

Oread Mountaineering Club Magazine

March 2026



On the summit of the Point du Dard 3204 m. Vanoise National Park – an appetiser for this year's Alpine Meet.

Photo Steve Christian, see page 9 for the story.

Editorial

Meets coming up include a working party **this weekend 28 Feb – 1 March** to get Heathy Lea ready for reopening then the last winter indoor meet - our photo competition on 3 March, the ever popular Patterdale meet, a Geo walk and details of the summer alpine meet. It's A.G.M. time again - see page 7 for details.

Write ups include a fascinating account of what's involved in caring for the Derby Cathedral peregrines – and an opportunity to get involved plus a trip to Madeira, local walks and memories from the 1940s.

Copy Deadline 20 March.

Meets List 2026 - Edward Bloomfield

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



	Dates	Hut/Location/title	Description	Leader
M a r c h	4th	Edale/Kinder	Wednesday walk	Simon Pape
	6-8th	George Starkey Hut Patterdale	Winter Lake District meet	Pip Leach
	12-17th	Toubkal Alpine walking/ climbing	Atlas Mountains	Ngel Berry
	12th	Munninglow	Thursday short walk	Rusty Russell
	21st	Alport Heights	Pre AGM Saturday walk	John Gwyther
	21st	Bear, Alderwasley	AGM	Mike Moss
	22nd	Black Rocks	Spring Stride Post AGM Sunday walk	Ngel Briggs
	0	0	0	0
A p r i l	1st	Ecton	Wednesday walk	Ngel Briggs
	3-12th	Easter meet Fort?	Bouldering in Fontainebleau	?????
	16th	Monyash	Thursday short walk	Chris Paice
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	25th	Birchen Cough - Fairholmes	Geowalk Saturday	Louise Amandini
	24-26th	Edale	Pennine Way in stages (stage 1)	Neil Weatherstone
M a y	24-26th	TyW North Wales	Climbing & walking, North Wales	Ngel Berry
	0	0	0	0
	1-8th	Cornwall camping meet	Climbing and walking, Cornwall	Edward Bloomfield
	13th	Charnwood Forest	Wednesday walk	Mike Rittig
	15-17th	Heathy Lea	New members meet	??
	0	0	0	0
	21st	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	23rd	tbc	Saturday walk	Louise Amandini
J u n e	0	0	0	0
	22-26th	Scotland Glen Nevis	Walking and Climbing meet	Michael Moss
	0	0	0	0
	3rd	tbc	Wednesday walk	Nick Evans
	12-19th	Fairhead (Belfast)	Climbing and walking meet, Northern Ireland	Kevin Raisin Moss
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	20th	Fairholmes - Upper Burbage	Geowalk Saturday	Jan Wilson
	25th	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	26-28th	Little Langdale Fylde MC Hut	Climbing and walking meet, Lake District	Snod Helliwell?
	0	0	0	0

