

# OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB MAGAZINE AKA LOCKDOWN TIMES 2

**JUNE 2020**



**Paul Gardiner has shared this photo of the Welsh 14 Peaks meet in 1966. L to R. Mike Pitchers ( an office colleague, not Oread), Colin Hobday, Jack Ashcroft, me (pre beard), Dave Weston. Can't remember if it was this trip or another one that Digger and I got down to the tents at Aber at 12.30 AM !**

## **Editorial**

In this issue some excellent financial news for the club and information about the BMC's new Clubs Strategy update on page 2. There is a quick online survey they are hoping club members will respond to. The survey closes on 31 May so please give it your immediate attention.

As well as the usual features we have a suggestion for a new regular walking group for those who enjoy shorter walks. There are several nostalgic articles from the past, including a tough walking meet in 1953, a review of the Oread on its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and a memorable weekend in Wales when Man first landed on the moon.

More recent action includes hard rock in Mallorca, Scottish winter action, an awful lot of cold water and of course the recent Virtual Camping meet!

Hope you find something in here to enjoy and keep those articles coming in! Looking forward to hearing from you all.

**Copy deadline for next issue is 23 June.**

## **Forthcoming meets 2020**

The meets programme for the coming year is temporarily suspended but will restart as soon as we can.

Michael Moss. Email for Meets Secretary remains oreadmcmeeets@gmail.com

### **Oread in Lockdown: here's the good news.**

#### **Lockdown Financial Update: Janet Briggs (Oread Treasurer).**

Following advice from the BMC, and direct or indirect approaches by relevant councils, I applied for Business Support Grants from both Derbyshire County Council and Gwynedd Council. We are eligible for these as our huts are classed as small businesses and therefore qualify for Covid support. I am pleased to say we were successful in both cases. This means that we can cover loss of hut income for at least the rest of 2020, so our financial situation will not be adversely affected by the current crisis.

#### **Please respond to the BMC survey on their proposed Clubs Strategy.**

A reply has gone from the committee, commenting on the strategy and complaining about the timescale making it impossible to consult club members but you do have an opportunity to make your views known. If you have not received the email reproduced below please copy the link into your search box to access the quick and simple survey.

**From: Mike Spooner <mike.mikespooner@gmail.com>**

**Date: 7 May 2020 at 17:26:34 BST**

#### **Subject: BMC Clubs Strategy Update**

Dear Clubs,

Many thanks again to those clubs who have taken the time last month to submit a response to the proposed Clubs Strategy for the BMC. I am currently sifting through and summarising the responses, and will endeavour to reply to those representatives who asked questions directly as this process continues.

In the meantime, we are keen that individual club members have a chance to engage with this process, even if they may not have time to digest the full document, and as a their opportunity to engage at area meetings last month was lost due to the coronavirus outbreak.

We have launched a flash survey for members to quickly feed their views on the overall direction of the strategy. It consists of a short video outlining the strategy and the reasoning behind it, and a short 3 question poll. It should take members no longer than 10 minutes to complete.

The flash survey can be accessed here: <https://forms.gle/yEukbbGrqhwGqGup9>

If clubs are willing, we'd be very grateful if you could share this link with your members in your next club communications or via social feeds. This has already been promoted via direct BMC mailings and social channels, but it would be an enormous help if clubs could also encourage their members to participate.

We are now hoping to present an updated paper in June to clubs and National Council, taking on board all of the comments received. We expect the final draft to be launched some time this summer, although we are keeping dates and what format it takes under review until we know what lockdown restrictions we may be under at that time.

Once again, many thanks for your contributions so far.

All the best

Mike Spooner

## **Member's Corner**

### **Does anyone fancy a regular short walk with friends?**

**Shirley Wainwright writes:**

I would love to get out more with the Oread but these days I cannot do the distances or match the speed of the Monday and Wednesday walking teams. Are there others who, like me, would enjoy three or four miles at a gentle pace in good company, in varied surroundings? If you are interested please be in touch and as soon as things return to something like normal we can give it a whirl.

Shirley Wainwright. Tel 01159 279384

### **Richard Hopkinson has shared this communication from Christine Renouf:**

Some of you may know I am a trustee with the **Mountain Heritage Trust**. They have an amazing archive collection which is stored at the Blencathra Centre just up the road from where I live in Threlkeld. This week ( 7 May) we have closed the archive and the office and furloughed our only employee the Collections Manager.

The BMC have withdrawn our funding as a result of the significant loss of income they have experienced because of the coronavirus. They are not able to say when or if they will be able give us financial support in the future. So for now the future of the Trust is uncertain.

If you want to know more about what we do and the collections we have do visit our website: [www.mountain-heritage.org](http://www.mountain-heritage.org)

## **Past Times and Old Friends**

### **Following on from last month's article, Shirley Wainwright has shared the text of Tony Moulam's speech at the 50th Anniversary Dinner.**

Tonight we are celebrating the jubilee or 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the club: - if it was a wedding it would be golden. By coincidence it occurs on the fifth (or tin) anniversary of the national lottery. It hasn't made me a millionaire, but even if it had, I would prefer the prize of the friendships I have made in your club, many of which have lasted ten times as long.

As it happens I was there at its start, but did not know it at the time. In December 1948 I had an unfortunate encounter with a lorry while hitch hiking from Shrewsbury to North Wales. Instead of a weekend climbing in Llanberis I spent the next three months in hospital. On my first outing after discharge, and still with only three degrees of movement in my right knee, Peter Harding picked me up from home in Derby for a tour of the local crags. Our first stop was Black Rocks, where I struggled to make a solo ascent of Pirate's Staircase which is quite difficult when you can only use one leg!

I didn't realise it at the time but diligent seeking in your archives revealed that the other people there, (a lot for the late '40s) included George Sutton, Roy Edwards, Paul Gardiner, Dave Penlington, Eddie Say, Keith Axon and Molly and Harry Pretty. They were busy in forming the Oread, and in the case of the latter, testing the elastic properties of the new-fangled nylon rope!

Unfortunately Peter and I were on a tight schedule and I was whisked away to visit Alport Stone, Cratcliffe Tor and Robin Hood's Stride, as we were writing the first guidebook to the area. Thus I came to miss the sight of your double president bouncing up and down at the end of the rope.

Incidentally I think it was one of your other guests tonight, Mac, who christened me AJ squared so I hope that he won't mind if I steal his joke and refer to Harry as President squared, from now on!

For your first few years I was lucky in that I was only CC officer to live in the north, so I got the invitations to your first three dinners. My climbing log is totally blank on the Sundays afterwards, hence I can only conclude that I had a very good time!

In 1958 I was part of a triple bill sharing the limelight with my old, and sadly missed, friend AB (Alf Bridge) and Wynford Vaughan Thomas. They both gave their usual polished performances, and I filled in as best I could, not having realised until I saw the menu that I was expected to speak. In the end a hurried whispered conversation with Wynford, who told me a couple of jokes, enabled me blunder through as a bit part, and luckily I was late enough in the programme for the audience to be less than usually demanding. I recall later AB's continually expressed amazement at the diamond encrusted teeth of the landlord of the White Lion, as we struggled up some unpleasant gritstone in a post dinner haze.

My next memory is rather a sad one. It was the occasion of the opening of your Eric Byne Memorial Hut. I had known Eric quite well and had had many long discussions with him about Peak District guidebooks and his (and Geoff Sutton's) book "High Peak". He gave me a copy in 1966 and I had no idea that he was ill, and was to die in just over a year. He joined the Oread, just after its formation, and together with Alf Bridge and Cyril Machin, helped the Oread through its early years. Eric also recruited them to the discipline of guidebook writing, to the eternal benefit of climbers in the Peak.

I will bore you with only one more tale of a dinner. Your 21<sup>st</sup> on 25 November 1972. There I was presented with a specially decorated plate, commemorating "21 years of Oread dining" and it is still one of my proudest possessions. I must confess however that tonight I attend your dinner for the twelfth time, and very glad I am to be here too.

