



OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2018 - JANUARY 2019



The Post Prandial walk attracted a record crowd of 33 mostly pictured here at midday above Hell Bank Plantation – still 1 ½ hours away from the pub!

Editorial

This is your bumper double issue to see you through into the new year. Lots of meets coming up including the usual seasonal favourites – The Bullstones, Black Rocks, a New Year's day walk plus a social pub evening in Derby. Several winter meets to Scotland, Wales and a number of local walks including a Wednesday walk on 5 December, more stages of the Boundary Walk and a Limestone walk.

Two trips abroad coming up – ice climbing and winter sun in Benidorm.

Write-ups include the last Peak Boundary Walk, a walking holiday in Val Gardena and a 30 year relationship with the Piz Bernina.

Also a plea for help with the club's website and the report of the Communications FTG sub-group.

Don't forget: Subs renewal time: form and details at the back of this issue.

Meets list for 2019 included here on pages 2-3.

2019 Meets List Spenser Gray

As always I am looking for meet leaders.

I have a range of preplanned weekend backpacking meets and the more usual camping/ hut meets if you want to run a meet and would like some inspiration. Equally if you have your own idea for a meet please get in touch and I will help you put together a plan for the meet and publicise it to the club.

Forthcoming meets 2018 - 2019

Here is the calendar for the rest of 2018 plus the list of weekend meets arranged so far for next year. More will be added, but get these in your diary now.

2018

<i>December</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>Evening lecture Royal Oak Ockbrook Rob Tresidder</i>
	<i>5</i>	<i>Inaugural Wednesday Walk Stuart Firth</i>
	<i>7-9</i>	<i>Bullstones/Peak District Boundary Walk - Chris and Gill Radcliffe</i>
	<i>12</i>	<i>Black Rocks Night Climb Rob Tresidder</i>
	<i>18</i>	<i>Social evening Smithfield Alehouse, Derby</i>
	<i>26</i>	<i>Boxing Day local get – together, Brassington</i>
	<i>22 Dec – 1 Jan</i>	<i>Christmas/New Year Meet Tan yr Wyddfa Rock Hudson</i>
	<i>28 Dec – 6 Jan-</i>	<i>New Year meet Inchree cottages Jess de Freitas</i>

2019 Meets list

<i>January</i>	1	<i>New Year's Day walk Colin Hobday</i>
	8	<i>Lecture Royal Oak Rob Tresidder</i>
	10-14	<i>European Ice climbing C Hartshorne/Spenser Gray</i>
	13	<i>PDBW Stuart Firth</i>
	20	<i>Limestone walk Rusty Russell</i>
	25-27	<i>Helyg Spenser Gray</i>
	4th-16	<i>Benidorm Derek Pike</i>
<i>February</i>	5	<i>Lecture Royal Oak Rob Tresidder</i>
	8th-10	<i>Karn House joint with FRCC Spenser Gray</i>
	16	<i>PDBW John Green</i>
	22-24	<i>Buttermere, Birkness Barn – Michael Hayes</i>
	26	<i>Social evening meet</i>
<i>March</i>	5	<i>Lecture Royal Oak Rob Tresidder</i>
	8th-14	<i>CIC Scottish meet Spenser Gray</i>
	8th-10	<i>Patterdale meet Stuart Haywood</i>
	15th-17	<i>Waters Cottage Neil Thompson</i>
	17	<i>PDBW Chris and Jan Wilson</i>
	22-24	<i>Tan yr Wyddfa meet leader needed</i>
	30	<i>AGM preceded by 70th Anniversary repeat of first ever Oread meet.</i>
	31	<i>Spring Stride Snod Helliwell</i>
<i>April</i>	5th-7	<i>New Members Meet Amy Prosser</i>

	19 th -22	<i>Easter</i>
	12th-28	<i>Proposed sun rock trip venue not yet known</i>
	30	<i>Evening social meet</i>
<i>May</i>	3rd-6	<i>May BankHoliday Gower Mick Hayes</i>
	17th-19-	<i>Tan yr Wyddfa Adhe Koukoui</i>
	24th-2 June	<i>Skye Mike Moss</i>
<i>June</i>	7-9 Jun	<i>Children's meet Neil Weatherstone</i>
	14th-16 Jun	<i>Borrowdale High House - Dave Helliwell</i>
<i>July</i>	3rd-5	<i>Tan yr Wyddfa working party Dave Helliwell</i>
	5th-7	<i>Tan yr Wyddfa barbecue meet Tony Howard</i>
	12 th -14	<i>North Downs Way Farnham-Caterham Pam Storer</i>
	19th-4 Aug	<i>Alpine meet (Oetzal?)</i>
<i>August</i>	2nd- 3	<i>Tan yr Wyddfa joint FRCC meet</i>
	9th -11	<i>Gogarth Neil Thompson</i>
	16th-18	<i>Yorkshire Low Stern Emma Hayes</i>
	23rd-26	<i>Bank Holiday South Pembrokeshire Gill Radcliffe</i>
<i>September</i>	21	<i>PDBW meet leader needed</i>
	27th-29	<i>Clwyd limestone Derek Pike</i>
<i>October</i>	1	<i>Evening Lecture Royal Oak?</i>
	12 th - 20	<i>Kalymnos</i>
	18th-20	<i>Tan yr Wyddfa</i>
<i>November</i>	1st-3	<i>Halloween and Bonfire meet</i>
	3	<i>PDBW meet leader needed</i>
	5	<i>Evening Lecture Royal Oak?</i>
	16	<i>Annual Dinner</i>
	17	<i>Post Prandial walk</i>
	22-24	<i>High House curry meet Tony Howard</i>
<i>December</i>	3	<i>Evening Lecture Royal Oak</i>
	7	<i>PDBW Dave Helliwell</i>
	11	<i>Black Rocks/Harborough night climb</i>
	13 th -16	<i>Bullstones</i>
	21 Dec- 1 Jan	<i>Christmas/New Year at Tan yr Wyddfa</i>

Evening meets:

Do come along to the evening climbing wall session:

Mondays at the Unit from 7 – 9.00 pm and after at the Smithfield, Meadow Road, Derby. Over the winter there is also a group at Wirksworth wall from around 7-9.30pm on Wednesdays, then adjourning to the Royal Oak, North St.

