



OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB MAGAZINE

APRIL - MAY 2013



The Pico de Orizaba, or Citlaltépetl is a dormant volcano and, at 5,636 metres, the highest mountain in Mexico and the third highest in North America. This photo, by Nick Moyes, shows John Green traversing the crater rim on the Glacier Este.

Editorial

Sorry folks, but I'm going to be off out enjoying myself in Nepal when time for the May newsletter comes around so it's a bumper double issue this time! As we still seem to be in the depths of winter it is appropriate that this one is filled with lots of snowy shots from Wales and Scotland rather than the sun-kissed rock we usually hope for at Easter.

In this issue is the Agenda for the AGM - now due to take place on 27 April; a meet coming up at the delightful and convenient Low House, in the middle of Coniston; the Wednesday evening meets programme for the next two months and no less than three accounts of deeds of derring do to amuse, inspire and entertain you.

What's on.

Wednesday Evenings

3 April	Harborough/Rainster and after at the Royal Oak, Wirksworth (which opens at 8p.m.)
10 April	Wildcat and after at the Royal Oak, Wirksworth
17 April	Cratcliffe/Robin Hood's Stride and the Miners' Standard, Winster
24 April	Lawrencefield and after at The Millstone
1 May	The Roaches and after at The Rock
8 May	Beeston Tor and after at the Royal Oak, Wetton
15 May	Earl Sterndale and after at the Quiet Woman
22 May	High Tor and after at the County and Station
29 May	Stanage and after at The Millstone

Heathy Lea: 13-14 April

The hut is reserved for the club to use this weekend. Book your bed nights with the Hut Bookings Secretary.

Tan yr Wyddfa: 20-21 April

The whole hut is reserved for the club this weekend. Book your bed nights with the Hut Bookings Secretary.

AGM: 27 April 2013

The AGM, cancelled due to snow, will now take place on the last Saturday in April at the Robin Hood, Baslow at 8.00 p.m. The agenda is as follows:

1. **Apologies for absence:**
2. **Minutes of the last Meeting, 2012**
3. **President's Report (PL)**
4. **Treasurer's Report (MB):**
5. **Appointment of Auditor:**
6. **Hut Sub Committee Reports**
 - (a) **Tan yr Wyddfa (AVH)**
 - (b) **Heathy Lea (MH)**
7. **Our Huts, their Running and Finance (PL, MB)**
8. **Election of Officers:** The Committee propose the following nominations

Main Committee:

Pete Lancaster – President
Pam Storer – Vice President
Dave Roscoe – Secretary
Michael Bate –Treasurer (until a replacement is found!)
Chris Radcliffe – Meets Secretary

Ruth Gordon - Newsletter Editor
Membership Secretary - ?
Hut booking Secretary – Dave Helliwell (Snod)
Welsh Hut Custodian - ?
Derbyshire Hut Custodian – Mick Hayes
John Green
Nigel Briggs
Colin Hobday
Derek Pike
Chris Wilson
Richard Hopkinson

Welsh HSC: Pam Storer
Tony Smedley
Keith Gregson

Heathy Lea HSC: Mick Hayes
Pam Storer

9. AOB

Nominations are urgently needed for the vacant posts. These should be communicated to me or Dave Roscoe as soon as possible.

If you wish to eat at the Robin Hood please let me know beforehand so that I can give them an idea of numbers.

Pete Lancaster.

Spring Stride: 28 April Clive Russell

I propose to take the walk, not near to Heathy Lea, but to the wilds of the Western Peak District where some, who know the Hinterstoisser and the Himalaya like their back gardens, may not have trodden recently. The Oread last visited the source of the Dove during a meet led by Harry Pretty, so far as I know. On route, there is a mini wilderness near Dun Cows Grove in the upper Manifold, where there are few visible features by which to steer. Some small and brief refreshment may be taken at the Travellers Rest, opposite the FTSE 100 quoted **Flash Bar Stores**. On return we shall traverse the stone causeway above Washgate Bridge which, Snod will confirm, was on the route of one of the historic motor cycle trials. The walk will conclude via the terrifying precipices on Hollins Hill. There is a delightful little depression on the side of the hill were I sometimes squat down cosily out of the wind and rain to brew up with my meths stove, accompanied by curious sheep. It is a pity to have to consider the banal matter of motor transport, but it would be helpful to share vehicles as much as possible, maybe parking at Longnor market place or nearby, and doubling up for the last couple of miles to meet by the telephone box at Hollinsclough (065665). Six or seven cars or thereabouts would be feasible on the hardened verge there, but we do not want to hog all the space or upset the locals or other walkers. I would like to meet at 10.45 and move off shortly afterwards.

