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DIARY

January	16 - 18	Scottish Winter Meet	Loch Tay
February	6 - 8	Northern Dinner Meet/AGM	Patterdale
February	27 - 1 March	Scottish Winter Meet	Newtonmore
March	20 - 22	Scottish Winter Meet	Appin
March	27 - 28	ABMSAC Hut Maintenance Meet	Patterdale
May	2 - 4	Yorkshire Dales Meet	Yorkshire
May	10	Surrey Walk	Surrey
May	23 - 31	Skye Meet	Isle of Skye
June	5 - 7	Snowdonia Meet	Rhyd-ddu
July	3 - 5	Lake District Meet - George Starkey Hut	Patterdale
July	25 - 16 August	Bernese Oberland Alpine Meet	
		- Joint ABMSAC/AC/CC Meet	Grindelwald
August	1 - 16	Lake District Family Meet - George Starkey Hut	Patterdale
September	Mid	Lake District Meet	Venue to be arranged
October	3 - 4	TCC Hut Maintenance Meet	Patterdale
October	16 - 18	Buffet Party - George Starkey Hut	Patterdale
October	30 - 1 November	Alpine Reunion Meet - George Starkey Hut	Patterdale
<u>Advance Notice for 1999</u>			
February	5 - 7	Northern Dinner/AGM	

THE OFFICIAL RE-OPENING OF THE BRITANNIA HUT - JUNE 28/29 1997

The renovated Britannia Hut is open and delightfully restored. The official opening was scheduled for the week end of June 28/29 and the Association was represented by the President and his wife and Peter Ledebor (who had done so much towards the organisation of the British contribution for the renovation. As previously reported we raised £10,000).

The weekends celebrations were superbly organised and it is unfortunate that the weather refused to be organised. For the two weeks prior to the opening it had been too bad to allow any workmen up to the hut to even clear up the surrounding building debris. This didn't matter too much as (a) one couldn't go out to view the hut from outside and (b) from inside one couldn't see outside for driving cloud and snow! (60 cms fell over Saturday night). The lightning was spectacular but the shrieking wind drowned the thunder - inside all was warm, comfortable and extremely friendly.

We were given a guided tour of the hut by Yolande Coeckelbergs who speaks impeccable English and is a member of the Commission des Cabanes.

The dormitories are high and airy - light and pleasant. They vary in size from three bed places to 16. The Hut will now sleep 136 on comfortable mattresses with individual duvets!!! The laundry facilities (and kitchens) would please any pernickety hotelier. Throughout the Hut the woodwork, beams, ceilings, walls, tables, chairs etc. are of the highest standard of workmanship and finish - a delight to behold - much too good for use by hairy insensitive mountaineers.

There are three dining rooms and one which is of special interest to our Association. This forms an annexe to the main dining room and has sliding doors allowing it to be isolated from the main room.

The woodwork in this room is truly superb. From the carved ceiling panels to the backs of the chairs inscribed with guides names, it is delightful. Our contribution to the renovation has been used on this room and it has been dedicated to the ABMSAC. There is a plaque over the doorway naming it "Britannia Stube".

Saturday evening was like no evening your President has spent at a hut. To 85 people was served an umpteem course dinner of a quality many good hotels would have difficulty exceeding. Traditional songs from a choir in local traditional dress - an award winning accordionist team - man and wife who sang and accompanied the choir - wonderful. But even more incredible was the Hüttenwirt who could dance, sing, yodel delightfully and was a delight to the eye. A very attractive young woman - this is no ordinary Hut!

Speeches were given by all the official guests and presents made to the Hut. Peter Ledebor gave a speech in French including apologies for Lord Hunt who was unable to attend due to recent surgery. The President's French is not good enough for such an occasion.

Sunday's official opening ceremony had to be cancelled due to the inclement weather. The official guests from Saas Fee were unable to ascend to the Hut and those at the Hut who had to work on Monday were lucky to escape - on foot - no cable cars could operate in those conditions. Those who didn't need to work stayed until Monday lunch time when a "window" in the weather allowed the cable car to operate and the remainder to descend to Saas Fee.

A memorable weekend.

Brook Midgley

A FIRST VISIT TO THE ALPS

This article was initiated by three bits of inspiration. Firstly, an article in the MG Car Club Magazine "Safety First" (as this was written by me it hardly qualifies as "inspiration"). Secondly, there was a brilliant article by Maurice Freeman which I have recently re-read with much pleasure (ABMSAC Journal 1988). The main reason was that Hon. Editor was in need of some copy to cover pages!!

There is no possibility that my trip could be compared with Maurice's with respect to travail. Maurice and his friend constructed their own transport and pedalled it to Switzerland!

In 1962 I bought my first car - a 1947 TC MG which to MG enthusiasts needed no further description. In 1962 the car was delightful but somewhat old fashioned in various aspects e.g. that it had 19 inch diameter (475mm) spoked (wire) wheels which rather too readily went out of shape and then devoured tyres. In summer, having no heater wasn't a problem - winter was a more serious matter. However, she was lovely - British Racing Green and at any speed over 50mph very exciting. (Factory new performance specification 0 - 60mph - 21 secs. max. speed - 76mph). The steering, suspension and, it seemed, everything else needed greasing at least weekly to ensure it worked. Fortunately, the steering wheel was large to allow any slight (or massive) stiffness in the steering to be overcome - the fact that the car would tack (rather nautical) down the road only added to the excitement.

Now you may ask what's all this got to do with mountaineering - well one has to get to the mountains before attempting to climb them.

During the winter and spring of 62/63, I had tremendous fun competing in rallies, hill climbs, sprints etc. in the car but before I could do this I had to pass my driving test. The examiner seemed anxious to remove himself from the car and not have to repeat the experience - so he gave me the coveted piece of paper.

Interspersed with motor-sport, the car had taken us to Scotland, Wales, Lakes, and various hilly places where we'd indulged in snow, ice and rock climbing plus a little hill walking - we did an early crossing of the North Yorks. Moors - Lyke Wake Walk shortly after friends from York MC had done the original crossing after numerous attempts. All this effort was to be fit for our first attempt on some Alpine hills. We even practised moving together - roped on Middlefell Butress prior to doing the Longdale round (Pavey Ark to Pike of Blisco) - great stuff!!

Maps, bought a guide book - "Selected Climbs in the Pennine Alps" (General Ed. Wilfrid Royce so it was a real one!) joined the SAC and ABMSAC - we were truly serious.

The team was Arline (new wife of 3 year's vintage) she was to be non climbing co-driver (she'd just passed her driving test - same white faced examiner!). Anne and John Fox had been to the Alps previously and had in fact met on an Austrian AC snow and ice course. Being ground folk they also joined the SAC and ABMSAC. For some still unconfirmed reason I seemed to be elected as climbing leader even though I'd never been to the Alps - not even been abroad! It may have had something to do with fact that I, at that time, climbed (terrified) with the clubs "hard men".

John had a large limousine (Hilman Minx!) so Anne's Mother came along - a very well travelled lady. We were to camp en-route but travel separately as our machines were ill matched - his car was much faster than my sports car! But not a fraction as much fun. We met in Rhemes and Pontarlier (also for lunch in Langres where Anne's Mum found an eating place we've continued to visit over the years - she was a treasure). The MBTC caused much interest and wherever we went

she attracted crowds of admirers - wondering why Les Anglais were driving a Bugatti!!! - I didn't murder many of them!

We'd decided that Saas Fee was to be our base for the great things and a traverse of the Weissmies the main feature. Anything under 4000m was only considered suitable for training (so these days I'm permanently in training!). Saas Fee, (1960s note) snow covered mountains, camping, sun (motoring with the hood down and feeling warm!) were a revelation. I could hardly believe it was real. I can't believe it now - meals in the hotels at around 10SF and the exchange rate at 12SF to £1.

