

Oread Mountaineering Club Magazine

February 2026



Trevor Stevens on the crux of Mamma Mia, Tafraoute granite and Roland Smith on Sherwood Wall, Tagmout Quartzite.

Photos Nigel Berry, see page 10 for more highlights of this meet.

Editorial

Meets coming up include the next winter lecture February 3rd with our very own Nigel Berry and Aaron Wigley, then in March our photo competition -hurry to get your entries in by 22 February at latest! All the info is on page 7.

Another Scottish weekend, the ever popular Patterdale meet, a Geo walk and exciting news about a desert rock trip in the Autumn.

It's subs time again, and the A.G.M. - see pages 3-4 for details.

Write ups include Morocco, the recent Scottish meet, Buttermere and more.

Copy Deadline 20 February.

Meets List 2026 - Edward Bloomfield

Ed Bloomfield email edwardlbloomfield@gmail.com tel. 07990 066362

	Dates	Hut/Location/title	Description	Leader
F e b r u a r y	3rd	Royal Oak, Ockbrook, OMC	Winter Lecture	Aaron Wigley
	4th	Cronford	Wednesday walk	Steve Booth
	6-8th	Inverardran Cottage	Winter Climbing, Orianlarich	Steve Christian
	Dec-99	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	19th	Chatsworth	Thursday short walk	Chris Paice
	21st	Milldale- Wétton Mill (15km)	Saturday Geowalk	Stuart Firth
	0	0	0	0
	28-1st	Heathy Lea	Maintenance meet	Kevin RM
	0	0	0	0
M a r c h	4th	Edale/Kinder	Wednesday walk	Simon Pape
	6-8th	George Starkey Hut Patterdale	Winter Lake District meet	Pip Leach
	12-17th	Toubkal Alpine walking/ climbing	Atlas Mountains	Ngel Berry
	19th	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	21st	Matlock	Pre AGM Saturday walk	John Gwyther
	21st	tbc	AGM	0
	22nd	tbc	Spring Stride Post AGM Sunday walk	Ngel Briggs
	0	0	0	0
A p r i l	1st	tbc	Wednesday walk	Ngel Briggs
	3-12th	Easter meet Font?	Bouldering in Fontainbleau	?????
	16th	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	25th	Birchen Clough - Fairholmes	Geowalk Saturday	Louise Amandini
	24-26th	Edale	Pennine Way in stages (stage 1)	Neil Weatherstone
	24-26th	TyW North Wales	Climbing & walking, North Wales	Ngel Berry
	0	0	0	0
M a y	1-8th	Cornwall camping meet	Climbing and walking, Cornwall	Edward Bloomfield
	13th	Charnwood Forest	Wednesday walk	Mike Rittig
	15-17th	Heathy Lea	New members meet	??
	0	0	0	0
	21st	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	23rd	tbc	Saturday walk	Louise Amandini
	0	0	0	0
	??	Scotland	Walking and Climbing meet	Michael Moss
	0	0	0	0

J u n e	3rd	tbc	Wednesday walk	Nick Evans
	12-19th	Fairhead (Belfast)	Climbing and walking meet, Northern Ireland	Kevin Raisin Moss
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	20th	Fairholmes - Upper Burbage	Geowalk Saturday	Jan Wilson
	25th	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	26-28th	Little Langdale Fylde MCHut	Climbing and walking meet, Lake District	Snod Helliwell?
J u l y	0	0	0	0
	1st	Monsal Head	Wednesday walk	Peter Armour
	3-7th	Tyw	Maintenance meet	Snod
	2-5th	hut to hut lakes walking meet	walking meet	seyhan turan
	10-12th	Ynys Etws, CC Hut, Llanberis Pass	Climbing in Llanberis Pass	Ed Bloomfield
	0	0	0	0
	17-19th	Cader Idris	camping meet, walking/climbing, North Wales	Ngel Barry
	0	0	0	0
A u g u s t	0	0	0	0
	23rd	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	25th	Mbw Cop 23km	Saturday walk	Nick Evans
	31-2nd Aug	Coniston Copper Mines, YMCHut	Climbing and walking meet, Lake District	???
	5th	Danebower Hollow	Wednesday walk	Rusty
	8th-15th	Val Cenis Vanoise national park	alpine meet	Steve Christian / Ngel Barry
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
S e p t e m b e r	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	22nd	0	Geowalk Saturday	Rachel Walker
	0	0	0	0
	27th	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	28-31st	Pembroke camping meet	Climbing and walking meet	0
	2nd	tbc	Wednesday walk	Chris Mather
	5-12th	Lundy Island	Climbing meet	Kevin Raisin Moss
O c t o b e r	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	24th	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	26th	tbc	Saturday walk	Stuart Firth
	25-27th	Holyhead, Rhoscolyn	Climbing & Camping weekend	Alan Monks
	24-27th	cairn gorm bothys	Bothy walking meet	Seyhan Turan
	3-4th	heathy lea	maintenance meet	kevin rm
	7th	tbc	Wednesday walk	Ngel Briggs
	0	0	0	0
	9-18th ish	Kelymos	Sport Climbing	Emma Hayes
	15th	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	24th	Upper Burbage Bridge - Robin Hood 15k	Geowalk finale Saturday	Gill Radcliffe
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	30-1st	Tyw North wales	Curry meet, Climbing and walking	Tony howard

