



2019

**ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH MEMBERS OF THE  
SWISS ALPINE CLUB**



Journal

## MEETS PROGRAMME 2019

Date	Meet and Venue	Meet Leader
February 2 - 3	The Annual Dinner and AGM, Inn on the Lake, Glenridding	Julie Freemantle
March 22 - 25	Early Spring Scottish Meet, Pitlochry	Book your own
April 12 - 13	New Members Meet, George Starkey Hut, Patterdale	Mary Eddowes
April 18 - 22	Joint ABMSAC/AC Meet, George Starkey Hut, Patterdale	Book your own
May 3 - 6	Royal Oak, Hurdlow, Derbyshire Bunkhouse/Camping	Andy Burton
May 19 - 25	Glenfinnan Bunkhouse, Glenfinnan, Scotland	Judy Renshaw
June 7 - 9	AC/ABM Alpine Skills, George Starkey Hut, Patterdale	Giles Robertson
June 8 - 15	Peaks and Passes of Mgoun, Morocco	Ed Bramley
June 28 - 30	Rhyd Dhu, Oread Club Hut, North Wales	David Dunk
July 5 -15	Alpine Meet, Hotel Piz Buin, Klosters, E Switzerland	Pam Harris-Andrews
July 13 - 3 August	Camping Joint Alpine Meet, Pyrenees	Tony Westcott
August 16 - 18	George Starkey Hut Maintenance Meet	Marian Parsons
August 19 - 25	Joint ABMSAC/AC Summer Meet, George Starkey Hut, Patterdale	Book your own
September 13 - 15	Beer Meet, Devon	James Baldwin
September 20 - 22	Alpine Reunion Meet, George Starkey Hut, Patterdale	John Kentish
October 4 - 6	Brecon Beacons, New Inn, Bwlch, S Wales	Paul Stock
October 18 - 20	Presidents Meet, George Starkey Hut, Patterdale	James Baldwin
Dec 28 - Jan 2	ABM Twixmas/New Year Meet, George Starkey Hut, Patterdale	Judy Renshaw

### LONDON WINTER LECTURES

October 2	Keeping dry, staying warm	Mike Parsons
November 5	Exploration and First Ascents in the East Karakoram	Derek Buckle
December 3	A Remote Trek in Uttarkhand, India	C Loy and A Fisher
January 8	Nature Protection in the Alpenverein	Tony Cooper
February 5	A Lake called Wanda and the John Muir Trail	Alan Schofield
March 5	A trek in the Carpathian mountains of Transylvania, Romania	Judy Renshaw

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**Cover photo: Summit of Grisedale Pike, Annual Dinner 2019, by Mike Goodyer**

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to this years Journal. This year is our 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary and it is good to see a strong meets programme with 17+ trips.. The variety of meets has been maintained including trips to Morocco, Switzerland and the Pyrenees this summer. Many thanks to Andy Burton, who stood down as Meets Secretary at the AGM after six years, and the meet leaders for setting up the programme. Paul Stock took on the role of Meets Secretary and is already coming up with ideas of new trips for the future.

As is reported elsewhere, Andy Burton has taken on the role of Treasurer from James. We wish Andy and Paul success in their new roles.

To celebrate the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary we commissioned an ABMSAC buff, a sleeve of material to keep your neck warm. We are pleased to say that many members have requested their buff and are proudly wearing it on the hills.



I have been sent photos of members wearing their buffs and I have posted them on the website.

So far the biggest group is 17 members on Fairfield on this years New Members Meet and the farthest from my home is Andy and me in Fernie, British Columbia at 4420 miles. Can you beat either of these records?

Please send me your photos and I'll add them to the website.

In addition, we are having a celebratory meal on the Klosters meet in July. I look forward to meeting many of you there.

I would like to thank everybody who over the year has sent me news and reports and photos of meets, which I add to the website and/or Facebook. Don't forget that you can post your own activities on the group Facebook page, let me know if you want to join. The Journal uses the reports and a selection of photos from the website to record the years activities.

I hope you enjoy the Journal.

*Mike Goodyer, Editor, May 2019*

## PRESIDENT'S THOUGHTS



Over the past few years the George Starkey Hut has been the main focus but this year your committee has been able to concentrate on club activities. As past treasurer I have been concerned about the amount of money held by the club and not being used for the benefit of members. It was hoped that we would purchase the freehold of George Starkey Hut from the Diocese of Carlisle but that is not on offer and there are twenty six years remaining of the current lease. We have funds of around £200,000 sitting in various accounts and investments gradually increasing in value.

Your committee will introduce a Development and Training package to encourage those who wish to develop their skills. It is hoped that the knock on from this, apart from the obvious increase in skills, will be additional members as it becomes known that the ABMSAC will “sponsor” these activities. The plan is to limit grants and only support members who have been with the club for more than two year. It is expected that the recipient will write a report on their experiences and publish updates on line to the ABMSAC Facebook account.

A donation of £1,000 was made to the BMC Mend Our Mountains fund. This is a worthwhile scheme and is targeted at National Parks where matched funding is frequently available.

A donation of £450 has been made to the Patterdale Mountain Rescue team for a lightweight causality sleeping bag set. It is a summer version of their winter bag and waterproof and suitability insulated (see Dinner Meet Report for photo).

The 17 meets this year have been well supported and I thank all meet organisers for their due diligence and enthusiasm. The 2019 meet programme is again full with over 40 members and guests attending the Klosters Hotel based meet.

2019 is the 110<sup>th</sup> year of the club and our membership stands at 223 of which 44 are full members of the SAC. 15 new members were recruited during the year but 50% of members are at or over 70 years.

Two long-standing members died this year. Tony Strawther who joined in 1959 and Marian Armstrong. Their obituaries are published in the Journal.

The new George Starkey Hut booking system went live earlier in the year and is proving an efficient method of allocating places and collecting payments for both members of ABMSAC, AC and kindred clubs.

**James Baldwin, March 2019.**

## MEET REPORTS

### **Killin Meet 16 to 19 January - Report by Jim Strachan**

The meet was initially all but cancelled. Roger and Phillip rightly deciding not to attempt the road north from Manchester via Shap Fell and the M74 both of which were seriously advised against by police and motoring organisations.

John on the other hand flying up from London could bypass this initial obstacle and our intention was to collect John at Edinburgh Airport in the late afternoon and set off up north for Killin. The weather forecast indicated heavy snow that evening with low temperatures giving rise to poor driving conditions. As the prospect of driving in the dark with heavy snow on possibly untreated roads did not appeal, we decided to abort and spend the night at home in East Lothian. Although the Edinburgh bypass had been clear on the way over to the airport to collect John it was covered in about one or two inches of snow on the way back and reduced to a single track each way with swirling heavy snow in the dark making driving difficult.

After our unscheduled hold up, we set off next morning with reasonable driving conditions up the A9, to keep to the east of the worst weather, however conditions steadily deteriorated after passing through Aberfeldy heading west. The road along the north side of Loch Tay had barely been tracked, single track most of the way. Passing any vehicles from the opposite direction was done at low speed, running into the thick cover at the sides of the road. After a pleasant light lunch in Killin we walked round to the bridge on the Falls of Dochart then on round the opposite bank of the river returning to Killin via the old railway viaduct and hence on to the hotel. (*Bridge of Lochay Hotel, photo by Margaret Strachan*). The day was terminated with an excellent dinner followed by nightcaps in a comfortable small lounge by a roaring fire.



Next morning with a temperature of around -5 degrees, necessitating a bit of scraping of windscreen we headed off for the hills. All the side roads were blocked by thick snow and ice making it difficult to access the hills so we returned to the hotel, left the car and headed off up Glen Lochay on foot. We took a side road which rose up through the trees and eventually enabled us to get on to the hills. We made reasonable progress after leaving the track up to one of the lower ridges giving us fair views over the surrounding Glen and the tops on the West end of the Tarmachan ridge. The sky was broken with blue and the odd snow flurry, but no wind. We observed several herds of Red Deer on the hill, easy to spot against the snow. Returning we took the alternative west road back down the Glen arriving back at the hotel as the light almost faded. We did see a further two large stags helping themselves to fodder put out for the sheep. We had been out for more than five hours.



*Summit of Ben Vrackie from lower down the track, photo by Margaret Strachan*

On Friday morning we awoke to an overnight dump of snow and again low temperatures. We had intended returning home via the Glen Ogle pass to Lochearnhead and then south. Doing a walk on route. However we learned that a lorry had jack-knifed closing the road. We therefore decided to head east along Loch Tay to Pitlochry, and head for Ben Vrackie. The going was slow at first but the roads improved further east. We walked up the track from which we had good views to the west and of the summit against a blue sky. On reaching the lochan the summit now looked less than inviting with mist enveloping it. As we were running out of time to ensure John could catch his flight south we retraced our steps to the car and headed for Edinburgh.

An enjoyable few days with good weather in the main and some exciting driving.

*Present: John Dempster, Jim & Margaret Strachan*

## New Members Meet, George Starkey Hut, 24 - 26 March - Report by Mary Eddowes

The usual convening of a very merry bunch in the White Lion kicked off the weekend of the forth new members meet. A few members, Heather E, Dave M and guest Michel and new member John Gregson had arrived on Thursday, climbed Place Fell in wind and sleet on Friday (and warmed the hut of course!)

The large group of 21 set off from the hut and up Grizedale, but were soon to split into two groups for ease and different routes.



*Group Photo outside the hut*

One group led by Mike Parsons traversed the Patterdale common path and headed for the hole in the wall. They went up and over, taking their time to talk geology, mountaineering and mountain safety along the way. The other group led by Ed, carried on up Grizedale and ascended via a short scramble up and over Eagle crag and then up the ridge to summit Nethermost Pike. Then on to Helvellyn taking the gentler path above Red Screes and Glenridding common to descend into the valley. The two groups aligned again on the main path back down from the mines to Glenridding ending up in the Travellers Rest for a well earned ale.



*On the top of Helvellyn - Carrie, Pete, Mary, Abby, Yas, Jo and Jonny*



Dinner was a tasty affair, with two different stews, veggie and chorizo, homebaked bread from Keren's bakery and the traditional heather Eddowes/Jonny Dixon apple crumble. Thank you 2017 autumn apples!

Sunday saw most of the group walking up to Angle Tarn before joining High Street and taking in the views and some lunch at the Beacon. Then we descended taking the Hartsop path in the valley and headed back to the hut to have afternoon tea and say some farewells.



Twelve of the group were having such a nice time that they decided to make the most of it and stay an extra night, playing games and enjoying the log burner into the night.

Monday morning saw the group take a relaxed walk to Ullswater (and a lake dip from some) before the friends and mountain lovers departed and made their long journeys home.

Thank you all for making the meet so memorable and a big welcome to our new members!

*Attendees: Jonn Gregson, Ed Bramley, Heather Eddowes, Dave Matthews, Michel Crabol, Mike Parsons, Martha King, Celine Ganyon, Abby Dyke, Pete Bennet, Carrie Brassley, Becca Rose, Jo Hellier, Yas Clarke, Jonny Dixon, Rachel Howlett, Karen Dickenson, Mary Eddowes, David Clear, Brendan Lennox, David Blackett, Alice Quigley, John Stevens, Keren Kossow, Ellen Wilkinson, Wojtek Rusin.*

## Royal Oak, Sparklow, Derbyshire May Day Meet - Report by Andy Burton

Fourteen attendees at the Bunkbarn and adjacent pub this year, plus two in a good B&B billet near Buxton, and two on a caravan site the other side of the hill. The usual eclectic mix of regulars and first timers, plus three day visitors.

Friday afternoon saw the O'Dwyers and I arrive at the Royal Oak mid afternoon, and set off to organise Margaret a bike from Parsley Hay cycle hire. There followed a short 12 mile cycle ride along the Tissington Trail to Hartington signal box and beyond, before returning to Parsley Hay for handlebar and seat adjustment, and then on to the pub to await the arrival of the others.

James and Belinda arrived on Thursday afternoon for a walk around Buxton via the Solomon's Temple and HSE quarries (4 miles). On the Friday they walked around the nine mile Dovedale circuit. A nostalgia trip last done 50 years ago with Maurice and Betty Freeman.



*Editor: Paul and I were in Dovedale in the mid afternoon, but didn't bump into the President!*

Between 6 and 7pm members began to gather at the Royal Oak in time for a beer, and the dash to the ever welcoming fish and chip shop at Longnor.

The view of the upper Dove valley as you negotiate the first hairpin bend down towards Crowdecote is still one of the finest unspoilt road views of this part of Derbyshire and neighbouring Staffordshire.

A pint in the Packhorse Arms at Crowdecote on our way back allowed me to speak to Mick the licensee, and provisionally book us in for dinner on Sunday night.

Saturday saw Ed and Chris join us early doors at the Bunkbarn, and for the various parties to decide what they were doing over ablutions and breakfast.

Mike O' D and Ed (on his new bike) set off on a 65 mile circular route, with 10,000 feet gain in high over the ride. The weather was very pleasant, warm, with a light breeze, the breeze became a headwind irrespective of the direction of travel. The route was fantastic showing Derbyshire off, with rolling hills, beautiful valleys and of course some steep, in fact very steep climbs. The route took in: Chelmorton, Taddington, Millers Dale, Wheston, Peak Forrest, Perry Foot, Castleton, Bradwell, Wardlow, Little Longstone, Ashford, Youlgreave, Brassington, Bradbourne, Parwich and Hartington. The ride took about 6.5 hours and the Royal Oak showers were very much appreciated.

James, Belinda and Lyn set off for a walk along the Roaches, Paul, Myles and Chris did a 20k walk from the pub over towards Monyash. Marcus and Michele climbed at Birchens Edge, and the rest of us set off on a 20 mile bike ride from the pub onto the Monsal Trail, taking a cross country route down to Ashford in the Water, where we sat and had lunch



*Having a welcome break before entering the Monsal tunnel, photo by Andy Burton*

on the riverbank, and back over the hill by Sheldon village to Parsley Hay for Margaret 'O' to return her bike, and Mike G to have a broken spoke replaced. The young man doing the repair described Mike's bike wheel as a bit of a pringle which he managed to retrue for a fiver!

Back to the Royal Oak for tea and cake and to hear what others had been up to.

The usual suspects assisted me in putting up my old 8 berth Vango family tent flysheet on the campsite, and everyone gathered there for a drink in the evening sun before adjoining to the Oak Room for our dinner and a couple of beers to finish. (For those who have helped me put up this tent over the years, friends and family included, you will all be pleased to know that it has gone to my charity NPAC for some lucky refugee far far away to toil over. Lucky them someone said?)

Sunday morning saw Steve Caulton and Michele and Marcus arrive and tuck into a Royal Oak big breakfast, and Andy Hayes joined us at short notice too. Michele and Marcus went climbing at Harboro Rocks, whilst the rest of us drove over to just below Mam Tor and walked half of the Edale Horseshoe.



*On the way to Rushup Edge, photo by Mike Goodyer*

Turning left up onto Rushup Edge meant we weren't walking with the crowds. What ensued in my opinion was a classic Edale skyline walk in nigh on perfect weather in the company of friends who I have tromped these hills with many times in our formative years.