I have already mentioned your President squared, and you have in him a remarkable man. One of his claims to fame is that, after visiting Tom Longstaff during a trip to Torridon, not only did he persuade Longstaff to be patron of the South Georgia Expedition but he must also have exuded an odour of sanctity, as Longstaff addressed a letter to him as "The Reverend H. Pretty."

He is also a watercolourist of some talent, notably the Nat Allen memorial print of Cloggy, and a portrait of Cwm Silin I commissioned from him to show Ogof Direct. I also recall praising his cliff drawings in one of the Peak guides, when I reviewed it some time ago. His skills as an editor as well as a contributor are seen in your jubilee journal and apart from all this his walks in the empty quarters of Wales, sailing expeditions with Stan Moore and his early exploits in Lyngen characterise a Renaissance Man, of whom much more could be said. Some of the politer things are the exquisite pantomime performances, to say nothing of the circuses with bearded ladies ranging from Whillans and Dick Brown to the cleanshaven Nat Allen, I believe this all grew out of the Ilam pantomime and the Dovedale Dash, but the performances at the Oread dinners became entertainment high points of the year.

Now enter Bob Pettigrew (along with others including Ray Handley, Ernie Phillips and Johnny Welbourne). I am reliably informed that Bob visited Japan in 1982, on a British Council sponsored trip to the Japanese Alps. Peaks climbed included Hakusan and Nishihodake and it is reported that when Bobsan took five hours out to meet the emperor one bystander said to another "who is that little man talking to Bob Pettigrew?".

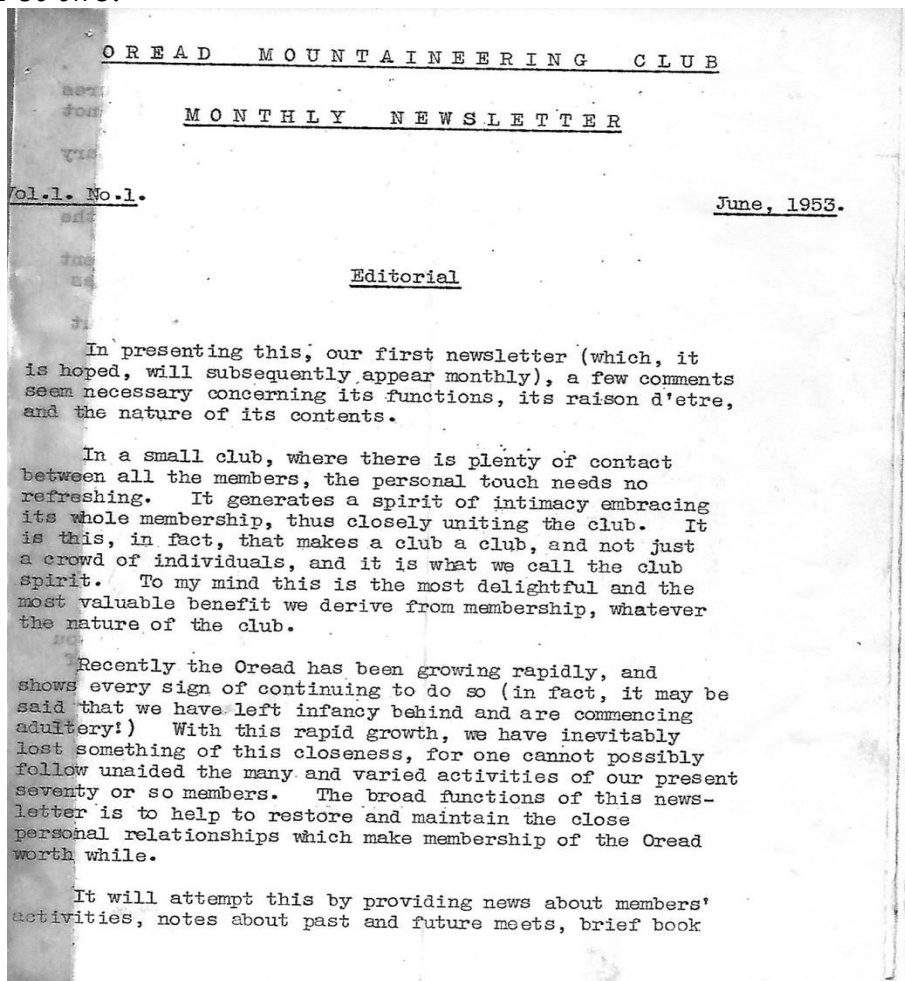
The club has spread its activities all over the mountain world, including ascents of the Eigerwand and the Eperon Walker, several forays to the Himalayas and the Americas, apart from Lyngen and South Georgia, already mentioned.

In England and Wales a remarkable tally of new routes and even a tradition of long Peakland walks. You can be proud of your club, starting in a modest way but growing to become remarkably successful in all these areas, including our sport, and the arts.

Throughout all this development the friendly close-knit nature of the club has been maintained, and it should be an example to anyone wanting to "mountaineer" - as stated as the object of your club. You have been very successful, and should look forward to your next 50 years!

## Jack Ashcroft has shared the very first newsletter of the club, June 1953

Here are images of the first editorial to show you what it looked like and the plans for its development. Other items from this newsletter will appear in the next month or two.



reviews, a correspondence column, and any other features you may desire. I must emphasize here that it will not trespass on the provinces of the Journal, nor will it replace the first-rate circulars issued by our Secretary and others.

Its news will consist mainly of gossipy items - the particularly bright remark "A" made; how "B" led his first V.S.; how "C" fell off a moderate; how "X" spent the weekend with Miss "Y", etc.; in fact any anecdotes which might interest or amuse readers. To a great extent I shall have to rely on you to let me know about these things.

The notes on meets will deal with such topics as where to find the best climbing, the best camp sites, what happened last time, and suitable tales about the meet location, e.g. how we put condensed milk on Dick Brown's beard.

The correspondence column will provide a forum in which members may ask questions or express their views. Letters may be serious or frivolous in their contents, and all opinions, common or controversial, will be welcome.

Here it is, then. Remember, its largely up to you to keep it alive, and lively, by sending me any bits of club gossip you may come across. All suggestions for improvement will be considered. I have tried in this issue, and in this unconscionably long editorial to give a lead. Now, over to you.

D.C.C.

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Now a meet report from this time of year, 67 years ago----

## **Marsden - Rowsley May 16-17 1953 D.C.(Charlie) Cullum**

Late on Friday night, (May 15<sup>th</sup>) nineteen hooded figures having unsuccessfully sought shelter first at a fairground, and then on a football pitch, slept in a field just outside Marsden.

They started the long trek at 7 a.m. on Saturday, Ken and Betty Wright having got away even earlier.

At Woodhead the party split into a speed group headed by Dave Penlington and Bob Pettigrew, and a larger group consisting of the idlers. The weather was cloudy but fine. Black Hill and Holme Moss fell behind, then Bleaklow via Wild Boar Clough, with a shower (of rain) on top, then sunshine and the Snake Inn.



Here the Hon. Sec. accidentally trod on the Hon. Ed's. face and broke his pipe.

*The group are pictured at the entrance to the small bar at the side of Snake Inn. Photo Jack Ashcroft.*

At 4 p.m. The main group ascended Kinder – the speed group having crossed Featherbed Moss, and the main plateau - then along Seal Edge and Blackden Edge, and (well strung out by now) the slow final pull up Win Hill. A meal followed, then a drink at the Yorkshire Bridge, and a bivouac in “a pine wood half a mile up the road” (Penlington). This half mile took 35 minutes – and the wood was nearly

vertical.

After a damp start on Sunday, a highly extended party strolled gently via Stanage, Longshaw Park and the Edges to Baslow, in warm sunshine. Most people finished here in order to catch the buses home.

As far as is known, all nineteen Oreads and friends “made it”. A special word of congratulation is due to Betty Wright, the only lady in the party, for an exceptionally fine performance.