N o v e m b e r	4th	tbc	Wednesday walk	Rachael Walker
	6-8th	Heathy Lea	Bonfire Night	???
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	14th	Annual Dinner tbc	0	0
	15th	Walk	Post Prandial walk tbc	???
	0	0	0	0
	0		0	0
	0	0	0	0
	25th	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	26th-6th dec	Wadi Rum Jordan	Climbing meet	Ed Bloomfield
D e c e m b e r	0	0	0	0
	2nd	0	Wednesday walk	Steve Booth
	4-6th	Bullstones Meet	0	??
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	23rd	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	26th	tbc	Boxing Day walk	tbc

Heathy Lea temporary restriction on overnight stays

We have had results from an independent fire safety risk assessment which indicates that we need to stop using Heathy Lea for sleeping and stop using the fire in the lounge until we have made some improvements to fire safety and evacuation. We can continue day use of the kitchen, lounge and toilet in the cottage and the parking. We can also continue to use the barn, but not for cooking or for sleeping.

The committee and hut subcommittee have started to consider how to do the work and to obtain estimates. The committee's aim is to get the hut back in to normal use as soon as possible and to support obtaining a renewal of our lease with the Chatsworth estate.

Updates on progress will come via the newsletter and email.

Oread Membership 2026

It's time to renew your membership for 2026, this year we have been able to hold the fees at last year's rates.

- £50 for Full Membership
- £40 for Senior Membership
- £40 for Provisional Membership
- £25 Voluntary contribution for receiving the paper newsletter

If you have already set up a GoCardless mandate then you should have received an email from Janet Briggs in early January, and you don't need to do anything apart from logging in to the members' part of the Oread website to make sure your details are up to date.

If you have not signed up to GoCardless yet here is how to pay, there are 3 ways;

1. Our preferred method is to set up GoCardless direct debit by setting up a general mandate using these links:

Provisional member and Senior member,

£40 :<https://pay.gocardless.com/AL0004BWYZEHS9>

Full member, £50:<https://pay.gocardless.com/AL0004BWZ2FGNQ>

You will be notified by email before any money is transferred.

2. By bank transfer to Oread Mountaineering Club Sort Code 30- 98-97 Account 62584068 with Subs and your name in the reference field. Once the payment has been made, please email michaelhayes6688@gmail.com with confirmation.

3. By Cheque made payable to the Oread Mountaineering Club and then posted to Michael Hayes, 179 Starkholmes Road, Starkholmes, Matlock DE4 5JA. We have to pay bank charges per cheque paid in so bank transfer is our preferred method if not using GoCardless.

If you are able to please also log on to the members' area of the Oread website: <https://www.oread.co.uk/members/> and check that all your details are correct, or amend if necessary. Please also check whether you have confirmed the GDPR statement and accepted the Club (BMC) participation statement. For those that have not logged on recently your username is either your initial and your surname, all lower case and no spaces (e.g. for Janet Briggs it is jbriggs), or for more recent members first name hyphen surname (eg janet-briggs). If you have forgotten your password there is a reset option. If you do not have access to the club website please inform Michael Hayes of any changes to personal details.

Thank you.

Michael Hayes and Janet Briggs.

Saturday 21 March 8.00pm Annual General Meeting The Bear, Alderwasley

The forthcoming AGM will be held at The Bear DE56 2RD.

<https://thebear-inn.co.uk/> The room is booked from 7.pm. You can order from the menu and eat in the meeting room. Limited space for camper vans – no charge providing you order a meal.

Please inform Michael Moss **in advance** if you want a van space.

Email mamoss@btinternet.com Tel 07932 420414

In the meeting we will approve the minutes of the 2025 AGM, consider the accounts and officers' reports for 2025, elect a new committee, elect the hut committees, consider the proposed amendments to the constitution and consider any other proposed business.