Evening Lectures this winter Rob Tresidder

For details of the lecture on 4 December see below.

The remaining evening meets will be on **8 January**, 5 February and 5 March. I do not have any definites for these slots but I am hoping to fill one with the second solo British ascent of the Eiger. I am still hoping to run a members' evening Last year we had a splendid evening when four Oreads stepped up to the plate and a fifth had to be deferred to an evening of his own. C'mon guys!! If you have something to say or know someone who has, please be in touch.

Rob Tresidder

Tuesday 4 December 8pm Lecture Royal Oak Ockbrook

Rock Hudson's Peaks and Passes of the Andes and Himalaya



Our very own Rock will take us on a tour of recent treks in the Andes and Himalaya: a trek through the gorge of the Jiwa nala in India; a walk around the Cordillera Ausangate in Peru; and after the beer break back to the Himalaya with a walk around the Damodar Himal crossing the passes of Teri La and Saribung La, both around 6000m. A few images will give the flavour I hope.

Wednesday 5 December inaugural Wednesday Walk Stuart Firth

Meet at the public car park Brassington (GR234547) at 10:00am. I'll devise a loop, calling in at Carsington Reservoir visitor centre where refreshments are available - or bring lunch. We can discuss future ideas then.

Stuart Firth

7-9 December The Bullstones 2018 Chris & Gill Radcliffe

A reminder that the annual Bullstones Meet this year will take place on the Derbyshire/Staffordshire border.

Accommodation is available at Bill and Elen's farm near Thorncliffe for Friday and Saturday night.

Location details: Post Code: ST13 8UW OS Map Ref: SK 023 593

Co-ordinates: 53-07-49.5N 1-57-57.92W

Some keen Bullstoners are going to follow tradition and bivvy on Friday evening after leaving the pub.

Meet on Friday evening at the Rock Inn, Upper Hulme (ST13 8TY) from 7pm and walk from the pub to Whitehouse Farm, or bivvy en route. The walks on Saturday and Sunday will include a section of the PDBW from Onecote to Tittesworth Reservoir.

Please let us know a.s.a.p. if you need a bedroom at the farm, otherwise choose floor space/camping/campervan spot when you arrive.

We plan to have a communal meal on Saturday night – please contribute to a starter or mains or dessert and contact Gill with your choice so she can co-ordinate contributions.

If you have any queries please get in touch.

12 December Black Rocks Night Climb Rob Tresidder Wednesday before the Wednesday before Christmas (Rusty's Puzzle Corner)

Sadly, this is the only time some Oreads visit Black Rocks. But good for them that they come at all and perversely perhaps when the climbing is at its least attractive. But... it can surprise too. Crisp freezing conditions can improve adhesion! The working population usually get to the rocks around 6.00 pm and sometimes there are folk still playing at 9.00. Food, drink and seasonal cheer afterwards at The Malt Shovel up the hill from the rocks.

Keep an eye on the emailing for more details... especially of eating! Or contact me

18 December Social evening, Smithfield Alehouse, Derby

Many of the older members voiced a desire to have pub meets as in the old days as part of the FTG surveys. To ensure that all members are able to attend these social meets they will take place in the Smithfield Ale House which has a fantastic range of beer and cider on offer along with a reasonably sized car park and easy access from Derby Train Station. Their previous purpose of organising the upcoming weekends' activities has somewhat been superseded by the advent of emails and Facebook etc, however there is clearly much value to be derived from chatting to each other over beer in terms of getting to know your fellow members, finding out about upcoming meets, planning what you will do on meets and providing plans for meets to the meet secretary so do please come along from 7.30 – 10pm and join us for (a) pint(s) of beer (delete as appropriate).

22 December-1 January Christmas/New Year at Tan yr Wyddfa Rock Hudson

It's the usual format - come and go as you please, bring some food to share, play silly games, attempt to slither up Christmas Curry/Canyon Rib/Lockwood's Chimney in dismal conditions – get blown back off the summits and return via lengthy circumnavigations, arriving back long after dark - but usually the weather gods give us one memorable day. If you don't join us you will miss that magical moment!

All welcome, book your bed nights with Michael Hayes and just turn up!

26 December Boxing Day Pub get-together

As is traditional, Oreads will make their own way on foot or by bike to the Miners' Arms in Brassington by whatever route they wish for a convivial afternoon until darkness or fear of being snowed in sends us scurrying homeward. The good news is that the pub has changed hands, they are expecting us and we are assured of a warm welcome and food available for those who wish it.

28 Dec – 6 Jan Glencoe Hogmanay Meet Jess de Freitas

I'm running a Hogmanay meet this year at the Inchree Centre. There is no guarantee of snow, blue skies or nice weather, but there will doubtless be some good craic and plenty of enthusiasm to get out in the hills.

Most of the places have been taken but contact me if you are interested.

Jess de Freitas

1 January New Year's Day Walk Colin Hobday

I propose to meet in the free car park at Mill Dale (northern end of Dovedale) at 10.30am for a 10.45am start, for the those with a hangover the steep climb out of the dale should remove any remaining alcohol fumes and thick heads, passing Stanhope and across the fields to Wetton for a lunch time stop at The Olde Royal Oak. I understand that it now has new landlord but no details if anything as changed. At some point possibly before dark we shall head back via Alstonfield to Mill Dale.

Colin Hobday

Tuesday 8 January 8pm Lecture Royal Oak Ockbrook

Speaker and topic to be circulated later.

10- 14 January European Ice Climbing C Hartshorne/S Gray

If you are interested in joining us and trying out some ice fall climbing please get in touch soon. We are stopping in Cogne, flights and hotel booked.

Sunday 13 January Peak District Boundary Walk Stuart Firth

So... Christmas is coming and the perennial question arises – what to buy your beloved who already has everything they could possibly need or desire? The answer - of course - is a silly hat! Why? Because it'll keep their head warm; it'll cause some merriment; and it may win a free drink on the next stage of the Boundary Walk. There'll be three prizes: male, female and self-declared other. No last-season offerings please. Judgment will be by popular acclaim.

