

**we can supply
everything but the mountain!**

We stock Climbing Gear, Boots, Sleeping Bags, Duvets, Waterproof Clothing. Specialise in Backpacking Gear. Plus over 40 Tents suitable for Mountain use: names like **Clog, Stubai, Snowdon, Peck, M.S.R., Bonaiti Cassin, Simond, Chouinard, Viking, Mammut, Joanny, Edelrid, Troll, Salewa, Optimus, J.B., MOAC, Henri-Lloyd, Helly Hansen, Grenfell, Ultimate, Point Five, Mountain, Sippy, G. & H., Dachstein, Karrimor, Berghaus, Camp Trails, Hawkins, Kastinger, Scarpa, Robusta, La Dolomite, Blacks, Vango, Saunders, Marechal, Turblokken, Springlow, Ranch House.**

You will be dealing with experts—Les Holliwel is our technical adviser. Before buying your gear—write or phone for our EXTRA-ORDINARY COMPETITIVE FREE PRICE LIST. Barclaycard Access accepted. We have a large Mail Order Department—most items immediate despatch with 7 day approval service.

We have a special Contract Department for Club and Expedition orders.

FIELD & TREK (equipment) Ltd

23/25 Kings Road, Brentwood, Essex, Tel: (0277) 221259/219418
Only 10 minutes from Brentwood Station; 30 minutes from London's Liverpool Street Station (Southend Line).

Please send me a copy of your FREE Price List.

NAME

ADDRESS

..... (SAC 76)

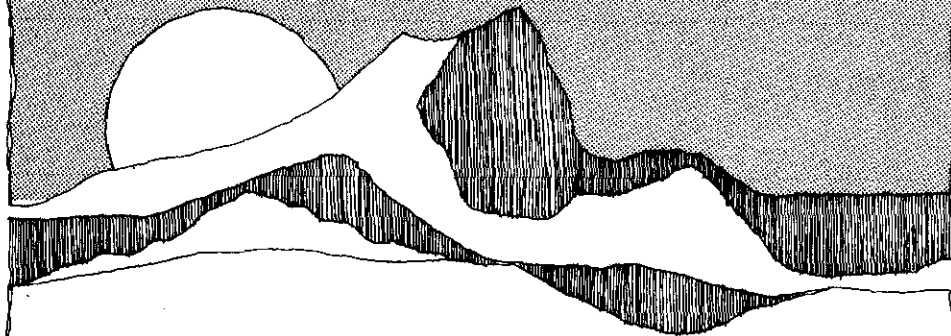
THE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH MEMBERS OF THE SWISS ALPINE CLUB

JOURNAL 1976

CONTENTS

Diary for 1976	3
Editorial	5
The George Starkey Hut	6
The Alpine Meet 1975	10
Mount Olympus, East and West by Frank Solari	14
Mezzaluna by Jeremy Whitehead	19
Ice Dream by Jim Gregson	21
Monte Della Disgrazia by Gordon Gadsby	24
The Walk round Monte Rosa by Ken Baldry	29
A Scotsman in Ireland by Hamish M. Brown	31
Powder Snow in Alta, Utah, U.S.A. by Walter Kirstein	34
To remain 40 years old for a further 20 years by Kurt Haas, translated by Walter Kirstein	36
Association Activities	38
The Annual General Meeting	38
The Annual Dinner	38
Outdoor Meets	39
Association Accounts	42
Members' Climbs	45
List of Past and Present Officers	65
Complete list of Members	67

climber & rambler



the magazine on a peak of its own

The Climber & Rambler (35p every month) is edited by Walt Unsworth, a well known member of the Association.

This monthly journal, whose contributors include many eminent mountaineers, keeps its readers up to date with all that is new in the world of climbing and camping.

Outdoor people enjoy reading Climber & Rambler every month.

Send to Subscription Dept., Climber & Rambler,
36 Tay Street, Perth PH1 5TT

Please send me each month a copy of Climber & Rambler. I enclose £5.64 for one year's subscription.

Name _____

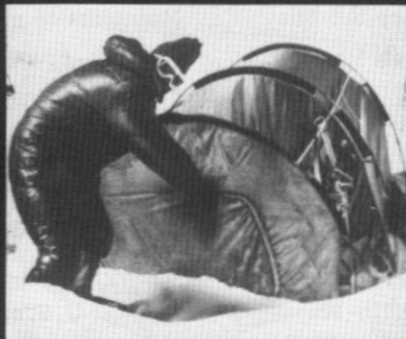
Address _____

DIARY FOR 1976

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| January 14th | Lecture meet jointly with Tuesday Climbing Club. |
| February 6th-8th | Northern dinner meet at George Starkey hut. Leader W. Brooke Midgley. Dinner at Glenridding on February 7th. |
| February 11th | Lecture, Dr. C. R. A. Clarke, Everest South-West face: the Doctor's view. |
| March 5th-6th | Maintenance meet at G. S. hut. Leader G. Rough. |
| March 10th | Lecture, J. Whitehead, New Zealand in July: Winter or Summer? |
| April 7th | Lecture, D. H. Lintott, The Bhilangua Valley, Tehri Gahrural. |
| April 15th-21st | Easter meet at Onich. Leader A. Andrews. |
| April 15th-21st | Easter meet at G. S. hut. Informal. |
| May 5th | Buffet party. |
| May 7th-9th | Meet at G. S. hut. Leader E. Tuck. |
| May 28th-June 6th | Meet at G. S. hut. Informal. |
| June 9th | Members' evening. Slides of Easter and Spring Bank Holiday meets. |
| June 25th-27th | Meet at Arncliffe. Leader J. Kemsley. |
| July 9th-11th | Meet at Glan Dena, Ogwen. Leader A. Husbands. |
| July 24th-August 7th | Family weeks at G. S. hut. |
| July 24th-August 21st | Alpine meet, Fischbiel, Loetschental. Leader H. D. Archer. |
| September 10th-12th | Meet at Rhyd-ddu. Leader A. Strawther. |
| September 22nd | Lecture, F. E. Smith, Swiss peaks. |
| October 1st-3rd | President's meet. G. S. hut. Leader W. Unsworth. |
| October 8th-9th | Hut maintenance meet led by T. C. C. |
| October 20th | Members' evening. Slides of Alpine meet. |
| November 17th | Annual dinner. |
- Fuller details of these events are notified in the bulletins. Lectures are held at the Alpine Club, 74 South Audley Street, London W. 1. at 7.00 p.m. and are followed by an informal dinner at the Britannia Hotel, Adams Row, W. 1. The cost at present is £2.50 and it is essential that members book not later than the preceding Saturday with the Secretary, A.B.M.S.A.C., The Medical Centre, St. Luke's Hospital, Guildford.

Information regarding the meets is available from the leaders.

Blacks Tunnel Tents, S.W. Face, Sept '75



And of course:

1974 Changabang Expedition

1974 Mt. Lenin Expedition

1973 Brammah Peak Expedition

1972 British Everest Expedition

 **Blacks**
of Greenock

Port Glasgow, Renfrewshire PA14 5XN Tel: 0475 42333
Ruxley Corner, Sidcup, Kent DA14 5AQ Tel: 01-302 2525

EDITORIAL

The first, and perhaps the pleasantest, duty of a new editor is to salute his predecessor. Graham Daniels served from 1968 to 1975. He brought to the Journal a professional skill which the new incumbent cannot hope to match. He worked with devotion, he made innovations, and he turned out a good job in good time. His last formal act as editor was to give his successor an invaluable guide as to how and when to perform the various acts required. Alas, one cannot tell people, and everyone has to learn by bitter experience.

The first lesson to learn has been that contributions to the Journal do not grow on trees, and that it is never too soon to launch the necessary propaganda effort to encourage shy writers. The 1976 campaign therefore starts *now*: do not wait until your adventures have taken place: plan your climbing with the Journal in mind. A few suggestions as to what is interesting are offered in a spirit of helpfulness. Do climbs of incredible difficulty in conditions of appalling privation. Suffer injuries of an undignified and laughable character. Fall into crevasses. Get benighted. Get arrested. Be attacked by bandits. Have your boots eaten by goats. (Remember the example of a former President, who described in ANOTHER JOURNAL how he completed the first ascent of a Lapland gully as second man roped to a reindeer). Always have your notebook and pencil ready, and please do not forget to take a photograph, preferably half-plate black and white, whilst your accident is actually occurring! When did we last have a flash-light photograph taken with a camera properly mounted on a tripod, from the *bottom* of a crevasse?

Of the events of the year to be noted, none is more remarkable than the continued survival and indeed robust health of the Association, in spite of the steeply rising subscriptions in Switzerland resulting from the increasingly unfavourable exchange rate. Thought has been given in Committee and elsewhere to what might need to be done if the membership were to fall substantially, but mercifully no drastic action has been needed. It is of course unceasingly necessary for the Officers and Committee to seek ever more attractive Meets both indoors and out, and for the members to support them by attending, helping and suggesting further improvements!

Two matters have given particular pleasure and satisfaction, and are discussed in the following parts of the editorial articles. The George Starkey hut is very obviously one. Less widely realised, perhaps, is the Alpine Meet. It was becoming increasingly difficult to sustain an hotel-based Meet in face of economic difficulties. We were rescued from peril through the initiative of Wing Commander Archer. His chalet-based Meet was a great success, and it is hoped that his patience and generosity (and his family's too) will be sustained to allow another such meet to take place in 1976.

It is clear from the reports on members' climbs and from other sources that many still get to Switzerland. We have had at least one official camping meet in recent years, and there have frequently been camping groups loosely

associated with the hotel based meets. Some members have suggested to the editor that we might all make more use of the activities organised by the Swiss section to which we all belong. We should conquer our shyness, fear of the language or whatever inhibits us, and we can count on a welcome. It has been suggested further that the Committee might be able to offer advice and help in establishing communication. Such suggestions deserve thought.

THE GEORGE STARKEY HUT

The hut really exists, and is in use. A fine hut it is too, as members may readily confirm by attending any of the Meets shown in the Diary for 1976, or by using the hut at any other time when it is free. To facilitate this, we repeat the information given in the circulars.

Members and other applicants must make prior reservations, wherever possible in writing, with the Booking Secretary, M. J. Cohen, c/o Cyril Cohen & Co., Brooks House, 48 Upper Thames Street, London EC4V 3DE.

Keys are available from the Manager of either the Glenridding Hotel, Glenridding or the White Lion Hotel, Patterdale on presentation of the booking card issued by the Booking Secretary.

Anyone arriving after 10.00 p.m. must apply in advance to the Bookings Secretary for a key and return it to him immediately after their visit.

ROBERT LAWRIE LTD.

54 SEYMOUR STREET,
(Marble Arch)
LONDON — W1H 5WE
Telephone: 01-723 5252

Telegrams & Cables: Alpinist, London W.1

Business Hours:
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9 a.m.—5.30 p.m.
Late closing Thursday — — 9 a.m.—7 p.m.
Early closing Saturday — — 9 a.m.—12 noon

**MOUNTAINEERING,
POLAR
&
ROCK CLIMBING**
Clothing & Equipment Specialists
Handsewn Bootmakers

Catalogue temporarily discontinued until
prices and supplies become more stable.



Hut fees : Members 35p
(per night) : Non-Members 70p

Cash should be inserted in the envelopes provided and placed in the safe

Members should note that camping is not permitted in the hut grounds.

The hut was described in the 1974 Journal. The subsequent decision to name it in memory of the late George Starkey, who served the Association for so long in so many ways, has met with universal acclamation. The problem of raising the money has been solved in various ways, some being at once happy and unexpected. Particularly so is the event described in the following excerpt from the 115th A.G.M. of the S.A.C. in Basel (translation by Walter Kirstein).

'Patterdale Hut in the Lake District, England.

The Association of British members of the S.A.C. intends to intensify its activities by buying and improving a building in the Lake District as its own mountain hut. The hut is intended to serve as a climbing base for the approximately 600 members.

The presents of various sports clubs in England and collections amongst the members of the Association were not enough to finance this project

NORTH WALES ASSOCIATION

OF MOUNTAIN GUIDES

CHAIRMAN: R. JAMES, B. M. C. GUIDE

SECRETARY: K. C. GORDON, B. M. C. GUIDE

Guides Available For
WALKING AND SCRAMBLING PARTIES.
ROCKCLIMBING (3 MAXIMUM).
MOUNTAIN RESCUE TRAINING FOR CLUBS.
WINTER MOUNTAINEERING.
ALPINE GUIDING BY ARRANGEMENT.

ENQUIRIES TO: SECRETARY,
15 CILFODAN,
BETHESDA,
GWYNEDD.

and therefore a modest application for help was sent to the Central Committee. Drawings and photographs had been enclosed. The C.C. decided on the 9th of July, 1975, to give once only an outright gift of Fr. 10 000.— (£1700.—) as a contribution to the very active British S.A.C. members. The more, because the English people have repeatedly made presentations in the past for our Britannia Hut. The British members appreciate very much the contact with Switzerland and it is the target of the Club to nurse and to strengthen the common enthusiasm for the Swiss Alps. Therefore they want to be in the position to have in England the first Swiss mountain hut outside Switzerland, where not only British people, but also Swiss and members of other Alpine Clubs can find friendships. With the help of our gift it will be possible to put this project on a sound financial base.'

A further invaluable help arose from someone's happy thought to invite the Tuesday Climbing Club to join forces with us to support the venture. Their help, added to the contributions which our own members made so generously, allowed the project to proceed to success. (The T.C.C. has done a great deal in other directions, of which more below).

For administrative reasons, a Limited Liability Company was formed to hold the lease of the hut and deal with the financial aspects. Diligent readers of the financial accounts may be able to form some idea of what has been involved and of the load of extra work which has fallen on the shoulders of the Hon. Treasurer and others.

The endless administrative work involved in obtaining and furnishing the hut was done by the hut management committee (P. Ledebuer Chairman, A. Blain, J. Cohen, D. Hodge, J. Murray, S. Prentice, M. Quine)

Work of other kinds has been done on the spot by working parties, and all concerned report that the Tuesday Climbing Club has done substantially more than its share in this respect. Our own parties, particularly their leader Brooke Midgley, have also worked very hard.

The official opening on October 4th, 1975, was reported elsewhere by Peter Wood, and the following account includes excerpts from what he wrote, with his kind permission.

Climbers from clubs all over Britain were present at Patterdale when the Bishop of Leicester, the Rt. Rev. Ronald Williams, opened the George Starkey Hut. This new hut, now part of the European alpine hut network, will be run jointly by the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club and the London-based Tuesday Climbing Club.

Situated in the mountain village of Patterdale, in the neighbourhood of attractive rock climbs, summer walking and winter snow climbing, the hut will accommodate 25 people of both sexes. It was converted from former parish rooms after a 28-year-lease had been negotiated with the Church Commissioners, an organisation that runs the property of the Church of England.

The president of the ABMSAC, Maurice Bennett, speaking at the ceremony, paid tribute to all those in both the ABMSAC and the Tuesday Climbing Club who had worked for many months to help convert the building. He also

thanked Frank Schweitzer and Peter Ledebuer of the ABMSAC who organised the project and Syd Prentice for all the work he had done as the first Warden of the hut.

The close links between Britain and Switzerland and the long friendship between the alpinists of both countries was symbolised by the presence of Herr Hektor Meier of SAC Zurich and M. Rene Serex, counsellor responsible for protocol and international affairs at the Swiss Embassy, London.

Mr. Harry Sales, president of the Climbers' Club, thanking the Bishop, responded aptly by presenting some Welsh daffodil bulbs for planting outside our Lakeland hut.

Herr Meier reminded his audience that it was in 1912 that the Association had given a large sum to the Geneva Section for the building of the Britannia Hut. Now the Central Committee, Lucerne, had given a sum to the Association from them and all members of the Swiss Alpine Club to help them finance 'this charming and homely hut'. Although the rates of exchange were different now in both countries, what had not changed was mountaineering, which was an adventure into the unknown.