We did some training walks and scrambles - I'd heard that acclimatisation was a requirement so we got some of that. The holiday was evaporating so "great things" had to be done and the three intrepid climbers went up to the Weissmies Hut to do a training climb prior to the main event.

The training climb was, I think, the Fletchhorn. Setting out at about midday seemed in retrospect, not the best idea I'd had and we didn't get up it. The avalanches and rock falls were exciting though and we decided an earlier start was necessary for the morrow. Anne also decided she wasn't well enough to join us and descended to Saas Fee so John and I were "the team".

We made an early start - 7am! And having carefully read the guide book (and the previous evening raced the first part of the route) we didn't get lost - perhaps we should have fared better if we had done - perhaps we should have been suspicious also of the route being deserted, unmarked by foot or orange peel! We didn't know about talking to Guardians to get an up-date on routes and conditions - we had "The Guide Book"!

So we followed the guide book ordinary route assiduously across minor glaciers and rock ribs until we were "guided" to ascend the glacier (Trift). Now we noticed on the ice slope there were large blocks of ice which seemed to have come from an ice cliff which cut off our intended route to the summit ridge. To confirm the source of the blocks a lump of ice cliff peeled off - about the size of a small block of flats and "slowly" trundled down the slope towards us - exciting this Alpine climbing we thought - not much like Central Gully on Great End. The lumps shattered and all the bits missed us (obviously or I'd not be boring the pants off you with this 1000's of years later).

The Guide Book said "UP THERE" so up we scurried hiding behind the stationary blocks for hopeful protection and nothing else significant came to visit us. We arrived at the bottom of the ice cliff somewhat sweaty - mainly exertion - we didn't really know enough to be as frightened as we should have been! (And, of course, we were on "The Guide Book" route). But the book made no mention of ice cliffs so was also deficient of information on how to get up it. It was rather taller than any ice face I'd ever seen and steeper with a nasty overhang at the top. So, we wandered along the bottom looking for the way up. After perhaps fifteen minutes wandering the cliff turned into two cliffs about a couple of yards apart - ah! I thought - a crevasse. Now I only knew these weren't to be fell into and we had our prussic loops to sort out that problem. But we were already at the bottom of the crevasse - both of us and "safely" roped so they seemed unhelpful for the current problem.

So we walked in and along the floor and I noticed that we weren't on the true ground floor - there seemed to be more crevasse under what we were strolling on. Also "our" floor was untidy (possible complaint to the management) - littered with lumps of clear ice cylinders - inches in diameter and feet long. Worse I was getting wet from dripping water so I had a look up and rather wished I'd not - damp was the least of our problems from that direction - Bloody Great organ pipes of icicles were hanging in festoons from the top edge - all honed to rapier points - it was time to go! - Lunch time!!

We found a pillar of ice which had broken from the lower face (so it seemed) and was leaning against the upper face. Better - it appeared to reach the upper lip. John belayed me (or I him considering the in-security of the floor - or was it all a waste of time!) whilst I cut steps up the thing - only 50 ft or so and it "went". I bought John up and - fantastic! We had a lovely view of mountains and things. It also seemed that we had joined the new (guide book "old") "ordinary route". A French party had watched our performance (with awe or horror) and dashed for the summit to put space between themselves and the accident which was looking for somewhere to happen!

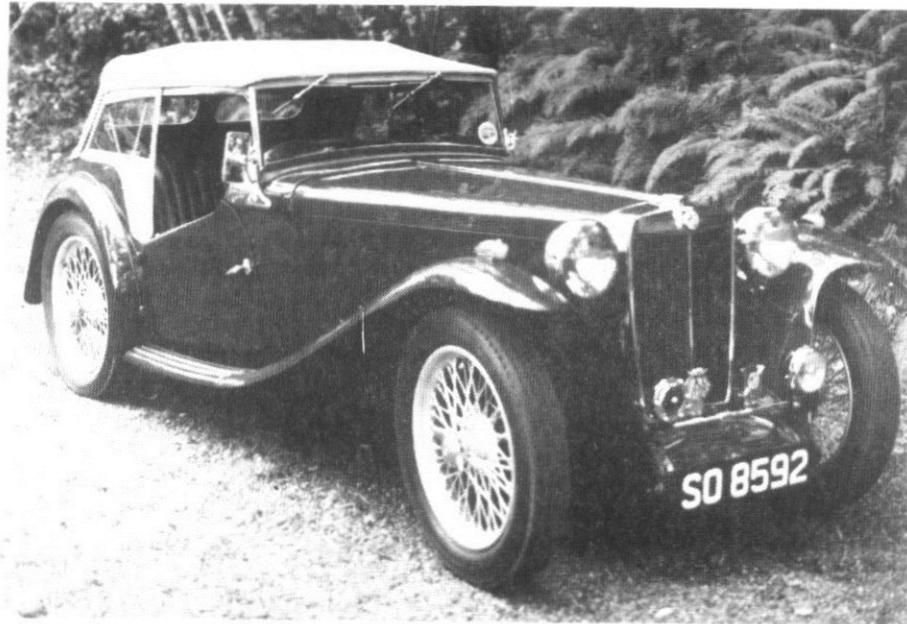
After all the excitement the route to the top was quite tame. We didn't manage the traverse to Zwischtergen pass (did that another year) and the loss of one of John's crampons made the descent a little more exciting than strictly necessary.

There's only one first trip to the Alps and experience indicates that some need luck to enjoy the second and subsequent visits.

Postscript

The TCMG SO8592 was sold in 1966 to friends of Arline's who a few years later sold the car to the present owner. In response to "Safety First" article I had a letter and photograph from Rod Plak in British Columbia, Canada who is the owner. She, I think, still looks wonderful.

W Brook Midgley



THROUGH HELAMBU AND BACK - A SHORT VISIT TO THE LANGTANG

After being part of a large expedition to the Khumbu in 1994, I had looked forward to returning to Nepal on a lighter scale. So when the grateful patients of my long suffering climbing partner Tony Perrons presented him with a "Trip of a Lifetime" on his retirement, opportunity beckoned. It didn't take too much persuasion to convince him that a wee walk up the Langtang would far surpass the pleasures of a tour or sunshine cruise.

With the very able assistance of Diana Penny Sherpani of Bufo Ventures our self contained expedition took shape and on the 25th March 1997 set forth from Sunderajill, on the outskirts of Kathmandu, to follow the undulating ridge of the Thare Danda to Langtang Valley. What though I had envisaged as lightweight now resembled a Sunday School outing with fifteen of us scattered along the trail. The reason for this influx being our modest objectives of climbing the small glacial peak of Yala Ri, c.5520m and exiting from the Langtang over the Ganja La, the same pass crossed by John Chapman's party in 1995.

A gradual height gain over three days took us from 1,400 to 3,600 metres following a well worn trail through small villages, terraced hillsides and wooded ridges. Below the Panghu Danda Pass we encountered our first snows, brightened by countless purple primula amongst thickets of moss draped rhododendrons. Beyond, all colour disappeared and a mist shrouded path let us up through fading light and snowflakes to the cold exposed lodges of Tharepati. Ahead the Thare Danda abuts the containing southern peaks of Langtang, access being over the Laurebina La, a well trodden pass at 4,610 metres. No longer able to follow the crest we embarked on an awkward traverse across tree covered spurs, bouldery slopes and deep ravines. In places the snow was knee deep and by midday chilling wind and mist replaced the early sun warmed charm of the passage. Occasional steps were cut to help the porters but one of them, when asked how he had coped, merely shrugged, smiled, removed a flip-flop and with a demonstrative wriggle, explained, "Used toes".

