



OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB MAGAZINE

APRIL 2018

The Beast from the East?



No, it's Pete Lancaster enjoying the fantastic winter climbing conditions produced by the winds from the Baltic. He's on the icy left hand branch of Clogwyn Du gully. Photos Jeff Ingman.

Editorial

At last the long dark nights are a thing of the past so in this issue details of the new season's Wednesday evening meets. A change of emphasis here with **set pubs for a social evening fixed** but the climbing or walking arrangements beforehand left flexible for last minute weather-dependent plans.

Also details of the **New Members' meet**, French sun-seeking and the early May Bank holiday trip to **North Pembroke**.

Write ups include a scary expedition on Ben Nevis by **new Meets Secretary**, Spenser; yet another snowbound Boundary Walk plus the promised tales of fun in the Spanish sun - although there's some snow in those too!

We have more memories and photos of Bullstones and Lower Small Clough cabins, a photo of your new President looking ridiculously youthful plus more reminiscences of John Dench and tributes to Len Hatchett.

Don't forget – this is **your newsletter** – all contributions are welcome from members old and new. This month our new **“Members' Corner”** - has a cautionary tale to tell – if you use climbing walls check out page five!

Evening meets:

Do come along to the evening climbing wall session:

Mondays at the Unit from 7 – 9.00 pm and after at the Wilmot Arms, Chaddesden.

Wednesday evenings over the summer will focus on a pub for a social get together after climbing, walking or whatever the weather permits.

If you would like to walk please share your departure point and time so others have the opportunity to meet up with you.

4 April	Miners Standard, Winster Climb Cratcliffe/Robin Hood's Stride bouldering.
10 April	The Boat, Cromford (Committee meeting) Climb Colehill.
11 April	The Maynard Arms Grindleford (BMC Peak Area Committee) Climb Yarncliff.
18 April	The Boat, Cromford. Climb Wildcat.
25 April	The Old Poets, Ashover Climb Turning Stone Edge.
2 May	Derwentwater Arms Calver Climb Froggatt.

The climbing venues are suggestions and any late amendments will be shared via the Yahoo Group and Facebook or you may prefer to make your own plans with friends – but let's all meet up in the pub after darkness falls – or rain stops play!

30 March – 3 April Easter in Cornwall Derek Pike

This year's walking, climbing and chilling out meet will be based near St. Just at the Trevaylor campsite, well known to the Oread and other clubs as it is an excellent site with all amenities including a bar and restaurant. Its other main attraction is its proximity to the coastal path and sea cliffs such as Bosigran, Kendijack, Sennen, Lands End and Chair Ladder. I have been there many times sometimes just for a long weekend in spite of the long drive and have never been disappointed, the climbing's the best, plenty of golden granite along with a few other offerings, an excellent coastal path and plenty of pubs along the way, something for everyone. The sun may even shine. If it doesn't, move to the other side of West Penwith, the climate is strangely variable, sea mist on the North coast bright sunshine on the South or vice versa.

I shall be there from the 29th March to 3rd April probably staying longer. If you require any more info just ask.

Derek. E-mail, derekpike1234@btinternet.com Phone 01332670459

You will need to make your own booking direct to the site, they know we are coming, so mention my name or the Oreads.

trevaylor@cornishcamping.co.uk

Phone bookings 01736 787016 or 0781699251

Site is at G.R. 369325. Sht S.W. Lat 50.1348097 Long -5.6835324

20-21 April New Members' Meet,Heathy Lea Spenser Gray

Following the success of New Members' Meets the club will be running a meet with a similar format over the weekend of April 20th-22nd at Heathy Lea. It is expected that people will go climbing on the Friday night (possibly some bimbaling on the Burbage South Valley Boulders if the weather is playing ball), some socialising at the hut will follow before we decamp to a local crag on the Saturday morning (possibly Bamford Edge or Rivelin Edge).

Saturday evening will see another excessively large meal made by myself (if attending please do inform me in good time so I know how much to make, also **inform me of dietary requirements** so I know if a vegetarian option is required), a bonfire will likely also be lit, hopefully without the influence of our former president.....

Sunday will see further climbing on the local crags (perhaps Froggatt, or maybe Birchen) before we head home to spend another week eyeing the weather from the office window!

The cost of the food and hut nights will be covered by the club, please come along and support the future developmet of our club!

Please contact Spenser.h.gray@googlemail.com if you wish to attend.

April in France

A dozen or so Oreads are heading for Provence in search of some sun-kissed limestone. People are going out between 3-16 April and returning around 1 May. We will definitely be visiting Buis les Baronnies for a few days plus other venues on the way there or back. If you would like to join us please contact me as we will be the last to leave, on 16 April.

Ruth Gordon – tel 01629 56636 email alistair.ruth@btinternet.com

4 - 7 May Bank Holiday North Pembroke Michael Hayes



Glan-y-Mor camp Site, Caerfai Road, St Davids Pembroke

Sun, sea and climbing in one of the most beautiful places in the UK. It's the perfect location for a bank holiday weekend.

