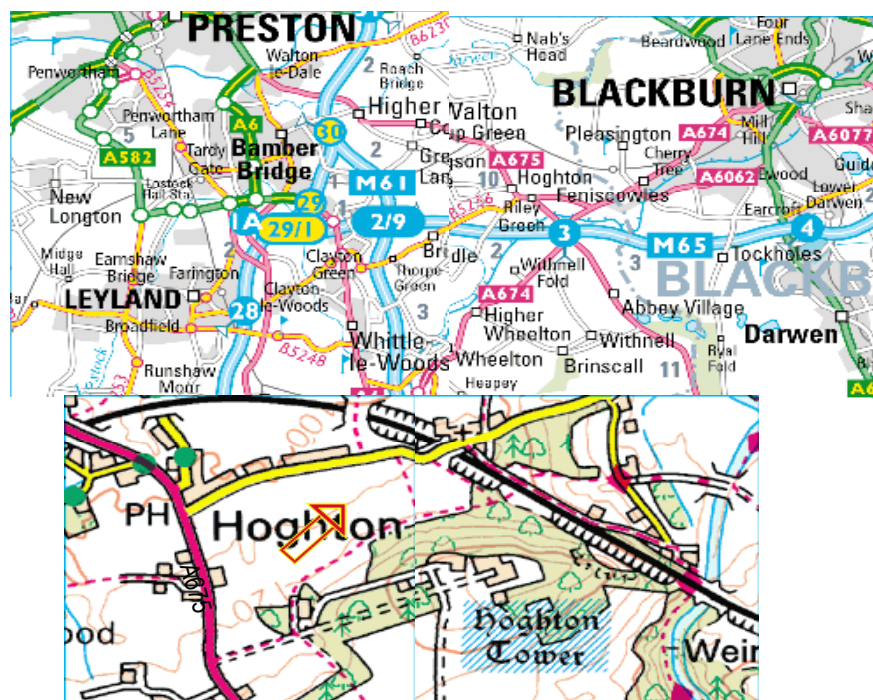
Unfortunately, access and birding restrictions in recent years have meant that this amazing venue has been left to nature. However, in a bid to renew interest at this fabulous climbing arena, the BMC's North West Area Meeting are planning to clean up as much of the quarry as possible. It's hoped that a strong turn out will show that there is interest in this quarry and that we will be looked upon favourably when attempting to renegotiate access in the future.



Please come and support. You will need old clothes, wellies, saws, brushes, scrapers, abseil ropes and anything else you feel will be useful in cleaning the rock.

Please park considerately, as there is limited parking and we don't want to annoy the locals under any circumstances. Car share where possible, or park nearer to the pub than the quarry and have a nice little walk to start your day.

Please contact me [martin@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:martin@thebmc.co.uk) <[martin@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:martin@thebmc.co.uk)> to let me know that you're coming so that I can bake enough cakes.



By Martin Kocsis

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