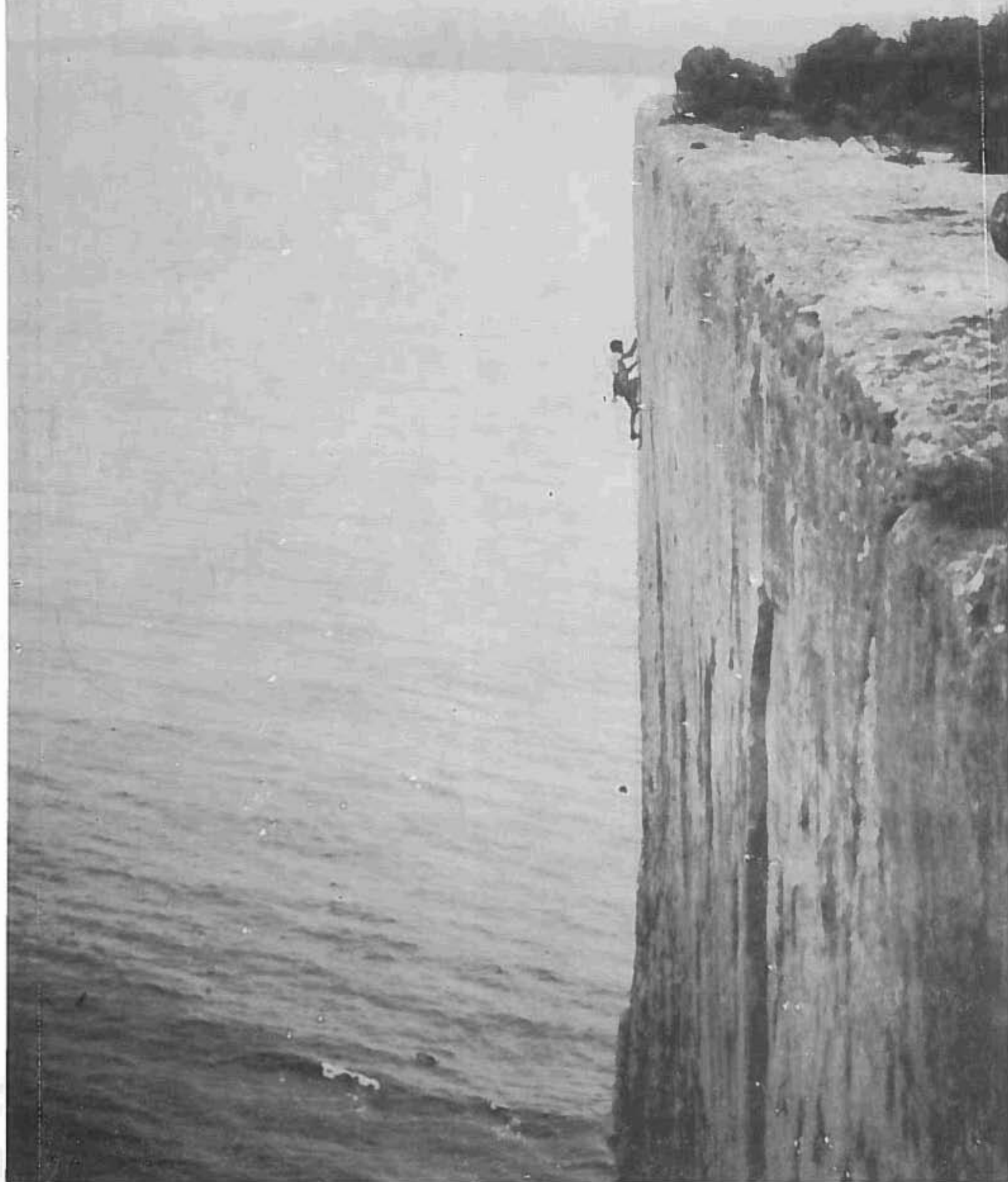


OREAD

1990-1992



OREAD

JOURNAL OF THE OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB 1992

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Cover: John Fantini climbing at Point Perpendicular, NSW, Australia. Photo: Bobby Gilbert

EDITORIAL

After a break of five years, we see the return of the Oread Journal. This bumper edition may not be quite as thick as previous editions, but due to superior desktop publishing techniques has the same number of words laid out in a smaller space.

I was all for having a journal made up of just text, and photocopyable illustrations (reproducing photographs accounts for more than half the cost), but I was assured by Oreads wiser than myself that the average member would be incapable of getting through the whole issue unless there was a picture on at least every other page, I believe the same is true for primary school children. To this end I have done my best to deliver a fully illustrated journal which I have to admit adds a lot to the publication.

There are a wide range of articles from 'Hot-ice' climbing to 'Hot-rock' climbing, from alpine epics (either the club has not managed any successful ascents, or they are too uninteresting to write about) to aid climbing, from classic walks to classic runs.

The articles on the whole are short and snappy and only a tiny bit of editing has been necessary. This means that there is a multitude of writing styles. I liked Pete Scott's terse front line reports from the Himalaya at one extreme, but also Dereck Burgess' tale of his trip to Scotland which reads a bit like Floyd on Climbing.

Finally there is an enlightening report from our very own Norman Lamont, Roger Larkam.

I would like to acknowledge everyone who has contributed in any way, most of whom are credited with their contributions. I would especially like to acknowledge Colin Hobday who did all the photographic reproduction, Katy Baker and Beryl Strike for illustrations, and Rob Tresidder for his influence in the Meet Reports section, either reporting meets himself, or bringing pressure to bear on others.

Finally, if you are too late to submit your article for this year's journal, please send it in nonetheless and I will ensure that it is published in the next edition.

Bobby Gilbert, 9th November 1992.

Llanberis Pass (John Salmon)

1990

LLANBERIS (without Christopher Robin)

Ian Spare had a great big inflatable Li-Lo

Ian Spare had a great big bright coloured tent

But Gary, poor Gary, he hadn't brought anything

Just about only, what others had lent.

Gary brought Dereck's and Dereck brought Gary's

But neither had brought a spare set of pegs.

When Roger said "Dereck, I've got the tent poles!"

Dereck suddenly went weak at the legs.

So they went to the Vaynol and sat next to someone

And Gary said "Please, will you shift over there."

While a guy at the bar (mistaken for urinal)

Didn't seem bothered at our long stare.

Gary climbed Daisy, Lord Trevor the Gates.

Tho' the weather not fit to uncover a leg.

Left Wall - impossible on more than eight sausages

And n'er let your toothbrush be used as a peg.

RL (after AAM)

Eskdale Bivouac Meet (Bobby Gilbert)

Summer 1990

A team of ten left the road at midnight and headed up the Esk valley towards the Sampson Stones.

Good progress was made for the first mile until Gary realised that the reason why his sack felt so light was that it had collapsed when he picked it up, and he was in fact only carrying the shoulder straps.

More fun was had when Kate, who had been staggering along for a mile and a half with twice her own body weight on her back and all the stability of an inverted weeble, toppled over to be pinned immovably to the ground by her own rucksack.

The Whittakers had economised on weight by not bringing any food, while the "ground to air Bissel" appeared to be carrying most of Sainsbury's under his

arms.

This year, Mike Moss had taken the precaution of wearing snow shoes for the walk-in so as to avoid disappearing into another bog.

It was therefore no surprise that the team finally blundered into camp at two o'clock. Some put up tents; some slept where they fell. It was a disarrayed bunch that was woken in the morning by Radcliffe demanding to know what was the sportsplan.

The weather ruled out climbing as any sort of serious activity so the team elected to walk to Great Gable.

Going up past Esk Buttress, it appeared that Gary was being humped by a giant grey caterpillar. On closer inspection it turned out to be the remodelled rucksack draped over his shoulders.

On reaching Gable, Radders decided it would be bracing to climb a VS in a rainstorm. The rest of us were content to photograph such madness.

The original idea had been for a few of us to get to the top of Napes Needle. The summit was really only big enough for four, so it was with some alarm that we finally hoisted the ninth man to balance precariously on top.

Now, it had been quite hard to get nine people on top of the Needle, but with the addition of three ropes and countless slings all interwoven through belays and bodies the only likely way down appeared to be to lift the summit block off by helicopter and transport it complete with climbers to Wasdale Head where further assistance might be provided with the aid of a machete.

However a major disentanglement was completed and the A team went on to do Needle Ridge while the B team set off homeward along the corridor route over Scafell Pike.

The ground to air Bissell got quite distraught when he realised that the way to his tea lay over the highest point in England, but Radcliffe showed himself to be made of sterner stuff, running all the way from the top of Great Gable to the top of the Pike, leaving a line of panting climbers behind him.

The teams eventually re-united at the stones where owing to an accident earlier in the day, bog roll was now being traded at 10p a sheet.

As supper was prepared, the teams who had felt so smug at having such small sacks the night before, now saw the down side of travelling light.

The Burgess/Bissell team found they had only brought enough petrol to boil half a cup of soup but eventually prepared their meal with the aid of three different stoves and half a dozen borrowed saucepans.

Fortunately, everyone seemed to have brought an adequate amount of wine so the evening took on a distinctly mellow flavour the climax of which was the "Party Animal" collapsing to the floor, knocking drinks over everyone, attempting to sit up again "before anyone noticed" only to collapse in the other direction with similarly spectacular results.

Eventually people drifted off to bed to lie watching the stars, listening to the wind in the high mountains, the stream trickling past, the sheep bleating on the hillside and the "Party Animal" blundering about being sick.

On Sunday, it rained so we all went home.

BG

Lundy Meet

September 1990

Letter to the Editor:

Sir

I write as the warden of Lundy to enquire whether your club is aware of the lack of competence which was displayed by some of your members during a recent stay here. I hope that by highlighting the more extreme instances, repetition can be prevented. We have always sought to avoid any untoward happenings on the island.

The prime concern has been the standard of ropework as epitomised by the antics of one of your more philistine members. I believe he was called 'deckchair' Stoogess by the others.

I understand that his performance included everything from embarking on leading a route without tying on or taking the rope with him, to squatting vainly at the bottom of the Albacore slab, unable to tie on and follow as he had allowed the wind to blow the rope end away across the cliff.

This really is quite dangerous especially for one shown prone to being caught by an incoming wave, calf deep in sea water. To his credit he has now it seems learnt to tie on using a figure of 8 knot (we have noticed that climbers here have been using this system for many years. Is this not normal?) Do you have any others in your club just emerging from a time warp?

Other relatively minor episodes are worthy of brief note. Some of the members brought no food with them but

instead of using our shop persisted in scrounging from others. One in particular was noticed. From the comments of others this was his first experience on Lundy. They seemed to think it quite remarkable that he had made it at all.

Mike and Bobby (I think they are both men) on the other hand used the week as a gourmet opportunity. Maybe it assists them when climbing grade 6a in a gale. I hope so. We really do see a variety of visitors but it was a concern to watch this group.

A young archaeologist type nearly set fire to his tweed jacket while learning to light a primus. Would it be worth your older members trying to instil a more correct approach in these matters?

Yours faithfully
Brig. A.G.T. Smart

Northumberland (Chris Radcliffe)

June 1991

Saturday saw my introduction to Northumberland sandstone at Kyloe.

The main conclusion that Tony and I came to was that it gets a lot harder as soon as you put a rope on. Everytime we roped up we either failed or had a desperate time; soloing we were unstoppable.

In the afternoon we moved on to Kyloe in the Woods where we were joined by mad man Mattock, wild eyed and staring after curing his hangover with a white line nightmare from Newcastle on his motorbike.

At first glance K-in-the-W looks green dark and horrible. On closer inspection, it is green dark and horrible - with superb climbing on it.

Sunday we went to Bowden Doors where Tony and I decided to have a desperate time on Overhanging Crack and so roped up.

After a joint total of 5 retreats, we both finally managed to swim the last 376 moves (3 feet of climbing) to the top.

Tony then went on to show what a star he is by soloing the first 15 feet of a HVS, deciding that it was horribly undergraded and that he could move neither up nor down. He was however quite comfortably ensconced hanging from a large jug on a wall that could only have overhung by about 30 degrees.

So ignoring the jokes about feeling really pumped (we all know Tony is invincible), I took a couple of photos before throwing up some gear. The rope was received well enough, but maybe I should have removed some of his rack before throwing up his bandolier. Tony's

arms seemed to stretch another 6 inches as he caught the thirty or so runners, and I had to admit that, on consideration, I too was baffled as to "what the hell" he was going to do with two No 4 friends in a finger crack.

Having arranged a few bits of gear, he attempted the move again (showing great spirit, since it says in the book that the route is E6 if you take ten minutes gearing up at the crux while hanging from one arm). But, in the end, gravity got the better of him.

We were successful on a whole string of VS 5as (whatever that means) which looked about E4 but actually had superb holds on them. Radcliffe was heard to say how useful this was when he was hit by a cloudburst halfway up.

The evening saw the completion of a seven man hacky, after about three hours of trying, and the game of gladiators reached its climax with a total of six people juggling. Jude was asked if we were part of a circus, but replied no, we were just a bunch of clowns.

BG

Borrowdale (Roger Larkam)

July 1991

This was a well attended meet with representation from almost all sections of the club.

Unfortunately it was a popular weekend with everyone else so the campsite was crowded and noisy. However I was actually woken by a stentorian voice from Rock's tent admonishing "Turn that radio off - now." This was however successful in suppressing the anti-social irritant.

Saturday morning brought waves of rain in from the SW which gave most of us an excuse to lie in.

The more determined mountain men headed off for the hills clad in waterproofs. Other less hardy souls sought the flesh pots in Keswick. After a morning spent festering, Roger, Richard and I headed off for a classic scramble - Ashness Ghyll, an exciting waterfall climb.

This was quickly disposed of and the improving weather sent us scurrying along to Shepherd's Crag where we launched onto an over ambitious project for my current state of fitness - The Bludgeon.

I grunched my way to the top of the pinnacle beneath a radically overhanging headwall and then felt the need for pro, so placed a Friend in a hole. This however proved to be the vital hold with the result that even tenuous contact with the rock was not maintained and as the Friend

pulled anyway, a spectacular plummet followed which silenced the crowds on neighbouring Little Chamonix.

After this time consuming failure, we joined Mike Wren and Reg Squires with their lads who were climbing more amenable routes nearby.

Once again I was nearly sandbagged on a short route appropriately named The Grasp. My companions having placed some tenuous HBs below the crux offered me the lead. After the earlier frustrations, I fired the crux only to find myself on a steep wall without any pro. Scott and Fidler on a neighbouring route were probably even more gripped than I was listening to my anguished wimpering.

Such frailties are unknown to our President and his troupe of jugglers who finally forsook the umpteenth game of Hacky Ball and headed for some E point test pieces on the Falcon Crag.

Everyone seemed to have had a fulfilling day one way or another and joined an early evening convivial gathering at the Scafell, until too much beer on an empty stomach dictated a return to the camp site.

Sunday was another pleasant day and parties headed for classics on Shepherd's and Goat while I dragged Richard to inspect Grange Crag - a jungle location known mainly to the local hard men.

The do-able routes were overgrown while the best lines were unprotected and rather hard. Eventually we headed for a more traditional venue, Black Crag, where the Squires/Wren team were in action. Raindrop proved a fine super directissima and aptly named as we got up just as the first drops fell.

Altogether an excellent weekend both for the climbing and a comprehensive and sociable Oread meet.

CJR

Derbyshire Amble (Colin Hobday)

April 1991

Monyash at 10 on a dismal Sunday morning. A crowd of Oreads massed together in a small layby on the edge of the awakening village.

I was lucky and was smoothly directed into a tight space between a crumbling wall and Rusty's dream machine. As I emerged into the rain the drone of Welbourn's voice could already be heard above the general chatter and the grating of numerous gear boxes as others not so fortunate had to park elsewhere.

Our meet leader, Colin Hobday, realising that the Sun God had deserted him for once, was explaining to Welbourn that the climatic conditions in Monyash and

Tenerife were bound to be different on some days of the week.

A few minutes later over 30 Oreads set off along the Taddington Road at a cracking pace. The drizzle was forgotten as friendships were renewed and Colin's annual walk took on its true significance as a great social occasion.

No-one bothered about the route, not for a mile or so at least and then Ernie Phillips (for whom a mile now needs a lot more effort than in those halcyon days when he was dancing across the crags), expressed with some concern "I think Colin's going the wrong way." The second time he said it, Ken Hodge got out his map. "You're right Ernie" he replied. "We've gone at least a mile past the turn."

John was onto this information like a rat out of a pump. "You're bloomin' wrong Hobday" he bellowed down the road, his voice echoing across the rainswept fields. No-one heard him, except for Ken, Ernie, Margaret and me; the rest of the Oread were at least 80 yards away and walking into a stiff wind. The four of us stepped back to protect our ears as Welbourn bellowed three more times. Ken and Ernie turned and in the true Oread tradition of every man for himself, proceeded to climb over the nearest roadside gate - in the general direction of our first objective, Deepdale.

John and I ran after the others until eventually John was close enough to be heard. Welbourn scanned each face in turn as the hooded figures turned towards us. John was looking for one face in particular, the meet leader's. Colin was not there. "We thought he was at the back with you" said Uschi.

Twenty minutes later we had crossed the fields of High Low and at the 1034' contour caught up with our meet leader and George and Janet Reynolds. Welbourn, who along with Ruth had recently returned from a two week working holiday restoring Dibidil bothy on the island of Rhum was by now subdued. The rain stopped as the whole party descended beside Over Wheal and then down the dirty muddy ravine known as Deepdale.

The owner of the ice cream van on the Buxton road was obviously a born optimist or else he'd heard a different forecast to the rest of us!

At Monsal Head the drizzle had returned in earnest and I felt sorry for a group of Japanese defying the wind and rain to photograph the mist shrouded but still beautiful dale.

The pub at Little Longstone was even more crowded than the Monyash lay-by,

so most of us spent our lunch hour in the beer garden sheltering from the wind and the occasional shower and passing round Ken and Doreen's excellent photographs of their recent alpine holiday.

Tony and Freda ordered a pub lunch but sadly it still hadn't arrived over an hour later, so they had to give it a miss.

On the steep ascent beside the woods up to Sheldon from Ashford, the sun came out in all its glory and soon the hillside was littered with gear as many people took off wet weather clothes.

It was a brief respite however and fifteen minutes later even the finest Berghaus gear was having a severe test as the driving rain settled in for the last few miles of what had been another classic Hobday walk.

GG

Nocturnal Wanderings... And Climb? (Pete Amour)

It has to be said that all the party were late for the rendezvous with the exception of C Russell Esq., who rather foolishly believed the newsletter and did walk from the Yorkshire Bridge to the watering hole at the Ladybower Hotel. Silly boy! Having been given a tightener by Rusty but not a drink, the insomniacs comprising Mike and Simon Wren, Rusty, Rock Hudson and Peter and Robert Amour left the pub at kicking out time to stumble their way onto Derwent Edge.

The consensus prior to the meet was to bivvy at some point in the circuit. I decided that this should be Abbey Brook but some of the group started to make whimperings about this being too far or "I'm tired".

With a view to ending the earache, I headed the group towards Far Deep Clough but only to find the stream pitifully dry. The original bivvy venue was now again on target and to add to the interest, a mile of Turk's heads was thrown in, which Hudson thoroughly enjoyed.

The doss, although brief was comfortable apart from the poly bag brigade who deafened all the local fauna.

The return leg of the journey was via the lower section of Abbey Clough, Derwent and Ladybower reservoirs, ending at the pub car park. On noting the effects of the night, it was mutually agreed that an hour or two on Stanage to end the foray would be an over indulgence. Instead the comforts of home were sought.

PA

Fred Phillips' Train Race

Sadly, Fred did not beat the train this year!

A well attended meet of starkly contrasting weather. The weather was fine on Saturday for the race in which four Oreads ran and Alan Ames convincingly beat the train in a time of 1h38. Sunday was very wet and dictated low level walking. Next year Fred is hoping to race (against) horses and mountain bikes.

RT

Bullstones (Jack Ashcroft)

December 1990

Horton-in-Ribblesdale was under siege by diabolical weather which crept up imperceptibly: rain, then snow and the final assault - gale force winds.

We rather casually supped our late Friday evening pint in the Golden Lion - and by Saturday morning we were in command of the village! From the railway station to Dub Cote Barn, a hut pleasantly situated on the southern slopes of Pen-y-Ghent - when you can see the view. A snow blizzard raged all day Saturday.

We intended travelling north by rail to Dent for a walk back over the tops. The Station Master completely put paid to such ideas by commenting that the six-in-the-morning train had gone north and "not been heard of since. If I were you, I'd forget it, go to the pub, get drunk and funk it."

We walked out into the storm after the "OMC Waiting Room Conference 1990" for a second breakfast at the cafe with the thought "all self respecting mountaineers enscourge to a bar in weather like this." And so, that was about it.

An Irishman, a Scotsman and fourteen Englishmen spread at various times between Dub Cote Barn, the Golden Lion, Horton cafe, the Crown Hotel and the station waiting room. We learnt later in the afternoon that the morning train returned from the Bleamoor tunnel entrance - mission abandoned.