The walk itself will be a great chance to burn off the excess Christmas puddings and mince pies and show off the new silly hats and it's also a great way of meeting members old and new.

We'll meet at Tittesworth Reservoir Visitor Centre (White Peak GR 994602) at 10:00 and set off at 10:15. There's a coffee shop for those who need a caffeine boost to get going. Parking is £5 for the day and there is also road parking a few hundred yards away in the village.

The Ship Inn at Wincle will be our diversionary lunch stop and a room has been set aside for us on the upper level. The food menu is currently in the process of being changed and the new one will be available on the website shortly: **shipinnwincle.co.uk**. If you'd like some grub, please let me have your order by Monday 07 January.

It's a great walk with long distance views over Staffordshire and Cheshire. Our end point will be the scenic valley of Wildboarclough at the layby car park at Brookside Cottage (GR 980681). A car shuffle will be necessary to return to Tittesworth so logistical volunteers please get in touch.

Stuart Firth

20 January Limestone Walk Rusty Russell

My first thoughts on being asked to re-schedule this walk into the snow period were to meet somewhere near to the population centres but then I thought "To hell with it, we are a mountaineering club and the members will deal with whatever nature throws at them".

We will therefore meet in front of the craft centre by the market place in Longnor and battle with the elements up towards Axe Edge before moving a little to the East and descending the upper Dove Valley via the Packhorse Bridge, Leycote and Fough. We shall dine out of doors and forgo the decadent enjoyment of a lunchtime drink through both altruism and necessity. We shall aim to set out at 10.45GMT. (It would be wise to check with me the previous evening if weather conditions are bad enough to engender the risk of road closures).

Rusty

25 - 27 January Helyg Spenser Gray

The Ogwen valley offers excellent mountaineering options for all weathers with Helyg sitting in prime position to facilitate many of these, particularly with easy access to the Glyders and the Carnedds on offer. You can see the North Ridge of Tryfan from the bedroom/ living room window, there is a range of bouldering in the area and the North Wales Limestone crags are easily accessible while offering a range of sheltered venues for those who don't enjoy a walk in. Who knows, we may even have full access to Craig Y Forwyn again after it being banned for 30+ years?!

Details of the hut can be found here:

<https://www.climbers-club.co.uk/venues/helyg-ogwen/>

I'm optimistically including a link to an article about Welsh Winter Climbing, however we'll just have to see what happens.

https://www.ukclimbing.com/articles/destinations/welsh_winter_climbing-8160

To book contact Spenser Gray

Tuesday 5 February 8pm Lecture Royal Oak Ockbrook

8 - 10 February Karn House Spenser Gray

As part of our new Reciprocal Rights agreement with the FRCC we are having a joint meet at their Aviemore Hut, Karn House, at the start of February. As with my previous Scottish Winter meets there will be a communal meal on the Saturday night along with some climbing/ mountaineering/ hillwalking as weather allows. Given that we will be visiting the Scottish Mountains in winter I can not give any guarantees of where we will be climbing, however Aviemore offers a wide range of options to suit the conditions on the day. For some inspiration have a look at **Jeff Ingman's article on page 12** of this newsletter. Please come and dabble in the delights of the Scottish winter mountains and enjoy the hospitality of the FRCC (while also enjoying nosh provided by Spenser Gray).

To book contact Spenser -

4 -16 February Benidorm Derek Pike

This venue appears to be quite popular with the members of the Oread as the place offers something for everyone from dipping toes in the Med. to long days in the hills. We shall be staying at the Benilux Park Hotel [What again? you may ask]. It is on the list of package holidays offered by Jet2 which flies from East Midlands, Birmingham and Manchester to Alicante where you may pick up your hire car or take advantage of a coach transfer straight to the hotel.

I have already booked from the 4th February for 12 nights the cost of which was £830 for two in a twin bedroom, half board. Half board is breakfast and evening meal plus a bottle of wine, nobody has as yet gone hungry.

You do not have to come on these exact dates as Oreads come and go to suit themselves some staying for only a week, others ten days.

If you want any more info please get in touch.

Saturday 16 February Peak District Boundary Walk Wildboarclough to Bollington John Green

This section of the walk is very interesting, hopefully we shall have some good weather to do it with.

I propose starting at the Crag Inn in Wildboarclough at 10.30. I have asked the pub about parking and they are happy for us to park if we come in after the walk for refreshments. We will be walking along the road and up Cheshire's Matterhorn, Shutlingsloe, then descending to Macclesfield Forest and its reservoirs. At the end of Ridgeway Reservoir is our lunch stop at the Leather's Smithy pub which opens at 12.00. The landlady has asked us to let her know numbers before we go so please let me know if you want to stop for lunch. Suitably refreshed we will climb up to Tegg's Nose and along the ridge to the visitor centre. If anyone feels like a quick climb, I am sure that will be OK. In my guide book there is a Moderate and two Diffs. Anyone wanting tea at the visitor centre should also be OK as it's open till 17.00. The walk then continues along the Gritstone Trail up onto Kerridge Hill before descending to Pool Bank car park (free) and a return to Wildboarclough. 14k or 8.5 miles. I shall be arranging to have at least two cars there for our return. Please let me know if you are coming so that we shall have enough transport for the return.

John Green –

22-24 February Birkness Barn (Buttermere) Michael Hayes

We will be staying at Birkness Barn in Buttermere which offers easy access to a range of areas in the Northern and Western Lakes. Details of the hut can be found here. <https://www.frcc.co.uk/venues/birkness/> More info in February's issue, or contact Michael Hayes:

8-14 March Scottish meet Spenser Gray

The club has a meet at the CIC hut, there are still some spaces on the meet:
The cost of the meet will be £20 per night.

Spenser Gray will be travelling up on 8th March and intends to stay at either Riasg or Waters Cottage (both huts where we have reciprocal rights) that evening before heading up to the CIC hut for the Saturday night and returning to Derby on the Sunday evening. Other attendees are expected to head up to the area Sunday Daytime for the full week.