The boggy path as you turn towards the Jacobs ladder area has been stone-slabbed out as have some of the more worn parts heading up onto the edge of the Kinder Scout plateau, and after a short lunchstop sat on the heather in full sun we joined many more walkers enjoying the rock outcrops dotted all along this part of Kinder, all with individual names like the Pagoda and the aptly named Woolpacks.

Negotiating our way past Crowden Tower and the brook of the same name we made our way down the Grindsbrook which I have never seen so empty of water in its upper reaches, and on into Edale village past the Nags Head (traditional start of the Pennine Way), Paul had a look in but it was rammed, so an ice cream and a cold drink sufficed for most.

Heather and Dave set the gold standard by fitting in afternoon tea and cake in Coopers Barn cafe.



*Coming down Grindsbrook,  
photo by Mike Goodyer*

We then all pressed on up underneath Mam Tor to the road gap and down to the cars. The drivers got us back in good time to get cleaned up and ready for dinner at the Packhorse where we all sat in the back garden looking across the Dove valley towards Longnor enjoying some of Mick's fine selection of ales and ciders until we were called for dinner.

Bank Holiday Monday morning saw Mike O'Dwyer celebrate his 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday, and your Committee locked in the Oak Room in earnest deliberation for a little over an hour before everyone went their separate ways. Dave and Heather went

off cycling again, James and Belinda walked on Parkhouse and Chrome Hill.

*Made it to the top of High Wheeldon, photo by Andy Burton*



Ed, Mike G, Paul, Myles and I walked from the pub north along the High Peak trail to where an enterprising young farmer from Pomeroy had set himself up with a modern ice-cream van in the neighbouring field selling his farms homemade ice-creams to passersby. Onto High Wheeldon top for its 360 degree views of the area (see photo).

Then down to the BMC owned limestone crag, Aldery Cliff, and into Earl Sterndale for a pint sat outside the Quiet Woman pub, before walking back across the fields to Hurdlow Grange and back onto the trail to the pub. A quick decamp, tea and cake to finish the weekend and home we all went.

*The attendees were James and Belinda Baldwin, Margaret and Mike O'Dwyer, Dick Murton and Lyn Warriss, Judy Renshaw, Don Hodge, Margaret Moore, Mike Goodyer, Heather Eddowes, Dave Matthews, Paul Stock, Ed Bramley, Myles O'Reilly, Andy Hayes, Andy Burton, and a potential new full member Chris Lund.*

## **Ullapool Meet, 19 to 25 May - Report by Judy Renshaw**

This year's Scotland meet was excellent, with mainly good weather and plenty of Munros and other summits climbed, as well as some scrambles. Unfortunately, several people who had expressed interest could not attend for various reasons, leaving just two of us to enjoy it. Max had already spent a few days on Skye then went on to the comfortable Forest Way bunkhouse near Braemore Junction, a few miles south of Ullapool, and I joined him on the Sunday, having flown to Inverness and driven from there.

The forecast for Sunday, the first day, was for low cloud and possible rain so we had considered a low walk. However, as the morning looked bright, we headed towards Stac Pollaidh, which was out of the cloud at 613m. We were early enough to have it to ourselves until late morning, so we took the path to the eastern end, did an unnecessary but fun scramble on the two end sections then traversed most of the ridge. Luckily it was dry and fairly warm so the rock was pleasant. The final scramble to the summit could be done either via a small chimney or on the face of a rock pillar – so it had to be done twice, just to make sure all routes were explored, before we returned to the descent via the full ridge. The traverse path around the base was also worthwhile as the views were wonderful. Since there was still plenty of time to spare, we did a short walk to the coast on the way back, where we saw stone chats and heard plenty of cuckoos.



*Judy on Stac Polaidh,  
photo by Max Peacock*

The next day saw classic Scottish cloud down to almost sea level and steady rain all day, so there was no hurry to get out. I wanted to visit a longstanding friend of my brother who lives near Dundonnell and luckily this was the only day she was free. Before going to visit her, we walked along the north side of Little Loch Broom to the village of Scoraig. The village is very interesting as it has no road access at all, though it houses some 70 people and includes a school, an information point in a lighthouse and a jetty. All of the 25 houses have wind generators and some people run businesses such as violin making from there, as well as crofting. Later we visited my brother's friend on the other side of the loch, who also keeps sheep, spins and dyes the wool and has had a house built with timber from her own patch of forest.

The following day was dry, but with cloud on the higher tops, so we chose Cul Mor, the lowest of our intended summits (849m). Getting there and ascending to the main summit was very straightforward, but the cloud came down just before we reached the top. So some messing about with compass in the mist was required to find a secondary summit along the ridge (which gave the opportunity for minor scrambling on some slabby sandstone shelves) and the descent. We descended a different way, across to another peak (An Laogh) and saw a mountain hare on the way, as well as a group of about eight deer. No other people were around all day. We finished in good time, so visited the gear shop in Ullapool and later the Dundonnell hotel, which had lovely views of hills bathed in sunshine. The late evening sun is one of the joys of being this far north at this time of year.

*Suilven from Cul Mor, photo by Judy Renshaw*



After this the weather improved markedly, with clear tops and much sunshine. Our next objective was a group of Munros in the Fannich range, just south of the bunkhouse. Max had done the Western ridge previously, so we headed for those on the East side of the same valley (Sgurr nan Each 923m., Sgurr nan Clach Geala 1093m. and Meall a Chrasgaidh 934m.) which comprise about half of the long day described in the Cicerone guide. We added another one, Sgurr Mor (1110m.), making a total of four Munros that day. The hardest part was the long walk up the valley to start the ascent. We were supposed to follow a track and then a stalkers' path but missed a river crossing (which was not very obvious), so had to stumble through rough ground and peat groughs to reach the saddle. Once onto the ridge it became much easier, and we were able to do the first couple of Munros by lunchtime and take in the other two without any difficulty. There were large

patches of snow remaining on the north side but we only needed to walk across some small sections (though one of us chose to find extra snow to wade in just for fun!). The views were extensive in all directions, including the distinctive shapes of An Teallach and Suilven. The descent off the final hillside was acceptable, through grass and heather, then

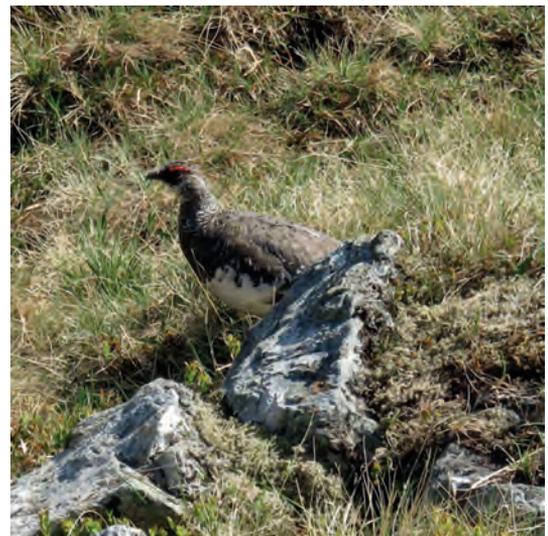
we found the river crossing we had missed earlier. This was not without interest, and it was hard to imaging crossing there in wetter conditions when the river was higher. That evening we went to a waterfront pub in Ullapool which had live music and a good atmosphere, as well as a view of the harbour and hills.



The last full day was warm and sunny throughout, so we both needed to take extra water. The initial plan was to do Ben More Assynt (998m) and Conival (987m), but Max added the suggestion of a scramble on the north ridge of Conival to make a more interesting approach. We made an early start and parked at Inchnadamp, taking a track then a good path up the valley. The main path heads up to a col on the left, but we crossed the river Traligill towards the col between Conival and Breabag. This took longer than expected, as the valley narrowed into a rocky cleft, through which we had to find a route, crossing the stream at intervals.

*Fannichs from Sgurr Mor,  
photo by Judy Renshaw*

On the way we saw a couple of ptarmigan quite close by and a lone deer. At the col, nothing resembled the guidebook description so we carried on for a while, looking at the ridge above, and stopped for a snack at a viewpoint. On approaching the ridge from there, we suddenly found the pools and shelf described in the book and were able to start up the scramble. Just as described, there were sections of nice warm rock, with good holds and friction and a few 'delicate' moves. Later it led over three towers, one with an interesting slab and the others with ways over the crest. The ridge finished just at the top of the mountain, a very suitable place for lunch with views over the far north-western area of Scotland.



*Spot the Ptarmigan,  
photo by Judy Renshaw*



The top of Conival was a different world, as there were several groups of people, who had come up by the main path, making it quite busy by northern Scotland standards. We found a good viewpoint for a lunch stop, then continued along the ridge to the two summits of Ben More Assynt. These tops are covered in broken white quartzite rocks, which were quite dazzling in the strong sunlight. We took pictures of the views all around before returning to the top of Conival and following the main descent path. We managed to miss part of the ridge path when it went over a small outcrop so had a more difficult descent to the valley path than intended. We finally reached the car after 8½ hours, feeling suitably tired, but very satisfied.

*Left: Max on Conival scramble*

*Below: Max on Ben More Assynt,*

*Photos by Judy Renshaw*

In the morning I just had time to take a short walk along the river near the bunkhouse, as we had been advised to look at a few bridges that had been designed and built by the engineer who built the Forth rail bridge, who used these as design models. This made an interesting diversion before setting off for the airport.

We were lucky to have such good weather this year, as northern Scotland was warm and dry for weeks on end. Those who could not come missed out on a great experience. We are already discussing the possibilities for next year, so hope that more people will attend.

*Present: Max Peacock, Judy Renshaw*



## North Wales Meet, 8 to 9 June - Report by Ed Bramley

The President had issued his challenge – “Andy managed to organise good weather for the Derbyshire meet. Can you manage the same for yours?” A hard act to follow, but Someone must have been listening, as we were blessed with another weekend of glorious weather. Too hot for some, as the train track from Beddgelert to Rhyd Ddu had buckled in the heat on Sunday, and those wanting to avail themselves of a train ride were in for a long walk back.



*On the way to lunch at the Monument,  
photo by Mike Goodyer*

On Friday, the early contingent set the mood for the weekend with a walk along the Nantle ridge from the hut, taking in all the tops, to a lunch stop by the monument on Mynydd Tal-y-mignedd, before dropping down the ridge and returning to Rhyd Ddu.

Saturday saw activities a plenty, from a days' climbing on the slabs and a full round of the Snowdon horseshoe, to more leisurely strolls. A sizeable contingent chose the annual visit to the top of Wales, up the Rhyd Ddu path of course.

Many others had decided this was the thing to do, and numbers added to even more by an adventure event starting from the car park near the cottage.

*The summit of Snowdon filling  
up with train goers as well!*





*Taking a well earned rest in the heat, photo by Ed Bramley*

The summit itself was half hidden by a sea of bodies, and the slopes beneath the hut were also well covered with people enjoying the good weather and taking their lunch break. A small world as Ed bumped into the Communications manager at Leeds Rhinos, and was interviewed for a future article in the fans magazine. The way down the Snowdon Ranger path was equally busy at first, but with many people either continuing down into Llanberis, or turning down the Pyg track. The route back to the cottage through the quarry was straightforward, and everyone was back in time for a late afternoon tea (or beer), before evening meal.



*View from the top of Cloggy on the way down from Snowdon, photo by Mike Goodyer*

Nearly record numbers, including three guests from the Oread club, sat down to the communal Saturday evening meal. Starters were field mushrooms stuffed with cheese, bacon and rosemary, followed by steak pie with gravy (courtesy of Ed's next-door neighbour, Tim), accompanied by green beans, peas and new potatoes. The whole was rounded off

with a choice of apple pie, trifle or tiramisù. In the words of one well known plate cleaner, there was little left over for either the dog or cat. With the wine flowing, the stories got longer and louder, and lasted well into the evening.

The weather kept up its marathon performance on Sunday, with further wall to wall sunshine. Another wide spread of activities, from the café direct route to Beddgelert and excursion to the ice-cream stall, to more energetic options around Cnicht, and even wild swimming in Llyn Gwynant.



*Paul looking into the abandoned Bwlch-y-ddwy-elor quarries, photo by Ed Bramley*

Our route took us from the cottage and into the abandoned quarries of Bwlch-y-ddwy-elor, before heading east over the next ridge and joining the tracks into Beddgelert. The café and ice cream shop lived up to its usual expectations, with blackcurrant a favourite of mine. A brisk stroll along the path and causeway back to the cottage saw us back in good time for afternoon tea and the slow road home.

*Meet attendees: Belinda Baldwin, James Baldwin, Ed Bramley, Andy Burton, Steve Caulton, Heather Eddowes, Mary Eddowes, Celine Gagnon, Natasha Geere, Mike Goodyer John & Freda Gregson, Don Hodge, Tony Howard, Steve Hunt, Chris Lund, Maggie O'Dwyer, Mike O'Dwyer, Michele Pulford, Judy Renshaw, Paul Stock, Marcus Tierney.*

## Summer Alpine Meet - Mayrhofen, Zillertal 29 June – 6 July

Report by Pamela Harris

This year's hotel meet in Mayrhofen was a great success, with 35 members attending, the most since our centenary in 2009: these included several present and past committee members, with four presidents, three vice presidents and two secretaries. We were lucky with the weather too: although those who arrived early had been subjected to torrential rain, the first day of the meet dawned bright and sunny, and the sunshine stayed with us all week with just an occasional thunderstorm.

Mayrhofen is in a beautiful location at the heart of the Zillertal, with several side valleys branching off, and everyone was out every day exploring the endless variety of walks. A few of us knew the valley from Alasdair's meet back in 2003, and others had been here even earlier: Dinah had spent several days in the Berliner hut climbing the surrounding 3000m peaks, while Pauline and Dick Murton had stayed here on a skiing holiday as children. However, for many this was a first visit to the Zillertal or even to Austria, and for Dave Matthews, his first visit to the Alps.



*View from Penkenalm, photo by Ann Alari*

The Hotel Kramerwirt in the town centre provided an excellent base, with large comfortable rooms and plentiful meals where we were spoiled for choice. Frau Kröll, the proprietor, had told me that the well-known alpinist Peter Habeler was a family friend, and the highlight of our week was when she arranged for him to come and talk to our group. Peter's name hit the headlines in 1978 when, together with Reinhold Messner, he made the first ascent of Everest without supplemental oxygen. Until then most had deemed this impossible, and even today fewer than 200 of the 5000 who have summited the mountain have succeeded in this way.



*Peter Habeler with Pamela, James and Mike, by Alan Norton*

Peter grew up in Mayrhofen and started exploring the local mountains at the age of six. When he was only ten he borrowed his grandfather's ice-axe and set off to climb the highest peak in the Zillertal, the 3476m Olperer; by the age of twelve he had soloed all the surrounding 3000m summits. His love of the valley was evident in all he said, and he spoke passionately about the importance of the environment and how the creation of a Nature Park has helped preserve this area. Modest and unassuming, he spoke to us as friends and fellow-climber, and was as interested to hear where we had been during our stay as we were to hear of his much more adventurous exploits. He is still regularly out in the mountains, and looked as lean and fit as when he had climbed Everest 40 years earlier. Only last year he became the oldest to climb the notorious Eiger Nordwand, which he had previously climbed with Messner in 1974 in the record time of only ten hours. At the age of 76, just two weeks younger than myself, he was an inspiration to us all.