Crossing the Laurebina La proved hard work although from our overnight camp, 1,100 metres below the pass, a wide stony corrie presented a straight forward approach. Tony was already suffering after a bad night with dysentery and by 4,300 metres I was feeling equally debilitated with fatigue and breathlessness. By the summit snowfields I had to call a halt and ignoring the glorious views promptly fell asleep. Three hundred metres lower, beside the frozen sacred lake of Gosainkund, I continued to cough and retch with my first ever bout of AMS. Sprawled next to our neglected lunch, exhausted, haggard and half-asleep we had our sherpas' sympathy, their faces though conveyed a different message. If this was how we coped with the Laurebina La, what chance the Ganja La?

The descent to the Langtang was a relief, the walk up it a recuperation. First down moraines furrowed by the feet of countless Hindu pilgrims, then amongst tall firs, red flowering rhododendron trees and scented viburnum to the cultured terraces of Syabru hanging above the heavily wooded confines of the valley. We spent three days beside the rushing waters of the Langtang Khola gradually rising from bamboo to berberis, pine to prostrate juniper and the scrubby pastured moraines of Kyangjin Gompa at 3,750 metres surrounded by harsh high mountains.

Snow level was at 4,000 metres confirming reports of daily precipitation. By next morning it was below our tent. Tensing, our sirdar, had already cast doubts about tackling the Ganja La, now he was adamant that it was too dangerous. As he had recently made the crossing as was backed by climbing guide Passang, who had come over the more difficult Tilman's Pass (with a lone Scot) only a few weeks previously, we didn't argue the point. However after paying off all but two of

our Tamang porters we were still left with a tight knit team of Solu Sherpas, more than enough to attempt Yala Ri.

The massive barrier of mountains to the north throw down long ridges into the Langtang, Yala Ri being the last glacial summit of one of the them. Lower they form rock and grass crests with easily accessible points below 5,000 metres. One such is Kyangjin Ri, 4,763 metres, which by traversing the branch spur of Dranglung can be included in a convenient horseshoe. Snow covered and on a bright sunny morning the ground was reminiscent of a Kintail ridge in winter, the views though were undoubtedly Himalayan. Southerly, a sprawl of crenellated ice capped ridges containing the notch of the Ganja La and the frequently climbed trekking peak of Naya Kanga, 5,846 metres gathered height eastwards to the elegant and rarely touched Gangchempo, 6,387 metres (Tilman's Fluted Peak) and the massive white sentinels which straddle the Nepal/Tibet border. To the north, seemingly only a stone throw away, the awesome 2,500 metre high glacial walls of Langtang Lirung, 7,245 metres and Kimshun, 6,745 metres dominated the skyline. Sadly a thick cold mist charging in from the west discouraged summit lounging and back in Kyangjin sent us scurrying prematurely in the shelter of our tent.

Now properly acclimatised, our intention for the next three days was to explore the uninhabited head of the valley from a higher camp above which a short cut up a steep grassy couloir could be taken to Yala Ri Base Camp. Twenty four hours later we had advanced 6 kilometres, and were back in the tent beating the snow from its sides as a blizzard swept up the glen. Late in the evening the howl of the wind and the rumble of avalanches subsided and took with them our last hopes of a summit. But, as always in the mountains, that which is lost one way is gained in another. The dawn revealed all the beauty of pristine snow on an already magnificent landscape and just beyond the camp, the unmistakable prints of a snow leopard. Accompanied by Tensing and Passang, we followed them for about 3 kilometres into the spectacular amphitheatre of peaks around Nubamatang where they climbed steeply up the hillside. With a feeling of being watched we dropped down across the meltwater flats to savour our solitude until a poignant acceptance that we should go no further turned us in our tracks.

By afternoon we were back in Kyangjin, again contemplating falling snowflakes. With our long planned objectives beyond us and a pattern of weather which enforced daily 16 hour confinement to the tent, there seemed no point in prolonging our stay. Accordingly the following afternoon's snowfall was witnessed in more comfort from a lodge just inside the tree line at Ghora Tabela. The ensuing morning's walk through the snow laden forest with views of the icy summits glistening remotely above soft trailing mists was movingly beautiful. Add to it the high spirits and laughter of our sherpas as we showered each other with snow released from spring loaded bamboo and pine branches and we had ample compensation for our foiled plans.

Our route back followed the old path which traverses the steep hillside at around 2,500 metres on the north of the valley, passing through Syarpagaon and Khangjung before descending abruptly to Syabrubensi and the road to Dhunche in the Trisuli Valley. It was a delightful excursion with each twist and turn stimulating the senses and leaving an indelible memory . . .

"bright scattered alpine and blazing red rhododendrons; noisy grey langur monkeys, fretful long tailed magpies, flocks of electric blue grandalas sinuously wheeling like airborne shoals of mackerel, soaring eagles, drifting lammergeiers; inquisitive laughing children at the tent door and two small boys proudly leading me to their school at Syarpagaon, no more than an earth floored byre astride an exiguous spur, the lofty campsite nearby, lit by the golden rays of the late evening sun; vivid green slashes of terrace and cherry blossom, the dazzling peaks of the distant Ganesh Himal, the sobering gloom and gaudy murals of the Khangjung monastery; the sweet warm air of the

valley, the hog pungent springs of Syabrubensi; freshly distilled rakshi at Dhunche and the haunting songs of our good companions!

A six hour, eighty mile, hair raising bus ride took us back to Kathmandu and old friends. Time in hand allowed a visit to the medieval temples and palaces of Bhaktapur as well as enjoying all the usual sights, sounds and smells of Kathmandu. And in its crowded streets on the eve of our departure we let in the New Year for a second time in 1997, except in Nepal it was 2053. It seemed a fitting end to a trip of a lifetime.

Peter Farrington

TWO VIEWPOINTS

Three years ago I was in Switzerland in October. I was staying in the city of Bern and the weather was fine, but misty. I had read that there was a view of the Alps from above Neuchatel which sounded attractive; I was not overconfident that the mist would allow me to enjoy it, but as I had nothing else to do I took the train from Bern to Neuchatel. There I caught a bus to La Coudre on the outskirts of the town where I found what appeared to be a very ancient funicular. I ascended into the mist, thinking I was on a fool's errand. However as I neared the top of the funicular the trees surrounding it were clear. A short walk from the top station, Chaumont, led me to a view point with a most remarkable view. The mist was still there - but beneath me, as a sea. Above it was a vast panorama of snow covered peaks. Nearest and clearest were those of the Oberland, with the Schreckhorn, the Eiger, the Mönch and the Jungfrau easily identified. In the middle of the panorama were the peaks of the Valais, among which the Matterhorn stood out. At the extreme west was Mont Blanc dominating its surrounding mountains. The altitude of Chaumont is only 1177 m, but such is its position that it commands this spectacular view.

It was essentially the same view that Hilaire Belloc enjoyed when he crossed the Jura at the Weissenstein. He described it in *The Path to Rome* in characteristic manner; 'One saw the sky beyond the edge of the world getting purer as the vault rose. But right up - a belt in that empyrean - rant peak and field and needle of intense ice, remote, remote from the world. Sky beneath them and sky above them, a steadfast legion, they glittered as though with the armour of the immovable armies of Heaven. Two days' march, three days' march away, they stood up like the walls of Eden. I say it again, they stopped my breath. I had seen them.

So little are we, we men; so much are we immersed in our muddy and immediate interests that we think, by numbers and recitals, to comprehend distance or time, or any of our limiting infinities. Here were these magnificent creatures of God, I mean the Alps, which now for the first time I saw from the height of the Jura; and because they were fifty or sixty miles away, and because they were a mile to two high, they were become something different from us others, and could strike on motionless with the awe of supernatural things.'