Spenser Gray

Copy deadline for next issue is 20 January.

The Oread Website needs You!

Calling mountaineers/climbers with skills in development, content management and administration of websites.

In 2019 the Oread will have had an amateur built web presence for 20 years (Only two careful owners). The current site is 10 years old, started as a reworking of the original, is built at a simple level with the free open source Joomla Content Management system, and functions OK. (good runner – central locking - GDPR compliant).

As membership, and club governance compliance requirements are increasing, there will be a future need for more functionality from the website. (Needs new engine).

Upgraded functionality will require higher skills than those that have kept it going to date, and which are outside the current webmaster's scope. This is where you come in.

Would you be interested in being part of this exciting development venture?

if you are not already an Oread member, no problem - come and join us. We are very welcoming to new members.

- Joomla - knowledge of html, CSS and php, as well as an organisational skills would be helpful, if developing the existing Joomla setup is undertaken.
- Wordpress - Good knowledge of Wordpress (as used by CC and FRCC) would be needed if a rewrite in that CMS were to be planned.
- Other website development options??

Among others, future functions likely to be needed are...

- Facebook integration
- Hut Booking
- Membership fee collection
- More detailed web calendar

While happy to keep things ticking over with maintenance, tidying and straightforward tasks, the current webmaster of 10 years would like addition(s) to the team that could effect uplift of the site functionality, and to whom he could hand over responsibilities in the future.

A target retirement date of AGM 2019 has been mentioned, but if we get takers for various roles a transition / hand over period beyond that would, of course, be fine. Rome, like the website, was not built in a day.

Keeping the website on free software, and in house would keep the cost down.

Mike Wren. **Please reply by email to: webmaster@oread.co.uk**

Members' Corner

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

Jack Ashcroft

As some of you will already know, Jack has had a nasty accident out walking and

has spent four weeks in hospital with damaged vertebrae. He is now home but still has to wear a collar to support his neck.
We send very best wishes from us all for a speedy and complete recovery.

News, Articles and Reports from Meets.

Forward Thinking Group Sub-Group On Communications Final Report 5th November 2018

This report is being circulated electronically to all members with email addresses. If you normally receive a postal copy of the newsletter and would like to receive a printed copy of the report please contact Ruth Gordon who will arrange for one to be sent to you. (Contact details at end of newsletter).

When the Forward Thinking Group's report was circulated to members back in July a sub group was still working on the topic of communications. This group has now produced its final report. It assesses current communications methods within the Oread Mountaineering Club and their ability to meet its constitutional objectives and needs of its members. This work draws upon the responses from a survey of Oread members, and an analysis of modern communication methods and the behaviour of their users. Recommendations are made for consideration by the Committee.

If you wish to make any formal comments on this new report to the committee please address them to Nigel Briggs, Club Secretary.

The recommendations that are made in both this and the main FTG report are the views of the communications sub-group and the FTG that drew up their respective reports. The reports have been gratefully received by the committee and read with interest. **However, it must be remembered that the recommendations are not Club Policy; at the moment they are discussion points.**

Currently the committee is working on a number of aspects that are mentioned in the FTG reports, namely updating and revising the Rules (Constitution), reviewing the legal status of the club and compliance with current legislation. In doing these we are considering relevant recommendations from the FTG reports.

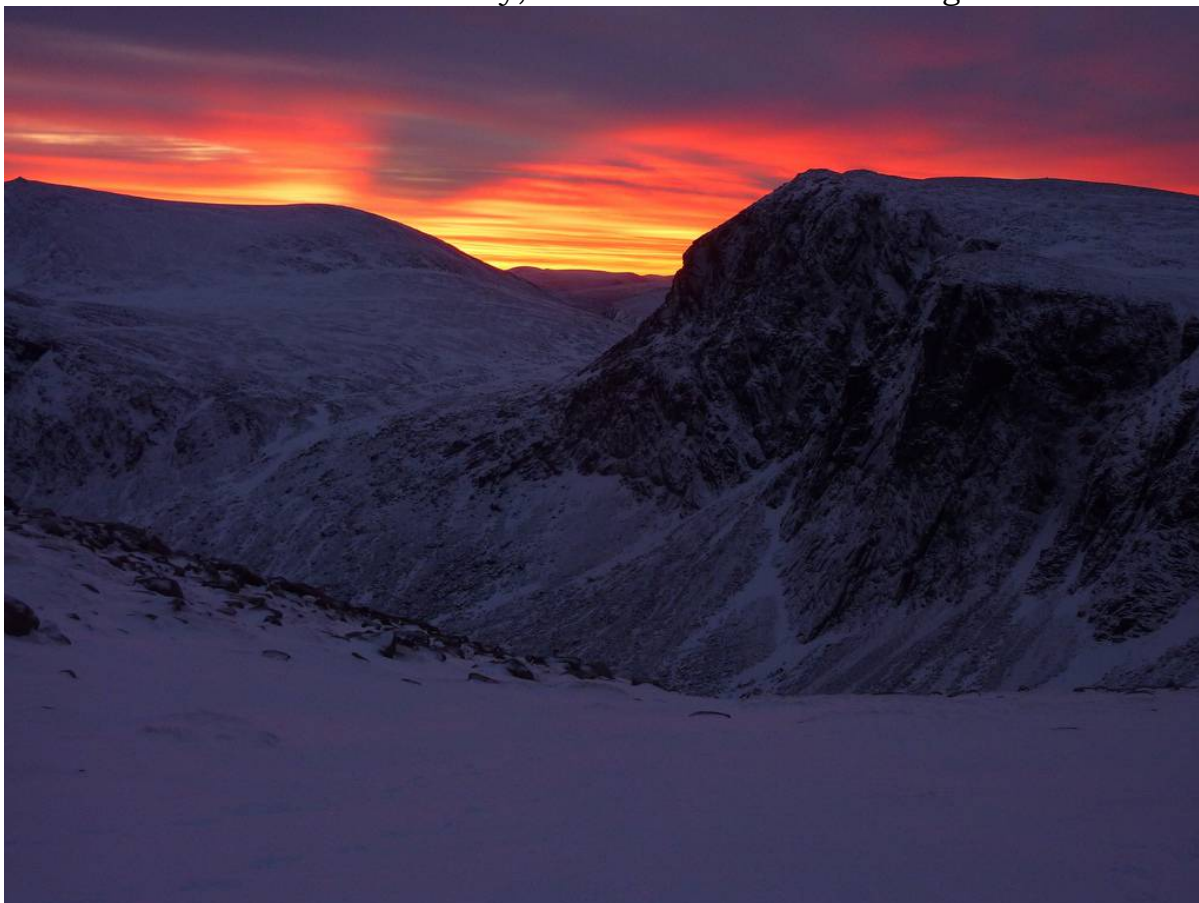
Anything that should be brought to the 2019 AGM is being worked on now as a matter of urgency so that it can be circulated ahead of the AGM.