J u l y	1st	Monsal Head	Wednesday walk	Pete Amour
	3-7th	Tyw	Maintenance meet	Snod
	2-5th	hut to hut lakes walking meet	walking meet	seyhan turan
	10-12th	Yrns Eitws, CCHut, Llanberis Pass	Climbing in Llanberis Pass	Ed Bloomfield
	0	0	0	0
	17-19th	Cader Idris	camping meet, walking/climbing, North Wales	Ngel Berry
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	23rd	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	25th	Mow Cop 23km	Saturday walk	Nick Evans
A u g u s t	31-2nd Aug	Coniston Copper Mines, YMCHut	Climbing and walking meet, Lake District	???
	5th	Danebower Hallow	Wednesday walk	Rusty Berry
	8th-15th	Val Cenis Vanoise national park	alpine meet	Berry
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	22nd	0	Geowalk Saturday	Rachel Walker
	0	0	0	0
	27th	tbc	Thursday short walk	Chris Paice
	28-31st	Pembroke camping meet	Climbing and walking meet	0
S e p t e m b e r	2nd	tbc	Wednesday walk	Chris Mather
	5-12th	Lundy Island	Climbing meet	Kevin Raisin Moss
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	24th	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	26th	tbc	Saturday walk	Stuart Firth
	25-27th	Holyhead, Rhoscolyn	Climbing & Camping weekend	Alan Monks
	24-27th	cairn gorm bothys	Bothy walking meet	Seyhan Turan
O c t o b e r	3-4th	heathy lea	maintenance meet	kevin rm
	7th	tbc	Wednesday walk	Ngel Briggs
	0	0	0	0
	9-18th ish	Kalymnos	Sport Climbing	Emma Hayes
	15th	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	24th	Upper Burbage Bridge - Robin Hood 15k	Geowalk finale Saturday	Gill Radcliffe
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	30-1st	Tyw North Wales	Curry meet, Climbing and walking	Tony Howard
N o v e m b e r	4th	tbc	Wednesday walk	Rachael Walker
	6-8th	Heathy Lea	Bonfire Night	???
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	14th	Annual Dinner tbc	0	0
	15th	Walk	Post Prandial walk tbc	???
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	25th	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	26th-6th dec	Wadi Rum Jordan	Climbing meet	Ed Bloomfield
	0	0	0	0

D e c e m b e r	2nd	0	Wednesday walk	Steve Booth
	4-6th	Bullstones Meet	0	??
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	23rd	tbc	Thursday short walk	Ruth Gordon
	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0
	26th	tbc	Boxing Day walk	tbc

Heathy Lea temporary restriction on overnight stays

A lot of hard work is ongoing by committee members, the hut committee and some very much appreciated volunteers to ensure that Heathy Lea will reopen for overnight use as soon as possible. Chatsworth Estates have confirmed that they are willing to renew the lease on similar terms when it expires in March 2027 and are being cooperative about making a fire exit in the toilet/shower room and getting a fire alarm system fitted. Fire boarding and plastering of lounge and kitchen ceilings has been completed by volunteer members.

Updates on progress will come via the newsletter and email.

We're having a meet at Heathy Lea this Saturday (28 Feb) and Sunday (1 March) to help get the hut open again.

There are tasks available for everyone, indoors and outside. So, if you would like to help, the club will be very grateful.

New Reciprocal Rights with the Rucksack Club

Ed has managed to negotiate kindred club status with the Rucksack Club. Well done that man.

They have three huts, at Ballachulish, near Glencoe, at Seathwaite in the Duddon Valley, Lake District, and at Nantperis. He will be booking them for next year's meets list but if you wish to use them on your own you should use their website to contact the relevant Hut Warden, telling them you are Oread and you will receive a discounted rate for kindred clubs. <https://rucksackclub.org/>

Rusty's puzzle corner

Where in the U.K. are the most caprine and ovine mountain features, that is to say upward trending and suitable for climbing or scrambling (absolute verticality is not insisted upon)?

Answers to your Hon. Ed. Email alistair.ruth@btinternet.com

Forthcoming Meets

Tuesday 3 March 2026 Oread Photo Competition



OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB
PRESENTS

WINTER LECTURE SEASON FINALE

A FUN-FILLED EVENING OF PHOTOGRAPHY

To round off the Winter Lecture Season, you are invited to a relaxed and entertaining evening of photos by Oread members.

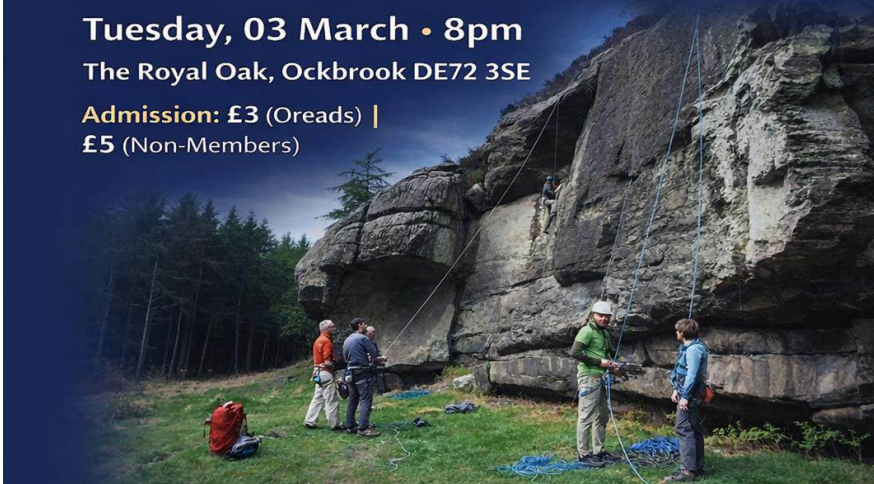
Expect:

- 📷 Fabulous photography from our talented members
- 😄 A few more mediocre snaps from others
- 🗣️ Audience participation, laughter and prizes

Come along to be inspired, meet new people, and enjoy photos celebrating our favourite sport.

Tuesday, 03 March • 8pm
The Royal Oak, Ockbrook DE72 3SE

Admission: £3 (Oreads) | £5 (Non-Members)



Wednesday 4 March Mam Tor and Kinder Simon Pape

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

Please let me know if you're coming.

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

Thursday 5 March From Peaks to Peat ... looking after our uplands - Steve Charles BMC

The Fishpond pub (Ballroom), Matlock Bath 7pm for 7:30pm start. As walkers, climbers and mountaineers we inevitably end up 'taking' from the places we love. Steve is going to talk about some of the conservation pressures on our uplands and mountains and ways in which we all might help 'give back' a little. This Derwent M.C. event is open to all and free to enter .. with all donations on the night going to the BMC's wonderful Access and Conservation Trust.

6 - 8 March Patterdale Pip Leach

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

The hut itself is large and comfortable, it boasts a new log burner, so we should be cosy! Twelve beds have been booked so far, there is the possibility of increasing that number. Several people have booked on the meet already and others have expressed an interest in going. In the past, people have stayed additional nights, let me know if you would like to extend your stay. It's £12 pppn for Oreads and £18 for guests.

Join the Patterdale WhatsApp or contact me on 07941 395856 or pippasleach@gmail.com

12 March Short Walk Minninglow Clive "Rusty" Russell

This walk has moved a week earlier than usual to stay clear of the A.G.M. Walks. The rendezvous (specially chosen to be near the Oread population centre) will be Minninglow car park on High Peak Trail (map reference SK193582)) The car park is of course on the highway whereas Minninglow Hill proper is on the trail. This will be a circular field walk minimising the use of paved highways and participants will be expected to find the spot en route from which both Moat Low hill and Minninglow hill are visible. A small prize might be on offer for this. Meeting time 11 am.

Those wishing to avoid the Peak Park Board's extortionate parking charges may leave a car at my house (Slate House Parwich DE61QD, 2.5 miles further) and travel with me, first three to e mail me will be accommodated.

Clive Russell email zrussell2@googlemail.com tel. 07895 761615

Saturday 21 March Alport Height walk John Gwyther

The walk on the day of the A.G.M. will start at Alport Height NT free car park at 10.00.am It's 18km 414m ascent and will take around 5 hours. A circular route to Idridgehay, Kirk Ireton, Carsington Water (WC + picnic benches) with a more

northerly return route. A lot of the route is on very quiet metalled roads and there's also plenty of mud! Please let me know if you wish to join me.
John Gwyther tel. 07931 630974

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

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

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

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

Email mamoss@btinternet.com Tel 07932 420414

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

The officers' reports and the accounts will be circulated prior to the AGM, early in March. Questions are requested to be submitted in advance of the AGM and the responses will be provided at the AGM. Questions asked during the meeting will also be answered.

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

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

Sunday 22 March Spring Stride Nigel Briggs

Meet at Black Rock Car Park (SK291557) by the Kiosk/Toilet at 10:15 for a 10:30 departure.