The other viewpoint that I went to this summer. It was the Cabane Segantini on the Munt da la Bes-Cha. It lies above Pontresina from where it can be reached by a steep path. It is rather more easily reached by taking the Muottas Muragl funicular, following a gently falling path for a while and then ascending more steeply to the hut. When I was there the weather was somewhat cloudy, nevertheless I could appreciate the excellence of the view of Bernina Group across the deep Val Bernina, especially Piz Palù, Bellavista, Piz Bernina itself and Piz Morteratsch. Also there was a very striking prospect along the whole length of the Val Roseg from the glaciers beneath Piz Roseg to the junction of the Ova da Roseg with the Ova da Bernina at Pontresina.

The name of the hut commemorates the artist Giovanni Segantini. His work is not as well known and appreciated in Britain as it might be, for he has a number of impressive mountain landscapes to his credit. Like Georges Seurat (who had a notable exhibition at the National gallery this year) Segantini used a technique of applying tiny strokes of pure colour for the eye to blend to give the effect he was seeking. In France this was known as pointillisme; in Italy (where Segantini trained) divisionismo. He sometimes mixed gold or silver dust with his colour, which resulted in great brilliance and a vivid rendering of the clarity of Alpine light. Segantini began to paint in Brienz, then moved to Maloja in the Upper Engadine, next to Savognin in the valley of the Julia and lastly to the Munt da la Bes-Cha. It is noticeable that he was always in the mountains and as time went by moved further and further into isolation among them. He must have had a very deep feeling for them. He died at the Cabane in the autumn of 1899. What a magnificent place to choose for one's end!

Both viewpoints are strongly recommended.

James Bogle

REPORTS OF CLUB ACTIVITIES

YORKSHIRE DALES MEETS

MAY DAY BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND

The meet was based again this year at the Black Swan campsite at Fearby, just outside Masham. The weather this year was much more typical Yorkshire - • nature in the raw • - than on previous occasions.

On the Saturday, when people had arrived, we ventured up the valley to Slipstones Crag, which provided good entertainment for all, including the children. By the time we had left the crag, the wind had picked up considerably, and we returned to the campsite to find that one of the frame tents had been bent by the wind. A fortunate evening visit by the president, complete with mega toolkit, meant that all was soon restored to its original state.

On Sunday morning, the poor weather continued unabated, so a visit was made to the Viking re-enactment festival at Richmond Castle. The state of their tents and people reminded us of what we had just left! The children were in their element.

When we thought the weather could not get any worse, Monday then unleashed itself on us. It was a case of upping sticks before the rain running down the campsite actually flowed through the tents, rather than just round them. In all, quite a few stormy days.

Ed Bramley

SNOWDONIA WEEKEND - TAN YR WYDDFA - RHYD-DDU. JUNE 7/8TH 1997

18 hut residents and four visiting members enjoyed a lively and active weekend albeit the weather was not good, indeed foul at times! The Mikes (Goodyer and Pinney) together with Ed - the dancing bear, I am led to understand! flogged up and down and round and completed the five cols walk, finishing with the competitors of the 1000 metre peak race on the top of Snowdon, and getting mixed up with people doing the tree peaks too. Busy up there! Don Hardy and Don Hodge, Dave, James, Peter, Hugh and Antonia did the Nantlle ridge in the teeth of a wind and

occasional cloudbursts. Roger and Phil Aldred climbed Tryfan and separately so did Heather, Mark and their young tigresses Lucy and Mary took the hard way by doing the Milestone and Route 21 on their way over Tryfan. Whilst Roger and his young tiger Gavin climbed Pulpit and Ivy Chimney before flashing over Tryfan. The Hon. Pres. Arlene and Denise walked up to the South Col, sorry on Snowdon, not the Big One! And explored the trackbed of the Welsh Highland Railway, which some of you may not know, is due to be re-instated after an enforced financial break of fifty years.

The ones who were back early enough were entertained by James Bogle in his comfy cottage in Rhyd Ddu and enjoyed homemade scones, cake and tea before the committee meeting. After which there was a rush to Beddgelert where the meet leader had laid on a bar meal in the restaurant of the Saracens Head and there we were joined by another Snowdonian member, Alan Lyall, so a companionable evening was had by all.

Sunday dawned, a worse day, I believe that some were rained off Snowdon, other gamely went climbing and yet others went to the ancient church of St Marys Beddgelert, where the Rev James had kindly helped and gave the sermon, followed by a civilised sherry at the meet leaders home, situated behind the Royal Goat hotel and to which members are welcome to call.

Merle Gartside

THE DAY DIANA DIED

The Day Diana Died they came and told us at our breakfast table . . . Slightly stunned we recollected that we had to climb 6,000 feet that day; so on with the packs and up through the village, John to the supermarket and on via the main road where he could battle with the Mercedes, the rest of us through the cluster of hamlets which add a little to the village of Heiligenblut. Reunited at Pfeifen we followed the stream up the valley to the inn at Alter Pocher.

Diana Dead! Our debate continued over drinks and on hard benches, attended by a bouncing puppy. Isolated too, for the East Tirol is cut off from South Tirol by the World War 1 border; road and rail to the North have to pass over or more usually under the great mass of the Hohe Tauern Alps, the Alpine watershed. Not much British passes that way, apart from the boiled eggs at breakfast, perhaps a gesture to our way of life. No newspapers, even John could not find the FT, and foreign papers held little interest until Diana died, from whence they were filled with nothing else.

Diana fans? - No, not really. Away from press hyperbole, we sensed the tragedy as an accident waiting to happen; a great beauty with immense charm and empathy for the less fortunate, flawed by instability and a penchant for unsuitable men. Antonia was sorry for the young princes. It was not quite the reaction of the Great British Public, as we later discovered, just that of an isolated group of Brits - too middle aged perhaps?

We donned packs once more and set off up rocky path which dodged its way through the cliffs towards the upper lake. As ever, steeper slopes stopped conversation. Above the lake, we tottered through a sea of boulders and on to the snow; we looked up the hut which bestrode the skyline against a sea of blue. For the first time on three walking tours we put on the rope; no other party bothered on that gentle slope so there must have been something symbolic about it - there is nothing like a long snow slope for thinking things over . . . It is an old cliché that everyone remembers where they were when Kennedy was killed; one sensed that Diana's death might bring forth similar reactions. Partly the flawed hero syndrome; the Byronic theme of "Those whom the

Gods Love die young". Give or take a month or two, I had been around for a third of a century when Kennedy died; another third had passed when Fate or the Press drove Diana into that tunnel.

If another young and charismatic figure were to be cut down in the prime of life after another third of a century, it seemed unlikely I would be in a position to comment. Curious the impact of someone one had never met . . .

Ages later we were able to tell John how many steps he had kicked; we staggered up a stone staircase that ended in the portals of the hut cum observatory which rested on the summit of the Sonnblick peak, a wall of mountains at its feet. A tremendous place where one's first duty in the morning was to watch the sunrise, and one's last call at night to see it setting behind the peaks.

Ten days earlier we had all met for supper in a hotel in Zell am See; Bill Peebles our token Scot from the 1995 party, Michael Austin from 1996, Antonia Barlen and I from both, and John Mercer, whose path we had crossed quite frequently in the Pyrenees in 1995. Saturday morning saw us mount the valley to the South by bus, followed by a curious open lift, and yet another bus. This brought us to the dam by the top lake and presumably to the Dr Adolf Scharf Hut, if someone had not chose to demolish it a year to two before . . . Plan B took us more painfully to the Heinrich Schweiger Haus where I had stayed 44 years before. On that occasion we had lunched at the bottom of the lake! Never trust a map!