Other recommendations will be considered in an orderly fashion, as and when time permits.

News, articles and reports from meets

Sticil Face, Shelter Stone Crag Jeff Ingman

A couple of Oreads have asked me about this route, the famous midgrade classic of the Northern Cairngorms. With winter upon us I thought I'd share some of my experiences from four attempts to get this route ticked. But first, the name - I've always pronounced Sticil "sty-sill" but my more pedantic Gaelic friends tell me that it's "steech-kill". Fortunately, Shelter Stone is less ambiguous.



Carn Etchachan at dawn from the top of the goat track. Shelter Stone crag is on the right.

The northern corries of the Cairngorm massif are popular places to climb, with good routes and a relatively easy approach and descent. In good conditions there will be several hundred climbers milling about on a weekend morning. But if you ascend the goat track and look down into the Loch Avon basin and beyond to the Shelter Stone crag, it is always relatively deserted.

The descents down to Loch Avon are not straight forward and both Coire Raibert and Coire Domhain can be heavily loaded with avalanche prone snow. My first attempt at the route ended early in Coire Domhain when we lost too much time on the descent due to deep and dangerous snow conditions.

Once you've descended into the basin you have to get around the western end of Loch Avon and the snow buried burn, the Garbh Uisge, that flows into the Loch. My second attempt at Sticil face ended here when my partner fell through apparently stable snow into freezing water. He was waist deep in the burn and hypothermic by the time I extracted him.

Having rounded the head of Loch Avon you then have to walk up to the base of the crag and find the route – sometimes with near zero visibility. My third attempt ended here in a white out with steep rock all around merging into a pale grey blizzard. I wasn't doing very well really!



Fortunately, in 2016 the fourth attempt saw my partner and me at the base of the route in good order, with cold, stable weather and an eight mile approach safely behind us. The climbing was good and we thoroughly enjoyed it, but our position in the middle of the Cairngorms meant that we had a sense of urgency about everything we did the day. We didn't linger at the top of the route, heading around the high level western arc that leads over the top of Hell's Lum and back down to the goat track. When we reached the car our electronic gizmos told us that we'd done eighteen miles of walking.

The crux corner pitch of Sticil Face.

Why keep going back? Well, if it was easy everybody would be doing it!

Spenser has thoughtfully arranged a meet in early February 2019 to Karn House in Aviemore, an ideal base for adventures in the northern Cairngorms – but get an early start if you are going “over the back” to Loch Avon.

A walking holiday in Val Gardena, Dolomites Colin and Uschi Hobday

At the start of September Uschi and myself caught the early morning flight from Birmingham to Verona together with around 200 other people on the flight, fortunately except for six others they were all heading for Lake Garda, so a mini bus took us on the two hour transfer to Selva, Wolkenstein in Val Gardena. (With all place names, and mountain ranges in three languages, Italian German and Ladin, the oldest language, maps can become quite confusing to read. The whole area is a National Park and a Unesco World Heritage Site.

We arrived at our small family run traditional Tyrolean hotel just ten minutes walk from the centre of Selva in rain after the superb Summer in Britain and the Alps.

The afternoon was spent exploring the village, collecting our free bus pass and enquiring about a six day summer lift pass, to be purchased when the weather improved. The next day was wet and cool - 10c. With snow on the tops, a quick decision was made to catch the service bus down the valley to Bozen 35 kilometres away, taking an hour at least, as everybody had the same idea, and the roads were very busy. It was amazingly warm in Bozen, not raining and a pleasant few hours was spent visiting a castle and strolling round the town. The famous museum containing Oetzi the iceman, had an endless queue, but we had visited him in the past.



From the Col Raiser to the Geisler Group

The Langkofel from the Seiser Alm

As there was a slight improvement in the weather the following day, we caught the bus to St. Christina and the cable car up to Col Raiser, 2106m. Then a chair lift up to Rif. Seceda 2518m.. The mist swirling in and out made the Geisler peaks very atmospheric and bringing back memories of when we climbed them 40 years ago. A long traverse under the rock wall of the Geisler Group, even the sun appeared for a short time. On the path we met a family who had walked from Slovenia on a two week walk across the Alps and were due to finish in Bozen. We descended down to the Regensburger Hutte, where we stayed 40 years ago, for refreshments, we discovered there that 1/4l of wine was cheaper than a coffee. We finished the day with a steady walk back down to the valley.

The weather was slowly improving, so we took a quick bus ride to St Ulrich at the lower end of the valley and up on the cable car to the high alpine meadows of the Seiser Alm giving good views of the Langkofel and the Schlern towering above the meadows. There were still a few heavy rain showers though by luck we always arrived at an Alm for Uschi's daily Apfelstrudel ritual, at the crucial moment to shelter.

Another day we took a cable car to gain height, from where we traversed via the Steinerne Stadt, under the Langkofel en route for the coffin lift which takes you up to the Toni Demetz Hut which sits right on the Langkofel Joch, 2685m high. Various climbing teams were on the Fünffinger Spitze on the Langkofel. The routes are very demanding. The lift is called Coffin Lift, as it only holds two

people standing, one behind the other which makes it very tricky to get on and off as the lift does not stop. The lift attendants either just push and shove or drag and pull. Great fun!!!