The route essentially circumnavigates Alderwasley. From Black Rock we pass through Bolehill, picking our way south easterly before dropping down and through Shining Cliff Woods and joining the Midshires Way which we follow to the High Peak Trail which takes us back to Black Rock.

The distance is a little over 16 km with about 550 m of ascent. There is no obvious stop for refreshments on the route (other than at the start/finish) so bring a packed lunch with you.

Please let me know if you will be joining so we can look out for you at the start.

Nigel Briggs email – nigel.briggs@btinternet.com, tel. – 07939 660369.

Wednesday Walk - 1 April Around Ecton Nigel Briggs

Yes, there really is a walk on April Fools Day!

Meet at the car park by Weag's Bridge (SK099542) at 10:15 for a 10:30 departure. The route takes us through Wetton, to Ecton Hill, passing by Warslow before heading first south and then east to Wetton Mill, where afternoon tea could be taken, before strolling down the Manifold Valley, enjoying the spring sunshine, back to Weag's Bridge.

The distance is about 14 km with about 500 m of ascent. As we are in Staffordshire expect it to be muddy.

Please let me know if you will be joining.

Nigel Briggs email – nigel.briggs@btinternet.com, tel. - 07939 660369.

22-26 May Ben Nevis/Glen Nevis Michael Moss

Lots of opportunities for climbing, scrambling and walking here. I'm planning to camp at the Glen Nevis campsite which is walking distance from Fort William and close to the climbing on the Ben and Glen Nevis. The hope is to do some mountain rock routes on the north face. If the conditions aren't right then lower level routes in Glen Nevis are an alternative.

Michael Moss email mamoss@btinternet.com tel. 07932 420414

8 -15 August The Vanoise National Park Alpine meet Steve Christian

This years summer alpine meet takes us to the Val Cenise in the Vanoise National Park. We'll be staying at Termignon, a small alpine village that has everything you need and is also the terminus for the summer access bus to the higher valley car parks that give access to the inner mountains (NB access road closed in the summer to tourists).

We'll be staying at camping Les Melezes, which has good facilities and plenty of shade, link here. [Les Mèlèzes à Val-Cenis Termignon en Savoie](#)

There is walking, mountaineering, via ferrata, valley cragging, mountain cragging, mountain and road riding all within easy reach. It's good for active families and I have holidayed there many times in the last decade.

There is general information about the area in the link below.

[Vanoise National Park - Haute Maurienne Vanoise](#)

There is a Cicerone selective guidebook in English that covers the many activities (link below), along with French language and topo guides for more detail on rock climbing in the area.

https://www.cicerone.co.uk/mountain-adventures-in-the-maurienne?srsId=AfmBOooDTQXwE_1-V9r-MOE1iefgcU_Uh1BckP5QxX_or5HVekfzJrEN

If you have any questions about the activities in the area, I have spent several summers here in the last decade, undertaking family activities like rock climbing, via ferrata, MTB, walking and easy mountaineering, so don't hesitate to contact me. For a flavour of the mountaineering opportunities see page 9.

Steve Christian email climbersteve@hotmail.com

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

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

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

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

News, Articles and Reports from Meets

An ascent of the Pointe du Dard (3204 metres) Vanoise National Park in 2017 Steve Christian



Crossing the stream en route to the Refuge du col de la Vanoise.

Five in the morning, continental breakfast, instant coffee or a tea bag. Our first alpine start of the holiday, Tom's second ever alpine start, at fifteen years old. The previous day's approach walk, after catching the courtesy bus from Termignon to Bellecombe at the head of the valley, had been a delightful wander along alpine valleys past the Refuge du Plan du Lac and the Refuge d'Entre Deux Eaux, followed by a steady climb in increasingly remote terrain to the Refuge du Col de la Vanoise, set amongst the highest peaks of The Vanoise National Park, at just over 2500 metres above sea level. It was high alpine summer but despite a clear sunny day and a start wearing shorts, the higher valley commanded a fleece to keep the chill wind at bay. We'd passed a tame herd of chamois grazing next to the stream draining the small lakes of the Col de la Vanoise and stone hopped the wide, shallow outflow to continue upward. Arriving mid afternoon gave us ample time to relax and absorb the peaceful mountain environment, exploring the environs of the hut, before the sun dipped behind the surrounding ridge line and the warmth of the *salle a manger* drew us indoors.