A first night in a crowded dormitory 8,000 feet above the valley floor is seldom a recipe for a successful morrow, and a veil should be drawn over our return to the Kapruner Lake and subsequent climb over the Kapruner Torl (pass). Rough paths and a couple of river crossings led us to the intimidating bulk of the Rudolfshutte, HQ of the Austrian Alpine Club, and quite the ugliest hut I have ever seen. However a hut that boasts bedrooms, drying rooms, hot showers, cafeterias, bars, table tennis table and a climbing wall can promote a much more charitable attitude, particularly if it costs no more than the average Alpine Purgatory.

Tearing ourselves away from such fleshpots, we crossed a pass, climbed a convenient peaklet, and lunched by a beautiful lake before descending to the Kals valley. At this point Bill suggested a halt and a rest day, and prompted the mutual revelation of aching thighs and seriously sore feet, all acquired in two nine hour days. A 4 star hotel helped the decision making.

Three days over a number of passes took us to Heiligenblut, a neat little village, with a well-sited and beautiful church and a view back to the Grossglockner, attempted by Michael and John ascended by the latter. En route, and whilst we were safely tucked up in bed, came the only bad weather of the tour, a brief storm which deposited snow down to 2,000 metres, and enabled us to half skid partway to the valley.

Another rest day and then came the ascent to Sonnblick and a fairly complex route over the glacier to the Niedere and Fragante Schartes (Passes) and down to the Duisburger Hut, with extensive destruction of the hillside for the latest in ski-resorts prompting pathfinding problems which were hardly helped by an unbridged river. Two more days took us down the Mallnitz, just below the Tauern Railway Tunnel and the end of our journeys.

The weather was much better than in 1995 or 1996, both of which started fine and deteriorated. Clearly the greater level of snow at fairly modest heights indicated a poor early summer, but apart from minor problems involved in crossing snow-filled gullies at 2,500 metres, this worked in our favour.

Size of loads is a hardy a perennial. A theoretical 25lbs become 15kilos at the airport, and when this is increased by food and water, and on unlucky days the obligation to carry 6lbs of rope, the

total is nearer 45lbs. Crampons, axes and rope were all used; even so we were inadequately equipped for a peak like the Grossglockner, with crampons sitting uneasily on light weight boots - perhaps an inevitable compromise.

Memories remain. The herds of ibex and the whistling of marmots. John's occasionally outrageous though always self-deprecating sense of humour. Bill's firm defence of his native Scotland against all comers, Michael's quite good temper, and Antonia's major anniversary party.

A great holiday and good company. But will its abiding memory be the Day Diana Died when we ascended from the village of the Holy Blood (Heiligenblut) to the Heavenly View (Sonnblick)? And I don't know what that proves anyhow . . .

Wendell Jones

ABMSAC/AC/CC CAMPING MEET AT RANDA 1997

Around 60 people (including children) from the three clubs visited the meet at the Atermenzen campsite during the last week in July and the first two weeks in August. When we arrived some of those who had already been out for the previous week told of bad weather and deep snow on the mountains, however we were blessed with hot sunny weather for our stay with only a couple of stormy evenings. Because of the previous bad weather the higher 4,000 metre peaks did not come into condition until the end of the third week.

Many started off with a 'training' walk up the Mettelhorn which gave stupendous close up views of the Weisshorn and Zinal Rothorn plastered with snow confirming that high level rock ridges we not in condition. Over the following weeks nearly every 4,000 metre peak on the Zermatt skyline received at least one ascent, the only exceptions being the Weisshorn and the Dent d'Herens. Popular routes included the Lenzspitze (NE face), various bits of the Nadelgrat, the Rimpfischhorn, the Strahlhorn via the Adlerhorn, the Allalinhorn, the Nordend-Dufourspitze-Signalkupp-Lyskamm traverse and its variations, and also the Fletschhorn-Lagginhorn and Weissmies above the Saas valley.

Of particular note was an ascent of the Zmutt ridge on the Matterhorn which was the first ascent of the year and the first one from the new Lonza hut. The route had not yet suffered the indignity of being 'equipped' as reported recently in the climbing magazines and a strong team had a mini epic involving slabs either verglassed or running with water and a precarious bivvy not far below the summit.

On a lighter note another very competent team managed to climb an entirely different mountain to the intended objective, having missed a path junction on the moraine in the dark.

Other activities for those confined to the valley by family commitments included swimming and rafting with the kids in the gravel pits, wild strawberry picking, mountain biking (the path down from Zermatt to Tasch was good fun) and good day walks. Some of the children acquitted themselves well on the Mettelhorn, Breithorn and Unterrothorn.

Socially the meet was very good fun with many late nights around the wood burning stove making new friends and renewing old acquaintances. The bottle wall had grown to a satisfying height by the end of the meet.

Jeff Harris

Bared to essentials the walk was a traverse of Blencathra attempted from Patterdale; as the Irishman said, he would not have started from there.

Five of us left the hut soon after 5.00; two hours later going up Stybarrow Dod, we met the first of the "Walking the Bounds" parties coming down. Traversing the Dods - some maps say Dodds, and no one suggested it was a Duddle - we descended quite steeply from Clough Head through the quarries, and crossed river and road to Threlkeld (11 miles) for third breakfast. The advance party had already shown signs of shaking off the Pyrenean Walk veterans, and on the warmish 2,300 feet ascent of Blencathra they finally vanished up the fellside.

Descent of Sharp Edge proved a successful ploy to combat post prandial stupor, and the crossing of the Vale of St John provided additional map reading experience. The leader's map was too old to show the main road, down which we marched for an unpleasant half mile. Per contra, the bridleway clearly marked South from High Gate on all maps had disappeared apart from a sign to record that it could be impassable in bad weather. After 11 miles of untracked bog we were relieved to hit the drove road (4.45). Since the start of the path across to Glenridding Mines was also missing, we abandoned the remainder of the original route and settle for Dochray and its pub and a return by the Lakeside, reaching the Hut a little after 8pm.

Those involved Advance Party David Penlington and prospective new member Jonathan Preskett; Rearguard, Antonia Barlen, Bill Peebles and Wendell Jones. (Distance covered approx. 27 miles, height ascended and descended 6,300 feet, total time 15 hours of which nearly 14 was "going" time. Weather Good but never too hot).

Wendell Jones

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

Ken Baldry

January - Skiing at Bad Gastein with Avis, who decided that retiring at 60 had been a bad idea. We did hang a wreath from their Schubert plaque on his 200th birthday, as the town ignored it. June - Both to Austria for art in Vienna and a 'seaside' holiday in the Salzkammergut. August - More seriously, I fulfilled a long-standing ambition to start the Cross-Swiss walk in more style by traversing the Rhätikon, the long limestone frontier ridge I started by air and train to Klosters, up the Madrisa egg railway and an afternoon walk over to Gargellen in Austria. Then, quite an arduous day over the Sarotla Pass and three minor passes to the Lindauer Hut, renowned for its good food. The next day was a long plod over the Ofen Pass under the glorious Drusenfluh, followed by the higher Verajoch and lower Cavalljoch, which gets back to Der Schweiz. The plod continues to the Schesaplana Hut with austere (very) Swiss cookery and a bad night's 'sleep'. The last day of the traverse goes over the Grosse Furka back to Austria and a traverse into Liechtenstein past the Pfäler Hut and down to Steg, where I arrived semi-dead to find the only hotel closed, so thumbed a lift through the tunnel into the Rhine Valley and stayed at Triesenberg. The rest of the week was spent in the Toggenberg, with deteriorating weather producing dramatic effects on the Churfirsten overlooking the Walensee and a last day plod over the Vorder Hohi to pretty Weesen by the lake. One breakthrough - no one laughed at my parasol-cum-brolly but many said that it was a good idea.



Peter Farrington

A few winter Munros provided good preparation for a trek to the Langtang Valley in Nepal in March, (reported elsewhere).