The first day saw most of the group taking the Penken lift where a variety of walks awaited us. It was an easy way to gain height, although James and Belinda elected to walk up the 1200m from Mayrhofen and take the lift down. Dick cycled up here more than once, and unwittingly chose for his first ascent the day of the popular Zillertal Bike Challenge. At the top he was overtaken by hordes of ultra-fit mountain bikers before they disappeared on a steep track downhill,

leaving him to take a less direct route down. There was a network of paths to explore up here, with such magnificent views of the surrounding mountains that it was easy to forget the number of ski-tows.



*Penken panorama: a seat with a view, by Geoff Causey*

This year none of our group set off up the 2900m Rastkogel, perhaps put off by my stories of missing the lift back down in 2003, but were satisfied with the lower Wanglspitze. From the summit we found a contouring path back to the lift, past a small alpine lake and the very modern "Granatkapelle" chapel, where an outside altar was decorated with candles for a wedding ceremony. Penken was a good place for shorter rambles too, and for Marian and Barbara to do some sketching, with alpine lakes to explore, a paddling pool to cool off in and the sunny terrace of the café to enjoy a drink or an apfelstrudel. An alternative way down

was to take the lift to Finkenberg and return along the Tuxer gorge across the Devil's bridge, a route taken by different groups on several occasions.

The other lift starting in Mayrhofen was the Ahorn which was taken by most of our group on different days, and by Niels and Guni more than once. Several walks started from here, the shortest being to the viewpoint at Filzenkogel, looking straight down to Mayrhofen far below. Even James and Belinda went up on this lift and accompanied the group to the delightfully positioned Edel hut, which Marian took time to sketch. (5a. Edelhütte, sketch by Marian Parsons). A higher objective was Am Glatzer directly below the Ahornspitze, which Heather and Dave reported as their highlight of the week.



*Gorge below Finkenberg,  
by Pauline Hammond*



*Ahornspitze above the Edel hut, by Heather Eddowes*

A large group of us had climbed the Ahornspitze back in 2003, but this year only five reached the summit, at 2973m the highest point of the meet: Bill and Rosie, Don, Richard and Rick. They had set off on an early cable car, and Richard has described their day. "After the Edelhütte the footpath rises steadily, first across grassy slopes before traversing a boulder field and some snow to the col which we reached in about another hour. From here the views are already magnificent but it was important to keep an eye on the red markers as we walked and scrambled up the final ridge to a preliminary top and then into an exposed gap to reach the main summit. The 360 degree view is spectacular and we shared it with half a dozen or so other climbers. We weren't surprised later to discover that the Ahornspitze is Peter Habeler's favourite mountain in the Zillertal region. A splendid excursion."



*View from the summit of the Ahornspitze, by Rick Saynor*



*Bill and Rosie on the Ahornspitze*



*The summit team back at the Kramerwirt, by Alan Norton*

The main side valley to the west and south of Mayrhofen is the Tuxertal, leading to the snow-covered Tuxer glacier below the Olperer. Lifts and ski tows led up to slopes busy with summer skiers, but it was easy to get away from these, and from the top of the Sommerbergalm lift we soon reached the Tuxer Joch-Haus.



*At the Tuxer Joch.*

James and Belinda took a higher lift and joined this by a more circuitous route, and on a later day Bill and Rosie climbed the small Pfannköpfl summit at the side, but most of us were content with a drink at the hut before setting off down the idyllic Weitental on what was one of the loveliest walks of the week. This remote valley is a haven for marmots, and we saw several family groups playing together, very close to the path.



*Marmots at play, by Rick Saynor*

The flowers here were even more spectacular than on other walks, and the slopes were bright with pink alpenrose, several kinds of vivid blue gentians, delicate soldanellas, moss campions and a variety of tiny orchids.

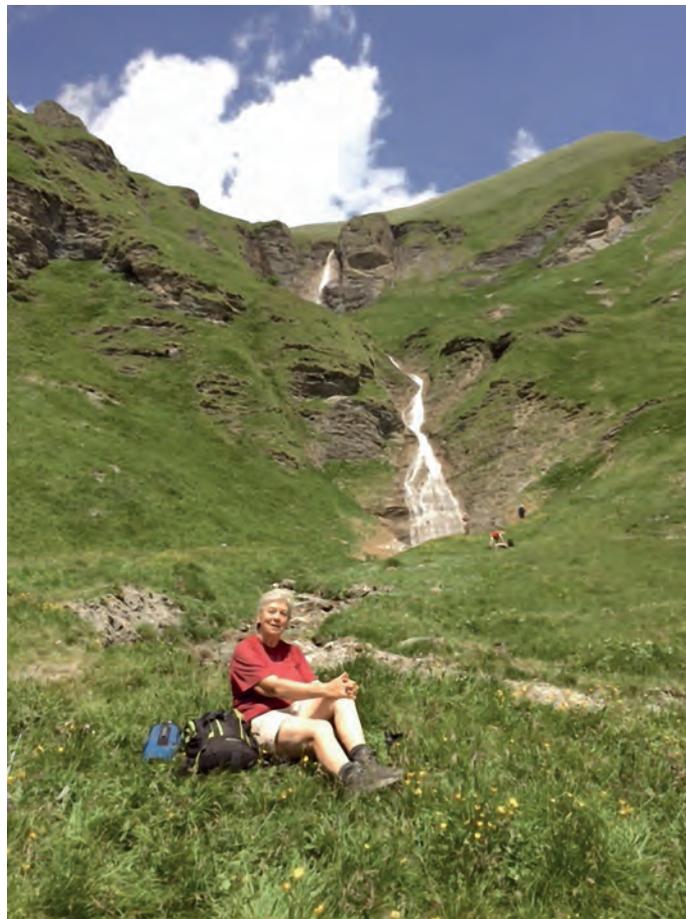


*Moss campion, by Heather Eddowes*

Further on a dramatic waterfall thundered down from high above, and it was here that several of us re-grouped for our picnic lunch.



*Walking down the Weitental,*



*Dinah at the waterfall, by Heather Eddowes*

Lower down the Tuxertal a lift from Lanersbach took us up to Eggalm, from where it was a short but steep climb up the Grüblspitze where we met a young-looking grandmother from Berlin, together with her six-year old grandson, at the summit cross. The flowers were lovely here too, and we even found a tiny snow gentian growing at the side of the path. After several long days our group had made a later start than usual and, on seeing the clouds build up, decided not to attempt the long circuit we had planned. Instead, we headed off on a more straightforward descent route, reaching the top of the cable car just as the first drops of rain fell. We raced for the lift, realising that the storm which was about to break would stop it working, and it did in fact stop three times during John and Dinah's descent only minutes later. By this time thunder was crashing overhead, with flashes of lightning and torrential rain, which got worse as we drove back down the valley.



*At the Grübelspitze summit cross, by Bill Westermeyer*

Meanwhile, Jay and Caroline had taken an earlier lift and had set off on the long circuit taken by Mike earlier in the week, down and up to the Ramsjoch, and then downhill to the beautiful Torseen lakes, still a long way above the main valley. Mike had had good weather, but nevertheless reported the route as long and challenging, in a remote valley. Jay and Caroline were not so lucky for, after the farm buildings of the Nasser Tuxeralp, on the forest road leading downhill, Caroline wrote: "We felt the first ice-cold drops of rain or hail on the backs of our necks. Within minutes of us donning all our wet-weather gear, the sky had blackened and the rain was pouring down. Huge bolts of lightning lit up the sky while the thunder crashed directly over our heads and we walked rapidly through the forest as the road turned into a river. By the time we reached the Geislerhof farmhouse we were both soaked, and it rained all the way down to the bus stop at Vorderlanersbach."



*Ramsjoch: View from the Ramsjoch, by Caroline Thonger*



*Photo by Geoff Causey*

Due south of Mayrhofen various side valleys led into the Nature Park, a beautiful area unspoilt by any ski installations. One of the loveliest valleys was the Zemmgrund, and our longest walk took us from the bus stop at Breitlahner up to the Berliner hut, 11kms away and 850m higher. The trail followed a narrow gorge into meadows of alpenrose before climbing up beside cliffs and waterfalls, the final ascent being up a steep, stone-slab path. This was a botanical paradise, and the only place all week where we found the rare edelweiss. There were two other huts en route, the Grawand and the aptly named Alpenrose, both of which provided welcome drinks stops, and at last, after three hours, our objective came into sight. This large and imposing building was constructed by the Berlin section of the DAV in 1879, and has a beautifully carved wooden staircase in the entrance hall and chandeliers in the dining-room. It is in a spectacular position at the foot of glaciers below the Grosse Möseler and other 3000m peaks, and we later discovered that this is Peter Habeler's favourite hut.



*Grosse Möseler  
from the below the  
hut, by Alan  
Norton*

We sat outside on the sunny terrace gazing at the magnificent view before us as we enjoyed a well-earned drink, and Richard and Katherine ordered a large portion of kaiserschmarrn which they had tasted first on their honeymoon nearly 50 years ago. Most of the group took a longer way down on the *gletscherweg*, contouring higher up to cross two streams and join the original path near the Alpenrose hut. It was a long but satisfying day.



*Walking back on the  
gletscherweg, by Rick Saynor*

Later in the week several of us took the bus past Breitlahner up the toll road to the Schlegeis dam and reservoir, from where we walked up the Zamsergrund to the Italian border at Pfitscher Joch-Haus. The Pfitscher Joch has been used as an alpine crossing for over 9,000 years, and traces have been found of Stone Age hunters who came here to hunt ibex and gather quartz rock crystal.



*Walking past Lavitzalm,  
by Carol Saynor*

The path rose gradually in a series of steps, through meadows of alpenrose and dwarf pine, past waterfalls and streams, to reach a small farm at Lavitzalm, where a diminutive stripey kitten was being manhandled by an equally diminutive child. It was a day for the young, for we caught up with three young mothers carrying babies of 3, 5 and 9 months, all smiling happily. There was a boundary stone at the pass telling us we were at the international border, and soon we

reached the small hut. It was a spectacular viewpoint, surrounded by 3000m peaks, looking straight down the Pfitschertal into Italy. A road on the Italian side led to the Brenner Pass road and Val Gardena, where we had stayed on last year's meet. This was one of the days which clouded over soon after lunch, and as the rain began and we donned our waterproof gear, we wondered if the babies were getting as wet as we were.



*Pfitscher Joch border signs,  
by Rick Saynor*

The Nature Park House at Ginzling was lower down the same valley, and several of us visited this with its fascinating multimedia exhibition exploring the world of glaciers. In search of a shorter walk on our last day, Alan and I continued from here into the Floital and up to the Steinbock hut, its sunny terrace in flower-filled meadows providing an attractive drinks stop. It was a pleasant stroll, and although earlier in the week we might have continued another 800m up to the Greizer hut, for once we were content just to sit. Nearby was the Stilluptal, another lovely valley which Roger and Sheila were the only ones to explore when they drove as far as the waterfall near the reservoir.



*Drinks at Gerlosstein, by Geoff Causey*

Lin and Pauline were the only ones to explore the northwest side of Mayrhofen when they took the bus to Melchboden, above Ramsau. They walked up the Arbiskopf and along the ridge path leading to Kreuzjoch before dropping down to the Rastkogel hut, past slopes of numerous tall yellow gentians. They completed the circuit by walking back through flower filled meadows to Mösl where they picked up the bus again.

Dick went off on his bike, covering 30 – 40 miles each day, and one day Lin hired an e-bike to accompany him. They took the Zillertal cycleway down the valley to Strass near Jenbach which, to their surprise, proved rather too boring - at least on that sort of terrain. On the last day Dick took the cable car from Zell to the top of the Rosenalmbahn and followed one of the race routes down to the valley bottom. However, he seems to have been somewhat distracted at the top on finding, in his words: “a wonderful

Several of the group found walks northeast of Mayrhofen, exploring the paths around Brandberg. Geoff and Janet wandered up here on a rainy day before the meet started, and on what turned out to be an even rainier day later in the meet, James and Belinda set off from the hotel to walk up to Kotahorn-Alm and Karlalm below the Gerlossteinwand, taking the Panoramaweg back to Brandberg and Mayrhofen, an ascent of nearly 1200m and a distance of 18.5km. Others took the easier option of taking the Gerlosstein lift from Hainzenberg, leaving only 500m to climb to the summit of the Gerlossteinwand. With a vertiginous rock face looking down onto the village of Brandberg, this was a dramatic viewpoint. Most took the lift back down, but Caroline decided to walk all the way down to Zell, a total descent of 1600m and a distance of some 22km, perhaps even beating James and Belinda’s record.

*Precipitous drops from Gerlossteinwand, by Caroline Thonger*



wooden castle with water engineering features, slides and various climbing frames - just needed to clear the kids off it to be able to have some proper fun!!”

Not many took a day off, and those who did went down to the lovely old town of Innsbruck, where a few of the group had stayed before the meet started. Geoff and Janet had stayed extra days in Mayrhofen beforehand, and Jay and Caroline had spent three rainy days exploring above Gerlos. After the meet Bill and Rosie headed off to Salzberg and Hitler’s Eagle’s Nest in the Bavarian Alps, Mike and Marian drove their campervan into the Stubaital, while James and Belinda spent a few days at the AAC’s 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary meet further east at Zell-am-See.

It was good to have with us again the long-standing members of the club who had not been on the summer meet for several years, and to see how much everyone enjoyed their week’s stay in this beautiful valley.

*Participants: Pamela Harris & Alan Norton, James & Belinda Baldwin, Geoff & Janet Bone, Derek Buckley & Ann Alari, Geoff & Pauline Causey, John Dempster & Dinah Nichols, Niels & Guni Doble, Heather Eddowes & Dave Matthews, Pauline Hammond, Don Hardy, Richard & Katherine Heery, Dick Murton & Lin Warriss, Roger Newson & Sheila Coates, Mike & Marian Parsons, Rick & Carol Saynor, Jim & Margaret Strachan, Barbara Swindin, Caroline Thonger, Jay Turner, Bill & Rosie Westermeyer.*

### **Beer Meet 14 - 16 September - Report by Belinda Baldwin**

The good weather of 2018 was still happening for us. On Saturday we set off from Eype parking area near Bridport. We had a good age spread and a cliff walk that could be as long as chosen. When we reached Seatown we had our customary lunch at sea level rather than above 2500 feet in the mountains.



Mary was the only one to brave the sea and apparently it was lovely in but the rest of us were happy to be out enjoying the sunshine. Three decided to start back inland with the plan to meet up for tea at Downlands Farm a local hotspot. The rest of the party carried on westwards to Golden Cap, the highest point on the South Coast. The views were wonderful and three decided that was enough and made their return. The remainder went down to St Gabriel’s Chapel, which is a charming ruin seemingly far from anywhere but once upon a time it was beside a major coach route.