A few significant points. One car made the barn on the Friday. Three cars took up forced positions halfway up the lane in snowdrifts. Three more cars remained mobile in the village. Come to think of it, were there fifteen people on the meet or eighteen? We will never know. Anyway the bacon butties were delicious, the chips were crisp and the mushroom & tomato omelettes delectable. Strategic planning came into question over the dominoes.

All in all it was a noble effort in the prevailing weather conditions and a tactical coup by the Lancastrians - for

Meet Reports

those familiar with the area. Who will have the courage to lead the 1991 meet? Will it get above base camp? It might be in the hands of the joker station master and his ghost operator!

Anon

Black Rocks

December 1990

The Wednesday before the Wednesday before Christmas seemed a long way from the Yuletide festivities, but only before I got into the Gate.

There was a huge number of Oreads and friends quaffing and jawing and an impressive number who had actually done something before arriving.

There was the usual stack of bikes outside and some had made their way from Black Rocks on foot. The rock was bone dry and in perfect condition for climbing.

The temperature was low so not many lingered for more than one route. Although there was a lot of snow lying especially on the High Peak trail, none of it had found its way onto the rocks.

RT

Memories of an Arran Trip

Drinking Bunnahabhain.

Walking with two very heavy rucksacks two miles to the campsite. Not finding the best non-line on the Rosa slabs.

Drinking Bunnahabhain.

Cycling to Whiting Bay in boiling sun and lying on the beach with a Cornetto; returning to Brodick via the cobbled beach on King's Cross point - these hired 3 - speed bikes are just as good as ATBs!

Getting lost on an E1 half way up an 800ft. crag and having to down climb. Drinking more Bunnahabhain.

A beach barby complete with burnt sausages, punch and glorious sunset. Nearly running down two hikers while not being drunk in charge of a tandem. Graham rubbing in "Honey Bronze" sunscreen every day to make himself look "highly desirable".

Being light at 10.30 p.m.

Having another sup of Bunnahabhain.

Always having to walk for a minimum of two and a half hours before being able to climb.

Basking on a stance in T-shirt and shorts, chatting to a Scots team who had done Pointfive Gully three weeks earlier.

A last tot of Bhumnnadhrbhainmdh.

Falling asleep at the campsite and only making the last ferry with seconds to spare.

Deliberately posting a postcard on the

island only to find the recipient received it with a Glasgow postmark.

TW

Cloggy Bivvy (Bobby Gilbert)

May 1991

Well what were this meet's essentials? Did "Cloggy" mean hard climbing at any price? Or did it mean Cloggy at any price? How vital was the bivouac or bivouacs?

Ten of us assembled in the Vynol Arms on Friday evening. Argument produced no consensus. In the end nine of us walked up to the Clog and bivouaced while one prospective member preferred the doubtful comfort of the President's car at Hafodty Newydd.

Three took tokenism to extremes and walked down in the morning. The remaining six made a traditional late start, found the boiler in the summit cafe out of order and failed to persuade our travelling plumber to step into the breach.

We descended the Pyg Track and came back over Crib Goch and Crib y Ddysgl. Radders, following the absent meet leader's instructions to the letter bathed in Llyn Du'r Arddu twice as penance for sleeping in a tent on a bivvy meet.

The descenders rescued their wet weekend with a mountain day on the South Buttress of Tryfan followed by the inevitable girdle of Carreg Hyll Drem in Sunday's rain.

RT

Cratcliffe

July 1991

From small beginnings in the Greyhound car park, the party grew to record (almost - 20) in the pub.

Those who had braved the (alleged) rain in Derby cycled dry to Cratcliffe in fruitless pursuit of the Moss stoked Larkam tandem.

After a few damp boulders, the climbers chased the leading group on a pub-wheel, via Bonsall moor to the Miner's Arms followed by a whizz down the via Gellia to the Boat Inn at Cromford.

From there "some" did cycle home; others found mysteriously materialising cars and trains!

GT

Golden Oldies (Doreen Hodge)

Twenty members attended the meet undeterred by the terrible weather forecast which needless to say didn't materialise and fine weather was enjoyed for the whole weekend.

Saturday saw the majority heading off to

Beddgelert from where they tramped back to the hut via Cwm Bychan, Llyn Dinas and the Arran col.

A thoroughly enjoyable evening was spent at the Plas-Y-Coed Hotel thanks to Gregson's recommendation in the hut log.

An early knock on the door on Sunday morning heralded the arrival of John Dench after an absence of 19 years.

We parked at Hafod Tan-Y-Graig just off the Gwynant road with the intention of walking to Cnicht by way of Llyn Edno but one hour into the walk disaster struck when Janet (Ashcroft) slipped and fractured her wrist. After on the spot first aid, she retreated to Bangor Hospital helped down the Afon Llyn Edno by Jack, Ken and myself.

The rest of the party continued to the top of Cnicht and had an enjoyable day.

DH

Bullstones (Brian West)

December 1991

Twelve of us waited in vain for Radders at the White Lion in Trawsfynydd; but he was in the warm counting his air miles as we emerged into the coldest night this winter.

Our laughter was muted when the fork lift truck man fell in the stream; it could be my turn next.

At one in the morning we found enough level pitches in the warm forest to stretch our bags and ourselves and luxuriate on a thick carpet of pine needles.

Unusually for a Bullstones meet, Beattie had arranged a lot of climbing for us - most of it over fences, but also some pleasant scrambling through the gorge, Rhaeadr y Cwm.

No-one had been in bed with Madonna which may explain how he took his turn in the river with a spectacular reverse somersault with tuck.

About this time 'owd man started his reprise that we were going round in circles. He remained unconsoled until Sunday when we walked in a straight line. The tussocks took their toll and only the phantom lady got to the bothy before dark.

Cefngarw was cold, very cold. Alcohol and shouting over the racket of the woodcutter's stove warmed things a little; perhaps wisely, the hard stuff was taken sparingly.

Sunday was as perfect as Saturday. In the best Bullstones weather ever, we walked below a line of pylons and past old mine levels to return to the mysterious mundanity of midday Trawsfynydd.

RT

Black Rocks

December 1991

It was very cold and there was verglas here and there on the north side of the rocks.

There were lots of Oreads hiding in the dark and ascents were made of several routes.

One traditionalist took the break with tradition even further by changing crag as well as pub. He enjoyed good, if lonely conditions on Harborough.

Eighteen helpings of pie were consumed at the Rising Sun by fewer than eighteen Oreads. More than 30 supped various ales. RT

Fontainebleau (Bobby Gilbert)

Easter 1992

(or From pedigree to claret and back)

By a miracle of modern transport and sheer good luck, the team assembled on Good Friday at Cuvier, arguably the best of Fontainebleau's bouldering areas. Soon after, climbing began in earnest, or was it Jacques?

A while later the team retired with sore fingers, tired arms and various degrees of success and hurt pride.

Time to stock up on wine, beer, cheese and bread and retire to the campsite at Milly-la-Forêt.

Once fortified the Flying Scotsman produced frizbees, juggling balls, a volleyball, a cricket bat and proceeded to tire out a vast international ensemble of children.

The Manager wobbled around the campsite on his monocycle, the Artist produced an array of fine watercolours while the Wine Hunter and the Wine Drinker consumed wine to show the Apprentice how it is done. Thoroughly enjoyable.

The rest of the bank holiday went in a similar manner. Get up, recover from the night before, go bouldering and have fun. Different areas were visited: Trois Pinions, Cuisinieres and L'Elephant, so named because it has a 25ft. high boulder, which is the spitting image of an elephant. Imaginative people the French; I'm surprised they haven't eaten it.

The holiday was a great success and proves what a fun area Fontainebleau is. It is ideal for a long weekend break or as a stopping off point on the way to or from the the Alps or Provence. Those who did not come missed a good meet.

The team: Manager - Bobby Gilbert, Artist - Kate Baker, Flying Scotsman - Brian Mattock, Wine Hunter - Gail Male, Wine Drinker - Gil Male, Apprentice -

Joanne Male.

GIM

Hoy (Michael Moss)

Whitsun 1992

The four intrepid members (Mike Moss, Bryan Mattock, Graham Weston and Kev Allsobrook) left Derby on Friday night and after twelve hours in a car, two hours on one boat and half an hour on another, they arrived at the bothy in Rackwick Bay at about 9 p.m. on Saturday night.

A fairly peaceful night was spent there with three other climbers. The morning saw them rise before us, but no matter. Eventually we made our way across the moor to find the Old Man standing 450 feet out of the sea, but looking more of 750 feet.

The path to the bottom could be described as "interesting" at best but "terminal" seems a better word.

Once at the bottom a wait followed while the other climbers vacated the first pitch.

Bryan and Mike set off first, while Kev and I followed after. Kev led the first pitch and told me I was leading the second (crux) pitch. This was to prove harder than I had anticipated and saw me pulling on wooden wedges and tatty old slings.

Kev made light work of it but expressed a strong desire for the toilet. The next two pitches are climbed on rock of dubious nature and amongst vomiting sea birds.

The first pitch is a lovely square corner and leads to an airy position on top. All four of us spent a short while on top before the abseil down. This was achieved with little incident, bar Kev's swing as a jammed rope freed.

A pleasant stroll back over the moor to the bothy and a celebratory meal rounded the day off well. Now all we had to do was get home.

GW

Walk/Climb The Edges (Gil Male)

June 1992

At 8am the sun shone warmly on the growing assembly of Oreads and Wigan lads chatting on Heathy Lea terrace ready for the start of the cragathon.

At 8.07 sharp General Gil appeared, at the door, breakfast cup in hand, to address his troops and assign car dispositions. By 8.30 the convoy was under way.

The main party, 21 in all, set off to Stanage. After climbing a good selection of routes, including Congo Corner, Mississippi Buttress Direct, and Dark Continent, the team toiled on in the heat

of the day to join Nick and Mike on the Burbage Edges where routes such as Knights Move, Byne's Crack and Fox House Flake were pulled in. Andre at this point disappeared into the heather whilst attempting to cartwheel wearing a full rucksack. It was clearly time to go to the Fox House.

This proved to be a good rendezvous for the team, also joined by Pete, Helen and baby Sarah in car, and Brian West on bike. Drinking proceedings were interrupted by the arrival of a very lame Alan who had fallen down a rabbit hole and badly sprained his ankle, within sight of the pub. It is indeed terrible what thirst can do to a man. Ice by the glassful, and compression were duly administered to the affected limb under Gail's supervision, and Nick's van was pressed into ambulance service to take Alan on a mercy dash to the Chequers for some more medicine and ice.

This also turned out to be another splendid team rendezvous, where the party was joined by Tony Hinks on his bike, and Roger, Phil and Hannah Larkam on their tandem. The newly opened hillside beer garden was used for entertaining displays of beer throwing, all terrain pushchairing, cripple hopping and dribbling by various participants.

Routes done on Froggat and Curbar included Brown's Eliminate, Avalanche Wall and PMC 1. Beers drunk included Wards; though I believe Hannah abstained in order that there might be one sober crew member for the wobble home.

The party by this time was fairly spread out. A number of routes were done on Gardoms where the party was met by a topless Derek Burgess and Ron Chambers. Various bits of the team straggled on to Birchens where, in the pleasant early evening, Orpheus Wall, Topsail and Sail Buttress, among others were ticked off.

It was then on to the Robin Hood for a relaxing sprawl and debriefing on the front yard after the hard day. The day was hardest for those who walked the full distance. I believe that Steve Bashforth managed an energy conserving nap at every crag, and with Simon did an extra route at Froggat rather than descend to the Chequers - very commendable.

At the Robin Hood, young Joanne Male, who had spent the day with grandparents, made an appearance and was no doubt bemused by the sight of climbers drinking pints of milk. (I jest not - 50p a pint.)

MW

First Aid

An account of my introduction to aid climbing

by Gary Burgess

MALHAM MAIN OVERHANG

This had to be easy. A line of closely pladed shiny bolts leading to the main overhang of Malham. It was decided that due to my complete lack of dangling experience, I would take the first pitch.

I was sure I'd make quick work of such an easy stretch of cheating. An hour and a half later an obviously bored Gilbert was still hollering advice concerning my use of short and long cow udders (I think he means cow's tails, Ed.) as his partner made agonisingly slow upward movement.

Eventually the stance was reached and Bobby followed like the well oiled climbing machine that he once was. (what do you mean "once was"? Ed.) We then hauled the large sack up after us as we were pretending to be in Yosemite.

Bobby flowed across the roof and around the lip pausing only for photographs leaving me to stare in awe and fearful contemplation at both the roof and his mastery of the sport.

Next went the sack with our litres of liquid, hammocks, bivvy gear etc. (you never know). This swung alarmingly away from the crag into the void, then back in towards the clinging sports climbers, no doubt on the verge of a successful red point. They fell like bar skittles, screaming something about outdated dickheads – this was starting to be fun.

The roof itself proved less frightening than the contemplation of it. I wobbled across trying not to swing upside down, regretting that I had been so casual when tightening my harness, to join Bobby.

We sat and munched our sandwiches as the sun went down. A fitting end to a memorable day (traditional).

GOREDALE MAIN OVERHANG

The ascent of Malham fired our enthusiasm for this developing branch of the sport and later the same winter Gilbert was back in the North with more horizontal escapades on the agenda. First was to be Goredale Main Overhang.

We sneered in a sort of manly way at the sheets of ice covering the first pitch. Well Bobby sneered manfully – he was used to such appalling conditions.

After a couple of hours of repulsion and attempts to clear the ice with a nut key however, I was eventually dragged off to Ingleton climbing wall. Myself, I was keen to stay and struggle on into the night – no wonder he can't get up the North Face of the Matterhorn with that attitude.

KILNSEY DIRECTISSIMA

This was easily the most enjoyable of my dangling experiences. This time Bobby sat on the perch and I was allowed to lead the roof while he encouraged me with calls such as "It'll be dark soon" every five minutes or so.

A change in the otherwise snails progress was instigated by a peg making a loud bang and showering me with rust as I swung onto it – bloody dangerous if you ask me; I made remarkably fast progress to the next shiny new "sports" bolt.

The abseil from the lip provided excellent sport as a huge rope swing into space from the foot of the crag.

As the sun dropped, casting a pink haze around us, Bobby remarked what a fitting end to a stimulating day it was.



Fat Hippos On The Droites

by Tony Walker

Standing in a telepherique queue has never been my favourite pastime but at least we were near the front this time. All the usual people were there: immaculately dressed French, hyperactive Spanish and Italians, the sober Germans and toward the back Bobby and myself, the antithesis of continental flair and liveliness.

The previous night on the campsite we had been forced to reveal our sportsplan. Actually plan was probably the wrong word as it implies a degree of forethought and organisation which I'm not sure we possessed.

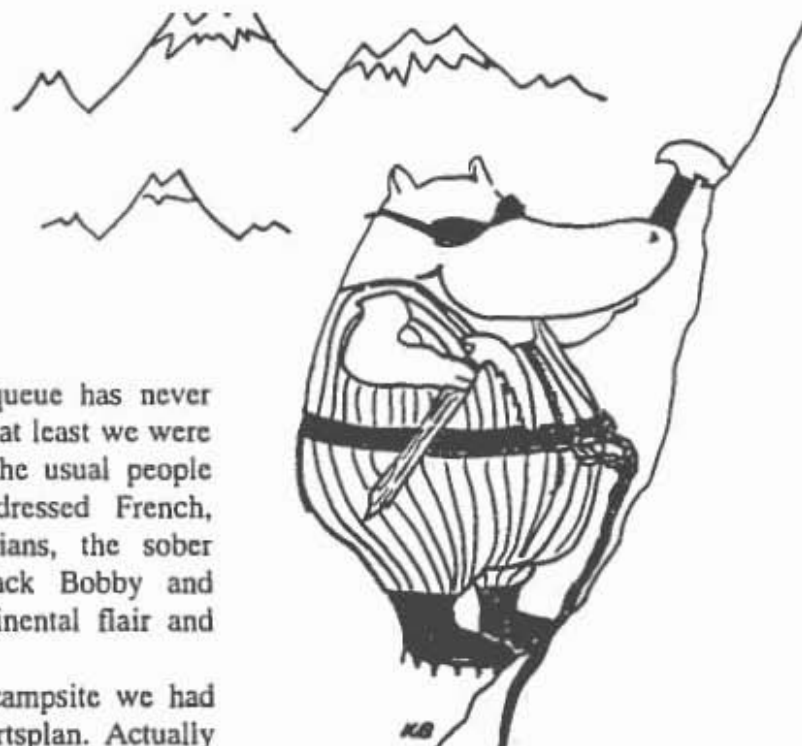
We had been toying with the idea of attempting the Droites for several days but actually saying this in open conversation meant we were now committed to trying the thing. No wimping out or we would face public humiliation on the campsite, or so it seemed at the time.

Still, we were sure it would be no problem really, okay it was fairly long but there were only really a couple of hard pitches, the guidebook said so, and it had looked in perfect nick the day before yesterday. Three days up and down – piece of piss really, what were we worried about? Campsite confidence indeed!

Stepping off the 'frique and bounding across what should have been hard frozen puddles revealed several things at once: that night the freezing level had been rather high and also that I now had wet feet. Despite the soggy white stuff we were walking through we were both sure that the route would be okay.

Sliding down the ice-cream slopes onto the glacier lent a further air of doubt as to the condition of the route, but the usual blinkered vision carried us across the glacier toward the bottom of the route.

Gearing up we began to realise that the overnight rise in temperature had had a marked effect on the condition of our intended route. The magnificent introductory ice streak of two days before had been reduced to a small stream



with the odd scoop of ice-cream clinging to the granite either side – like Scotland most winters.

The most likely alternative seemed to be a gully system to the right so without further ado we set off up the first slushy snow slope. The bergschrund at the top wasn't too bad and after no discussion whatsoever, a bit like most presidential decisions, Bobby set off up the ice groove above while I belayed to nothing much of any consequence.

As seems to be a common feature of most ice routes the belay was reached after exactly 50m and I followed up the soft ice.

By now the groove was becoming an increasingly popular means of descent for most of the ice that previously formed the upper pitches. Fortunately we were still to one side of the fall line and from where we were we could even admire the wild beauty of the icy streams snaking down the face. However any such appreciation of the icy phenomenon was quickly replaced by less kind thoughts as I tried to lead across and was engulfed in a particularly heavy torrent.

To add a little variety to the situation a few odd lumps of granite decided to join in – one of which decided it liked my left shoulder and left a healthy bruise as a sign of affection. Bobby had much the same experience in crossing the groove and things looked even worse above. Still we were now out of the firing line and had a half reasonable belay.

Bobby was the first to dare to mention that it didn't look too promising above and that it

wouldn't be very pleasant to continue. I think he expected a big protest and something along the lines of "we must go on!". However my reply dispelled any such misconceived impression of my character and we were soon abseiling towards the glacier.

The retreat was rather tricky: diagonal abseils, loose rock and snagging ropes all helped to get the adrenalin flowing.

At this point Bobby performed a very unselfish act that helped – for me at least – to relieve the tension of the situation. After lecturing me on the value of having elastics on your gloves (I didn't have any) and the potentially serious situation you may find yourself in should you drop a glove on a major alpine route etc., etc., the elastic on Bobby's Dachstein broke and it was lost forever into the bergschrund.

After my laughter subsided I lent a rather embarrassed climbing partner my spare pair of gloves brought for just such an emergency.

Crossing the bergschrund aside, the rest of the retreat was rather orderly and uneventful, almost hinting at a slight degree of competence.

The glacier was by now very slushy and we plodded down in the heat of the afternoon sun. There was no hurry at all now – in fact we had another two days to get down – so we decided to stop off for some refreshments at a suitable looking boulder on the glacier.

Drinking tea and soaking up the rays soon dispelled thoughts of the failure and we both agreed that the right decision had been made under the circumstances (mutual wimpiness?). To be honest – despite a slightly guilty feeling –

lazing around amongst such magnificent scenery seemed an altogether pleasanter option than spending several days on a north face. In fact apart from the minor point of failing before we'd even really set foot on the route it had been a rather enjoyable day.