The officers' reports and the accounts will be circulated prior to the AGM, early in

March. Questions are requested to be submitted in advance of the AGM and the responses will be provided at the AGM. Questions asked during the meeting will also be answered.

Nominations for Officers of the club and members of the committee are welcome and must be submitted by 28 February to the Secretary. Each nomination must be in writing and supported by two full members of the club along with the consent of the nominee, who must be a full member. Nominations can be made for any position. In the event of multiple nominations for the same position a vote will be held.

Any motions and/or changes to the constitution for consideration need to be sent to the Secretary, Steve Christian, email climbersteve@hotmail.com, 1 Duke St. Middleton by Wirksworth, Matlock DE4 4NB by 28 February 2026 and be supported by two full members of the club.

Gil Male Donation of climbing gear.

Thanks to Gil for his generosity in donating his new and nearly new climbing gear and to Chris Wilson for doing a good job of selling it. It has raised £345 in total which will be used to benefit the club.

Forthcoming Meets



Tuesday 3 February 8.00 pm Lecture Royal Oak Ockbrook

Next up in the series of winter talks is a double bill again. Two Oreads have stepped up to tell a tale or two. First up is Nigel Berry who will talk about his experiences of 25 years of winter trekking in Morocco in an illustrated talk entitled "Adventures in the High Atlas Mountains".

After the break Aaron Wigley will give a talk entitled "Montenegro: Mountains, Karst, and Wild Adventure". Aaron will talk about hiking, climbing, exploration, canyoning, paddleboarding and deep water soloing.

Perhaps this will be an evening of something for everyone. I look forward to seeing many of you there. Entry £3 Oreads, £5 visitors.

Rob Tresidder rob61.tresidder@icloud.com tel. 07951 625378

Wednesday 4 February Cromford Circuit Steve Booth

A circular 9.5 mile walk exploring the east and west sides of the Derwent valley between Cromford and Holloway. The walk starts at 10.30 from the Cromford meadow car park (SK 30074 57069). Use the parking app "RingGo" all-day parking is £4, the reference number for the carpark is 24734.

Steve Booth email: booth.steve.j@gmail.com tel. 07985 588544

6-8 February Inverardran Cottage Crianlarich Steve Christian

The Ochills Mountaineering Club cottage at Crianlarich is a wonderful location for winter hillwalking with many nearby Munroes, as well as good winter climbing areas with the Bridge of Orchy Hills, Beinn an Dothaidh and Beinn Udlaidh to name a few. We have 10 beds booked (three taken already) with an option to book eight more, so get in touch if you fancy some Scottish winter action in a less frequented area.

[Club Cottage – Inverardran Cottage – Ochills Mountaineering Club](#)

Steve Christian email climbersteve@hotmail.com tel. 07467 329175

Thursday 19 February Short walk Chatsworth Chris Paice

A walk that begins at Chatsworth House DE45 1PP. (NOT the garden centre) at 11 a.m. Whilst it is probably a well-known area this takes advantage of the FREE parking offered at this time of year and a different starting point. the plan is to go along the river to the garden centre, Calton houses, Calton pastures, alongside Manners Wood, past the fort to the road, downwards to Edensor and return. Approx 10km, 6 miles with 200m, 658ft of ascent. Packed lunch, drink etc. A steady walk, good company, often sprinkled with some hilarity. Come and join us.

Chris Paice: email walkingpaice@hotmail.co.uk Tel 07773 045838

Saturday 21 February GeoWalk Milldale - Wetton Mill Stuart Firth

In case you're thinking we've already done this stage of the GeoWalk, you'd be partially correct. This in fact is the full-fat version of a walk which Rusty led last year and it should suit those purists amongst our ranks.

It's an A2B walk 15km long and with a mere 170m of ascent. Car shuffling will be required so please volunteer if you are able.

The official summary is as follows:

The route begins with an easy well-marked path following the limestone valley of the River Dove through Dovedale and across the famous stepping stones, with impressive exposures of carbonate mud mounds along the way. The walk then veers away from the Dove to join the Manifold valley at Ilam, skirting the fringes of the Early Carboniferous lagoon and passing onto thinly bedded, muddier

limestones that formed in deeper water beyond the lagoon margin. The second half of the walk mainly follows the course of the disappearing River Manifold before ending at picturesque Wetton Mill.

Starting car park Milldale SK 136 548. W3W outnumber.supposed.engulfing. Loos nearby.

Potential refreshment stop / loos at Ilam.