Contact Rusty on 01335 390369, email zrussell2@googlemail.com

Low House, Coniston: 3 - 5 May. Steve Bennett



Low House, 2012

This was a brand new meet on the club calendar last year and it went so well that we are going to do it all over again this year. Last year we had 12 Oreads and friends either staying in the hut or camping in the garden and much was undertaken on Dow and White Ghyll as well as various walks, all in very cold but dry conditions.

For those who are unfamiliar with Low House, the cottage is situated just off the centre of Coniston and only a few minutes walk from a choice of four pubs and the local shops. Apart from the throbbing night life all other local attractions are fairly obvious with climbing, walking and cycling available at all standards.

The hut accommodation is excellent and is in fact pretty much on a par with our own hut TyW. We have 14 beds available on a first come first served basis and I am informed that the MAM have actually reduced hut fees for visiting clubs for this year. To book your bed and for possible car sharing please give me a call or send an email. Steve Bennett tel. 01332 516367; 07795 511582 email steve@apexdesigns.biz

Anyone wishing to book a bed after 19th April should call Roy Eyre (01623 469658) who will advise on availability; I will be away for the fortnight prior to the meet.

Gower: 24 - 26 May Derek Pike

The Gower is a lovely spot, the tides are favourable, and a few people have already booked on this meet. There is something for everyone, walking, kite flying, wind surfing, in fact a great holiday destination. Oh! Nearly forgot the climbing. Must be something for everyone from short diffs to E 5 and beyond. Three Tors, on the vast expanse of sand which is Oxwich Bay, permits climbing straight off the beach, or it does until the tide comes in and makes your feet wet, it offers routes from mainly diff to H.V.S. A little to the south west of Port Eynon the boiler Slab offers more routes from V.D. to E3. As you can see I've already got my eye on a few of the crags with routes that I might be able to climb so those members who wish to climb something much harder will have to consult the guidebook, mine has around two hundred pages devoted just to the Gower. We shall be staying at Bank Farm Leisure, Scurlage, Reynoldston, Swansea SA31BA , 01792 390228 , G.R. 473860. They will try to keep us together if you mention my name when booking. **Booking is essential so if you would like to join us book your spot now!**

Derek Pike tel 01332 670459 email derepike1234@btinternet.com

Alpine Meet: July 20th – August 10th 2013 Nigel Briggs

This summer's Alpine meet will be in the Val di Mello, Italy. The area has been described as 'the Yosemite of Europe'. It features high quality rock routes, both short valley cragging to long mountain and 'plaisir' routes. The area is world famous for its bouldering. It also gives the opportunity to explore the Italian side of the Bregalia Peaks. The area is rich in alpine walking, both amongst the peaks or in the valley. For those interested in the higher snowy mountains the Bernina peaks are only a couple of hours' drive away.

If the mountain weather is poor the area allows rapid escape to the Italian Lakes!

If you are thinking of coming along please can you let me know numbers, accommodation (tent or van) and dates so I can get bookings made and keep everyone informed.



Contact me at : nigel.briggs@btinternet.com or on 01203 732925

News, Articles and Reports from Meets.

Crossing Tryfan: 2nd February 2013 (the Curry Meet) Annegret Siebert



On arriving the meet leader and his followers had a quick dinner, and then rested in front of the fire in anticipation of things to come. When the first arrivals stopped resting (whilst discussing) time had progressed rather fast, and we all made a quick jump to get into bed (at 2am!).

The next day was the Tryfan and the next nearest peak (Glyder Fach's northern slope) was considered a good choice, spiced up with Roland's Curry at the end, the "carrot" to make us master the cold day.

The walking party at warmer temperatures near the start. Everyone was ahead of the writer, and the earlier party, with Michael Hayes and Chris Seaman, were already on Glyder Fach (though the rest did not follow).