Accommodation:

The camp site is only a 10-minute walk from the wonderful town of St Davids, down the road leading to Caerfai Bay. I have warned the campsite to expect the

Oread and *you will need to book your own pitches on the website*

<http://www.glan-y-mor.co.uk/>

Climbing:

The climbing is fantastic with the sea cliffs of Caerfai St Nons and Porth Clais just a short walk away. The Pembroke Volume 1 North guide book has 440 pages stuffed full of adventure covering every grade.

Local Area:

If you have not been to this part of the country then you really are in for a treat. The coastal path is stunning as are the beaches, coves and surf. Bring your wetsuit, board, kayak and bike there's just so much to do!

Contact me to let me know you're going and if you need any more information.

If you are coming then please book the campsite ASAP as it can get very busy over the bank holiday weekend.

Michael Hayes tel 07771700913

21 July to 5 August Bregaglia and Bernina Alpine Meet Michael Hayes

We will once again be staying at the fantastic campsite Mulina in Vicosoprano close to the Swiss Italian border; surrounded by the superb Granite climbing of the Bregaglia and within an easy drive of the snowy mountains of the Bernina. From single pitch sport routes in the valley to 20+ pitches on the Piz Badile or the stunning Biancograt on the Bernina, there is something for everyone.

If you want to join us then please let me know.

Michael Hayes: email hayes_michael_j@cat.com Tel 07771 700913

Copy deadline for next issue is 25 April.

Your new Committee

President: Dave Helliwell

Vice President: Derek Pike

Secretary: Nigel Briggs

Membership Secretary: Michael Hayes

Treasurer: Janet Briggs

Hut Bookings Secretary: Michael Hayes

Hut Custodian Heathy Lea: Phil and Yvonne Waterson

Hut Custodian Tan yr Wyddfa: Dave Helliwell

Meets Secretary: Spenser Gray

Newsletter Editor: Ruth Gordon

Additional Committee Members: Pete Lancaster, Chris Wilson, Tony Howard (with responsibility for Dinner and Handbook) Chris Radcliffe to be co-opted to represent the Forward Thinking Group.

Hut Sub committees:

Heathy Lea: Phil and Yvonne Waterson, Steve McDonagh, Michael Hayes, Pam Storer

Tan yr Wyddfa: Dave Helliwell, Chris Eyre, Roy Eyre, Tony Howard, Pam Storer,

Ruth Gordon.

Members' Corner

Here's the new regular spot to share info, ask for hints and tips, put your For Sale and Wanted ads, write open letters to the committee and generally make your voice heard. All non-libellous contributions welcome!

BMC Multiple Club Refund 2018 - shared by Christine Renouf

For those of us who are members of more than one BMC affiliated mountaineering club and therefore may be making multiple payments to the BMC there is a form on their web site for you to reclaim your multiple payments.

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/claiming-multiple-membership-refunds>

Climbing and the Olympics – Martin Lancaster



A new Olympic event ~ **The Long Drop**

A club record has recently been set at Awesome Walls, Sheffield.

Using a controversial technique, combining the Fosbury Flop with the Lancaster Bomb, Martin made an unassisted landing from the penultimate clip. Luckily injuries were negligible. His team mate points out that this is a **team event** - he too was awarded top style points for inattention.

The moral of this story is:

This is a true story. it happens really quickly and could happen to any of us. Let's be careful.

News, Articles and Reports from Meets.

Fifty days on the road - Chris Radcliffe

We got back from our trip after 50 days – we left on December 20th. We enjoyed generally good weather in Spain, although there were exceptions. Our route to the

south of Spain, down the western side of France, avoiding most of the autoroutes, was rather slow as we were travelling in tandem with Gill's parents.



I found this quite enjoyable as the driving was not taxing and we had time for a bit of walking when we arrived at our stopovers – generally campervan aires, also some campsites. Of course on this section of the trip we could spend the evenings in the relative comfort of Ron and Pauline's campervan. We left them to it at Granada on January 1st and travelled to El Chorro. It is about 30 years since I was last here and the focus of the climbing was quite different. We had great weather and really enjoyed it. *Photo shows Gill on Amptrax at El Chorro.*

We returned to Granada to visit the Alhambra on January 6th and we endured heavy rain that turned to snow (that was the day that it snowed in the Sahara). This was just a



temporary glitch in the weather and we then moved on to Redovan, not far from Murcia but actually at the very southern tip of Valencia. Again great weather to visit La Pancha, an area of the crag that we hadn't climbed on before. Moving back west we camped at El Berro, close to the Sierra Espuna with a massive crag, Pared sur de Leyva. I think this is a great area, but the climbing is tough and you really need some trad gear, even on the notionally fully bolted routes.

The magnificent cliffs of Pared sur de Leyva.



We ended up repeating a route we had done some years ago, but as I found it much harder I was still very happy just to get to the top again. We were amazed at the performance of an ibex (pictured to left of the tree) that we met on pitch three (of five). She descended right in front of us, spent some time sniffing at me, before down climbing right past my belay and then she traversed across the crag in seconds. The speed and confidence of movement was amazing.

