

OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB MAGAZINE

JUNE 2015



Controversy! Sgurr Mhic Choinnich? -We think not!

Rusty's puzzle corner is making a take-over bid- seek your photo caption there! (Photo: Jack Ashcroft.)

Editorial

This newsletter is another bumper edition and some articles are being held over to next month!

June will bring us the annual Children's meet at Heathy Lea, celebrated delightfully with Hobday's Humour, (although I suspect the reality of this meet might rather depict hapless parents pursuing their offspring as they weasel their way up all kinds of nooks and crannies). Then a trip to the Lakes, a new venue for us at Thirlmere. A working party for those of us with mid week time to spare will be followed, hopefully, by sun, sea and rock at Gogarath.

Also in this issue: more memories of Gordon Gadsby, meets write ups for Little Langdale and Swanage, enticing snippets from sunny Sicily and tales of Scotland and Skye from way back. Plus the news of the month – where is that stunning mountain ridge disappearing into the sea? Puzzle Corner Rules OK!

What's On

| Coming Soon | | | UK | A b r o a d |
|-------------|------|----|----|--|
| | Wed | 3 | | Froggatt [evening meet] |
| | Thur | 4 | | |
| | Fri | 5 | | Kiddies Meet |
| | Sat | 6 | | Heathy Lea |
| | Sun | 7 | | Neil Weatherstone |
| | Mon | 8 | | |
| | Tue | 9 | | |
| | Wed | 10 | | Windgather [evening meet] |
| | Thur | 11 | | |
| | Fri | 12 | | Smithy Hut |
| | Sat | 13 | | Thirlmere |
| | Sun | 14 | | Chris Radcliffe |
| | Mon | 15 | | |
| | Tue | 16 | | |
| | Wed | 17 | | Dovedale [evening meet] |
| | Thur | 18 | | |
| | Fri | 19 | | |
| | Sat | 20 | | |
| | Sun | 21 | | |
| | Mon | 22 | | |
| | Tue | 23 | | |
| | Wed | 24 | | Roaches [evening meet] |
| | Thur | 25 | | |
| | Fri | 26 | | |
| | Sat | 27 | | |
| | Sun | 28 | | |
| | Mon | 29 | | |
| | Tue | 30 | | |
| July | Wed | 1 | | Harpur Hill [evening meet] |
| | Thur | 2 | | |
| | Fri | 3 | | |
| | Sat | 4 | | |
| | Sun | 5 | | |
| | Mon | 6 | | |
| | Tue | 7 | | Tan yr Wyddfa |
| | Wed | 8 | | Working Party |
| | Thur | 9 | | Dave (Snod) Helliwell |
| | Fri | 10 | | |
| | Sat | 11 | | Gogarth , Anglesey |
| | Sun | 12 | | Dave Mawer |
| | Mon | 13 | | |
| | Tue | 14 | | |
| | Wed | 15 | | Horseshoe Quarry [evening meet] |
| | Thur | 16 | | |
| | Fri | 17 | | |
| | Sat | 18 | | |

- **See below for details of these meets.**
- Use your Yahoo group to see what members are doing on a day to day basis.
- See the Oread website <http://www.oread.co.uk/> for the full meets calendar.
- Help your club by leading a meet. Contact Gil Male - tel. 07958 169389 – email gilemale@gmail.com

Wednesday evening meets.



*Gil Male enjoying the evening sun, if not the exposure, at Willersley on May 20th – don't be fooled by the sun it was warmer at Harborough in April!
(Photo Mick Hayes.)*

Here are the planned venues for the month – weather permitting.

| | | |
|---------|---|------------------------|
| 3 June | Froggatt | The Grouse |
| 10 June | Windgather | The Swan, Kettleshulme |
| 17 June | Dovedale | Royal Oak, Wetton |
| 24 June | The Roches | The Rock |
| 1 July | Harpur Hill | The Parks Inn, Burbage |
| 8 July | Yahoo Group (for the TyW working party – Tremadoc!) | |
| 15 July | Horseshoe Quarry | The Moon |

6 June Children's Climbing Meet Neil Weatherstone

The idea is to have a meet for small Oreads so they can have fun climbing together.

Climbing is at Birchen Edge. Starting out from Healthy Lea at 10am with a picnic lunch. Some of us will be staying over at Healthy Lea on both Friday and Saturday night, so let me know if you want to stay over (cottage is already full). We'll be having a bonfire and BBQ on Saturday evening. If the weather is too wet for climbing on the Saturday I plan to set off at 10am for a walk along the edges instead. I'll be climbing and staying over with my children who are now aged four and six.

Neil Weatherstone email Neil.weatherstone@btinternet.com tel.07946825798

13-14 June The Smithy, Thirlmere Chris Radcliffe



This meet is something of an experiment. I have booked The Smithy Hut (Gritstone Club) which is located in Thirlmere, a part of the Lakes which is some distance from the main watering holes and therefore rarely visited as a first choice venue. It is a small hut so I am hoping for a convivial group keen to explore the local possibilities. If there is a massive demand to join the meet, there are three campsites close-by.