*Seatown, by Andy Burton*



Arrivals for tea were in order of turning back east. The first two groups experiencing service akin to *Faulty Towers*, whilst those who did the full stretch were rewarded for doing so by excellent service and 'what were we moaning about?'



*Mike enjoying the good tea!  
Julie Freemantle*

*On the way up Golden Cap, by Julie Freemantle*

Those stopping for Sunday had a new venue for supper in Beer producing an element of change. The Smuggler's Kitchen did us well. On Sunday we drove a short way to Colyton and walked to the Iron Age Fort at Musbury overlooking the Axe Estuary again being rewarded with great views. At least we had to climb to the top of a hill to eat our lunch. We returned alongside the River Coly.

It was a great weekend with new and old faces but we were sorry that some old hands couldn't make it.

*Participants: Antonia Barlen, Andy Burton, John Dempster, Mary Eddowes, Julie Fremantle, Mike Goodyer, Margaret Moore, Dick Murton, Celine Gagnon, Lin Warriss, James and Belinda Baldwin*

## Brecon Meet, 5 - 7 October - Report by Paul Stock



*Lake at Pen Tir, by Mike Goodyer*

The remaining group decided to allow most of the rain to pass before driving via Brecon to a car park on the A470 near the Llwyn-y-celyn YHA. By the time we toggled up the weather was starting to improve with only a light drizzle for the first half an hour followed by cloudy but blustery conditions. We left the car park / picnic spot on a path leading south west which then turned northwards towards Twyn Dylluan-ddu.

The meet was held once again at the New Inn at Bwlch which is perfectly placed between the Black Mountains and the Brecon Beacons. The Friday afternoon walk participants arrived at the Bunkhouse around 12:00 and once we had deposited our bags in the rooms we set off on the Friday afternoon fixture walk. This walk involves the ridge which passes to the east of Llangors Lake. The ridge is approximately 5 km in length from Bwlch to the pass at the far end.

As we arrived at the pass at the far end of the ridge we took a different return route from previous years involving a faint path along the eastern escarpment to Pen Tir. The plan was to follow the path off the ridge at the southern end and make our way back up the slopes of Cefn Moel. However, during the decent we made a choice to wander down through some heavy heather and cross a stream to add some entertainment to the day! We regained the original ridge which took us back to the Bunkhouse for the evening meal and some refreshments with the remainder of the weekend participants.

On Saturday we awoke to some of the wet stuff which was forecasted to abate around 11:00. The group broke up into two walks. One group left early, in the rain, to do a lap of Llangors Lake and then ascend the ridge from the Friday walk at the pass end and walk back to the Bunkhouse.



*Crepuscular clouds over the Brecons, by Marian Parsons*

Here we picked up a track leading up the south west ridge of Fan Frynych. From the summit we took the path along the escarpment leading south east and then followed a path across a peat plateau to the base of Fan Fawr. Before the ascent we took a lunch break and then made a bee line for the summit up some steep heather slopes. From the summit we took the path back to the Storey Arms car park. During the decent we were passed by a fell race to the top of Fan Fawr. After a short tea break at the roadside café we watched the fell racers return. From there we followed the Taff Trail back down the pass towards the cars in the sunshine.



*Team on top of Fan Fawr,  
by Mike Goodyer*



On Sunday morning we were greeted with a typical autumnal day, bright sunshine but cold to start off. After breakfast we made our way to a very small car park in a tight bend in the road near Neuadd-fawr. Amazingly we got all the cars in without blocking the road. The planned walk is called the Crickhowell skyline and involved a visit to Crug Howell fort which was very impressive with some amazing views. From the fort we took the path to Pen Cerrig-calch summit and along the ridge northwards to Pen Allt-mawr summit where we stopped for lunch. The low level shelter allowed for brilliant views across the Black Mountains and the Brecon Beacons.

*On the way up Pen Cerrig-calch, hill fort behind,  
by Judy Renshaw*



*Lunch on top of Pen Cerrig-calch, by Ed Bramley*

Our return path came down the valley below the summit of Pen Allt-mawr and followed the fence line to where the cars were parked. After a brief tea and cake stop in Crickhowell we departed for home. I must thank Mike Goodyer for his walk planning as I had been distracted by my recent home move and subsequent refurbishment work.

*Present: Paul Stock, Andy Burton, Steve Caulton, Ed Bramley, Mike Goodyer, James and Belinda Baldwin, Myles O'Reilly, Mike and Marian Parsons, Judy Renshaw, Don Hodge, Rick Snell, Alison Henry.*

### **Presidents Meet at the George Starkey Hut, Patterdale, 19 - 21 October** *Report by James Baldwin, Ed Bramley and Don Hodge*

The President and Belinda finally arrived on Saturday afternoon in time for a superb dinner cooked by Andy Hayes with assistance from a team of helpers including Ed, Andy Burton, Paul Hudson, Heather and Judy. The late arrival, partially due to Belinda having slipped and broken her fibula the previous week, resulted in arriving after all the hard work had been done.

The hut management committee meeting was to start early afternoon, so some members had time for a short walk but those not involved in the meeting were able to have a full day on the hills. The cloud level was very low but it was not cold at hut level.

Saturday was a day that was good for navigational practice, low cloud, wind and that mizzling rain that just gets down the back of your neck. Some hardy souls set out to explore the environs of Helvellyn, whilst Ed, Andy and Judy ventured out onto the less frequented slopes of Hart Crag. Good navigational practice - "now was that two or three low mounds



we've just passed over". All on track though and they popped out onto the tops, and headed for Fairfield, also shrouded in mist. They weren't alone though, as several hundred fell runners came up out of the gloom from Grasmere and then headed for Deepdale Hause. Definitely a hare and tortoise moment as the faster fell runners slowed down to descend the mixed steep ground, whilst Ed, Judy and Andy were in their element. As the day progressed the cloud slowly lifted, so that by the time they had reached St. Sunday crag, the cloud had lifted and the worst of the wind had abated, giving them glimpses of Ullswater and Place Fell. Down in good time for afternoon tea, and cake, courtesy of Don's baking - Yum.

*Judy and Ed descending from Fairfield, by Andy Burton*

Others did a low level walk in the area of Hartsop and Brothers Water. Another member went over to Buttermere to continue doing the "Wainwrights".

It had been agreed that in addition to ABMSAC members, AC members of the Hut Management Committee could join the meet. The committee meeting agenda included the hut booking system and future upgrades to the hut and this was scheduled for Saturday afternoon.

In all 20 people sat down to dinner and 16 stayed the night in the hut. The three course meal started with three sets of prawns each with a different dressing, laid out decoratively with mashed avocado, lambs lettuce, Japanese seaweed and a fresh tomato sauce. The main course comprised slices of roast pork cooked with garlic and rosemary, served with new potatoes, roasted squash, broccoli with almonds and baby carrots. The vegetarian option was a roasted pepper with a filling of pine nuts, olives, parsley and raisins. For dessert, apple strudel was served with a brandy sauce. If people had any space left, a selection of fine cheeses was available. All this was accompanied by some good wine.



*Cheers Andy!, By Don Hodge*

With our committee meeting, Sunday was a shorter day, but good for the old favourite of Beda Fell, Howtown and the ferry back. The weather seemed to have exhausted itself on the Saturday, as it was that benign pastel monotones that greeted us for much of the day. The pull up to Boardale Hause got the system warmed up, as usual, with the long out onto Beda Fell. Easy if unspectacular walking all the way along the ridge, and in at Howtown in good time for the afternoon ferry back. Several other sets of walkers out as well, the most noticeable being a pair of whippets in coats, complete with snoods!

Another party went towards Place Fell via the Hare Shaw route, then on to Martindale and Sandwick, before returning on the path back to the hut.

*Attendees: Andy Hayes, Don Hodge, Judy Renshaw, Ed Bramley, Ian Mateer, Simon Perrins, Rachel, Dick Murton, Heather Eddowes, Howard Telford, Morag Mc Donald, Andy Burton, Mike and Marian Parsons, James and Belinda Baldwin, Tony and Fiona Westcott AC, Paul Hudson AC, Tim Radcliff AC.*

## Strathpeffer Meet 26 - 28 October -Report by Philip Hands

The 11 participants gathered on the Friday evening at the Highland Hotel in Strathpeffer. Saturday morning dawned bright and frosty with the promise of good weather so we were all anxious to head for the hills after breakfast.

Jim and Margaret Strachan, John Dempster and Peter Farrington drove up Strathconon to Inverchoran Farm from where they climbed Meall na Faochaig. The ascent was more or less pathless and quite a pull up heathery slopes, covered with a dusting of snow.



On reaching the ridge they were rewarded with magnificent views to the west including the Achnashellach, Torridon and Dundonnell hills, sparkling with snow against blue skies. A short walk along the ridge brought them to the summit cairn, where they didn't linger as the slight breeze and temperature around -5 degrees soon cooled them. The party then dropped below the ridge into shelter from the wind for lunch before descending to the car.

John and Marj Foster and Susan Chapman did a 10 mile walk along the shores of Loch Glass.

*The Strachans and  
John Dempster on  
Meall na Faochaig,  
by Peter Farrington*

Hugh, Chapman, John Gregson, Roger James and myself set off from Inverchoran Farm in Strathconon to climb the Corbett, Bac an Eich in bright sunshine with a covering of fresh overnight snow. On reaching the southeast shoulder leading to the summit ridge, we quickly became aware that this could be a bit tricky, a steep face of heather and a covering of snow. Hugh and I decide that "discretion is the better part of valour" and decided to turn back, leaving John and Roger to continue to the summit.

One could compare the pitch where Hugh and I turned back to "The Hillary Step" but with snow on heather - even trickier!

On the Sunday Jim and Margaret Strachan and John Dempster climbed the Munro, Fionn Bheinn from Achnasheen. At about 500 metres the snow deepened and in places was knee deep. They encountered a couple of other parties enroute, one, with a large dog that showed unwanted interest! Luckily its owner managed to hold it on a long lead. Again the

summit views in all directions were superb with bright sunshine, snow and blue skies. The descent was long and the lower part tiresome in trackless slippery heather. They arrived back at the car about four o'clock and briefly visited the Ledgowan hotel for a well earned small libation.

John Foster and Peter Farrington climbed Beinn Bhragaidh from Golspie, making a traverse of the hill and meandering down a fine woodland walk.

Marj Foster climbed the local Strathpeffer hill, Knock Farrell.



Roger James and I climbed the Corbett, Beinn Tharsuinn from Achnashellach in Glen Carron. Another superb day of blue sky with extensive views and snow that deepened as we gained height. The snow impeded our progress, which meant a return in the dark on the last leg of the walk.

*Roger James on  
the summit of  
Beinn Tharsuinn,  
by Philip Hands*

On the Monday, Jim and Margaret Strachan and John Dempster headed south and east along the Moray coast towards Elgin, stopping at Findhorn for coffee and a walk round the jetty area and village. Towards Elgin, they turned south west up the Spey valley, where they took a tour of a cooperage and learning the craft of barrel making in some detail. Then on to Edinburgh in good time for John's 6.30 p.m. train to London.

John and Marj Foster visited the Falls of Shin and walked along Dornoch beach before continuing home. Roger James and I climbed the Corbett, Sgurr na Feartaig, again from Achnashellach. Another glorious day with superb views but this time with spindrift in a biting wind on the summit plateau.

The weather could not have been better on this weekend and was enjoyed by all.

*Participants: Hugh and Susan Chapman, John Dempster, Peter Farrington, Marj and John Foster, John Gregson, Roger James, Margaret and Jim Strachan and Philip Hands*

## Montserrat Meet, Spain 1- 4 November - Report by Andy Burton

My first sighting of the Montserrat massif was from the bus bringing us into Barcelona from Esterrí d'Aneu at the end of Ed Bramley's 2011 Trek along the Chemin de Liberte (Freedom Trail) from France into Spain across the Pyrenees. A subsequent return with Marcus Tierney in early November 2015 convinced me that it would make a great venue for a long weekend Club Meet.

The first three to arrive were Mary, Martha and Abby who arrived on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> October at the Hostal Guiliemes in Monistrol, the little town situated above the el Llobregat river, and right beneath the mountain, where the railway from Barcelona meets with the rack railway that goes up to the monastery at Montserrat.



*Monastery at Montserrat, by Nicholas Moore*

On Thursday, Abby, Martha and Mary ventured, via Creu de Sant Miguel at 774 metres, up to the viewpoint near Santa Magdalena at 1132metres, where they watched couples dressed in smart clothes posing for photos, and taking selfies on the top. On the way down they bumped into Margaret, Mike, Steve and Andy.

Margaret, Mike, Steve and Andy had met at Barcelona El Prat airport a little after midday on 31<sup>st</sup>, and after collecting our Aerobus and Trans Montserrat tickets, made their way into the El Born district of Barcelona. A quick freshen up saw them back out into this area of the city, pulling in visits to the Museum of Culture, where remains of this part of the city from over three centuries ago have been excavated and preserved, the impressive Santa Maria del Mar church, and

the Fossar de les Moreres Eternal flame memorial to the fallen Catalans of the Spanish War of Succession ending in 1714.

As the evening progressed it became apparent that the locals celebrated Halloween quite seriously, and as we left the last bar they were treated to a firework display by bands of locals of all ages known as the 'corre foc' (Catalan for fire run) in the square in front of the museum.



*Monistrol and the rock formations, by Mary Eddowes*

Thursday, All Saints Day in Spain, saw Andy and team make their way to Monistrol, in time to see Mary and gang hopping on the Cremallera rack train. After dropping off their travel luggage, and made their way up on the rack railway too. As he left Monistrol - Vila Heather and Dave get off the back of the train with their luggage and make their way to the Hostal.

Andy and team walked the Cami de les Ermites to Pla de les Tarantules at 971 metres, where the Funicular de Sant Joan comes up from the monastery. Then along the Cami de Sant Joan to the ruins of some hermit dwellings under the cliffs beneath the Santa Magdalena viewpoint at about 1050 metres, returning in the late afternoon sun back to the train. Great views of many of the unusual rock formations further into the massif on one side, and out towards Barcelona and the coast on the other.

By the time we arrived back at the Hostal and enjoyed a beer, all the remaining attendees had arrived in time for dinner. Alison, Helen and Rick arrived in time to walk up to the Monestir de Sant Benet on a pleasant little path straight up from the town.

*Steve admiring the view,  
by Andy Burton*



Friday morning saw two distinct groups set out for the highest point on the whole massif.

Alison, Helen, Rick and Mike started the same way but continued on to the Monestir de Santa Cecilia before crossing the road to take a very steep and treacherous path up one of the main northern gullies. There was a lot of evidence of recent rockfall and landslide, and the guide books listed a via ferrata route, Ferrada de la Teresina, up it, which was closed because of the damage. They spent the day wandering the paths on the top of the mountain, gawping at amazing rock towers and very impressive groups of Ibex. The latter were so obviously swifter and surer of foot than us that they were not afraid to be just a few yards away. They only ever looked more fearful a few days later when we heard some gunshots. They finished a longish day by walking down from the main monastery, Monestir de Montserrat, back to a well-earned dinner.