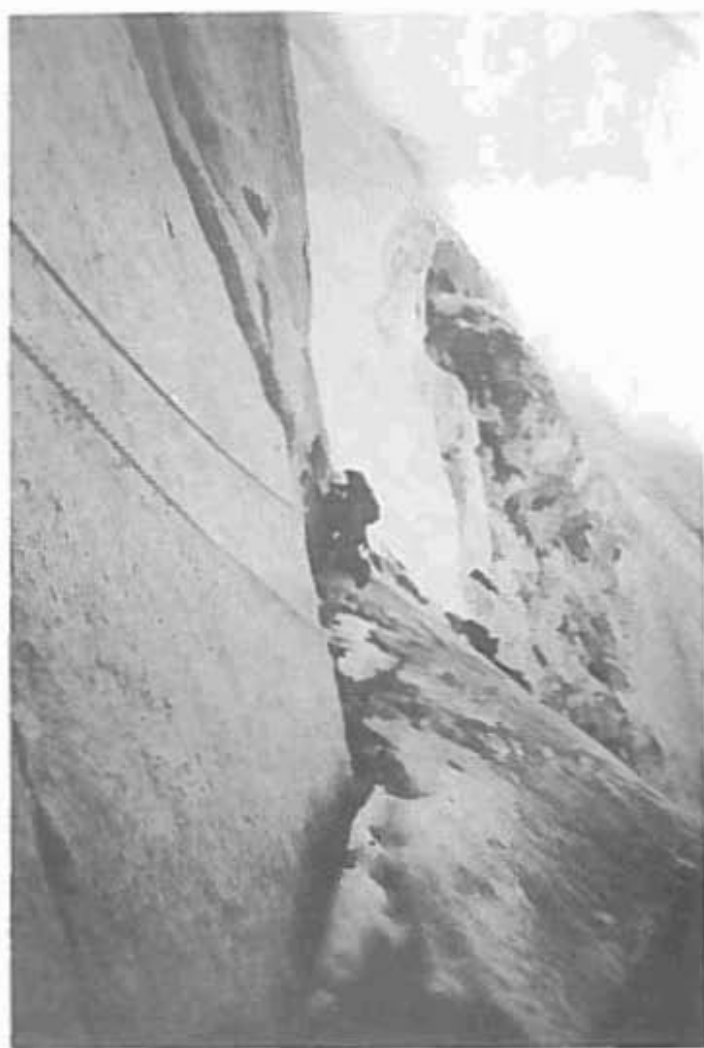
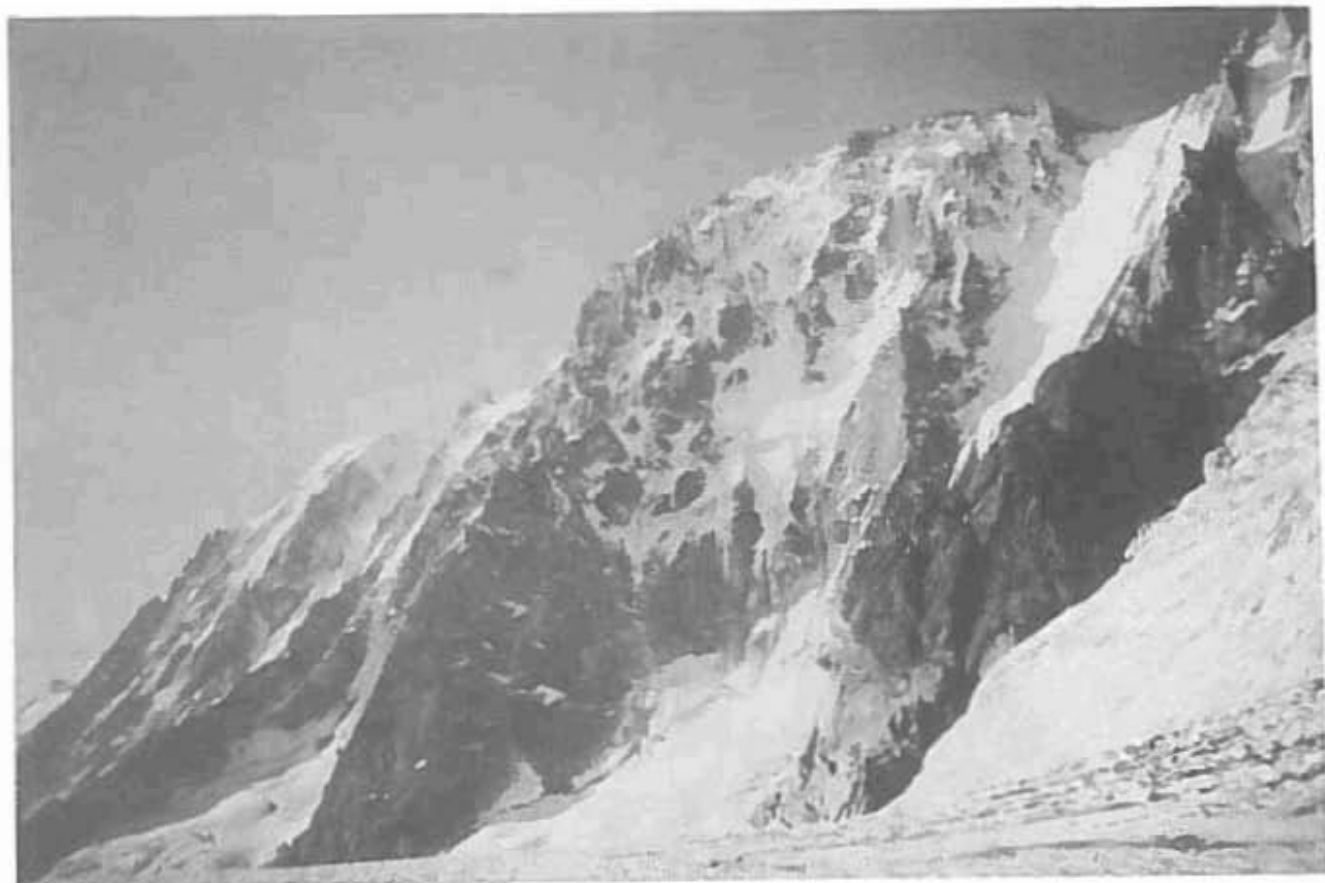
Top – The North Face of The Droites.

Bottom Left – Tony Traversing out of the couloir. On the wall in the background can be seen the remains of the initial ice streak.

Bottom Right – Tony descending towards the bergschrund. Glove lost at this point!

Photos – Bobby Gilbert







Top left - The Crux Pitch
Bottom - Spitzkoppe 1829m

Top right - Abseil descent

Spitzkoppe Rules O.K.

by Gwen Tresidder

Known as the "Matterhorn of Namibia", Spitzkoppe rises abruptly out of the flat semi-desert plains of Damaraland, the region once an ethnic homeland during the time of South African rule in Namibia.

Next to a small range of mountains, the Pontoks, Spitzkoppe stands alone, by far the most appealing, and the highest.

The night before our ascent we camped on the North side. The mountain is a coarse kind of orange/pink granite that takes on an amazing red hue in the sunset and sunrise. We watched the changing colour as we picked out our route for the following day. By night the mountain is a big dark shadow silhouetted by the stars of the clear winter skies.

We started at first light the next morning, in order to avoid climbing in the heat of the day. The mountain is unvegetated except for a few of the hardiest trees that grow between the rocks, so the ascent begins on the large granite slabs of the West face.

The route is marked by cairns but it is tempting just to forge ahead on a route you think you can see - until you come to an unscalable boulder or an impassable thorn tree.

About half way up the mountain we stopped and swapped our trainers for rock boots. Quite an airy scramble followed, not difficult, but with fatal consequences for a fall. This led us to a beautiful series of chimneys, some requiring elegant traditionalism, others more of a pot-holer's wriggle!

The chimneys went "through" the mountain and we emerged on the North West buttress. To reach the start of the climb it is then necessary to do a short abseil.

The first pitch scales a featureless rounded slab which frustrated the "pioneers" of the 1940s. After being defeated by the slab, they returned with a hammer, chisel and very few ethics, to cut series of steps. The climb is now graded according to which combination of steps, pulling on a sling, and standing on a shoulder you use. My partner, Brian, led the pitch.

Although I reckoned, in modern sticky boots, with such frictional rock, the slab wouldn't be a problem, it meant moving so far left that I didn't

fancy the swing. So I did it the "original" way.

I led through, onto the second pitch, a short, rounded, unprotectable crack, followed by a traverse.

Brian considers the third pitch the best so he insisted I led it. It was good. A short friction slab followed by an easy-angled crack (a bit rotten in places, but the face either side was solid). Until now we had been climbing in the shade, but the top of this pitch rounded a crest and I emerged to a belay in warm sunlight.

The fourth pitch, an easy-angled traverse, led by Brian, was supposed to be the crux, but perhaps that was a pre-sticky boots opinion as well!

The final pitch, which I led, I found more difficult. A real thrutch up a very narrow chimney until it became less steep and I could bridge across it.

"Spitzkoppe" means "pointed head" and the summit was very much a point. From it we could see and shout to our friends who had done the scramble route which goes to the summit ridge.

The view from the top was spectacular. Because the plains are so flat you can see for miles. From above they are a sort of grey-purple, the only vegetation being the blackened bushes that trace the courses of the dry rivers.

The descent is a couple of abseils and a scramble back through the chimneys. By this time the heat was shimmering and we were glad to get back to the car for some water.

Mountaineering in Namibia is relatively undiscovered. There are the well-known challenges that people come for such as Spitzkoppe and the Brandberg, but all around the country there are likely looking crags that have probably never been touched. Even on Spitzkoppe, we were the first ascent for over a month.

We signed the Spitzkoppe summit book making us about the 173rd ascent, a rather self-satisfied white idea that doesn't take into account the many barefoot Damara tribes-children that probably climbed it hundreds of years before the white man came to cut steps, in his single-minded desperation to reach the top.

The Bungy Jump

by Bobby Gilbert

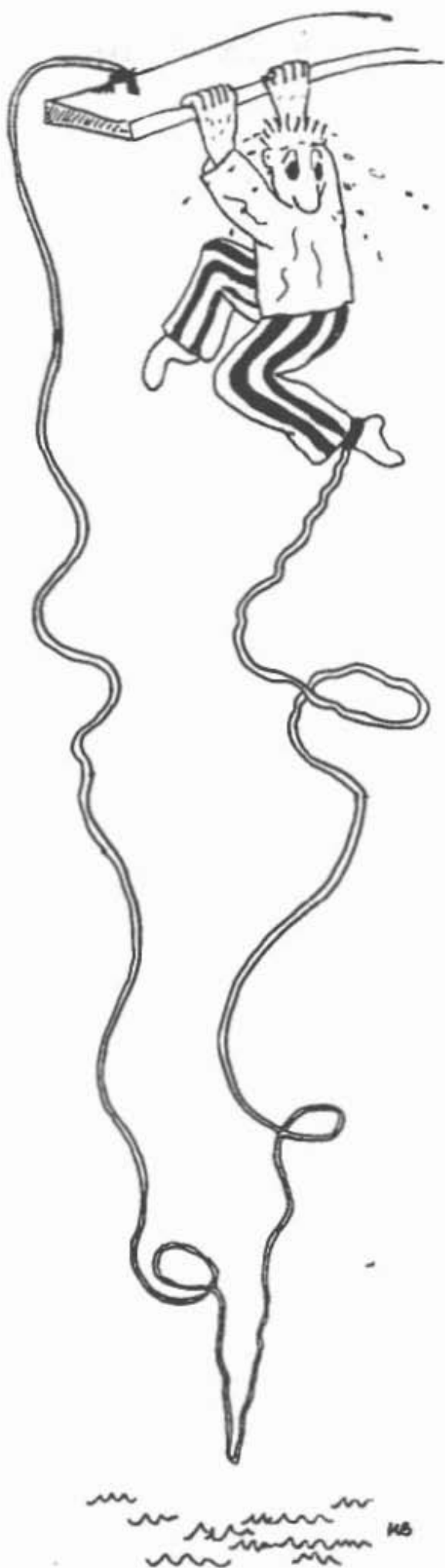
A bungy is a piece of elastic rope. To bungy is to tie a piece of elastic rope to your ankle and jump off a bridge or cliff one hundred and fifty feet into a ravine, free fall for ninety feet before the rope comes tight, stretches, and stops you a few feet above the river, at which point you go hurtling upwards on the stretch of the rope.

I approached my first bungy with a calm air of assured confidence. After all, I was a rock-climber, quite use to falling through the air and trusting to the mechanics of little bits of metal wedged into cracks to stop me hitting the ground. Jumping off with the rope attached to a large solid metal railing was going to be a cinch. Besides, my brother had once done it, and I'm not competitive but.....

I was weighed in then told to make my way to the end of a large piece of scaffolding sticking out over a cliff. I casually looked over the edge. Yes, that looked about a hundred and fifty feet, about the height of the sea cliffs at Pembroke. I wasn't particularly concerned. I was going to be casual, execute a perfect swan dive off the edge and coolly head down, Acapulco style.

I took a seat at the end of the platform. The two "jump technicians" were setting things up. First I had an ankle harness tied tightly to my feet, then the bungy rope, about two inches thick and made of hundreds of strands of what looked like knicker elastic, was clipped into the harness with a screw gate karabiner (Just the one...? Hey come on, you've fallen onto single karabiners before now). I looked along the elastic rope. It hung in a long loop off the end of the platform, down, then back up to where it was attached, again by a single karabiner (how strong are those things?), to a length of eleven mill. static rope (I wonder how old that is?) which ran over a pulley to a winch.

I was still assessing the quality of the belay when one of the "jump technicians" came



across to me.

"Now we've still got a load of checks to go through, but in a few minutes I'm going to say to you: 'Prepare to bungy!'. When I say that I want you to step calmly and confidently to the edge of the platform, stand with your feet together and look out towards the cliffs on the other side of the river. We will then count you down with the words 'Three, Two, One, Bungy!'. On the command, 'Bungy!', I want you to just topple forwards, don't jump, and fall outwards."

It all sounded straight forward enough. I was busy trying to get a better look at the drop. It really was a long way down to that river, but I couldn't really link the distance with what I was about to do.

About twenty seconds later...

"Prepare to Bungy!"

(Hey, that wasn't anything like a few minutes!) I hobbled to the edge and stood calmly looking at the drop. I still couldn't quite convince myself of what I was about to do.

"Three!"

(Pardon?..., Oh.... What's all the hurry about anyway?)

"Two!"

(Hold on, I'm still taking in the view.)

"One!"

(Oh well, just remember to be cool and graceful....)

"Bungy!!!"

I stretched my arms out and toppled forward, calmly and in control. Just as I over balanced I looked down. AAAAAH!!! I felt a massive surge of adrenalin. What the hell was I doing here?!? I'm not ready for this,

I've not had time to think it all out. LOOK AT ALL THAT DROP!! BLOODY HELL!!!!

Outwardly I was still calm and composed as I felt my feet part company with the platform and started on the longest leader fall of my life..... there was the river rushing up towards me..... Memories of jumping off the top diving board at the age of ten, because my older brother had done it, that's another fine mess you.... I'm still accelerating..... I've over turned and I can see the cliff rushing past.... I'm going faster and faster.... I'm not going to stop.... Surely I'm going to hit the river.... Eighty feet of free falling and I still can't feel the bungy rope coming tight. I shouted....

"F*****G H**L!!!"

Calmness and composure forgotten as the adrenalin level reached saturation point.

The rope comes tight with a massive jerk. I didn't expect it to be that hard. I'm slowing down rapidly as I come down to a few feet from the water, then suddenly I'm accelerating again, upwards! I hurtle up as the elastic rope catapults me high into the air, almost two thirds of the way up to the platform again, then back down, but now it's all fun, I know the equipment works and I'm enjoying myself swinging around as I bounce up and down on the end of the rope.

Slowly I'm lowered down on the winch whilst an inflatable raft comes out to collect me. Just as well. I don't fancy trying to tread water with both feet tied above my head. The blood is now starting to go to my head and I'm beginning to feel somewhat uncomfortable as I am finally lowered into the raft.

"How d'ya like it" asked the man in the boat.

"Oh it was OK; but I'm a climber. I'm used to doing that sort of thing."

Ice Station Solvay

by Rob Tresidder

We were all curled up in our bags in the cold pit at the bottom of the hut watching our breath sail into the warm high roof. All day the radio in the corner had crackled with more or less urgent messages – arcane signals of life in another world.

Suddenly...

"Allo Solvay Hutte. Allo Solvay Hutte. Bitte antworten."

I leaped out of my pit and struggled hurriedly to decipher the instructions on the red box which told which buttons to press in what order to transmit.

I heard my own voice, tense with drama, sounding like the chief engineer addressing the skipper on the bridge after a direct hit to the engine room in one of those interminable naval films from the Second World War.

The radio operator wanted to know how many we were and then advised that the forecast for the following day was very bad and we should descend as early as possible. "Over and out." Did I really say that?

The weather seemed pretty awful now and it would be worse tomorrow. Suddenly we were transformed from a slightly bored, just international, quintet who had been swapping yarns and jokes to wile away the long wait, into a closely knit group of men determined to fight to the bitter end for our survival.

Jan, from Czechoslovakia had already had one night in the hut before climbing alone to the summit and back in seven hours. Peter and Brett from Kendal were on the route they had come out to do. Bobby and I, along with numerous others, had found conditions on the North Face unpromising. The ice was very very hard and the snow was too fine and dry to stick.

On the North Face too little snow, on the Hornli ridge far too much, so our climb to the Solvay the day before had been slow and had felt insecure. We were holed up in the hut because the early morning weather had been so appalling; tomorrow, we were being told, would be even worse.

We rose early but not very early, kitted up in the hut and then emerged onto the tiny concrete terrace, half banked up with snow. I was

strangely glad to climb down off this, the scene of windswept nocturnal terrors on the journey to the bog, overhang ing the north face.

Some easy soloing guided by Jan avoided the hard pitches of two days before and then the abseils started.

My hands had been frozen for the first half hour and then all of a sudden the wind dropped, the sky cleared to give splendid panoramic views: Breithorn, Monte Rosa and then right round to the Dent d'Herens. The sun came out and we were buzzed by two inquisitive helicopters. The whole "epic" suddenly assumed a dream like quality. Had I been a victim of a kind of mass hysteria?

I thought back to other occasions when my judgement might have been interfered with by outsiders. On almost my first Oread meet, at Gardom's, I was warned off soloing a route by a senior Oread, later to be a President, with the advice: "I've seen Pete Holden back off that." I resented the interference but retreated in the belief that I was acting independently.

More recently a friend of long but infrequent experience expressed dismay that he had not been dissuaded by members of his new club from soloing the route he subsequently fell off. He seemed to me to be out of touch with "the ethics and etiquette" of our sport which have caused all of us at one time or another to guard our tongue even when confronted by dangerous bad practice.

In the afternoon and back in the security of the Hornli hut, the storm returned with increased ferocity.

A Gritstone Selection

Memories of early Bullstones meets and suggestions for alternative walks in the Peak.

by Footsore

It was 1953 and a young enthusiastic hill-goer wandered into Clulows on Iron Gate, Derby, following his equal enthusiasm for books – old and new. His eyes lighted on a Penguin Book, "Derbyshire and the Peak District" by Frederick C. Mutton. What better purchase, he thought, to develop his interest in the Peak District.

First published in 1939 – just three years before the inauguration of the Peak National Park... and there he read in the early pages of "wild and desolate moorlands, mountain streams, windswept hill-tops, thickly wooded valleys, peerless dales, famous rivers, old manor houses, churches as varied as the scenery and stone circles which still baffle the antiquarians".

The enthusiastic young hill-goer was to familiarize himself with most of this Derbyshire countryside in the ensuing years, much in the company of Oreads, though the crags seem to have been missed in Muttons vivid resumé of Derbyshire and its landscape qualities!

And so to 1992 and a somewhat older enthusiastic hill-goer wandered into W.H. Smiths on Far Gate, Sheffield, and there following his equal enthusiasm for books old and new, his eyes lighted on "The Alternative Pennine Way" by Brook and Hinchliffe. What better purchase, he thought to continue his interest in British hill going.

Turning the pages he read 'At one time we considered calling this walk "The Gourmets Pennine Way" and designing it accordingly, but we would not have got to the hills at all.' Something of the Oread spirit there I would say.

Having made my purchase, a glance at the magazine racks revealed the June 1992 edition of "The Derbyshire Countryside" with a photograph of Iron Gate, Derby, with Clulows just tucked in the corner! Our enthusiastic hill goer (EHG) saw a connection here; Muttons quote and the Derbyshire sections of Brook and Hinchliffe. Why not put it in an Oread context?

The Alternative Pennine Way commences in Ashbourne and the first five sections are from

Ashbourne to Marsden and basically take in the Eastern Edges in a northerly direction.

Another time and space change and it is a cold December weekend in the nineteen fifties and three youngish EHG's, caught a bus from Derby after work one Saturday morning and travelled to Bakewell, Another bus to Longshaw Gates and by two o'clock they were on their way over Carl Wark, Higgarr Tor, Stanage to Moscar, on a rather gloomy Saturday afternoon, bound for Bullstones Shooting Cabin on Howden Moors.

Before they had reached Wheel Stones it was dark and the aspect from Back Tor to Margery Hill was black as pitch. There was no doubting the navigational skill of the trio (who held the majority skill can best be unsaid, but it was he who now holds Honourary Membership and never uses map and compass!). And so down to Abbey Brook, back up to Howden Edge to Cut Gate. A moments discussion on the line for Bullstones and we were there. Six-thirtyish I would hazard a guess.

The cabin was up to capacity, with others on the meet having approached from various directions, not least from the Lady Bower Inn lunch time imbibing session, a regular pre-christmas venue by a certain element of the Club in those early Bullstones meets, followed by the afternoon amble up the reservoirs.

Sunday morning dawned misty with a frost covered moorland terrain. The walk back to Bamford was for one EHG painful to say the least. It was a lesson in the desirability of wool stockings with footwear. Definitely not nylon; blisters the feet too easily – or was it those tender young feet of the fifties!

That apart a jar of two of Roger's ale and more than ample beef sandwiches at the Ladybower restored energy to walk on, for transport back to Derby and Monday morning.

That was one of the first Bullstones meets attended by the fifties EHG's. Those pre-

christmas weekends on Bleaklow and Kinder merge happily together, usually starting on a friday night, bogtrotting over snow and frost covered moorland, sometimes misty, sometimes in bright sunlight.