Finishing car park Wetton Mill SK 096 561. W3W scatter.potato.booms. Tea rooms nearby (Allegedly open 09:30-17:00)

I suggest we all meet at Milldale at 10:15 ready for a 10:30 departure. (Those volunteering to car shuffle will need to be at Wetton Mill at 09:40 to allow time to make the journey to Milldale.)

Please let me know if you are coming and also offering to car share or shuffle.

Stuart Firth: 07977 458048; stuartmfirth@btinternet.com

Tuesday 3 March 2026 Oread Photo Competition

For the last indoor meet of the season we have a photo competition.

The evening will be a fun event and a great social occasion for all Oreads. Many of you post great photos on Instagram and Facebook. Many take and present very professional photos in all kinds of outdoor settings. We hope to attract both the serious photographers and those who record life in the Oread on their phone to submit their photos for us to enjoy on the night. Richard Freestone, one of our members who has had a career as a professional photographer, has kindly agreed to judge the photos and to collate and present them on the night. The club interest category will be judged using the clapometer method.

The categories for submission are:

1 Action (can be anywhere in the world but must have action as the focus. Can relate to any Hill/Mountain activities including climbing, cycling, trekking, walking etc.)

2 Landscape (again anywhere)

3 Nature (shot in a Mountain Environment)

4 Oread Characters (there are many great shots of Oreads doing great stuff, so we want to capture the spirit of these characters doing their thing)

5 Club interest (long standing members will remember this was the category where the embarrassing shot you really didn't think needed publishing was full screened for the amusement of fellow Oreads)

To ensure we can get through all the categories can you limit your entries to three per category. Old favourites are welcome as well as recent photographs.

Photos can be submitted by email to Richard Freestone (rdf@dircon.co.uk) or WhatsApp (via the Club Community) or by sending him a memory stick. If you have any questions regarding how to send a photo please get in touch with him. Tel. 07968 889258. Please name your photos with your initial.surname.category.jpeg to make life easier for Richard. For example JWilsonLandscape.jpeg

Points will be awarded for 1st 2nd and 3rd. There will be prizes for those who come 1st and an overall prize for the most points which is a magnificent trophy.

The closing date for submissions has been extended to 22nd February to allow you all time to get those entries in.

Jan Wilson email: jan.lumsdale@gmail.com tel. 07769 186041

Wednesday 4 March Mam Tor and Kinder Simon Pape

10 miles over Mam Tor, Rushup Edge, Brown Knoll and along the edge of Kinder to Grindslow. Should take about six hours, so there may be time for a quick drink afterwards! Meet at the main Edale car park (SK 123 853) at 10.00 am for a 10.15 start.

Please let me know if you're coming.

Simon Pape email: simon.pape66@gmail.com tel. 07813 616563

6 - 8 March Patterdale Pip Leach

We are returning to the George Starkey Hut this March, for what is like a near annual pilgrimage, and it's easy to see why, this is a super hut in a glorious area. There is some amazing hillwalking, low level around Ullswater, or higher level, all from the front door of the hut. March can bring all sorts of weather, there's been snow aplenty in the past, so don't forget your ice axe and crampons, if there's snow on the hills. For the more adventurous, there's scrambling, such as Swirral Edge and Striding Edge.

The hut itself is large and comfortable, it boasts a new log burner, so we should be cosy!

Twelve beds have been booked so far, there is the possibility of increasing that number. Several people have booked on the meet already and others have expressed an interest in going. In the past, people have stayed additional nights, let me know if you would like to extend your stay. It's £12 pppn for Oreads and £18 for guests.

Join the Patterdale WhatsApp or contact me on 07941395856 or pippasleach@gmail.com

Toubkal Meet – 12 to 17 March 2026 Nige Berry

Winter ascent of Morocco's highest peak, Toubkal (4167 Metres).

Last year I organised a friends' trip to the Atlas and by popular interest, I have been asked to plan another trip next year using the local trek company that was such a success last time.

For a flavour of this, see Aaron Wigley's video on WhatsApp.

Flying from Manchester, the local contact out there will supply transport, accommodation, food, mule and porters, as well as a local 'guide' (now a requirement to go into the national park). Suitable for anyone who wants to climb a big mountain and can use crampons and ice axe. Winter walking experience. For more information on costs, itinerary and what to expect contact me Nige Berry email NigebMIC@yahoo.co.uk.