## **A Giant Leap for Mankind John Mountain**

So where were you on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July 1969? (This question is aimed, obviously, at the older cadre of the OMC!)

I was in North Wales, with my cronies Snod and Rance.

Snod and I arrived late on the Friday night and installed ourselves in the JMCS hut in Bethesda. Rance was expected overnight Saturday, being delayed by thespian activities at the Sheffield Playhouse.

Saturday was a bit damp, but we did get a full ‘mountaineering’ day in on Tryfan, followed by a pleasant evening in the Douglas. After more than sufficient lubrication (in my case), we settled down for the night, wondering when (if?) Rance would arrive on his Triumph ‘Bonny’.

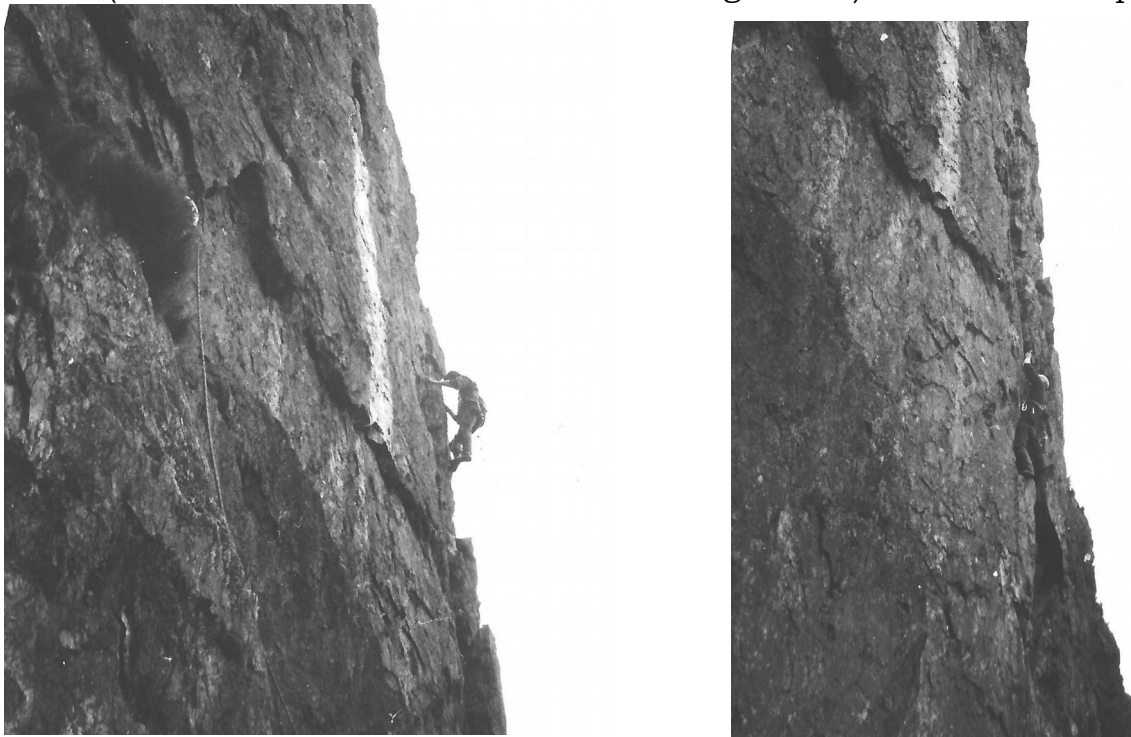
We were awakened around 3am with furtive movements in the hut. Odd, we thought, no sound of the bike arriving. Rance appeared. The only bit of the bike that had arrived with him was the speedo, the needle stuck at around 60mph.

The rest of the bike was impaled in a wall on the bends at Betwys!

How did he get from there to Bethesda? Well, the story is that having overcooked

it on one of the bends, Rance was able to rescue the situation with an accommodating layby. This layby was also accommodating a car in which a couple were enjoying each other's company. Despite the coitus being interrupted so surprisingly, Rance persuaded them to give him a lift to Bethesda. The following day dawned wet and generally horrible. We drove round to Llanberis for a second breakfast and some retail therapy. The weather improved after lunch and the idea of doing Cemetery Gates was mooted (not by me, as I was still feeling the effects of the Youngers No.3). I bravely agreed to accompany the other two and cheer them on. On the off-chance of my recovering a bit, I did carry my gear up to the crag.

We ensconced ourselves on a ledge above, and to the left of, the start of the Gates (underneath the line of what became Right Wall). Rance set off up the



*Left, Terry on the arete. Right Snod on the crack.*

route at breakneck speed, and as he got to the top of the first pitch, this guy (let's call him Bill Shade) sidled up. He was dead keen to lead the Gates and pressed me into agreeing to do it with him.

At this point, I realise that some key information needs to be relayed to younger viewers. This was 1969. No harness, no belay device and no gloves. What I did have on was one of my Grandma's sweaters. She knitted four for me in all. They came with extra long arms, to protect the hands whilst belaying...(I think you can guess what's going to happen...).

Anyway, Snod was half-way up the first pitch when Bill set off. He was also climbing like a demon, and by the time Snod was about to vacate the belay ledge, Bill was on the little fingery section just below. And then he wasn't. He came flying down towards me. I saw one, two, three runners plucked out of the route before one held. He ended up below me and about 15 feet off the deck.

I was rather shaken, to put it mildly. Expecting Bill to be a gibbering wreck, the realisation set in that I might be expected to flog to the top and ab down to retrieve gear, Snod and Rance by now being out of sight and shouting range. Bill was not shaken at all. "Just got cramp in my fingers" he said, in a matter of fact way. With that, he shot off to the top and retrieved his gear, packed his bag, and was off, cool as the proverbial salad item.

We three followed down to the road rather more slowly, with me struggling to take in what had just happened.

Later that evening, the telly portrayed someone else taking a small step, which rather put my exciting day in the shade.

Where are you now Bill? Still climbing? Or still in orbit?

## Meets Reports and Deeds of Derring Do

### Socially Isolated Camping Meet 8-9 May 2020 Janet Briggs

Well there were two unusual things about this meet:

- It was a Bank Holiday weekend but the Bank Holiday was on a Friday.
- It was a Bank Holiday weekend and the weather was warm and sunny.

Possibly there is something else unusual going on at the moment but that did not stop the Oread from having a well attended and successful meet.

As meet leader I'm afraid I have been remiss in not having a full list of all attendees, suffice to say that there were at least 44 attendees for some or all of the weekend. Things were kicked off early by one of our older and wiser members, who felt that as he was using his Blacks 'New Guinea' tent for the first time in 45 years it might be prudent to pitch early and check that all the 30 guys and 34 pegs were present and correct and that it would stand up to all that the Allestree weather could throw at it. He was fully prepared by Monday afternoon.



For most 'arrival' at their chosen campsite was on Friday so by the time of our 'zoom' get together at 8.00pm on Friday tents, tarps, bivvi bags and hammocks had been erected, at least one van had been prepared. Fires had been lit, some outdoor cooking undertaken and a glitter ball erected, a 'glitter ball' you ask... just ask Tim Sellears why, but I'm sure it seemed like a good idea at the time and provided some evening entertainment. It would seem that some participants succumbed to the availability of luxurious indoor accommodation at their chosen



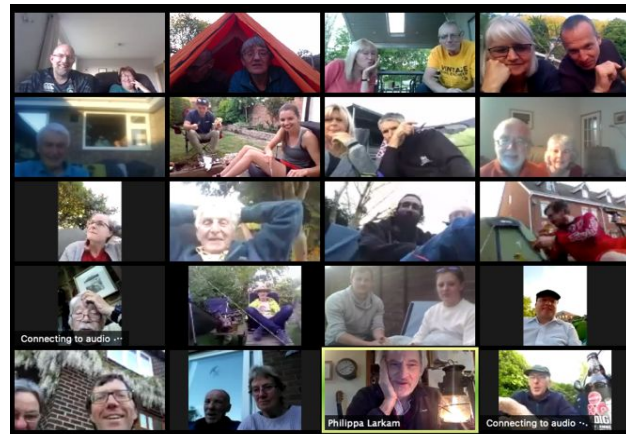


venue (shame on you!).