I found a description of the route as one of the finest routes in the whole of Wales, but for reasons of verglaced ice on Tryfan the speed at which the group moved was not allowing enough time for Glyder Fach. The North Ridge of Tryfan is a Grade 1 scramble, which we spiced up with a fast lunch snack midway where temperatures just dropped to zero degrees (recognisable change of frozen water!). The air was crisp, the sky clean, wonderful scenery, but all the right conditions to make you want to go up a mountain. From below they always look so easy. The going up exercise turned into something more interesting just near the peak. One could exactly tell the border, when the stones became verglaced rock, and the taste of a cheese sandwich at freezing temperatures is slightly different.



My personal feelings of crossing yet another peak also changed, as without crampons the matter was become a little more delicate. Route finding was not difficult to start with, but had elements of easy climbing on verglaced rock with good views steep downhill, and made the crossing sufficiently "serious" to keep all attention on the next steps. There were also photo-opportunities on the use of ice axes and crampons, as most of the participants (Tony Howard, Richard

Hardwick, Roland Smith, Angela Pingram, Mike Hayes and Chris Seaman) were equipped with the care to be expected



Walking on the top of Tryfan was not straight forward, but good fun, particularly with crampons. The gents were technically equipped to good standard bringing and offering ice axes as well.

The views from the top down were rewarding, there was a lot of light and shadow, and amazingly no rain, except that it started to snow for 10mins just before we reached the car for the way back. Whilst we were not entirely alone on completing this walk, the area was not very well populated, and very worthwhile to do in winter conditions.



Adam and Eve - and someone else.

Re: Rusty's Puzzle Corner, March 2013. Jack Ashcroft.



The photograph shows the bottom end of Dovedale, or, more politely, a view of the River Dove from the north end of Thorpe Pastures looking west to Blore Pastures and the bulk of Bunster Hill in the middle foreground.

(Quite right too, this newsletter does not condone impolite views on (or of) local bottom ends.) Ed.

Anyway: down to business:

My first visit to Dovedale and Bunster was in the summer of 1952 from Ilam Youth Hostel with Oz, a youth hostelling pal, in the early '50s. We took a first pint in "The Peak" at the little back bar of The Peveril.

It was the start of a five day walk to Castleton via Hartington, Buxton, Windgather and Edale Youth Hostels.

Why were we doing this? Having joined the Y.H.A. in 1948 with a cycling pal, Bonney, we knew about the National Parks and the Access to the Countryside Act of 1949. Ilam was not too far from Greater Brummageham where we lived and so a week's holiday was planned in new countryside – and not a drop of rain fell all week. Those were the days!

Talking of taking a pint, another was sampled at the Cat and Fiddle, the second highest public house in England. It was a lunchtime break en route to Windgather. The inside décor was rather austere and dark, our boots echoed on a highly polished wooden floor as we walked to the bar and ordered a drink from a surly-looking character. We were soon out and on our route again with a comment from a middle-aged couple, the only other customers, ringing in our ears as we walked out:

"They should drop "The Cat" and simply call it "The Fiddle."

Incidentally the previous day had been my first visit to the Quiet Woman at Earl Sterndale. I've been there again recently with the "Thursday Group" and not a lot has changed: same old bar and décor with pickled eggs and pork pies the standard (only) menu.

So, back to Rusty's picture and the Dovedale stepping stones. After the 1952 trip I was back there again in January 1954 - with the Oread.

I've often wondered how life could well have turned out so differently if Oz and I had planned a week's walk to Exmoor, rather than The Peak, in the summer of 1952. More ponies than sheep I suppose.

P.S. This walk: it was a serious expedition, not a pub crawl as Janet has most unreasonably suggested.

Grand conditions - Creag Meagaidh: Dave Mawer with help from Roger Gibbs

On Monday I'd written off the weekend due to the forecast. Too early to break ranks I know, but such was my desperation not to repeat my last disappointing Scottish weekend of tropical temperatures and unconsolidated snows. But, as the week passed, the Met. Office crystal ball forecasted a lowering of temperatures and improved weather to provide eventually a weekend as good as any I've had in Scotland. The team assembled at my house, ready for the off. David, Roger and Kyya.