Location: Thirlmere - NY315194 Post Code: CA12 4TG

Facilities: Two bunk rooms, two shower rooms, two WCs, drying room, fully equipped kitchen, solid fuel stove and space heating, off road car parking.

Capacity: 9 in lower bunk room Rates: Non-Member £7 per night.

The hut is close to a path leading to Sticks Pass, north of Raise on the Hellvelyn range so there is immediate access to the Eastern Fells.

The key attraction is the rock climbing in the immediate vicinity. The most well known crag is Castle Rock of Triermain. Unfortunately there is a potential for a massive rockfall on the left of the crag. A crack is opening up and has been monitored for some time. All routes to the left of May Day Cracks should be avoided, including the classic Overhanging Bastion. The latest update from the FRCC is dated 12/3/2015 and includes the following observation from Trevor Langhorne:

It may be wisest to avoid the whole of the North Crag. If/when the collapse takes place it will be an impressive sight, if you are unfortunate enough to be on one of the routes when it collapses I believe the correct thing to do is shout "way to go dude"!

Although this is disappointing, there are a number of enjoyable easier routes on the South Face.

On the opposite side of the valley there is the steep and impressive Raven Crag. This includes a couple of classic reasonable routes: Anarchist and Communist Convert, and a number of much harder routes of which the most reasonable is Totalitarian (E1+). There is also Lower Swirl Crag. This is described as looking like a rather insignificant large boulder. However there are four routes (HVS to E2) which are said to combine quality with brevity.

If the weather is very fine and it seems preferable to head for a high mountain crag, then we could easily drive over to Patterdale to climb the mega-classics on Eagle Crag.

Please get in touch if you would like to join me and take up the limited number of places at the hut.

Email chris@farfields.co.uk tel. 01246 569134 (home) 07770 883259 (mobile)

7-10 July Midweek working party at Tan yr Wyddfa Snod Helliwell

There are a few jobs that need seeing to so I'm proposing to spend a couple of days at the hut before joining the Gogarth meet at the weekend. It would be great if people who are free during the week could come and give us a hand. Jobs include some painting inside and out, annual cleaning and laundry, cleaning the sycamore seedlings out of the gutter and other outdoor maintenance jobs including a bit of wood cutting if anyone fancies playing with a chainsaw.

Please let me know if you are able to spare a day to help.

Snod. Tel 01298 812753 (I have an answer phone so leave a message and I'll get back to you, or email dave.helliwell@stirlingloyd.com

10 - 12 July Gogarth Camping meet Dave Mawer

If you only ever visit the Sea Cliffs of Anglesey as a wet weather alternative to the mountains you may be missing the point. Gogarth offers a wide variety of climbing styles, with many of its routes the epitome of "Adventure" whatever your grade. The forthcoming meet has favourable tides with lows around midday allowing the tidal starts to dry out. However the great thing about Gogarth is that there are plenty of areas that are far enough from the sea not to be affected by tides or large swells. Unfortunately there are bird bans in force on some parts but these are typically Red Wall and Mousetrap Zawn at South Stack. Check the BMC RAD for more info. Hopefully it will be more successful than last year's meet which was abandoned due to the weather. If the weather does look dodgy please get in touch to see if it's still a goer.

Once again we will base ourselves at the Valley of the Rocks Camp site, Portdafarch Road, Trearddur Bay, Isle of Anglesey, LL65 2LL. Tel: 01407765787. Booking isn't really necessary unless you need electric hook-up for which space is limited. Apparently the post code will lead you astray if you use Satnav. The best approach is to follow signs for south stack but then follow the coast road at its turning, then look out for Portdafarch Road on the left just before a small bay at the bottom of a hill. The campsite is about 1km on the right. Most importantly to note is that accessible from the site is the Paddler's Return a purveyor of fine beers and cuisine.

If you fancy coming email me at dtmawer@yahoo.co.uk or phone on 07790715520.

1-15 August Dolomites for the summer Alps Trip Roger Gibbs

Located in northern Italy, and representing a true mix of Italian and Austrian culture, these so-called 'Pale Alps' contain climbing of every shape and size. Single pitch sport crags lie beside kilometre-long traditional routes, with climbs

which are steeped in history running parallel to modern bolted lines. The area is also renowned for its via ferrata, cabled routes predating the Great War which give superb access to some of the World's most striking summits. The glamorous fleshpots of Cortina provide alternative attractions, plus walking, biking and sightseeing.

The campsite we plan to use is:

<http://www.campingrocchetta.it/index.php>

They've said they don't take bookings from Mid July onwards, but we should get on if we don't arrive too late in the day.

There is another one just across the road from this they haven't replied but I expect it will be the same.

We'll try Rocchetta first.

I guess we're going to have to just go and hope for the best.

We're planning to go 1st week of August for two weeks...when the whole of Italy will be going too. Some of the others will get there up to a week earlier, and some will stay longer.

Let me know if you're going to join us!

Roger Gibbs: roger@tilda.com . Tel. 07770 2372708. People hoping to arrive earlier may also like to contact Pam Storer and Pete Lancaster.

News, Articles and Reports from Meets.

Tan yr Wyddfa: important notice.