Then what of Fred Muttons quote of "stone circles which still baffle the antiquarians"? Well baffled or not, to walk from the Youlgreave / Winster / Birchover area on Stanton Moor to Nine Ladies stone circle, on through Chatsworth Park to Baslow Edge and Froggatt Edge, where we find another stone circle; and so past Tegness Pinnacle to the Grouse Inn, before a final walk over Big Moor to what is surely the finest example of a stone circle in grit, gives a walk of both scenic and historic interest.

To follow a route from Winster to Bullstones is an exercise in peeling off, or not peeling off, if that can be applicable to walking. The pictorial presentation of four walks without explanation of where to go from 'there', is for the readers contemplation. If walked, you will familiarise yourself with the salient features of the Peak Eastern Edges.

To go into a little more detail of the Pinnacle Way, which I'm sure appeals to most Oreads:

You make a start at The Inaccessible Pinnacle and The Weasle Pinnacle on Robin Hoods Stride, from there on to the Andle Stone, Birchover; The Cork Stone, Stanton Moor; The Eagle Stone, Baslow Edge; Curbar Pinnacle (via Slab Route); Froggatt pinnacle (your choice of route!); Tegness Pinnacle; Higgar Tor; Head Stone (Hallam Moors) and Rivelin Needle (your choice of route!). There is nothing conclusive about this selection, just climbs from easy to HVS.

A word on Boot's Folly on Bradfield Moor:

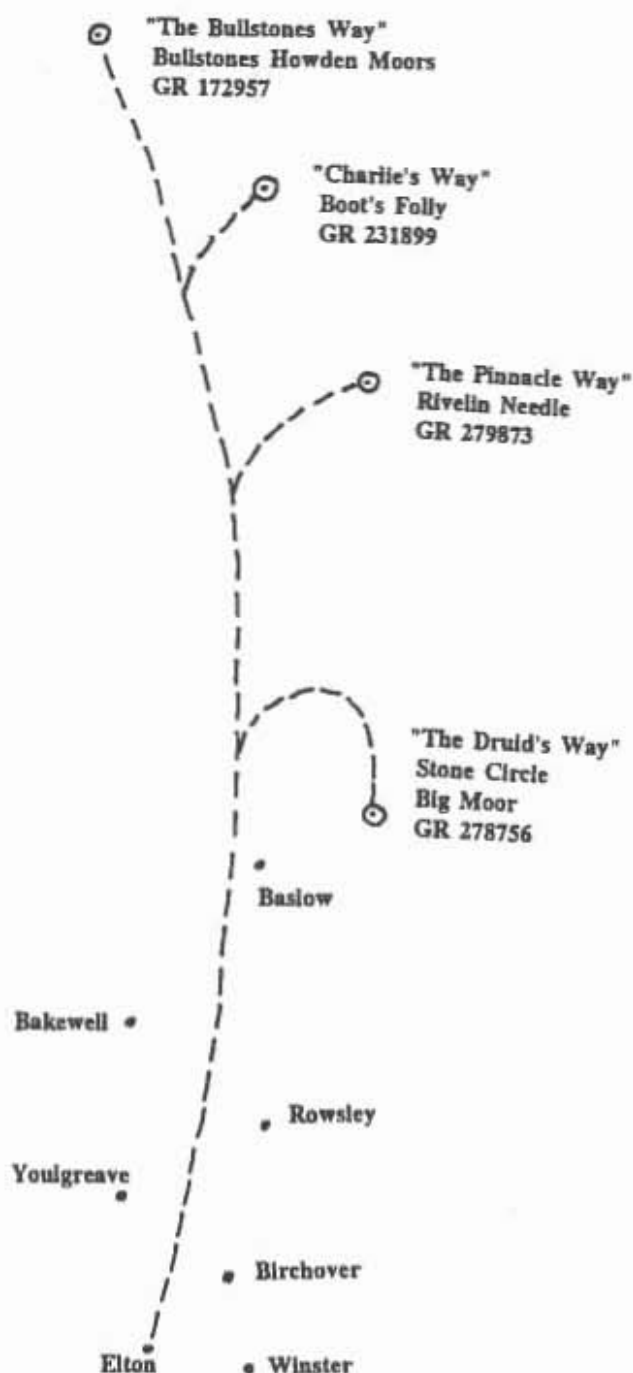
This was built in 1927 by Mr Charles Boot to provide work for the unemployed. It looks out to Strines Reservoir, Dales Dike and Asden Reservoirs and The Derwent and Bradfield Moors.

If you manage to escape the 'gourmet triangle' of Bakewell, Rowsley and Baslow, the rewards in Pennine Walking are great. Follow the

alternative Pennine Way to Marsden, return on the original Pennine Way to Edale and continue through Peak Forest back to Ashbourne.

To conclude this Derbyshire selection I've picked up another book. It's by Jong Dearden who in 1962 published a book extending the original Pennine Way from Kinder Low through eastern gritstone country to the Lickey Nills south west of Birmingham. Any other selections?

WHO WERE THE THREE YEHG'S IN THE FIFTIES? – Footsore will buy a pint in the Red Lion Birchover for the first Oread with the correct answer.



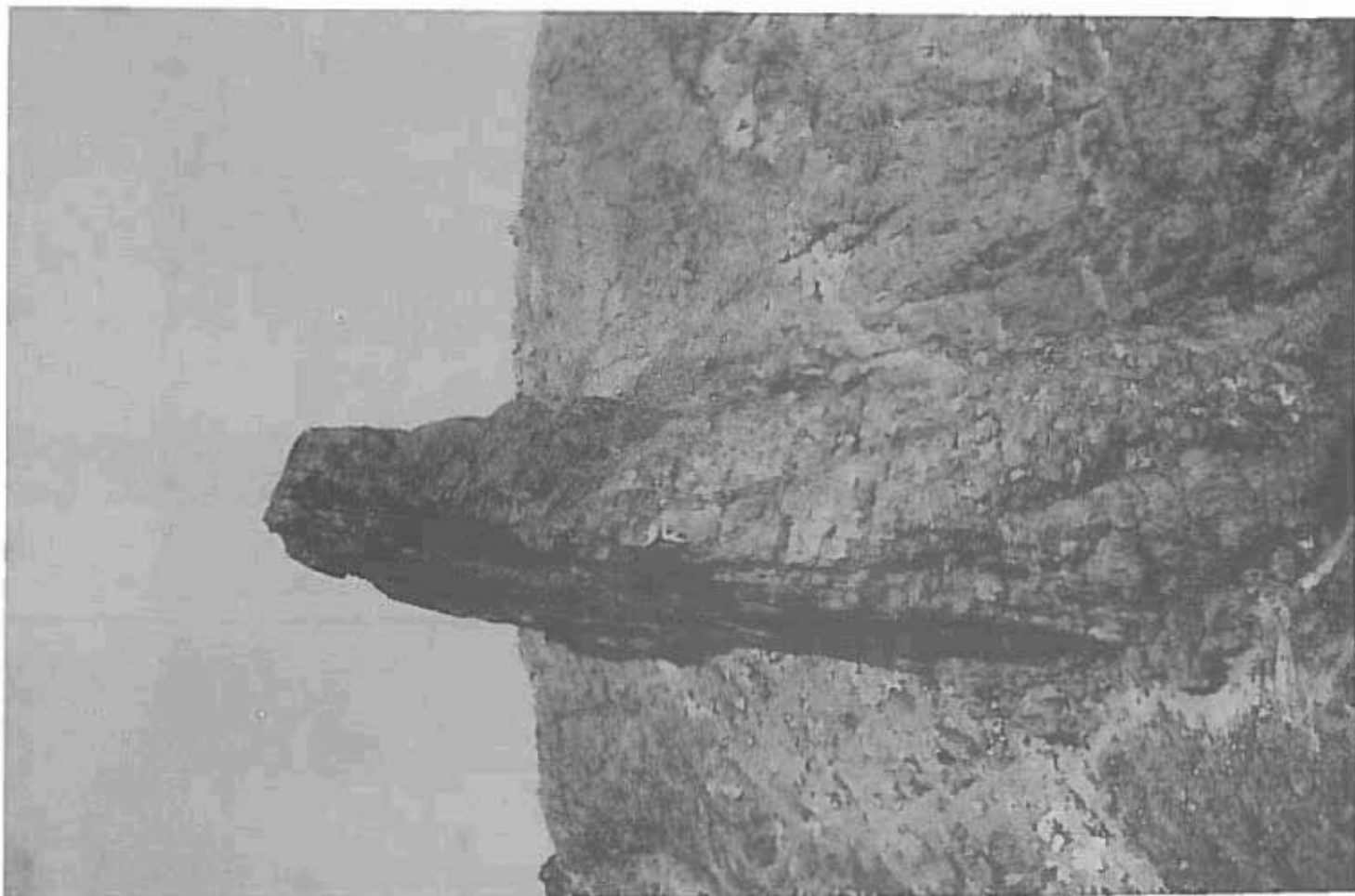


Top - Oreads at Bullstones Cabins, early 60s. Left to Right - Lol Burns, Dave Penlington, Harry Pretty, ?, Tony Smith, ?, Phil Falkner, Webb, Geoff ?, Digger, Janes.

Bottom - Ashop Shooting Cabin, early 60s. Left to Right - ?, ?, Harry Pretty, ?, Digger, Janes, Clive Webb, Phil Falkner, ?.

Photos - Jack Ashcroft

Identification by Harry Pretty who would like to point out that he didn't have his glasses on at the time and so hopes he hasn't offended anyone.



Right - The Inaccessible Pinnacle

Left - Pinnacle Ridge, Clach Glas, Skye

Photos - Jack Ashcroft

The Ridge on Half a Rope (Hope!)

by Bill Kenyon

As most climbers know, luck with the weather and no small amount of perseverance are two of the main ingredients for a successful traverse of the main Cullin Ridge of Skye.

Knowledge of the ridge and a good degree of fitness and stamina are pre-requisites rather than rock climbing ability. There is nothing above "very difficult" on the route but in pouring rain and with numb fingers and boots it just seems more difficult (and that's in summer!).

Ron and I had discussed the traverse several times, both of us having had one previous attempt. I had sussed most of the ridge, but in winter conditions. We decided that both of us were free and the weather forecast sounded half hopeful, a quick dash up with a day traverse of between ten to fifteen hours should fit the bill. We hoped to at least emulate the first traverse time of twelve hours twenty minutes by Shadbolt and McLaren, June 1911.

A twelve hour drive door to campsite, a good pitch, a fairish forecast for the next day, a few pints and a start time of 4.30am from Sligachan was agreed. It was also decided that I would carry a half rope and Ron the necessary slings and tat. Ron was to set the pace from start to finish.

The drive from Sligachan to Glenbrittle was magic with sweeping views of the ridge wreathed in swirling pink mist, reminding us again of the navigating problems. At Glenbrittle Ann promised to meet us, hopefully before closing time and took the car back - time 5.30am.

After half an hour we were fully "cagged-up" in the pouring rain, squelching across the bogs. The first photograph was of the supposedly non-existent Red Deer, which subsequently printed as fifteen deer rumps looking like boulders through a wet lens. So much for proof.

Gars-Bheinn, drink and sandwiches, off at a good pace (8.30), rain stopped, mist alternating with windows of transitory views of Coruisk, looking like liquid gold in the early morning light.

Excellent progress was made over S. Nan Eag, our first Munro, Caisteal and S. Dubh Da Bheinn, plus a find of Alpine Rock-cress and

Alpine Saxifrage. These places should be savoured really, not skimmed as we were having to do.

We had decided to bag all the Munros so we nipped across to bag S. Dubh Mor (2) accompanied by the eerie croaking of an unseen Raven there and back.

Navigation is quite tricky here in mist, but a split second view of the triangles of Alisdair and Tormaid was rewarding.

Up treacherous wet polished ledges to the Thearlaich Dubh gap. Ab down, belay Ron in a perishing wind, up the "french polished" wet basalt chimney, (thankful for a fixed wire) fingers numb, desperate but only graded as "very difficult" (80ft).

A scramble to the airy perch of Alisdair, third and highest Munro, a return down the basalt steps to the foot of the Great Stone Shoot for a drink and a snack of fruit cake.

A pleasant scramble over Thearlach and down to the bearlach where the mist parted yet again to present a magnificent view the length of Coruisk which raised our spirits.

Despite a strong Westerly the mist and gloom descended as we tackled King's Chimney (70ft.). Ron wisely led the corner left, beneath the overhang rather than the wet smooth slab direct.

S. Mhic Coinnich (4) crossed gingerly on slippery slabs bought us to Coire Lagan. In mist thick as a bag we felt our way up the treacherously loose An Stac; very slightly off route at times, judging by the steep loose unscratched corners.

Ah, people at last!

"Howdy, nice day" said we.

"You are coming from the Inn Pin, yes?" said the Dutch/German accented leader of the two.

"Erm, no, we're heading there about 15 minutes on a bearing 240."

He produced a tattered piece of map the size of a piece of bumfodder, orientated it so Alisdair was behind him and pointed downhill to the Inaccessible Pinnacle. He told us we were definitely wrong as behind them was a sheer impassable abyss.

He used every plausible argument in the book to convince us and his mate that he was right.

We left them, traversed left and lo and behold, the Inn Pin!

Up the east end like the proverbial off a shovel to meet a group on top being winched up by Gerry Ackroyd to do the hardest Munro (5).

It was then that we discovered that my half rope was not quite long enough. I abbed off on the single rope and Ron asked an intelligent looking guy if he would oblige us by untying when he was down.

Gerry a typical Lancashire lad said

"Doin' t'ridge Bill? You're down on time, watch out for Bidein, good luck."

Spot on navigation to Banachdich (6) in thick mist, then disaster struck. On a bearing due North, with cliffs on our right waiting for the cairn and a descent to the right, a couple called to us in the mist. They wished to know if the cairns they were following went down to Glenbrittle. I walked across, checked their bearing and told them Ok but not to follow us. We then cut across the ridge to pick up the steep ground on the right. Wrong! Down the Diallaid ridge, not the Thormaid. We checked, recovered, but lost half an hour.

Twenty metres would have saved us. I can tell you it never lets up. A relentless roller-coaster now on rapidly drying rock over Tormaid and hard scrambling with care, cresting the three teeth to Sg. Ghreadaidh (7).

Past the wart An Dorus notch, seemingly easy after last winters traverse. No time to relax over Sg. A. Mhaidaidh (8) and the four tops, the knife edge appearing almost vertical below ones boots.

Roping down from new slings and in-situ crabs as far as possible then climbing the rest, Ron was tempted to retrieve them. I couldn't get Gerry's words out of my mind; "Watch out for Bidein". I was reassured that Ron had sussed this bit out also.

Bidein Druim Nan Rahm, three complex peaks utterly confusing in the mist, compass definitely misleading, scratch marks everywhere starting from Glaic Moir.

Easy scrambling on Gabbro up the West Peak followed by every square centimetre of friction, including bums, down a tilted slab, followed by a steep dyke, negotiating loose blocks with many awkward moves brought us to the North-East Peak gap. We led a charmed life route finding, and not a foot wrong to the summit of the North top.

The weather clearing gradually we relaxed and made good time over Au Caisteal, Sg. Na-Bhairnich getting occasional good views of the ridge in front.

Bruach na Frithe (9) and we felt we had cracked it, but Ron pointed out that with a short rope Naismith's route was not on (V. Diff), so it would have to be Collie's route to the Tooth; longer, but still (Diff).

We couldn't find it! It was lower down Lotta Corrie than expected. The start is marked A.S. with a white cross.

Thankfully we chugged up the slabs and chimneys to the nick of the Tooth. Up to Am Basteir (10) via a steep open corner, then our final goal up the West ridge of Sgurr nan Gillean.

Arriving on Gillean (11) a few minutes before 9.00pm we were pleased with a time of twelve and a half hours, considering the conditions. Nevertheless, Ron was dubious about reaching the pub on time.

Reversing the West ridge then down Bealach am Basteir (welcome springs) we picked up the line of cairns due North.

We paused to see the last pale light fade out of the heavens behind Bruach na Frithe and listened to the murmur of the stream.

We were a satisfied pair. We switched on the head torches to alert Ann. Wonders, the pub was still open, five minutes to closing time, nearly seventeen and a half hours on the go and another of life's little acorns gathered.

A Night On The Tiles

with Tim Whitaker

The self belief of climbers is legendary. One of the most frequent manifestations of this self confidence is the ability to make a route description fit an arbitrary rock or ice face. Don't kid yourself – we've all done it, seen the film and eaten the book.

We'd got down to Argentiere the previous morning having done the Swiss Route. After the usual coffee and croissants, followed up with self-congratulatory beers, a sports plan was hatched to fill the remaining full day of our stay. The last week had been sunny, if not very warm, and the forecast for the following day was reasonable. The Rebuffat Route appeared a reasonable bet, a simple approach combined with mostly straightforward rock climbing offered the prospect of a relaxed day in the sun.

Next morning we made the first bin up the Midi along with the early-bird Vallee Blanche skiers. Ultra lightweight was the name of the game as we slithered down the arete in our trainers, thankful for the handrail and cursing the clumsiness of those carrying skis. Only five days before, we too had crept down the same slope with skis, bivvi gear and designs on the Gervasutti couloir – but that's another tale.

On the glacier the snow was compact and old but the sky was ominously cloudy, forecasting a change in the weather pattern. At the bottom of the face the various guides were consulted, the descriptions mentioned features which were contorted and moulded to fit the evidence of our eyes. The decision was made and the ropes uncoiled.

Robin leapt into the van and clanked up

the first pitch – a traverse was mentioned in the guide, and duly manufactured. I followed. "That was pretty tough for IV, seemed more like 5b" – the first hint.

The next pitch went up a beautiful clean thin corner, complete with an attractively sized crack. The first ten of fifteen feet were great, then the stopper. I turned to Robin after about ten minutes of vain effort – "this is desperate, never HVS/E1, are you sure we're in the right place?".

Not wishing to waste valuable time I relinquished the lead, but was gratified to note that Robin had to pull on a peg or two to arrive at the top. I followed again. The pitch was really hard and sustained, at least 5c and at 3600m; a good lead that would warrant E3 in the Pass. "I really think we're on the wrong route".

Even our best efforts could not make the rock succumb to the guidebook description for the next pitch. A line of shiny new bolts took a steep wall out leftwards beneath an overhang: we used them. By now I'd given up all pretence of wanting to do the route and was suggesting that it was only two abs to the glacier, Robin would have none of this: "There's plenty of time, we can easily make the last 'phrique".

The remainder of the route is hazy now, an awkward chimney here, a snowy groove there, to a final block with a bolt ladder leading to the summit.

The weather had meanwhile taken a turn for the worse, the cloud had dropped onto the top of the Tacul and it was getting late. The top station of the Midi was still visible, but the shortest option was crossing an



unstable looking snow slope without ice axes and wearing trainers. The safest option was to climb up to the observation platform at the top.

There were some people on the restaurant balcony waving at us; it was three minutes to the last departure for Chamonix. We arrived at the observation platform just in time to get a grandstand view of the last bin disappearing into the clouds below.

Coiling the ropes we discussed our options. Realistically we had only one: to bivvi as best we could. The only way into the station building was to abseil to the bridge and hope there was a door open, on the minus side it would be a long prusik back to the top if the door was shut. The increasing wind velocity and the advent of snow forced a decision.

The only available shelter was the porch of the lift shaft. This just held two standing or sitting in discomfort. Taking stock of our position we were each wearing thermals, Ron Hill's, jumpers and cags. Our rations were a Twix apiece and six Mintoos for emergencies. Bivvi gear was the ropes to sit on and the daysacks to put our feet in. The only other material available was the PVC liner to the bin in the porch. Robin decided to get into it, having turned it inside out. I packed all the gear into the space under the door to prevent the snow drifting in.

Conversation for the next half hour centred on the acceptability of wearing a used bin liner overnight. After that I was too cold to care as we huddled together.

The next conversational gambit centred around when it was acceptable to eat the food, hunger soon put a stop to that one. Our concern at not being able to take Timbo out for the previously arranged thanks-for-the-doss meal was short-lived, on grounds of mental cruelty.

The wind outside was growing increasingly strong, prompting worries about the likelihood of the telepherique working in the morning. This quickly turned into a game of nerves, seeing who could out-psyche the other most – re-calling instances in the past when telecabines had been out of action for

days after lightning strikes. Eventually, as the wind increased further, this game petered out. We were both concerned by the real possibility of the 'phrique being non-operational in high winds or due to storm damage.

Amazingly sleep was possible, although turning over to ease cramp was awkward, and wakeful periods meant Mintoos.

Dawn saw some moderation in the weather and a revival of the Telepherique bravado, now based on what time the first bin should be and whether it had already failed to run. The wind noise prevented us hearing much until the lift started.

Pierre seemed completely un-fazed to find two very cold, stiff and hungry 'ros-bifs' in the lift porch and sent us down to the station with minimal fuss. After a half hour wait for the first official cabin, punctuated by the last of the Mintoos, we were on our way down. Cafe-au-lait et croissants-au-chocolat, encore.



Is There Life After Childbirth?

Gail Male

No, this is not a paper on infant mortality rate, the "life" that I refer to is the quality of life of the parents, in particular climbing parents.