The Opening Ceremony

Photo by: W. Kirstein

Herr Meier said that we were now faced with environmental problems and we had to be 'conservative' in the non-political sense, to conserve nature with its animal and plant life. He congratulated the clubs involved in creating a hut in a land of 'thrilling natural beauty'.

The Alpine Club was represented at the ceremony by Sir Jack Longland and the British Mountaineering Council's Lakeland Area Committee by Mr. Sid Cross—both distinguished climbers. Representatives of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, the Fylde Mountaineering Club, the Fell and Rock Climbing Club of the English Lake District and the Preston Mountaineering Club were also among those represented. Warden of the new hut is Mr. Syd Prentice of Ambleside.

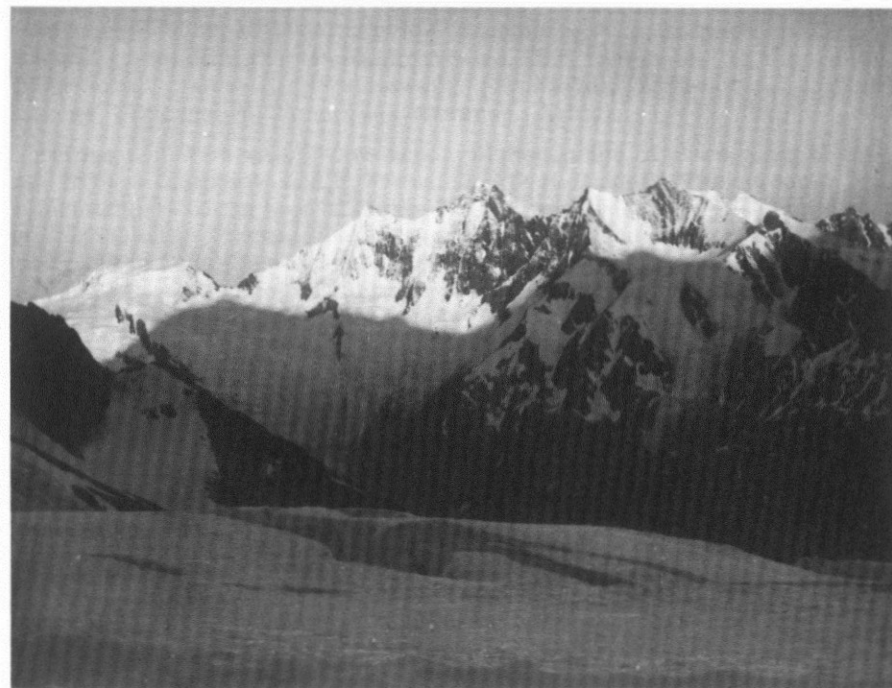
The occasion attracted many more than could be accommodated in the hut overnight, and those who were not first to apply were scattered far and wide. The editor was comfortably situated with several congenial friends at Raw Head, and was lucky enough to enjoy two passages of the slightly adventurous road pass in pouring rain. The trip on Sunday morning was abortive except in the social sense, as the faint heart failed in face of the continuing rain. Braver souls enjoyed what they enjoyed, but further account of the meet is not to hand at the time of writing.

ALPINE MEET, 1975

New ground was broken in 1975, to the pleasure and satisfaction of all present. Ever-rising prices had put an hotel-based meet almost beyond our means. A solution to our problem was provided through the initiative of Harry Archer, who secured the lease of a chalet at Saas-Fee. A great deal more had to be done to make the occasion the success it was. In the first place there was a very substantial financial risk. There was support to be enlisted; the task fell largely on Harry's shoulders, and the issue was in doubt to an uncomfortably late date. In the end there was a fine attendance with an unusual proportion of unfamiliar faces, a very satisfactory outcome.

Plainly a building was not enough; we had to be fed and looked after. Valda Archer took total responsibility for this, and provided the skilled workers in the persons of her sons and daughters, Margaret, Charlotte, John and Matthew and her friends Eileen Conway, Lucy Falconer, and Hazel Ryle. The result was that breakfast was always there at the appropriate time, with facilities for early risers to make special arrangements; packed lunches to individual taste were provided; we could have a cup of tea when we wished and dinner was of high quality and ample quantity. Travellers to huts and elsewhere used such of the services as they needed, and paid for what they had, no more and no less. We did not even have to keep our own accounts; all was reckoned up for us. Such service could not have been obtained in an hotel.

The arrangements have been discussed at some length to prepare the way for 1976. Harry has made tentative arrangements for a chalet-based meet,



Mischabels from Weissmies

Photo by: Hamish M. Brown

probably in the Lotschenthal, so far as information is available at the time of writing. The best way for members to express their gratitude for last year's efforts would be to make up their minds in good time for 1976. This Journal will appear later than would be wished for the purpose, but it is hoped that these remarks will persuade procrastinators to take the plunge with further delay.

The 1975 meet extended over the three weeks 29 July to 16 August. The members recorded in the visitors book as attending at one time or another were A. and S. Andrews, G., H., J., M., M. and V. Archer, J. H. Brooks, J. Coales, E. Conway, J. Dempster, J. Durran, J. Edwards, L. and P. Falconer, J. Fish, R. Floyd, B. and M. Freeman, P. and V. French, S. Harris, R. James, W. Lambley, C. and R. McCall, D. Macniven, H. H. Mills, H. S. Nimmo, D. R. Riddell, H. Ryle, H. Sales, A. Sperryn, W. Stuart-Menteith and B. Summerthwaite. The Editor's apologies are offered to anyone omitted.

Providence took a hand by providing hot sunny weather continuously for the first fourteen days, a very rare occurrence at a Meet. The crop of climbs done, almost all guideless, matched the opportunities. A list culled from the log and almost certainly incomplete included Allalinhorn 5 times, Almagellhorn, Fletschorn (on one occasion by S. W. Ridge, Brooks, Edwards and



Please contact your Travel Agent or the
 Swiss National Tourist Office, Swiss Centre, 1 New Coventry Street,
 London W1V 3HG, Tel. 01-734 1921

Floyd), Lagginhorn, Mittaghorn twice, Nadelhorn twice, Matterhorn (Durran, Fish and guide), Rimpfischhorn, Strahlhorn, Stecknadelhorn—Nadelhorn-Ulrichshorn traverse (Brooks, Edwards and Floyd), Tasch hut to Langfluh traverse, Ulrichshorn, Weissmies traverse (thrice).

Numerous mountain walks were accomplished, pride of place going to the walk-in by J. Coales, V. and P. French and D. R. Riddell. Their route comprised part of the tour of Monte Rosa, from Gressoney-la-Trinité by the Col d'Olen to Alagna, then the Turlo pass to Macugnaga, then the Monte Moro pass to Saas-Fee. Stops were made at the Cap. Morgenrot, Rif. Vigevano and Rif. Anna Crispi Calderini, the last being much praised. Prof. Coales included an ascent of Castor, on the way. (The tour of Monte Rosa is the subject of an article by Ken Baldry in this issue). A sad note was the loss of the French's luggage on the railway, but this was recovered at very end of the trip, though the clothes that Virginia and Paul wore on arrival must have been somewhat well worn by the end.

The endless charming local walks included innumerable passages of the Kapellenweg, trips to and from Almagell, and more vigorously to Almagelleralp, Britannia hut, Langfluh, Mischabel hut, Mellig and so on. Perhaps best of all are the high level routes along each side of the Saastal, from Grächen and Gspon respectively. The Editor's party was fortunate enough to do both in favourable weather.

The last week of the Meet was heralded by a sharp deterioration in the weather. Some members gave up, but those who remained were rewarded by a restoration of the lovely sunshine, and more climbing was done. The faithful few were also able to enjoy the last social event of a socially delightful Meet, which took the form of a small ceremony at which an attempt was made to express to the Archer family the thanks of all who attended the Meet. I hope those who were unable to be present will accept that their sentiments were conveyed with such eloquence as the speakers were able to muster.



A.B.M.S.A.C. TIES

Association ties (red and silver badge on blue background) may be purchased at any time from

J. S. Whyte, 40 Cassiobury Drive, Watford, Herts

Cheques for £1.50 to be drawn payable to A.B.M.S.A.C.

MOUNT OLYMPUS—EAST AND WEST

Frank Solari

In the course of his article in the FRCC Journal for 1934, written with characteristic discernment and wit, J. H. Doughty discussed the reasons for our widespread preference for the traditional names of mountains, however obscure their origin or significance, over those given by explorers and other moderns. Alas for my present theme, he did not touch on the plagiarism of naming newly-discovered mountains after old and familiar ones or he would surely have written something quotable and illuminating about the two Mounts Olympus. For here are two mountains, linked arbitrarily by a common name but separated by some 147° of longitude, which are about as dissimilar as two mountains can be, yet each is splendid in its own way and a worthy bearer of an exalted name.

As everyone knows, Mount Olympus (the original one, that is) is in Greece near the shore of the Gulf of Thermai, some 160 crow's miles to the north of Athens. It is an extensive mass of rock, much of it over 2,500 metres above the nearby sea, on which stand a number of fine and shapely peaks, the highest, Stefani, Skolio and Mytikas, topping 2,900 metres and springing dramatically from the headwall of a spectacular corrie. Although bearing a heavy snow cover in winter and spring, it is very dry in summer and the vegetation is what one might expect of the climate, altitude, latitude and predominant limestone—oak and beech woods lower down, then pine giving way to a sparse but delectable flora and finally bare rock in the topmost reaches. The massif is well served by huts of the Hellenic Alpine Club (ELLENKOS OREIVATIKOS SYNDESMOS) and local clubs, and it is readily accessible via Litokhoron, a road now going as far as Prionia whence it is but two hours to the Spilios Agapitos hut. (Apart from being by-passed by the road to Prionia, the old approach road by the Monastery of St. Dionyssios lost its appeal when the buildings were damaged beyond repair by an avalanche some years ago).

How far one may identify this modern Mount Olympus with the Olympus of Greek mythology is, I suppose, a matter for individual inclination. My own acquaintance with the original texts being what it is, I merely note that my Britannica reports some conflict of testimony between the Iliad and the Odyssey as to the whereabouts of the gods' dwelling places, and that later poets are similarly divided. There seems, however, to have been general agreement that all deities had residences at the court of Zeus on Olympia where the assemblies and common feasts of the gods were held. Make what you will of the significance of the alternative names (Thronos Dios and Pantheon) given to Stefani and Mytikas.

In 1973 Babs and I had the good fortune to be invited by the EOS to join in celebrating the 60th anniversary of the first ascent (by modern mortals) of the highest of the Olympic summits, Mytikas. Olympus had, of course, attrac-



Mount Olympus,
Greece

Photo by: F. Solari

Mount Olympus,
U.S.A.

Photo by: F. Solari



ted attention long before 1913 and the first mountaineers were probably those seeking refuge from the alien Turk. More organised interest began in the 18th century and the 19th saw visits from France, Britain and Germany. For a long time there was uncertainty about the relative heights of the three highest tops which are all within a range of 8 metres, and Skolio was thought the summit until a more accurate survey gave the crown to Mytikas at 2917 metres. This, in turn, led to the first ascent of Mytikas in 1913 by two Swiss, Fred. Boissonnas and Daniel Baud-Bovy. The 1973 celebrations were the occasion of a major effort by the EOS to stimulate national awareness of the need for conservation of mountain areas such as Olympus, and attracted a widely representative international company which included a large Swiss contingent in recognition of the Swiss initiative that led to the first ascent. We were most efficiently and cordially entertained by our hosts, and we enjoyed two gloriously fine days on the mountain based on the Spilios Agapitos hut. A banquet in Litokhoron followed by a swim in the warm waters of the Gulf of Thermai put us in fine shape for the long drive back to Athens with a break to appreciate the site of Thermopylae, and a final farewell party in Athens. No people could be more genially hospitable than the Greeks; no club more genuinely welcoming to foreign climbers than the EOS.

Mount Olympus, U.S.A., is not only far removed in distance from Mount Olympus, Greece, it is in marked contrast to its eponym in situation, climate and structure. It is the culminating and most westerly of a cluster of steep peaks forming the heart of the nearly 100-mile-square peninsula in the extreme northwesterly corner of the United States. Its western flanks are thus exposed to the prevailing moisture-laden winds from the Pacific Ocean, and the resulting heavy precipitation far exceeds that of the eastern Mediterranean and yields a massive glaciation normally only to be expected at its latitude (that of Switzerland) well above its modest height of 2,425 metres. The rain forest that extends from the limits of its glaciers down to the Pacific shore is quite remarkable in scale and density and unlike any forest I have seen in Europe. Under the benign influence of the local climate everything grows to prodigious size, with conifers dominant but also including a wonderful variety of deciduous trees and lesser plants. The eastern half of the peninsula is drier but by no means arid. From our limited experience, the summer months seem to be blessed with fine weather giving a brilliantly clear atmosphere away from the very narrow coastal fog belt. The rocks are sedimentary and metamorphic with volcanic intrusions.

The deeply cut valleys radiate from the central mountain mass, much as (but on a larger scale than) in the Lake District. In shape, the valleys owe much to earlier glaciation (the Lake District again) and the principal rivers are glacier-fed. No road traverses the central mass, but there are numerous foot trails giving access from the road heads in the principal valleys. The central area is a National Park administered by the Federal Government, and development in the Park is strictly controlled. Car parking and camping facilities are provided at the road heads, and camp sites are located strategically along some, at least, of the trails. Outside the National Park is a Forest Reserve in which lumbering is permitted but under regulation.

The physical defences of the country supplement the protection afforded by the National Park regulations. Here is no peasantry to provide porters for bag and baggage, and the climber must carry all he needs for several days. Our own approach to Olympus from the Ranger Station in the Hoh River valley involved a march of 18 miles to our campsite at Glacier Meadows (1,280 metres) which took us two days (we managed the return in a day and a quarter), and this is one of the shortest expeditions one can make into the area. The trails are, however, well laid out and maintained by the Park Rangers, and the going is most agreeably varied. We had been lent for the occasion a very lightweight tent and other light camping equipment, and we had an excellent selection of freeze-dried provisions, so our loads were not all that great although they felt enormous on our unpractised shoulders by the time we had added rope, ice axes and other alpine impedimenta. For the greater part of the distance from the Ranger Station, the trail closely follows the Hoh River, mostly through the forest of giant cedar but with occasional glimpses of the sun at the river bank where, even so early as August, the maples were making their first brilliant splashes of colour. In consequence, a dozen or more miles leaves one still at barely 300 metres, the last 1,000 metres to camp at Glacier Meadows being concentrated in the last 4-5 miles. The gem-like Elk Lake, bordered with immense water-lilies, gave us a welcome breather from the up-hill slog, and the thinning forest cover gave space for a very colourful under-storey, including some succulent white raspberries. The campsite at Glacier Meadows was, unexpectedly, in big timber just below the timber-line, and about 20 minutes from the Blue Glacier, one of the principal glaciers draining from Olympus.

We found access to the glacier rather more tricky than seems to be implied by the AAC's Guide to the Cascade and Olympic Mountains, and lost much time skirting the crest of an enormous moraine before we could descend to the ice. Once there the going was good, the snow excellent, and the sun shone from a cloudless sky as we traversed the glacier to and climbed to the top of the Snow Dome at about 2,000 metres, passing on the way an elegant rock garden decorated with at least three varieties of Cassiope, the American counterpart of our Ericas, with their pendant bells of pink, white and yellow set against the tawny-red rock. The angle was easy enough for us to take an appreciative interest in our splendid setting and the rope was not really necessary, although the passing of the hours was not good for our hopes of reaching the top of Olympus. From the Snow Dome a broad glaciated shoulder rises southwards to the trio of rocky summits (no legendary allusions here, they are prosaically the East, Middle and West Peaks), with ice-falls cascading off its flanks to right and left. Technically there was nothing between us and the top, but, alas, we had taken twice the guide book time of three hours to get thus far, partly because of our long detour round the moraine, partly because of our lack of condition, and the guide book put the tops another three hours away. So, with the noon sun high in the sky, we rationalised the elegance of our situation and our need to strike camp that afternoon if we were to get back to the Ranger Station by the following evening, and decided that we had enjoyed ourselves enough in getting so far. Half an hour luxuriating in the sun and admiring the outlook including the far-off

Mount Baker near the Canadian frontier, and we started down. The sun had softened the snow a little but the going was still very good and we were able with out difficulty to pick out the short way off the glacier that we had missed coming up.