The rest made their way up to the monastery by rack train, and set off up the steep path that leads into the gorge at the back of the whole complex, past the remains of various hermit dwellings tucked into the rocks, and on various vantage points which lead into a box tree-lined path dotted with the occasional holm oak trees, and lots of signs of wild boar activity, joining up with the main path at 1083 metres and wending our way up to the summit viewing platform, Miranda de Sant Jeroni at 1237 metres, and into the sunshine.



*Mary and Heather on top  
of Sant Jeroni*

After lunch near the top the group split up again with Mary, Celine and Martha coming down from Sant Juan to the south of the range, on little used paths. It was very peaceful and the views were stunning. They didn't walk past anyone until they rejoined the main path again.

Rick and his team walked on a higher traversing path above where we had come up in the morning, and we all walked on the opposite side of the gorge affording great views of many of the Serrats, very different rock shapes that make this little mountain area so unique, and on the other side long views out towards Vinya Nova, el Bruc and Collbato.

On Saturday Helen's partner Xav joined us and with Alison and Rick drove round to Vinya Nova to do the Via Ferrata des Dames, a gentle name which they felt might reflect its severity. How wrong they were! Between them they've done



a few via ferratas, usually great fun, with staples or steps for the feet and hands, and a cable to clip into for security. By contrast this one was an absolute pig, where in places there were vertical sections with virtually no foot- or hand-holds, and one had to resort to pulling up on the cable with feet braced on the cliff, extremely strenuous! They got up it eventually with no serious incidents, but the sense of achievement was marred somewhat, as they felt cheated of a pleasant outing in the mountains and forced to work like hell for it instead! Michele and Marcus also enjoyed their own little adventure on this thuggish little route too.

*Xav, Alison and Helen  
enjoying themselves,  
by Rick Snell*

Alison and Xav had to leave on Sunday, but Helen and Rick had several days more to enjoy themselves. There was a cold wind and occasional showers, but they managed a couple of days climbing at Montserrat before moving on to other crags. The rock at Montserrat is a very tightly packed conglomerate, and a lot of the routes there are bolted, the spacing of the bolts varying from every metre on some routes, to whole pitches unbolted on others. They had trad gear with them, and although there are very few cracks or fissures, there are occasional pockets and some protuberances like chicken heads to use for protection between bolts. Anyway the challenges of climbing on this unfamiliar weird rock provided some fun on a couple of multi-pitch routes, the last one especially. It was a route up the trunk of a formation called l'Elefant, and the first pitch was not particularly hard or steep, but had almost no protection available on it, certainly no bolts. The crux pitch though was steep and hard, and very satisfying, luckily with very frequent bolts, otherwise they may have backed off.

It thoroughly put them in their place later when they saw a small group of three ibex casually strolling across our first pitch as if it were flat!

All in all they thoroughly enjoyed the meet, it's an extraordinary place.

A group of 10 (Mary, Celine, Abby, Martha, Heather, Dave, Mike O, Mags O, Margaret and Nicholas) went up on the tram to the Monastery and then up to Santa Anna. They took the trail around to Sant Bene, past la Trumfa and Sant Salvador and around the south side of l'Elefant. Then traversed the Serra de les Lluernes (although they took a few

wrong turns here and there on the path as it wasn't always easy to see the markings) and then ventured up to highest point again for lunch and views.

They all took slightly different routes back down. Celine, Martha, Mike O and Mary walked all the way down to the hostel on the G96 trail whilst the others took it easy on the tram. Steve and Andy visited the museum and art gallery at the monastery and went into the Basilica i Mare de Deu to see the wood carving of La Moreneta, the reason many people make the trip up here. They then walked along the Els Degotalls path which faces north-east affording great views of the substantially snow covered Pyrenees, and down into the el Llobregat valley, and lies in the shade of one of the large rock walls on this side of the mountain.

In Barcelona the group all did slightly different things. Mary and her team visited the Picasso museum, the Sagrada Familia, Parc Guell, the gothic quarter, went swimming in the sea and ate gelato on the beach, drank cava in Barcelonetta, walked up to Montjuic, viewed the Miro gallery and ate lots of delicious food in La Ribera.

Heather and Dave made it up Mount Tibidabo. Steve and Andy also went up to Montjuic and managed to visit the Sagrada Familia in the fading daylight as the heavy rain returned and before it closed.

As this is likely to be my last Meet as Meets Secretary I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped me in this role over the last four years.

You all know who you are and how much you have contributed to keeping our Club thriving through its programme of Meets.

It has been a pleasure to have been involved in the hills and mountains with you all.

Sunset over the mountains,  
by Marcus Tierney



*Meet attendees: Mary Eddowes, Celine Gagnon, Martha King, Abby Dyke, Heather Eddowes, Dave Matthews, Michele Pulford, Marcus Tierney, Margaret and Nicholas Moore, Rick Snell, Alison Henry, Helen Snell, Xavier Fally, Margaret and Mike O'Dwyer, Steve Caulton and Andy Burton.*

*Thanks to Rick Snell and Mary Eddowes for their help with preparing this report.*

## **Annual Dinner Meet, Glenridding, February 2019 - Report by Julie Freemantle**

The Annual Dinner and AGM weekend meet 2019 was attended by 55 members who enjoyed a great weekend.

Five stalwarts of the Club (Ed, Andy, Mike, Myles, Paul) set off from as far south as Southampton on Wednesday 30th January. Both cars made the decision to go over Kirkstone Pass, and it is a tribute to the local services that the road was clear and passable with care, despite being blocked with snow 36 hours previous.

The later party, Ed and Andy, found the Hut warm and welcoming with the fire stove glowing well at 9pm. They all met up with Mike G., Paul and Myles in the White Lion and also a group of guys who none of them had met before but who turned out to be ABM members and guests.

Thursday saw the two David's from the Northeast join the group in time to pick up Ed, and in two cars they drove over via the Dockray road to Braithwaite. The seven of them set off up Grisedale Pike via Sleet How in bright cold clear snowy conditions with great views all around.



*Grisedale Pike, by Mike Goodyer*

A quick reassessment on the sunny leeward side at the top, based on a slow uphill pace saw them traverse off through the snowy left hand flank down to Coledale Hause, under Eel Crag, past the Force Crag Mine, (now a joint Environmental Project with Newcastle University) back to the village via the mine road paralleling Coledale Beck.

On Friday Ed, Mike, Myles, Andy and Paul walked from Kentmere village to the bottom of Nan Bield pass via the Kentmere reservoir and back.

Also on Friday some members took advantage of Jonathan and Lesley Williams kind invite to join them for an informative publishers afternoon tea, tour and talk at Cicerone Press.

Our Honorary Editor was quite pleased to find that their lead editor used a very similar publishing software system to him.



*The Friday gang in Kentmere, by Mike Goodyer*

Friday night saw 23 members gathered around the fire in the White Lion for the usual food, drink and banter. Great for everyone to catch up with some old and new friends.

Saturday morning saw a variety of different walks taking place.



Mike Parsons, Heather, Dave, Rachel, Celine, Karen, Mary, Steve Bowse, Mary, two Daves, Chris, John and Paul Stock decided to take a walk up to Kepple Cove and have a look at Raise.

Instead of taking a path to the right just after the YHA, they mistakenly carried on following the path they were on and crossed a footbridge now with Glenridding Beck and Glenridding Common on the right and Birkhouse Moor to the left. Mike Parsons assembled everyone and explained that perhaps Red Tarn was now a more achievable goal and from then on the snow was about knee deep.

Red Tarn (see *Heathers photo*) was reached around lunchtime where the group stopped for about 20 minutes and the girls shared out some tasty Tunnocks teacakes.

The temperature must have been a degree or so below zero and the wind was strong and very bitter so everyone was glad of the newly received club buffs.

The girls decided to return to the village by way of The Hole in the Wall (obviously to get some cash for the evening's binge session at the AGM).



*Catstycam and Helvellyn from Raise, by Mike Goodyer*

The remaining gents ascended Catstycam to be rewarded with spectacular clear but bitterly cold views of the whole panorama including High Street to the South East, Swirral Edge, Striding Edge, Raise to the North and Ullswater to the North East.

Some of the group were so cold and tired as they the village that they were forced to seek refreshment at the pub for a short while!

Ed, Mike G, Myles and Andy took a slightly different route and made their way up into the snow and sunshine under Stang End, lunching on the path in deep snow just below Sticks Pass with a most expansive view of High Street. A great walk with spirits only slightly dampened for Myles who managed to slip up and fall on the way back – definitely Yaktracks on next time!

Jim Strachan and his party of Margaret, John, Dinah, Stuart Beere, Hugh Chapman, started out up Glenridding towards Stakes pass. Margaret, Hugh and Jim continued up to the ridge and over the Raise then down the Zig Zag path back to the valley below Catstycam enjoying an excellent day and perfect weather.



*Margaret and Dinah on the fells,  
by Jim Strachan*

James and Belinda Baldwin took a walk to Aira Force and around the falls and back and up towards the Mines.

Julie Freemantle, Julie Jones and Jeff Harris intended to walk from the hut up to Angle Tarn Pikes. However the track was very slippy and as none of them had crampons it was decided that it would be more sensible to head back down and walk along to the Brotherswaters Inn and then back through Low Wood to the hut. Highlight of the day was being cajoled by a local farmer into herding some runaway sheep back into a field!

Everyone gathered later in the day at the Inn on the Lake in Glenridding for the Clubs AGM at 5-45 pm and then the Annual Dinner at 7.30.

The dinner commenced with a welcome glass of wine courtesy of the Club to celebrate the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Both formal gatherings were adroitly managed by President, James Baldwin, ably supported by the two guest speakers Jonathan and Lesley Williams, and all those who worked in the background to make it all happen so smoothly.

Don Hodge also supplied a rolling slide show of photographs in the hut, which was enjoyed by many of the members staying there.



Sunday morning started early at 9am when a group of ABMSAC members met with members of the Patterdale Mountain Rescue Team at their base, and James presented them with a cheque for £450 for the purchase of a new summer weight Cas Bag.

This was followed by the post AGM Committee Meeting.

Some members did manage to get out for a walk on the Sunday with Judy Renshaw setting out early to walk towards Raise, Don Hodge walking a route via Boredale House and James and Belinda walking to Patterdale and back.

Jon Gregson and Chris Lund went into Kendal and visited the climbing wall where Jon spent some time dragging rope and knot work out of the dark recesses of Chris's mind as it had been many years since Chris had climbed – he also taught him about those new fangled 'Belay Devices'!

## MEMBERS ARTICLES

### **A Trek in Transylvania, Romania** by *Judy Renshaw*

The mountains of Transylvania sounded a romantic and remote place for a trek, so I decided to go there in September 2018. I chose to go with KE Adventure as they offered an interesting eight days, taking in the highest peak and some nights in mountain huts. I added an extra week, travelling independently, to see more of Romania while I was there.

My trip began in the second week of September, when it was still hot in the valleys but cooler in the mountains. This proved popular as there were 14 of us on the trip. Most of us met at the airport in Bucharest, having arrived from various different places, including several from Scotland. One Scotsman stood out from the crowd, as he wore his kilt every day until the trek finished. Our guide met us there and took us for a two hour journey by minibus to the town of Sinaia, which is much higher and noticeably colder than the warm 29° of Bucharest. Sinaia is an access point for the mountains and has a modest ski resort.



*Kilted Scotsman at the monastery*

After a comfortable night in the hotel we had to pack for the first overnight hut stay. We were taken for a short walk around the town and its impressive castle, then queued for a small cable car which took us up to the Bucegi plateau. The plateau is open and windswept, with many large rocks that have been eroded into strange shapes, and has a small ski area to the south. We went north, first to look at the 'Heroes' Cross', a large war memorial overlooking the valley, then on up a ridge to the summit of Mount Omu (2506m), where the Omul hut is located. The wind had been strong and cold from the start but, after the first hour, it became colder and wetter as we went into dense wet cloud. Although the walk had taken little more than 3 hours, we were very glad to arrive at the hut around 5.30.

This was the most basic of the huts, having an outside 'drop' toilet and no water for washing or drinking, as it was too high to have a stream or spring. Although the dining room was quite cosy, the crowded matratzenlager bunks felt cold and damp, so the night was not very comfortable, despite a having some extra blankets. In the night the dense fog and howling wind made a journey to the toilet quite perilous. However, we did have some cheery after-dinner entertainment from Jock, the kilt wearer, who performed a traditional Scottish song and challenged people on the other two tables to sing, dance or recite. Though no one felt able to rise to the challenge on that occasion, three of us practised an African song which we planned to inflict on the rest of the company the next evening. Unfortunately (or not) the opportunity did not arise again so we had to be content with singing it at times on the way down the hill.

The weather was no better in the morning, with visibility down to 2-3 metres, so the group stayed close together as we made our way along a ridge and down through some interesting rock sections towards the valley. In good conditions the views would have been impressive but, as it was, we just concentrated on getting down the slippery paths and rock sections, some of which had wire protection. We had one snack stop in a dome-shaped bivouac hut which provided

welcome shelter. The mist continued until we were well down into the tree line but eventually we were rewarded by views below and some sunshine to warm us.

After a nice lunch stop in the sun we descended towards the town of Bran.



An unexpected turning to a house found us in the garden of a beautiful house surrounded by vines and orchards. This was the family home of our guide, where we were welcomed and provided with all kinds of drinks and snacks and invited to pick plums and pears from the orchards, as well as viewing their domestic distillation plant for making grappa.

Later we continued down into Bran where we took the unmissable tour of Castle Bran, reputed to be the home of Count Dracula and the setting for the story. This spectacular castle was the home of a notorious dictator called Vlad the Impaler, who disposed of his enemies in a particularly unpleasant way which I won't describe here. There are also long-established local legends about semi-dead human creatures who came out only at night, drank blood and could only be stopped with a wooden stake through the heart, so these do explain the association of Dracula with the area.

That night we stayed in a very good guesthouse, were treated to a huge meal of local specialities and did not encounter any vampires.

The next three days saw the longest walk, taking in the highest peak in Romania and two nights in huts. The start was further west, with a three hour drive to get there, so we did not set off walking until after midday. The minibus took us up to a pass via an impressive mountain road, built as a grand project in the era when the notorious Ceausescu was the country's leader. From there we ascended a ridge which had a lovely view of a lake and ridges far into the distance.

The weather was good for the remainder of the trek, with much sunshine, much to everyone's relief. The trail followed a ridge with some steep rocky sections with wires, which a few members of the party found challenging. One of these was Jock the kilt wearer who, I was told, was a 'true Scotsman' though, luckily I was not close enough to verify this. We saw a few marmots and heard many of their calls, also saw flocks of martins wheeling around. The route went over a couple of summits before descending to the Podragu hut at 2136m, where the first of us arrived about 7.30, just before sunset. This hut was pleasant, with a spacious





dormitory and an indoor toilet and wash basins. Most of us had a fun evening but Jock was too tired even to come down to dinner, let alone entertain us.