From the col there were fantastic views across to the Seiser Alm, and a steep and rocky path takes you back down to Selva via the Langkofel Hut, a very long descent.



The descent from the Langkofel – Seiser Alm in the distance.

Another day we took the cable car to Dantercepis 2298 m and from there walked to Jimmy's, a very posh Alpine Hut and continuing up to the col of the Gran Cir 2592m, a steep rocky path. After a quick stop it was down the other side, a very long descent (3 hours), down the val de Chedul, and back to Selva.

To sum it up we realised the mountains have become much higher since we were last there, or so it felt, however, the area is wonderful, magnificent mountain scenery, lots of scope for hard rock climbers, Via Ferrata fanatics, Mountain Bikers (most of them on E-bikes) and hut to hut walkers.



Col de Gran Cir looking towards the Sella Group.

In addition to summer tourism, the main attraction there is of course the skiing with an amazing network of lifts. As we left most Alms and lifts were due to close until the ski season starts. A real bonus is the free bus service taking you up and down the valley which is very efficient and frequent.

PDBW number 5 - A story of lost and found. Peter Amour

Sunday, 4th November required a certain amount of determination by those intending to come out and play, Saturday evening had seen the bonfire revelry at Heathy Lea, and Sunday morning was to witness the annual fixture of the nearby Dovedale Dash and its attendant traffic problem.

A taxi service team of cars arrived at Onecote to allow the return plan for those yet to participate in the PDBW fifth leg. Having witnessed enough vehicles at Onecote I advised that we get underway to NT Ilam. On arrival there was obvious evidence of athletes preparing for the Dash. Shortly afterwards an unknown face approached us and asked "Are you the AAC group?", "AAC Group? No." was the reply, thinking that we certainly didn't look to be an athletic club. At this point the meet leader recalled an email from the Radcliffes stating that there may be participants from the Austrian Alpine Club (AAC). With the confusion over, visitor Derek was welcomed into the fold, we now awaited ultra reliable Mike Hayes but zero hour came and went and no Hayes. I attempted to ring him but found no signal.



The early ascent onto Musden Meadows to warm everyone up.

Having passed kick off time we left Ilam's manicured grounds and steeply left the Manifold Valley to access Calton before descending into Waterhouses. The route then took a northerly direction over meadows and asphalt to reach Waterfall's Red Lion pub where those who had booked food took their nosh (after a little confusion about my booking). Having found our food, we also gained the missing Mr Hayes, who had headed to Onecote to dump his motor but found the hasty transport arrangements had abandoned him! On interrogation he'd enjoyed a more athletic route from the finish point to the pub than the rest of us. Refuelled, a photocall was made for the record outside the Red Lion before we proceeded westwards, with much of the route following the Hamps Valley. The meet leader adjusted the final section to run a parallel route avoiding the swampy ancient packhorse route of Wetley Lane. With vehicles accessed we returned to Ilam to reacquaint everybody with their homeward transport and an Ilam cuppa.

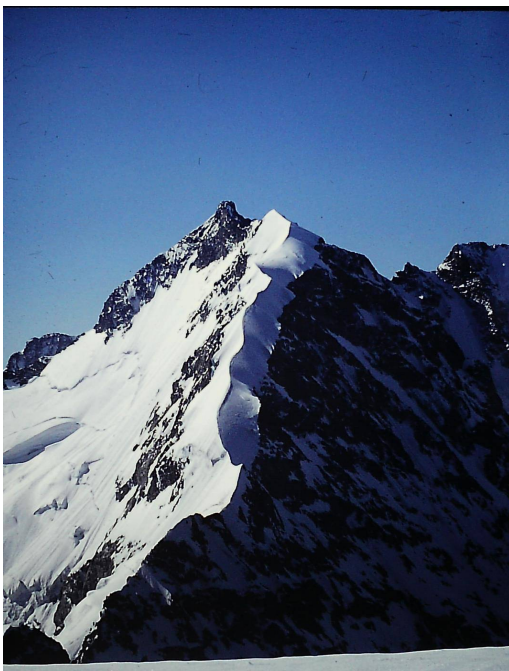


The PDBW Number Fivers post lunch, having gained calories, a lost member and a pumpkin - to clarify the lost member is fourth from the right.

Thanks for all who took part as shown in the accompanying images. Thanks especially to those who made the linear route possible by use of their vehicles including Tony Howard, Colin and Uschi, Stuart (Mr Boundary man) Firth, Sue, and Mike Hayes. I'm looking forward to the sixth PDBW, cheers Gill and Chris.

38 Years, 3 Attempts and 1 Mountain Nigel Briggs

Act 1 – Summer 1980



The original plan was to go caving in Northern Spain in the summer. However that did not work out. Instead I joined the Leeds Mountaineering Club's Alpine meet in Pontresina. Not only was this my first trip to the Alps, it was also my first time abroad, all very exciting. The first mountain we climbed was Piz Morteratsch, from the Boval Hut. The mountain is renowned for being a good viewpoint and one of the best views is of Piz Bernina and the Biancograt. You are looking directly at the photogenic snow ridge, and it looks magnificent, it just asks to be climbed. It went on the 'to do' list.

The Biancograt from Piz Morteratsch in 1980

Piz Bernina is the highest peak in the area and the most easterly Alpine 4000 m peak so it was an obvious objective. On this occasion the plan was to stay at the Diaveolezza Hut, traverse Piz Palü, stay overnight at the Marco e Rosa Hut, before an early morning dash to the top of Piz Bernina and back to the valley. I was climbing with one of my friends from the LMC, Chris Hilton.

Chris was also on his first Alpine trip so we were learning together.

The Diavolezza was a 'plush' hut in 1980, apparently it is even 'plusher' now! The traverse over Piz Palü went well and to be honest I don't remember that much about it other than it was a superb ridge. All was going well along the Bellavista terrace as the hut came into view until some of the bolts loosened and fell out of one of Chris's crampons causing it to flap around! We were unable to locate said bolts so made do as best we could and pressed on to the hut, hoping we could fix it. Once there, we tried to fix it but with no luck (cable ties had yet to be invented). Plan 'B' was to see how things looked in the morning with a view to me going to the summit alone.