Back in camp we packed up and carried down to Elk Lake for the night, and next day we made the long trek down through the forest to the Ranger Station, bearing memories of a singularly elegant mountain in a superb setting.

'MEZZALUNA'

J. Whitehead

One chooses to do a climb for many reasons, and in the case of the N. ridge of the Grivola, the 'Mezzaluna' from its curving sickle shape when viewed from the North, my reasons were largely because of what others have written about it. Both Tyndale and Dorothy Pilley have stirring accounts, stressing the prowess of their leaders, whilst Julius Kugy bestows more superlatives than usual on 'la fulgida Grivola ardua e bella'. So the climb has been on my 'wanted list' for many years, and now at last circumstances of weather, conditions and companions were propitious for the ascent.

The 4-berth Balzola bivouac hut is situated on the Col des Clochettes, on the E.N.E. ridge of the Grivola, and is reached in 6-7 gruelling hours from Cogne. Richard Brooke and I were profoundly relieved when Colin and Dave, our young companions, called down that the hut was unoccupied. Even so, we filled all the available space with ourselves and our sacks, and cooking supper proved a somewhat delicate operation. Despite this we were all glad to be away from the crowded bustle of the average hut in mid-season. This bivouac is in a superb situation, perched at 3477 m on a narrow ridge between the Trajo and Nomenon glaciers, and it has a fine view across the trench of the Val d'Aosta to Mt Blanc and the Grand Combin. Unfortunately I was feeling a little out of sorts, so on this my second visit, my appreciation was somewhat dulled.

Starting so high, it was not necessary to start too early, as we needed light to find the route down to the Nomenon glacier, which one crosses to gain the N. ridge. Unfortunately, my indisposition was worse, and no sooner had I managed to force down some breakfast than my stomach violently rejected it. However, after coming all this way I was determined to go on, and movement soon restored my well being. While Richard and Dave went on ahead to pick out the descent, Colin patiently shepherded me down. After a time-saving abseil we reached the glacier, though there was a moment's alarm when a flake that the others had used to swing round on collapsed just as I left it for a ledge where they were busy fixing crampons. After a traverse across beneath the N. E. face, we reached the N. ridge itself, and Colin and I soon joined the others on a patch of stones, where a rest and a bite of food put my stomach right for the rest of the day.

The earlier accounts speak of finding the ridge in ice, but I was pleased to find my hunch correct that after such late spring snowfalls as we had this year, it should still have good snow cover. Nowadays the ridge is no longer the narrow crest of the accounts, but a rather broad angle between the N.E. and N.W. faces. Indeed, at the end of a long dry season it can become a pile of loose scree patches. We had already found that the snow was softening on the edge, even at 7-30 a.m. so when Colin and Dave led off, they took a line to the right, and indeed we really followed the left edge of the N.W. face for the whole ascent. This held a layer of frozen snow, giving excellent

purchase for our crampon points, and we were able to move continuously together the whole way. The ridge gradually steepens, and as we climbed we could appreciate the increasing exposure as the slope swept down unbroken to the Nomenon valley in shadow far below. On such a slope, part of the pleasure comes from the certainty that, although a slide by ones companion would be difficult to hold, such a slip is not going to occur. Although the party had scarcely climbed together before this holiday, it was this, our second route, that gave us the mutual confidence so necessary in the Alps. The sole real difficulty of the climb lies in passing the rock band that crosses the whole N.W. face at about three-quarter height. This posed a few problems, with poor security, and was well led by Colin. Once over this difficulty, the final, steepest slope held several inches of snow, which held the foot and the axe shaft well, and took us quickly up to the W. ridge. From here, a rope length along the snow ridge was followed by a rock step, and with crampons scratting, I joined the others at the cairn. We had taken about 5 hours from the hut, but of this one hour was spent on the descent to the glacier.

In a way the ascent might have been considered disappointing. In the conditions as we found them it was perhaps a little too easy, and there was even some regret that he had not had to climb any ice. We certainly did not have the hours of step cutting related in the accounts, but in any case we had modern ice climbing equipment. There was no 'dizzy crest of ice' such as Kugy describes, yet re-reading his account I can see that the climb is essentially the same, and that we modern climbers perhaps take technical problems more for granted, and are less prone to indulge in the heroic over-statements of the good Doctor's book.

ICE DREAM

Jim Gregson

I had my heart set on a decent ice-climb this year and I had dutifully trained every morning for six weeks, steeling myself to the vertiginous exposure of the streets of Sale at 6.45 in the morning, rain, hail, carbon monoxide, the lot. I'd even got my wife Sandy to go through it all too.

Carrying heavy sack-loads of Swiss francs, we had acclimatised after a fashion on the Allalinhorn and Rimpfischhorn, and even walked to the foot of the Matterhorn. A much-thumbed guidebook kept falling open at the North-east Face of the Lenzspitze—'a connoisseur's peak. . . the finest pure ice route. . . ' all the guff. Who could resist it?

I was all keyed up for going. No qualms about the route, no mention of objective danger, no approach problems. It was a Sunday as we left Zermatt for Saas-Fee. A train ticket for down the Valley blitzed the wallet. We scowled and looked poor English for forty minutes on the rack to Stalden. As the sacks were lighter by a few pounds, we walked without panting to the station yard to get the bus to Saas. More bolstering of the Swiss economy while the driver helpfully loaded the sacks into the back of the bus.

Soon after, the bus was careering round a set of typical Alpine bends when the driver played his ace. The back door flew open and Sandy's sack took its chance and dived out, axe, crampons, helmet and so on spewing out all over the road. Well, it's not easy to get a Swiss Post Bus to stop, particularly when you don't know the German for 'Stop this bloody bus!' Luckily the driver was quick to realise that all was not well with an ABMSAC member leaping up and down and making wild gesticulations, so he pulled up and let me out to leg it back down the road to pick up all the bits. On reloading I watched him LOCK the door this time. Sandy was in a sweat and sat for the rest of the journey glaring at the offending door-catch, uttering a few phrases in Yorkshire idiom.

Now all good Alpinists know that the Valais hut walks are bad, but the one to the Mischabel Hut is a killer, specially when you start at midday and you know it's going to take at least four hours. I tried to look the dignified connoisseur on arrival, just like the book says, but stinking armpits and salt-caked face are a dead giveaway. The hut was hot, as the stovepipe came up through the dormitory floor, but through the window I could see the top half of the face looking nice, clean and white.

It was only when we stopped to rope up that we found out. A few scratches on a helmet and a snapped strap on a rucksack don't put you to any bother when it's the 'finest pure ice etc.' . . . but mangled crampons do. I don't ever recall having to bend crampons back into shape in the dark with bare hands at one o'clock in the morning at 13,000 feet, but it doesn't put you in a good mood. Specially if you're not sure if they're going to fit properly when you really need them. Sandy looked a bit worried by torchlight.

We caught up two other lights by the bergschrund, which proved to be fixed to German heads. I don't know the German for 'connoisseur' either, but one spoke about as much French as me, so we were all right. These lads found a bit of closed 'schrund, so I waited till they'd dug a good stance before moving up. The ice was a bit like gritstone—dirty and rough, so you had to show it who was boss. The clean stuff looked a long way up yet. On it went with me making best use of these resting places the Germans had worn themselves out chopping, but just to show British fair play, I enlarged some of them by a square inch or so.

Climbing ice in the Alps isn't like Scotland, where you go like hell till it eases off and you can get your breath back. In the Alps you go like hell (so you think) and no matter how you fix your belay you can't get comfortable, so you hop about from foot to foot and guess in vain how many more rope-lengths you've got to go. Well, there we were, four connoisseurs kicking and hammering away up this big shiny slope, beginning to enjoy the sunshine, when it really started.

We heard this high-pitched buzzing sound, getting louder, like a tiny Japanese motor-bike doing its best. The German lads, forgetting that I only spoke French, began to shout 'Stein! Stein!'. 'Hello' I thought, 'one of them's dropped a beer mug pinched from the hut'. But no. The Alps were playing for real. Proper stones. And moving very fast. Sometimes they bounced, but never more than five feet off the ice and not usually more than twice in the whole length of the face. This hadn't been in the guidebook or I might have thought twice about it. The problem with stonefall is that you can't look up to see how near it is to you, and it's not too easy to climb while looking at your feet all the time.

The worst moment was when a large rock smashed into my hammer just above my thumb, ripping through several layers of tape and marking the metal shaft. That could have been nasty if I'd had the next size in thumbs. The clean, white ice was also a disappointment as it proved to be only a thin crust over the armour-plated glass beneath which broke into great dinner-plates on being smashed with a terrordactyl. It went on for hundreds of feet like this, a muscle-tightening lurch from kick to kick, toes bruised, thankful for drive-in pegs.

The line slanted to the left so with joy we pulled out onto the north-east ridge not far from the top. Our two Germans had had enough and began to descent this ridge. After this we pushed on to the top and found the way onto the south ridge to go down to the Lenzjoch, for we wished to come down in the Zermatt valley. Sandy wouldn't go back in the Post Bus for anything! A nice scramble down, a wade through wet snow and a totter across the avalanche debris below the Dom seracs then we could have a decent sit-down to try to eat something.

We passed the Dom Hut at speed as the thought of more money going on a sleepless night was hurtful. Didn't we have a tent at Zermatt, crammed with food and comfort? Down, down and down, happy to have not much more to cope with. Through the woods in gathering darkness, but at last having to get a torch out. Through Randa village, stopping to drink at all the troughs,

trying to remember the way to the station. Look! the lights of a train! It stopped, then pulled out and we weren't on it. The last weary steps to the station and the deflation of seeing that there were no more trains till next day. Five minutes later we had recalled that taxis ran from Tasch to Zermatt, and we could walk there in about an hour. Well, after everything else, it was only fitting that all the taxi men had gone to bed. Painfully transferring weight from one set of blisters to the other, we argued over what to do.

Wait a moment! Didn't we have sacks full of semi-bivouac gear? We couldn't find a level field, so we lay down on a slope already wet with dew. That was fine till we woke again two hours later, damp and shaken by spasms of shivering and unable to go back to sleep. Still five hours before the first train or early taxi. What a choice to have to make—lie in wet grass for five hours, then ride up in comfort, or stagger in the dark for nearly two hours and be warm but aching all over. We opted for the walk and so it was that two weary English completed their ascent of the 'finest pure ice climb in the Mischabel' by hobbling into Zermatt at four-thirty in the morning like a pair of drunks falling over everyone's guy-lines.

'MONTE DELLA DISGRAZIA'

Gordon Gadsby

After several forays up some of the lesser peaks of the Bernina, July 23rd found Ken Bryan, Stuart Bramwell and me at the entrance to the Preda Rossa valley above the Val Masino Italy, after an early morning drive of seventy miles from our campsite at St. Moritz. The weather was set fair and Disgrazia beckoned from high above the pine woods at the head of the valley.

Shouldering our heavy sacs we set off at a steady pace on a good undulating track past the old stone cottages of the Preda Rossa Hamlet (long since deserted but still in very good condition). Our destination was the Cesare Ponti Hutte situated above the lateral moraine of the Rossa glacier at an altitude of 2559 metres and the property of the Italian Alpine Club. After a few minutes our track wound slightly downwards and we emerged past several stunted trees to a magnificent flat, grassy plain with the Masino river meandering towards us and forming two Ox Bows on a level journey of about half a mile. The track continued beside the river with impressive views in all directions.

On our right, above the forest, we could see a spectacular ridge of red granite leading up to the summit of Corni Bruciati 3114m, whilst on the left rose the equally impressive ridge of the Punta Della Averta 2853m. Ahead of us the track climbed steeply alongside a series of delightful waterfalls, stunted pine trees and masses of azaleas with butterflies in such abundance that we had to watch where we trod.

Thirty-five minutes later the ground levelled off to another idyllic valley with a small tarn. Soon we passed the last of the trees as the track turned sharply to the left and ascended a steep rock band in a series of zigzags. This was hard work for about an hour but the views more than compensated us. The hut was hidden from view until the last ten minutes. As we approached it looked like an outpost from the Alamo with dirty cement walls offering little contrast with the rock surroundings. A few tourists were just preparing to go down so we exchanged greetings and then were pleased to step out of the hot sun and into the cool dark interior of the spacious hut—the walk had taken two and a half hours.

Arivederci, Grazie, Buona sera—that was about the limit of our Italian and the three teenagers in charge knew no English. We soon gathered however that we were the only overnight visitors in a hutte with forty beds, a welcome change from the overcrowded conditions in the Bernina Alps. After a meal, which consisted of very thin soup (the girl used one litre of water to each packet instead of one pint!), bread, cheese and sardines, we went for an evening stroll to check up on the route. It was a lovely evening with a delicate pink sky over the shadowy hills of Italian lakeland on the horizon. Across the Rossa glacier snout were the impressive twin summits of the Cima Di Corna Rossa 3250m just catching the last rays of the evening sun.

We decided on a three o'clock start and, after a last lingering look at the still distant Disgrazia, retired to our comfortable room at the front of the building, each of us wrapped up in thought of what tomorrow might bring. For myself I was very excited and could hardly wait for morning and the chance to set foot on a mountain that had haunted my thoughts for almost nine years.

The cold grey light of dawn was slowly easing across the sky as we fitted on our crampons on the upper moraine of the Rossa glacier. We had left at 3 a.m. after a torchlight breakfast in our room of cheese, bread and grapefruit washed down with blackcurrant juice. The first hour had been a stumbling process with no real track across boulders and creaking snow-fields. It was real pleasure now to lead off at a steady pace up the long and fairly steep Preda Rossa glacier. A chilling wind was whining across the snow ice from the North East and the dark morning was bitterly cold. About half an hour later a cry from Stuart 'Look behind Gordon' stopped me in my tracks and on turning I saw the first rays of the morning sun changing the dark tower of the Cima Rossa into a red fiery light. Slowly the light spread along the ridge dancing from rock to rock, a breathtaking spectacle of nature that never fails to enthrall. This was our third sunrise of the holiday and by far the most memorable. 'We'd best be pressing on' said Ken, 'I don't like the look of those clouds. We could be in for some bad weather soon.' He was right, the sky above us was filled with small fast moving clouds, a true herring bone formation and a sure sign of a front of bad weather on its way. Ken reckoned we had twelve hours, but Disgrazia is noted for attracting bad weather and we were worried.

At five fifty a.m. we reached the lowest point of the North West ridge at the Sella di Pioda 3387m after crossing several large crevasses and a bergschrund without incident. On our left the satellite of Disgrazia, Mount Pioda 3431m swept up to the heavens like a campaign missile. It is possible to climb it in thirty minutes from this spot, but the ridge looked dangerously loose. On our right the very sharp N.W. ridge of Disgrazia rose up in a series of towers and snow crests into a deep blue sky. The view northwards into the Valley Sissone was all peace and beauty with green meadows and tiny villages dotted on alps thousands of feet below us. In the middle distance was a band of haze and mist with the enormous backcloth of the main Bernina massif rising above it.

Our blackcurrant cordial tasted like wine in this heady atmosphere and thus refreshed we set off up the route of the first ascensionists. The snow was in excellent condition as we traversed the base of the first tower and then climbed steeply to the crest of the ridge, a short exposed snow arete followed, then another rock tower taken direct. The rock was very sound and all the climbing done in crampons. 'This is the best route I've done' shouted Stuart as he followed up the rough red granite. It was certainly a fantastic ridge with spectacular views on both sides.