*Above - On the way to the hut  
Right - the Podragu Hut  
Below - the donkeys*



In the morning we saw a group of chamois a short distance away, as well as a group of donkeys being prepared for a 20 hour journey to collect supplies for the hut.

The day was clear and sunny as we went back up to the ridge and continued along to a col, then to the main summit ridge. We left rucksacks at the first summit, where some people stayed for a rest, then most of us followed the ridge, with some scrambles, to the top of Mt Moldoveanu (2544m). The views were great though the summit was surprisingly busy, as two 'official' parties were there. One was the group who maintain summit posts and plaques, who were in the process of removing the old marker post and replacing it with a new one. Their team included mountain rescue people and rescue dogs as well. In addition, there was a large group of people in army uniforms who were part of Invictus Romania, a section of the international charity for disabled services people. They were delighted to have a group of foreigners to join in their photos and video, so we had to hold up a huge Romanian flag and shout 'Go Go Go Invictus Romania' until they were satisfied. The video appeared later on their website.



*Above - Judy on first summit with Romanian flag*

*Right - Mt Moldoveanu with summit plaque being changed over*



After returning to pick up our rucksacks, we descended briefly to another col for lunch then had a further four mountain tops to go over before the final descent into a green valley to the Sambatei hut. In the valley we saw more chamois and many marmots at close quarters. It had been a long afternoon, with the first group reaching the hut around 7pm, having spent quite a lot of time waiting, at intervals, for the others. That evening some people were too tired to stay up

for long but did at least manage to eat a good dinner. Since the supplies here only required a two hour journey by donkey, the meal was considerably better than those higher up the mountain.



The next day was easy, as we followed a path and track for little more than three hours to the village of Sambata and its lovely monastery. The monastery had white walls and cloisters, colourful flowers, frescos and mosaics, all of which were enhanced by the warm sunshine. The atmosphere was perfected by a choir from Finland who just happened to be visiting at the same time and sang 'Finlandia', beautifully, in the arched entrance which had excellent acoustic! After lunch at a café nearby we visited a water-driven spinning and weaving centre and went by minibus to our hotel in the town of Brasov. Later we walked around the town, viewed its historic buildings and ate at an outdoor restaurant.

On the last day of the official trek, most of the group did a short walk in the hills near Bran, seeing the woodlands where our guide had played as a child and the fields where he had worked. It ended up at his family house again, where we were provided with the best meal of the entire trip, their hospitality being second to none. It was all far more than we needed at that stage but too good to resist. We were back in time for a further wander around Brasov and final group meal in the evening.

The organised part of the trek finished the next day with a lift back to the airport. I had arranged independently a couple of nights in Bucharest, a few days in the Danube Delta and a day on the Black Sea coast before flying home. Five of us were staying a short time in Bucharest, so we visited the monstrous Palace of Parliament built by Ceausescu in his most megalomaniac period, which is the second largest building in the world. It was worth seeing, if only to wonder at how completely 'over the top' it is. I spent the next couple of days investigating some of the other city sights and sorting out my travel arrangements for later, then met up with the others each evening, which was most enjoyable.

I left most of my mountain gear and warm clothing at the hotel in Bucharest, then took a local bus to the town of Tulcea to visit the Danube Delta. The Delta is one the largest in the world, with an amazing labyrinth of channels and lakes and wonderful wildlife. It is something of a Mecca for keen birdwatchers and quite unlike anywhere I had ever been before. I had booked a short tour with a small company called 'Discover Danube Delta', including two nights in a guesthouse in the village of Mila 23 and a trip to Letea, another village. Neither of these villages have road access so everything has to be brought in by boat.

A small motorboat took five of us to the guesthouse (a two-hour trip from Tulcea) and around the Delta, stopping at intervals to watch the huge variety of birds.



We saw hundreds of pelicans, white tailed eagles, various types of egrets and herons, rollers, kingfishers fishing and many others. In winter the channels freeze, so they use ice breaker boats to reach the mainland. Many of the population are Russian or Ukranian and we were treated to a rendition of Russian songs by a group of women and girls in traditional costumes. In the evenings we ate vast quantities of local fish, including catfish, carp and pike.



On leaving the Delta, I took a bus to Constanta on the Black Sea coast for a day and overnight stay, as well as several swims in the warm sea. Though a popular seaside resort and still very warm in late September, it seemed to be the end of the season; all the beach paraphernalia were being packed away and I was only visitor to the museum and mosaic floor. From here, a train took me back to Bucharest, where I had most of the last day for further sightseeing (where by chance I met two of the people from the Delta) and museums before flying back to Heathrow.

Romania was a great country to visit, with much to see and is still inexpensive. I was only able to explore a fraction of the many mountain areas, so it would be interesting to see more of it.

## Zermatt to Zinal – By Mike Goodyer



We arrived in Zermatt mid afternoon and in good time to make the most of the greatly reduced fee up the Gornargrat railway – with a further discount with our rail card. We had pre dinner beer on the terrace of the Hotel admiring the Monte Rosa to Matterhorn vista – a good start to our next few days.

After a successful time in Parc Ela last year Andy and I returned to Switzerland for another high level trek in one of our favourite areas of the Alps. Hearing that the suspension bridge to the Europa Hut had been rebuilt set a plan in motion to include its crossing on a trek – the Zermatt to Zinal walk via the Europaweg, Meidpass and into Val d' Anniviers.



We had decided to use uplift to get us out of the steep sided valleys on the walk, which would both save our knees and time. So it was off on the funicular to Sunegga to start the walk proper. The weather was good with fine views of the high mountains. We set off along the terrace path towards Taschalp and the Europa Hut. Beyond Taschalp the path has become hazardous with falling rocks so a covered walkway has been provided in the most exposed parts to provide protection!

In the late afternoon, shortly before reaching the Europa Hut we reached the new suspension bridge, which is nearly 500 metres long and is 85 metres above the ravine. With only two of us on the bridge it bounced around quite a bit, but not too alarmingly. The bridge is amazing and photos don't do it justice.

We checked into the very busy hut and enjoyed a welcome dinner and a good night's rest.





The majority of the walkers in the hut were going from Saas Fee to Zermatt so next morning we set off by ourselves towards Gasenried.



The path was very clear but very rocky and thin in places, with many rope hand rails in place for the more nervous. The rocky path eventually opened out into a high pasture with a monument of St Bernard prominently displayed.

A great view point for the high mountains. We walked down the steep path to Grasenried and then caught the postbus to St Niklaus and our overnight lodgings .

After a stunning pizza we retired to our Hotel room.



The next morning we set off promptly to catch the small cable car to Jungen, we only had eight people in front of us (the cabin takes a maximum of four)!



The walk up to the Augstbordpass was very pleasant, through cow high pastures and then a rocky landscape. From the pass the walk was very straightforward down to the Hotel Schwarzhorn in Gruben – where we upgraded to a private room. We had another good meal in the Hotel restaurant.

After picking up a packed lunch from the Hotel we set off for a hard days walk – no uplift today. It was another warm day and we heated up well walking uphill through the forest before coming out into the high pasture and cooler breeze.

Once again the ground became very rocky and passed the Meidsee, a good place for a break.



It was then a steep path up to the Meidpass where we could see over into the Val d' Anniviers. The famous Hotel Wiesshorn was visible in the distance. The next couple of hours were very pleasant walking down through an area of small lakes and flowers.



We reached a balcony path that ran towards St Luc and then had to climb up the path for a couple of hundred metres to the Hotel! What a location for a Hotel, built in Victorian times, it is perched on the balcony edge with fine views of the Rhone Valley.

The Hotel is run as a luxurious mountain hut, you have to leave your boots in the hallway and wear hut shoes. Our twin room overlooked the valley and was above the dining room. Our table at dinner overlooked the Rhone Valley where we watched a magnificent sunset. The food at dinner was nothing like hut fare and was thoroughly enjoyed by both of us.

We are staying two nights here, so the next day we could just take a day sack and head for the Bella Tola.

On our trip up the Bella Tola we partly retraced our steps up through the flower meadows and small lakes. Below the pass we traversed around and up to the shoulder of the mountain and then climbed it, finishing up a steep scree slope.



The views around the Rhone Valley and along the Val d' Anniviers were stunning. We traversed the mountain coming down another ridge and returning to the Hotel for well earned refreshment. After another delicious meal we were ready for our last day.

On the last day we walked along the Sentier Planetaire, with a number of sculptures of planets before reaching great flower meadows.



*Halley's Comet*



We saw Zinal at the valley head and after a couple of hours walking downhill through the cool forest we emerged into the town – very quiet. Time for a late lunch and a beer.



*The next article is a delve into the archives from 1988*

## The Alterative 14 peaks - by Marian Parsons

In the summer of 1988, our ABMSAC/Alpine Club climbing meet was in Zermatt, that wonderful traditional venue surrounded by classic routes on 4000m peaks. My first route of the season was Pollux, a high, remote but easy summit, with Miriam as a 'ladies' rope'. Then the Breithorn, (leading a terminally slow rope of middle-aged novices) and the Lagginhorn – a very pleasant climb in the unforgettable company of Prof. Tony Snodgrass, a Cambridge don, notable for his a quaint collection of ex-WW1 gear.

One of our team, Mike Pinney, kept going on about this classic high-level traverse along the Swiss-Italian frontier, taking in all the 4000-ers between Monte Rosa and Breithorn, but I dismissed his notion as boring, having already climbed most of them before. So we went off and failed on the Dent d'Herens instead, then I ran out of excuses and found myself trailing behind Mike up to the Monte Rosa hut, feeling distinctly unenthusiastic. Just the two of us, four days' food, one ice-axe each and a couple of slings and nuts. En route, we met two friends descending – they'd attempted the big traverse but packed in after a day, reporting difficult ice on the Grenzgipfel, and they were very scathing about our minimal gear.



*The whole traverse from Monte Rosa to Briethorn, by Mike Goodyer 2018*

At the Monte Rosa hut, unfriendly service, poor food and noisy revellers resulted in a bad start the next day. We got lost in the moraines in the dark, suffered stonefall on the glacier snout, and stumbled unroped round murderous crevasses by torchlight until the dawn light gave us a view of the Silbersattel, between Nordend and the Grenzgipfel of Monte Rosa. Very few people do Nordend, as the connection between it and the more desirable highest summit of Monte Rosa (Dufourspitze, at 4634m) via Grenzgipfel isn't easy.

The Silbersattel normally takes 5 hours, but our earlier mistakes had cost us another hour; however, the weather was set fair, so there was no great rush. Dumping our packs on the saddle, we roped up and took the opportunity to study the ice face of Grenzgipfel that we would have to climb later. Bagging Nordend was a nice hour's work over delicate corniced snow crests finishing with a few rocks. Another couple followed us, but turned back at the rocks. Retracing our steps to the saddle and our packs, we launched ourselves up the intimidating hundred metre ice face opposite, which was the key to attaining the highest point of Monte Rosa. Our crampons scraped and slithered and we wished we'd brought a few ice screws. Making the best of it, we threw slings over rounded pebbles set into the ice, and pretended we were belayed. From the top, it was a fine and enjoyable scramble to Dufourspitze, reached at 2pm.

Leaving the lofty summit to the gaggle of guided parties who had ascended directly from the hut, we set off for Italy, down-climbing the rock slab pitches with care as they had a wet and treacherous covering of fresh snow. The party

behind us actually came to grief here, and later we were involved in relaying shouted messages to summon a helicopter.

*Marian on the Dufourspitze to Nordend traverse, by Mike Pinney, 1988*



We continued over Zumsteinspitze to Signalkuppe, an easy romp to the Margherita hut, the highest in the Alps at a breathless 4554m. (Miriam had had a terrible experience here in the past, arriving to find a group of high-altitude research doctors who offered her a bottle of wine in exchange for a blood sample. She was conned into accepting the bribe, but the blood sample taken was about a pint, leaving her extremely ill and completely unable to enjoy the view, the climb, or her tippie!)

We arrived at 4pm, just twelve hours from leaving the Monte Rosa hut. Sadly, although it's a marvellous viewpoint, with amazing sunsets as though seen from a plane, the Margherita can't be recommended for its cuisine. Stale hard bread and lumps of old gristly steak.

However, we slept well, unlike the latecomers who had to manage on the freezing dining-room floor.

Unfortunately, our attempt at an early start the next day was thwarted by the non-appearance of the guardian until well after dawn – as soon as we'd paid and got our cards back, we legged it down easy snow slopes to climb Parrotspitze and Piramide Vincent, then another descent to the Lisjoch. I think we'd established that 8.30 was about the latest time we could start the long traverse over Liskamm and Castor. We ought to reach the far (West) top of Liskamm by 1 pm, and Castor by 3 pm. A couple of hours' descent would then see us down to the Mezzalama hut.

We cracked on at a great pace over the elegant icy cornices of Liskamm – conditions were fantastic, and there was a good trail. Not a ridge to lose your footing on, though – perfect cramponning technique is demanded by the immense drops. Sometimes our ice axes poked right through the cornice into Italian airspace, for a little added spice. Huge seracs broke away from the sheer blue ice face somewhere far below our boots, from time to time, crashing and rumbling down onto the Swiss glacier. Views all around were in a pure palette of white and blue.

Our luck held for a while, and we gained an hour over the guidebook time – then it began to thunder. Apprehensively eyeing up the clouds, which were boiling up menacingly behind the huge snowy bulk of Castor, we hesitated and considered our options. Could we risk being caught out up here, at this altitude with no shelter, or should we run for cover to the Quintino Sella hut, by the first route down into Italy? Taking the safer option would add a day to our expedition. Accepting the risks, on and up we went, and as we gained height on Castor, so the storm-clouds retreated into Italy. Castor provided an entertaining knife-edge arête of soft snow which we had to straddle, 'a cheval', right leg in Switzerland, left leg in Italy, feeling quite dizzy!

The glacier descent to the Mezzalama hut was dreadful. Long, rough, badly crevassed, and just to add insult to injury, we passed a newly constructed hut, which was almost completed, then still had two thousand feet to struggle down to



*Marian on Liskamm, by Mike Pinney, 1988*

the old hut. By this time, the old hut was stuffed to bursting with Swiss and Italian climbers who'd booked all the beds. My entreaties – 'We are exhausted, we have come all the way from the Margerita...' got us nowhere. Meals were taken in shifts – there was so little space inside, that if you weren't actually eating, you were evicted to shiver outside in the freezing dark. I was chatted up by a Swiss lad, another latecomer who was relegated, like us, to sleep on the floor. He plied me with comforting wine, in anticipation of a night suffering together. To his chagrin, after the plates all were cleared, places were found on the communal bunks for Mike and I, so I left my new-found friend moping with the remains of his bottle!

The re-ascent of that horrible glacier the next morning did nothing for my flagging energy levels, and the hut food had been woefully inadequate once again. I let Mike tackle Pollux on his own while I sat and soaked up the early morning sun – after all, only a few days ago I had climbed Pollux with Miriam.