After a mere 8 hours the mighty Peugeot van pulled into a surprisingly empty Creag Meagaidh car park. Four hours later the alarm sounded the beginning of our day. As the kettle whistled again and again we prepared ourselves for the day and Roger somehow managed to eat four, yes four muffins. With a still empty car park we started the two hour walk in to “Meggie”, steep to start, then rising gently to the lochan. Without the stress of any competition, David and I parted company with Roger and Kyya as they headed for the popular Pumpkin.

Our goal was to be Smith's Gully, a climb with a big reputation, “ A tremendous route of great character, continuously steep and sustained. One of the hardest traditional Scottish gullies.” With a feeling of in trepidation we geared up at the bottom of Raeburn's Gully which provides access to our route. Originally Smith's Gully was step cut by Jimmy Marshall in 1959 and named as a jibe to Robin Smith who'd failed on an earlier attempt. Step cutting up vertical walls of ice? How hard were the men of yester year! Today armed with front points, freshly sharpened leashless axes and enough express ice screws to sink a small boat we set off up steady slopes into the cloud in search of our initial ice fall. After a 100m or so we sighted a rather steep looking sweep of ice. We sorted ropes and then, after a misunderstanding of rules, carried out rock, paper, scissors for the crux pitch a second time.

Meanwhile on The Pumpkin: (words by Roger Gibbs)

I'm an avid reader of guide books. I read too many and most of the time they simply serve to scare me off the routes I want to do. I'll have some blood curdling sentence from one of Ken Wilson's bumper fun books going through my head while trying to persuade myself to go for it. So, remarkably, this time I hadn't thought too much about it, couldn't even recall the essay in Cold Climbs. I wondered briefly if a long grade V was a good idea when I would be doing all the leading, but the conditions looked superb and the alternative looked a bit lame. We waved the A team off, set for bigger fish, and headed for the inner corrie.

Meggie looked in fine fettle, with some rock showing and low avalanche risk forecast. The snow on the walk in was rock hard. We'd had a good view of Raeburn's buttress as we approached, but the inner corrie was wreathed in mist. As we got under our route, the clag lifted. It was an imposing sight, with (supposedly) two long pitches on ice, a brief respite and then another steep ice chimney higher up.

Roger in action on The Pumpkin.



We kitted up and grabbed a drink and a snack before bashing up perfect neve to a ledge already excavated by a previous party. It was a little after 8am and we still had the place to ourselves.

I set off, perfect ice and first time placements every time. An ice screw sank reassuringly, some in situ and I could see the first belay under a little rock roof. The guide had suggested a long pitch, but this didn't feel more than 30m. Oh well, we've got all day and you don't climb past a comfy belay in Scotland. Kyaa joined me in no time with a big grin.

"Grand conditions!" The accent was Scots/East Midlands.

Kyaa enjoying "Grand conditions" on The Pumpkin.

There was steepness ahead, but more perfect screws and first time placements. This was like Scottish winter mountaineering but without the terror. It wasn't even unpleasant. Another comfy belay on two fat icicles. I leant out over the bulge and snapped



away. It didn't feel like we were rushing but the route was passing pretty quickly. A little more steepness before it relented and I chomped up good snow to another solid belay. I could see into the chimney: more fat ice and not too steep. Below, another team had arrived and the mist teased us with glimpses of the valley.

The chimney was steady enough and I ran out a rope length to a good rock belay. The wind was buffeting us about now and the climbing changed character, with turf and slightly trickier route finding. Soon I was out of the lee of the buttress to our left and I thought I could see the top. The cornice didn't seem to be a problem, but just to be on the safe side I sent Kyaa up. The wind howled but we'd cracked it. The murk closed in predictably so we fished the map and compass out and started counting paces. Before long we could see footprints and we dropped into the col above the Window. We exchanged pleasantries with a family of walkers and then leaned hard into the gale funnelling up from the corrie.

As we stripped off crampons and gorged on snacks, we spotted two familiar figures picking their way down Easy Gully. The lads had bagged their route and there were four big grins.

Back to Smith's:

I won, unsure of whether I actually wanted to. David set off up deceptively steep ice, that eased once the gully was reached with bridging and putting your shoulder against the right wall. Exiting provided some excitement but soon the snow slopes of pitch 2 were reached. As I paid out rope beyond the expected amount I began to wonder what my sneaky Spanish friend was up to. 55m later I had my suspicions.