Some members have expressed concern about the spare keys now kept in the hut. The reason is that, as reported last month, there is now a police-approved key safe for the use of visiting clubs on the main side entrance. Clubs are supplied with a code (changed regularly) to access the key. The key in the safe is attached by a chain so that it cannot be removed from the door. This avoids the risk of anyone taking that key home by mistake. There are extra keys hanging in the hut **which must not be removed** because they are essential for visiting clubs to open the other doors and the coal bunker.

You, as members are not affected by these changes, you will carry on using your own keys as normal.

Chuck Hooley memorial bench

The memorial bench to Chuck Hooley has been delivered and has been installed and fixed in position, at the top of the garden, with fine views down the valley and across to Snowdon, The work was done over the weekend of 15-17 May by Pam Storer, Chris and Roy Eyre and a group of friends from the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust.



Wildlife Trust member Barry, pictured above, masterminded the concreting, laying of the slabs and fixing of the bench. The team also put their walling training into practice by rebuilding the collapsed wall that supports the lintel in the old outside loo. While cutting the grass and tidying the garden they discovered a robin's nest in the undergrowth and were fascinated to watch and listen to them as they fed their young.

Say No to UK Winter Rust – Go to Sicily and Get a Tan! Gil Male - March 2015

Sicily is the largest island in the Mediterranean Sea. It is an autonomous region of Italy and is officially referred to as Regione Siciliana. It is a mountainous island that provides good walking, lots of pre and post Christ history and, very importantly, well documented climbing with a guide book part written by a pair of Tits (Scott and Jim that is).



The team decided to base itself in San Vito lo Campo because we had a climbing guide to this area. By car this is about 1hr 15min from Palermo airport or in the region of 15mins for the average Italian taxi driver. We rented a four bed apartment from some local people that we found through the internet (www.homeaway.co.uk). Staying in San Vito has the advantage of being in town so you are close to shops, restaurants and the extensive San Vito lo Campo beach. If you don't want to stay in San Vito then there is the El Bahira campsite that is a short drive out of town and under the right hand end of the crags. You can book camping or a mobile home on site and it has a swimming pool for those who enjoy

poolside tiffin and a dunk after a day baking on the rocks. The temperatures were in the upper 20°C region when we were there in mid-March.

If you are looking for single pitch sports routes ranging from 4 to 9b difficulty then the most convenient climbing stretches from the El Bahira campsite to the outskirts of San Vito. This crag, or series of crags, is something like two miles long and is a sort of Stanage by the sea except it has solid holds and friendly bolts. Oh yes and the routes go up to 35m in length. Of course there are penalties when you have holds to pull on. The crag is invariably steep and despite titanic efforts to find a slab there wasn't one. Nevertheless, on the easier routes you often find jugs that you can wrap your whole hand around so don't be put off. Also, access is relatively easy because you can take a hire car close to the crag at both ends or in the middle. Hire cars do seem to go places that other cars reject!



If you want something more demanding there are big multi-pitch crags on the other side of San Vito. These are a short walk from the road so are easy access. Problem is you need to be climbing 6b or above on most routes. We did consider doing an 18 pitch, 5c route with bolts for the first eight pitches and then trad above. Common sense prevailed on the grounds we were on holiday and it was too hot so that's for another day



Regarding culture, that's not for me! However, I was persuaded to go to Segeste, a major city of the Elymian people who were indigenous to Sicily. This extensive site is now the remains of an ancient city with a temple and amphitheatre dating back to 400 years BC. The remains of a Muslim temple and Norman church were also evident. The city was abandoned towards the end of 13AD. Despite my desire to wallow in ignorance it left me surprised by the level of societal infrastructure and organisation that must have existed to build

and administer such a large and impressive centre of population. Worth a visit. There are also other sites such as the Valle dei Templi that has the remains of seven temples and the Tomb of Theron which is a large pyramidal monument that scholars suppose was built to commemorate the Romans killed in the 2nd Punic War. People we met said this was more impressive than Segeste. Couldn't be persuaded to go there.

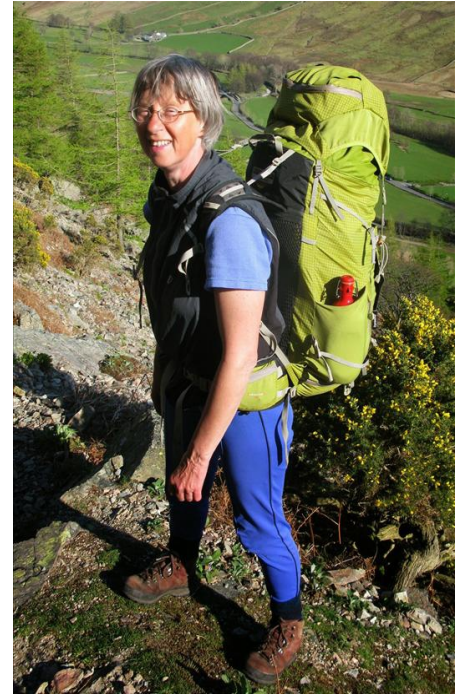
So, that's a quick potted tour of Sicily. It's a beautiful, historic island with friendly locals and it is much greener than expected, at least in March. It has enough climbing for at least a two week break and seems to have substantial potential for mountain walking. Unfortunately, I can't speak of this having done none. In addition, there is another guide book covering other climbing areas so more climbing exists outside San Vito lo Campo. If you go then I hope you enjoy it as much as the team did.