After this we headed for Calpe so we could meet up with Roger and Clare. We also had a day in

the company of Howard and Ali, Bill Birkett and Ted Rogers who took us to a new “secret” crag high up on Segaria. It faced north which was welcome as the weather was very hot at this stage and we had wilted while climbing at Sella. We spent some of the time at a campsite in Calpe, but we also had a trip to the more distant crags of Guadalest and Sella where we wild camped near the crags. Although it is easy enough to drive there on day trips, we enjoyed taking advantage of the campervan to be right there without having to do the driving.

The weather became a little more unsettled and this was the point where we took over an apartment from Howard and Ali Lancashire who were just leaving and enjoyed a week of space and relative luxury.. We still got out onto the crags and also did some walking. We also joined with Roger and Clare, Ali Lancashire and Rod Valentine for an excellent bike ride into the hills beyond Jalon and Benimaurell – some good cycling as well as being sociable – it became a three café day.



The team after the descent from the Col de Garga. Ali, Clare, Chris, Gil and Rod. Roger and Clare left for home early in February and the forecast was not good, so we decided on a final push to climb at Tallat Roig where we spent a couple of nights. We were impressed by this crag – it has a variety of rock and some excellent routes. It is popular with climbers from Valencia, but until recently not well known to Brits. Then we headed for home, taking five days to drive to Calais. It was miserable weather most of the way and one night we turned up a campsite that was supposed to be open all year, but was in fact closed, so we succumbed to a night in a hotel and enjoyed some fine home cooking in their restaurant.

Off to sunny(?) Spain Ruth Gordon

When Derek booked a trip for himself and Joan to the Benilux Park hotel, Benidorm from 5-17 Feb he knew a few friends would join them - that guaranteed(?) sunshine being so welcome in darkest winter days. To find that

over 30 club members and friends of all ages - spanning at least five decades (not polite to ask too closely) decided to join him was a bit of a surprise. To see the area and all its potential you really do need a car -though journeys by train get you to good places and Colin and Uschi had a long day using the public bus to Guadalest and back. Derek generously drove up into the mountains twice to give those without transport a chance to see the area.

Folk arrived and left as the fortnight wore on so the first to leave were gone before the last arrivals turned up. A complete mix of walkers, climbers and folk happy just to seek a bit of sunshine and a gentle stroll on the beach in good company. Janet (Briggs) even went swimming and says the sea was pleasant and warm. Janet (Burgess) put her feet in the sea. She did not say it was pleasant and warm – but she did it! I did not. Pete and Ali decided it was an alpine trip and headed to the Aitana (1500m) for a snowy walk and exciting scramble. Alas, Ali caught a horrible cold and was ill for the rest of the holiday.



Jo, Ali and Pam on the Aitana. Photo courtesy of Pete Kennington.

After a dismal first day of chill wind and icy drizzle the climbers headed south and inland to the glorious warmth and fantastic rock at Redovan while the walkers enjoyed the almond blossom of the Jalon valley under grey skies. Colin photographed it later in the holiday when normal blue skies had resumed.



Thereafter the weather was great, except for a conveniently wet rest day on Saturday 10th -perfect for watching the Six Nations rugby. So many people, so many different agenda, I don't think any one person could write a meet report! First arrivals, Pam and Nodge explored Echo Valley, expecting to walk but, as the day improved, enjoyed the climbing too; while Lance and Al had a grand day at Sella.

Most of us rolled in on Monday. Snod had been upgraded – instead of a Fiesta we had a Renault Captur. It was vocal - its beeps and squeaks demanded constant loud and abusive response from Snod. It was so large that backing it into the cramped and costly underground parking was a challenge space . Snod backs in - “As far as I can see I'm perfect.”

The car was spot on - but when I reported his words to the team Tony suggested it was time to visit Specsavers.

Meanwhile Derrick and Janet had mislaid a gilet containing their holiday money and missed their evening meal in search of it. Arriving after chuck-out time, Derrick blagged a pudding – complete with fresh cream, while Janet got thrown out! I went to tackle the Manager: “Ha – you have a Wife who has lost her Husband? I have a Husband who has lost his Wife!” Reunited, they went out for burger and chips, the missing gilet was found and all was well.

It's war on the dance floor - Mike and Sue Wren are gesturing for our support - the line dancers are gaining control. Lance, Al and Amy are becoming very conscious of their youth – they head off to the pub as we join the Spanish pensioners jiving through the collapsing lines. Ken is fascinated by the line-dancing – heads off to the beach in the morning and discovers you can join in the groups down there and learn for free! A whole new world opens up!

Al and I have both ripped the knees out of our jeans on hedgehog rock – so on trend – down there with the kids – but we can't hack it – I stitch mine up - he bins his.

Off to Alcalali, glorious day. Richard nips into the woods for a pee. There is no seclusion to be had up close to the crag. We all decide it's a good idea. As we sneak, singly, into the sparse woodland Richard is getting edgy – if this goes on much longer I'll have to go again!

Up at the crag Angela discovers she has left her boots behind. After much



experimentation best match was mine so we climbed together - that way we only needed one pair of boots. Amy joined Lance and Al, leading her first routes this week. Then we moved to a new area and the boots were nowhere to be found. Simon says “That has to be the ultimate test of incompetence. Only one pair to look after and still you lose them!”