Mike rejoined me, I rallied my strength and we embarked on the long and interesting traverse of Breithorn. It was warm, and the snow was softening rapidly. We were glad to leave the soggy south-facing slopes for the cold and windswept crest just past Roccia Nera. The eastern end of the ridge was straightforward mixed snow, ice and rock, until a big pinnacle, which needed a long abseil descent. Abseiling off my harness, in semi-classic

style, I managed to burn a painful groove in my arm when swinging unexpectedly under an overhang. There followed the entertaining ascent of the Three Rock Steps, the crux of the route. Failing to find a line up the first step, we traversed round on the south side, crossing a succession of soggy snow gullies. Mike had a potentially nasty slip in one of these, but a combination of rapid emergency tactics won the day, and we soon found an obvious way up loose rocks onto the delightfully solid crest. Gaining the long and lofty snow ridge, we bumbled happily along until we reached the main (West) top, usually crowded with tourists as it's the easiest 'fourer' in the Alps. This late in the day it was deserted, however, and it took a mere ten minutes to descend the voie normale to the Kleine Matterhorn plateau.

Suddenly, my legs gave way as I ran right out of energy. Lack of decent food (and anaemia, which I didn't know about at the time) had taken its toll. I collapsed in a heap on the snow and poor Mike had to drag me the last mile uphill to the telepherique. We just made the last cable car of the day, and it broke down almost immediately. Slumped on the dirty wet floor, as we swayed around in mid-air, with the operator pressing buttons like mad and phoning engineers down in Zermatt, I just didn't give a damn. What a brilliant trip!

**SUMMARY: 4000 metre peaks and tops:**

Day 1: Nordend 4609m, Grenzgipfel 4596m, Dufourspitze 4634m, Zumsteinspitze 4563m, Signalkuppe 4554m.

Day 2: Parrotspitze 4432m, Ludwigshöhe 4341m, Piramide Vincent 4321m, Liskamm East 4527m, Liskamm West 4479m, Castor 4228m.

Day 3: Pollux 4029m, Breithorn East 4139m, Central 4159m, West 4164m.

Which adds up to 15.....er, miss out all the easts and wests and you get 12.....I never could add up!

## Obituaries

### Marion Armstrong



Marion a native of Shotly Bridge, spent most of her working life as a legal secretary in a family practice in Lanchester County Durham, where she was very highly thought of, working up until her retirement in 1996. She was heavily involved in the Scout movement for many years, as was her husband Colin, and was a Cub Leader from her late teens up till her retirement. As a member of the local Scout Association, she helped in organising many of their outings and fundraising events.

Being interested in travelling from an early age she visited Norway and the Black Forest among many other European countries mostly with local groups and friends.

Marion was long associated with the ABMSAC through her husband Colin, although not a member until 1977 when she joined as an affiliate. She also organised meets and accommodation in Switzerland for a group of friends from the North East and Scotland. She attended many of the Alpine Meets in Switzerland and Austria including those organised by Harry Archer. Although not a mountaineer herself, she enjoyed getting out onto the hills using the uplifts and walking on good paths. She attended both the 75<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary meets of the club in Switzerland and was very knowledgeable on both the club history and its members.

Many club members used to meet for weekends and at New Year in Marion's house at Selbourne Gardens. Being a small house, bedrooms accommodated the ladies while all the men slept in the attic where the climbing gear, ropes ice axes and crampons were stored. Many lively evenings with music and revelry were enjoyed.

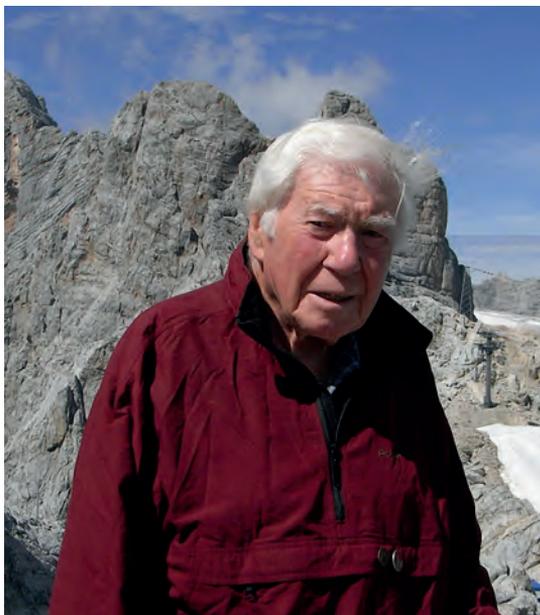
After having spent several summer meets in the Alps in bad weather, Alasdair Andrew suggested that Marion and Colin carry out a reconnaissance trip to Crete with the intention of organising a club meet there, and also to make contact with the Greek Mountaineering club. This meet was eventually organised and took place in 1993 (Fifteen attended over a three week period, ref 1994 Club Journal). Mount Ida (Psiloritis) and Gingilos were climbed in addition to a trek down the Samarian Gorge. Marion and Colin were regular visitors to the Greece and the Greek Islands over many years including Rhodes, Thassos, Santorini and Cephallonia. They made many friends including a young girl who some years later invited them to her wedding near Thessoloniki. Her father was a priest and they were accommodated in the local monastery. Several visits to Crete by small groups of Club members continued for many years after.

Marion was instrumental in instigating and organising the Annual Patterdale Buffet Party for the Club following a successful private party for a small group of friends held in the George Starkey Hut in 1979. This was always a very successful and well attended meet which she ran for fifteen years before handing the reins over to Cathy McManus. She was a regular attendee at the Annual Dinner Meet in Glenridding with husband Colin up until recent times, and enjoyed meeting up with many old friends on these occasions.

Marion was a lively outgoing and warm individual who will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Jim Strachan

## **Anthony Strawther (“Tony”) 1<sup>st</sup> February 1933- 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2018**



Tony was born and brought up in and around Chesterfield, Derbyshire; an only child. After the Second World War, the family moved to Barlow in the Peak District, and it was living here that Tony first discover “the Great Outdoors”. He explored the Peak District first with a friend and then with the local YHA group.

Upon leaving school, Tony was apprenticed as an upholsterer and it was an older colleague, who asked if he would like to try rock climbing. At the end of the day’s climbing at Black Rocks, Cromford, Tony was given an old 60 foot rope by his mentor. He had many exciting “run outs” with that rope, it being far too short for many of the routes he was climbing, bearing in mind that one tied directly on to the rope, then.

From 1951-1953, Tony did his National Service in the RAF Regiment, and following basic training, was stationed in Egypt, for two years. He enjoyed his time there, going on training exercises in the desert and in the mountains of Crete. It was when he was returning home, by ship to Trieste and train across Europe, that Tony saw the Alps for the first time. Actually seeing what he had read so much about, made an influential and lasting impression on him.

Following National Service, Tony left his original trade and went to work at Markham and Co., Heavy Engineering Works, in Chesterfield, where he remained until retirement. Work for Tony provided the means, so that he could go away to the mountains as often as possible.

In 1959 Tony had his first Alpine season, and joined the Swiss Alpine Club, thereby becoming a member of the ABMSAC. When Tony joined the ABM, there were only two traditional meets a year: Easter in Scotland and Summer in the Alps. The committee recognised that change was needed: an increase in the number and variety of meets and an official Northern dinner, to balance the London one. Tony organised the first three of these dinners, basing them in Edale, Derbyshire. Also serving as Meets Secretary 1975-1979, he broadened the UK meets programme, considerably. He remained a Full member of the SAC, all his life.

That first Alpine season he went to Zermatt, staying in the Hotel Bahnhof, and so like many other climbers of this era, met Bernard Biner and his sister Paula, the owners. The kitchen at Bernard's was the great meeting place for climbers; swapping stories and getting up-to-date knowledge of routes.

For Tony, this was one of the great joys of climbing, the diversity of people he met along the way; people from all spheres and walks of life, but the one commonality, that everyone held dear was their love of the hills. Climbing clubs were something, therefore that Tony valued; they were a way of meeting people with the same passions.

In 1969, Tony was elected as a member of the Alpine Club, a huge honour and privilege for him; he was always conscious of the place the AC holds in mountaineering and exploration, and to be part of that meant a great deal to him.

In 1987, he joined the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, and enjoyed the warmth and friendship of the people met, on meets, in the huts and at club dinners. Tony loved going away to the huts; a day out on the tops, followed by sitting round, laughing and chatting in the evening, with friends old and new, was a perfect day for him.

I met Tony in 1971 at a symphony concert in Sheffield. In accepting a coffee in the interval, I little realised at the time what a lifetime of adventures would ensue. Having passed the test of a wet weekend's camping in North Wales, Tony then took the time, trouble and patience to teach and nurture my climbing and mountaineering skills. Our first Alpine season together was in the Bernina, and it did not get off to an auspicious start, since I managed to burn the tent down. Tony was very stoical about it, and it was far from the end of a beautiful friendship. We went on to marry a year later, and have very many subsequent climbing trips and Alpine seasons.

We repeated many of his previous climbs; he enjoyed taking me on peaks he had enjoyed, but also we explored new areas together. Tony always liked to traverse a peak, to see another valley or pass; we both did. This often led to some very long days. His boast was that we never had to spend the night out, unintentionally, but we came close on a number of occasions.

However Tony would never boast about climbs he had done, or brag about his achievements, it wasn't in his nature, but if he did mention what he had done and where he had been, in the midst of telling a story, the listener would be left in amazement at his exploits; but that was Tony, a very modest man.

On the hills he was a careful climber and a very solid companion. He was caring for others less able or competent than himself. He would always ensure that the party stayed together in all weather conditions. He was a great companion in the hills, with the experience for others to rely on, and the stability never to get into difficulties.

Away from the hills, we had many shared interests: mountaineering literature, history and art, visiting many exhibitions together, and latterly some of our holidays were taken visiting archaeological sites, in Italy and Turkey.

Tony was always conscious how vulnerable we were climbing as a husband and wife team. I was the gung-ho, "let's do it?" whilst he was the safe one, "let's weigh it up?" We balanced each other on the hill, as in life. And Tony lived the fullest of lives.

Suzanne Strawther

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH MEMBERS OF THE SWISS ALPINE CLUB

Minutes of the meeting held at the Inn on the Lake Hotel, Glenridding on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2019. The president James Baldwin was in the Chair, 36 members were present.

**Apologies for absence:** Graham Daniels, Sheila Coates, Jeff Harris, Tony Howard, Antonia Barlen, Derek Buckley.

#### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2018**

These had been circulated as part of one of the newsletters. The minutes of the previous AGM were approved. Proposed by Ed Bramley, seconded Don Hodge.

**Matters Arising:** BMC / climbing competitions raised by S Beare.

At last years AGM, Stuart Beare stated he did not consider that it is in the best interests for the BMC to be the coordinating body / representative for competitive climbing such as the Olympics, and would prefer a separate governing body. He urged the committee to consider this and progress with the BMC.

The following paragraphs have been taken from the BMC newsletters and website.

*The Organisational Review Group made 2 recommendations relevant to Olympic completion climbing:*

*Recommendation 15: The BMC should give clarity to members, partners and stakeholders on its level of support for the Olympics.*

*Recommendation 24: The BMC should create a joint subsidiary for competitive activities in partnership with Mountaineering Scotland and other relevant home nation governing bodies for the purposes of managing competitive activities and to support elite level competitive activities such as Team GB.*

In 2017 the BMC applied for UK Sport funding for an Olympic climbing programme and in February 2018 an investment of £630k was awarded to individually support medal contenders for the period up to the Tokyo games. This funding is channelled through and managed by the English Institute of Sport (EIS) and the BMC has influence over the use of funding through membership of the EIS Performance Management Board (for climbing).

*UK Sport [have] announce[d] plans to support Climbing [at the 2020 Olympics] with an award of up to £630,000, subject to approval of a plan and budget. The investment is subject to the BMC agreeing to the programme being implemented through a partnership with the English Institute of Sport (EIS). The EIS would be the recipient of the award, and be responsible for forming and implementing the plan in partnership with the BMC.*

*The BMC [are to] provides administrative support and financial help to the team, but team members have to raise money toward the cost of competing internationally for the GB Team.*

*Sport climbing has been named as one of fourteen Olympic and Paralympic sports receiving investment from the new £3m Aspiration Fund to help support British athletes in their ambitions to qualify for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. Sport climbing will be backed by a £192,500 investment from the fund.*

*Funding for activities related to competition climbing and the Olympics will be ring-fenced to ensure transparency of costs and allow for effective financial control by the BMC."*

## **Election of Officers and Committee:**

**Treasurer** - At the Hurdlow meeting in May 2018, Andy volunteered to take over this role, fully supported by the rest of the committee. Due to the complexity of the role and the Club's financial year, Andy commenced the training / handover immediately, with a view to his appointed as Hon. Treasurer at the 2019 AGM, and is now able to takeover completely once approved.

Proposed: James Baldwin for the committee. Seconded: Christopher Lund. Approved unanimously.

**Meets secretary** - Paul Stock volunteered to take over the role of Meets secretary and has been involved since then.

Proposed: Judy Renshaw. Seconded: Ed Bramley. Approved unanimously.

The following office holders and committee members indicated that they are willing to be reappointed:

Membership secretary	–	Ed Bramley
Secretary		Dick Murton
Editor		Mike Goodyer
Elected member	–	Pamela Harris-Andrews
Elected member	–	Julie Freemantle
Elected Member:	–	Ian Mateer
Hut warden		Marian Parsons

Proposed: Don Hodge. Seconded: Marian Parsons. Approved unanimously.

## **Hon Treasurer's report**

The bulk of the report has been copied from the newsletter, December 2018, the notes issued 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

I propose that the subscription bands for 2018 - 2019 remain as follows:

Single Membership £23 - £27, Second member at same address £15 - £18 , Junior Membership £10 - £14

The membership fees for 2018 – 2019 remain unchanged at:

Single Member £23.50 , Second member at same address £15.50 , Junior Member £10.00

There were small losses on meets this year amounting to £198.50.

Investment value was maintained despite volatility in the market especially at the end of September. Please note that this is a spot valuation at the end of the financial year (*Financial Report at end of minutes*).

The club has a very healthy balance sheet increased by the sale of books that were duplicates of those already in the AC Library. The high value books have been retained and are available for inspection at the AC, on request. The sale netted £10,657.00.

My comment last year about use of funds have come back to haunt me as I was selected to be your President in February. I am delighted that Andy Burton has put himself up for election as your treasurer with effect from the AGM. Andy and I are currently working together in preparation for the handover. As part of the handover, arrangements will be made to update the nominees on the investment accounts and the committee have agreed that John Dempster's name will be removed and Andy Burton added.

Your committee has been discussing ways of using some of the cash to the benefit of members and suggestions, together with a resolution about disposal of funds, will be put to the AGM in February (*see below in President's report*).

## President's report

Thank you all for coming to the AGM of the club. The AGM is your opportunity to question the committee about running the club. Over the past few years the George Starkey Hut has been the main focus but this year your committee has been able to concentrate on club activities. The committee met formally three times during club meets. In addition, there have been numerous discussions and email contact throughout the year.