Returned to fell running with a vengeance in May with the Bens of Jura Race on one weekend and the Lowe Alpine Mountain Marathon, again on Jura, the next. Competed a demanding 'A' class course with my son Simon in superb conditions which will be long remembered by all who took part.

Submitted to gentler days in June with my wife on an Exodus trip to Lycia in Turkey. Walks varied from forest paths and archaeological sites to high passes and rocky tops with aquatic excursions to the coast and Saklikent Gorge to cool off. The limestone mountains of the Ak Daglar and Olimpos National park proved very attractive with a fine array of alpine flora and some outstanding hospitality in the village houses. Ascents of Uyluk, 2,700m and Teke Dag, 1,600m were made as well as crossing the Baba Dag and the Eger pass through the impressive Salur Dag, to the west of Elmali. Very well led by Caroline Williams and Adnan Pirikoghu and recommended to anyone wanting to active relaxation.

Filled in the rest of the summer with local walking, running and climbing before completing the Ben Nevis Race on a drech day in September in a time of 2 hours 49 mins., about twice as long as the winner. Later in the month I accompanied my wife up her first Munro - Schiehallion.

Barrie Pennett

I have had a busy walking and scrambling year with many visits to the Yorkshire Dales and the Lake District.

In January we continued walking the Ebor Way, a 70 mile walk from Helmsley to Ilkley. This is a super walk which can easily be done in a week or even less, if one needs to rush.

Later in the month my wife Valerie and I drove to Littondale (Yorkshire) where we walked in the valley and then had lunch in the Queen's Arms, Litton. Although we did not do much walking in February except for another section of the Ebor Way we did, however, do a number of local walks in Wharfedale. On a fine but dull day we walked on Burley moor which proved to be enjoyable.

In the middle of March we spent a week in the lake District, staying at Near Sawrey. On March 18 we parked in Grasmere and climbed Steel Fell (1811ft) by Goody Bridge. Visited Rough Crag, Calf Crag (1621ft), Gibson Knott (1379ft), Helm Crag (1299ft). This was a good day in the fells although the weather was mixed - starting with sunny and bright periods followed by rain and hailstones. March 19 saw us in the Kentmere Valley where we walked with friends in bright sunshine and clear blue skies.

A walk in Little Langdale from Tilberthwaite Gill on March 20 proved to be a good choice. On March 21 we did another walk in Little Langdale where we climbed Great Carrs (2575ft), Swirl How (2630ft) and Grey Friar (2536ft).

Good Friday saw us on the Yorkshire Moors where we did an 8 mile walk to Hutton Ridge, Ana Cross and Lastingham Ridge.

In May we walked in Wharfedale, particularly in the Bolton Abbey area and later in the month we spend a weekend at Gillamore, North Yorkshire Moors. On one occasion we walked on Bransdale Head and Rudland Rigg from Cockayne and the following day we walked to the head of Rosedale.

In July we visited Ambleside and did a walk on Loughrigg Fell. On another visit to the Lake District in August we stayed at Lowick Green. We had actually gone to see our son David play cricket for Cumberland against Northumberland at Barrow but we managed a short walk near Furness Abbey on August 18. The next day August 19, was very warm when we did a walk to Finsthwaite Heights from Newby Bridge. This was a glorious walk on a hot day and I enjoyed a swim in the lake which is known as High Dam.

On August 21 my wife and I walked from Addingham to Skipton by Draughton Moor.

October saw us back in the Lake District. We again stayed at Sawrey where we did a number of walks in that area. They were not particularly energetic walks but were very rewarding scenery wise. On the Saturday before returning home we walked to Tarn Hows and climbed Tom Heights, which although only a small fell was nevertheless very rewarding. We returned home that night and the following day (Sunday) we began the Aire Valley Walk, a 50 mile walk from Leeds to Malham in the Yorkshire Dales. Like the Ebor Way we are doing the walk in sections. Later in the month we did a walk in Wharfedale in the Harrogate area taking in the upper Crimble Valley. We also did another section of the Airedale Way.

In December we walked in the Harewood area, visiting the grounds of Harewood House.

Christmas was spent in Keswick. On Christmas Day we did a short walk up Latrigg (1203ft) while on Boxing Day we climbed Barrow (1494ft) and Outerside (1863ft). December 27 saw us on Causey Pike (2035ft) and Scar Craggs (2205ft).

David Watts

Pressures of work have meant that 1997 was unremarkable for mountaineering. However, the proximity of Manchester to British upland areas facilitated many short visits for walks and scrambles to the Lakes and Snowdonia, the latter now reached in 60 minutes! Business trips to the Minnesota, Istanbul, Hong Kong and Thailand tended to leave an after-burden of jet lag, but the Bangkok trip permitted a visit to the river Kwai and the Japanese death railway amidst the green volcanic hills of Kanchanaburi. In April I also visited Liechtenstein for work and was able to walk the mountains above Malbun in heavy snow cover. During the summer, I planned to join the Alpine meet in Randa, but again "trouble at the mill" delayed my departure, so I finally settled on eight days in the Bernese Oberland. As much of my pre-alpine fitness training had consisted of rising rapidly from arm-chairs, I headed straight to the Kiental, between Kandersteg and Murren. Dumping the hire car at the delightful Berghaus Griesalp, (1407 m) I set off next morning for the *Sefinenfurke*, above Murren and below the craggy top of the Buttlassen. A circular tour brought me late afternoon to the Gspaltenhorn hut, visited a few summers back with Roger James and my son Jonathan, for our ascent of the Gspaltenhorn. I found the return to this particular part of the Oberland immensely refreshing: a complex mountain and valley terrain with new and stunning vistas around every corner.

Grindelwald was the next stop, and here I was pleased to discover the *Grindelwald Mountain Hostel*. This new venture is run by the wife of a Grindelwald guide and appears to have strong support of the local community. It is situated at Grindelwald Grund, near to the rail station, and hence close to the camping site. It is comparable to a top class youth hostel, and the clientele was mostly young but not exclusively so. Prices were very reasonable by Swiss standards and were on a sliding scale, depending on whether hire of sheet sleeping bag and blankets were required. Bunk beds, about 10 per room, are the norm and family rooms can be booked.

Having teamed up with a Swiss climber, the Eiger again exerted its fascination and we set off for the Mittellegi hut. However, a re-ascent was not to be: for late afternoon on the Challi glacier the heavens opened and within minutes a torrent was cascading down the rocks of the south face below the hut. Poised as we were at the bergschrund, and with thunder and lightning playing around us, retreat across the glacier to the Eiger tunnel was deemed prudent. As we stood dripping at the Eismeer station, the last train pulled in and so we now headed for the Jungfrauoch and thence to the crowded Ober Monchjoch hut. After a fitful night's sleep, the starlit dawn saw us crossing the glacier to the Jungfrau - a notable 4000m peak on my 'hit list'. The downhill stage was easy, but then the grinding snowslopes to the Rottalsattel made me feel my age and poor-acclimatisation with a vengeance. However, the more airy snow ridge above was an invigorating compensation and that wonderful summit panorama - Europe at one's feet. I shall draw a discreet veil over the interminable descent and the noonday weariness of the long final upward slopes to the Joch, the crowds, the ogling helicopters and the railway.

After a big effort, I consider lighter days justified. However, the weather adopted a pattern of hot mornings and acute afternoon storms. I visited Adelboden and Kandersteg for walks and then in worsening weather, decided to explore the region of Brienz, Rosenlauri and central Switzerland. My final notes were to plan, in prospect of a future holiday, some training climbs on the mountains around the Susten pass (2224 m), where a Swiss friend has undertaken his military service. These are ideally situated for shorter - one day - ascents and boast numerous elegant rock and ice peaks.