Now, as we set off in the pre-dawn darkness using our head torches, the previous day scouting the approach path to the Glacier de la Roche Ferran started to bear fruit. We ascended rocky, scree covered ground, with the occasional rock scramble and steadily ate into the 2km and 500 metre height gain. Slowly the eastern sky brightened, and the sun poked over the distant ridge of the Grand Roc Noir, allowing us to turn off the torches and make the last approach to the outer apron of the glacier. The Glacier de la Roche Ferran is the northernmost stretch of the Glaciers de la Vanoise, a high plateau of continuous ice covering the largest peaks of the Vanoise, ranging in altitude from 3600 to 3200 metres.



Looking across the glacier toward the summit of the Pointe du Dard.

Arriving at the glacier brought an immediate reduction in temperature and we

stopped to dress and struggle into our climbing gear to rope up for the glacier crossing. There was 3km of ice sheet ahead of us and despite the summer sun rising into the morning sky, it remained cold until we stepped back onto the rock of the round summit of Pointe du Dard at 3204 metres. We removed the rope and strolled the rocky few hundred metres to the summit cone. The views on a clear sunny summer day were vast, spectacular and worth every ounce of effort. This was a totally easy mountaineering day, set in the wonderful remote mountains of The Vanoise National Park, achievable by any fit and competent party. A reminder that good things in the mountains don't have to be extreme, and to return soon.

Ashover short walk 22 January Ruth Gordon

I had blithely said that this walk would be less boggy than most places in the current monsoon conditions, as much of it was on tracks. Astonishingly, on a dismal wet morning I found seven folk had gathered to ensure I couldn't just turn round and go home! As we splashed our way through six inches of flood water stretching 20 metres up the road it was clear that only Rachel, in knee high wellies, was suitably shod. For the rest of us the water in our boots gradually warmed up – until the next sub aqua section replaced it with a new influx of cold. Worse was to come – the footbridge over the stream into Butts Quarry was only to be reached by braving a swirling brown river over slippery stones. Rachel saved the day by hanging onto the bridge midstream and passing walking poles back to the rest of the party. As Pete Amour remarked later “It's one of the best open water swims I've enjoyed for a while!”

Cromford – Rowsley 24 January John Gwyther



Seven regulars plus two newish faces joined me for this 17km linear stroll from Cromford to Rowsley. We walked up south of the Via Gellia (successfully negotiating an uprooted tree) to the Gellia Mill. Thence up the road to Bonsall.



From there we took the Limestone Way to Winster. There we stopped for refreshments and exercising before crossing the valley to Birchover Campsite. Then onto Stanton Moor where after a minor navigational hiccup we passed the Nine Ladies and descended to Rowsley. Some of us took the bus back to Cromford whilst others met up with an injured Stuart in Massarella's. We were blessed with an overcast but rain free day. Many thanks to Sue, Chris P, Rachel, Janet, Chris M, Nigel, Peter, Alan, Brian and a very well behaved Woody for the good company.

Cromford Circuit 4 February Steve Booth and Cathy Luffman



A positively bumper turnout assembled for this mid-week wander: Janet and Nigel Briggs, Rachel Walker (with her visiting sister and brother-in-law from Canada), Steve Booth, Cathy Luffman, Peter Amour, Chris Wilson, Chris Pierce, John Green, Brian Dykes, John Gwyther, Alan Bower, Stuart Firth and Sue Todd. With numbers like that, we were practically a procession.

The route offered a fine exploration of both the east and west flanks of the Derwent valley between Cromford Meadows and Holloway. After weeks of relentless rain, the mud had achieved that special Derbyshire consistency—somewhere between bread dough and industrial adhesive—yet spirits remained high and boots only occasionally tried to escape their owners.