25 November - 6 December Desert Rock 2026 Wadi Rum Ed Bloomfield

Having been to the Anti Atlas the last three years in November I thought it's time for a change in 2026, an adventure awaits on the sandstone monoliths of the Wadi rum desert. The climbing was established back in the late 80s by Tony Howard (not Oread Tony Howard). The grading has been done in alpine grades and climbing here should not underestimated, a rescue is very unlikely and the remoteness adds to the overall seriousness of the climbing. However for those with good mountaineering nous some of the world's best rock climbing awaits. Robert Durann has done a wonderful article on UKC see link below for more information. Having purchased two guidebooks I'd suggest Rock around the world guidebook is the one to go for - or see if you can get the latest version of Tony Howard's guidebook. There is a good range of climbing from HVS-E3 and a good selection of relatively easy from a technical point of view but very committing and adventurous Bedouin hunting routes. Get in touch if interested. We will be flying out from Luton to Amman and traveling down to Wadi rum via Petra. There are many climbing and walking opportunities straight out of the accommodation in the village of Rum.

[https://www.ukclimbing.com/articles/destinations/wadi_rum -
a desert sandstone wonderland-8747](https://www.ukclimbing.com/articles/destinations/wadi_rum_-_a_desert_sandstone_wonderland-8747)

Ed Bloomfield email edwardlbloomfield@gmail.com tel. 07990 066362

News, Articles and Reports from Meets

“Desert Rock” Anti Atlas Tafraoute 20-30 November Ed Bloomfield

For the third season running the Oread mountaineering club returned to the Anti Atlas for ten days of adventure climbing, tagine and for some a hammam, see Mike Mowbray for details about his special spa retreat.

The group was made up of five teams, Mike Mowbray, Alan Monks; Phil Sturgeon, Jimmy and Aaron; Roland and Angela; Nigel Berry and Trevor Stevens; Myself, Tom Larkam and Simas. Me and Tom stopped at Kasbah, an old fortified village North of Idaougnidif for three very cold nights before we met up with the rest of the guys down in Tafraoute. We learnt on our last night you can request a heater for your room - note for future self! The proximity of the Fort provided an opportunity for a leisurely breakfast, short drive ins and some time to explore the coffee tents in Idaougnidif. We started off with a route recommended by Snod, “Crazy Mushroom Ridge.” We opted for the E1 variant and hugged the arete, a very steep introduction to Moroccan climbing for Tom. Thankfully the jugs kept coming and once at the top you're about level with the car, we headed down the road to Orange Wall and Tom led “Southern Comfort” a two pitch HVS very good - good climbing up an obvious line through a crack system under a roof. We found ET waiting for us at the top of the route having been missing since 1982. We couldn't resist an opportunity for a good selfie so we climbed the buttress, a new route, two pitches “ET Phone Home” VS 4B. A five metre downclimb and a 60m

abseil off an Argan tree and we were back at the bags.



Left: Tom Larkam on ET Phones Home Right Tom Larkam P3 Brisingr.

A successful first day, we went on to climb Black Beauty and Brisingr the next two days before we headed down. Black Beauty was a fantastic line up a black streak on Lower Eagle with a short fierce crux on the last pitch. Brisingr is very popular route, a few teams did it on last year's trip. Me, Tom, Roland and Angela enjoyed it this year. The route is on Dragon Rock which is akin to Tremadog - very good climbing on some of the best Rock in Morocco, so much so myself and Mike returned on the last day and did a very unlikely line "Tan Y Draig" A hanging crack 100 metres up was the feature we were aiming for but the second pitch to get there was the unexpected Crux. Mike dispatched all the runners he could fathom, small bomb shelters of gear which wouldn't withstand a hail storm. I arrived at the belay to find him tied on with the remaining snap gates the nuts were attached to. More quickdraws next time!