I have to admit that I was rather worried during my pregnancy that this marked the end of my climbing career. Critics told me such things as

"Your hormones change after childbirth - you won't want to climb any more"

"You won't have time"

"You'll be too tired"

"It's not fair on the child"

Of course Gil and I had discussed this and decided that we would find a way of continuing to climb but we both knew that it wouldn't be so easy.

Towards the end of the pregnancy I was getting really frustrated at having to watch climbing without being able to climb myself, "Where are those anti-climbing hormones now?", I thought.

I have to admit that for the first two weeks after the birth I didn't really feel like climbing (walking was difficult enough) but after a fortnight I started to get itchy feet and fingers so I attempted the Railway Slab on Black Rocks and then some slabs on the Roaches - my goodness it felt good to touch rock again! Joanne seemed happy sleeping in the sunshine at the bottom of the crag so all was well.

This set the pattern for the next couple of months. Gil and I continued to climb together as usual. We stuck to one pitch routes and belayed from the bottom wherever possible so that one of us could always be next to Joanne. She didn't seem to do too badly out of this situation often causing quite a stir when we arrived at the bottom of the crag. She rather enjoyed being the centre of attention.

Summer gave way to winter and the usual sessions on the climbing walls. Joanne came too and once again enjoyed plenty of attention.

In January we booked a holiday in Spain. Here we were lucky because my parents were already out there and the novelty of having a new Granddaughter hadn't worn off yet so we had willing baby sitters and two weeks to climb, climb, climb.... bliss. I gained confidence with the bolts and led my first route since the birth.

This season hasn't been quite so easy. It seems that as Joanne got more mobile, we got less mobile! New

tactics were called for. Twice per week we arranged a babysitter and got out to the Lancashire quarries and at the weekends we relied on the charity of our friends to either keep an eye on Joanne or to climb with us while we took it in turns to babysit.

This still restricted us to one pitch routes, but using other tactics - mainly the very large heart of Sue Lancashire - we managed to climb the Old Man of Hoy along with Pete Lancashire, and a few days later did "Swastika" while the good natured Sue looked after three children.

Other tactics involved me taking Joanne for a walk in the Lakes on the Saturday while Gil climbed, then Gil taking Joanne to the pub on the Sunday while I climbed (OK, so who's the mug then).

Despite all of these problems, where doing a route can take on Alpine proportions in terms of planning, I have still managed to have one of my best seasons yet, leading several E1's from my hit list and even the odd E2, so I would like to make some points to the critics I mentioned earlier:

- a) If there are any anti-climbing hormones, I haven't got any.
- b) You have the time if you make the time.
- c) Yes, you are tired, but the physical activity helps you feel better.
- d) Joanne thoroughly enjoys playing at the bottom of crags and she thinks it's unfair if we don't take her with us.

I have also been told that women become stronger after childbirth and this appears to be true. I do feel stronger although this could be due to the fact that I am not working, have less stress in my life and more time for training.

On the subject of training, constantly lifting a baby which is gradually increasing in weight seems to be excellent progressive weight training!

Another reason for my climbing improving this season could be sheer enthusiasm. It takes so much planning to actually get to the foot of the route, I don't intend to waste it!

So, in answer to the question, "Is there life after childbirth"..... There's life Jim, but not as we know it!

The Committed

Mike Wynne assures that this is a purely fictitious account of a climbing club that meets in an old railway pub that brews its own beer, owns two cottages and has committee meetings once a month. Any resemblance to real persons or events within our own club must therefore be purely coincidental.

It was a typical January evening in downtown Redby; a degree or so above freezing, but with the addition of wind and fog it felt like -10°C . M pondered a while; how is it that it can feel colder here than at 16000 ft in the Himalayas? Here we are about 2 foot above sea level, surrounded by every modern device possible to churn out heat, yet it is so bloody cold and miserable..... Maybe it was these thoughts that encouraged him to battle on through the hostile environment – battle for twenty five minutes or so to reach tonight's destination.

M often walked or cycled. Tonight he had decided it was too dangerous to cycle. Drivers these days seem to have tunnel vision especially where cyclists are involved, and it's not too healthy to argue with them too many times. Most others came by car or bus, but M actually wanted to be out in the elements tonight. It would take him back to some of the times he had spent in the hills where, in some strange way, adverse weather can enhance the exhilaration and feeling of wilderness that one gets there. But not so here. Here, surrounded by the gloomy buildings the weather was simply foul.

The rendezvous had been arranged about a year ago. It had for many years been arranged in a rather rickety room above a sort of garage – not a normal garage but a garage for boats. Needless to say it was right on the bank of the river. The members were not happy. OK there was ale, of a sort, and it was cheap; just as well. There was an old bridge nearby where in the summer months they could practice clinging to the slimy vertical faces; trying all the time to make a move a little bit harder than the previous person did, but of course not being competitive about it! Good training for the real thing it was said. That was over a year ago and things move fast in and around Redby. The question being asked nowadays is what is the real thing? Has artificial and real become reversed? Are our training grounds now our wildernesses and our wildernesses our training grounds? To climb and to fall used to mean certain injury, but now? Now to fall is an essential part of the game for those at the top. To climb hard and not to fall simply no longer go together.

As various philosophical thoughts flicked through his mind as if in a dream, M soon found himself in the vicinity of the old railway sidings in the right frame of mind for this month's meeting. This area

was for years a real slum with all the workers cottages lying derelict. Recent restoration has restored them to their former splendour and now even the alehouse, the last building to be restored, is again functioning. Today the ale house even produces its own brews (as does M) which keeps the members far happier than they used to be in the shed above the garage. A small room above the new brewhouse now provides the committed a place to get together each month while their members exchange their hard earned money for the establishment's good ale at the high bar on the floor below – and so high it is that a few shorter members have to make a few moves to reach it!

Taking a last deep breath of the 'fresh' smog filled air outside, M entered the smoky alehouse. After acquiring a pint of 'Brunswick No. 29' (whatever happened to the wonderful names such as 'Bertie's Bottom Blaster?'), he wound his way up the half finished stairs to the little room above.

A quick glance around showed him that he was not the last to arrive. Some of the more strongly committed were there already; some seemed as if they had been there for ever. Some looked as if they were not really there at all. Fagin was already there, as usual, peering through his thick lensed spectacles at his book of numbers. He would continue to do this all through the meeting thought M – as he always did – yet he would still seem to make the right comments at the right time. Did he really listen to all that was said? Did anyone? Or was much said anyhow that was worth listening to?

The note-taker was there – early as always. The job of transcribing the meeting's discussions into a brief set of comprehensible notes is an onerous task and obviously not something that we were taught at school. Even with the help of the most up to date word processing machines the job is not made much easier – yet he sticks religiously at it, year after year. Fortunately, as the notetaker's position is of such importance, the system has provided for a standby in case the notetaker is absent or overworked, a clever little loophole which on occasions can give the notetaker a good opportunity to 'pass the buck'.

Then there is the inner circle of the ultra-committed. This is the team without which the whole organisation may collapse. It revolves around the assets which in theory, are owned and run by all the

members but in practice are run by the 'cosy little number' that are dedicated enough to put in the time and effort to do it. Various grumblings are often detected within the membership about the situation but they seem to be generally happy with it, being able to enjoy from time to time a few days of palatial luxury in their time-share apartments in the mountains over the border to the west, or even in their more mediocre accommodation which they lease on the local Duke's estate.

Just as the proceedings are about to start the latecomers arrive, hot foot from their body building course which always finishes just too late to enable them to arrive at the meeting on time. M is usually with them, but due to a small but significant part of his body being broken, was missing out this week.

Brandishing beer and sandwiches the 'post and publicity' comes in armed with various papers, mumbles the obligatory round of 'eh-ups' to those already present and settles in his place. Next but by no means least comes the obermeister. In traditional manner the assembled rise, each raising a clenched right hand in salute symbolising a hand jam in a mean gritstone crack. This is the guy who all the members have chosen by a totally democratic and unbiased election to be their figurehead for two years. His stout stature, rugged features, bulging biceps and chalk under his fingernails identify him as a real mountain man. He has scaled the steepest cliffs, dangled from the rustiest of pegs, survived the most harsh conditions that a Scottish winter can throw at him **AND DOES NOT SKI!** This is the man who is leading the club into the nineties.

Not one who likes to mess about with trivialities he used his new-found power to start by completely rewriting the Agenda for the evening; maybe because he had inadvertently lost or forgotten his copy, or even never received it. There was no arguing with this man - despite the fact that he was veering dangerously away from the 'traditional' way of doing things. Everyone scribbled down the new agenda:-

1. Potential climbing wall for Redby
2. Publication of magazine
3. Monthly 'E' point tally
4. Scotland's opening hours - an appraisal
5. Annual disco arrangements

And if time allows,

6. Financial summary
7. Property analysis
8. Correspondence and communications
9. A.O.B.

"Before we start tonight, I want to make sure that we are all clear and agree on one thing.

WE ARE committed. We must think why we have come together in this room in spite of the rather

inclement weather outside.

WE have all selected ourselves to be automatically elected by our members to our appropriate positions, to ensure that all our members get full value for money. It is this commitment that brings us all here tonight.

WE are controlled by a strict set of ancient rules that will now, since the recent changing of one of the aforementioned rules, be able to be subtly altered to ensure that our members can move more freely within our framework and climb E5 if they want to.

As the turnstiles are erected around the Lake District, and routes on Stanage have to be reserved in writing a few months in advance, we must do our utmost to ensure that **OUR** members can continue to enjoy the aspects of the wilderness that are still available.

As our outside wilderness is being taken away from us we should enlighten our members with modern day alternatives".

As the Obermeister sat down again, glances flashed around the table. This man is radical. Will he have enough support among the committed to enable his new ideas to be followed or will tradition still be maintained? Will he soon have the most stalwart of the hemp ropes and breeches brigade yo-yoing and red pointing? It was not so long ago that chalk was finally accepted by the committed, and now....?

As M's thoughts flashed around what the future held in store, he was oblivious to the continuing proceedings. Items 1 - 5 were rapidly disposed of in the usual but unfortunate fashion and soon a long debate was in force concerning the fact that the National Park had refused permission for the construction of a multi-storey covered car park which was to be attached to the time share apartments; and just because we do not own the land!

Not quite seeing the relevance of how, if the car park was to be built or not, this would further the chances of being able to climb Adjudicator Wall without falling off, or to further his or for that matter any of the member's ability to enjoy the freedom and the tranquillity of the hills, M decided that it was time for a beer break.

After all what is it all about if one can't have a few beers when one feels like it. These things shouldn't be taken too seriously!

The meeting continued.....

Two Old Men

A Week in Scotland

by Dereck Burgess

A week's cragging ahead and the usual question of where to go, North or South.

Two years ago Ron, Gary and myself, later joined by Roger, had a great week in the South West and the prospect of sunny sea cliffs, a moving scene from night to night and of course a different pub every night certainly appealed.

Somehow our mountaineering instincts prevailed and the decision was taken to go North to Scotland, the land of the long walks in to weeping crags, midgets, rain etc, etc....

"If we go North, we need an objective".

We both agreed on a start with "The Old Man of Hoy" and to then move south, playing it by ear as to where to climb next. Our enthusiasm was heightened by the telly screening a programme on the "Old Man" the evening before we departed. The scene was set.

Scotland beamed at us on the journey north. In Aviemore there had been a six weeks drought. The hillsides looked packed and the weep had gone from the crags. It couldn't last.

At Thurso we pitched on the pleasant municipal campsite and celebrated our arrival with a few pints of Heavy with whisky chasers. We both felt distinctly fragile at 4.00 a.m. the next morning when we de-camped prior to catching the six o'clock ferry to Stromness.

Everything slotted in nicely, no sooner were we at Stromness than the ferry departed for Hoy. There had been a view of the Old Man from the P&O ferry but in the morning mist, and our hangovers it did not look too inviting.

By the time we arrived at Moreness on Hoy the sun was shining and spirits lifted a little but were soon dampened by a large notice warning climbers that no rescue facilities existed on the island. The taxi driver's concern didn't help either, she stated they hadn't lost anyone yet and didn't want to start now! Perhaps we did look a bit rough and maybe carrying our gear in plastic shopping bags didn't help.

The taxi dropped us at Rackwick Bay on the South side of Hoy, a beautiful place where steep cliffs on either side give way to a shingle and sand beach and the few cottages are dotted

around a wide valley with gentle hills behind.

We pitched out tent on the common (near the local toilets) and contemplated our next move over a cup of tea. It was barely 10.00 a.m. The weather was fine, we both felt knackered, it would rain tomorrow, someone else would arrive. No excuses. We had to go today.

An earlier chat in the Brunswick suggested we needed plenty of large gear and long slings with a spare rope to safeguard the overhanging abseil descent, so we were heavily loaded as we left the valley.

At the last "bothy" we met Davey Hutch, an Orcanian who had opted out and lived the year round at Rackwick. He invited us back for a cuppa on our return. He also chronicled the ascents and advised how many had been over so far this year. We were the only climbers on the island now we learned, so at least we could walk to the climb without the fear of being "pipped at the post".

The walk over the moor was fairly short and the top of the Old Man soon appeared towering above the cliff edge. The view across to the Old Man was spectacular, awesome even, and despite the spectators who watched our descent to the foot of the stack, we felt somewhat lonely and rather intimidated. It was reminiscent of roping up at the foot of a serious alpine route.

The first pitch led easily to the ledge where the route breaks right across the overhanging face into a crack and corner system.

As there was an old rope in place under the lower overhang we decided to leave our spare rope on the ledge and use the existing tat.

The crack system pulled more at the heart than at the muscle. Moving around the initial overhang was easy but spectacular and exposed. The second overhang complete with wooden wedge, old slings and the tied off rope soon went, once the scruples lapsed to permit a handhold on the tat. The upper section of the crack gave pleasant straddling with holds in the horizontal breaks.

Ron soon joined me on the stance and we contemplated the next pitches, both trying to

ignore the void below! The route followed the corner and ledges in the face for two long pitches, all easy but requiring care with friable rock and a few spitting contests with fulmars who seemed reluctant to share the mances.

This brought us to the foot of the final corner which gave superb straddling and jamming to finish on the quite large and airy summit.

We took the usual photographs and signed the visitors book beneath the summit cairn. We watched the antics of the Razorbills and Puffins who ignored us completely and carried on feeding their chicks. A squally shower focused our attention on what had worried us all the way up; the way down!

Three long abseils saw us at the top of the long crack, all in a steady drizzle which we prayed would get no heavier. The crack abseil tugged at the heart, and with a wry smile to Ron, I started down. The old rope tied under the overhang was clipped and I pulled across, well out in space, towards the starting ledge. Horrified I went lower and lower until at last, completely knackered, I managed to reach a lower ledge and climb back up to the belay. Ron was hauled across on the abseil rope with a few pauses for photographs.

Then came the problem, the wet ropes would not run through the abseil loop and had to be abandoned. It was then we realised how fortunate we were to have the spare rope on the ledge for the last abseil. We tied the ropes off to avoid fraying and decided to recover them the next day although Ron did keep hinting that it was an old rope.

Dave Hutch was as good as his word and supplied tea and cake to celebrate our ascent and was apologetic that his "home brewed" was not yet ready for tapping. We further celebrated that evening with a few "tinnies" around a good camp fire in true Scots tradition although in this instance the fire was more to dispel the drizzle than the midges.

The rope was recovered the next day without mishap. Ron couldn't be persuaded to free prussik up the rope and I daren't either so the pitch was re-climbed on a single 9mm using every bit of tat, and prussikers on the jammed rope which pulled down easily once freed. If you wanted, the whole climb could be Severe; A1, due to the amount of old wedges and tat in place.

That was that, the old men had conquered the

Old Man, what next?

We thought to rush off by taxi was not doing justice to the island since the weather was again glorious so we took the path to Moreness and paused en route to walk up Ward Hill, the highest point in the Orkneys, a wonderful viewpoint to survey the rest of the islands and Scapa flow. The ascent was enlivened by being fiercely attacked by giant Skuas who repeatedly dive bombed us until we cleared their nesting area.

Moreness is only a handful of cottages but it did boast a Post Office and bar. The bar proved worthwhile, packed solid initially with a ferry load from Stromness, their night out. It soon thinned out and a great night ensued with Davey Hutch and "Jimmy the Post" recounting Ward Drummonds six day ascent of St John's Head, possibly the largest sea cliff in Britain. At two thirty we retired to the concrete floor at the ferry terminal.

The next day we returned to Thurso and journeyed west to camp at Sango Sands near Dumess, with wonderful views of Ben Hope and Ben Loyal en route.

As the weather seemed unsettled we opted to move south to the Letterewe Forest area and walk in to Carn More, a south facing cliff which had eluded us for years, and see if we could snatch the "Old Man of Stoer" pinnacle on the way.

The day started wet but brightened as we moved south, and despite blowing a gale had cleared by the time we had parked at the lighthouse at Stoer pinnacle. We were in luck as two Scots lads had rigged the rope for the Tyrolean traverse and were embarked on the route.

We followed and found the route was on the sheltered side and gave good climbing to the summit. The rock throughout was perfect, more like gritstone and well supplied with holds.

Again the abseil looked horrendous and the rope shooting out horizontally in the wind didn't help. However at the extreme stretch of the fifty metre rope I just managed to swing onto the ledge at the foot, now lashed by spray at high tide.

Not pausing to watch Ron, I reversed the Tyrolean only to find myself submerged in the middle because of the high tide. The Scots lad, once he was across, tightened the rope which helped a little but not sufficiently for his mate

who, on reaching the middle, screamed that he was bugged and just hung upside down on the rope. This looked quite spectacular and we all indulged in a spate of photography until we saw his head under the water and realised that he was serious. A well flung rope enabled him to clip on and receive a welcome tug back to land.

Yet another adventure. The four of us drove down to Lochinver for a celebratory drink where we learned that the unfortunate Scot who nearly drowned was virtually a novice and had never abseiled before. Rather him than me!

We moved to Ullapool and sat out a full day of rain with thoughts once more on Carnmore. Early next day the weather improved so we decided to drive to Poolewe and walk in and either climb or walk depending upon the weather.

The further south, the better the weather, and by the time we had parked at the deer fence at Kensary all the rain had cleared and the weather was magnificent.

The nine mile walk in to Carnmore was rather gruelling with heavy rucksacks, but with each step once we had cleared the initial bog, the view improved to become quite spectacular as we crossed the causeway on Fionn Loch with towering slabs above and Carnmore crag itself brooding over the lodge.

The old stable had been extended and re-roofed by the estate as an open shelter for use by walkers and climbers between November and August, so it proclaimed on a notice.

We settled in and after a brew walked up to the crag and climbed Fionn Buttress, an 800 ft VS, magnificent in the evening light and a worthy three star route.

Our bothy was shared that night with three German walkers on the trek through Dundonnell and a further seven appeared the following night. It apparently appears in the German "Rough Guide to Scotland".

Our second day was again spent on Carnmore savouring the magnificent traverse which is one of the crags best routes.

One could not be a complete rock jock amidst such wonderful scenery so our third day was spent bagging a couple of local Munros (not Munroes!) that are normally difficult of access. Ruadh Stac Mor and A'Mhaighdean. Misty weather with cloud breaks and the occasional shaft of sunlight rewarded us with an unforgettable day in the hills.

On our return the "Laird" was in residence and we chatted awhile before packing and a further four hour walk out.

Needless to say, all this exercise gave us a thirst which was well and truly slaked at the local hostelry in Poolewe.

Well what next? Centurian or bust? But it was not to be. The hoards in Fort William and Glen Nevis seem so alien after the far north that we fled to join the club meet in Buttermere – and incessant rain! We packed and ran.

Top left – Dereck retrieving ropes on the Old Man of Hoy.

Top right – The Old Man of Hoy

Bottom left – Dereck on tyrolean traverse to Old Man of Storr

Bottom right – Ron descending Old Man of Hoy

Photos – Dereck Burgess and Ron Chambers



confidence so down we went. The following day we pushed the same route another three pitches. As the day progressed it became warmer and warmer until things were falling down around us. We had no option but to abseil off a dubious peg. A disappointment for Graham and myself but Tim and Dave did a good route each day.

Friday our last day. As we were beginning to tire, and mindful of the long drive ahead, we headed for Lillaz once more. What a mistake. We arrived at the foot of the "Cascata di Ecouverney", a magnificent 150ft TD+ icicle, to be greeted by warm weather and running water. Undeterred Graham ran out a rope length and

belayed. My turn now. After about 15 feet I swung my axe into the ice and knew something was wrong. A crack appeared around the whole icicle accompanied by a rumbling sound. Time to go. I have never moved so quickly in my life and Graham wasn't far behind. Time to head for home.

Overall it was a good trip but quite different from Scotland or Wales. You can drive close to the routes and you don't get many ice routes in Britain with pegs and bolts. If you fancy a fun week on ice give it a try, I will certainly be going back.