After an hour we reached the base of the steep curving shoulder of the Fore peak. The first thirty feet was a delicate traverse across icy slabs above a sheer drop of three thousand feet, then a direct ascent up very steep snow



Disgrazia

Photo by: G. Gadsby

glazed with ice for about two hundred feet. This was a thrilling ascent with all the joys of mountaineering, but we didn't relish the thought of descending it. Eventually the slope eased off and we stepped onto the almost level snow summit of the fore peak. Ahead of us the main ridge dropped slightly then was blocked completely by an unusually shaped hunk of granite—The Bronze Horse! Beyond the block the imposing summit tower reared to the heavens, so near and yet could we get round the Bronze Horse?

I approached the impasse carefully, the guide book said traverse left or right low down, both very exposed. I decided on a direct ascent and surprisingly climbed the imposter without difficulty. Ken and then Stuart followed with comparative ease and at 8.15 a.m. the three of us stood on Monte Della Disgrazia's highest point at 3687 metres.

It was a thrilling moment especially for me. Since first seeing the mountain, shimmering above a sea of cloud from the main summit of the Piz Roseg, I'd waited nine years for a chance to climb it. On the day I had not been disappointed, the memory of the warm red granite, the curving ice aretes, the companionship of good friends and the breathtaking views from the airy summit of that remote and lovely mountain, would remain for the rest of my life.



Please contact your Travel Agent or the
Swiss National Tourist Office, Swiss Centre, 1 New Coventry Street,
London W1V 3HG, Tel. 01-734 1921

THE WALK ROUND MONTE ROSA

Ken Baldry

There is no classic route for this walk but we decided that St Niklaus seemed the best starting point. We did the section as far as Mattmark in 1973 and the rest of the trip this summer.

From the station at St Niklaus, the marked path to Grächen follows a straight line which avoids or cuts off the road, leading to the end of the traffic-free 'high street'. From the main square, a footpath runs up to the Hannigalp, where we stayed the night in the Hannighusli cafe. An early start is desirable in the morning as the signpost time may be modified by snow or, in 1973, the path being avalanched off! This is the Balfrin Hohweg, one of the best days in the tour, with a glorious surprise view of the Balfrin Glacier. The path contours at about 2000 metres, high above the Saastal, to Saas Fee, where you cross the gorge and go down to Saas Almagell for the night.

From Saas Almagell, a mucky footpath to Mattmark avoids the road, but visit the chapel commemorating the Mattmark dam disaster. From Mattmark, the well-marked Monte Moro pass leads to Italy. It follows the slabs up the side of the top valley rather than the valley bottom and there is a wonderful view of Monte Rosa from the top, we are told. The top of the Italian side is messy but very good lower. We stayed the night in Borca to be well placed for the next and hardest day.

Baedeker says that the Val Quarazza is uninteresting but it has changed since 1911. The larch trees and lake make it the most beautiful of the valleys, but the Turlo Pass is 1600 metres above Borca and it must be 25 miles to Alagna. To our surprise, we found a perfectly maintained pack-horse track above 2000 metres. Musso's Alpini, who were responsible, left a plaque at the top. There is another plaque in the local German. Philology is half the fun of this walk, with local variations of German in this Walser area being squeezed by modern Italian. Place names like Staval, Monte Rothorn, Turlo and Z'Makigno assist one's confusion.

Alagna is a dump and the Col d'Olen worth a miss. You avoid it by taking the cable car to Punta Indren and, dodging the skiers in August, go up to the splendid and spotless Gnifetti Hut. We could only do the Pyramide Vincent this year as the snow was so thick, but we set our new altitude record at 4215m. With better weather, you can do Monte Rosa and Liskamm. The walk down to Gressoney is rough but the scenery compensates one. Gressoney is a mild ski resort who's uplift is being improved to the benefit of climbers. An egg railway goes part the way to the Gnifetti Hut and, on the other side, a chairlift is being built to the Colle Bettaforca, which we crossed the next day. This lift will save some of the slog to the Quintino Sella Hut. The Bettaforca is a double-sized Sty Head in character and leads to St Jacques in the Val d'Ayas. The map is the only place it is called San

Giacomo. This is a few miles and a few centuries from the trendy ski-hole of Champoluc.

To get to Breuil, you must cross the Cima Bianche pass. This is a long walk, full of interest, with a huge flat hause unlike anything else on the walk. Below this is the Gran Lago, a tiny tarn which reflects the Gobba di Rollin in its turquoise waters. A German lady said Breuil is schrecklich but daft would be a better description of this ski architects ego trip. Things look more normal from the high street, dominated this year by a snow plastered Matterhorn South Face. We took the string railway to Testa Grigia on the Theodule Pass and watched the summer skiers on winter quality snow. Then the walk over the crevasse-free glacier to Trockener Steg. This ice is normally quite cut up.

It feels like coming home to enter Zermatt and we spent four days there. But to complete the trip, you must walk down to St Niklaus, which is well worth doing. Most of it is off the road and it is surprising what you miss on the train. Tasch, Randa, Herbriggen and down the mule track to St Niklaus.

You can do the walk in ten days but it pays to linger a little. This is the only practical way to visit these valleys as the heads are so far apart. It is good that foot is still the best way to tour in parts of Europe still. This was the first visit Jane and I have made to Alpine Italy. We have made friends of the land and its people and so will you.

A SCOTSMAN IN IRELAND

Hamish M. Brown

Ireland is a word sadly present before us these days. Yet there are great contrasts. Ulster leaves the far South West of that island untouched; they have in many ways the same outlook on Dublin as the Hebrides have on London. Life is concerned with soil and sea, survival and the seasons.

'Go your way you questing men,
Life has no need of reasons.'

Furthest west of the 3000 feet summits in the British Isles is Brandon, Brandon Mountain, so inseparable to some from the poems and prose of Geoffrey Winthrop Young. There he climbed those Torridonian-like cliffs and corries where elbows and knees held together what fingers and feet mounted, there he wrote of the bright eyed children of Brandon, wild as seabirds, the sky children of Brandon. They stood peering over a wall at us when we went up the Saint's Road years ago—just as Young described. The saint's road: Brandon the blessed. On top the remains of his cell, cold-cluttered with hoar frost while at the end of the world the moors burnt blue clouds across the Blasket Islands. Brandon has a magical quality of romance about it as no other mountain I know.

This last visit gave the only clear day among the mists and storms of autumn: time to wander up lanes eating brambles, time to swim in lochan after lochan, penetrating deeper into the encircling corries and finally out of their circling arms to the grassy heights. Brandon stands at the end of the Dingle Peninsula, west of Tralee, beyond miles of white sand, only the Atlantic beyond.

From the summit I could see the cliff-cut notch of Brandon Creek. There I had spent the night in the dormobile, presuming a quiet night beside the currachs but finding they came and went silently on the shoulders of fishermen. Vague memories of lights and quiet voices, of the brightness of the sea and the shimmer of scaly fish being thrown onto the slipways.

It was on the peninsula they filmed 'Ryan's Daughter', that moving film of Ireland's struggle. It gave vague unease to dreams. The history is still too close. Irish centenary stamps, indeed living memories, recall struggles which we knew six hundred years ago.

Also in the South West are the Macgillycuddy Reeks, the main group of 3000-ers but before then, briefly a glimpse at the two other separate ones: Lugnaquilla and Galtee More.

Lugnaquilla is in the Wicklows south of Dublin: an Ochil-like range of rolling grass and moor, the Galtees are near Tipperary, half way to the South West. Both groups, and many others which fail to reach the magical 3000 ft., rise from the patchwork quilt of green Ireland: that tracery of smallhold cultivation which is simply absent from our highlands. There is

a richness in the Irish landscape we lack. Our peaks are a desolation. These still have folk about them.

The Wicklows enjoy Dublin popularity just as Arrochar or Ben Lomond does that of Glasgow. Here too at Glendalough is hidden a sixth century monastic settlement. Ireland has its ancient tales too. The Galtee Hills, again as many Irish ranges, rise steeply from the wash of fields. They are well forested and the forest roads are not barred to the odd motorist—something the Forestry Commission might follow. It led almost to my undoing. I drove up several hair-raising tracks to end above the forest: sleeping in the dormobile at about 2000 ft. Two days and soakings later and feeling a bit monastic myself in that solitary site I drove down—to find the track barred by tree trunks which they had been dragging out the forest with ponies. Fortunately months at a sawmill had taught how to manhandle logs alone. Perhaps they would think the fairies had been at work. . .

Were these all the 3000-ders there would be a definite lack but the Macgillycuddy Reeks redresses matters to bring to the groupings an aesthetic unity. They are a splendid range (I can think of several places in Scotland where they would fit well): a horseshoe of dark crags in the west, and a succession of steep, Glen Shiel like Sisters, 'the ridge of the Reeks', running east to finish with the narrowest ridge in Britain: a mere page of upended strata.

Twice we had cars and/or drivers to help for full traverses: the frosty Easter when we would have welcomed ice axes and where we ended in the Gap of Dunloe, the girls meeting us with a couple of ponies. Fresh scones and tea in a cottage there too. The second time was with boys and girls: Florence and Eddie and Jimmy; all to go on to complete the highest in England, Wales and Scotland too, Jimmy at the ripe age of twelve. We just made it up to Moll's Gap that time before the heavens opened. We scuttled down to Killarney with never a glimpse of the Lakes. It was odd to be alone among them.

This time the main interest came on the last peak. It had been depressing and delightful in turn till then. I'd taken a new way up to the horseshoe, becoming drenched in a typical Scotch mist, or Irish mist I suppose, and Carrauntoohill, the highest point in Ireland was bleak and windy. I completed the horseshoe and back, coming off Carrauntoohill vowing to go down if it did not clear at the col. Typically, it did, the mist rolling back peak by peak as I raced along them, the sun shafting into the valleys, the corrie lochans glittering, the wind flushing a happy face. Then the Crom Cruach knife edge and rise beyond the Cruach. It seemed to have a bigger cairn than recalled. Puzzling. A figure flitting about in the mist too.

I arrived to find a big man-made cairn with a ladder leaning against it, tools lying about and many bags of cement. The figure greeted me; an ancient local who was busy painting the niche of this shrine he had built through a long hot summer. I wondered whether it was a labour of love—or a penance. Everything he had carried up 3000 ft. from the village below, several miles away. He must have been well on in his seventies, and no hillman. I'm sure he thought me a liar explaining wee Jimmy's romp along

those ridges. 'You could not be travelling them at all'. As for being employed for mountain doings? 'Och well, if they pay you for it it must be all right'. You should never attempt to explain why we climb.

I think there is something of its unique combination of physical doing with the mental or spiritual, call it what you will; we 'embrace earth rock to find a soul'. Ireland, that other Ireland, has always completely satisfied both the animal activity and the aesthetic, both the sense of exploration and of pilgrimage. Any hillman will enjoy it thoroughly, these hills, the same difference. . .

POWDERSNOW IN ALTA, UTAH, U.S.A.

Walter Kirstein

I apologise that this report has little to do with mountaineering though it does concern mountaineers on mountains in Winter on the lovely powder-snow in Alta in December 1974.

I had heard a great deal about the magnificent powdersnow in Alta and knew that Mike and Sally Westmacott would spend some time there at the beginning of the Winter. I had arranged to give a talk about the Alps to the Chicago Mountaineering Club on my way to California to visit my daughter



Powder Snow in Utah

Photo by: W. Kirstein

and her family at Christmas. I had given a talk to the Club members before and quite a few of them remembered me from my visit in November 1963, a never to be forgotten occasion. It was on the day that President Kennedy was shot and I heard the sad news over the loudspeaker whilst travelling on the plane from Philadelphia, and the details I learnt from the Club President who fetched me from the airport. I offered at once to cancel the talk but was told that there was no way of getting in touch with all the members, at least 150 people. About half of them did arrive that evening and I should think this was one of the few functions which took place in the United States that night.

Utah is on the direct line from Chicago to California, and knowing that Mike and Sally would be around I made a stop at Salt Lake City only to find out that there was so much snow in the mountains and on the approach roads to Alta, it was doubtful if I would get up to Alta at all. The next day the avalanches were shot down and I was able to travel to Alta arriving in the late evening. During the first few days I saw little of the mountains, snow was falling nearly all the time and I was surprised how many of the extremely steep slopes were open for skiing. I could hear the avalanches being shot down and as soon as day broke and about 9 a.m. or 10 a.m. most of the runs were opened. Once the noise reminded me of London during the Blitz when we heard the shells bursting and even felt the blast coming from the explosions whilst sitting on our seats high up on the chairlifts. Soon, however, all worries were forgotten when the sun came out and we were taken up by the lifts to about 10,000 or 11,000 feet with miles of untracked powdersnow below us. The photo with the one skier racing down next to the few tracks in the snow and the powder spraying up to his waist shows the signs marking avalanche danger beyond.

Some American skiers are so used to the artificially smoothed ski runs that they believe one can only ski down once the heavy ski machines have made the deep powder snow flat. For me it is a special pleasure to show some of them how lovely and how much nicer it is to ski on natural snow off the piste than to follow the marked, polished runs, which are often very crowded.

When the Westmacotts arrived the weather at first was not so favourable for skiing. However we did ski in plenty of powdersnow, too much of it indeed. A terrific blizzard was blowing and I heard Mike murmur something like 'Even on Everest it was not that cold'. By the time we were right down in the late afternoon I saw how tough Mike could be. One of my safety bindings opened too early, quite unnecessary. My fingers were too stiff from the cold to close the binding again but Mike managed to do it very quickly. I was glad to hear later that after I left for California Mike and Sally had the most marvellous weather and perfect snow conditions.

The next time I saw Sally was on my return trip in New York. Sally came to my talk in the AAC there and a few days later when back in London I heard her lecture to the ABM/SAC about their climbing in the Rockies.

TO REMAIN 40 YEARS OLD FOR A FURTHER 20 YEARS

Kurt Haas, Section Uto, Zuerich, Swiss Alpine Club.

(Editorial note. Walter Kirstein provided this translation, with the information that Mr. Kurt Haas is a distinguished mountaineer with the first and so far the only winter ascent of the south-east face of the Eiger to his credit. Walter believes that the views expressed may be considered controversial, and that this may be a good thing for the journal. He should know, having been twice as successful as the writer claims, in that he has been 40 years old for about 40 years).

The organism is physically as efficient as the heart is, the human being as young as his or her heart-circulation-system. It is not by chance that the words 'old' and 'calcified' mean practically the same. Someone may have yet the most impressive muscles—if the circulation and particularly the heart are weak, they are not efficient. The dominant component for physical efficiency is the capacity of the heart to stand up to long periods of stresses.

There is a basic biological law that if you practice some functions you will improve them, if you neglect them they will deteriorate. On account of the differences of the various components of physical efficiency we have also different effects of training. Accordingly we have different ways of training, methods which are shaped to reach whatever target is meant to be reached.

The physical efficiency depends mainly on two organic systems and they have to be trained:

1. The organs, which have to be moved: bones, muscles, tendons, ligaments and joints.
2. The oxygen system, lungs, heart and bloodvessels.

It is not necessary to exhaust oneself all day long with manual work to increase the capacity of the heart to stand up to longer and harder stresses. On the contrary, that would be wrong; only exhaustion but not wellbeing would be the result. It is sufficient to produce a short but powerful training effect within regular intervals. This effect has to be the more powerful the longer the intervals are. If the training is too short, it will have no effect; if the interval is too long, the effect of the first training will have disappeared before the second one can act.

The sport and efficiency medical science has done a lot of research regarding these problems during the last decades and has come to recognise a great number of results. Training exercises, which intend to improve the efficiency of the heart and particularly of the oxygen transport apparatus, have to fulfill 5 requests:

1. They have to be of the right kind, that means they have to have a dynamic character.

2. At least one sixth of all muscles have to be in action at the same time.
3. The intensity of the exercise has to produce an increase of the pulse rate by ca 60% higher than the pulse rate figure before the start, at least 170 minus age, but not higher than 220 minus age.
4. The exercises have to be carried out for at least 6 minutes with the same intensity.
5. They have to be done on at least 4 days during one week and the intervals between 2 exercises ought not to be more than 2 days.