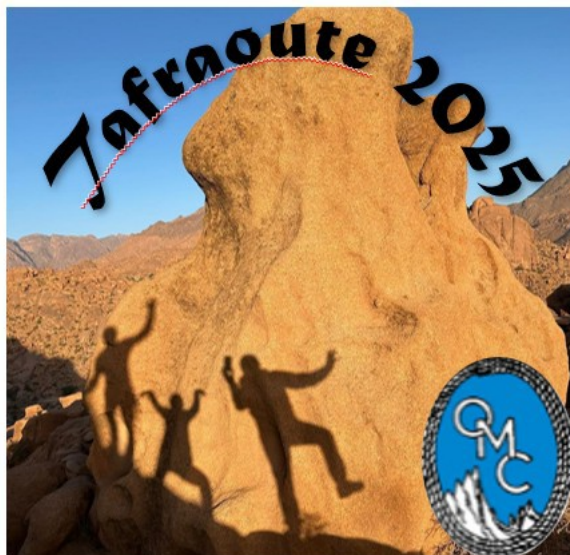
Once we arrived in Taфраoute we enjoyed a bit too much of the Bar under the encouragement of Mr Motivator. We woke a bit weary headed so opted for a short day in Tizgut gorge. We climbed the infamous Tizgut Crack, a Joe Brown classic, the first pitch is 35 Metres and will eat all the metal you can throw at it. I'd phsyced myself royally up for the lead - the first 10 metres is awkward, thin hands up a corner crack before the corner opens up into an off width. There are many options for bridging in between the short thrutches to get ever closer to the belay. A few chicken wings and a knee jam help with upward progress - I'm through the worst of it and feel a rush of excitement - I've wrestled the infamous Tizgut Crack - don't drop it now! I pull on to the stance and I am elated. Tom followed up and led the second pitch which starts with an offwidth with suspicious rock - proceed with caution, the rock improves and the steepness relents, a few big lay back moves and a pull round the corner, Tom's stood on top of a Taфраoute classic beating his chest in triumph.



Left: Ed Bloomfield on Tizgut Crack, Right: Mike Mowbray the White Arete on Asendrar Welcome.

“Asendrar Welcome” a 12 pitch 305m big day out Alan and Mike had climbed the day before. We couldn’t resist but to follow in their foot steps after the tall tale of 12 steep pitches of sustained VS climbing on a huge buttress known as the Thumb! The climbing is never desperate but the position’s incredible. Bobby Helmet variation provides some amazing exposure on some of the biggest holds in Morocco.

Many more routes where dispatched through out the week, too many to mention, the scenery in the Anti Atlas never disapoints , the rock climbing is only comparible to Gogarth on steroids but mostly we will all long to return for the hospitality and kindness that is offered by the local people! The evenings are spent enjoying beers on the terrace and dining in the various restaurants in the town. Personally I've made some really long lasting memories and good friends on this trip the last three years and I can't wait to go back already! East Midlands is starting flights to Agadir next October so will be even easier in the future!



Nigel Berry writes:

Big thank you to Ed for organising another great trip. Good to see so many Oreads.

My first time out to this part of Morocco, superb climbing on both the granite and the quartzite. Once you get used to the driving, plenty of options in the VS+ range. Perfect weather and great accommodation in Hotel Amandiers. Cheers to the team for looking after me.

Buttermere Meet 28-30 November Charlie Taylor

For this meet the club returned to the Fell and Rock club's Birkness Barn - located on the shores of the quaint lake Buttermere. Near gale force winds welcomed the early arrivals with a few spending Friday afternoon in the hills. Neil had arrived early and had spent the afternoon on the fells surrounding Honister pass, taking in Grey Knotts. As the evening progressed the last of the stragglers (Dawn and I) arrived with the looming forecast of a wet Saturday, putting a dampener on any plans.

With the imminent threat of heavy rain, Pip, Michael H, Michael P, Neil and Dave decided on a lakeside tour around Buttermere and Crummock waters, whilst Dawn went on a bike ride up to Cockermouth via Whinlatter and Newlands passes.

I had a wander over to Green Gable, Great Gable, and Pillar with the return leg back to Buttermere over High Stile. This was made all the more interesting as snow started falling and the darkness beckoned, making for an atmospheric, if somewhat damp descent back to the hut. Here I was greeted with delicious jam and clotted cream scones courtesy of Helen Hayes. Just what I needed, Thank you Helen!

Roger and Snod spent the day in Borrowdale, where they climbed Intake ridge on Glaciated Slabs, Coombe Gill, before retreating to the Langstrath Inn, in time to see snow falling on the fells.

The torrential rain forecast for Saturday held off until mid afternoon and the day ended up being far better than expected. The heavy rain did eventually

materialise, mid afternoon and falling as snow above 500m.



Michael Percival stranded in the lake. (Photo M. Hayes)

Sunday's weather was glorious, cold with full sun and a blue sky. The heavy rain of Saturday afternoon and evening resulted in a pleasant covering of snow on the fells. Michael P consumed the biggest fried breakfast known to man, ready for a big day in the hills. I'm sure his biggest challenge was keeping it down. Keen to enjoy the snow before heading off home, Michael H, Michael P, Neil and Dave headed up Whiteless Pike.

Pippa and I walked up Haystacks. Sadly we had to say our farewells at Scarth Gap pass, as I needed to head off home. Pippa continued up to Seat and High Stile.