In a meteorological twist worthy of a minor miracle, the skies stayed dry all day. Even more miraculous was the attendance: fabulous in both quantity and quality.

Near the end, John Green—ever the champion of local refreshment—encouraged a stop at the Stone Centre café. The staff, moments from closing, reluctantly agreed to revive the weary walkers with hot drinks. Their faces said “We were going home,” but their actions said “Oh go on then.”

A warm welcome was extended to Rachel’s Canadian relatives, who gamely joined the adventure and we enjoyed some lively discussions, finding we shared surprisingly similar views.

A fine day out, then: good company, good humour, and mud with real character. Exactly as a winter walk should be.

Geo Walk Milldale to Wetton Mill 21 February Stuart Firth

After weeks of seemingly incessant rain, it seemed we might be in for a very wet walk. I was concerned that the stepping stones on the River Dove might be impassable. Rusty kindly did a recce a few days before and reported that they were indeed underwater and that an alternative route along the river bank was knee-deep in water. Consequently, I started to formulate a Plan B and did a recce myself on the day before. A prominent red notice stated that the stepping stones were closed as they had once again become unstable. However, I was able to negotiate said river bank.



Come the day, we had plenty of walking poles between us and agreed to gamble that the river had not risen too much overnight; we committed ourselves to the slightly modified route.

The shuffle logistics worked well and we set off from Milldale a few minutes ahead of schedule. Although I had neglected to download the GeoWalk description when a signal was available, we enjoyed seeing familiar

features starting with the spectacular Dove Holes.

Back row: Alex and Gill. Front row: Chris, Rachel, Sue, Brian and Angela.

Ilam Rock was next and the party discussed the various climbing routes thereon. This would have been the start of the Plan B diversion. We recommitted to Plan A. Pickering Tor and Tissington Spires were next - good fishing territory nearby. New member Alex Bradley pointed out some geology - Crinoid fossils. Lover's Leap provided a good coffee stop and a kind passer-by took a group photo.

Back row: Angela, Alex, Sue, Stuart, Chris, Gill and Rachel. Front: Brian.

We approached the stepping stones with some interest and apprehension but all successfully negotiated the flooded river bank without mishap.

Chris negotiating the flooded river bank.



Memories of the Dovedale Dash were awoken as we found our muddy way (Widmerpool Formation) past the Izaak Walton to a welcome lunch stop at Ilam Hall.

Plodding uphill away from the Manifold river, past the ruins of Throwley Old Hall (16th Century) we were greeted by the sight of the magnificent Beeston Tor. Again, much talk of happy climbing days doing routes such as Beeston Eliminate.

Lots more geological features to be seen before we eventually arrived at the Wetton Mill café where we enjoyed some refreshment. Radders was somewhat peeved that he had switched off his crucial "device" too early - so his registered distance was

somewhat less than his compatriots’.



The party descends to Beeston Tor

Many thanks to those who supported the meet: Rachel Walker, Sue Todd, Gill Radcliffe, Sue Todd, Chris Radcliffe, Brian Dykes and Alex Bradley.

Derby Cathedral Peregrines Nick Evans



I was first asked to build a nest platform for the pair of peregrine falcons on Derby Cathedral about 20 years ago. They had been hanging around for a couple of years, but there was nowhere suitable for a nest. The platform was just what they needed because within a few weeks they had moved in and were laying eggs.

Nine years ago the platform was getting decrepit and was replaced with a new one. The platform is fixed on the outside of the cathedral tower, involving abseiling from the top and with assistants winching the platform up from the roof of the nave. Another Oread, Nick Moyes, organised the project and assisted with the installation along with some other Oreads.

There are three cameras, attached on both sides of the platform which are connected to the Internet. You can watch what the birds are up to in the nesting season. Just search for Derby Peregrines.

In November 2025 the platform was again falling to pieces and I had to abseil down to remove the gravel on the inside. (There is a layer of gravel on the platform. The female makes a scoop in it to lay the eggs). Thanks to Steve Booth for photographing my efforts.