I later joined him at the top of pitch 2, the poor belay that has in the past given an overall grade of VI. Not today though - with the poor pegs backed up with bomber screws we assumed it to be V.



David on the first pitch of Smith's gully.

We swapped gear, and I led off up another deceptively steep ice pitch. Off vertical to begin with, followed by a narrowing, beyond which the ice reared up vertically, then a little respite to a final steepening before the belay area on Appolyon ledge. But which way, left or right? I chose right and was rewarded with spacious stance equipped with a hidden double peg belay and a large threaded icicle. Happy days! A little while later David appeared, beaming.

After a bit of Spanish chivalry my partner insisted that I should lead crux pitch on my "nearly" home turf after his earlier leap-frogging. So a quick gear hand over and rope sort ensued, then I was back in the hot seat for what looked like a daunting pitch. With thoughts of this being originally step cut, "so how hard could it actually be" and its reputation for difficulty bouncing around my head, I set off. What followed was pure joy.

Although steep, the 20m crux wall was helpfully split by skirting leftwards via some easier angled ground and bomb proof rock gear. But this detour was duly rewarded with a short bulging section to reach the upper snow slopes that signalled the end of the difficulties. Erring on the side of caution I quickly fashioned a nut and peg belay, as the last thing I wanted was to be moving together when the rope ran out whilst David climbed the crux.

Me on pitch 3 of Smith's Gully

As I belayed my mind wandered, although steep the ice was as good which, I'm sure you'll agree, helps. But I had dispelled the mythical reputation that I'd managed to create which had made me anxious about trying the route. It didn't take long for David to dispatch the pitch and he was soon chomping up perfect neve above me towards the token cornice. With ropes and gear stowed in our packs we battled against intermittent gusts towards our descent of Easy Gully. Passing some impressive ice scenery we contentedly made our way to the corrie floor where we bumped into Roger and Kyya both sporting smiles.

Below: David's view of the crux 4th pitch.



I'll finish with Roger's words:

Back at the van, swigging tea, we reflected: "pretty civilized - this Scottish winter lark!"



“This was like Scottish winter mountaineering but without the terror. It wasn’t even unpleasant.”

Rusty's Puzzle Corner

Name the crag, who were you with and - oh dear - how long, long ago???

(In my case I don't think I've done the route since April 1979 with George Fowler.)



A clue: the crag has been mentioned in a recent newsletter.

Any memories you may care to add to your answer will be published in the next issue along with the names of all correct guessers. Particularly entertaining answers may win a pint.

Answers to alistair.ruth@btinternet.com or by post, morse code, semaphore or thought transference as suits your whim.

For last month's winner see Jack Ashcroft's article above. This is what we need - come on you all – dish the dirt!

Information on member activities.

Heather Seaman has applied for full membership of the Oread. Would anyone who has an objection to this being approved please get in touch with a member of the committee.

Hut Bookings for March - April.

TAN-YR-WYDDFA

Easter 3 people.

April 4/7th. Scunthorpe MC 12 beds.

April 7/11th Hurstpierpoint School whole hut.

April 12/14th Bewdley MC 16 beds.

April 19/21st Oread Meet.

April 21/24th P. Craddock 4 beds.

April 26/29th. G Gadsby whole hut.

May 3/5th vacant

May 10/12th Cambridge Uni. MC 16 beds.

May 17/19th Skyline MC 16 beds. J Linney 4beds Oread room.

May B.H. vacant

May 31/June 2nd Keith Daws 10 beds.

HEATHY LEA

Easter vacant.

April 5/7th Yorkshire Ramblers cottage/barn.

April 12/14th Oread meet.

April 19/21st D. Helliwell. cottage/barn.

April 26/28th Gloucester MC cottage.

May 3/5th vacant

May 10/12th vacant.

May 17/19th vacant.

May 24/26th vacant.

May 3/June 2nd N. Wetherstone ??

Note these dates are correct at the time of writing, one should check with the new Hut Booking Sec. if visiting the hut at short notice, or for payment of hut fees after the AGM.

“Whole Hut” includes the Oread room! Please note that both huts are now partially available for booking by other clubs during the summer holidays.

Thanks,

Colin Hobday.