What is more a new route had already been put up by Roger Larkam, I do not currently have information about the route name, and in which guide book it will appear, I also have not been told whether there has been a second ascent yet, however there is a photographic record of the route.



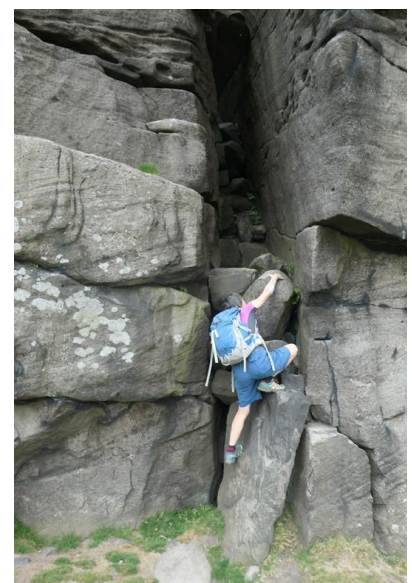
So, at or around 8.00pm, (depending on prior engagements), at least 26 phones, tablets or laptops were pressed into action for our first ever virtual 'meet evening yarn' via zoom. For some reason beyond my control the usual 40 minute limit on zoom meetings was not applied so we had over 90 minutes of banter, drinking together but not together, and socially distant social interaction before fading light stopped play.



So far as I am aware all had a good night, reports of Saturday activities are sparse, I do know that Ruth was successful in managing to insert her pop up tent back into its bag.



Chris and Gill had a good walk and provided the second bit of climbing action of the weekend.



## Some quotations from participants:

I've arrived a little early for the camping meet.... must be the excitement of good weather and a new tent to test out!  
Neil Weatherstone. 6 May.

Had a lovely walk over Cromford Moor. Back at campsite now.  
Beer outside tent before lighting campfire, chimera\* actually.  
Richard Hopkinson.

\*According to your Hon. Ed's dictionary: chimera: a fabulous fire-eating monster.  
Chimineia: a wood burning garden stove.  
Perhaps Richard will enlighten us as to which he used to cook his tea.

I couldn't be bothered with pitching a tent so I tried to bivouac but ran out of wine after an hour and retreated into the house. Dave Wright

Must stop sitting in here comfortably drinking fizz. Tis time to venture into the outer darkness. The cat refuses to contemplate the tent experience. My neighbour's three year old was evicted from her tent last week by the marauding trolls of Lumsdale. This may be the last you hear from me.....Ruth Gordon

Slept like a log except being woken a midnight by some fireworks. Straight off again and didn't get woken by the birds. Snod

A terrible thing has happened. Our campsite does accommodation as well and happens to have an empty room at a rate that was too good to resist. Maggie and I will be in the pub though. Simon Pape

I couldn't persuade Gill to forsake a comfortable bed, but I gave the old Quasar an outing and enjoyed the experience including the dawn chorus in the early hours. Our activity for the day was a circuit of the Burbage Valley from Foxhouse. It was splendid weather although quite cloudy by the end. Chris Radcliffe.

All in all a successful meet, one that I hope circumstances allow us to never to have to repeat!

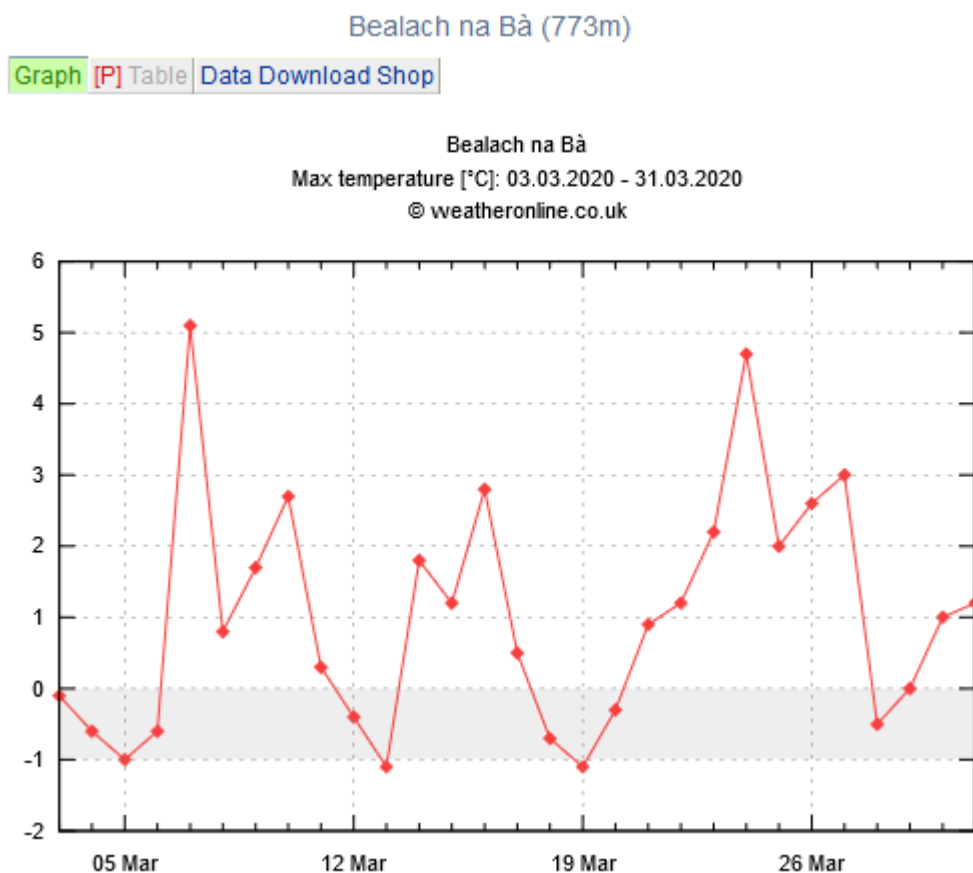
## Gully of the Gods, Beinn Bhan Jeff Ingman

After 45 years of Scottish winter climbing I'm only prepared to get out of bed for a few of the last remaining routes on my to do list. A quick count up in my guide books shows that I'm near to 300 routes now, and my poor old knees are reminding me of every single one of them. But there are still a few things that are worth the long drive and all that ibuprofen, and this route is one of them. Some folk reckon that Scottish Winter climbing has had it, killed off by deep thaws and the warmer weather that we saw in the early months of 2019. It's now more than ever like a good situation comedy – all about the timing. Sometimes you just have to watch and wait, using the internet to monitor the essentials so that two of the T's are taken care of – Timing and Tactics.

The vast majority of my Scottish routes have been done south of the great glen. When I was working full time the prospect of continuing to drive north for another two and half hours past Fort William or Aviemore seemed preposterous,



and would have been a touch too much in an already crazy weekend schedule. Now I have a bit more time on my hands, and a VW camper, so the other possibilities further north west have opened up. So where is Beinn Bhan? For a winter venue it's outrageously close to the sea (Loch Kishorn) on the way to Applecross and it's not even a Munro at 896m. It has four impressive corries on its north eastern aspect and Gully of the Gods is in the last of these, furthest from the road – I knew it would be. So the route is at low altitude, right next to the sea, and it needs good, solid ice to be feasible. I was going to need some data to justify the trip. Fortunately there is a real time weather station at Bealach na Ba, the top of the pass on the high level route to Applecross. I've been over this pass several times in summer, but never really understood how relevant it might be to climbing on Beinn Bhan. Indeed, some people walk from the top of this pass (c700m) and contour around to climb Gully of the Gods, but I had not checked that approach route and thought it might have deep snow with no tracks.