Nick Moyes writes:

If any fellow Oreads would like to offer to help Derby's peregrines in the future - be it as an experienced abseiler or as a general gofer - that would be fantastic. Nick and I have just built a new nest box on the roof of the Cathedral tower as the current one is in dire need of repair or replacement.



Nick Moyes with the new nest box – just hoping the peregrines will approve! Photo Nick Evans.

Occasional assistance with an abseil to maintain or even remove the platform is sometimes needed, as neither of us is getting any younger!

If you feel fit, strong and willing to assist, do please drop me a line at nickmoyes069@gmail.com. Just let me know what you're willing to help with, whether you're free on weekdays or only at weekends, and I'll add your name to a 'supporters' list that we could call upon from time to time, if necessary.

Many thanks, Nick Moyes (Derby Cathedral Peregrine Project).

Madeira - November 2025 - Some Winter Sunshine Stuart Firth



Sue and I had a superb November holiday in Madeira recently and I'd like to share a few photos to illustrate what a great place it is, especially for a walking holiday.

The mountains go over 6,000 feet and there is splendid coastal scenery. There is walking for all abilities as the levada system (water channels) allow for flat, contouring walking which can also be spectacular with vertiginous drops and tunnels. There are good guidebooks and maps and the Outdoor Active App gives large scale coverage. Bus services are excellent, especially from Funchal the

capital. Those interested in botany will enjoy the gardens and little-known but world-class orchid nursery.

Road cycling would be intimidating but mountain biking might be exhilarating; trips are available where they take you plus bike to a high point and collect you at the bottom. Sea swimming (c 20-23 deg C) is possible from some beaches and natural rock pools; be careful of sea state! I believe there is some rock climbing but it is not a prime destination.

Both photos are on the Sao Lourenco peninsula looking north.

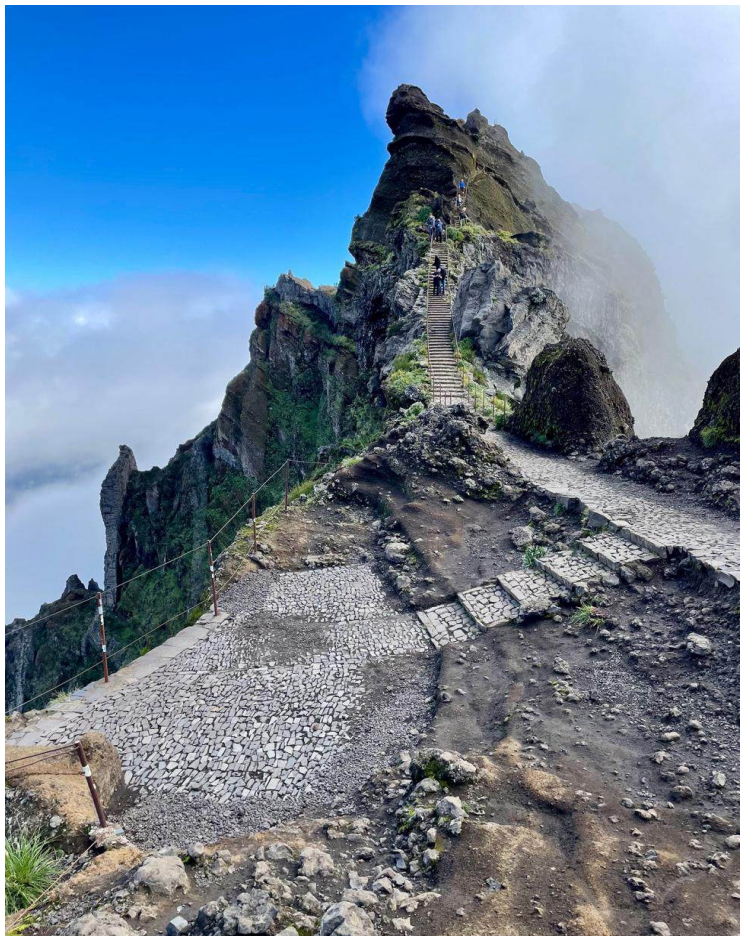


Jet2.com and others offer flights and holidays from EMA; flight time ~4 hours.