BOOK REVIEWS

Britain's Alpine Ridges:
Snowdonia and the Lake District
Robin Ashcroft

Marlborough: The Crowood Press, 1996.
Paperback, (format 23 x 16.5cm), 160 pp., illustrated.
£12.99
ISBN 1 85223 929 8

As Whymper's classic volume attests, *scrambling* is arguably the most characteristic skill entailed in alpine mountaineering. Although this may required rather less 'gymnastic' ability than rock climbing, *per se*, nevertheless it shares the same spice of danger. Especially it demands the ability to plan a route on the topography of a complex mountain face. Thankfully, this is something alpinists can practice to the full on British mountains and this has long been a prominent feature of ABMSAC meets. Since Steve Ashton published *Scrambles in Snowdonia* in 1980 and RB Evans authored *Scrambles in the Lake District* in 1982, a number of other worthy volumes have been published in this field. As a devoted scrambler, I wondered whether this book had anything new to present. The answer is affirmative!

In size, Mr Ashcroft's book is designed for the study rather than the rucksack. Forty five routes are described, with equal attention to Snowdonia and Cumbria. All but two were already familiar to me, but the guide was worthwhile even for those two! However, apart from being a valuable overview and introduction this is also a book to read after the ascent, to re-live those hours of adventure on the hills. There are also a number of interesting variations, such as the feasible by-pass of the 'suicidal' section on the *Yr Esgair* (NE) ridge of Foel Goch.

This guidebook has a particular focus upon ridges. It therefore omits some of the harder buttress scrambles, such as on *Lliwedd*, and the gorge or gill scrambles in the Lakes. Nevertheless, ridges

are interpreted broadly, so as to embrace such diverse features as the *Clogwyn Y Person Arete* and the *Pinnacle Ridge* of St Sunday Crag. Each route description is accompanied by three illustrations: a map, and a line-drawing of the ascent correlated with a photograph. Basic facts, such as the grades, time and distance, are followed by fuller consideration of situation, approach, ascent and descent. These are all of a good descriptive standard and some complex regions, such as Pillar Rock, are handled in exemplary manner.

Preceding the routes are seven pages of sensible introduction, on matters of grading, safety, etc. Equipment is sometimes a personal matter, and apart from some thin abseil rope, one item I deem invaluable for all seasons is my trusty Mountain Tech hammer-axe, with wrist-loop. Apart from hidden patches of snow/ice, its placement in steep grass (!) has saved me from more tight corners than I care to remember.

David Watts

Upon High Places:

Stories from the mountains of Wales

Mike Perrin

1197: Bryntirion Press, Bridgend, Wales

ISBN 1 85049 133 X

large format (25 x 22 cm) paperback, 90 pp, illustrated.

£6.99

This book reflects an intense love of mountains and especially those of Snowdonia. In a series of vignettes, Mike Perrin looks back upon a lifetime of mountaineering in Wales and in greater ranges. Throughout he interprets his mountain experiences and life in the context of a mature Christian faith in God, that has itself been tested and refined through deep personal tragedy. In particular, his much loved son, Carl, aged 28, was drowned in the flood waters of the river Cothi in 1992. The opening chapter describes a solitary mountain bivouac beneath the starlit skies as he struggled to come to terms with his loss.

Mike Perrin has had a varied and multi-dimensional life experience. I first met him briefly a quarter-century ago when, as a young grammar school teacher, I brought a party of teenagers to the Christian Mountain Centre which he had founded at Tremadoc, in the birthplace-home of Lawrence of Arabia. Mike was then perhaps at the height of his physical powers. In the course of a week there would be some sleepless nights as he participated as a member of the mountain rescue team. But these nocturnal ventures did not slow him down by day. There was a heady mix of rock climbing, canoeing the river rapids and also the labours of the Christian pastorate, based upon the Chapels of Penrhyndeudraeth and Beddgelert. Despite periods of work in southern England, Mike has become a well known figure in Snowdonia, both on the hills and motor-biking the narrow roads.

Temperamentally, Mike Perrin has loved and lived a frenetic and physical life-style. But time and experience have inculcated a mellowness of character. Despite the outpourings of the mountaineering press, there are not so many books of our day that exhibit profound, integrated thought about the mountain experience. This modest, but literate and evocative volume will help us grapple with thoughts and reflections - sometimes too deep for words.

David Watts

VAUD

Guide to Lac Leman - Lake Geneva, Jura and Alpine Regions.

Elizabeth Upton-Eichenberger

Do buy this book if you are planning a holiday in the Vaud. It is crammed full of background information to that region that will enrich and enhance your visit. One learns history, geography, gastronomy, literature alongside helpful tourist information. The book is commercially sponsored but for once I was drawn to reading the advertising copy. I found out that Nestlé sent milk products via balloon to Paris once when it was under siege and the Confiserie Zurcher provides recipes for pastries and Gateau a la creme.

It is choc-a-bloc with vignettes about this rich and diverse area of Switzerland giving the visitor much to inspire them to explore and find out more.

There is a companion volume - Zermatt - A Guide to Zermatt and Its Culture, which is similarly packed with interest and information.

Both books are distributed by Cordee of Leicester. Vaud costs £14.95 and Zermatt £12.50. Members of SAC Zermatt can have them at the privilege price of £9.50. Mrs Upton-Eichenberger's address is The Old Church, Gravel Pit Lane, Rowney Green, Alvchurch, BIRMINGHAM, B48 7QG.

MICB

OBITUARY

Professor Max McGlashan, April 1924 - July 1997

Max's love of the mountains began when he was a very young man in New Zealand, where he was born and brought up. It was there, in the Southern Alps of the South Island, that his feeling for snow and ice climbing developed. And it was there that he introduced me, his newly-acquired wife, to this other great love of his.

His university teaching career brought us to England, and for many years, until two years ago, we went every summer to the Swiss Alps. There we explored the Engadine, the Bernese Oberland, the Valais, with lesser excursions into adjoining regions. There were usually just the two of us; we did not tackle the major peaks; we never took a guide. Max revelled in relying on his own judgement of snow, ice and weather conditions in all their changeable variety. And he also relied heavily upon the Alpine Club and CAS guide books.

In this way we went to some wonderful places, and were enchanted over and over again by Alpine dawns, as we trudged up into the sunrise on Piz Palu, the Allalinhorn, the Pique d'Arolla, for example, or made our way over high passes from one CAS hut to another, and the fading evening light, and emerging stars, seen from the welcome shelter of a hut, never ceased to have an almost magical effect.

There was just one occasion when we, with Michael Beer (than also an ABMSAC member), were benighted, on the Fieschergletscher. The dawn was then especially welcome!

Max twice climbed the Piz Bernina, with friends, but not with me. He also did some rock climbing, mostly in Wales, and in Scotland. But his special devotion was to making his way on snow and ice.

He was a veteran member of the CAS.

Susan McGlashan

25 October 1997

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Association held at the Glenridding Hotel, Glenridding, Cumbria on Saturday 7th February 1998.

The President was in the Chair with 42 members present.

1. Apologies for absence were received from the Lord Hunt KG, CBE, DSO, Bryan Richards GM, John Byam-Gounds, Ross and Sheila Cameron, Keith Dillon, Wendell Jones, Peter Ledebor, Robert Müller, Tony and Suzanne Strawther.
2. The Minutes of the AGM held on 1st February 1997 were approved and signed. There were no matters arising.
3. Election of Officers and Committee
Vice President Don Hodge and Committee Members Anne Jago and James Bogle retired in rotation.

Vice President:	Mike Pinney	Seconded: Prof. Boulter Passed unanimously
Committee Members:	Mrs Nigella Hall	Seconded: Edward Coales Passed unanimously
	Peter Goodwin	Seconded: Alasdair Andrews Passed unanimously
	Phil Hands	Seconded: Roger James Passed unanimously

All other Officers and Committee Members offered themselves for re-election and were returned unopposed.