OK OK they were clipped to my harness. Just don't go on about it.

Left, Angela at Alcalali – modelling Snod's boots.

Amy wasn't the only one to develop her talents over the week: – Roma convincingly demonstrated that this climbing lark is no problem to a fit Monday walker and thrice-weekly golfer.

Meanwhile, the sightseeing team explored Guadalest while Mike and Derek went climbing. Joan, Chris and Sue visited the Microscopic Museum where you can see the Bible written on a pinhead – and astonishing images of ladies and gentlemen, balanced on a pinhead, in compromising positions, revealing their all in exquisite detailthe Oread ladies were greatly entertained – as were we all by their lurid reports.

The sightseers also had a grand day out to Alicante on the train – here is the team at Castle Santa Barbara (photo courtesy of Colin Hobday).



Al and Lance had a hit list. The Toix ridge had been ticked on a challenging grey, windy day but not deterred they headed for the Penon. Via Valencianos.

“How was it?”

“Awesome with a capital A!”

“What about the polished crack?”

“The first bit was ok then I looked round the corner – there was this tin of Mr Sheen saying “Use me” It was disgusting!

“It was revolting” says Lance. “But all the rest of it was just awesome.”

“And I'm so lucky – not one, not two – three seagulls shat on me!”

“ I was immune!” says Lance.

Nigel and Janet had an exciting last day following their noses up to the cross on the far hilltop: “We turned into an quarry - like area following what seemed like paths. These went below some bolted rock (routes looked hard) and up the hillside before petering out! We continued up scrambling and fighting vegetation to eventually emerge near the top of a hill north of the cross and a decent path back to the cross. We were suitably scratched, but it was memorable!”

You learn so much from these trips ---we oldies do love to share our vast and encyclopaedic knowledge of the mountaineering way of life:

Richard: “The thing that did wonders for my sciatica was when I stopped carrying my wallet in the back pocket of my jeans.”

PDBW Stage 3: Winster to Minninglow CP - 17 March Gill Radcliffe



A spring like afternoon on Friday gave way to a last blast of winter on Saturday morning as 21 Oreads and friends assembled at the Market Hall in Winster for the third stage of the peak district boundary walk.

We were later joined by Rob Tresidder who was two minutes late and thwarted from starting with the rest of the party by a meet leader who likes to keep to

schedule.

Heading down from the car park for the start. Photo Tomasz Janiki

Frequent gusts of strong wind and snow showers kept the party moving at a brisk pace towards Bonsall. Rob joined at some point but the meet leader was marching ahead and didn't notice. A few individuals tentatively suggested a tea break and managed a quick sip from their



flasks before the meet leader set off again.



Into the fieldsPhoto Tomasz Janiki.

Field after field, stile after stile (did anyone count them all?) passed by as the snow fell and the party burrowed into their brightly coloured jackets. It was close to 1pm when someone plucked up the courage to request a lunch stop. Surely no one was hungry? The meet leader was assured that many in the party were indeed hungry and she agreed to huddle behind a wall for a few minutes.



Huddled behind a wall. Photo Tomasz Janiki

Lunch was soon over and who would want to linger in that wind? The party

continued to Ible and the High Peak Trail.



Rob left to watch the rugby (England lost), perhaps he should have joined the rest of us in the pub. Rusty left to walk home, ignoring rights of way in favour of speed. The remainder hot footed it back to Minninglow car park, and the meet leader was relieved that everyone was able to find a space in the cars, especially as she had volunteered to be last to get a lift.



Silly Hat competition – Round Three.

A hot drink in the Miners' Standard ended a brisk walk on an invigorating day. As Paul G said "it wouldn't have been anything like as good in fine weather!"
PS – did anyone look at the view? Many thanks to all attendees for an enjoyable walk: Jan and Chris Wilson, Ruth Gordon, Colin and Uschi Hobday, Paul and Douglas Gardiner, Nigel and Janet Briggs, Tony Howard, Roma, Stuart Firth, Angela, Rusty, Mick Hayes, Rob Tresidder, Tomasz Janicki, Mary Haslam, Aga, Donald, Chris and Gill Radcliffe.

Spring Stride 25 March Clive (Rusty) Russell



The new President checking up on the Spring Striders at Wetton Mill.

Jaded by the previous evening's AGM, the bulk of the membership stayed away and, with the honourable exception of Mr. Hayes, the mass of those attending were O.A.P's. I kept to my usual principles of trying to find a route which, for some of the way at least, was not regularly trodden ground for most of those attending. A beautiful fresh and sunny day dawned and approximately seven assorted figures appeared at the green outside the Royal Oak. We traversed to the West of Wetton Hill, adding about 40% to the straight line distance based on a 3:4:5 triangle (Ruth will give a dissertation on Pythagoras if required). Crossing a small stream which drains down to the grounds of the Railway Inn at Hulme End, we were then faced with the first major ascent of the day to gain the heights of the mine workings leading up to Ecton hill. Here it first became apparent that the ladies had more power in the legs than their contemporary male counterparts. After Ecton Hill we descended to Wetton Mill where two muffled humanoids, only identifiable by the cream tank panels on their motorcycle, proved to be two leading Oread figures. A referendum was conducted, strategically upwind of any

dissent, to confirm the original intention to ascend to Grindon. From here the descent offered fine views of the front and westerly aspects of Thor's Cave, scenes of past heroics by Radders. After re-crossing the river, the lung bursting effort to return to Wetton could be summarised as mud and more mud.