Little Langdale Meet – Fylde Hut, 17-18 April. Chris and Gill Radcliffe



We travelled to the Lakes earlier in the week and enjoyed brilliant weather in Buttermere which continued into the weekend. On Saturday we enjoyed clear skies, light winds and long sunny periods, while on Sunday it was a cloudy morning and the sun appeared in the afternoon, but still a fine day.

On Saturday a rock climbing party comprising Pam and Nick, Angela and Roland, Steve and Pam Norris, Chris and Gill headed for Raven Crag, Langdale. We all enjoyed some classic routes including, Revelation, Bilberry Buttress, Centepede, Evening Wall, Savernake and Holly Tree Direct. It was warm and sunny on the crag. Nodge, with Rock and Keith did a circuit of the Little Langdale Valley, walking up to Wet Side Edge and continuing over Great Carr and Wetherlam, returning the long way round via Tilberthwaite. It was fine, but quite chilly on the tops – for Keith a great effort considering it was his longest walk for a while. John Green was also walking, knocking off three more Wainwrights – just one more to go! The Fylde hut is a comfortable and convenient base for the area and various folk enjoyed the hospitality of the Three Shires Inn, just up the lane, for beer and food.



On Sunday, Pam and Nick headed for White Ghyll, where they found it sheltered from the easterly wind and had a good time climbing. Steve went for a run, as did Gill – doing an anti-clockwise version of the Three Shires fell race taking in Pike O’Blisco, Great Carr and Wetherlam, descending directly

through an ancient pine forest on the flanks of Wetherlam which slowed her down a bit. The rest of the group went for various walks. Pam, Nodge, Rock and Keith headed for Lingmoor Fell, as did Angela and Roland. John had a short walk before heading home and Chris walked the same route as Gill, taking a couple of hours longer! Thanks to all for attending and making it a very enjoyable and sociable weekend.



Swanage – by Royal Appointment

One was wondering what to do for the Bank Holiday weekend. One had spent all week fondling with one’s Velocettes, ensuring they were in imperfect working order and guaranteed to breakdown before reaching Windsor. One was also keen to get away from one’s palace before the arrival of one’s latest great-grandchild. Then one remembered what one’s loyal subject Robert MBE had said about the Oread Mountaineering Club ...

The forecast for Saturday was poor, with high winds and the possibility of rain later. Lord Motivator of Southall suggested that Winspit was supposed to be sheltered and would provide the possibility of easy escape should the rain come. One could only concur.

One imagines that most of the Oread know Winspit well, but in case they don't, it's an old quarry a little way above the sea, split in two by a small valley. The guidebook suggests that Quarryman's Wall was the most likely to be sheltered in windy conditions, so that was where one headed. Sure enough, it was as



sheltered as promised, but when one poked one's head around the corner to the south face, one felt one would lose one's crown!

Lord Motivator was as keen as ever, straight onto a 6a, and then another, to complete the warm up. He had his eye on a couple of classic 6a+s. Stonemason was a steep crack line, mostly well endowed with jugs and a few jams towards the top. The bolting seemed sparse from the bottom, but in practice, the spacing was about right – one didn't want to have to stop to clip too much.

Unseen Ripples of the Pebble was an even steeper proposition at the same grade, a layback crack up an overhanging corner. Luckily there were plenty of opportunities to bridge and take the weight off one's arms. Despite that, one didn't show the necessary commitment and had a few sneaky rests. (French style,

according to Lord Motivator. One may have to consider giving him a holiday in the Tower.)

By now, Lord Motivator was ready for something harder, such as the "6b" to the left, Jargon Eater. One's more modern guidebook graded it 6c, but one doesn't like to be discouraging. Lord M. had an admirable attempt, but the crux stopped him first time round. He managed it second go, after a short rest, which is more than one can say for one.

That seemed to feed Lord Motivator's rat. A few more, easier, routes to keep the numbers up and explore the windy parts of the crag and it was time to retire to the pub, where one could sample the local apple juice.

Sunday started wet. One must have a word with one's forecasters. Still, they did seem to suggest a sunnier afternoon, so after luncheon at the Castle, a party set off for Boulder Ruckle. My Ladies Wislon and Pape decided that cliff-top walks in the bracing sea air were a better option.

Lightning Wall was deemed a suitable warm-up, and one volunteered to lead. One feels that one managed it in reasonable style. The crux was a little damp, but the traverse that followed was really delightful. The belay at the top was

definitely bracing. Then it was back down for a second route. Lord Motivator had his beady eye on Elysium for his first trad lead of the year. He made of a fine job of it, despite some dampness and comedy ropework around the halfway break. It was still bracing at the top, so the party decided that there was only so much fun one could take and retreated to the metal tents. The evening was spent sampling the contents of Lord Motivator's van cellar. Whilst not a patch on the cellar at Sandringham, it certainly stands good comparison with Balmoral – and his van was considerably less draughty.