I watched the real time weather each day for the first few days of March and, feeling excited by five days of actual sub-zero temperatures, drove up to Scotland on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March to climb the route on the Friday. Without this kind of specific intelligence I may not have bothered with the trip. I needed to sort out another T, the Team. Fortunately an old mate of mine was already up in the CC hut at Roy Bridge and happily accepted the offer of a trip up to the northwest. Steve is a very experienced alpinist and winter climber, a very reassuring presence on the mountain. After a quick brew at Roy Bridge on the Thursday night we headed north,

through Kintail and onwards to the River Kishorn bridge at Tornapress. There were no other vehicles around and we settled in for the night. I never sleep well before a big route, even in a comfy van in near perfect conditions. It's just the nervous tension of knowing what is to come.

We went through our early morning routine and left the van in the dark for the path along the western bank of the River Kishorn. It was snow free up to about 400m altitude, and I knew this approach from two years earlier when I walked in to do Gully of the Gods. On that occasion five people were ahead of us, and we didn't want to follow them in the close confines of a very narrow slot. We settled for "mad hatter" in the adjacent coire. On this beautiful morning we had the place to ourselves.

Gully of the Gods – a deep slot, overhanging climbing for the first 70 metres

There was a lot of good ice in the slot, with the left hand side looking best for ice screws if you could stop to place them. The gully varies in width from about five to eight feet, with the back wall continuously overhanging. It's intimidating. The only beta that I'd been given was that both of the steep pitches were grade 6 and that a very long sling was useful, so I had one of those in my larger than average rack. Steve set off on the first pitch and did a great job. He continually maintained his balance in the overhanging slot by bridging, back



and foot shuffling, between strenuous pulls on good hooks and sticks. He gave me a commentary of sorts, and revealed five or six bombproof runners as he chopped away at the frozen mossy blobs on the walls. He was highly motivated, and each runner excavated brought a small cheer.

Then his pitch was suddenly over – a hidden ledge appeared on the right hand side and he could take a rest. I followed carefully and tried to use my feet and the hands free rests as much as possible, needing to save my strength for my pitch still to come. I could see it looming above on the wrong side of vertical. Steve handed me the rack and off I went, back and footing out into the jaws of the slot where a thick ice streak came down the left hand wall. I'd decided to leave my sack at the base of the route and regretted this more than once, when the chimney positions were just too wide to be comfortable. At the ice streak I was stretched out, and strung out, maybe four or five body lengths from my last runner. There was a hole at the back of a chock stone that I couldn't reach, but I threw the carabiner on my long sling in there and it rattled downwards. I gave a sigh of relief as it emerged out of reach and below my waist. I hooked it with the

nomic and clipped it, then stopped shaking. The ice streak above looked fantastic and it was, leading to a solid belay.



The slopes above led to a cornice that we outflanked on the right and then headed back down into Coire nan Fhamhair, via a lengthy and jubilant bum slide. Back at sacks it was time to pick up the walking poles, take a hand full of pain killers, and hobble back to the van.

I've never been one for organised religion, but if this is the Gully of the Gods then I need to go and worship more often. Maybe we did get some divine help when the temperature went up by five or six degrees the next day. The ice we'd climbed would be heading for the Irish Sea.

A final word on the T's. Timing, Tactics, Team and Training – in my experience you need to get all of these right and then the climbing just takes care of its self.

## **Directland - Roger Gibbs**

I'm still learning this sport climbing game. I probably still will be when hell freezes over or the Coronavirus pandemic is over, whichever comes first. I know you're supposed to enjoy the process and falling off isn't failing, it's learning. But sometimes when the rest of the crew are cruising them it's hard to "enjoy the process" of being burnt off. Sometimes it feels easier to walk away, find something else, even if there are some raised eyebrows. Discipline is hard, even harder on holiday.

The first attempt on Directland, at Port de Soller on Mallorca was in February 2019. I'd already ticked one route of the same grade at the same crag: Phantomas, the mega classic out of the cave at the right hand end. This was a level I'd never managed before 2018, so I was feeling pretty chuffed with myself. I had also demonstrated some pretty terrible tactics in not quite ticking some other hard (for me) routes around the island. I'd got some miles on the clock this week already.

Anyway, Chris strolled up Directland, pronounced it a total gift, and handed over to me. I fell off unable to do the stiff slap over the bulge to less steep ground. This was a rude awakening – it really didn't feel like I could do it at all. I was lowered off and somebody else wandered up it. I had a minor paddy and took myself off back to the beach. While walking back down I reminded myself what I've achieved recently and my hit rate at the grade which I reckon is about 50%

(of the whopping six I've tried). Remember this is a number I'd never reached before 2018. Not too shabby for an old punter, so cheer the F up. While telling myself all this, I was so absorbed I nearly walked straight past Kyya, heading up to the crag. His broad grin and infectious laugh put everything into perspective.

That was the end of the climbing on Mallorca for 2019 and I got stuck into various adventures in various places. Directland faded into the background until we started thinking about Mallorca 2020. Feeling ok after plenty of dangling off bits of plastic through the winter, I started telling people I was going to do Directland this year. If you tell folk there's no wimping out later, right? Then I remembered how hard that move felt. Oh dear. Did I really want to spend the whole week on holiday worrying about one route? One route that I might not even be able to do? Well, I'd better make sure I enjoy the process.

The process started by falling off my bike. Well, actually falling off the hire shop's very expensive bike. Sharon and I had had our traditional tootle up to Deia to get the legs fired up. On the return leg, I was enjoying the hairpins and the sunshine when I found myself sliding across the road at an alarming pace. A very clear and distinct thought formed in my head: "This is going to hurt."

Remarkably, it didn't. Ignoring the skidding noise from immediately behind me, I leapt up, grabbed the bike and scampered to the side of the road. Peering back up the hill, five yards behind me was an alarmed looking woman with her car in the ditch, apologising profusely for not having run me over. I decided to forgive her. Sharon appeared and we helped our new friend reverse the car out of the ditch (although not before she'd tried to put it into first gear instead of reverse). I finished the ride back to town rather more gingerly, before popping back into the bike hire shop. The stern Kiwi lady gave me precisely zero sympathy and told me

Handwritten notes on a piece of paper, likely a beta sheet for a climbing route. The notes are organized into two columns. The left column contains the main sequence of moves, and the right column is a box containing specific route information. The notes are written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Left column:

- LH tufa on ledge
- RH to vertical slot
- LH push off
- ~~RH~~ ~~feet support~~
- LF to pillar on ledge
- LH crimpy blob
- Feet up
- LH tufa
- RH tufa (match). Clip?
- RF to high right foot hold
- LF to — — L — —
- RH right side blob
- drop RF off + down to ramp
- LH over the top of RH into slightly damp incut
- Both feet down to ramp
- RH down to bottom off of right hand tufa
- sort feet on ramp + bring LH across to top of right hand tufa.

Right column (boxed):

- Beta for
- Directland, F7b
- 21/2/20
- RP (+ Tullon Mawer)

in no uncertain terms that I would have to pay for any damage to the bike. At least I'd dropped it on the left side and avoided trashing the expensive bits. Some German fella who came in to show us the gravel rash on his backside got equally short shrift.

A spot of lunch, a bit of beach action to recover and it was time to climb. We warmed up on the usual classics (Ja Som Five felt as hard as ever). It was getting late and clearly the onsight was long gone, so I poked Chris up it again. I jumped on the top rope. It felt doable. After the winter's training it had gone from impossible to feasible. Pleasing. Back at the apartment I carefully wrote down exactly how to do it. The first two thirds of the route were

butch but straightforward to a sit down rest. The moves off the rest ledge were immediately in your face. Up to the left hand tufa blob efficiently and make the clip, then carefully across and down onto the right hand tufa with feet on a sloping ramp. There were some tricky moves and I need to be fresh for the crux off the top of the right hand tufa.