Those present: Derek Pike, Tony Howard, Roma Wilcock, Richard Hopkinson, Christine Renouf, Dave Roscoe, Chris Radcliffe and Michael Hayes. Thanks to all these for attending.

The Long Climb, Ben Nevis, Spenser Gray

As it tumbles down the Orion Face I hear the rumble of the boulder which not five seconds before had looked and felt solidly attached to the ledge two feet above me. The first thought that crosses my mind is "I'm alive..... I think?!" Guiltily my second thought is of my friend and climbing partner, Mark, who is belaying me at the bottom of the pitch.

"Are you ok?" my voice echoes thinly back at me from the maze of gullies and ridges which form the north face of Ben Nevis competing with the crash of the boulder which I had just dislodged. As I see the warm glow of the orange sparks split the night in sharp contrast with the cold glow of my head torch the mountain's true nature becomes painfully apparent. I hear the word "Yes" shouted up from below. Fortunately Mark was belayed beneath a small overhang significantly to one side of me, the rockfall had come nowhere near him. For a second I close my eyes and in front of me stands a friend, her smile beaming at me from the end of a sunny day on Pavey Ark, a world away from where I am now. With my nerves steeled against my fears, I mantle the ledge now conveniently clear of the stacked loose blocks, a strong desire to continue living overpowering any and all doubts in my mind.

The weather forecast was amazing, the absence of Scottish climbing in my logbook woeful and I was working in Glasgow for several weeks. Mark readily agreed to go and have an adventure on a big rock route in the mountains, a lunchtime perusal of UKC yielded a list of objectives and on Saturday morning the decision was made to head for Ben Nevis to do "Tower Ridge" or "The Long Climb". The latter is described as "The Longest Vertical Face Climb on Mainland UK", at 426m long there's no reason to doubt this statement. The route was first climbed in 1940 by Dr JHB (Jimmy Bell) and John Wilson in a pair of Woolly's plimsolls with socks covering them at a standard of VS. It's hard not to respect the climbers of bygone generations, you're huffing and puffing your way up a route with decent ropes, proper rock boots and a full rack of trad gear and the first ascensionist often did it with his mother's cast off washing line for a rope and pebbles in place of wires! The route follows a weaving line starting just beyond the toe of Observatory Ridge and heading up into a huge grassy amphitheatre of rock called "The Basin", a regular candidate for late season snowball fights, once this is navigated a rising leftward traverse line is taken to reach the summit ridge. We pulled up by the Glen Nevis Youth Hostel at 8:45 AM and after a good old fashioned sweaty slog up and over to the CIC hut, which involved many self-deprecating remarks regarding my woeful lack of fitness, we stood and marvelled at the scale of the place in which we found ourselves. I had never been on Ben Nevis before, and one of the biggest rock routes in the UK seemed like an apt way

to go about it. The game was on, any thoughts of doing Tower Ridge were discounted and we were heading for the Long Climb. Fortunately the snowfield which often sits at the base of the route in summer was long gone, this enabled us to reach the base of the route with relative ease, and no amusing tales of bergschrund crossing. The other team which we met at the CIC hut headed off to do Ledge Route with a passing remark that we'd probably be alone on our route.

I set off up the first pitch, noting the lack of gear. The second pitch was pleasant yielding some good moves. The third pitch again yielded good but very bold 4c/5a moves due to moss and greenery preventing access to the rib at the point described in the guidebook, I instead traversed onto the rib three metres above the belay ledge. At various points on the route we had found slings placed around not entirely convincing rock spikes and nubbins which appeared to have been used in an abseil descent;

The next pitch quickly yielded an explanation, the remains of a smashed helmet, a shattered phone and an assortment of gear were strewn across the pitch. Suddenly it dawned on me that I had climbed directly into the scene of a terrible accident, I later learnt that only six hours prior to us arriving at the base of the route Lochaber MRT were completing what has been described as "one of their most difficult and technical rescues ever carried out", no wonder they'd left a few slings behind.

A brief discussion resulted in the decision to push on up the route as I was not massively keen on the idea of abseiling from rounded nubbins, a poor decision on my behalf? Given that they seemed to have worked for the previous party and that whatever had caused the accident was likely still above us, perhaps it was, but then again I didn't have the full picture of what had happened until I was three pitches higher.