DIAMANTI DI CRISTALLO

1990 COGNE



ELENCO DELLE CASCATE DELLA ZONA

Val di Cogne

- 1) Cascata di Chevril D- D.A. Cambiola - P. Sartore 5-1-79
- 2) Cascata del Nomenon D + TD- A. Cambiola - P. Sartore 10-1-80
- 3) Cascata di Vieyes AD AD + A. Cambiola - P. Sartore 3-1-79
- 4) Porta Gemellare TD- TD Azzola - Bragolenti - Marzone - Ottaz - Peyrol 6-1-80
- 5) Fontana d'Ymir TD- TD A. Cambiola - D. Domeneghini 17-1-82
- 6) Couloir du Soleil TD- TD A. Cambiola - S. Casalegno - M. Castellan 18-2-84

Valnontey

- 7) Cascata del Lauson D + TD- A. Cambiola - D. Domeneghini 30-1-82
- 8) Cascata del Thoule TD TD + A. Cambiola - D. Domeneghini 19-1-82
- 9) Cascata Thoullette TD + ED- S. Casalegno - E. Marlier 15-12-88
- 10) Cascata di Valmiana D + M. Marone - D. Vota gennaio 81
- 11) Sentiero dei Troll TD- A. Cambiola - D. Domeneghini - B. Elter 29-1-83
- 12) Cascata di Gran Val D + Bragolenti - G. C. Grassi - N. Margaira e C. 28-12-86
- 13) Cascata dell'Erfolet TD + L. Chialvetto - G. C. Grassi - P. Marchisio - G. Montrucchio 26-3-85
- 14) Di fronte al Tradimento ED- A. Cambiola - E. Marlier 4-2-89
- 15) Dedica per Sara AD + D- A. Cambiola - E. Marlier 26-11-88
- 16) Voglie Effimere TD + A. Cambiola - E. Marlier 8-12-88
- 17) Cascata della Pazienza D + G. C. Grassi - N. Margaira 1-1-87
- 18) Coupe Money TD + G. C. Grassi - G. Montrucchio 11-4-85
- 19) Mishria D + TD- G. C. Grassi - G. Montrucchio - M. Rossi 17-4-86
- 20) Falso di Plutone TD + G. C. Grassi - G. Montrucchio 21-4-85
- 21) Fiumana di Money TD- G. C. Grassi - P. Marchisio 5-4-85
- 22) Flash Estivo stal. cent. TD sostenuto G. C. Grassi - G. Montrucchio 19-1-89 uscita di sin. TD G. C. Grassi - P. Marchisio 13-3-85
- 23) Monday Money TD + G. C. Grassi - E. Tesserà 31-3-85
- 24) Repentance Super ED + F. Conta - F. Damilano - G. C. Grassi 2/3-2-89
- 25) L'Acheronte D + M. Bisso - G. Caneva - G. C. Grassi 24-3-85
- 26) Cascata di Patry stal. di dx TD + ED- P. Sobro' e C. 1-5-84 uscita di sx TD G. C. Grassi - P. Marchisio 20-3-85

Valeille

- 27) Tuborg ED- G. Ghigo - G. Ghiboudo e C. inverno 85
- 28) Candelabro del Coyote ED- G. Ghigo - S. Calvi 18-1-86
- 29) Chandelle Levure TD TD + E. Crudo - G. C. Grassi 4-3-89
- 30) Cascata di Fenilia D + 1
- 31) Vertigine di Porcellana TD P. Angela - E. Bonfanti - G. C. Grassi 14-12-85
- 32) Henninger TD- G. Ghigo - S. Calvi 5-1-86
- 33) Vello del Ginghiale D D + D. Aime - G. C. Grassi - P. Marchisio - G. Montrucchio 22-12-85
- 34) Pareti Contrastati D + A. Cambiola - E. Marlier 14-1-89
- 35) Ecknoton TD + A. Crudo - E. Crudo - G. C. Grassi 22-3-89
- 36) Baltica TD- A. Crudo - G. C. Grassi 23-3-89
- 37) Budello di Mambo TD + E. Bonfanti - E. Crudo - G. C. Grassi 26-3-89
- 38) Ala di Gelo TD TD + F. Conta - A. Crudo - G. C. Grassi - S. Malaspina 25-3-89 sett. sx (Sudori Freddi) TD + ED- G. C. Grassi - S. Rossi 3-4-89
- 39) Frigida TD- G. C. Grassi - S. Rossi 3-4-89
- 40) 80 Folgorazione 89 ED- E. Bonfanti - A. Crudo - E. Crudo - G. C. Grassi 19-3-89
- 41) Piccola Lella D + A. Crudo - E. Crudo 12-3-89
- 42) Cascata di Arolla AD + G. C. Grassi - P. Marchisio 12-12-85
- 43) Cold Couloir TD + G. C. Grassi - N. Margaira - M. Rossi 20-12-85
- 44) Stella Artice ED- E. Crudo - G. C. Grassi - S. Rossi 5-3-89
- 45) Hard Ice in the Rock TD + P. Bazanet - J. F. Garlon - F. Girado - G. C. Grassi - N. Margaira - M. Philibert 12-1-86
- 46) Pattinaggio Artistico D + G. C. Grassi - N. Margaira 6-1-86
- 47) Lillaz Gouly TD- N. Giovenzano - G. C. Grassi - N. Margaira 28-12-85
- 48) Cascata delle Loye D + G. C. Grassi - S. Stior 3-3-86
- 49) Lau-Bij TD + E. Marlier - J. Mazza 11-2-89
- 50) Cascata di Lillaz TD- A. Cambiola - P. Sartore 18-1-81

Vallone dell'Urtier

- 51) Cascata di Taveranaz TD- S. Calvi - G. Ghigo 19-1-86
- 52) Cascata di Ecouverney TD + S. Calvi - G. Ghigo - M. Guastavino 25-1-86

Vallone del Grauson

- 53) Oceano Polare D + TD- G. C. Grassi - P. Marchisio 30-1-87

The Bob Graham

The Bob Graham Run involves the ascent of 42 Lakeland peaks in 24 hours. **Rob Tresidder** gives his account of a successful attempt.

It was the full moon on 28 August that had caught my eye – as significant to running nuts as any other kind of lunatic. But better still the cold white disc was scheduled to set as the sun rose and to rise as the sun set. 24 hour illumination perhaps?

The atmosphere seemed even more lunatic outside the Moot Hall near midnight. I donned long johns as drunken youths and flashily dressed women milled around Keswick lightly contained by police accompanied by composed Alsatians.

Brian and I were relieved to be off on the dot of midnight, holding back all the way down the main street and on to the path to Portinscale. At the suspension bridge, I met my first supporters – Mark and Jim who would later take me across the western fells. Brian had researched his section with ruthless accuracy and determined that we needed to make ten minute miles on the road. At almost every traffic sign he consulted his watch and pronounced us so many seconds ahead or behind!

It was good to get the tarmac out from under my feet while they were still fresh but a shock to rub up against the steepness of High Snab bank. Could there really be another 42 of these in me?

We were seven minutes late on Robinson which seemed ominous. But, we quickly made up the ground on Hindscarth and were only a minute behind at Honister. But the weather had clagged in on Dale Head and was very murky as I set off with Mark and Jim. Soon we had our cags on and began to feel the delaying effects of acres of wet, slimy rock.

The descent from Great Gable was hard to find and awkward underfoot. Kirkfell was a grind. Pillar proved a great relief – a familiar climb. The spur out to Steeple and back was much further than I remembered from years back. Coming off Yewbarrow, I pulled away from my support team – very good for the ego – and very insignificant.

Scafell was wet, so with no rope on Broad Stand, we took the West Wall traverse in Deep Ghyll followed by Lord's Rake. This is not

really a lot further.

On Scafell Pike, I foolishly claimed I knew the way off and ignored the experienced navigators with the maps. When we realised my mistake, they soon had us back on course. But all these extra minutes were adding up. We had a few more on Great End as a result of making a bee line from the summit to Esk Hause which took us down a gully with a vertical run out which forced an escape sideways on to wet loose rock.

Esk Pike was hard to find and as I had not researched the direct line down Hanging Knotts, we returned from Bowfell to Ore Gap and skirted Angle Tarn. I was dreading the grind across Langdale Combe and round Martcrag Moor but this went better than expected.

Simon left us on High Raise to rejoin his family in Borrowdale. Robin and I pressed on in bright sunny conditions over Calf Crag and Steel Fell. How did BG choose his 42? These last two are well below 2000 ft. and unacceptable as new peaks in a 24 hour record.

Then there is the dog leg to the trifling Sergeant Man, ignoring Scoat Fell and Skiddaw Little Man, scoring three for Scafell Pike, the expensive climbs up Seat Sandal and Fairfield. This time I came off Steel Fell in the right place and found the scree run to Dunmail Raise, but our deficit had crept up from 38 to 71 minutes.

I had felt fresh and strong at Wasdale Head. Now, I felt tired. Ian changed my socks, fed and watered me with care and without obsequiousness.

Rebekah set off at a cracking pace up Raise Beck and soon we began to claw back valuable minutes: seven on Seat Sandal, nine on Fairfield, eight on Dollywaggon. After that just ones and twos as the weather closed in and the cagoules went on with hoods up but the wind blessedly behind us for the most part.

We managed the descent to Threlkeld in only 37 minutes which included the curious run across the front lawn of Bridgend on the way to Threlkeld Hall.

Dave and I left Threlkeld just 14 minutes down on my 23 hour schedule. The climb up Hall's Fell ridge is beautiful but a ligament in

my knee was starting to hurt badly.

The sky, still light and clear made the traverse of Blencathra to Foule Crag easy. Blue Screes led to a fast run down on perfect ground to wade the River Caldew. Here we got torches out and were briefly graced by the presence of the full moon.

I was slow on Great Calva and while we could clearly see the summit of Skiddaw, everything between was utter blackness and I chose a poor line from Great Calva, first too far left then too far right. It was a relief to see Brian's light moving up Skiddaw on his way from Keswick. He came down a little way to meet us.

As we crested the ridge we were met by a gale that made standing difficult and running impossible. We traversed the whole ridge: north col, north top, main top, middle top and south top. I couldn't remember which top was top. South top isn't but seemed like it so that is where I punched my watch with just 70 minutes left to get to Keswick. Easy in fine conditions, but I was knackered and there was a little hesitation in finding the gate in the first fence.

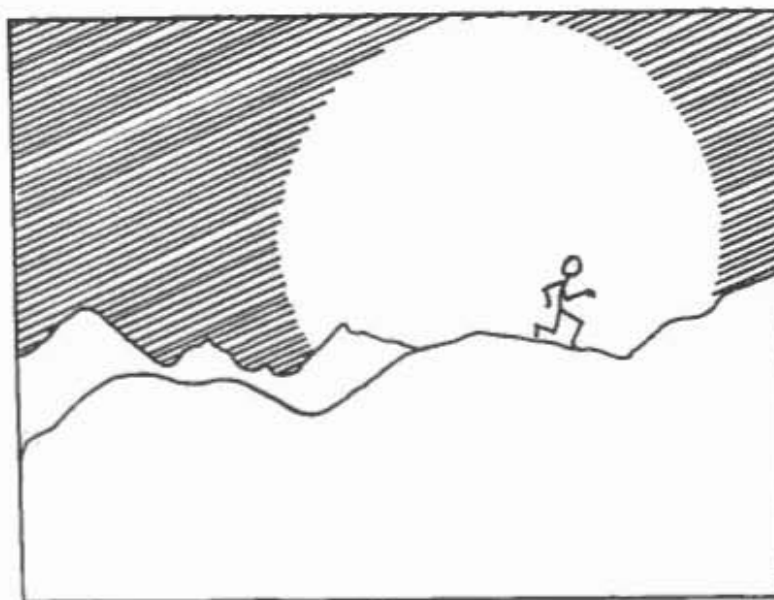
Brian said I was going too slowly: without him I would never have arrived in time.

All of a sudden, it all came together. Out of the wind, I felt able to pound. Brian clucked around like a hen, advising of stones ready to trip me up, telling me how much further to go. Somewhere on Jenkin Hill, I was met by Gwen and three of her friends who charged down behind us, their headtorches floodlighting the way ahead.

At Gale Road, I had made sufficient time to be allowed a cup of tea made by Lyn. Then on around Latrigg, down Spooney Green Lane and then a Wright special through Fitz Park, over the footbridge and into the High Street a mere 30 yards from the Moot Hall.

With only eleven minutes to spare, I had obviously cut it very fine; as with most Bob Graham attempts, success had only been achieved through the considerable assistance of others.

Keswick seemed unchanged from 24 hours before: the same drunks, the same policemen with the same alsatians!



Running Round-up

Heathy Lea Fell Race

1989

Richard Hopkinson organised an orienteering "score" event. A running time of 1h15 was allowed with checkpoints at Puppet Crack (5 points), Gangplank (10), the Eaglestone (15) and Peapod (25). Ten bonus points each were available for climbing the Gangplank on Birchen's and Choked Crack on Chatsworth Edge. The checkpoint locations were all coded in crossword type clues. Penalty points were awarded for failure to solve. Eight competitors made faultless rounds within the time limit, so in the end it was all down to fiddle factors:

		Points	factor	Net
1=	Keith Gregson	65	1.25	81.25
	Mike Moss			
	Peter Scott			
4	Rock Hudson	60	1.35	81
5=	Chris Johnson	65	1.2	78
	Brian West			
7	Tony Raphael	59	1.3	76.7
8=	Phil Baker	65	1.15	74.75
	Bobby Gilbert			
	Bill Kenyon			
	Rob Tresidder			
12	George Fowler	55	1.35	74.25
13	Ron Chambers	60	1.2	72
14	Ian Brindle	65	1.1	71.5
15	Katie Baker	59	1.2	70.8
16	Roger Larkam	65	1	65
17=	Roy Eyre	60	1.05	63
	Clive Russell			
19	Helen Griffiths	40	1.4	56

Of the finishers with 65 points, Roger Larkam and Ian Brindle were fastest in 55 minutes.

RT

Oread Fell Race Cliff Inn, Crich

1990

An excellent day with a good route saw 16 Oreads and 15 Cliff Inn regulars tackling the course. Congratulations to Rob Tresidder who produced the fastest 5 checkpoint time of 1 hour 28 minutes and by the law of natural justice scooped the first prize and the much coveted Oread fell race trophy.

Thanks to those selfless Oreads who provided the checkpoint manpower and to everyone who contributed to the race charity - The People's Dispensary for Sick Animals. The race results are set out below.

F Phillips

Time:Check:Bonus:Penalty:Net

1	Rob Tresidder	1h28:5:52:13:39
2	Bobby Gilbert	1h32:5:52:17:35
3	Clive Russell	1h33:5:52:18:34
4	Helen Griffiths	1h21:3:36:06:30
5=	Jane Tresidder	1h25:3:36:10:26
	Esmond Tresidder	1h25:3:36:10:26
	Gwen Tresidder	1h21:3:32:06:26
8=	Anne-Marie Carrington	1h42:5:52:27:25
	Mike Wynne	1h42:5:52:27:25
10=	Chris Johnson	1h46:5:52:31:21
	John Gresty	1h46:5:52:31:21
12	Roger Larkam	1h52:5:52:37:15
13	Roy Ayre	1h54:5:52:39:13
14	John Linney	2h03:5:52:48:4
15	Chris Wilson	2h22:4:44:67:-23
16	Pete Amour	2h32:5:52:77:-33

Dovedale Dash

1990

The 38th dash was held in traditional conditions. The preceding week had been wet making the river crossing deep and the mud muddy but the day itself was sunny and sharp and quite cold in the shade. For the first time since Radders edited the newsletter sometime last century, here are as many of the Oread placings as I could find:

85	Rusty
127	Richard Hopkinson
135	Mike Wynne
190	Chris Radcliff
246	Rob Tresidder
269	Roger Larkam
323	Bobby Gilbert
329	Bill Kenyon
330	Richard Freestone
379	Pete Lancaster
458	Esmond Tresidder
530	Gwen Tresidder
579	Annie Carrington
581	Tony Raphael
668	Jane Tresidder
691	Ron Chambers
775	Steve Bissell
837	Ruth Gordon
877	Chris Wilson
1060	Andy Oakden
1088	Dave Helliwell
1111	Richard Halam
1116	Graham Foster
1180	Roy Sawyer
1198	Nat Allen
1206	Jenna Allen
1286	Hayley Allen
1287	Richard Allen
1412	Sally Tresidder

RT

Fifteenth Annual Oread Fell Race 1991

It was a dismal wet day for this year's race. In spite of this the numbers of competitors held up well and the race was much better supported than usual by a walking contingent in small parties totalling nearly a dozen. Many thanks to Sally and Kate, the soup making and serving stalwarts in their makeshift stone kitchen. After deductions for soup and squash, a total of £10.00 was donated to Comic Relief.

The course started and finished in Haywood and went first to the Tegness Pinnacle (where a clockwise circumnavigation was offered as an optional extra). A steep descent led to the bridge at Grindleford station and then an ascent almost as steep to Lawrencefield where runners were invited to climb Shallow Chimney or Grass Groove. Across the Surprise and up to Mother Cap which nearly everyone climbed. From there back across the Burbage brook and through Longshaw country park by way of the lake in Granby Wood.

I hope the marshals enjoyed scribbling and spectating as much as I did - thank you all.

RT

84	Steff Hobday
113	Mike Wynne
123	Richard Hopkinson
138	Rusty
241	Roger Larkam
251	Rob Tresidder
398	Esmond Tresidder
403	Mitchell Briggs
414	Chris Radcliffe
500	Bill Kenyon
612	Annie Carrington
830	Ron Chambers
889	Jane Tresidder
1063	Andy Oakden
1201	N Foster
1312	Dawn Hopkinson
1353	G. Fowler
1421	Colin Hobday
1430	Jenny Rafael
1431	Tony Rafael
1458	Pete Janes

	Start	Finish	A/s	Pen.	Time	Net.
1 Gresty	11:07:30	12:02:33	38m33	+ 0 =	38m33	55m03
2 Larkam	11:15:30	12:04:42	40m42	+ 0 =	40m42	49m12
3 Gilbert	11:17:00	12:05:42	41m42	+ 0 =	41m42	48m42
4 Chambers	11:09:00	12:07:42	43m42	+ 0 =	43m42	58m42
5 Lancaster	11:15:00	12:04:56	40m56	+ 4 =	44m56	53m56
6 Hopkinson	11:24:00	12:09:07	45m07	+ 0 =	45m07	45m07
Crosland	11:11:30	12:09:35	45m35	+ 0 =	45m35	58m05
7 Tresidder J	11:00:30	12:07:03	43m03	+ 6 =	49m03	72m33
8 Eyre	11:08:00	12:08:42	44m42	+ 6 =	50m42	66m42
9 Hudson	11:10:00	12:07:59	43m59	+ 9 =	52m59	66m59
10 Tresidder, G	11:08:00	12:11:55	47m55	+ 6 =	53m55	69m55
10 Hobday	11:01:00	12:09:46	45m46	+ 9 =	54m46	77m46
Baker	11:13:00	12:10:14	46m14	+ 9 =	55m14	66m14
11 Radcliffe	11:18:00	12:19:42	55m42	+ 0 =	55m42	61m42
12 Jonson	11:13:00	12:29:17	65m17	+ 0 =	65m17	76m17
Briggs	11:10:00	12:35:49	71m49	+ 4 =	75m49	89m49
13 Raphael A & J	11:05:00	12:34:35	70m35	+ 9 =	79m35	98m35

(A/s: after scratch; Pen.: penalty minutes)

RT

Dovedale Dash 1991

A cold and sunless day this year, but yet again the rain held off until all the runners were safely in the pubs, most of them ruing yet again their lack of training. Several Oreads as well as others seem to have become infected with a computer virus which gave their club as "Bingham".

Some of these results have a distinctly nostalgic flavour; others not at all!

Two Girls' Debauchery

by Gail Male

It had been planned for weeks. Gil was to have Joanne for the day and I was to be released from duty to do as I pleased. Debauchery just had to be done. I spoke to Kate and she enthusiastically agreed.

A little bit of rain on the day wasn't going to stop us, oh no! We had planned a day of Debauchery and that was what we were going to do. The others in the plan weren't so keen, so Kate and I set off to High Tor without them. We weren't alone for long however. Two men had beaten us to it so we thought, but no, luck was with us, they weren't planning on Debauchery, so we got straight into it.

The first pitch passed uneventfully for me; what a surprise, it was the scene of a previous epic! This time a few grunts, a bit of heavy breathing and it was all over, phew. Kate had more fun involving a man, a length of rope, and the position of his nuts! Still it was soon sorted out and we were on the stance recovering ready for the second pitch.

The stance gave a beautiful view. I could see for miles. Wasn't that Gil and Joanne heading in the direction of the pub? Anyway I had better things to worry about, namely the second pitch. This was a little more problematical, it took a little more grunting, much more heavy breathing and a couple of false starts but all too soon it was over and I was at the top of High Tor feeling on top of the world.

After a minor communication problem which left Kate a little tied up on the stance, she soon cruised up behind. A few congratulations to each other and we were hot legging it to the pub to see if Gil and Joanne were still sober!

The Monster Lob

Anon

The route was a long, overhanging crack. Fingerlocking in some places, jamming in others. For some reason I had convinced myself I could do it and so here I was, making for the top, running on empty.

I had somehow made it over the crux overhang.

Strenuous moves on poor fingerlocks were rewarded with excellent hand jams. However the angle was still well over vertical and there was another thirty feet to the top.