A beautiful alpine morning followed, as the top of Piz Bernina was tinged with the first light of day we went out to decide on the course of action. Somewhat unsurprisingly Chris's crampons had not miraculously repaired themselves and he was reluctant to carry on up. I looked up to the top, thought about it, and thought better of it. I did not fancy climbing alone (having since come down from the summit to the Marco e Rosa hut I now know it was the correct choice) so down we went.



The ridge on Piz Palü in 1980 (left) and 2018 (right) taken from similar positions

We went back along the Bellavista Terrace but this time turned left down the Fortezzagrat. I must confess that nothing about the descent sticks in my mind other than some short abseils and scrambling down the ridge to the glacier. It seemed quite quick as well, oh how memory plays tricks on you.

So ended the first attempt on Piz Bernina.

Act 2 – Summer 2011

The years had passed by and 2011 saw me back within striking distance of Piz Bernina. We were on the Oread Alpine Meet based in Vicosoprano. Some things were the same, although the cast had changed. As an initial peak Janet, Peter and I went up Piz Morteratsch, from the Boval hut! This trip satisfied Janet's snow rat but mine was still hungry. Moreover I had Piz Bernina to climb and Peter was also keen for another day playing in the snow!

We did not feel ready for the Biancograt so opted for the South Ridge. We adopted different tactics this time. The plan was to take the cable car to the Diavolezza, then go down onto the glacier, bivvying near the base of the Fortezzagrät. The next day we hoped to go from there up to the Marco e Rosa Hut, dumping surplus gear and heading up to the summit. Then a return to the hut, collecting gear and heading back down the Fortezzagrät and on to the Diavolezza, all before the last cable car down. (In hindsight, and as I write this, it seems like a long day – what possessed us?)!



The sun rises on Piz Bernina during Act 2.

Anyhow the first part went well. The bivvy was good, the stars were bright and the snow froze. We had the Fortezzagrät to ourselves on the way up and did not see anyone as we made our way to the Marco e Rosa Hut. We got there mid-morning, went in, stashed the gear and set off. We got as far as stepping out of the hut door before reality dawned on us. It was too late to get up and back and we were too tired, it just did not feel right to carry on.



Good sense prevailed so we turned back into the hut, repacked our gear and headed down. It was long way down and then we had just 20 minutes for the final 200 m of ascent from the glacier to the Diavolezza Hut before the last cable car down. We tried to get there in time, but failed.

Our reward was to walk down to the car park where Janet was due to pick us up, we weren't overly impressed. At least we were able to message Janet and explain our predicament. She went and bought supplies (Coke and crisps) before wandering up to meet us. Coke has never been so welcome.

Score to date: Piz Bernina 2, Me 0.

Act 3 – Summer 2018

Vicosoprano was suggested as the Alpine summer meet venue. We were there only seven years ago but ... hang on a minute ... I have unfinished business just up the road.

So, a few days into our stay it was back to Piz Bernina again, this time with a change in tactics. We did not start with Piz Morteratsch! We were also going to go for the Biancograt and, learning from Michael Hayes and Pete Lancaster's experience in 2011 of a long day and an unplanned bivvy, stay at the Marco e Rosa Hut after the summit.

Huts were booked, rucksacks were packed and off we went. This time I was climbing with Mike Mowbray and Tim Sellears. The car was parked at the bottom of the Diavolezza lift and we took the train back to Pontresina to begin our walk

to the Tschierva Hut. Despite showers during the walk in and a poor evening's weather, the atmosphere in the hut seemed optimistic. Everyone was preparing to head off in the morning.

Right – The Biancograt

The morning was good and our study of the approach the previous evening proved worthwhile. We had read that the route to the start was marked with 'cats eyes' and we found that reflectors had been used to supplement the usual paint flashes. They were quite effective.

We got to the Fuorcla Prieclus, the start of the ridge proper at first light. For the first section we were moving together on rock then we went around to the East side of the ridge and onto snow, with ice sections to maintain interest. This is the main snow ridge leading up to Piz Bianco which looks so impressive from afar but is in fact reasonably easy, just a 'plod'!



From Piz Bianco to Piz Bernina it's a fine rocky ridge (*above*) with crampons coming on and off as the terrain dictates. It is at times like this that you realise how good modern crampon bindings are. They certainly beat fighting with six feet of tape! The ridge was mainly scrambling and a couple of short abseils before the final climb up to the summit. Then we were there, the summit of Piz Bernina finally under my boots 38 years after first setting out.



The author on Piz Albris in 1980 (left) and Piz Bernina in 2018, no further comment!

The descent to the Marco e Rosa Hut proved to be non-trivial with some abseils and a narrow ridge before the glacier and a final plod/slide to the hut. On this section we were being hassled by a guide trying to outflank us. On each attempt Mike out manoeuvred him (or stood in the way). We were at the hut by early afternoon, I'm not sure exactly when, that didn't matter, I was too happy. We got gear out to dry, had a snooze, a beer, food, wine and finally to sleep. The Marco e Rosa hut is high at 3597 m. An advantage of this is that is you don't need to get up particularly early if you're heading down.

We were the last up and after a leisurely breakfast we packed up and headed down. As we had the whole day and were already high up the obvious route was over Piz Palü. An added bonus here was not having to go down the Fortezzagrät again. A relaxed traverse of Piz Palü led us onto the glacier which was quite heavily crevassed. Soon enough we were off the ice. The final walk to the Diavolezza seemed to take longer than it should have been, maybe I was getting tired. Anyhow we eventually arrived, had a celebratory beer and went down the cable car (expensive) and to the waiting car.



Left – On the glacier – not a place to linger!

The highlight of the drive back to Vicosoprano was Tim using his underpowered hire car to terrorise a Porsche that he felt was underperforming going down the Maloja pass. He did get a reaction!

So that's the end of my affair with Piz Bernina. Will I go back? Who knows. There are still many mountains to climb.