Further bold climbing brought us to the end of the "hard" pitches, unfortunately the easy bimbles to the top seemingly promised by the guidebook transpired to be loose, poorly protected, still slightly wet despite at least 1.5 weeks of good weather and involved 4c and 5a moves! As I progressed up the first of these pitches 150m above the mess I had encountered earlier I passed a chopped rope, which I have since learned was likely cut by rockfall or by the climber falling over a sharp edge. The red and orange bicolour pattern of the rope sat against the grey slab of rock in front of me, its sheath splaying out like the strands of a mop exposing the clean white strands of the rope's core. I pushed unhelpful, fearful, thoughts from my mind knowing that if I did not the consequences did not bear thinking about. A couple of pitches further beyond this point I found myself stood in front of a shoulder height ledge, two blocks the size of my torso leaning against a much bigger boulder. I give the boulder a tug, try and rock it, it doesn't move and seems solid, concluding its great mass will keep it in position I go for it. Pulling on the sharp edge of one side with my right hand and palming down with my left I bring my feet up below me. The next thing I know I'm stood on that ledge watching sparks pierce the night as I enquire about Mark's wellbeing.

We quickly progress up the final pitch and onwards to the summit bothy, a bag of jelly babies meet no mercy and we let Mark's friend back at the hostel in Kinlochleven know we are ok (by this point it is 11:30 PM, the loose rock and

sparse gear had significantly slowed us down on the route). We decide to head straight down to the car arriving at 2:30 AM making it a near 18 hour day before a failed attempt to find a takeaway open in Fort William at club kicking out time. After a brief nap in the car we drove back to Kinlochleven and fell asleep immediately on lying down.

The Sunday brought a search for a fried breakfast, a short amble up the hill above the Grey Mare's Tail and some paddling in the stream outside the Lagangarbh hut, a much deserved period of recovery after the previous day's adventure.

Perhaps we were pushing our luck a bit to go and do the longest conventional route on our wonderful ridiculous little island from valley to valley in a day on an unfamiliar mountain in late autumn with only one leader in the team, no we definitely were, but headtorches make a wonderful insurance policy when doing this kind of thing! Should we have started to retreat from the route when the severity of the previous day's accident became apparent, probably, these things sometimes impair your judgement. In these situations perhaps I'd be best to stop and think what advice some of the older Oreads would give were they there. With solid rock, easier route finding and more easily placed gear we may well have made it down in time to get food in the pub, or at least not miss last orders. This said, I think I'll remember this for far longer than the pub grub I'd have got had everything gone to plan.

I found myself sat in a pokey little office in a railway depot the next week trying to resolve a technical issue with a customer, words are coming out of my mouth, but my mind is several hours north and several hundred metres higher, watching the tattered ends of a colourful rope swinging gently in the wind. I am again filled with doubt, now armed with more information, the victim had been climbing for longer than I'd been alive. But for the grace of God it would have been Mark sat there on a ledge shivering, waiting for the MRT to arrive. Still, a trip to Reiff was planned for the next weekend, three weeks in Arapiles two weekends after that and a week in Spain directly after that, the first two proved to be mighty fine adventures to put a smile on anyone's face and the last a good opportunity to spend time with a good friend while the rain lashed down against the windows.

I left Fort William asking myself if I could justify continuing to climb, five weeks later I left Australia knowing that I could not stop.

Young men on the Old Man

As a postscript to Terry King's article last month here are the three musketeers on the summit back in 1967. Don't they look young!

Of course photographic technology way back then didn't run to a selfie of all three together on the top – luckily Gobbo's daughter can do Photoshop!



John Dench

Tom Green writes:

I first met John on one of Geoff Hayes' mountaineering courses in the late sixties. We were very different characters, John being very vocal, outgoing and humorous- myself being very reserved. Needless to say we remained at arm's length. That was until he, Lesley and family moved not far away from me in Derby. We started climbing together in Derbyshire and then the Lakes and Wales over the next three years.

This brings to mind two of many incidents we experienced whilst climbing.

Incident one took place in Derbyshire whilst on the way to climb the Big Plum in Cheedale. On the way we came across a dead body lying partially on the path to the crag. We stood there in amazement for some time not knowing what to do until a search party of police officers arrived. We were promptly interrogated until they were satisfied with our explanation and they let us go on our way. As we walked off, John-with his typical humour- turned to one of the policemen and said

"If you hang about long enough lads you might have a couple more". Needless to say we completed the climb without further incident.

The second incident or epic took place on a weekend in Wales. Our original climbing plans were scuppered due to bad weather, it being very wet and misty. With a guide book on YLiwedd which John and Lesley had bought me for my birthday (which I still possess) and the inclement weather, we plumped for a traditional mountaineering (big boots and rucksacks) route on its East Buttress. I can't remember which route we started on but after a few pitches we were lost

and off route due to the dense mist. I brought John up to a small stance and passing over some gear to him I expressed my doubts about continuing. With his usual banter he called me a wassic and climbed up and out of sight. The mist and its atmospheric silence was broken only by John's odd comments of the lack of adequate runners - and the jingling of his gear. Then with very little warning - only a shout that he was coming off, he took flight past me into the mist below. Using an old fashioned waist belay I braced myself to take the full impact of his fall, only to find that the rope went upwards to the only runner he had managed to place - which broke the fall's momentum . Having stopped him I shouted down to ask if he was okay, he replied that he was but had broken a few finger nails on his departure from the rock. With that I burst into a fit of nervous laughter of relief - John's voice came floating up with " what are you laughing at you little b*****d?"