If one prolongs the times of the exercises, one does improve the success. Once the desired condition is reached, it is sufficient to have only 2 training exercises per week, however then not less than $\frac{1}{2}$ hour each time.

Of all the usual sports, the following kinds of exercise seem to be the best ones to improve the efficiency of the heart:

Mountaineering, hiking in the mountains or fast walking on the level.

Running (on tracks or crosscountry).

Bicycling, if possible away from heavy traffic.

Rowing or paddling.

Swimming.

Special gymnastic for improving the condition.

Whatever kind of these exercises you choose, your heart and your circulation will be improved and you will feel better for it. You have to select the times for your training according to your occupation and your way of life. It depends on the present capacity of your system, how far you can go with your exercises at the start. If there is the slightest suspicion of any heart trouble, you have first to consult a doctor.

ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 19TH NOVEMBER 1975.

The election of officers and committee resulted in the appointments of Mr. H. Flook as Hon. Librarian, Mr. Llywelyn Jones as Hon. Auditor and Mr. S. M. Freeman as Hon. Editor. Wing-Commander H. D. Archer, Mr. K. J. Baldry and the Rev. F. L. Jenkins were elected to the Committee. All other eligible Officers and Committee members were re-elected.

Two sets of accounts were presented by the Hon. Treasurer, those of the A.B.M.S.A.C. and those of the A.B.M.S.A.C. Ltd., the latter relating to the management of the George Starkey hut. The former accounts were approved, the latter are the concern of the Company and will be considered at another meeting. The President pointed out that a heavy burden had been imposed on the Hon. Treasurer in the circumstances. A formal vote of appreciation was carried with acclaim.

The President expressed the Association's thanks to the Swiss National Tourist Office, without whose help it would be difficult for the Association to continue. Particular reference was made to Mr. Unsel's many years of work, and to Mr. Imoderdorf who has succeeded him, and is continuing in the tradition of his predecessor.

The painful necessity to raise the subscriptions was accepted. The rates of £3 for Town members, £2 for Country members, £24 for Town Life Members and £12 for Country Life members were approved.

The President spoke of the extra work done in 1975 by the Officers and Committee in connection with the George Starkey Memorial hut. Particular mention was made of Mr. J. P. Ledeboer, the Hon. Committee Chairman.

The meeting closed with a note of thanks to the President, proposed by Mr. Kirstein and approved unanimously.

THE ANNUAL DINNER 19TH NOVEMBER, 1975.

This was again held at the Connaught Rooms. The official guests were:-

Dr. and Mrs. Karl Fritschi,
The Swiss Embassy

Mr. and Mrs. R. Serex,
The Swiss Embassy

Mr. and Mrs. E. Imoberdorf
The Swiss National Tourist Office

Mr. and Mrs. G. Hall
The Tuesday Climbing Club

Dr. C. R. A. Clarke
Representative from the Alpine Club

Mr. Harry Sales
President of the Climbers Club

Mr. J. Lane
Treasurer of the Fell and Rock C.C.

Miss Barbara Sneath
The Cambridge University M.C.

Mrs. Mary Starkey

The Royal toast was proposed by the President.

The toast to the Swiss Confederation was proposed by Mr. H. S. Flook, and Dr. Fritschi replied, both emphasising the close ties between the two countries and between the parent Club and this Association.

The toast to the Association was proposed by the President, who reviewed the events of a momentous year.

Mr. J. S. Whyte proposed the health of the guests and Kindred Clubs, and Dr. Clarke responded on behalf of the Alpine Club.

OUTDOOR MEETS

The programme offered was considerably fuller than ever before. This probably took members by surprise, because the response was not in all cases what had been hoped for, and one meet had to be abandoned. Popular events like the Alpine Meet and the Northern Dinner were great successes, and the Hut opening was a sell-out. Mr. Strawther has arranged an even more ambitious and delectable programme for 1976, and the continuing maintenance of this high level of British activity depends on active support from the members. The hut is in full use, and support for meets based on Patterdale is doubly important.

The Editor has proved to be a dismal failure at getting in reports of meets. The Alpine Meet is reported earlier. Reports on other meets follow.

EASTER MEET 1975 ROYBRIDGE

Alistair Andrews

The Meet was centred on the Glen Spean Lodge Hotel where the main contingent were in residence. Others found accommodation in a run down bothy in Fersit.

Most of the members arrived on Wednesday and as the cup flowed we agreed that we should attempt Creag Meagaidh the following day. We awoke to a snowy scene, however it was cold and clear and soon we were tramping our way up Coire Ardair. The cliffs were truly magnificent being plastered with

snow and ice down as far as the lochain. From the lochain we quickly stepped up to the Window, and from there to the summit. The views from the summit plateau, particularly to the north, were beautiful. We descended by another route bagging a few tops en route.

On Friday we attempted a climb on the Grey Corries but had to retreat from about the 3000 foot mark because of the foul weather. That evening we were entertained by Hamish Brown, who showed us some of his slides of various parts of the Highlands and Islands.

Next day we drove up to Loch Laggan and walked south towards Ben Alder, above 2500 feet the weather was foul. One party decided to circumnavigate Creag Pitridh whilst the other party traversed Beirn a' Chlachair in white out, very thankful of massive steps cut by Tony Strawther on the ascent. Needless to say some of us decided that Sunday should be a day of rest and went up Glen Roy to examine the parallel roads. The fitter members returned to the Grey Corries and traversed the whole ridge in perfect snow and weather conditions.

On Monday we drove round to Glen Nevis. Once again the weather was perfect and between us we climbed Stob Ban, Mullach nan Coirean and Sgurr a' Mhaim.

For our last day we decided to do something different so we took the train to Corroun and walked back to Glen Spean through the hills via Strath Ossian and Fersit. This was an interesting trip into an area which is fairly remote but well worth a visit.

Thus ended this year's Meet. In all 17 members and friends attended the Meet. Perhaps we can attract more members to Scotland next Easter.

THE CWM COWARCH MEET

(A. W. Strawther).

This was new ground for a club meet, thanks to the Mountain Club's excellent hut Bryn Hafod, which in its lovely setting is all that a hut should be.

The weather was kind throughout the weekend. On the Saturday ropes were out on the Pencoed Pillar to taste its very steep grass and equally steep rock, also a walking party crossed the Cader Idris range to taste the beer at Cross Foxes. The Sunday found climbers out on Craig Cowarch and walkers on Aran Mawddwy. Sunday afternoon however was marred by an accident on Craig Cowarch caused by a falling block; happily the outcome was less serious than at first thought.

There is still room for more members at these meets; I wonder just how many members have ever visited the area. (Editor's note: Brooke Midgley displayed his versatility again by repairing the leaking float chamber needle in the ed.'s carburettor, despite a V.S. task of dismantling the thing).

KIRKBY STEPHEN JUNE 20-21.

(John Kemsley)

The practice of holding an occasional meet off the beaten track was continued in June when John Kemsley organized a weekend gathering of 13 members and friends at Kirkby Stephen with the King's Arms as base.

The Saturday gave a good walk over Wild Boar Fell and down the Ais Gill which is better known as the highest point on the Midland line from Leeds to Carlisle than as a highly attractive mountain stream. Here lunch-time frolics divided the party into those who were prepared to traverse the upper gorge in Ais Gill at the risk of immersion in the rock pools and those who gave first priority to emptying their picnic boxes. The thirsty return route on that very hot afternoon went up Hell Gill and over the hills to the ice-creams, lemonades and beers of Kirkby Stephen where an excellent dinner later rounded off a thoroughly satisfying day.

On the Sunday the meet moved to the Sedbergh district and made a short expedition up Cautley Spout where the succession of cascades made a spectacular showing despite the dry summer, and thence over the tops of the Howgills before the party dispersed homewards in divers directions.

ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS 1974-1975

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

for the year ended 30th September 1975

	1975	1974
<i>Income from Members</i>		
Subscriptions (Note 1)	267	728
Entrance Fees	46	49
Life Membership Credit	44	46
Profit on Sale of Ties	6	5
Insurance Commissions	29	28
	<u>392</u>	<u>856</u>
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>		
Hire of Rooms	100	100
Journal (Note 2)	436	378
Printing, Postage etc. SNT0	156	164
Printing, Postage etc. Association	249	122
Hut Appeal Costs	—	216
Insurance	9	17
Entertainment	37	40
Visit of Swiss Climbers	—	(25)
BMC Subscription	69	73
Lecture Expenses	—	3
Sundries	14	6
Depreciation, New Projector	33	33
	<u>1,103</u>	<u>1,127</u>
	(711)	(271)
<i>Add: Investment Income:</i>		
Association Investments	121	114
Building Society Interest	35	72
	<u>156</u>	<u>186</u>
<i>Less: Taxation (Note 3)</i>	<u>66</u>	<u>32</u>
	<u>90</u>	<u>154</u>
<i>(Excess of Expenditure over Income)</i>	<u>£(621)</u>	<u>£(117)</u>

BALANCE SHEET

30th September, 1975

	1975	1974
<i>FIXED ASSETS (Note 4)</i>		
Projector (N.S. Finzi Bequest)	33	66
Equipment at Swiss Tourist Office	1	1
<i>INVESTMENTS at cost (Note 5)</i>	1,872	1,872
<i>CURRENT ASSETS</i>		
Advance to ABMSAC LTD.	292	—
Stock of Ties at cost	17	29
Debtors	112	217
Cash on Deposit—Building Society	27	909
Cash at Bank	11	51
	<u>459</u>	<u>1,206</u>
<i>DEDUCT: CURRENT LIABILITIES</i>		
Creditors	67	186
Subscriptions in Advance	164	159
	<u>231</u>	<u>345</u>
<i>NET CURRENT ASSETS</i>	228	861
	<u>£2,134</u>	<u>£2,800</u>
<i>SOURCES OF FINANCE</i>		
<i>LIFE MEMBERSHIP ACCOUNT</i>	830	874
<i>ACCUMULATED REVENUE ACCOUNT</i>		
Balance at 30th September, 1974	1,825	
Less: Excess of Expenditure over Income	621	
	<u>1,204</u>	1,826
<i>N.S. FINZI BEQUEST</i>	100	100
	<u>£2,134</u>	<u>£2,800</u>

I have examined the books and vouchers of the Association and report that the above accounts are in accordance therewith.

J. LLYWELYN JONES
Chartered Accountant.
Hon. Auditor

14th November, 1975

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. Subscriptions

Income from this source is made up as follows:-

	1975	1974
Subscriptions—Town Members	266	290
Subscriptions—Country Members	332	336
(Deficit) on Flat rate of Subscription levied against the sterling equivalent of Subscriptions due to the Swiss Sections of the S.A.C.		
1974 Surplus	(338)	86
Miscellaneous	7	16
	<u>£267</u>	<u>£728</u>

2. Journal

Cost of the journal is made up as follows:-

	1975	1974
Printing	447	360
Despatch cost and other expenses	49	52
	<u>496</u>	<u>412</u>
Less: Advertising Revenue	60	34
	<u>£436</u>	<u>£378</u>

3. Taxation

The Association is liable to Corporation Tax on its income from outside sources.

4. Fixed Assets

	Cost	Depreciation to date
New Projector (N.S. Finzi Bequest)	166	133
Equipment at Swiss National Tourist Office	80	79

5. Investments

These are as follows:

£1,000 4½% Agricultural Mortgage Corporation Deb. Stock 1977/82
 1,080 Brunner Investment Trust Limited Ordinary Shares of 25p.
 710 London Scottish American Trust Limited Ordinary Shares of 25p.

Cost of these holdings was £1,872. Aggregate market value at 30th September, 1975 was £1,954. (1974 £1,219).

MEMBERS' CLIMBS

Dr. A. W. Barton with Mrs. Barton

Easter

Spent just under a fortnight at Trefriw with my sister-in-law, when the weather was poor, cold and usually very cloudy and very wet. Went up Moel Eilio, a little to the N.W. of Llyn Cowlyd; fine views of Carnedd Llewellyn and the neighbouring peaks. On one of the few fine days, starting from the A5 near to Tryfan, we went up Pen-yr-Helgi-du and then across the col to Pen-Llithrig-y-Wrach. Fine views from both summits on a sunny day with a strong cold wind.

Switzerland

On the whole very good weather. At Belalp did a number of good walks, including the Belerkreuz and reconnoitred the Grisighorn but did not go to the top.

At Saas-Fee we went up the Mellig and on the next day we walked to Saas-Grund by the mule track and up to the Weissmies hut, going up the north side of the Trift Valley; a glorious day with superb views of the mountains surrounding the hut and of the Mischabel peaks. We also walked up the usual path to the Mischabel hut until we reached the point where another path goes downwards to the right: we followed this smaller path, crossed two streams and then ascended quite steeply to reach the law cow house on the path to the Mellig: we then went back to Saas-Fee on the usual path via Hohnegg.

We also did the glacier tour from the Langfluh to the Mattmark reservoir with Siegfried Bumann as our guide. This was a cloudy day with some sunshine as far as the Britannia hut, flying the Union Jack. From there onwards we were in mist; we saw little and there was an almost deathly stillness. On reaching the top of the Schwarzkopf we walked along a path going down steep grassy slopes and got a view of the Mattmark lake in due course, a deep turquoise blue.

We concluded our stay in Saas-Fee by going to Gspon and doing the walk from there to Saas-Grund, when we were again fortunate in having a beautiful day. The walk started with a view of the Weisshorn high up in the sky draped in its handsome cloak of snow; on the way we had good views of the Bietschorn dominating the scene to the north and of the various peaks around Saas-Fee.

P. S. Boulter

A year that does not start with a hilltop for New Year's Day is probably ill-omened. We had to come South for Hogmanay and it was late in January before our boots went on for the first time in 1975 and then it was our ski boots at Lenzerheide in Graubunden. It was probably the best skiing holiday

for sun and snow that we have ever had and we went over some delightful tops in the mountains South of Chur. However, misfortune struck at my right tibia on the 13th day when I tripped off a path and a rapid retreat was beaten back to England in time for some appropriate surgery and a spell of convalescence.

A full leg plaster certainly does provide some inconvenience to one's climbing plans and the log for the early part of the year was distinguished by such tops as Pen y Gaer (all 1312 feet of it). For those who haven't tried it, there is an art (and some brute force) in hill walking on crutches and there are problems posed by the need to keep the plaster dry and to avoid weight bearing. Still, a certain wry sense of achievement came from a stately parade round the Iron Age forts of North Wales in March.

By the end of April I was weight bearing but still in plaster. A lecture visit to Galloway gave us strenuous walks over the hills around the Nick of the Balloch. Rowantree Hill is a gem and gives superb views of the Merrick Range to the East and Westwards over the moors that stretch to the coast where Ailsa Craig and Goat Fell of Arran mark the Firth of Clyde. Galloway is lovely country—still one of the least frequented hill tracts of Britain and not yet marred by eroding crocodiles of 'Way Walkers'.

The summer started well but the leg wasn't ready for punishment and sadly we had to opt out of the Saas Fee meet. This was just as well as misfortune struck again and a July day saw the Hon. Secretary dealing very successfully with a stone in the Vice-Presidential ureter. This led to a further spell of Welsh convalescence and, aided by Mary and others, a few more Welsh tops were bagged—all easy and suitable for a pedestrian with a left abdominal incision and a right below knee plaster. It was satisfying to find that Y Drum, Moel Eilio and such tops were practicable, deserted and rewarding—especially with Peter Ledeboer as Bergfuhrer.