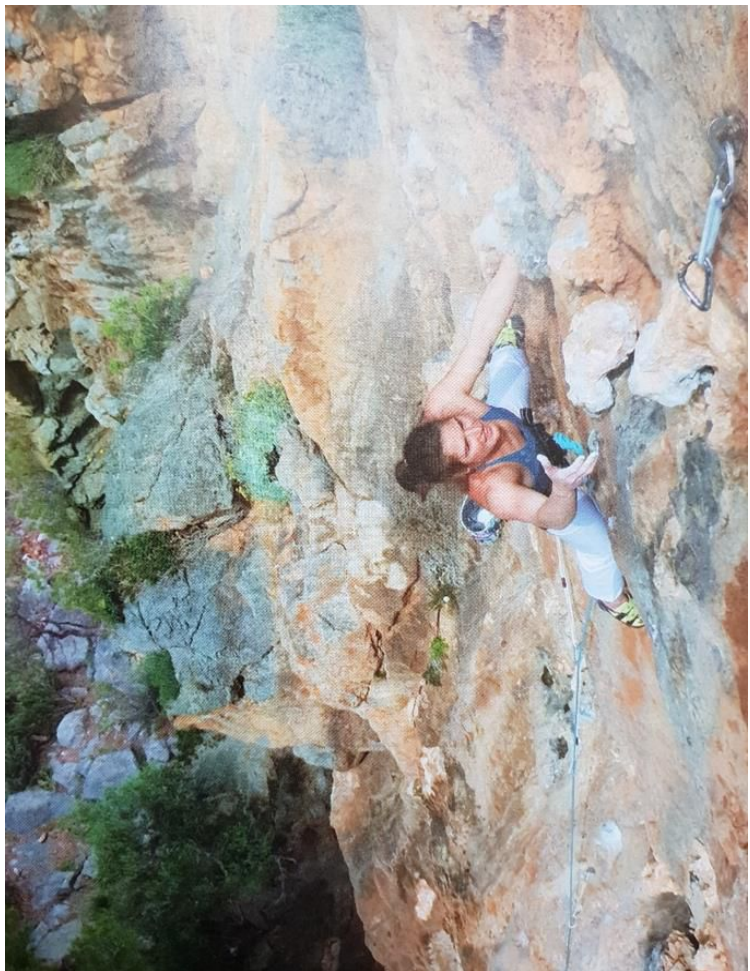
More cycling, some fun on the beach and a couple of beers intervened and suddenly it was Tuesday. A snatched few hours with Amy. Walking in, I explained in detail what was going to happen, including the likely lob if I got it wrong. Was Amy ok with that? She grinned, of course she was. We had an hour or so doing some brilliant routes in the sunshine, you know, enjoying yourself. Amy pulled a fine lead out of the bag. My turn now.

Hey, all of a sudden this was a rather different proposition. On most of the hard (for me) routes I'd done previously, I'd been able to watch a proper climber do it first and the quickdraws were already in place. Of course the beta from watching someone else didn't always help, indeed it often served only to lull me into a false sense of security.

"Well, Chris made this look easy." Thirty seconds later: "Taaaake!"

No such luxury this time. I set off. The first section seemed disturbingly hard. The rest ledge was a welcome relief. I eyed up the moves to the first bolt above the ledge. Let's go. Meaty moves up the first tufa, the clip and the tentative moves across and down to the ramp under the second tufa. High feet and set up for the crux throw. That's impossibly far. What's wrong? My brain full of blood, I realised my right hand was too low. I need to step down again to set up correctly. Try again, feeling distinctly powered out. The fierce slap becomes a feeble pat. I'm off. With a lot of rope out I go a long way.

*Blobland. As the name suggests, Directland goes direct where Blobland escapes left. The rest ledge on Directland is just visible below the leader's right foot.*



Back on the ground I review what went wrong. Remember the beta dummy! We sit around relaxing and gazing out to sea. I'm enjoying myself but I'm also acutely aware that no one else is stripping the draws. Next go, the first part of the route feels easier, but it's still butch. A long rest and then back to the

sequence. This time there's no mistake setting up. I slap upwards and miss the crucial crozzle. I'm airborne again. But I can feel myself grinning. That was close. I haul up to the bolt and manage to sort of climb the crux to the top. It's getting late and I'm feeling it, so we pack up. I've had a great afternoon, trying hard.

Wait, am I enjoying the process?

The week flies by, but crucially I manage to tick another route at "the" grade at another crag. The pressure lifts. Anything is a bonus from here on in. But now it's Friday, and we fly home tomorrow. Rugby on the beach is great fun and I'm wondering if an opportunity will appear. The many moving parts of a family climbing trip are wondrous to behold. With a few hours of daylight left, my pass out is stamped and I'm off up to the crag.

Tullan held my ropes while I got the quickdraws in (climbed with a clip stick to the sit down rest, sat on the bolt below the crux and clip stuck the next bolt). I didn't bother with the moves across to the right hand tufa, just pulled on and top roped the crux, which felt ok-ish.

"Looked pretty steady," he said.

I had 20 minutes rest on the ground, pulled the rope and went for it. The strenuous work up to the sit down rest didn't seem to be getting any easier, but it's ok really. The moves across and down to the right hand tufa weren't perfect, with some shuffling around with my feet to get down onto the ramp. The right hand hold on the ramp felt good, I could feel the positive dink at the back. Left foot on the bottom of the tufa and solidly up to the left hand flatty. Right hand into the crimp in the seam. Left foot onto the top of the tufa and twist to get the right foot on the tufa blob under the overlap. Think about pushing up a little on the feet, core strong. A moment's hesitation.

"Go on!" Dave shouts.

Pretty controlled right hand into the crozzle. I'm in. Feet onto the ramp and step slightly right again to get stable. Clip and crozzle away to glory. A shout of delight. Pretty casual really. A fist bump with Tullan, a bit of glory hogging and I walk back to the beach for a celebratory beer. Now that's enjoying the process.

## **60 100 Swims for 60 years Janet Briggs**

2019, do you remember that time in the past when life was simple and we could go where we wanted and do what we wanted. Well I turned 60 in 2019 and decided to set myself a challenge to mark the occasion and to give a bit of money to charity. As a lover of open water swimming I decided to try to swim in 60 different open water locations throughout the year, and to give £5 per swim, shared between six charities. I also invited swimming companions to donate via me or to a charity of their choice.

The task was given a kick start by spending nine weeks in the early part of the year in Australia and New Zealand, giving warm water swimming opportunities during our winter. So, the morning of Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January saw me standing at the edge of the Pacific Ocean near Christchurch, having just spent our first night in our hired campervan. A very enjoyable swim amongst some fairly lively surf followed, tick number 1, the **Pacific Ocean**, well I guess the swim locations were only going to get smaller after that.



Over the next three weeks we found that South Island NZ is full of beautiful lakes, in many cases with fairly easy access for swimming. However, we did find that seeing a road running close to a lake shore is no guarantee of easy access to the water; in some places there were steep drops down to the water, or several metres of impenetrable scrub. We were soon to learn that Antipodean scrub is

very impenetrable, if there isn't a path you don't get far. We did manage to swim eventually in every targeted lake though. Highlights were **Lake Pukaki**, milky blue with Aoraki Mount Cook in the background; Tasman Glacier Lake, absolutely freezing cold with a few icebergs for company; Lake Te Anau after four days walking the Kepler Trail and a sunrise dip in



Lake Wakatipu just outside Queenstown.

The tally of 20 South Island swim spots included five sea swims and one river swim, along with 14 lakes. At various stages I had to decide what constituted a separate swim spot, easy with lakes but more difficult with the sea, in South Island they were all very distinct: Pacific Ocean, Tasman Sea and three different fiords: Doubtful Sound, Milford Sound and Queen Charlotte Sound. There was also the question of what constituted 'a swim', my original rules were to get out of my depth, and to be in for at least several minutes, these rules did get broken or stretched at various times later in the year. Most of the swims were for at least 10 minutes, some for much longer.