After hours of deliberation the previous evening, Snod and Roger headed back over to Borrowdale to Shepherds crag. Here they climbed Jackdaw Ridge in the glorious winter sunshine and then on to Brown slabs before heading to the Borrowdale hotel for a well earned pot of tea.



The Buttermere valley sporting its winter colours.

Thanks for all those who attended and made for a great weekend. Fortunately, the weather behaved, and we all had an enjoyable weekend. Attendees: Roger Larkam, Neil Weatherstone, Pippa Leach, Michael Hayes, Michael Percival, Dave (Snod) Helliwell, Dave Ward, Dawn Willmer, and myself.

Geo Walk Brierlow Bar to Tideswell 20 December

Rachel Walker



At Thirst House Cave, photo Michael Hayes.

On the day before the shortest day and after a period of heavy rain, we set off from Brierlow Bar in the mist. We had already lost one of the party finding her broken down on the road before Tideswell Dale (we took her to a nearby farm shop where hopefully she could contact breakdown services). At the beginning of our walk, looking down into Back Dale, a thin layer of Pleistocene clay covering the Bee Low Limestone, preventing the gushing water from sinking into the ground of this 'dry valley', meant that the dale and our path was thoroughly waterlogged and then pooling into a lake as we entered Deep Dale. Avoiding the flooding as best we could, we splashed our way down the dramatic, deeply cut Deep Dale, stopping for coffee at the entrance to the aptly named Thirst House Cave. As we tucked into mince pies and Yule Bread, Stuart disappeared into the dark depths of the cavern for quite a time, possibly in search of neolithic cave-dweller artefacts. So we almost lost another down the slippery steep slope into the abyss.

Immediately after the cave a footpath diversion zig zagged up to the top of the dale where a small path went along the edge overlooking the dale below before re-descending dramatically into Topley Pike Quarry, only a short distance from the Wye Dale carpark picnic benches for lunch. The path along the bottom of Deep



Dale is closed for about eight years while quarry waste is removed in order to restore the dale into its natural state. Continuing more rapidly along the Monsal Trail and through the tunnels and viaducts, the old climbers reminisced about ascents up dramatic cliffs such as 'Sir Plumb'. (Actually they tell me it's Sirplum!)

As this was a Geo walk, in a cutting after ice cream from the cafe at Millers Dale and the old Lime Kilns, we attempted to spot the hard to see 'stylolites'. (Look this up). From Litton Mill we finished up Tideswell Dale, leaving the valley to explore the dark coloured Dolorite quarry above, then back to the carpark and return to Brierlow Bar bookshop cafe for a cuppa and more mince pies. Happily Angela and car had been rescued and were back home.

New Year's Day walk Richard Freestone



Nine sturdy souls joined me and Sheila for my birthday bash around Lathkill Dale on New Year's Day. Jane Tresidder, Peter Amour, Steve and Sam McDonagh, Roger Larkam, Stuart Firth and Sue, Trevor Stevens and Mike Moss. We set off over the fields to Youlgrave then along the River Bradford to Alport and the Lathkill to Conksbury Bridge followed by the footpath up to Over Haddon and the Lathkil Hotel. There we were joined by Pete and Sue Lancaster, Brian West and Dave Appleby. After lunch and a beer or two we took the lane back down to the dale and headed west. I was quite shocked at the state of this stretch of the dale. We then took the bridge into Cale dale and the steps up to the meadows above. The Limestone way then took us back to the cars. Thanks to all and a happy new year. Richard.

New Year at Tan yr Wyddfa



The days between Christmas and New Year were cold but sunny enough for climbing on Tremadoc to be a pleasure (or so Chris Radcliffe and Gill assured us when we arrived on the 29th). Being in the hut was a different matter – none of the storage heaters was working – the place was an icebox requiring full winter gear to leave the fireside! On Tuesday Snod spent about an hour and a half being thrown around the switchboards of Scottish Power and E.D.F. Eventually he found a lass who actually wanted to help and when she learned that we were all over 70 and some in their 80s she booked us an emergency engineer visit! He arrived at 5pm and we sat in the dark while he changed the meter. Apparently the radio signal that turned off peak electricity on and off ceased at the end of October! It now works on a telephone signal. Why none of the six parties who used the hut in November and December reported the problem is a mystery. Next morning the heaters were warm – what a relief – but, as you can see from the photo (thanks Pete Kennington) the dining room was still a chilly place to enjoy our splendid new year's eve bring and share supper. Still it was a rare few days of

good weather, climbing, walking and biking all enjoyed. Sadly it was back to the usual rain on new year's day so most of us went home. Those who stayed till Friday were chased out by the forecast snow. Thanks to all who came and made it a fun few days.