However, things improved in the Autumn and October saw us off to Pakistan on a working trip. Most of it was spent in such lowland spots as Karachi and Lahore, but from Peshawar we had a trip to the Khyber Pass and another to the Tribal territory in the region of Kohat. This area was distinguished by the arms factories where a cottage industry makes everything from pistols to machine guns.

The first proper hill of the autumn was Chak Ogam which is above Islamabad, the capital suburb of Rawalpindi. This we did in state with the British Ambassador to Pakistan, a dedicated hill walker. We were slightly sabotaged by 85° F and an Embassy lunch, but we just managed to keep pace with His Excellency.

In early November we went for 10 days of hill walking in the North of the country. First to Nathiagali, where from a base at 8,000 ft. there were some nice easy hills such as Miranjani and Moshpuri at about 10,000 ft., all with superb views of the Jhelum Valley, Kashmir and, 110 miles away, the magnificent snowy wedge of Nanga Parbat.

Then we made our way by a crowded bus, a dilapidated taxi and a splendidly driven jeep up the Khaghan Valley. This, the glen of the Kunhar River, ex-

tends nearly 100 miles from the market village of Balakot to the Babusar Pass—the gateway to Chilas, the upper Indus Valley and Gilgit. We had two days at the forest rest house at Shogran—one of the loveliest places we have ever seen, with some tops of 10,500 ft. above it, which we climbed in perfect solitude and with fine views. These hills had the parched remains of what must have been a superb showing of Himalayan gentians of at least four varieties. Alas, only isolated ones were still showing any colour.

From Shogran we went up nearly to the top of the valley to Naran—a very bleak spot at 8,500 ft. just about to get shut by the winter snows which in fact forced us to make a hasty retreat down the icy and exposed road back to Balakot.

In the mountains we stayed in Forest and Public Works Department Rest Houses. They varied in detail, but a common factor was the Chowkidar or caretaker who also did the cooking. The standard diet was chicken curry and Mary got used to the evening ceremony where the Chowkidar appeared with a live chicken under each arm and said 'One chicken or two in the curry?'. At first she was soft-hearted and asked for one, but Himalayan chickens are very scraggy and her appetite eventually overcame her finer feelings!

The Kaghan and Swat Valleys are gems which would repay proper exploration—good and high enough mountains to be testing though not in any way serious. We eagerly await another excuse to go back to them, though September would be a better month for flowers and transport.

That was 1975—a mixed year—rather a traumatic one, but associated with my personal record of 27 hill tops reached with a leg in plaster. And that is a record that I have no desire to beat.

G. R. Brooke

Braemar in April

A week of walking in the Eastern Grampians including Glas Maol and Carn Aosda. A long day's excursion to Lochnagar via Glen Callater—22 miles covered in 9½ hours—long stretches of soft spring snow.

Chamonix in July with Joseph Burnet.

Petite Aiguille Verte.

Aiguille des Pelerins—this a straight-forward but entertaining climb on both snow and rock; the ascent taking 3 hours from Plan des Aiguilles. Fine weather but oppressively hot!

Hamish M. Brown

Pyrenees

At Easter I joined the Eagle Ski Club on their Jubilee tour in the Pyrenees, again enjoying 'Alpine' hills in the non-tourist season. The Eagle Ski Club exists purely as a ski-mountaineering body and organises tours at all levels.

They have been to Poland, Morocco, Demavend (and all over Europe) in the last few years.

A thorough annual training course is held in the Oberland every spring. The Pyrenees were no picnic.

Nine of us met at Pau to be ably led to spoilt by Michael de Pret-Roose and Martin Epp. Their navigation at times was unbelievable—good, that is. With poor maps and nil visibility, constant snow and avalanche dangers they wiggled through complex country in superb fashion.

We used huts which proved well-appointed (even opened specially for us!) and often linked them together. The Pic d'Anie, 2504, from Lescun and the Refuge L'Abéronat was our furthest west. Memories of good vino, blazing fires and bonny lassies. And storm conditions on the hill.

Urdo saw us loading up like donkeys and then picking up to the Col d'Ayous, a cold, bleak spot in gathering dusk. Nil visibility and corniced ridges delayed the experts for two hours while it snowed on. My sleeping bag set off down and a wild rush and rugby tackle followed to save it. We broke down a cornice and through cliffs to a hut which only had one corner showing. Navigation had to be accurate!

An enjoyable descent and a gully up led through to the Refuge de Pombie under the Pic du Midi d'Osseau, 2884, our planned peak but we arrived in a blizzard, and next day had our work cut out merely to escape down to Gabas. Marvellous wild scenery as we traversed under the avalanching east face—SKADI all switched on! (bleepers)

The route was impossible in the conditions so after a day piste-playing we went round via Lourdes to Pont d'Espagne. Blazing sun and sparkling forest scenery saw us up to the Wallon hut. Self-catering and no loo. Where to go? A French gang replied 'un peu partout'.

The Pic de Cambalès, 2965, was done the next day. Ski-ing up pieces marked on the map as 'skis-off' sections was entertaining: doing kick turns where one felt like belaying. A flanking route into Spain led to the top. (Last time in that region we'd had our passports taken by guards to see we stayed in Spain).

It snowed all night, so next day we set off in another pea-souper for a pull to the Col d'Arratille, 2500, into Spain again, and sun; then back over the Col des Mulets, to France and cloud and the concrete box of the Refuge Oulettes. It froze hard. Clear skies. So we were early off.

The Vignemale, 3298, was a fitting climax: a rise to pass round the great north face, an exposed traverse, a long ascent with superlative views and a tricky climb to the summit. For such high moments we will suffer; glad addicts of delight.

The run down in deep powder was bliss. I only wish my suspicions of ski-ing had been laid twenty years ago. Or that I had earlier met with Eagles—who climbed on skis. It's a great combination: giving the best of Alpine doings but with the absence of mobs of people and their soiling hidden by snow.

Norway

The 'super summer' of 1975 was spent with a young B.F.M.C. party wandering by dormobile up to the Arctic and back. Norway has fantastic scenery and hills to suit all tastes. One marvels at its comparative neglect, no doubt due to its failure to rank, credit-wise, with Chamonix!

Jotunheim

We began at Lakes Tyin and Bydgin; Slingsby country: every peak seemed to have been 'cairned' by his parties. Lucky Pioneer. From Eidsbugaren we climbed Hegbrothogdi, sailed to Torfinsbu and through the Svartdalen to Gjendebu, a pass of Andean grandeur. Knutsholtstind (2340 m.) was climbed en route. A high camp under Rundtum led to Galdeberg (2074 m.) and back to base. Uranostind (2157 m.) gave a more dramatic peak, a proper glacier start at 3.30! From Gjendesheim we sailed in to Memurubu, and walked out by Besshö (2257 m.) and the Bessengen ridge of Peer Gynt fame. A bad weather period filled the long trek north via Dombas and Trondheim to Mø i Rana.

Svartisen and Okstinder

Europe's second-largest ice cap is split by the Vesterdalen, a big valley in which we were based on a bothy, the Píkhaughytte, just north of the Polar Circle. Two major—and icy—river-crossings and a complex route gave us Snötinden (1594 m.) and we also traversed Kamptind and Sniptind. We visited the Gronli cave system and the much-studied Austerdalsbreen. We climbed Okksskolten (1915 m.) the highest peak in North Norway just before the weather broke again, then drove south by Sweden—with a rest in Hell. A nice quiet place in fact!

Snöhetta (2286 m.)—once regarded as Norway's highest—and a popular hill was done in a 34 mile day from Kongsvoll. Folkstva bird sanctuary and the Rauma valley led to the dramatic descent through Romsdal.

Romsdal—From the Vengedal (G.B. Cars in plenty) the party did the Romsdalshorn, Vengetind, Sore Vengetind and Kalskratind in various combinations. From the Trollsteig traverses were made of Bispen and Kongen, of Breid-tind, and of Finnan and Ringshorn. This was the only area we encountered British climbers, presumably because it has a guide book, and such spectacular climbs as those on the Troll Wall. Geiranger and Hellysylv led to the Jotunheim again.

Jotunheim—From Spiterstulen I traversed Styggehoë (2214 m.) while the others did Galdhoppigen, then we all toiled over Glittertind, the dullest peak of all (2470 m.) to Glitterheim. The return by the Veobreen and Store Memurutinden (2364 m.) and Leirhoë (2328 m.) gave two more good tops. Some managed to trek through to Leirvassbu and bag Visbretind before the weather broke and from Krossbu I managed to fiddle Store Smorstabttind (2208 m.) as a last fling. Everywhere the glaciers are much receded compared to maps available, and one of the interests was seeking out and climbing good-looking peaks with little or no information. Mosquitos in the north

were a pest (less so than midges). Road passes and railways do all we expect in the Alps—and more at times.

Prices are high; (more than double), but by taking foodstuffs, and camping, expenses were reduced mainly to fresh food needs, toll-roads, ferries and camp sites. On all but the very popular hills we never met *any* other climbers. The country often reminds of Scotland but the scale is vastly bigger both on the horizontal and vertical. It is a bit like the Alps before the climbers came and makes one query our ease-loving, statutory, annual visit to *those soiled regions!* Norway has its *posh* mountain huts and climbing between them is very satisfying—or just walking as most locals are. Expensive and luxurious but easy. After several Norwegian visits I only look forward to more. Try it some day, hide-bound A.B.M.'s.!

N. M. Davison

Some new aspects of ski-ing with a week's Hot Dogging in Davos followed by easy days in Wengen.

Ski touring season consisted of the following tours.

Pizzo Lücendro and Pizzo Rotondo with run into Bedrettal. Balmaten and Hoch Fulen from Haldi (Altdorf) and down via Unterschachen. Kirchalhorn from the little village Hinterrhein. Blüenberg via Sisikon, Lidernen hut and the long run into Muotathal. Round tour, Isental, Schöneggpass, Oberrickenbach, Bannalppass, Isental. Simplonpass area, Breithorn, Wasenhorn, Spitzhornli and Sirwaltpass were made in 4 days of mixed weather. Schwarzwaldalp (Rosenlauri) Wildgeist with ascent to Dossen biwack. Via Rosenlauri gletscher to Wetterhorn and Renfenhorn. Grassen from Sustlihut with run back over the Wichelplangfirn. Ruchen via Ruchen Chalen and down to Unterschachen.

April. A week spent with the Section Randen in the Calanques (Marseille). Weather was not up to much but we enjoyed climbing in an unusual area. Grubenberg hut in the Gastlosen with ascents of: Dent de Ruth, Capucin, and Travers Zuckerspitz, Wandflue to Wolfsort.

June. Hoch Sewen S. grat and Sewenstock S.E. Pfeiler from the new Sewen hut. Bergsee hut and ascent Hochschijen S. grat.

July/August. Bueelenhorn south face chimney and Kehlenalphorn. Bordier hut. Balfrin, Kl & Gr Bigerhorn, Galenjoch and Guglia all in poor weather. Over the Nufenen pass to the Tissin with ascent of Passo Campolungo & Pizzo del Prevat.

Sept./November. Rossbodenstock & Mutsch from Etzlihut. Brugler, Fohrenweg and Kl. Verschneidung. Engelborner, Rosenlauristock W. flank, Engelnburg, Sattelspitzen, Pollux West Wand, Kastor with descent via Kastorsattel Ochsenattel and over the Ochsenplate Bachlital hut, Point 2818 solo & Alplistock traverse. Gelmerhut with ascent Kl & Gr. Gelmerhorner, VII. Gelmerspitz. 11. & 1 Gelmerspitz traversed solo. Vorderfeldschijen W. ridge. Daunatal, Rabenkante & Gr. Rabenkante (Blie-stift) and Bochmattli, Namenloser Kante and Deubergratchen.

Gordon Gadsby

Dec. 30th. Sat and watched the dawn break from Crib Goch summit after a very fine moonlight ascent. Completed the Horseshoe and down for lunch with Ken and Chris Bryan.

Dec. 30th. Sat and watched the dawn break from Crib Goch summit after a very fine moonlight ascent. Completed the Horseshoe and down for lunch with Ken and Chris Bryan.

Jan-Feb. Walking in Derbyshire and some climbing on the Gritstone Edges.

Easter Sledging near Plynlimmon on way to Pembrokeshire. Climbing on Marloes Sands, Craig Coeton and 'Mochynddu' on Coastguards Cliff with Ron Sant and Bev Abley. Weather excellent.

April 23rd. Evening climbing at Black Rocks, Derbyshire.

May 17th Evening climbing on Baslow Edge, Derbyshire.

May 19th Fabulous days climbing at Stannage Edge, Derbyshire.

Spring Holiday Four great days on Isle of Arran. Climbed Witches Step by the 1,000 ft. gully from Glen Sannox and then traversed the Central Ridge back to Glen Rosa with Oread Party. Beinn a Chliabhain with my wife and son (his first mountain).

June 1st. Limestone climbing on Beeston Tor.

June 7th w/e Camping in Wasdale with fellow members of Oread M.C. Very hot weather all weekend. Became involved in a rescue just as we prepared to leave Pillar Rock. Casualty was very lucky to survive 100 ft. fall on Rib and Slab.

June 21st w/e Fourteen Peaks on the most humid day of the year. I only managed eight. Saw at least 50 people on Crib Goch at 6 a.m. that morning.

July-August Bernina Alps. Three glorious weeks camping at St. Moritz Bad. Good friendly campsite, deduction made when you visited huts. Lady in charge (Heidi) speaks excellent English. Decided to revisit the Coaz Hut after lapse of nearly ten years, this time with my wife, Margaret, and son Richard. Next morning I traversed Il Chaputschin and Pitschen with Chris Bryan and Yvonne Taylor. The long walk back from the Hut via the Fuorcla Surlej to Sils was even more beautiful than I had remembered.

Another good expedition was the ascent of the Piz Fora from the picturesque Fex Valley, still unspoilt despite the nearness of St. Moritz.

Also my wife, son and I walked up Nunt Pers 3208 m from the Diavolezza Hut.

In the final week I climbed the majestic Disgrazia from the Ponti Hut with S. Bramwell and K. Bryan. Also a pleasant day was spent by Lac Cavoloc with other Oread families.

Bank Holiday Camping in Lakes. Walking in Grisedale Forest etc.

Oct/Nov. Some great autumn weekends in Wales, Derbyshire (Dovedale) Bucks. (walking at Burnham Beeches) and Dovedale again on the Oread Dinner weekend.

Dec. 6th w/e Fabulous weekend on Bleaklow. Left Nags Head, Edale at 11.30 at night to cross Kinder for Lockerbrook Farm above the Snake Road. The next day traversed vast stretches of Bleaklow in glorious sunshine and spent night in shooting cabin high on the moors near Bullstones. Walked back to Edale on Sunday with Pete Kenyon and Digger Williams.

F. L. Jenkins

January Skiing at Val d'Isère with Jeremy Whitehead. Pointe de la Sana 3437 m. on New Year's Day.

N. Wales with M. R. Loewy, and a School party. Clogwyn y Person to Snowdon Summit in nil visibility. Various routes on Tryfan and the Milestone.

March Climbs on Milestone and Tryfan with a School Duke of Edinburgh Award party.

April Joined J. Roche, J. Whitehead, R. Cooper and J. Walters on the second leg of our ski-traverse, this year Briançon to Chamonix (Last year Nice—Briançon). With J. Whitehead after Chamonix skied from Les Montets to the Argentière Hut, then crossed the Col de Chardonnet and Fenêtre de Saleina to the Trient Hut, but plans to climb the Aiguille du Tour, and ski down to Trient were foiled by bad weather which kept us in the Hut all day. The following day we forced a descent in storm with 24 Swiss to Orsières by the Orny Hut as the Champex route was too dangerous.

May Half term break with M. R. Loewy and a School party to N. Wales. Climbs on Snowdon, Amphitheatre Buttress, and Ysgolion Duon.

July Toad Rock, Tunbridge Wells from Cadet Camp at Crowborough.