Monday was sunny! Windy as well, but definitely sunny. Lord Motivator had business at the west of Boulder Ruckle, whilst one had designs on Isis (VS **) and Eskimo Nell (E1 *) at Cattle Troughs. So it was decided to warm-up at Cattle Troughs before moving into the Ruckle.

Cattle Troughs was busy, but only on the easier routes. Isis and Eskimo Nell were free. We soon discovered why when a large wave washed over the stance at the bottom of both routes. Lord Motivator declined the opportunity to get wet; he thought one could start Eskimo Nell from the left. He was not wrong, but one did get the feeling that one's gear would simply unzip if one fell off. And so to the Ruckle ...

Lord M had his eye on Ocean Boulevard, described as one of the best E3s in one's realm. "Only" 5b climbing, it claimed to have good gear. What's not to like? Abseiling in, the challenge soon became apparent. The wall was continually overhanging up to the halfway break – above that it was merely vertical. The line of Ocean Boulevard was obvious – a stunning crackline leading up to the break. There was even a throne for one to belay from!

Lord Motivator made quick work of the crack. He had to really, even his arms could hang around too long on that sort of ground. The pro seemed a plentiful as promised and he seemed to find a crouched rest at the halfway break. Then things got interesting. The crackline had faded out. There were holds leading straight up, but they soon ran out. The guidebook suggested going slightly right, and holds led that way too. Up he went, tried a few moves, then back down to where he could rest. Back up to fiddle some more gear in, then back down to rest. Up for another look, back down for another rest. His arms were obviously burning, but he was using all his nous to get the onsight. Back up again, a bit further this time. Then he moving left and up, faster now as the ground got easier. "Safe". Maybe that trip to the Tower will have to wait. One's thanks to the Lords and Ladies who accompanied one. One must now see if Philip has any relatives in Kalymnos ...

E.R. (Photographs by Lord Wislon of Lumsdale).



Gordon Gadsby – memories. Jack and Janet Ashcroft.

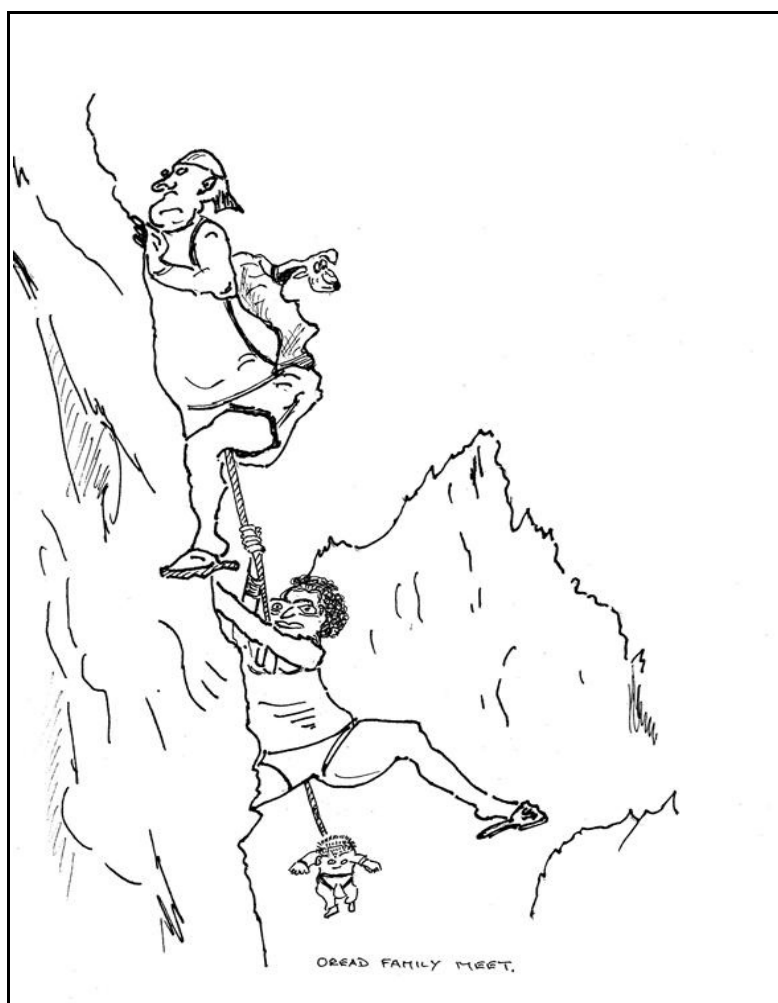
We have a monochrome photograph hanging on the wall at home. It is an enlargement from a 35mm slide up to 30 by 24 inches (750x600mm) especially organised by Gordon after our work on photographic selection for “Climb if you will” published in 1974 after one of the most disastrous events in Club history – Geoff Hayes' fatal fall on Dow Crag.

It is a measure of Gordon's character to have arranged this portrait of the Matterhorn to the Dent d'Herens taken from the Zinalrothorn and delivered, with minimal comment, some time after the publication.

Yes, it is all rock, ice and snow. Colour slide though it was, it processed brilliantly into black and white. It has not always received polite comment by visitors – one, a TV celebrity, walked away from it with a “Huh”! Be that as it may - that photograph always brings to mind the Club meet in the Mattertal in the summer of 1971.