We called it a day, retrieved our gear and returned to the welsh hut. That same night (for some obscure reason) we decided to go down into Llanberis for a pint, and on the way down the Nantgwyant, John (not renowned for his slow driving) spun his car 360 degrees after hitting a large pool of water. The car ended up facing the direction we were originally travelling in. We called quits on that one too- John for once being lost for words. We had a few other escapades but they must remain just a memory.

John, Lesley and family left Derby and I lost contact with them, only to meet up a few years later at an Oread Dinner where we swapped tales and some banter. It's very sad, and like the others, he will be missed by many.

Len Hatchett – 14 July 1920 - 4 February 2018 an appreciation John Fisher

Presumably few members now will have known Len who joined the club in 1955. He died in February this year at the age of 97 years.

Following war service as an Engineer Officer in the Merchant Navy he worked for International Combustion in Derby where he rose to Director level. He was much involved in power station contracts, conventional and nuclear, both in the UK and abroad. Later on, after a period with Babcock and Wilcox based in Glasgow, he eventually retired to live in Brassington.

His forte, apart from engineering expertise, was negotiation and he was well regarded by management and unions alike. Len's influence on the club was a modest but good one, his style adding a dash of extra maturity to an outfit with a tradition of irreverence/iconoclasm. From 1957-59 he was an efficient club secretary, a period around the time of the purchase of Tan-yr-Wydffa.

As for climbing, while enthusiastic and a fine companion, he had no serious ambitions, rather regarding rock climbing as a spicy physical part of a general interest in mountain activities. The demands of work, often abroad for long periods and devotion to family limited opportunity for really regular climbing.

Molly, his wife who predeceased him, should not be forgotten here. A woman of

great personal warmth she only occasionally attended meets but always with generosity, children and animals in attendance, welcomed any Oread visitor to their home.

A lasting memory of climbing with Len was in the 1960s when he, David Penlington, a student named Jones and myself did the Direct Route on a snow free Glyder Fach in winter. We started late, were very slow such that the final pitch was climbed in diminishing light on frost glazing rock. On our way down the moonlight was so brilliant it cast clear shadows and we were glad of it.

As a final note, in later years he took to painting and his pastel representations of rural and mountain scenes are well thought of.

Paul Gardiner writes:

Len passed away on the 4th of February at the age of 97. He was Secretary of the Oread in 1957 and 58.

At the funeral service on the 2nd of March, with snow on the ground and an icy wind, the Officiant began by saying that it was the sort of day that adventurous Len would probably have thought appropriate!

My abiding memory of him is of when the Committee met at his house in Burton Road, Derby in 1958 and the nettle was grasped to attempt to raise enough money to purchase Tan yr Wyddfa. I remember a clear thinking, softly spoken family man, not much given to recounting his experiences on North Atlantic convoys during the war. No doubt others will have memories to contribute.

Memories of Len from Jack Ashcroft are included in his piece about the Bullstones Cabin below.

Hut Bookings.

TAN-YR-WYDDFA

4-7 May	R Linney Mountain Club 16 beds
18-19 May	A Rossington 2 beds
21-22 May	Rex Bleakman 2 beds

HEATHY LEA

1-4 April	Pam Storer's friends 4 beds
13-14 April	Panther Owners Club
20-21 April	Oread New Members' Meet
27-28 April	Extreme Sports K Eastman
4-7 May	Vertigirls

“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 Michael Hayes, the Hut Bookings Secretary: 32 Hawthorne Drive, Thornton, Leicester, LE67 1AW.

Tel. 01530 231401 mobile 07771 700913. Email: hayes_michael_j@cat.com
Our preferred method of payment is via bank transfer - Sort Code 05-04-07
Account number 45028744 You must put your name **and either TYW or HL as a reference**. Otherwise the treasurer cannot allocate the payment to the right hut.
Please follow up with an email to Michael to let him know that you have made a payment and what it was for.
Alternatively you can post a cheque, payable to Oread MC, to the above address.

Hobday's Humour



Information on Member Activities

Welcome to new Provisional member, Ruth Webster. and Full member Michael Percival. We hope you will enjoy many happy days with the Oread.

An application for full membership has been received from Amy Prosser. If you would like to comment on this application please contact a member of the committee.

Bullstones Cabin: memories from Jack Ashcroft

As you will recall, Richard Genner of the Mountain Bothies Association (email rgatrg11@gmail.com) appealed in last month's issue for memories and photos from those who stayed in the Peak District shooting cabins. Jack has contributed as follows:

Sad to hear of the passing away of Len Hatchett. Len was one of a small number of largely WWII veterans who would meet at lunch hour in the mid '50s at the tiny Ladybower Inn as it was then. Followed by a late afternoon December walk along Derwent Edge to Back Tor, Margery Hill and so to Bullstones Rocks and the Cabin. On the Sunday morning it was a walk down the reservoirs back to the Ladybower Inn for very adequate beef sandwiches – a speciality of the then landlord, Edgar. These few Saturday afternoon walks and bivvies at Bullstones Cabin formed the basis of the more ambitious Kinder-Bleaklow weekend starting on Friday night at the Nag's Head, Edale.