August Arolla with J. Roche. Petite Dent de Veisivi, Dent de Tsalion West Ridge. Retreated from Aiguilles Rouges in bad weather. La Bérarde: Pic Coolidge with Julian Olver. Then led A. C. Meet from 17th August in intermittent bad weather (Paul and Phyllida Roberts Patrick and Margaret Andrews, Ian Haig who climbed with John Slade, and J. Whitehead, who joined later). Climbs by different members included Les Bans—voie normale, and N. E. Pillar, Pelvoux, and Barre des Ecrins. A party was rained off Pic de l'Olan (F. L. J. for the second year) and retreated in a downpour from the Aiguilles des Arias. Afterwards J. Whitehead and F. L. J. crossed the Col du Sélé to the Pelvoux Hut and

climbed that mountain while waiting for sun to clear the rocks of the Ailefroide Summits, but the tops remained snow covered so we climbed Ailefroide Occidentale to within 40 minutes of the top and retreated from iced rock in thick mist, as it was inadvisable to continue in such conditions and descend the complicated route from the Brèche des Frères Chamois to the Pilatte Hut. Instead we recrossed the Col du Sélé and reached La Berarde that evening. Hopefully we set out for the Châtilleret Hut with the intention to continue to the Promontoire for the Meije if conditions permitted. They did not, and doubtful weather next morning persuaded us to continue past the West Ridge of Pic Nord de Cavales to the Col, and to climb the South Ridge, again in mist and a downpour during the last half hour of descent to the Hut.

John Kemsley

Domestic commitments kept Freda and myself away from the hills until Easter when, after a week's pursuit of the ancient Romans in Rome, Pompeii and Herculaneum, we walked over the sunny heights of the Gargano Peninsula (the 'spur' of the Italian 'boot') in search of its limestone flowers. We then moved higher to the snow-covered Abruzzi to see for the first time the full glories of a mountain pasture blue with spring crocuses.

June gave us two good days on the Kirby Stephen meet, followed by three scattered days in Scotland seeking high alpinism and Munros west of the Great Glen.

In mid-August we went to the Saastal with the intention of making a high circuit of Monte Rosa on its southern side and of climbing such summits as opportunity afforded on the way. Three fine days saw us over the Monte Moro Pass to the Rifugio Malnate and the Seewjinhorn, thence by way of the high Schwarzberg Glacier to the Rifugio E. Sella from which we reached the Cima di Jazzi to enjoy spectacular views of Monte Rosa and the Valais peaks on a day of unparalleled clarity. The descent to Macugnaga offered us yet again that delightful contrast between the ever-increasing vegetation ahead and the starkness of the receding snows.

From afar the Colle delle Locce had looked somewhat uninviting as a way ahead and we opted instead to continue our journey by walking from Macugnaga to Alagna over the Colle del Turlo. On the east side of this col there is a fine new bivacco at 2150 m and we found it hard to pass this by on a day that was as wet as any we had ever experienced.

We spent the next two days drying our belongings in the pleasant village of Riva Valdobbia and exploring the side valley whose ancient track still offers access only to pedestrians and mules; then moved up to the Rifugio Gnifetti by the now extended cable-car which goes from Alagna to within two hours of the hut. Next morning the guardian roused everyone with his shouts of 'Bello' but the half-metre of new snow on every route meant hard labour for anyone who pioneered a trail and never on a fine day has a hutful of

climbers shown less inclination to rise and get going. Our intention had been to go by the high-level route to the Rifugio Q. Sella and beyond, but in view of the conditions we went instead by the lower passes to the Rifugio Ferraro and up to the Rifugio Mezzalama. From here we enjoyed the ascent of Pollux with its sharp rock climb near the summit and then returned to the hut in a snowstorm that persuaded us to abandon the high-level route to the Théodule Pass and to cross instead to Breuil via the Colle Superiore delle Cime Bianche.

Descending in the early evening to Breuil and looking down on its hideous multi-storey ski-hotels, we thought it quite the ugliest mountain village we had seen and feared for our welcome in such heartless surroundings. In fact once we had descended amongst the monstrosities we found the Albergo Fosson where we obtained excellent accommodation and friendly service at an acceptable tariff. Our final walk over the Théodule to Zermatt to catch the train home was unnecessarily hurried for we had forgotten as we ran down the zig-zag path from the Gandegg that the hour's difference between the Italian and Swiss clocks would give us an extra hour on the way.

The southern circuit of Monte Rosa could be as fine a hut-to-hut tour as any in the Alps, but to enjoy the climbing possibilities to the full one would need much better continuous weather than was our lot. In compensation the lower passes gave us a rich display of alpine flowers and we have resolved to return yet again to this attractive district.

Will McLewin, with Andrew Hartley and Brian Wood.

A disappointing season for us in the Alps this year—nearly four weeks in the Zinal area with very little to show for it.

We had set out with an ambitious programme, having made good use of the superb spring and summer weather in Wales and on gritstone. But we had all been involved with changing jobs or moving house, and uncertainties about when we could leave for the Alps persisted until the day we actually left, so that we arrived at Sierre rather ragged and tired.

The traverse of the Besso and the Blanc de Moming made a suitable training route with a superb bivouac, good weather and the usual guide book inaccuracies. Then we went round to Moiry, waited for good weather then walked up the Pigne de la Lé and just sat on top all day. Bivouacked again and next morning went on to the Grand Cornier in the company of thousands of Swiss on one of their National holidays. Various differences of opinion led to my soloing the last 1½ hour to the top of the Cornier and then walking round with Brian to the Ptes de Mourti (worthwhile) and then rejoining Andy at the Moiry hut.

Zinal Rothorn by the north ridge.

This took four days of perfect conditions! The first attempt ended at about 3600 m when a French party in front and to the right of us had an accident. Their leader, a Chamonix guide (!) fell down a crevasse and was dropped by the second (his wife!). Both had been carrying coils while they dropped, so he

went down about 14 m and we had no doubt that had he not hit the bottom, certainly the second, and quite likely the rest of the party, would have joined him. As we have had some experience of this situation we went over to help and I abseiled down, thinking that we could get the man out without too much trouble. It turned out that he had a broken femur and quite reasonably refused to be moved without a helicopter and a stretcher. A truly Laurel and Hardy situation then ensued. He spoke no English, I speak no French but Brian speaks a bit of French and one of his party spoke a bit of English so to ask him a question I shouted up to Brian, an approximate French equivalent was produced which was shouted down, he shouted back up and so on, eventually I would obtain some sort of answer. On the surface the situation was equally grotesque, with his party refusing to be organised by us on the grounds that they had an alpine guide as their leader. This was resolved by Brian producing the magic phrase 'guide Anglaise'. Eventually, after about 1½ hours the happy sound of the helicopter was heard and I looked forward to a demonstration of super efficient Swiss rescue service. It must have been their second reserve team! They didn't really have much idea, and they didn't have a stretcher! More protracted shouting, during which it seemed as if their strategy was to fill in the crevasse with snow. The poor guide got through a fair quantity of curses at his rescuers but had to settle for being pulled up in a net. Brian came down and we tied his legs together in my carrymat.

Inevitably the surface party couldn't manage to pull him over the lip of the crevasse and the poor fellow hung there in considerable pain until the helicopter was used to lift him out. After four hours in the pit I was helped out and we all trudged back to the Mountet hut. As we were expected in the valley we had to carry on down and return the next day to bivouac as usual and do the route without incident a day later.

The rest of the time was spent trying to do the Dent Blanche in uncertain weather. The first attempt was before the superb weather which we had been experiencing finally deteriorated. For the first time we didn't carry the bivouac tent and of course it snowed heavily during the night. A large party at the Dent Blanche hut had their disappointment tempered by the curious spectacle of yet another party of mad English, and our little heap of cold miserable bodies had a steady stream of visitors, alternatively amused and horrified. Brian's literary genius flowered even under these conditions with the classic phrase 'pas de money' which we thereafter chanted as if it were a mystic all-explaining incantation.

Andy and I tried yet again a few days later, and exactly the same thing happened, except that this time there were very few people at the hut and the guardians nerves couldn't stand it, so he insisted we came inside and slept on the floor, in spite of our having the tent this time.

Yet more days of bad weather convinced us we might as well leave. We sped across France consoling ourselves with the thought of John Arlott describing the last day of the last test match, which was just another disappointment.

W. B. Midgley

1975 was an 'odd' year as for the first half the Midgleys were contemplating emigrating to Nigeria, consequently our Alpine Holiday migrated during the negotiations. However this allowed us to fulfil an old (10 year vintage) ambition, of which more later.

The first weekend in January we went to Ambleside and it was very wet. One day was spent with Peter Boyes walking from Langdale (N.D.G.) over the Pikes and then very roughly north, all on compass bearings to come down north of Thirlmere, as was intended!! (No Snow).

The last weekend in January was a Mountain Club (Stafford) Meet at High Moss in Dunnerdale. The foul Saturday comprised the round of Seathwaite Tarn in cold, cloudy and windy conditions, after Walna Scar, Dow Crag, Swirl How, Grey Friar, etc. it was a pleasure to be down. The snow had of course melted on the Friday. Sunday was as perfect as Saturday had been horrid, and while the remainder of the meet members went off to do great things on Scafell and others, I walked S.W. from Walna Scar summit over White Pike to Caw enjoying fabulous views of the Sca Fell range and a sleep in the warm sun. This was the start of the good 1975 weather.

On the Northern Dinner weekend I arrived a day early to sample the weather. I must admit to having arranged it perfectly. Arline deposited me on the summit of Kirkstone Pass, and as they were shut I went up over Candale Head, Thornthwaite Crag and into a very local and cold cloud on High Street, then down over Rest Dodd (which wasn't) to Angle Tarn, where Arline met me (Sans Auto) and back to Glenridding Hotel passing the embryo Hut. Good snow climbs on Saturday and Sunday with Pat Hurley and Tony Husbands. A splendid weekend which even provided Walt Unsworth with some copy.

Two weeks later back to Langdale for a weekend comprising one day round the valley head starting over Pike o'Blisco. No climbing snow but good walking. Sunday it poured in the Lakes so we went to Ingleton and inspected the limestone pavements in warm sunshine.

Things were rather hectic in March and April so there were not many days on the hills, but for one spell in Eskdale when it snowed fairly consistently so the family walked some of the forest tracks to escape the wind, Blengdale and other unlikely places. One solo attempt at a snow climb foiled by the quantities of wind-blown powder coming down Lord's Rake.

The first working weekend at the Hut, May 2nd, was like all the other weekends we've spent there (except the Official Opening). Perfect Weather. No one went up a hill, the pub was a different matter but much good work was done.

A couple of weekends later we had a day, again in perfect weather, in Edale taking my daughters (7 and 5 years) and Peter Boyes's son (5 years) up to Crowden Head and back along the ridge over Ringing Roger. It's very hard work walking with the children as one can't keep a steady pace (they walk rather like the British Economy, possibly rather faster at times).

The 24th May weekend was again a Mountain club meet at Bryn Hafod where there were thousands of other children in addition to ours, we did some walking and some bouldering with the children.

About the end of May the Nigerian negotiations broke down and as it was a little late to arrange an Alpine holiday I started to sound out my wife on an idea which had occurred to me whilst doing the Lyke Wake Walk (one tends to go a little mad at such times) some ten years ago (before it became a motor-way). The idea was to extend the Lyke Wake Walk (East to West *Not* vice versa) over the Pennines and Lakeland to St Bees Head, taking in as much high ground as possible en route.

Starting on Sunday 22nd June I took 13 days over the route and carried camping kit for two (just over 50 lbs) for the first few days as my daughter Denise (7) walked with me over the Lyke Wake and a few other days in the Dales. It was extremely hot and not suitable walking weather but it is a magnificent route with the minimum of road and hardly touches Wainwright's route. The remainder of July and most of August were spent resting sore feet and a damaged Achilles tendon.

Back to the Lakes at the end of August for a day at the hut to instal a double dust bin holder, and Syd Prentice showed me how to mix concrete. Then on to Eskdale for a few days meeting Wendell Jones, Stuart Beare and families for rides on Lal Ratty and paddling plus a pleasant walk along Wastwater Screes and over Scafell, into upper Eskdale and down to Brotherilkeld, yet another splendid day in perfect weather.

On Tony Strawther's September meet at Bryn Hafod I was hauled up Pillar of Pencoed by Tony Husbands and enjoyed it only in retrospect. Tony had a nasty accident with a loose block on Glasgwm on the Sunday which spoiled his week's holiday and has put him out of action (climbing at least) since.

The Official Opening of the hut was an enjoyable occasion and no doubt it's all written up elsewhere.

A group of friends had the hut for the 18th October weekend and again enjoyed perfect weather. Lots of small children (5's and 7's) plus some a little older went up Dollywagon Pike via the ridge behind Ruthwaite Lodge, which is a pleasant and unusual approach to Helvellyn. We returned via Striding Edge to Grisedale. Ropes were taken to safeguard the smaller ones but we couldn't catch them to tie them on.

November saw a day's walking in the Yorkshire forests following the R.A.C. Rally—not mountaineering but enjoyable.

December Hut weekend, Mike Carter and I installed the storage heaters on a perfect day, snow in the gullies—it must have been frozen. We decided on an Alpine Start on the morrow to attack it before the sun softened it and of course it was a warm day with cloud to the valley floor. We walked up to the porridge above Red Tarn and were blown down again. Monday was perfect again so we mended a washer. Arline scrubbed the kitchen floor and the children hoovered and then we went home after a short walk from the top of Kirkstone pass.

Not a bad year, I nearly got fit, and with the snow so early: will this be the winter we've been waiting for!!!

John Murray

This year a lot of our time has been devoted to work on that most rewarding project—the hut.

It has also been a very good climbing year. Once again a poor winter for climbing but some good walking at Easter on Lake District tops on good crisp snow in extremely cold but very sunny weather.

Spring Bank Holiday week with Don Hodge and friends from Tuesday Climbing Club in Ardgour. Mediterranean type sunshine and temperatures were ideal for climbing on the Great Slab of Garbh Bheinn. A walk to Ben Resipol in the middle of the week found us longing for some shade. The streams and our beer stocks refreshed us inwardly and outwardly!

Our Alpine trip was to Arolla where once again the weather was kind. Some evening storms always cleared up for good climbing the next day. Our training climb from the valley was the traverse of Petit Dent de Veisivi. We climbed L'Eveque but failed on the North Ridge of Mont Collon. Traversed Pigne D'Arolla to Dix Hut and from there traversed Mont Blac de Cheilon. In our second week we climbed Dent Blanche by the South Ridge and the Weiss-horn by the East Ridge.

At the late Summer Bank Holiday we went to Land's End where we had two days good climbing at Bosigran. There were rewarding Autumn weekends in North Wales where we climbed on sun baked rock in the Llanberis Pass, at Cwm Silyn and Tremadoc.

Barrie Pennett

The highlight of the year for myself and my family was undoubtedly the two weeks we spent in Zermatt, Switzerland, early in June. Myself my wife, Valerie, and five years-old son David stayed in a chalet and catered for ourselves. This was our second visit to Zermatt, the first being in 1965 for the centenary celebrations of the climbing of the Matterhorn. Before and since then we have visited the Bernese Oberland on many occasions.

Because we had our young son with us and there was plenty of snow on the high ground, we were confined to easy walking and scrambling. Nevertheless we walked every day in hot sunshine covering most of the well known walks around and above Zermatt. David, who first walked up Dale Head in the Lake District when he was 2½ years-old and has since walked up Skiddaw, Causey Pike, Cat Bells, High Spy and Great Crag, enjoyed his rambles to Zmutt by Herbrigg and Hubel; up to the Alterhaupt, an easy excursion, and the Trift Gorge; and walks in the Findeln and Riffelalp areas, to name a few. It was indeed an enjoyable holiday and proved to be ideal for David's introduction to walking in the Alps, although he had previously visited the Bernese Oberland when he was 18 months old and had been pushed round the Alps in a push chair.