We cannot add more to the tributes paid to Gordon by Colin and Bob in the May magazine. He will be missed by many of his friends in the outdoor movement in its entirety. It is a sad occasion.

Hobday's humour:



Hut Bookings.

TAN-YR-WYDDFA

| | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| 6 -7June | Roches UK |
| 12-13 June | ABMSAC |
| 15 June | Notts Fire Service |
| 19 – 20 June | Hinchley M C |
| 7 – 10 June | Working party |

HEATHY LEA

| | |
|------------|----------------------------|
| 5-6 June | Neil Weatherstone |
| 9-10 June | Elaine Sutherland |
| 19-20 June | Offered, not yet confirmed |
| 26 June | Ruth Ramsdale |
| 3 July | Offered, not yet confirmed |
| 12-15 July | C.M.C. |

“Whole Hut” includes the Oread room!

“Sole use – children present” means you may not stay overnight, even in the Oread room.

All queries, payments and bookings should be addressed to Derek Pike, the Hut Bookings Secretary:

Derek Pike, 19 St. Johns Drive, Chaddesden, Derby. DE216SD

Tel. 01332 670459 Email: hutbookings@oread.co.uk

Rusty's Puzzle Corner

This month's puzzle:

My skills regarding the location of photographs are seemingly questionable, and looking at my stock of old photos, we are a bit thin on the small stretch of territory between the Manifold and Glenbrittle. Accordingly, I offer a numbers problem with a view to drawing the mathematicians out of retirement. (Mr Tresidder has been silent for awhile)

At the Heathy Lea barbecue/working party, a large fallen log was located. This was tapered, being 6 ft. long, 8 ins. diameter at the thick end and 4 ins diameter at the thin end. (Parwich has now modernised from rods, poles and perches). The party decreed that this should be dragged back to base to be dried out and cut up. Mesdames Griffiths and Gordon, clearly the two strongest present, were asked to perform this task, and decided to cut the piece into two so as to equalise the weight between the two carriers.

At what distance from the thin end should the saw cut be made?

A gentleman named Morse (not the detective) took inspiration from this log, who and what was he?.

Answers from non-technologists would be especially meritorious.”

Last month's puzzle:

What is the name and location of a gritstone edge, unexplored by climbers so far as I am aware, which lies on the watershed of England, arguably on the shortest line between the sources of watercourses flowing to the East and West coasts?

Solution:

There is no need to think so far afield as the Pennine way for the location I had in mind. (see *Roger's email below*) "Gritstone Edge" so named on the OS Buxton and Matlock Landranger map at ref.SK025685 has a tributary to the River Dane, which drains into the Irish sea via the Mersey, a mere few metres to the West. Dove Head Spring is almost as close bearing just South of East, and the Dove of course enters the Trent, the Humber and so the North sea The late Harry Pretty led the ageing Oreads on a walk in this area, and I also often lurk in the balmy atmosphere of Axe Edge and immerse my disreputable feet in both rivers, not simultaneously of course, but at either Panniers Pool, or Packhorse Bridge where a few Oreads joined me on the post AGM walk during the year of the big snow.

Meanwhile back on the Cuillins.



Within a couple of days of mailing the May newsletter your Hon.Ed. received two replies – not to solve Rusty's puzzle – but to challenge his caption to the photo on the left.

Roger Chapman emailed within a few hours of receiving the magazine: "No, this time I am not to be first with the answer to Rusty's puzzle. Nothing I could recall about the Pennine Way would fit the bill, not that the Pennine Way closely follows the watershed.

No it is the small matter of the photograph below his explanation of last month's puzzle. I am as convinced as I can be that the peak in the background is Sgurr Dearg topped by the Inn. Pin. And Sgurr Mhic Chionnich would have been under the text to the right of the picture. I found a picture (pages 58/59 in Gordon Stainforth's 'The

Cuillin' which I am sure must be on every Oreads bookshelf) which shows how close Choinnich is to Sgurr Thearlich which the map suggests would have partly blocked any view of Choinnich from the top of the Great Stone Shute."

(More from Roger below.)

He was swiftly followed by a “snail mail” letter from **Jack Ashcroft**:

“The photograph on page 18 of the May magazine is not of Sgurr Mhic Choinnich. It is Sgurr Dubh Mor taken from Sgurr Alasdair over climbers exiting the T-D Gap and Coir a Ghrunnda. The camera was pointed east. I enclose a complementary photograph of mine pointing more to the south.” The caption to Jack's image, shown on the front cover, is *Sgurr Dubh na Da Bheinn (left), Sgurr nan Eag (right) and Gars bheinn (centre) taken from Sgurr Alasdair in late evening sunlight.*

(More photos below.)

Rusty replies:

Having submitted this photograph as a merely scenic minor addition to the newsletter, not intended to be part of any quiz or competition, I was surprised that it had been subjected to such close examination, although I share your hon. editor's pleasure at this evidence that the newsletter in general is being read and is of interest. What an interesting pair of comments from Roger and Jack, the former asserting that the background peak is Sgurr Dearg which bears approximately NNW from the top of the stone chute and the latter making a categorical statement that the camera was pointing East!