4. Accounts

The Hon. Treasurer having offered his apologies for his absence, the Hon. Secretary presented his notes and the unaudited accounts which had been distributed.

The Income from Members was lower than the previous year due to the change in accounting period, but the notes showed that membership was only slightly lower. Expenditure on the newsletter and printing/postage costs were lower and the losses on the London activities reduced.

This, together with a "profit" on SAC transfers due to the improved exchange rate, and the sale of Halifax shares, resulted in an excess of Income over Expenditure of £2337.

The adoption of the draft accounts, subject to satisfactory audit, was proposed by Peter Bull, seconded by Prof. Boulter, and passed unanimously.

5. Subscription Rates for 1998 and 1999

The subscription rates of 1998 had been set at the previous AGM, and although it was not envisaged that an increase would be necessary the Committee proposed that the rates of 1999 should be set by the Committee within the bands:

Single Membership	£15.00 to £17.00
Joint Membership	£23.00 to £26.00
Junior Membership	£6.50 to £7.50

Seconded by Peter Bull
Passed unanimously

The exchange rate used for conversion of SAC subscriptions can be varied according to the rate at the time of transfer.

Prof. Boulter enquired about the variation in costs between SAC Sections, and which ones were preferred. The Hon. Registrar replied that applicants were offered the choice between Grindelwald, Zermatt, Diablerets, Geneva and Monte Rosa unless they had a particular wish to join another Section. Although the costs varied from SF80 to over SF100 other considerations had so far resulted in an even spread.

6. Amendment of the Rules of Association

The Committee proposed that the Rules should be amended as follows:

Rule 3. MEMBERSHIP

The following should be added to the types of membership:

"5. Junior Members"

The following should be added after the definition of Retired Membership:

"Junior Membership shall be available to those who have attained the age of 10 but not have reached their 22nd birthday and who either:

1. Qualify for Ordinary Membership or
2. Are proposed and seconded by Members of the Association, other than Junior Members."

Seconded: Mary Boulter
Passed unanimously

7. President's Report

The past year has for the Association been active and successful. The foundation for this was, of course, laid before I took office.

Having had a year in this seat I have a much better idea of what Heather had been doing during her term of office. So whilst we thanked her at last year's AGM I will not give her my personal thanks for handing over the Association in a good and tidy state.

Membership

Numbers are reasonable static in total 316. Full membership numbers have dropped slightly from last year, but other classes of members have risen in number and are thereby compensating.

We could do with some new younger members and I would ask each member to try to enrol a friend or family member who has an interest in the hills.

Our Finances are sound and the details have been covered in the Treasurer's report.

Meets.

Both indoor lectures and social events in London and the outdoor weekend meets have been well attended. Also three successful meets were held in the Alps.

Peter Ledebøer and his many assistants who served solid and liquid refreshments made the London scene a success. Good lectures and very enjoyable evenings - I recommend them to those from further afield. West Coast train fare £17.50 return and FREE LECTURES! Many thanks to Peter and his friends for their efforts.

Taking the outdoor meets chronologically and not in the detail they deserve - The Scottish Meets were mainly organised by Alasdair Andrews and were well attended, some over subscribed. E.g. Members from the Skye meet in May moved en-mass to the Newtonmore weekend meet - a very full house. Many members attending the Scottish meets are from the "deep south" of England. This indicates the enthusiasm of members and the quality of the meets; I especially enjoyed the meet reports of JMS and JMcS.

More southerly meets held in Wiltshire, Wales, the Yorkshire Dales and Lake District covers the hill areas fairly well, and about once a month provides regularity. Meet leaders included Nigella Hall, Meryl Gartside, Kathy McManus, Mike Goodyer, Ed Bramley and Don Hodge.

Meets were also held further afield. Randa in the Pennine Alps where Mike Goodyer led a mainly camping meet at which our numbers were joined by AC and CC members. Many peaks were climbed in often poor conditions.

An Italian Alps meet was led by Alasdair Andrews. The accommodation was in apartments and the venue was Derby in the Val d'Aosta. A goodly crowd had the worst weather in the valley for years - they climbed every day and at least one 4000m peak was ascended.

The Austrian trek of Wendell Jones was undertaken by a select party who enjoyed good weather in early September.

There were parties in various other mountain areas, e.g. John Chapman's trek in Nepal.

The only meets not well attended were the Hut Maintenance Meets and those not going were denied the pleasure of free tea and biscuits plus half price hut fees for a year.

To all the meet leaders mentioned by name and any missed - our thanks for all their hard work; their only reward is to see members attending and enjoying themselves.

In June Arline and I with Peter Ledebøer attended the re-opening of the Britannia Hut and later this evening Yolande Coeckelbergs will give a presentation of the re-construction project. The Association was involved in raising £10,000 towards the project's costs.

The intended purchase of the G S Hut freehold is ongoing and complicated. We are working continuously at the problems.

The Officers and Committee have worked hard on behalf of the members and the four committee meetings have been well attended. Meetings have been held in London and at weekend

meets in Wales and the Lake District. I thank on your behalf all the Officers and Committee Members and will mention by name only those changing office. Vice President Don Hodge and Anne Jago and James Bogle - they have my thanks for their support.

Welcome to the newcomers - well not Mike Pinney our new Vice President, certainly a thousand welcomes but by no means a newcomer as you all know. Welcome too to Nigella Hall, Peter Goodwin and Phil Hands. During the year we have co-opted to the committee Robert Müller, Consul General of the Swiss Embassy. Robert sends his regrets that he is unable to join us this weekend.

Lastly I would like to thank all our members for taking time to attend the various functions and meets - without your participation the Association has no purpose - Thank you.

8. There being no further business the President declared the meeting closed at 6.35pm.

LIST OF OFFICERS

List of Officers since the formation of the Association

PRESIDENTS

1909-1912	Clinton Dent	1913-1922	A E W Mason
1923-1926	Dr H L R Dent	1927-1930	Brig Gen The Hon C G Bruce, CB, MVO
1931-1933	W M Roberts OBE	1934-1936	A N Andrews
1937-1945	C T Lehmann	1946-1948	Dr N S Finzi
1949-1951	Gerald Steel, CB	1952-1953	Col E R Culverwell MC
1954-1956	F R Crepin	1957-1959	Geo. Starkey
1960-1962	B L Richards	1963-1965	Dr A W Barton
1966-1968	Vincent O Cohen MC	1969-1971	Frank Solari
1972-1974	D G Lambley FRCS	1975-1977	M Bennett
1978-1980	P S Boulter FRCS	1981-1984	J P Ledebøer
1985-1987	Wing Commander H D Archer DFC	1988-1990	J S Whyte CBE
1991-1993	A Ross Cameron ARC, FEng	1994-1997	Mrs H M Eddowes
1997	W B Midgley		

VICE PRESIDENTS

1948	Gerald Steel CV and Colonel E R Culverwell MC
1949	Colonel E R Culverwell MC and Brigadier E Gueterbock
1950	Colonel E R Culverwell MC, Rev G H Lancaster (died April 1950), and Dr C F Fothergill
1951-1952	Dr C F Fothergill and Lieut-Colonel A E Tydeman
1953	Lieut-Colonel A E Tydeman and J R Amphlett
1945-1955	J R Amphlett and Robert Creg
1956	Robert Creg and Dr J W Healy
1957-1958	Dr J W Healy and B L Richards GM
1959	B L Richards GM and Dr A Q Barton
1960-1961	Dr A W Barton and D G Lambley FRCS
1962	D G Lambley, FRCS and V O Cohen MC
1963-1964	V O Cohen MC and F Solari
1965	F Solari and J G Broadbent