In this photo of the Bullstones Cabin, taken around 1960, the centre of interest is “Professor” Falkner (he was a lecturer at Nottingham Polytechnic at this time) demonstrating a solution to “Brass Monkey weather” with a gaz stove. We assume his laboratory lectures on smelting for brass were better presented with a bunsen burner!

These December meets, in addition to the early summer Alpine Training meets, (often the 14 Welsh 3,000s) were meant to give some impetus to mountaineering in the Greater Ranges, in particular the Alps.

Into the 1960s and '70s the Bullstones meet moved deeper into Bleaklow, using Lower Small Clough Cabin; the comparative comfort of Bullstones Rocks Cabin

having been vandalised by some idiots. The picture below shows both the Lower Small Clough Cabins, the old one below, a bit of a ruin in comparison with the upper.

As an aside – contrast the male-dominated Bullstones meets of the 1950s and '60s with the multi-national Oread team at Rowtor Rocks, with its tunnels and crevasses plus Nine Ladies photographs in the 2018 March magazine. Things move on!

Rusty's Puzzle Corner

Last month's puzzle solution:



Those wretched cats had your Hon Ed scratching her head fruitlessly for some days. In the end I named the cats Alpha, Beta and Gamma. Alpha cat, being the Alpha male would go first and he's far too strong and clever to fall. Beta cat has the beta for the route and so knows how to avoid falling but Gamma cat, coming last has a gammy leg so he's the one that falls. Meanwhile Roger Chapman was musing over plays on words, cats having nine lives etc. Eventually, after a heavy hint from Rusty that it was to do with the symbol used for the property in physics relevant to the cats' stability, we got there. Well I, lacking even simple school-person's knowledge of physics, had to google the symbol for the co-efficient for friction..... the answer is the cat with the lowest

μ (mew) is the one that falls.

This month's puzzle.

An attractive middle aged lady found herself, during a Peak District stroll, sharing a path with a group of Oreads. The predatory males, testosterone dribbling out of their ears, immediately moved in to engage her in conversation. ***** elbowed his mates aside and commenced with his usual banal conversational gambits, asking her about her offsprings. The lady, being of perceptive nature, decided to go along with it for a little light amusement and told him she had three offsprings and that the product of their ages was 36 and the sum of their ages was equal to the path number which was displayed, just opposite, on a footpath preservation society

signpost. After some head scratching, **** announced that a further item of information was necessary to determine the ages of the three youngsters, her reply was that the youngest child liked ice cream. What were the ages of the three offsprings?

Forthcoming Meets 2017/2018

This is a work in progress – several more meets are at the planning stage. **Please support your club.** More meet leaders are required for 2018 and 2019 (UK and abroad). If you fancy leading a meet please contact Spenser Gray to discuss ideas or for more information- email meetsec@oread.co.uk

	4	<i>Evening meet to finish at The Miners' Standard, Winster</i>
	10	<i>Evening meet to finish at The Boat, Cromford</i>
<i>April</i>	11	<i>Evening meet to finish at The Maynard Arms, Grindleford (BMC Peak Area Committee)</i>
	18	<i>Evening meet to finish at The Boat, Cromford</i>
	20-21	<i>New Members Meet, Heathy Lea Spenser Gray</i>
	25	<i>Evening meet to finish at The Old Poets Corner, Ashover</i>
<i>May</i>	2	<i>Evening meet to finish at the Derwentwater Arms, Calver</i>
	5-7	<i>Early May Bank Holiday – N. Pembroke Michael Hayes</i>
	26-28	<i>Spring Bank Holiday – Mid Wales? Spenser Gray</i>
<i>June</i>	8-10	<i>Kids Meet, Heathy Lea Neil Weatherstone</i>
	8-10	<i>Joint Meet, Midland Association of Mountaineers (MAM) Chris Radcliffe</i>
	15-17	<i>Fylde Mountaineering Hut, Little Langdale Dave (Snod) Helliwell (BMC AGM)</i>
<i>July</i>	5-7	<i>Tan yr Wydfffa Working Party Dave (Snod) Helliwell</i>
	7-8	<i>Welsh 3000s Walk Derek Pike</i>
	21 Jul – 5 Aug	<i>Alpine Meet Bregaglia Michael Hayes</i>
<i>August</i>	17-19	<i>Galloway Spenser Gray</i>
	31 Aug – 2 Sep	<i>Walk & Climb the Edges Gil Male</i>
<i>October</i>	6	<i>Peak Boundary Walk (stage 4) Chris Radcliffe</i>
<i>November</i>	3	<i>Oread Bonfire Meet, Heathy Lea Neil Weatherstone</i>
	4	<i>Peak Boundary Walk (stage 5) Pete Amour</i>
	11	<i>FRCC Remembrance Meet</i>
	17	<i>Oread Annual Dinner</i>
	18	<i>Post Prandial Walk</i>
<i>December</i>	7-9	<i>Bullstones - TBA</i>
	12	<i>Black Rocks Night Climb</i>
	22 Dec – 1 Jan	<i>Christmas/New Year Meet Rock Hudson</i>

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