So, we then moved on to North Island, the map showed fewer blue patches so expectations of swim spots were lower. We kicked off with a sea swim, the beautiful Lake Taupo, largest lake in New Zealand and a bizarre 'hot and cold' river swim in the geothermal area. We then set off on a four day walk around the volcano Mt Ngauruhoe. Being an arid area, we were not expecting to find many swim spots. We were pleasantly surprised, the overnight huts were all located, maybe not surprisingly, near spring fed streams. The first of these was really only a series of plunge pools above a waterfall, the 'out of my depth' rule was definitely broken here but it was very welcome after a very dry and dusty day's walking and with only a small wash basin at the hut. The best was the Ohinepango Springs near the Waihohonu Hut, we swam just below the springs, it was absolutely crystal clear and freezing cold!

The remaining four North Island swims were in the sea, in the Auckland area, the geography of the area gives plenty of scope for different bits of sea, east and west coast, and various different bays. So, the North Island total was 13 swims, two in lakes, five in the sea and six in rivers.

We then moved on to Australia for three weeks, mainly based around Melbourne but with a trip to South Australia. After a couple of sea swims; Bass Straight and Inverloch Surfers Beach, we soon found that drought-stricken Australia does not have many swim spots. We managed just one more, in the Murray River, notable for the fact that I visited New South Wales by swimming across the river to it from Victoria.

Now it was back to England in late March with over half my total completed (36), and the knowledge that the water was suddenly going to get a lot colder. First up was an old favourite, Trent Meadows at Long Eaton (now known as Spring Lakes and a pay to swim venue). It was pleasantly bracing, and good to catch up with some local swimming friends. We headed up to Scotland over Easter, and after a day walking above Loch Earn I entered the lake first, to give Nigel a temperature assessment, it seemed cool but ok, I went in a bit further, got out of my depth, put my feet down into the deeper water and rushed straight back out, it was freezing. The 'swim for at least several minutes' rule had been broken, and I told Nigel I was certain he would not enjoy it, he was happy to take my word for it! A river swim the same week was somewhat warmer as was a very pleasant half hour at Three Shires Head in mid May (swim spot number 40).

The end of May saw us back in Scotland for the Oread Skye meet. Here I managed three swim spots on the way up, and three more on Skye, the highlight being a socially isolated swim in **Corrie Lagan**, before social isolation had been invented, there was not another soul in sight.



Back home I had a couple of organised longer swims coming up in July and August, so I wanted to get some distance training in. This meant going to a couple of the local pay to swim venues, Albert Lake and Dosthill Quarry. The latter was one of my two wetsuited swims of the year, I only wore my wetsuit because I had forgotten my costume but had brought the wetsuit for Nigel to use. He had a short swim first then I took it over.



Next were a couple of local river swims, one each in the Trent, and Derwent (at Froggatt), a sea swim at Southsea whilst visiting son Mark, and another local favourite, Little Barbrook above Baslow. On the Oread High House meet in June I had a chilly swim in Sty Head Tarn and a somewhat warmer one in Ullswater. Next up was my first organised swim, a two-way swim of **Llyn Padarn** at Llanberis. I thought I had entered the 'non wetsuit' category, with an option to change to wetsuit at the last minute, I didn't take it up. I then checked and found that I had actually entered wetsuit and had passed the date to swap, so this became my second wetsuited swim of the year ... in my thin, sleeveless shorty one! It was a very enjoyable swim, number 57.

I was rapidly approaching swim number 60, and also my longest swim of the year, the Thames Marathon. I decided it would be fitting to make this number 60, so had two more to fit in. The first was ticked off with a swim in the River Wharfe at Wetherby on the way back from Nigel riding a time trial in East Yorkshire, and

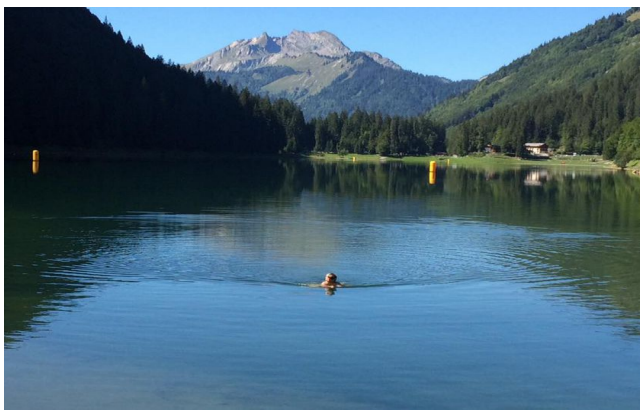
the second with a very 'gloopy' dip in Stanage Plantation Pool, very peaty and with lots of leaf debris.

Swim number 60 was a pre-arranged one. I travelled down to Henley on Thames with friends Jaq and Clive to take part in the annual **Thames Marathon**, 14km to Marlow, split into four sections with short walks around locks providing a stretch and a chance to take on board a bit of food and drink. The three of us were all in different waves, so setting off at slightly different times. Amazingly Clive and Jaq finished with times just eight seconds apart, with Jaq just ahead, much to Clive's chagrin. My time of 4:44.58 was almost an hour slower, but not bad for an oldie without a wetsuit. It was a great swim, and very well organised.



So, having completed my 60 swims in early August what now; well as someone said to me 'you aren't likely to do 100 swims in a year when you are 100 so why not now'. Challenge on, carry on to 100!

The next 40 kicked off with two more different stretches of the River Trent, two swim spots in the River Derwent, one in North Yorkshire, a very wet day in Shropshire swimming in the reservoir at Cardingmill Valley and then four sea swims in Cornwall. Next we headed to Europe, first to visit friends in South Germany (two lakes and a river), then a leisurely three days driving through Switzerland and swimming in the River Rhine and in six lakes. The lakes in Switzerland were all lovely but the highlight was Lungensee, between Lucerne and Interlaken, unplanned but it looked so lovely as we drove past that we stopped and got in.



The next few days were mainly climbing around Chamonix (wet) and further south. We then met up with some friends to stay near Morzine and cycle up some cols. The first of these was the Col de la Joux Verte, and, what a surprise, there was the **Lac de Montriond** halfway up. My friends sat in the sun patiently whilst I dipped. Our European tour ended with swim number 81 in Lac Léman.

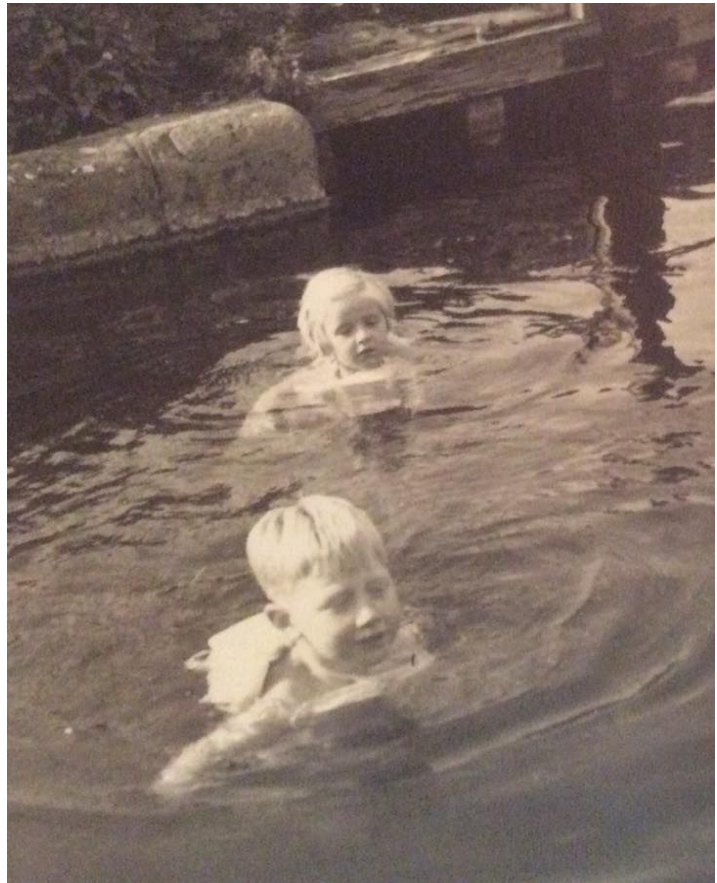
Back in the UK and three more swims in Derbyshire and South Yorkshire, Swineshaw Reservoir near Glossop being a hidden gem. By this time it was September and getting colder, but fortunately we had the Oread trip to Kalymnos booked. Our days there soon fell into a pattern of climbing till just after lunch then head to the coast for a swim somewhere. The earlier rule about different bit of sea got stretched to different bays around Kalymnos here, but I managed eight different swim spots. The last morning started with a swim from **Massouri to Telendos**, a very pleasant 1km swim, in fact so pleasant that after a brief rest and drink of water I turned round and swam back (swim number 92).