Hobday's humour:



The Hayes/Pape ski trip got off to a bad start.....

Letter to the Editor

Dear Madam,

Congratulations on your outrageous efforts to blow your own trumpet in the letters column, no doubt in a desperate attempt to drum up votes at the AGM so that you can cling on to the Editorship in spite of the hordes of aspiring wannabes fighting for the role.

“your newsletters, they are really professional.”
Dennis Gray.

Dennis Gray – I ask you!

Who will you be impersonating next month? Ron Fawcett? Johnny Dawes? Don't you think I didn't see you fluttering your eyelashes at **him**, telling him how he's inspired your writing career.

That's the trouble with you gutter press editors - you don't know fact from fiction these days.

Yours faithfully,

“*One Who Knows.*”

Forthcoming Meets: Derek Pike

April.				
3rd	1 st Wed eve outside	Harborough	Royal Oak Wirksworth	
6 th -7 th .	Easter.			
10th	Wed eve	Wildcat	Royal Oak Wirksworth	
13 th -14 th .	Heathy Lea.		Leader Required.	
17th	Wed eve	Cratcliffe	Miners Standard	
20 th -21 st .	T.Y.W.		"	
24th	Wed eve	Lawrencefield	The Millstone	
27 th -28 th .		Yahoo Group.		
May.				
1st	Wed eve	Roaches	The Rock	
4 th -5 th -6 th . B.H.	Low House.	Coniston.	Steve Bennett.	
8th	Wed eve	Beeston Tor	Royal Oak Wetton	
11 th -12 th .				
15th	Wed eve	Earl Sterndale	Quiet Woman	
18 th -19 th .		Yahoo Group.		
22nd	Wed eve	High Tor	County & Station	
25 th -27 th B.H.	Gower	Tides favourable	Derek Pike	
29th	Wed eve	Stanage	The Millstone	
June.				
1 st -2 nd .	Kiddies meet	Heathy Lea	Neil Weatherstone	
8 th -9 th .		Yahoo Group.		
15 th -16 th .	Heathy Lea W.P?	Barbecue?		
22 nd -23 rd .	T.Y.W.	Barbecue.	Tony Howard.	
29 th -30 th .		Yahoo Group.		
July.				
6 th -7 th .		Yahoo Group.		
13 th -14 th .	High House.	K. Fellfarers.	Dave Helliwell.	
20 th -21 st .		Yahoo Group.		
27 th -28 th .	Alpine Meet.	Val de Mello	Nigel Briggs	
August.				
3 rd -4 th .	Alpine Meet.	"	"	
10 th -11 th .	Alpine Meet.	"	"	

17 th -18 th .				
24 th -25 th -26 th . B.H	Pembroke?		Leader Required.	
September.				
31 st Aug. -1 st .	“			
7 th -8 th .		Yahoo Group.		
14 th -22 nd .	Lundy.		Derek Pike.	
28 th -29 th .		Yahoo Group.		
October.				
5 th -6 th .		Yahoo Group.		
12 th -13 th .	Gogarth.		Dave Mawer.	
26 th -27 th .	T.Y.W.	Curry Meet.	Tony Howard.	
November.				
2 nd -3 rd .	Heathy Lea.	Bonfire Meet.	Mike Hayes.	
3 rd		Dovedale Dash	Rob Tresidder?	
9 th -10 th .		Yahoo Group		
16 th	Annual Dinner	Bluebell Inn	Leader Required.	
17 th .	Post Prandial Walk		Leader Required.	
23 rd -24 th .		Yahoo Group.		
December.				
30 th Nov- 1 st Dec.	Patterdale.	G. Starkey.	Tony Howard.	
7 th -8 th .	Bullstones.		Kev Fidler	
11 th .	Black Rocks.		Rob. Tresidder?	
14 th -15 th .		Yahoo Group.		
21 st -22 nd .		“		
25 th - 1 st . Jan	Christmas	T.Y.W.		

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And to finish - Morocco in March: pictures overleaf :

Top left: Not a lot of gear on Artful Dodger 4c.

Right: The team on the top pitch of Crazy Mushroom Ridge 5a.



Centre: Snod on top of Babouche Buttress. Bottom: Wilson secures basic hostel accommodation for the team in Agadir.