Earlier in the year we did a great deal of walking in the Yorkshire Dales and found the family walks in the National Park arranged by the Yorkshire Dales National Parks Committee to be most enjoyable.

Early in October we spent a week in Borrowdale, Lake District, and introduced David to Great Gable, Glaramara, Causey Pike, and surrounding fells.

Ernst Sondheimer

April: Three Peaks Walk, to shake off the winter. End of May: a week on Rhum, in a Hamish Brown party. The chief hazard was the blazing sun (Hamish observed: 'if I'd known the weather would be like this, I'd have brought my umbrella. . .'). Highlights: climbing on Barkeval, nights in the open on Allival (to observe nocturnal habits of shearwaters) and near the Greek temple at Harris, and exploration of the (normally inaccessible) northern part of the island. July: a week in Mittel Switzerland, to recover from examinations. Piz Terri on a brilliant day, the ridge covered with purple saxifrage. Then to the Binntal hut and the Ofenhorn, finishing at Alpe Devero on the Italian side of the Albrun pass (meadows full of the paradise lily). September: hut-to-hut walk in the Silvretta, from Switzerland into Austria and back again. Grosslitzner in bad condition, so climbed the Gross Seehorn as consolation prize. Then back to the Valais for a week with Othmar Wenk. Too much snow for most of the bigger routes. Trifhorn, Zinalrothorn and Wellenkuppe from the Rothorn hut (one of these days I'll get up the Obergabelhorn). Then to the Almagelleralp, to find nobody else there and the Portjengrat plastered in ice and snow. Still, the Dri Hörli and Sonnighorn made it five climbs in five days and, under the conditions, a reasonably satisfactory week's work.

Oliver St. John

For the second year running the holiday in the Alps was spent converting our newly-acquired house in the Val d'Aoste. This, though not completely finished, is in good working order and has been fully used throughout the spring and summer by family and friends. However, we took two short breaks to climb a couple of peaks nearby, with my son and his wife. We could spare little time and we left the valley about 5 pm and drove up to Pont and thence to the Gran Paradiso Hut. This was very full so we bivouacked up above the glacier and climbed the peak early next morning. As this was done without any training, we found it quite hard work but the scenery and flowers were magnificent.

For our second break we chose the Dent du Geant, being transported up to the Torino Hut late one evening to find that both huts were overfull. However, at the old hut we were eventually given two places for three, which meant Christopher and his wife sharing the upper half of a narrow truckle double bunk. They had to be clipped in with karabiners! The rock was dry and the weather perfect: the Rochfort ridge was in superb condition. We were on the top early and enjoyed both the rock under our feet and backdrop

of Mont Blanc. In spite of the fixed ropes, a thoroughly enjoyable and impressive climb in perfect conditions. We caught the noon cable car back down the valley and got back to work in the afternoon.

A. N. Sperryn

My alpine season started at Arolla with Paul Krebs towards the end of July. We went up to the Vignettes Hut and on a very fine day climbed the Pigne and went over to the top of La Serpentine. The next day was to be a short one with the aim of climbing the North-West ridge of the Petit Mont Collon. The dawn was beautiful, not a cloud in the sky; but the rock on the ridge was not of good quality. However, we made reasonable progress and could see the parties on the ice slope of the North Face to our left. Half way up the ridge, Paul was making a traverse to the back of a tower when a loose block became detached and pushed him off balance. He shouted. Suddenly I found the rope tearing through my hands. It was impossible to stop it slipping. After what seemed an age, he came to a halt on a small ledge. He had fallen 50 feet down the steep ground at the side of the ridge and broken his leg. Help, in the form of a rescue helicopter, came within two hours, summoned by one of the North Face parties descending to the Vignettes Hut and we were taken direct to hospital at Sion.

The accident left me with unfulfilled ambitions and over two weeks remaining, so I made my way to Saas-Fee where the ABMSAC meet was taking place and joined Bill and Sue in the camp site. Marion came out from England to join me and we carried out a programme of climbs that didn't often coincide with the rest of the meet, though the base camp hospitality of the Pension Supersaxo was very welcome in the evenings.

After a preliminary canter to the Monte Moro pass, four of us went to the Weissmies Hut and, in perfect weather, three made the ascent of the Weissmies by the ordinary route. The snow conditions were excellent and the view extraordinary, stretching from the Piz Bernina to Mt Blanc. The next day there were only two of us fit for the Lagginhorn (by the North-West ridge) and the weather held fine for a climb made eventful by my having to cut steps up the final steep and icy snow section, my crampons having been left in the early morning darkness of the Weissmies Hut.

It was raining that afternoon by the time we got back to Saas Fee and we wondered what had happened to the Fletschhorn-Lagginhorn traverse party (they got back to the hut after dark). A rest was called for and a day spent in Brigerbad recuperating. However, the weather was continuing to be remarkably fine and so the four of us went up to a hut again, this time to the Britannia. The long walk to the Allalin pass was compensated for by the colours on the Strahlhorn and Rimpfischhorn as the sun rose, followed by a cloudless panorama of the Zermatt peaks from the plateau at the top. Strength failed soon after, when we were still a few hundred feet from the top of the Allalinhorn. So we made a hot and slightly slushy way down, retracing our steps instead of traversing to the Felskinn.

The final expedition was fascinating and very worthwhile. It is an immense walk to the Mischabel Hut, with the weather looking as if it might break, but glimpses of marmots and steinbock and, at night, the twinkling lights of Saas Fee far below took away thoughts of the toil of reaching the Hut. It was sunny the next day, but cold in the early morning and there was a gale blowing on the way to the Windjoch. I didn't want to solo the Nadelhorn (though I went up the Ulrichshorn at a trot), so we continued over the pass and down the sweep of the glacier to a third breakfast at the Bordier Hut. The rest of the day in idleness and then descent to Ried for lunch. The plan was now to contour round the ridge separating the Zermatt and Saas valleys and this can be highly recommended. First there comes the walk through the forest above Grächen. This has tracks laid out for the holiday makers of the resort town and is very charming. There is lots of bird life there. At Hannig, one has a tremendous view, down to Visp. The Saas side is mysterious. There is a high-level track back to Saas Fee, but we took the lower route since it was now around six o'clock and a storm was brewing. The lower track is visible, but sometimes precariously perched above the gorge of the Saas-tal. At one stage we had to cut steps across a snow shoot filling a fully; as we contoured we wondered if there would ever be a way down. As we moved in the gathering gloom, deer flitted away disturbed from their own domain. And then we came to the deserted alp. A collection of chalets built around the turn of the century now just neglected, the high pasture given back to the wild life. This was Galgern and we ran down the beautifully engineered path to Huteggen and the road just as night fell.

The bus wouldn't stop, but a car did and we were soon back at Saas marveling at our good fortune in discovering a walk of such interest. Time was now up and the storm that didn't quite come was the herald of the break in the weather. A tragedy upset the return home, but I now recall: it was my thirteenth alpine season.

Les Swindin

The year started for me in a very pleasant way by my receiving the honour of being elected President of the Gloucestershire M.C., a position that I have tried to live up to.

Mountaineering early in the year, as is becoming all too common in our mild winters, was rather disappointing. A few gullies were climbed in Wales and the Lakes, but nothing notable. Fortunately things were better for our Easter skiing holiday in Cervinia with my wife, Barbara, and Norman Smithers. Fresh snow most days ensured excellent skiing, although the near blizzard conditions of our last run from the Plateau Rosa drew heavily on our mountaineering experience and instincts. From them on it was training for Skye and one of the outstanding events of my mountaineering career. This was the long looked forward to Greater Traverse of the Cuillins including the return to Glen Brittle, the starting point, via the Dubhs ridge. This was accomplished during the excellent Whit. weather in the company of Richard Heery, with some assistance from our wives, in 36 hours including a bivouac on Bruach na Frithe. Highly recommended.

In the Alps I reached something of a landmark by climbing my fiftieth route which I celebrated by taking Barbara on the North ridge of the Zinal Rothorn where we met John Oaks' party on the summit. Prior to that I'd climbed the N. face of the Obergabelhorn, descending the Arbengrat, the N. Face of the Col du Plan, where we were the target of 'stone shot' from a careless French party whom we took great delight in 'burning off' on the ice, the N.W. face of the Bionnassay which was rather icy and the Milieu glacier on the Argentièrè. One great setback was having to turn back to the N. ridge of the Weisshorn. Ominous storms were very evident on most of the surrounding mountain groups so we found it expedient to return from below the Grand Gendarme. Next year maybe!

In addition most weekends have found me in Wales or the Lakes, rock climbing on many crags from Cloggy to Sca Fell, although on one occasion (in June) Sca Fell was so cold and wet that my party was forced to retreat from the crux of Moss Ghyll Grooves. In fact quite a year for retreats.

R. A. Tyssen-Gee

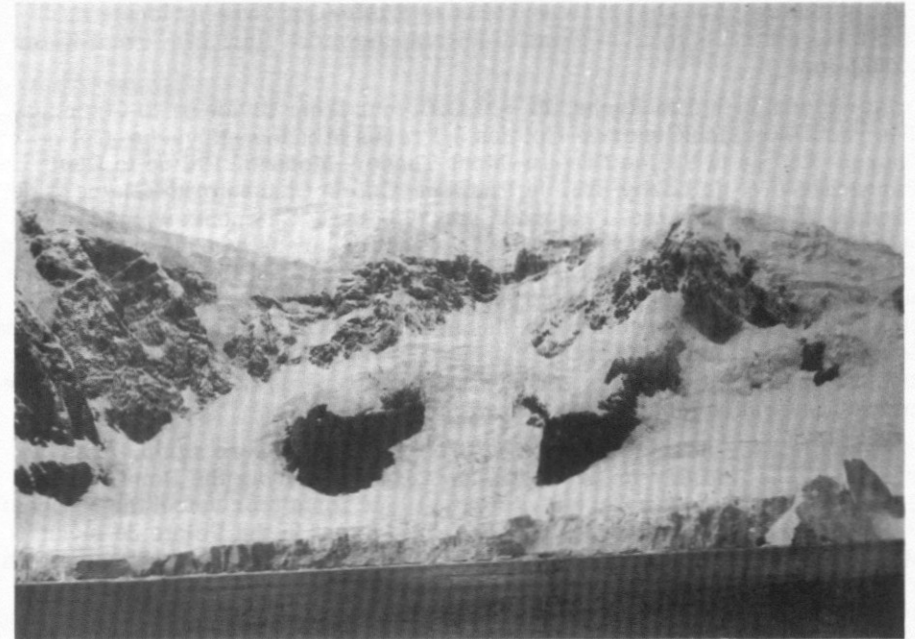
Members Climb.

In the early part of 1974 I was fortunate enough to visit the Antarctic. The tour was organised by Lindlled Travel of Antarctic and the English party flew out to Buenos Ayres, and after a 2 day stay there, where we joined up with the Americans, we flew on to Tierra del Fuego landing at Rio Grande on the barren East Coast. A six hour bus journey over rather dusty roads bought us to Ushuaia on the South Coast on the Beagle Channel. Here we boarded the Lindlled Explorer, a 2300 ton 250 feet long vessel which carried about 90 passengers. It has a shallow draft and so inevitably it rolls rather a lot, and we were soon on the rough Drake Passage which separates Tierra del Fuego from the Antarctic Peninsular.

Watching wild life, photographing icebergs and the lovely icy scenery of the Bellingshausen sea took up the first part of the trip. Landings were made by rubber inflatable Zodiacs which carried about 15 people. Our furthest South was Anvers Island, almost 68°S, which was surrounded by pack ice, which held the swell to some extent. We saw albatrosses, skuas and many species of seal and penguins.

On the return journey we made a landing at Deception Island, from which a party of explorers had to be evacuated rapidly by helicopter in 1969 following a sudden volcanic eruption; we made a long walk up to one of the craters and saw a large colony of chinstrap penguins. The next part of the trip took us into the Weddell Sea which is notorious for its ice, but fortunately we had excellent weather and made a landing at Hope Bay. This is not far from Elephant Island, where Shackleton left some of his party and made his difficult and wonderful 17 day trip to South Georgia, and after many difficulties found a rescue ship to pick up those who were left at Elephant Island.

We then went Northward to the Falkland Isles and had four delightful days and one very stormy one before returning to Ushuaia. On one occasion our



Gerlache Strait

Photo by: R. A. Tyssen-Gee

party did a long walk to see a Gentoo Penguin colony and the rest went to see some seals. There was time for a trip into the country before flying home, and I was surprised to meet Eric Shipton, who has made several visits to these parts.

The trip was most enjoyable, we had lectures on board on Oceanography, birds, seals and whales as well as the history of Antarctica. It was inevitably costly and alas, with the depreciating £ compared with the \$ and the price of fuel, prices will be higher in future.

Nigel E. D. Walker

Getting married in last August somewhat curtailed my climbing activities for the year, but in October I spent a week in the Karwendels walking mostly in the near-by valleys with a large group of Germans. However a couple of climbs were made, one to Mittenwalder Hut and an impressive Traverse of Scharfreiter from Tolzer Hut, all with Wilhelm Winneberger in good weather.

Jeremy Whitehead

The year began on an auspicious note, with a ski ascent of Pointe de la Sana, from Val d'Isère on New Year's Day. The party of nine included five

A.C. members. But real activity began at Easter, as I was fortunate to obtain a term's sabbatical, and was able to spend more time than usual in the mountains.

In April, ran, with Jim Roche, the S.C.G.B. tour from Briancon to Chamonix. The route was MontGenevre—Col des 3 Freres Mineurs—Nevache—Col de Thures—Ref. de la Vallée Etroite—Mont Thabor—Modane. Ref de la Dent Parrachée—Col de Labby—Ref de l'Arpont—Col de Chasseforet—Glaciers de Vanoise—Col de Vanoise—Pralognan and eventually Chamonix was reached by rail. We experienced the bad weather that all areas had, and were forced to spend three nights at both the Refuge de l'Arpont and Refuge Felix Faure before abandoning hopes of progress on skis. At Chamonix, with Fred Jenkins, crossed from Argentière to Trient huts via Col du Chardonnet, and then descended the Combe d'Orny with a large party of Swiss railwaymen. Back in Chamonix, Fred had to leave, but I managed runs down the Vallée Blanche and on the Grands Montets and Argentière glacier.

In May, I left the Association's buffet party for Val d'Isere again. After a week with one fine day, on which we had a fine view from the Pointe de la Galise, we left the deserted and gloomy village for a tour round the National Park. In improving conditions we were able to get in the Pointe de Méan Martin, Pointe W. de Chatelard, Col de la Grande Casse, Col de Chiaupe with a check on the Sommet de Bellecôte, and finally the Dome de la Sache on a perfect spring day. A fascinating time of year this, with the ski resorts empty and closed down, and the upper hamlets not yet occupied. And it is so refreshing to have the huts to oneself, except at weekends.

At the end of June I combined a family visit to New Zealand with ten days in the Mount Cook area. Ski planes make access to the high huts effortless, though conditions only permitted two visits to the Tasman Saddle hut. With one of the local guides I skied the Mannering, Murchison and Tasman glaciers, but blizzards prevented our reaching any peaks. It would be a fine area to visit later in the spring.

Back in the Alps in July, with Richard Brooke, Dave Viggars and Colin Beechey. We found the Italian bivouac huts most advantageous financially, but the guarded huts overcharged blatantly. Climbs done included Roccia Viva by the W.N.W. ridge, Grivola by the N. ridge, Petits Jorasses by the S. ridge, Grandes Jorasses by the Hirondelles ridge, and Pointe Savoie by the S.E. ridge. The others having left, I spent an abortive ten days with Jim Roche at Chamonix, where visits to the Argentière, Albert I, and Trient huts produced no climbs at all. Hoping for better conditions, I went off to joint the A.C. meet in the Dauphiné. Weather there was little better, but it did pick up enough for Fred Jenkins and myself to manage Mt Pelvoux, and much of the Ailefroide, and the Pointe N. des Cavales.