I took the 'photo in 2007 just casually to record the scene and have never felt the need to study it in close detail until now, but having zoomed it up to the limits of its definition, it is clear that the sea is visible over the shoulder of the background peak. This must be in the vicinity of Camasunary and tends to confirm that the view was in a generally easterly direction. Illogical though it may have been, I mentioned Sgurr Mhic Choinich in the caption because the focus of my attention was to the left from the top of the stone chute, and Mhic Choinich lies in that direction in the sense of being anti clockwise on the circuit of Corrie Lagan. I agree that Thearlach is close to Mhic Choinich and would obscure it (Stainforth's photograph illustrating this point is of course immeasurably superior to those of we ordinary mortals). All in all it seems that Jack's analysis of the situation is the nearer to geometrical correctness. When I took the photograph, I had moved on a little from the top of the stone chute and was on the ridge leading up to Alasdair which implies that my direction had rotated clockwise through South towards West, so looking back towards the main ridge would mean my view was in an Easterly direction.

Editor's note.

For the final word – we eagerly await Dave Penlington's caption to the splendid image on the next page which he sent to your Hon. Ed. way back in February with instructions to

“Show it to Rusty – the clue to location is the island in the background.”

Your dozy Hon. Ed. did not make the connection between this image and Rusty's photo but Jack's almost identical view finally jogged what remains of her brain so it is perhaps Dave who should be credited with setting the original puzzle and your Hon. Ed. who should be awarded the dunce's cap!



Virtual Ramblings. Roger Chapman.

Roger writes:

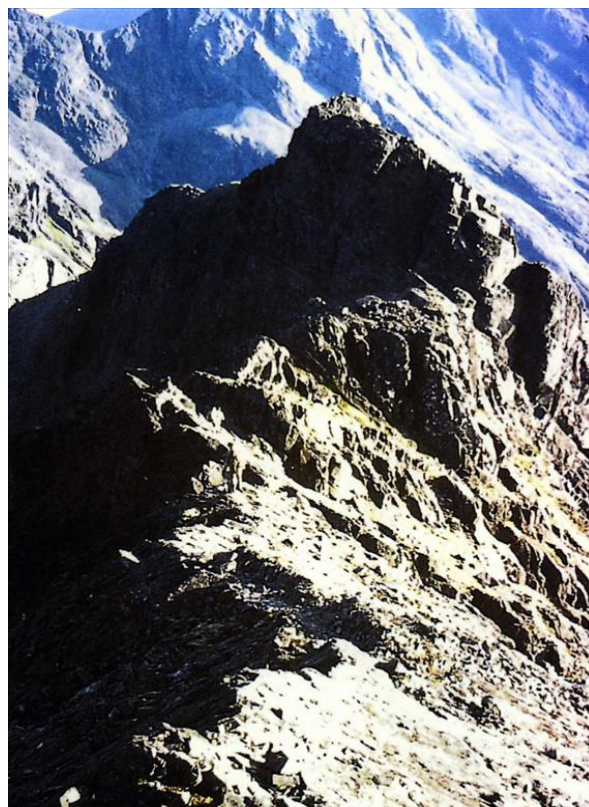
“As I am currently near enough housebound, recuperating from the fourth minor operation in three years, I am little more than an armchair Rambler these days.” but recent writings about Scotland and Skye have brought back many memories for him:

“Jack’s records, they really do put my scanty records to shame. Just about every record I have is little more than a tick and a year except for the very occasional magazine article. I must admit also to not being immune from error. Reading the recent announcement of Jack’s talk on the 4000s I casually subtracted 40 from 2014 and ended up with 1964 rather than 1974! This produced a twinge of envy since he had got there several years before my solo trip (*actually several years after as it turned out*) and a much bigger twinge that he managed to knock off some of the lower Munros on the way and still manage a better time than I had. I have my excuses ready of course. Exhausted by an expedition that resulted in Derek Mountford and myself being away from Glen Brittle for 30 hours ending Friday morning and compounded by the effects of a badly leaking exhaust on the way to Glen Nevis the following Saturday I was so shattered that my first day on the Ben ended with me camping halfway to the top.

Co-incidentally I had been looking back for evidence of my time in the Cuillins.

The first Oread Journal (or Bulletin as it was back then) I have is Winter 1976 which contains Jack's account of the 4000s 'by Landrover'. Oh well I don't suppose two miles along a relatively flat track invalidates the continuity of the walk.

The very next journal had two articles about doing the Main Ridge the hard way carrying bivvy gear. One by G.Gadsby and the other by J. Doughty. We overtook Gordon's party on the summit of Dearg. We didn't rate a mention in Gordon's account but I still remember (and more and more frequently as the years went by) Johnnie Welbourne yelling after us as we clattered down the scree "You'll ruin your knees." How right he was.



Two images of Skye from Jack Ashcroft's collection: left Sgurr Mhic Choinnich, Sgurr Thearlaich and Sgurr Alasdair (right) taken from Sgurr Dearg, looking south. Right Early morning sunlight on Sgurr Mhic Choinnich from Sgurr Alasdair, looking north.