On the Pico Arieiro trail. There used to be a path / tunnels to Pico Ruivo but this has unfortunately fallen down.

Returning to Pico Arieiro summit.



A Reminiscence – 77 Years on: thoughts of a very old Oread.

As I read in the Magazine of journeys and expeditions to far flung and exotic places I have been moved to write to contrast it all to the situation in the country when the Oread came into being at a time of considerable austerity.....

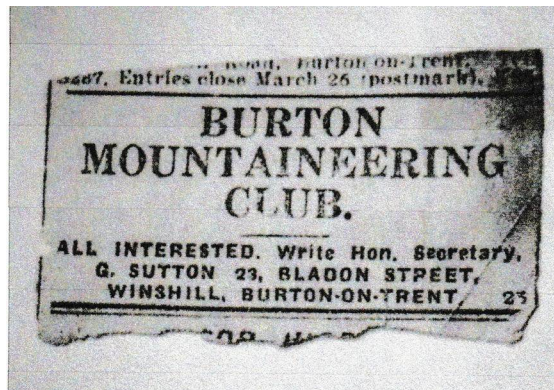
It is a dark and wet night in Burton on Trent early in 1949, street lights sparse if working at all. It is only nine o'clock and the Corporation buses are already on their final run back to the depot. The air is pervaded with the smell of brewery boiling wort coppers as they evaporate, gaining potency and somewhere a steam boiler vents noisily to the sky as it comes off load.

The streets come alive with bicycles as Technical College night classes disgorge students on their way home, hoping none of the many crossing gates will be closed against them as wagons trundle slowly across. Lights show dimly in the numerous small pubs where pale ale bitter flows freely at a time when lager is almost unknown.

The N.H.S. is very recently set up and requires one to register. Many things are still on wartime ration and clothing is difficult to come by. The Army Stores offers the most durable kit. Stuff for walking and camping comes mail order from Blacks of Greenock, Brighams or, expensively, Lilywhites of London.

In an austere post-war world the bright spots are the open markets on Thursday and Saturday and the occasional cinema visit.

Then, in the columns of the Burton Daily Mail there appears a small advertisement: -



which was to change the lives (forever) of a number of local people, and subsequently many more throughout the country.

This is the situation when the Oread was hatched, except it was not the Oread to begin with, just Burton “Anorak” Mountaineering Club. Well, there was the Rucksac Club and the Karabiner so why not Anorak as this was the “in” garment of the time? The subsequent name change is well documented.

So we come to the first meeting in the Education Offices in Guild Street when

some format was established and officers elected.
The prime movers subsequently met in the kitchen at 72 Hare Hedge Lane and planned to go to Black Rocks to see what this climbing was all about.

The rest is history.....

Hut Bookings.

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

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

All queries and outstanding payments should be addressed to Michael Hayes, the Hut Bookings Secretary: 179 Starkholmes Rd. Starkholmes, Matlock DE4 5JA
Mobile 07771 700913. Email: michaelhayes6688@gmail.com

Our preferred method of payment is via bank transfer to our Lloyds account – Sort Code 30-98-97 Account number 62584068. Please use the ‘Reference’ box to say what the payment is for. **In particular please say which hut, ie Hut fees HL, or Hut fees TyW.** Your name is not necessary in the reference, unless it is different from the bank account name.
Alternatively you can post a cheque, payable to Oread M.C. to the above address.

Hut Door and Barrier Codes

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

Information on Member Activities

Welcome to new provisional member Phil Bastow. We hope you will enjoy many happy days with the club. Current provisional members Nuno Gomes, Bex Orme and Vera Venancio have applied for full membership and we have new full membership applications from Laura Booth, Alex Bradley and Douglas Hobbs. If you would like to comment on any these applications please contact a member of the committee.

Ruth Gordon, 4 The Terrace, Upper Lumsdale, Matlock, Derbys DE4 5LB

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