My thanks and appreciation to all who have shared my Bernina adventures:
Chris Hilton, Peter Briggs, Mike Mowbray and Tim Sellears.

Hut Bookings.

TAN-YR-WYDDFA

22 December-1 January	Oread Meet
18-19 January	Yorkshire Ramblers
25-27 January	Croydon MC
1-2 February	Skyline MC
8-9 February	Orpheus MC
15-16 February	Southern Trekking and MC

HEATHY LEA

7-9 December	Litchfield MC 8 beds
30 Dec-2 January	Leeds University MC ? - unconfirmed.
11-12 January	Hillingdon MC

“Whole Hut” includes the Oread room!

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

All queries, payments and bookings should be addressed to Michael Hayes, the Hut Bookings Secretary: 32 Hawthorne Drive, Thornton, Leicester, LE67 1AW.

Tel. 01530 231401 mobile 07771 700913. Email: hayes_michael_j@cat.com

Our preferred method of payment is via bank transfer **to our new account with**

Lloyds - Sort Code 30-98-97. Account number 62584068. You must put your name **and either TYW or HL as a reference.** Otherwise the treasurer cannot allocate the payment to the right hut.

Please follow up with an email to Michael to let him know that you have made a payment and what it was for.

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

Information on Member Activities

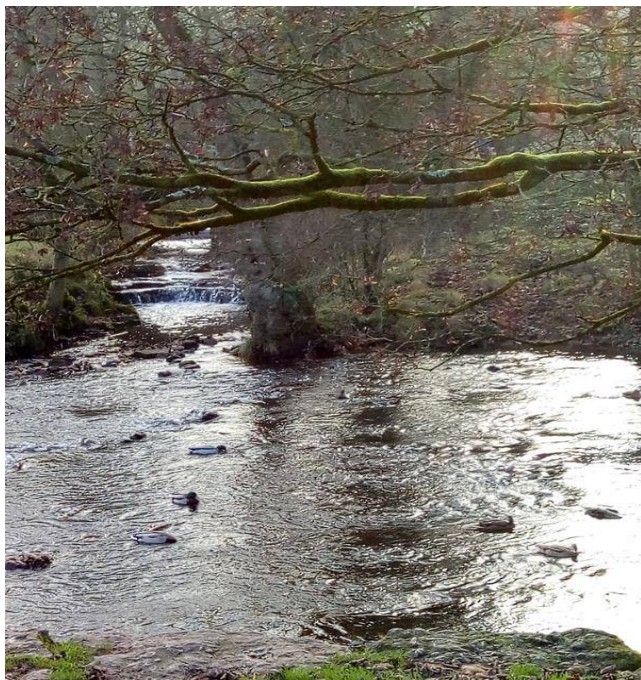
An application for full membership has been received from Emily Ross. If you would like to comment on this application, which will be decided at the December committee meeting, please contact a member of the committee. Welcome also to new prospective member Zoe Brownley. We hope you will both enjoy many happy days with the Oread.

Rusty's Puzzle Corner

Last month's puzzle solution:

Nobody has responded so this word quiz is being held over to provide some Christmas/New Year fun at Tan yr Wyddfa. Answers in next issue.

This month's puzzle.



What is the name of the delightful little watercourse seen joining a scenic river adjacent to a popular tourist attraction in the Peak District National Park

Commercial Corner

Alpenglow – Ben Tibbetts

I'm a photographer and IFMGA mountain guide based in Chamonix.

Over the last six years I've been creating a beautiful and inspiring large format book, 'ALPENGLow', about the finest routes on the 4000m peaks of the Alps. I have spent 700 days climbing and photographing every route, drawing the topos and writing about the mountains and their climbing history. (Surprisingly it seems I also became only the second Brit to complete the 'official' UIAA list of 82 peaks.)

I've hit the limits of my word-of-mouth 'reach' and would really appreciate any help spreading the information. I'm self-publishing so pre-sales are really crucial to help pay for the printing and production of this passion project. Pre-orders are still possible at www.bentibbetts.com/shop)

Thanks for your help,
Ben

Membership Renewals for 2019

Although it's time to renew your annual subs we have once again managed to hold the cost for another year and absorb the £1.00 BMC increase. So please renew early to take full advantage of it.

The subscription includes the BMC fee of £14.25 giving you all the benefits of individual club membership and in particular the BMC third party insurance.


How to pay: 1 of 2 ways

- Please complete the form below and send it with a cheque made payable to the Oread Mountaineering Club, posted to Michael Hayes, 32 Hawthorne Drive, Thornton, Leicester, LE67 1AW.
-
- You can pay by bank transfer to our **new** account: **Sort Code 30-98-97, Account Number 62584068** with **Subs and your name** in the reference field. Once the money has been transferred please email hayes_michael_j@cat.com confirmation and a copy of the form below.
-

If you have any questions then please contact me.
Michael Hayes

Please help your club - take the time to fill in and send a copy of the form below with your payment. The new

Data Protection legislation makes it essential that we have evidence of your consent to the Oread M.C. holding your contact information.

Oread Mountaineering Club Membership Renewal and Contact List Update		
Name		
Second Name (Joint Membership)		
Address		
Telephone Number		
Telephone Number Mobile		
Email Address		
Secondary Email Address		
Contact in case of emergency	Name, phone number and address:	
I hereby apply for prospective / full membership of the Oread Mountaineering Club, and confirm that I have read and promise to abide by its rules, respect its properties, and give due respect to the mountain environment	Yes / No	
Data Protection: I agree to my contact details being held by the Oread MC, shared with other paid up members and passed to the BMC to gain my third party insurance	Yes / No	
Participation Statement: We recognise that climbing and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions	Yes / No	
Signature		
Date		
Membership Type: Please tick relevant box		
Ordinary Member	£40.00	
Senior Member	£25.00	
Prospective Member	£25.00	
Joint Membership (Two people at the same address)	£65.00	
Senior Joint Membership	£42.00	
Joint Membership (One senior one ordinary)	£53.50	
Member with permanent address outside the UK. 50% of appropriate rate as BMC membership is not included.		

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