The other article at least gave us a favourable mention which might well have been Derek and my tickets into full membership of the Oread. "We had one rather daunting experience when we were passed by two mountain club members who had started that day! [From a tent pitched directly below Gars-bheinn to avoid the arduous stroll from the Glen Brittle campsite.] Going very fast indeed there were trying to include Blaven and Glen (sic) Glas and apparently been in training for it, having done the ridge on numerous occasions."

We failed due largely due to me getting gripped on steep vegetation approaching Sgurr na U-amha, which some maintain is the true end of the Main Ridge, and using up what little remained of my mental energy getting off when a 'jug handle' hold came off as I lowered myself off an overlapping boiler plate. Derek had opted

to return from that summit via the steep vegetation but I could not be persuaded so Derek had the benefit of a long rest as I struggled to find an easy way off down a potentially dangerous hillside. There were times when I had to climb back and others when I bitterly regretted my decision to do this bit on my own. Once I was down as well we bombed off across the Bundu at great speed and were halfway up Clach Glas before I threw in the towel. We did however make it back to the 'Slig'in time for several rounds of beer before being transported back to Glen Brittle.

And finally a plea for more information: **Naismith's Route.**

As a mere walker (I assume the classification 'Rabbit' disappeared from the climbing lexicon at much the same time as the 'Easy' rock climbing grade was discarded) I am not at my best on steep rock but I do claim to be good at route finding (aka avoiding difficulties) so it was probably my fault that we never did find Naismith's Route on the Bhasteir Tooth. A fact that only dawned on me in the last few days. We had forgotten the exact wording of the brief description in the 1970 edition of the SMC District Guide for Skye which of course we were not carrying. (Every little [reduction in weight] helps as they say in Tesco.) All I can now remember (and probably all we had to go on at the time) is that at some point we had to trend to the right to reach a ledge with a large stone on it with Naismith's Route continuing from the end of the ledge. We must have trended right too soon heading for the wrong 'ledge with stone' on the Tooth. Puzzled by the lack of any way off at either end of the ledge we took on the thin crack that ran up above the boulder itself which I believed must be the route we were looking for but surely if it was it would have been the hardest Diff. in the world. A very brave lead in bendy boots and negligible protection by a tired Derek. Derek did not tell me that the peg he belayed me to in preference to the boulder was only finger tight otherwise I might have pulled it out before I commenced my ascent. Luckily there was an old but firmly placed peg to use as a belay at the top of the route. Our Boulder Ledge can just about be made out in the upper photograph on page 144 (in Gordon Stainforth's 'The Cuillin') while the intended correct ledge (since sans boulder) is shown on page 34. I looked at the public face of UK Climbing.com and came away more confused than ever since that records only three routes up the Tooth suitable for mere mortals and one of those, the Lota Corrie route is definitely not in the picture. The remaining two were Naismith's Route (VD **) and Naismith's Route Direct (D). I would have thought that the two Naismith routes would be variations of the same route with the 'Direct' the harder route and Diff. is the grade usually given to the original route. The only public comment about the Direct Route is:

"Mistook route for Lotte Corries Route. This route is not D or even Severe as in book. More like VS."

Which may or may not actually be our way up. Our route was certainly not VS since I couldn't even follow anything that hard when fresh."

Forthcoming Meets:

Note there are some changes from the list published last month.

2015

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| June | | | |
| 3 rd | Evening meet | Froggatt | Yahoo Group |
| 6 th – 7 th | Kiddies Meet | Heathy Lea | Neil Weatherstone |
| 10 th | Evening meet | Windgather | Yahoo Group |
| 13 th -14 th | Thirlmere | Smithy Hut | Chris Radcliffe |
| July | | | |
| 7 th - 10 th | Tan yr Wyddfa | Working party | Dave Helliwell |
| 11 th – 12 th | Gogarth | Camping | Dave Mawer |
| August | | | |
| 1 st -15 th | Alpine Meet | Dolomites | Roger Gibbs |
| 22 nd - 23 rd | Joint meet with MAM | Heathy Lea | |
| 29 th – 31 st | S Pembroke | Camping | Pam Storer |
| September | | | |
| 12 th – 13 th | Wye Valley | Camping | Derek Pike |
| 19 th -20 th | Heathy Lea | Joint with DMC | Eddie James DMC |
| 23 rd (eve.) | Curry Meet | Matlock | Simon Pape |
| 26 th – Oct 3 | Lundy | The Barn | Derek Pike |
| October | | | |
| TBA | Morocco | Tafraoute | TBA |
| November | | | |
| 1 st | Dovedale Dash | Fell Race | Rob Tresidder |
| 7 th | Bonfire Night | Heathy Lea | Pam Storer |
| 14 th | Annual Dinner | Matlock Golf Club | Leader required |
| 21 st – 22 nd | Coniston | MAM Hut | Tony Howard |
| December | | | |
| 5 th – 6 th | Bullstones Meet | Long Walk | Leader required |
| 16 th (eve.) | Black Rocks | Night cragging | Rob Tresidder |
| 25 th – Jan 1 | Christmas/NY | Tan-y-Wyddfa | TBA |

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