Newtonmore – or not! January Ed Bloomfield



Ed on pitch 1 Quartzvein Scoop. Below Mike Mowbray on pitch 2.

The promise of climbing on the Northern Cairngorms hadn't failed me the last three years in January. But the weather that came in the week commencing 5th January was problematic to say the least. After a really cold snap and really heavy snow it wasn't practical to go climbing from Newtonmore so after much deliberation of forecast and real time weather reports (winter highland is the gold mine for winter conditions allowing real time data of temps and snow condition) we decided to go to the Rucksack Club hut in Ballachulish. Myself, Rob Beck, Alan Monks and Mike Mowbray headed up Thursday afternoon, escaping the incoming snow to the midlands.



We stopped in the Arrochar hotel for one night so that we could get to Ben Udlaigh early on Friday and go in search of some Scottish Ice. Quartzvein Scoop was in but thin so we paired off and all set off up the ice fall. The first pitch provides the crux with a steep top over a bulge to reach the belay cave and the second pitch has an exciting airy traverse before you can

get a good screw placement, a few technical steps and soon you're romping up the snow slopes to the summit. We topped out in the dying light and tried to find an open pub on the way to the Rucksack Club hut. This proved even more problematic than the conditions, after trying three pubs that were all closed for January we sent Alan off in search of a shop while Mike cooked dinner. Tim Harrison arrived Friday night and was linking up with Gill R on Saturday for East Ridge on Beinn a Chaorainn. Saturday we woke to a changing forecast - now heavy snow was inbound in the west. Tim and Gill successfully waded through deep powder to the summit of Beinn a Chaorainn via the east ridge. The rest of us went on a wild goose hunt for Taxus on Beinn an Dothaidh. Having failed to read the approach notes correctly we ended up in the wrong corrie - perhaps the only screw we will place today is the bent one! Struggling to match descriptions to the rock and ice in front of us. The weather had come in by now and the temps had picked up so we retreated to the safety of the hut. An interesting start to the winter!

Seeking Simple Shelter Richard Genner

There is now a 2025 Appendix to Richard's history of mountain bothies at home and abroad. As usual it can be obtained from him by emailing him in person. His address is rgatrg11@gmail.com

Hut Bookings.

Hut bookings are now made online at the Oread website www.oread.co.uk. The system allows you to see up to date bed availability details and make your own bookings.

Please remember to sign in as members first before making your bookings as you get access to the Oread beds and rates and you don't have to enter lots of details required for external bookings.

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

Our preferred method of payment is via bank transfer to our Lloyds account – Sort Code 30-98-97 Account number 62584068. Please use the 'Reference' box to say what the payment is for. **In particular please say which hut, ie Hut fees HL, or Hut fees TyW.** Your name is not necessary in the reference, unless it is different from the bank account name.

Alternatively you can post a cheque, payable to Oread M.C. to the above address.

Hut Door and Barrier Codes

Note – these are available on the website in the Club Information section under the Members tab section **when you are logged in as a member.**

Information on Member Activities

Welcome to new provisional members Andrew Ruddell and Benjamin Wortley and full member Chris Williams. We hope you will enjoy many happy days with the club. Current provisional members Nuno Gomes and Vera Venancio have applied for full membership. If you would like to comment on these applications please contact a member of the committee.

Ken Bryan

Former member Ken Bryan died in mid December. He joined the Oread in 1974 but later moved to Skye, quite some years ago, where he opened the Three Herons Studio photography gallery in Broadford. He was certainly a fine landscape photographer. Our sympathy goes to his son, Chris. Photographs and memories would be welcome for future issues.

The photograph is from Gordon Gadsby's collection.



Roland Jackson

Rob Tresidder writes:

Roland Jackson collapsed and died while climbing a snow gully on the E face of Helvellyn on 10 January. Some Oreads will remember the talk he gave to the Oread five or six years ago. He spoke about John Tyndall, and the biography Roland had just written. The biographer and his subject were a good match. Both were scientists first and mountaineers later. For many years it was believed that Tyndall was the discoverer of the greenhouse effect. In fact that distinction belongs to an American scientist, Eunice Forde. But Tyndall was the first to climb the mighty tetrahedral Weißhorn in the Swiss Valais. Roland had a similar liking for the big snowy peaks of the Alps.

I first met Roland in the mid-1970s. We climbed a lot together when I lived in Seascale. Later we joined up for a couple of trips in the Dolomites, narrowly missing out on the N face of the Cima Grande. He and his wife, Nicola, and family became very close friends.

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