I powered on, the finger locks were all perfect now, every one a sinker, the runners rattled down the crack to wedge perfectly, deep in the back. It was a case of climb, place runner, clip, climb, place runner, clip. I was rapidly running out of large chunky wires to place. I was rapidly running out of strength.

There was the top, only another fifteen feet to go. My arms were at the point of giving up. Should I put another runner in or should I just run it out to the top and glory? I didn't have any more gear the right size so I carried on to glory.

Pull on the finger lock, bring the feet up, another finger lock, not quite so good. Don't think, just keep pulling. Bring the feet up. Reach up to NOTHING!

A sandy flared pocket was the best I could find. I balanced, pawing at the hold for maximum friction. To the right of me I could see chalk, up the wall where the route was supposed to go. I couldn't get across to the holds I had missed. I wasn't sure I could reverse the move. Grabbing my bunch of RPs I vainly tried to get one to hold in a poor crack.

My fingers started to uncurl. I thrust the RPs between my teeth and vainly tried to get a grip again with my other hand. It was no good, I was off. I tried to shout a warning to Greg, but with a mouth full of RPs only a plaintive gurgle came out. He had in fact been so taken in by my rapid progress up the last few feet that he'd paid out plenty of rope thinking I was about to pull onto the top.

As I toppled backwards I looked down for the last runner. I was convinced that it must be obscured below a small overhang just beneath my feet, but as I fell out I could see it was in fact some ten feet lower.

Oh boy, this is going to be the big one.

I hurtled through the air conscious of rock rushing past me at great speed. Usually a fall is over so quickly that you hardly have time to think about it. This one seemed to go on and on. I never actually felt frightened. I knew the runners were bombproof and would stop me eventually. I find that once I have fallen off and am committed to trusting the gear, it is impossible to believe it won't stop me. Having reached the point of no more decisions it is impossible to think of the alternative ending.

I stopped slowly. This turned out to be because I had pulled Greg off his feet and about six feet into the air.

We stared at each other for a second, both quite shocked, then both burst out laughing.

From Our Own Correspondents

Letter From The Karakorum Highway

1/9/91

Judy and I are sitting either side of the aisle on one of the gaudy Pakistani buses, slightly barrel shaped, roof piled high with baggage and bulging at the seams. We are about three rows forward of the front seat; there is a door immediately behind us and a sea of bobbing heads in front. The driver is to say the least "progressive" in his driving, and before darkness fell we had some dramatic views of the Indus hundreds of feet below the highway through the rear door.

The road is so narrow that when vehicles pass there are only inches between the rear wheels and the crumbling edge of the highway (and the sickening drop); naturally the driver hardly slackens speed and the rear end of the bus lurches from side to side crashing up and down delivering a series of random body blows to the dozen or so hapless rear end passengers.

Jude is sharing a seat with a young Austrian lad. As for me I have a Pakistani sprawled across one and a half seats forcing me to hang grimly from a conveniently placed grab rail..... He's just taken his socks off! The socks are now hanging on the back of the seat in front, about a foot from my nose and they smell horrible!

An unhappy looking individual on the back seat is in the process of vomiting into the stair well and the sickly aroma of rice and dhal (not my favourite at the best of times; even first hand) is complementing "old smelly socks". Nobody attempts to open the door to clear the air or swill the floor; all look impassively ahead as the bus hurtles on into the night.

The most revolting sight has just appeared hovering alongside my seat between J. and myself; it's actually a toe. It belongs to the bloke immediately behind me. On the face of it he's attempted to push it through a mincer together with half a kg. of manure. The disgusting appendage is held together with a scrap of filthy rag from out of which regularly drips blood which in turn joins the mess in the stair well.

A moment ago the bus stopped to allow an older poorly dressed turbanned chap off. Unfortunately he'd misplaced one of his sandals and was therefore barefooted. There followed a mildly chaotic search with passengers standing up on seats while the old chap crawled along the floor prospecting for his footwear; meanwhile the conductor and driver growing ever more impatient. The sandal was eventually located and handed over to the conductor who threw it out into the night and likewise the wretched owner and his ragged bundle of belongings.

The driver is back to his task with renewed determination, a man possessed, with what, one hardly dare think, I've put myself in the hands of Allah now and just hope I'll survive the journey with nothing more than a few crushed vertebrae.

We've just pulled up in a one horse town, comprising

one long street lined with food stalls, hotels and arms/ammunition vendors' shops. Jude is slumped on the verandah of a weapons merchant's shop while I lie on the floor. Oh! The relief!

The rest of the passengers are in the restaurant next door, no doubt recharching their stomachs with rice and dhal ready for another volley into the rear seat well. The ambience is reminiscent of the wild west; one expects to see someone stagger out backwards from the establishment next door clutching their stomach and fall over in the dust; more likely as a result of the products sold there than gun shot.

The nightmare has finally ended after seventeen hours at six o'clock in the morning just as dawn and a monsoon downpour broke over Rawipindi. We thanked Allah for deliverance, found a cheap hotel and crashed out.

Pete Scott

Gil Male gets on his soap box:

Chalkies, Bolties, and Fuddy-Duddies

It has long been my "unbiased", "unbigotted", "unfounded", and "unwanted" opinion that things in life don't really change much. It's that perennial syndrome. Summer follows spring, autumn follows summer, winter follows autumn and in England you can never tell which is which. Simple really isn't it?

It's like climbing controversy; grumble, grumble - we've heard it before.

"Pegs; bang and dangle?"

"Bits of tat; makes the crag look like a Christmas tree!" and now.....

"Bolts; anyone can climb with those above their heads!"

Well no matter what you say about these things, they don't help much on some routes. What's more they won't be the last technical innovations which hit the sport. One day, however, like pegs, they may rust away, fall out or simply become mistrusted. Just like many of the old Derbyshire route grades.

Now don't get me wrong. I don't support the indiscriminate use of bolts, threads or pegs and I certainly think they should not be used except where necessary. But when is necessary really necessary?

"What grade do you think Elder Crack is?"

"Is dogging cheating?"

"Does a top roped ascent mean a tick in the book?"

Well all of this is good pub talk so time for more opinions!

Everyone knows that a top roped ascent of a route means you haven't really done it, that dogging is cheating

From Our Own Correspondents

and that there would be a lot more dogging on Elder Crack if it were possible. Does this mean that Elder Crack is a model route? You bet... well not really... all I can say about Elder Crack is that there could be more subtlety in climbing it than there is in this article.

Now, I'll bet by now you think that I'm really a chalky, bolty and my tights get ever more lurid as I read more issues of High magazine. Now let me tell you, under this slick, sleek, highly-trained, beer belly lies an old fuddy-duddy. An old fuddy-duddy just bursting to come out. Yeah, you can have lots more fun being a fuddy-duddy! You can even keep it going longer and there are lots of others who will join in. Lots more fuddy-duddies. Great isn't it?

Let me tell you the point of this article and why I want to be an old fuddy-duddy. I want our sport, fitness program, pastime, or pre-drinking excursions, whichever you want to call it, to last forever; not just for me but for the generations who follow and truly want to enjoy the hills. I don't want others to spoil it for them so I have listed some examples of behaviour that I've witnessed repeatedly on the crags this year. In my own "unbiased", "unbigotted" but not unfounded or I hope unwanted opinion I have suggested some excellent and far seeing ways of curing the problems listed. You don't have to support my methods of dealing with the problems but I hope you support my motives.

So here we go:-

a) Anorexic weirdos hanging above the walkers path underneath the Cornice in Cheedale drilling bolt holes with cordless electric drills.

That's nice isn't it? How long before the masses lobby the Peak Park to put a stop to this inconsiderate behaviour and ban climbing on the Cornice or other crags?

I SAY make the weirdos go to Sunday school. They might learn a thing or two and it'll stop them going out on Sundays. Yeah, that's a good idea.

b) Harrisons Rocks syndrome; ie endless top roping of routes of all grades on Derbyshire crags.

For heavens sake if you can't do the routes do something easier. Stop destroying the precious holds which have been there for centuries.

I SAY have passport control at Watford Gap and ban the wendies we catch doing this. Yeah, lets put wally stickers in their passports and stop them from coming up here.

c) Chipping of holds with wire brushes.

Oh yeah, we've all seen "hard" climbers doing this to prepare new routes. You can even see areas of crags that have been prepared in this way. This is bad, but now holds are getting chipped in long established routes using less subtle techniques. If you can't do the routes leave them for those who can.

I SAY catch the people doing this, stuff the tools up

their back sides and feed them with the contents of their chalkbags. Yeah, that'll stop them holding those tools for a while.

d) Litter scattered around crags and stuffed behind boulders and rocks.

For heavens sake are you too tired to carry it off the crag?

I SAY find out who's doing it and empty their dustbins in their living rooms. Better still, empty your dustbins in their living rooms. Let them live in it. Yeah, let them live in their own muck.

Yeah, yeah..... oh, ah, um I think perhaps I'm calming down a bit now.

Seriously though the kind of behaviour listed above is not wanted on Derbyshire's crags, or anywhere else for that matter. If you see people doing it please explain the folly of their ways. If we don't then one day the crags may become facilities with all the organisation which follows. Do you want to end up paying for highly organised outdoor rock gyms with McDonalds style litter monitors, route preparers and pay booths. I don't and I don't think you do.

Gil Male

What No Mountains ?

As one who is now what I believe is called a senior member of the Oread, having first accompanied the members in 1956 and joined in 1957, I felt I must put pen to paper to show that "we oldies" don't just disappear off the face of the earth, but do still take an interest in an active part in the Oread M.C.

As some of you may know, I moved south to Lat 50° 50' N, Long 0° 28' E (Oh that's my coastguard activities coming out - more of that later) Lets try Grid Ref TQ732068 and to those uninitiated - Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, in 1974.

East Sussex is an undulating heavily wooded (prior to the hurricane of 1987) county stretching from Shoreham in the west to Camber Sands in the east, and inland to almost Tunbridge Wells in the North. It's highest point is approximately 800 ft. It's claim to fame as far as walkers go is that it has the start and finish of the South Downs Way.

From a climbers point of view, the only area of significance is the white chalk cliffs to the West of Eastbourne rising to a height of 560 ft at Beachy Head. These cliffs are climbed on rare occasions but owing to the looseness of the chalk are not to be really recommended.

From Our Own Correspondents

As for Bexhill-on-Sea, this has the nickname of "Costa Geriatrica" as it has the largest percentage of pensionable people in relation to the overall population of around 38,000 (70% are in bed by 4.0pm !!).

Some of you will be wondering what all this rubbish is about - its got nothing to do with climbing I hear you say. Well it is to give some of you an idea of what to do if you move to one of the coastal counties with no mountains.

Many of you who climb on British coastal cliffs will have come across little white cabins on the cliffs (called lookouts) with H.M. COASTGUARD painted on them. Even sleepy Bexhill has one and that is where I headed once I was established down here. Yes, to get the adrenalin running and to help the community I signed up as an "Auxiliary Coastguard" as a spare time activity.

My reason for joining was that it had some interesting activities closely related to climbing and mountain rescue attached to it. Rescues over cliffs, breeches boy (now no longer used), co-ordination of the R.N.L.I. lifeboats on search and rescue missions, beach searches, use of ropes (bowlines, clove hitches, etc. etc.) and working alongside the RAF and the Royal Navy as well as our own helicopters.

The main role of H.M.C.G. is to coordinate all civil maritime search and rescue operations around the coast of the U.K. and 1000 miles out into the Atlantic. There are approximately 500 full-time regulars and 6500 auxiliary staff employed.

The coastguard keep a 24 hour watch 365 days of the year around the coastline. However you will not now see the C/G's in the lookouts as we are all equipped with radios and beepers when on call and therefore get called wherever we are at the time. Our own area is controlled from Dover 60 miles away.

In my own case, I operate across two teams, Bexhill and Eastbourne. As I work in Eastbourne I am a member of the Eastbourne Cliff team with task of recovering bodies from Beachy Head which has up to 25 suicides per year.

For each cliff rescue we need a minimum of six team members to put one member over the 560 foot cliff. Fortunately mechanised winches on the Landrovers take a lot of the strain and are capable of lifting the cliff man plus a casualty on a single line. However in view of the height and run out of the rope we will use two vehicles with a safety line.

Quite often we will call on the services of the Sea King, Search and Rescue Helicopter from RAF Manston to recover bodies where it is too dangerous for us to put a cliff man over from the top. These pilots are a credit to the service when operating to within feet of the cliff with very unpredictable turbulent winds close in.

Each year the coastguards handle some seven thousand incidents including three thousand one hundred offshore and nearly five hundred cliff and inshore rescues involving eleven thousand five hundred people.

I hope this has given some of the younger members some ideas if they do have to move away from the hills, and trust that no Oread member adds to the sea cliff rescues that occur each year. If you do, dial 999 and ask for the coastguard.

Chris Martin

Letter From Nanga Parbat Base Camp Above Rupal Village

29/8/91

We picked up food in Gilgit last Sunday and also by telegram confirmed our previous telegram confirming our telephone call confirming our Egypt Air flight to the U.K. Perhaps a picture postcard with love from Pete and Jude might clinch the matter?

Our preparations went smoothly apart from the matter of the eggs! We bought these in a bazaar. Our hotel manager offered to hard boil them prior to our early departure next morning. One dozen eggs were EVENTUALLY produced next morning albeit rather reduced in size, but only after huddled conversations, men being dispatched to the bazaar on bicycles and some considerable delay, all watched by four sleek Pakistani tourists tucking into three egg ommlettes at the breakfast table. Nothing is ever straight forward, somehow the hotel staff never did get round to producing any breakfast for us.

We spent the day travelling by three different jeeps until an hour after dark when we found ourselves dumped in the middle of nowhere. It was a typical subcontinent scenario where one moment the future is unknown but after sitting around in the sun and dust or the gloomy confines of a shack, drinking chai, listening to 360 degrees of opinion from anyone and everyone, matters resolve themselves and one makes a few hours bone shaking progress.

The day comprises a series of bemusing vignettes. Our second drop at a collection of chai stalls called Bunji provided us with a warm welcome from an elderly man who gave us tea and delicious chicken soup. A demonstration of the method of production was graphically provided by the slitting of a hen's throat and subsequent decapitation. Our "plastic Sainsbury" culture was somewhat inadequate to cope with this as we were then presented with the unusual spectacle of a headless chicken flopping around in the dust.

The elderly proprietor turned out to have been a porter on Hertlingkoffer's expedition to Nanga Parbat in the 1950's when Herman Buhl made the final ascent alone and was said to have aged forty years in a single day. Buhl having made the first ascent of the mountain and lived to tell the tale, was accused by Hertlingkoffer, a notoriously arrogant and autocratic man, of disobeying orders and

From Our Own Correspondents

there was violent dissention in the camp, all witnessed by the "chicken-soup" man.

From Bunji we had to retrace our steps a few km. because the locals said it was impossible to get lifts just there. Back we went to Jaglot with the son of the "chicken-soup" man. He fixed a lift for us in a jeep full of dark, bearded fierce looking characters. The son then waved us goodbye, whispering "be careful, this place is full of wild people".

An hour later we screeched to a halt for the first of the journey. Where? At the "chicken-soup" man's stall!

Actually, all the wild men turned out to be harmless and friendly and we had an interesting conversation with a fanatical Kashmiri freedom fighter over yet another free cup of chicken soup.

One bloke (there's always one) wasn't really very pleasant. Fat, smelly armpits, pretending to be our friend (too friendly), asking all sorts of questions, inducing pins and needles of the foot, leg, arm or shoulder depending on which bit of his blubbery body he decided to press against me or Jude.

At 4pm we had reached Astore where it was necessary to find onward transport. We found ourselves in a chai house dimly lit and full of more "wild men". Conflicting information was abundant but our chai was paid for by one of the other customers. BO fussed over and announced he had fixed us up a good deal for Rs.500 for the next leg of the journey but we declined, knowing Rs.100 to be nearer the going rate. Business was eventually concluded however and we found ourselves bumping along in a new jeep with a fresh set of "wild men".

Jude had been transferred to the cab, sandwiched between BO and a rather "academic" but narrow schoolmaster from a remote side valley up which we were later to detour en-route to our final destination.

"Do you believe in one god Allah?"

"Do you believe there was only one prophet, Mohammed?"

"What is your issue?"

I think he found it difficult to cope with;

"No!"

"No!"

"None!"

from his female travelling companion.

Meanwhile BO's arm was flopped casually over Jude's shoulder, it made a change, it had flopped over mine earlier in the day.

As the sun began to set we turned up a side gorge and came to a pleasant village set in green fields, the home of the schoolmaster. He introduced us to his daughter who was finishing of the day in the fields with the other women of the village and then took us down to the school.

The school comprised of twelve tiny, dark classrooms and practically no resources, twelve teachers and a headmaster, the facility being limited to the boys. Prior to

1947 this village had lain on the main route between Shrinagar and Gilgit but since partition Europeans were unknown. Villagers gathered around in friendly amazement, the schoolmaster indicating we were the first Europeans many of them had ever seen.

The jeep driver who had been further up the valley returned and the three remaining passengers set off in twilight and then darkness to a spot on the map called Rumpar Bridge where we were duly and unceremoniously dropped off. Our companion, a silent youth with poorly eyes indicated that there was a rest house in Rumpar a ten minute diversion on foot. I was for sleeping out under the stars but Jude had heard stories about a stone throwing madman in a nearby village and insisted we walk to the rest house. Muttering darkly I followed with a very heavy rucksack. Half an hour later we arrived, weary and tired. The place was in darkness, the doors padlocked. There was no sign of life.

"The Shadow" tried each of the padlocked doors in turn, after which it was clear there were going to be no further developments that night. We, that is I, announced that the concrete verandah was to be our final resting place. We cooked a meal of soup, fish and biscuits, shared it with our silent friend and bedded down for the night. "The Shadow" was clearly disconcerted, possessing no more than a small cardboard box containing a paraffin lamp and some newly purchased plates, cups and cutlery. Communication was impossible and we guiltily pretended to turn over and sleep. Through half open eyes we observed "The Shadow" miserably clutching his cardboard box and tears rolling down his cheeks. We felt bad.

Next morning after a sound night's sleep we awoke to find ourselves alone.

In two or three hours we walked and hitched a tractor to the small village of Tarshing at the end of the jeep track, experiencing the usual social interaction along the route. Resting in the shade of a tree in Churnett we gathered around us three old men, six young children and a young man who offered his services as porter and guide to base camp. By Tarshing Judy had begun to see much sense in the concept and eventually for Rs.200 she engaged a charming old chap to carry my rucksack while I was engaged for Rs.ZERO to porter her rucksack. Were we glad? It was worth every rupee!

Our campsite was a delightful flat grass meadow with stream and firewood, sheltered by the lateral moraine of the glacier. We were quite alone for the first twenty four hours. The weather being clear, the Rupal Wall of Nanga Parbat was revealed rising 15,000ft. from the base to the summit, just sixty minutes stroll from our tent. I can only say we felt with our situation and with each other.

The weather has not remained good but the very next day was sunny enough but too hazy with flat light for good photography so our photos will be "holiday snaps" and not lecture material.

We decided to take an excursion across the glacier

which took an hour and a half. It was a dry glacier and not too far as the crow flies, but chaotic and huge pressure ridges made the route finding difficult, rather like a labyrinth. It was clear that the locals travelled across daily, herding cattle and ponies, but none were there to show the way. However on the return, just as we were lost and despairing in the middle, three bovine faces peered 'round an ice tower. Saved! I urged Jude to grab hold of a cow's tail (unfortunately too short to wrap around her middle and secure with a bowline) and within a short time we were back on route and safely back in camp within the hour. We made a grand caravan; three cows, an intrepid maiden and a not so "world famous mountaineer" bringing up the rear.

Well! After that adventure on Nanga Parbat and reflecting on the fate of many other truly world famous mountaineers in the past, we stayed close to the tent, reading adventure books and gorging ourselves on porridge, tinned fish and apricot kernels.

We are now packed and just about to leave Nanga Parbat for Holloway and The Croft.

Peter Scott and Judy Wood

New Route:

The Belper Crack

30ft. HVS 4c

In the convent grounds on the E side of the A6, just to the N of the bridge over the railway at the N end of the town.

Takes the obvious overhanging crack on the highest part of the crag. Not well protected.

First recorded ascent: R Tresidder, R Larkam, 16.5.84.

This is the eye catching crack on the left as you approach Belper after being rained off at Matlock. Parking at the foot of the climb.

Looking For a Familiar Shape of Extraordinary Dimensions

by Katy Baker

We hacked our way through the encroaching weeds following a narrow track that seemed to bear some resemblance to the route on our map.

Our confidence in succeeding in climbing *Cavall Bernat* was not high. We had grown used to the cycle of emotions associated with climbing at *Montserrat*: Smugness, bewilderment, anger and anxiety. The smugness is engendered as you complete your arduous walk-in in sub-guidebook time. This is closely followed by bewilderment as these great characterful humps of rock, the Elephant, Mummy, Bishop etc, so clear on the approach, become an unidentifiable patchwork of identical rock when seen through the thickly intertwined branches of the trees at their base. Later, much later when you have scouted up various promising gullies you angrily conclude that the guidebook is fundamentally wrong and you might as well ignore it completely. Finally, when you commit yourself to a route which blind instinct tells you must be right, there is the tricky discovery that any pitch below, or even at 5a may be casually protected only once every fifty feet.