Eight left to go and these were definitely going to be cold swims. After the fireworks at Heathy Lea we walked up through the woods and I swam in Emperor Lake. A week later I met a friend at Linacre Reservoir near Chesterfield. Both these were on pleasant sunny days. We headed to the Lake District for two extra days before the High House Curry meet. On the way up Coniston Old Man we stopped at Goat Water in an icy wind. I dipped, straight in and out, but I did get out of my depth. Coniston Water the next day was surprisingly pleasant. The Saturday of the meet included a dip in Bassenthwaite Lake, surprisingly cold, but not involving a wetsuit as erroneously suggested by Tony Howard in the meet report!

Early December saw me with three left, the first was ticked off back above Chatsworth, Swiss Lake this time, hard to get into and even harder to get out of, climbing up a wall with freezing fingers and toes is not recommended. That left two swims, I had been thinking about where to go for number 100. One idea was the River Dove at Rocester, a local favourite which had eluded me so far, however the storms and corresponding high river levels made that impossible.

A somewhat sad event, attending the funeral, in Hampshire, of my 93 year old godmother gave me the unexpected opportunity to go back to my roots for swim number 100. I learnt to swim in the **Kennet and Avon Canal**, outside my home in Wiltshire. In those days (57 years ago!) it was unused by boats and crystal clear. Not so these days, typical canal colour so I wasn't swimming there. However, a small feeder reservoir called Wilton Water, about three miles from my first ever lifetime swim spot had more potential.



First, we had number 99 to fit in, the Outdoor Swimming Map led me to Rooksby Lakes near Andover in Hampshire, a small set of fishing / nature reserve lakes. After a close-up view of a kingfisher I got in, the other

visitors walking around looked fairly unperturbed. As we headed from Hampshire to Wiltshire the weather turned to grey and drizzly. We walked across

several very muddy fields to **Wilton Water**. It was grey and rather muddy and not very inviting, however I got in, and I swam, and out of my depth!



So, I had completed my 100 swim spots, starting with the beautiful Pacific Ocean on a warm southern hemisphere day in January, and finishing in a damp muddy cold lake in Wiltshire on 21<sup>st</sup> December. 49 swims were in lakes, 24 in rivers and 27 in the sea. Nigel was my companion for 63 of the swims, not bad for someone who claims not to like water. I swam solo in 20 of the swim spots and had 28 different known companions for the other swims. Oh, and I and others donated over £600 to six different charities. It was a fun filled year; all I can end with is that it is a good job I wasn't trying to do it in 2020.

## Hut Bookings.

### TAN-YR-WYDDFA

Closed until further notice.

### HEATHY LEA

Closed until further notice.

All queries and outstanding payments should be addressed to Michael Hayes, the Hut Bookings Secretary: 179 Starkholmes Rd. Starkholmes, Matlock DE4 5JA

Mobile 07771 700913. Email: [michaelhayes6688@gmail.com](mailto:michaelhayes6688@gmail.com)

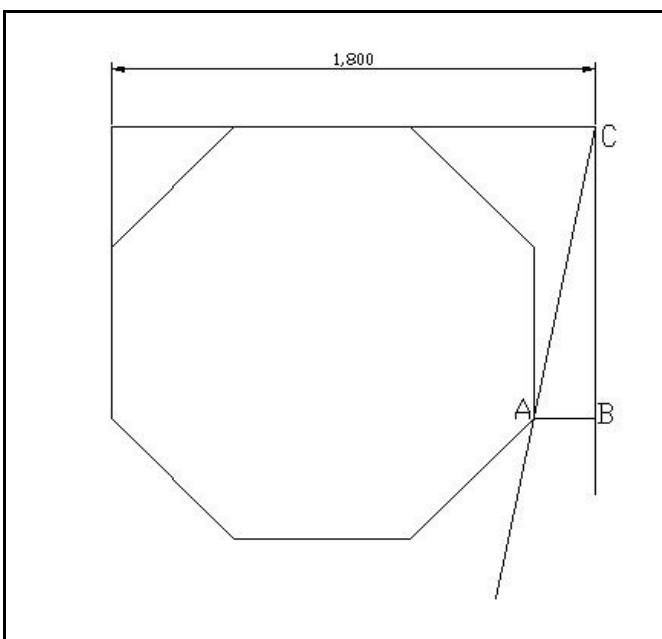
## Information on Member Activities

Congratulations to Phil and Yvonne Waterson who managed to move house in the midst of lockdown - some achievement - and their new address is: 3 Rectory Road, St Stephens in Brannell, St Austell, Cornwall PL26 7RJ

Welcome to new full members Clare Foulkes and Pamela Postans. We hope you will enjoy many happy days with the Oread - before too long!

## Rusty's Puzzle Corner

### Last month's puzzle solution:



On this sketch it is clear that the critical point for the slightly smaller table is point A. (The taper angle is exaggerated for clarity, but is 5 deg). as specified.

If we assume that each of the 8 sides is of length  $L$  mm. then the overall reduced width is  $L$  times  $(1+2*1/\sqrt{2})$  since a 45 degree projection of a diagonal of length  $L$  is  $L/\sqrt{2}$ . length BC as drawn is  $L$  times  $1+1/\sqrt{2}$  and so length AB, which is  $CD$  times  $\tan 5^\circ$ , is  $L$  times  $1+1/\sqrt{2}$  times  $\tan 5^\circ$ .

This gives an equation,  $1800 - \text{length AB} = L \text{ times } (1+2*1/\sqrt{2})$  Hence  $L=702$  mm and the revised overall width is 1695 mm. or, for comparison with Snod's solution in imperial units, 5 feet 6 3/4 ins.

Snod's solution of 1734 mm or 5 feet 8 5/16 is predictably a little larger since, so far as I can make out, he only allowed for the taper on the vertical part of the octagon rather than one vertical plus one diagonal.

I agree that 1/16 inch is a realistic tolerance for woodwork where the operator such as Mr Firth or Mr Tresidder is careful, well equipped and precise. Were it myself however, using a chainsaw, crowbar and sledgehammer and possibly intoxicated, then 1 inch would be more realistic.

### **Rob Tresidder's photo puzzle asked us to**

- Q1 Name the climb
- Q2 Name the climber (hint: a current Oread, but not when picture was taken)
- Q3 Name the year.



Snod got part way there. Rob confirms that it was indeed Trafalgar Wall, and, as he guessed, it was mid-60s. Actually 1964.

Neither Snod nor your Hon. Ed. had a clue who the climber was. We considered, and decisively rejected the possibility that it was Rob himself - but it was he! Pictured here in the must-have outfit of the day: breeches by Robert Lawrie, top by Umbro, plimsolls by Woolworths, football socks, model's own!

### **This month's puzzle**

A group of young climbers in south Yorkshire were really getting frustrated and decided to form a clandestine group and break the lockdown rules. Police surveillance in the area was heavy, electronic messages hacked etc. and so a member, George Gable, decided to send a trade pamphlet to his mates with a hidden message giving the rendezvous for midweek climbing. The card, suitably embellished with fancy scripts etc. read "L.G. Gable (builder) Having trouble with your....." etc.

Where was the proposed mid week venue?

***No mathematical or IT skills will be required to solve this simple puzzle.***

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