And so we stumbled on.

But what is this? We have emerged from our green jungle into a blackened landscape, blighted by fire, and clearly to be seen, like a phallus rising from the ashes (sic), is IT, the Big Willy, *Cavall Bernat* itself! We square our shoulders grinning at the sight of this 800ft joke pinnacle, so well deserving of its nickname.

Could it be that we are going to reach our route without mishap – there's nothing in the wasted landscape that could possibly conceal this piece of ultimate exposure.

Only fifteen minutes later we emerge at the base of Big Willy. But tension is mounting; another party is on OUR ROUTE. It seems however that their ascent is not going smoothly. During our approach the leader has made two abortive forays from the first belay point and seems now to be resting.

Bobby decides that we shall overwhelm them with a display of competence so that they concede the lead. He races off up the gently angled rock, pointedly ignoring the only two bolts in the first one hundred and twenty foot pitch. Team honour demands that I follow without hesitation, deviation or repetition and at all possible speed. Have we convinced the Spanish team?

Well it would appear that far from us needing to impress them by our virtuoso display, they were hoping to persuade us to place some protection for them as we shot up the route.

Bobby allows me to protect the next twenty feet but warns me menacingly not to nanny them any further. Such ungenerous advice is quite easily given as the communication barrier between the Spanish team and ours is particularly dense.

So off I go, happily clipping into the unusually frequent bolts. The slope of the rock is gradually steepening, there's nothing too strenuous, just interesting, thought provoking combinations of moves on the conglomerate allsorts rock.

The next pitch I lead is up a corner feature which is slightly loose but compensates by offering some comforting gear placements. Bobby arrives and we look down; way below, the Spanish team is in cautious retreat.

Bobby takes over as the steepness of the rock becomes silly. He's doing it free and enjoying the closely fought fight. Steadily gaining on the rock he only needs to clip every other bolt, they are so frequent.

I am relaxed, hanging from at least six anchors, absorbing the place and our success so far. When it's time for me to follow up these last pitches, I unclip my etriers and take the A1 approach as recommended in the guide book.

Now it's easy angled again to the top which is roomy and flattish – there's even a wrought iron statue of the Madonna and child up here.

This is obviously the ideal photo opportunity; happy couple, end of route, bit of culture in the background. As we try to work out the remote control gadget on my camera there is a rumble of thunder. Determined to get our shot we pose, gritting our teeth as the drum rolls become louder and more frequent.

ACTION STATIONS! First abseil off the bottom of the statue (how unfortunate that lightning is attracted to elevated metal objects), then hunt desperately for the next chain in the abseil descent. Rain is pattering around us and the storm is very close as we run down the rock onto the shoulder connecting Willy to the cliff behind, but laughing, chattering with enthusiasm we relive our day as we head down the path back to camp.



Left - Cavall Bernat from the approach path

Below - Katy belaying on one of the upper pitches

Photos - Bobby Gilbert





Dave Owen 1955 - 1990 Cyril Douglas Milner

Oreads will be sad to hear of Dave Owen's untimely death.

There is a terrible irony in Dave's taking his own life: he was such a gentle and thoughtful character who had many friends, all of whom thought well of him. When he drew back from the climbing scene, many of us felt unhappy that we didn't know how to encourage or help a friend with whom we had spent many enjoyable days on the hills.

Earlier, there were few weekends or holidays when Dave was not to be found alone or with companions on crag, fell or mountain absorbing and delighting in the physical and aesthetic appeal of our sport.

We shall all miss Dave. Is there any one of us who has a greater love of the hills?

Pete Scott

Those of us who have been privileged to spend time with Dave will remember him for his commitment to the hills, his humour and above all his thought for others.

His enjoyment of our sport ranged from walking in Derbyshire, through rock climbing to Alpine mountaineering.

An enemy of no man, Dave's warm personality belied a private person with uncompromising standards. He died tragically.

Climbing, broadened by the achievements of others, would be nothing without our experiences with others. Dave shared in those to the full.

Roger Larkam

An appreciation of Cyril Douglas Milner, member of The Alpine Club and honorary member of The Oread.

Douglas, one of the great characters of the climbing world, passed away in the early part of this year.

We of the Oread will remember him best for his wonderful style of judging in so many Oread photographic competitions during the sixties, seventies and eighties. His comments, criticisms and praise, in front of a packed and eager audience, monocle at the ready for each and every slide, his witty repartee with the beer swillers at the back, have never been equalled.

Douglas was well qualified as a photographic judge and wrote many books on the subject. His original book was "Mountain Photography", written forty years ago. This was followed by "The Photography of Scenery" and the still current "Focal Guide to Mountains".

Douglas was a true Oread and loved the mountains in all their aspects. A skilled rock climber, alpinist and photographer, his finest book was "Rock for Climbing" (now a collectors' piece). It includes superb photographs of the Alps and the Dolomites and in this book and in our hearts he will always be remembered.

Gordon Gadsby

The Novice Supervision Sub-committee

Richard Coghlan

Friday evening saw the usual rush by the O.M.C. at Portmadog Station to bag an entire carriage for themselves and their obese rucksacks. Tomorrow's weather forecast was open to some interpretation but was not good. It didn't matter anyway, the details of the previous days committee meeting in the Brunswick were still fresh in my mind:

"John's still got one to do. You're going to Wales this weekend Richard, can you look after it?"

Damn, I'd copped for it again. I had planned to do some proper climbing with Andrew, after all that was the whole idea of going to Wales this weekend. He would have to find someone else to climb with now.

The journey didn't take long because we were being pulled by one of the new diesels. They saved the steamers for tourists, and tourists didn't usually want to pay to go on joy rides at this time of night. It still gave time for John to ask all the questions that I would have expected so I launched into my customary spiel.

"They effectively stopped cars from entering the park in 2002. The rules still say at least four people per car and the toll is now over five hundred ECU's. That's why we're leaving the car in Portmadog. You don't have to pay if you're on the A5 in transit through Ogwen, but you're not allowed to stop if you haven't paid. I remember when I started climbing, anyone could drive straight in, leave the car anywhere they liked and walk anywhere they liked."

Streaks of rain began to appear on the windows. At least the hills hadn't changed, nor the weather. I could feel fairly confident that we would be back down the railway to Tremadoc next day. With the current situation that meant Christmas Curry before being able to turn our attention to anything else. John needed to lead another severe on a designated training route before getting his climber's licence.

Christmas Curry hadn't been the same since they put a bolt every 4 metres up the route, but I would still expect John to place gear as if he weren't also using the bolts and, of course, mark the quality of his efforts. I always thought it strange, every time I did this, because I had never been able to do much above V.S. myself. I had been around long enough to gain the status of club instructor. Experience and the ability to climb were all that was needed for this according to the B.M.C.

The train arrived at Rhydd-Ddu station and the carriage emptied into the hut. It was John's first time at Tan-yr-Wydrfffa so I had to show him 'round.

"Who are all these people in the photographs around the room?"

"Oh, past presidents. We get a new one every couple of years. Its quite a prestigious position because they say who's in the club and who's out."

What a change from the good old days! The new laws forbade walking away from the road unless one belonged to a B.M.C. recognised club. The club size was limited to 150 in the case of the Oread. The limit on numbers kept down erosion in prime sites such as Snowdonia and elevated the Oread M.C. and similar clubs to institutions of national repute. John wouldn't get in. Newly qualified climbers needed a few years to 'prove themselves' to stand a chance against the committee and to avoid the presidents veto.

Working within the confines of European law was not easy at first. All insufficiently active members had to be chucked out. It caused quite a furore when some of the pioneers of the sport had to go, but what else could we do? I kept my place by volunteering to supervise novices, others made sure that the president was well supplied with beer at the Brunswick.

John was working backwards from the recent, formally posed, suit and tie portraits to the slightly faded photographs of past presidents actually climbing.

"I see that bright red sweaters and some very odd pairs of trousers were in fashion in the early '90's."

"Yes, I used to know the individuals concerned. I remember John Hudson leading me up the Triple Buttress on Beinn Eighe."

I didn't admit that I had to glance at the name plate. I couldn't remember names even in my youth. The noise of the front door being shut diverted me from my reminiscences. I remembered that time was pressing, yet everything had to be done by the book because of the legal implications of even a minor accident the next day. No problem. I turned to John and said,

"Coming down the pub? We'll do the briefing session in there."

'D' Gully Buttress

by Tony Fidler

I stood on the steep slopes of the Buachaille, breathing hard and envying Alistair for his boots. The relentless kicking of steps in hard snow had left my legs tired and me behind Alistair's shrinking dark silhouette.

I felt sorry for myself with my old leather boots. I had struggled to don them as they had frozen solid overnight and had had to hold them under the car heater until they were soft enough for me to force my feet into them. With crampons tightly buckled the boots felt cold to my feet and hurt. I pressed on up the avalanche debris to where Alistair had already prepared a small stance.

The outstanding beauty of this area enhanced with a curvaceous blanket of snow slowly seeped into my eyes as my heartbeat slowed.

My first impression of Scottish winter climbing protection was that there are surprisingly few placements and I was under no illusions about this route. Alistair invited me to undertake the first pitch with a few words of encouragement and a lot of slack rope.

Straight forward enough I thought and swiftly headed off to get stuck into the first rock band. Stuck was an understatement.

All that wonderful pure white snow, into which I was going to plunge my axes and obtain the rare pleasure of making my own holds at will, offered not a hint of purchase. I managed to secure a few axe placements in what little ice there was and balanced and sweated my way to the first ledge. It was here I placed my first peg in anger and have never been so please to hear the ringing change to a dull thud.

I stepped out onto a snow covered slab, first one foot to test the snow and then the other. Standing there for a few brief moments I realised that the snow was crumbling beneath my feet. I would try a number of foot placements before I was finally forced to choose the best of what remained of the snow.

The thought of slipping, of downward movement with all those bits of steel clamped to my feet and axes looped to my wrists, focused my attention on each step or axe placement as they struck rock. This was powder snow with a veneer of ice at it's best. I reached the end and sat on the broad back of the buttress pleased that Alistair was going to lead the next pitch which looked horrendous.

Some clanging later and a short lecture on what the various pegs were used for, and it would have been better to use this thin peg rather than that one, and Alistair neatly avoided the vertical nasty and nipped

round to the left along the obvious ledge system. I managed one camera shot which merely served as a reminder before Alistair disappeared and was pulling at the rope for me to follow.

I arrived at the stance and looked at the next pitch. My heart sank as my eyes slowly picked their way up the front of the buttress. No nifty little ledge system here, I thought.

To my surprise the texture of the snow was somewhat better than that below, and the face was less steep than it had first appeared.

At about forty feet I could see a cleared patch of snow some feet above the traverse line offering a hint of protection. As I neared the cleared patch, the buttress steepened and I became aware of just how far up I was. An extra twelve feet seemed a long way at that precise moment but I had a real need for protection as the traverse line looked thin.

I was suitably impressed on arrival and much reassured. Back down at the traverse, and with a top rope, I set off with renewed vigour. All went well until the 'thin bit', when the angle of the rope and the depth of the snow amounted to rock climbing with crampons and with one move to make I hesitated for good reason. I couldn't climb with the axes, they felt ungainly in my hands with no firm placement to be found. The traverse ended with a narrow ramp on an awe inspiring drop down to the valley floor.

In an effort to maintain my balance I placed two front points on the edge of the ramp, and slowly moved my body round the arete using the pick of one axe as a dagger and disregarding the other in favour of the gloved hand. The axe scratched and skidded and my hand padded for what purchase it could gain until for one brief moment it all seemed in vain. Confidence waned until I had almost resigned to the fall, but with final resolve I gained the ramp. The rope ran back behind me to the runners and to Alistair but all seemed distant and insecure.

The ramp reached up for a further forty feet and I began to make my way up slowly, grateful for the reduced angle, but fearful of the delusive powder snow. Padding with crampons was a new experience for me and one I was pleased to come to the end of as I lashed myself to a large spike.

The remainder of the route cut through deep powder snow as we made our way up the gulleys, across the slopes, and finally to the summit to witness a fine winter sunset of pastel blues and contrasting blood red streaks before the surrounding peaks were enveloped in twilight.

Club Finances Over the Last Five Years

Roger Larkam

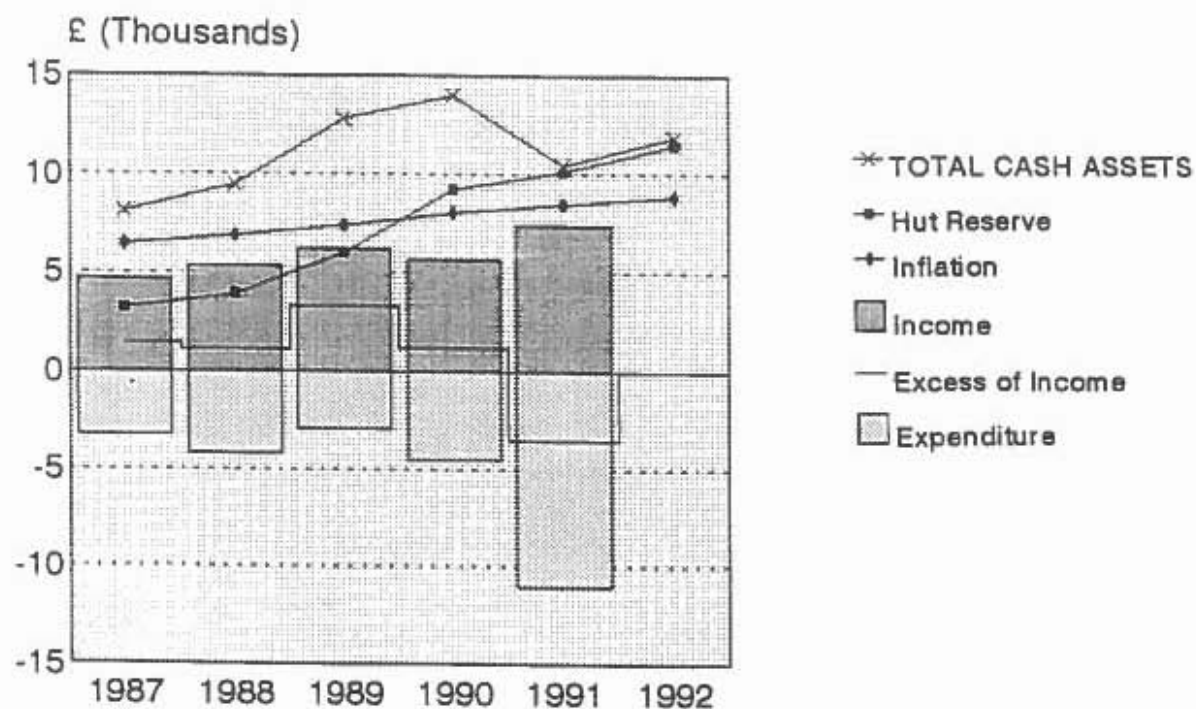
The charts on the following page show the club income and expenditure and a break down of how these are made up. Notice the line of inflation which shows the rate of depreciation of money.

The total cash assets represent the total money the club has at hand, the majority of which is kept in the Hut reserve fund.

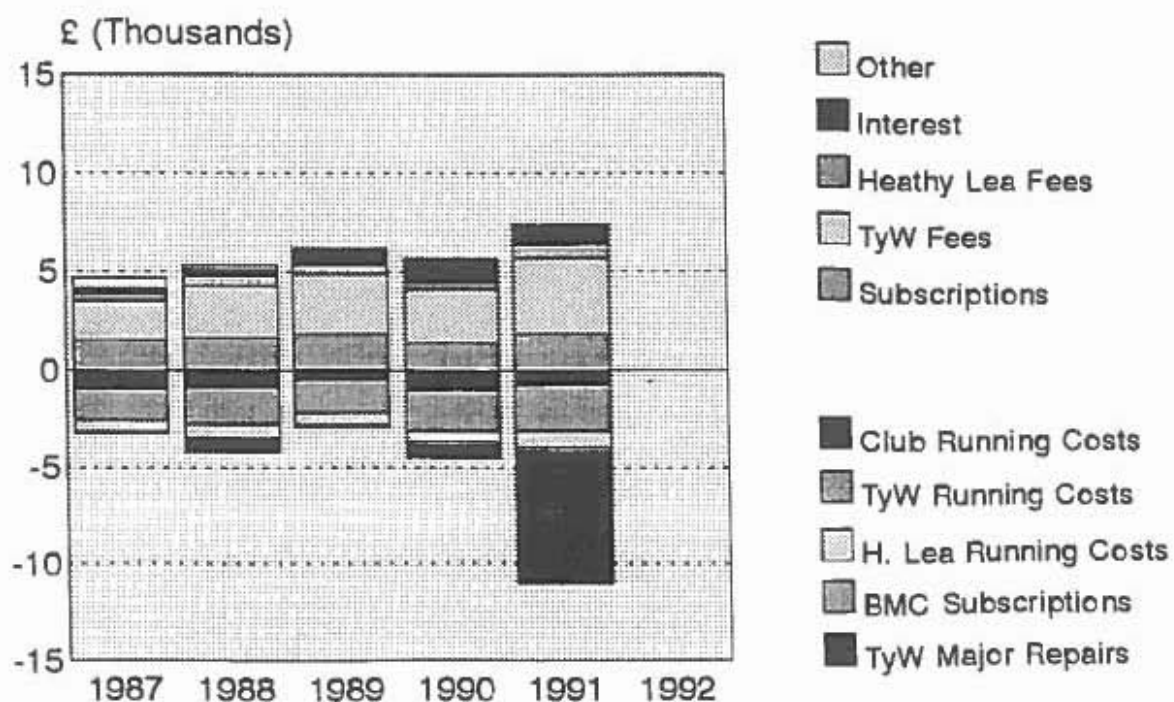
The following points are of interest:

- **Yearly operation account in surplus except when major repairs to property has been required (1991: £6862).**
- **Total cash assets maintained such that hut reserve has been increased in real terms each year.**
- **Hut reserve maintained to provide fund for major Tan-yr-Wyddfa maintenance.**
- **Total assets reduced in 1991 as a result of funding dry rot and roof repairs at Tan-yr-Wyddfa.**
- **Major income is hut fees.**
- **Major expenditure is hut running costs.**
- **Tan-yr-Wyddfa running costs increasing at an average of 13% per year (i.e. in excess of inflation).**

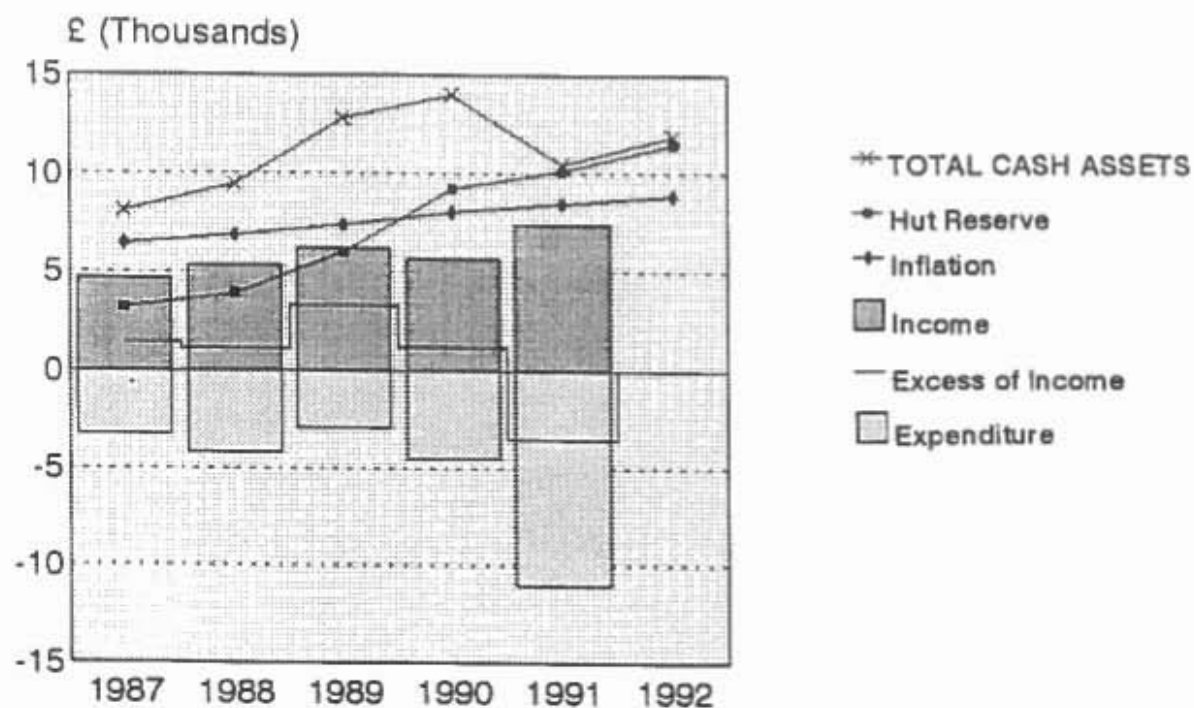
Comparison of Assets and Current Account Surplus



Break Down of Income and Expenditure



Comparison of Assets and Current Account Surplus



Break Down of Income and Expenditure