I have been concerned for some time by the amount of money held by the club and not being used for the benefit of the members. It was hoped that we might have been able to purchase the George Starkey Hut from the Diocese of Carlisle, but that was not to be. We have funds of around £200,000 sitting in various accounts and investments gradually increasing in value.

Your committee has given thought to this situation and whilst it has not come up with any ground-breaking decisions makes the following proposal:

Your committee will introduce a Development and Training package to encourage those who wish to develop their skills. It is hoped that the knock on from this, apart from the obvious increase in skills, will be additional members as it becomes known that the ABMSAC will "sponsor" these activities. Currently the plan is to limit grants to £2,000 per annum, to only support members who have been with us for more than one year, and in recognition of the support write a report on their experiences and publish updates on-line to the ABMSAC Facebook account. The plan is to be published in the next Newsletter.

We are looking to increase our "Media" presence. An A5 flier was produced earlier in the year with copies in the Hut and put up on notice boards at various establishments. If you have an opportunity to publicise the ABMSAC please ask Mike Goodyer for copies.

We made a £1,000 donation to the BMC Mend Our Mountains fund. This is a worthwhile scheme and is targeted at National Parks where matched funding is frequently available.

A donation of £450 will be made tomorrow (Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup>) to the Patterdale Mountain Rescue team for a lightweight casualty sleeping bag set. It is a summer version of their winter bag, and is waterproof and suitably insulated. If you would like to be in the picture please be at the Centre at 09:00 tomorrow (Sunday) morning.

The 17 meets this year have been well supported. May I thank, on your behalf, all meet organisers for their due diligence and enthusiasm. The 2019 meet programme is again full and Pamela has confirmed that 39 members and guests have booked the Klosters Hotel meet this summer.

You will have noted that there were a lot of blanks in the address pages of the Journal. GDPR requires that you invite members to express their preferences. I am pleased to report that all but 18 have now expressed a preference, but between 45 and 50 do not wish to have their address published or receive e-news.

This is our 110<sup>th</sup> year. Our current membership stands at 223 of which 44 are full members of the SAC. We have recruited 15 new members but, unfortunately, 19 have left the club, 4 of whom have died. 50% of members are at or over 70 years.

It is sad that two of our long-standing members died this year. Tony Strawther who joined in 1959. He and Suzanne were stalwarts of Patterdale meets for many years and I am very pleased that Suzanne has joined the ABMSAC to continue her involvement with the club. Marian Armstrong died earlier in the year. She was an active supporter especially of the Buffet Parties held in the Hut over many years.

Finally, I would like to thank my Committee for keeping me on the right track, prodding where they felt necessary and for their support.

### **George Starkey Hut Ltd**

The main activity this year has been the introduction of the automated booking system. The system is based on a piece of standard software called "Free to Book" with associated payment system called Stripe. Ian Mateer is the webmaster and has written all the clever bits to make the system work. The system went live over 6 months ago and so far, there have been no significant problems. Two AC members volunteered to become Hut Booking Secretaries and working with Ian have got to grips with both individual and group bookings.

A maintenance meet was run earlier in the year, and in October a Hut Management meeting discussed various proposals for the future layout of the Hut. Tony Westcott an AC Director, is in discussions with the Local Authority about what can be done to the Hut to make it a more welcoming experience and to future proof the offering. The George Starkey Hut is in a conservation area within the National Park so any modifications are likely to need building regulation and possibly planning approval.

### **Proposal for authorised committee expenditure limit**

At the 2012 AGM John Dempster and Graham Daniels questioned the size of a donation made to the Britannia Hut without seeking the views of the membership. They requested that the Committee consider whether the Club rules should be amended to introduce a requirement for the membership to be consulted before any major donations were made in the future. So as to formalise the situation the committee propose the following rule change:

*"The committee of the Association may, at their discretion, make single donations from Club funds of up to £5,000, within an overall limit of £10,000 per annum. No larger donations shall be made without prior consultation with the membership".*

Proposed by: James Baldwin on behalf of the committee. Seconded by: John Dempster. Agreed with one abstention.

The Membership Rules will be changed to reflect this decision.

### **Any other business:**

- a) John Dempster reported that the John Muir Trust hold regular working parties for path maintenance, and proposed that should one take place in the Lake District, we should support this by offering accommodation at ABM members rates. The AC is proposing similar meets, and will be inviting ABM members.
- b) It was queried how members should best record proposals / requests for improvements at the hut. There is a suggestion book in the hut, or Email the company secretary (currently James Baldwin) directly, or contact any of the ABM members of the hut management committee, Heather Eddowes, Ian Mateer or Don Hodge.

**Date of next meeting:** Provisional date of next year's AGM – Saturday 1st February 2020. 18:00

*Dick Murton, Secretary, February 2019*

## Income and Expenditure Account - year ending 30 September 2018

	Notes	2018	2017
<b>Income</b>			
Subscriptions	1	4336.40	4181.22
Dividends/Bank Interest	4	3464.23	3280.68
Sale of ties			22.50
Sale of ABMSAC books held in AC library		10657.00	
<b>Total income</b>		<b>18457.63</b>	<b>7484.40</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
British Mountaineering Council		-2894.91	-2650.00
Journal	-1769.20	-1457.48	
Newsletters		-35.83	-49.64
Administration	-452.75	-390.59	
Tax on interest and dividends 2016 - 2017	5	-158.33	
London Lectures		-72.60	-81.00
Meets	-198.50	-205.87	
Annual Dinner	-346.00	-173.50	
110th. Anniversary	-798.00		
Profit/Loss on SAC Transfer	2	21.34	8.81
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>-6705</b>	<b>-4999.27</b>
<b>Surplus</b>		<b>11752.85</b>	<b>2485.13</b>

**BALANCE SHEET** as at 30th. September 2017

### Fixed Assets

Investments at cost	3	19151.00	19151.00
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Assets sold in period

### Current Assets

Stocks		0.00	0.00
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Debtors		0.00	0.00
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Cash on deposit	63677.39	51887.74	
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<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>63677.39</b>	<b>51887.74</b>
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### Current Liabilities

Creditors		0.00	0.00
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Subscriptions in advance	-1093.30	-1056.50	
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<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		-1093.30	-1056.50
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<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>81735.09</b>	<b>69982.24</b>	
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### General Fund

Brought forward at 1st. October	69982.24	67497.11	
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Surplus from I&E A/C	11752.85	2485.13	
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Donations and Bequests

Carried forward at 30th. September		<b>81735.09</b>	<b>69982.24</b>
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# Historic 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 C 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 George Starkey  
 1960-1962 B L Richards  
 1963-1965 Dr A W Barton  
 1969-1971 Frank Solari  
 1966-1968 Vincent O Cohen MC

### **VICE PRESIDENTS**

1948 Gerald Steel CV & Colonel E R Culverwell MC  
 1949 Colonel E R Culverwell MC & Brigadier E Gueterbock  
 1950 Colonel E R Culverwell MC, Rev G H Lancaster (died April 1950) & Dr C F Fothergill  
 1951-1952 Dr C F Fothergill & Lieut-Colonel A E Tydeman  
 1953 Lieut-Colonel A E Tydeman & J R Amphlett  
 1954-1955 J R Amphlett & Robert Creg  
 1956 Robert Creg & Dr J W Healy  
 1957-1958 Dr J W Healy & B L Richards GM  
 1959 B L Richards GM & Dr A W Barton  
 1960-1961 Dr A W Barton & D G Lambley FRCS  
 1962 D G Lambley, FRCS & V O Cohen MC  
 1963-1964 V O Cohen MC & F Solari  
 1965 F Solari & J G Broadbent  
 1966-1967 J G Broadbent & J S Byam-Grounds  
 1968 J S Byam-Grounds & W Kirstein  
 1969-1970 W Kirstein & Dr D R Riddell  
 1971 Dr D R Riddell & M Bennett  
 1972-1973 M Bennett & Rev F L Jenkins  
 1974 Rev F L Jenkins & P S Boulter FRCS  
 1975 P S Boulter FRCS & J S Whyte  
 1976-1977 J S Whyte & F E Smith

### **HONORARY SECRETARIES**

1909-1911 J A B Bruce & Gerald Steel  
 1912-1919 E B Harris & A N Andrews  
 1920-1922 A N Andrews & N E Odell  
 1919-1928 A N Andrews & W M Roberts  
 1929-1930 W M Roberts & M N Clarke  
 1931-1944 N Clarke & F W Cavey  
 1945-1948 M N Clarke & F P Crepin  
 1949-1953 F R Crepin & George Starkey  
 1954-1956 George Starkey & R C J Parker  
 1957-1958 R C J Parker & H McArthur  
 1958-1960 R C J Parker & F E Smith  
 1960-1962 F E Smith & M Bennett  
 1963-1970 M Bennett & J P Ledeboer

1972-1974 D G Lambley FRCS  
 1975-1977 M Bennett  
 1978-1980 P S Boulter FRCS  
 1981-1984 J P Ledeboer  
 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  
 1997-2000 W B Midgley  
 2000-2003 M J Goodyer  
 2003-2006 A I Andrews  
 2006-2009 J W S Dempster CB  
 2009-2012 M Pinney  
 2012-2015 E A Bramley  
 2015-2018 M C Parsons  
 2018 - J Baldwin

1978 F E Smith & J P Ledeboer  
 1979 J P Ledeboer & F P French  
 1980-1982 F P French & S M Freeman  
 1983-1984 S M Freeman & F A W Schweitzer FRCS  
 1984 F A W Schweitzer FRCS & Wing Commander H D Archer DFC  
 1985 F A W Schweitzer FRCS & A I Andrews  
 1986-1987 A I Andrews & W B Midgley  
 1988 W B Midgley & C G Armstrong  
 1989-1990 C G Armstrong & R W Jones  
 1991 R W Jones & G G Watkins  
 1992 G S Watkins & F B Suter  
 1993-1994 F B Suter & Commander J W Chapman OBE  
 1994-1995 Commander J W Chapman OBE & D R Hodge  
 1996-1997 D R Hodge & R N James  
 1997-1999 R N James & M Pinney  
 2000-2001 M Pinney & Dr D W Watts  
 2001-2003 Prof D C Watts & D F Penlington  
 2003-2004 D F Penlington  
 2004-2007 W L Peebles  
 2007-2010 T J Shaw  
 2010-2013 Mrs B Baldwin  
 2013-2018 J H Strachan  
 2018- Mrs H M Eddowes

1971-1972 J P Ledeboer  
 1972-1976 F A W Schweitzer FRCS  
 1976-1978 R A Coatsworth  
 1978-1983 S N Beare  
 1984-1986 A G Partridge  
 1987-1988 S M Freeman  
 1989-2000 H F Romer  
 2000-2001 A I Andrews  
 2001-2006 J W S Dempster  
 2006-2010 Mrs A M Jago  
 2010 - D Murton

**HONORARY MEETS SECRETARIES**

1971-1974 S N Beare  
 1975-1979 A Strawther  
 1979-1983 A I Andrews  
 1984-1988 J C Berry

1989-1994 F B Suter  
 1994-2001 M J Goodyer  
 2001-2003 E A Bramley  
 2004-2009 J C Foster

2009-2010 J F Harris  
 2010-2013 M Parsons  
 2013- 2019 A Burton  
 2019 - P Stock

**HONORARY MEMBERSHIP SECRETARIES****(Formerly Honorary Registrar)**

1965-1968 George Starkey  
 1969-1971 F A W Schweitzer FRCS  
 1972-1974 J E Jesson  
 1975-1977 D J Abbott

1978-1980 A N Sperryn  
 1980-1984 J W Eccles  
 1985-1991 T G B Howe MC  
 1991-1993 H M Eddowes

1994-2003 Dr M J Eddowes  
 2004-2012 E A Bramley  
 2012-2014 M Pinney

**HONORARY EDITORS**

(The following officers carried out duties of Hon. Editor until post was created in 1949: 1909-11 J A B Bruce, 1912-28 J A B Bruce & A N Andrews, 1929-48 M N Clarke)  
 1949-1962 M N Clarke  
 1963-1964 W R H Jeudwine  
 1965-1968 G A Hutcheson

1968-1974 Graham A Daniels  
 1975-1986 S M Freeman  
 1987-1992 M R Loewy  
 1992-2002 M I C Baldwin  
 2002-2009 R B Winter  
 2009- M J Goodyer

**HONORARY EDITOR NEWSLETTER**

1992-1995 F B Suter

**HONORARY TREASURERS**

1909-1911 C E King - Church  
 1912-1925 J A B Bruce  
 1926-1954 C T Lehmann  
 1954-1957 J A Amphlett

1957-1969 F R Crepin  
 1970-1978 R Wendell Jones  
 1978-1980 R A Coatsworth  
 1980-1997 M Pinney

1997-1999 K Dillon  
 1999-2005 A I Andrews  
 2005- 2018 J Baldwin  
 2018 - A Burton

**HONORARY AUDITORS**

1909-1914 A B Challis  
 1915-1922 Reginald Graham  
 1923-1930 W L Adams  
 1931-1940 F Oughton  
 1941-1952 J A Marsden-Neye  
 1953-1956 S E Orchard

1957-1967 R A Tyssen-Gee  
 1968-1974 A Hart  
 1975-1977 J Llwlwyn - Jones  
 1978-1979 G A Daniels  
 1979-1980 C J Sandy  
 1981-1984 N Moore

1985-1999 D Bennett  
 1999-2005 K N Ballantine  
 2005-2009 P McCulloch  
 2009-2011 N Harding  
 2012 - M Reynolds

**Posts no longer in use****HON. CHAIRMAN - HUT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

1974-1977 J P Ledeboer  
 1978-1980 D R Hodge  
 1980-1987 W B Midgley  
 1987-1990 D W Edwards  
 1991-1994 D Beer (TCC)  
 1995-1998 S Maudsley (TCC)  
 1999-2005 W B Midgley  
 2005-2010 S Bridge (TCC)  
 2010-2012 D R Hodge

**HONORARY LIBRARIANS**

1909-1918 J A B Bruce  
 1919-1928 C T Lehmann  
 1929-1932 A N Andrews  
 1933-1938 George Anderson  
 1939-1952 S de V Merriman  
 1953-1963 C J France  
 1964-1966 J Kemsley  
 1966-1968 R Wendell Jones  
 1968-1970 S N Beare  
 1971-1974 W R H Jeudwine  
 1975-1979 H Flook  
 1979-1981 K J Baldry  
 1983-1984 Miss J Gamble  
 1985-1986 S N Beare

**HONORARY SOCIAL SECRETARIES**

1971-1977 P S Boulter  
 1978-1980 P V Andrews  
 1980-1983 F A W Schweitzer , FRCS  
 1984 Prof. E H Sondheimer  
 1985-1990 Mrs P M Boulter  
 1991-2001 J P Ledeboer  
 2001-2002 Wing Commander H D Archer, DFC

**HONORARY SOLICITORS**

1909-1932 E R Taylor  
 1933-1973 The Lord Tanglely  
 1974 M Bennett  
 1991-1995 S N Beare  
 1996-2003 Mrs D K Lewis (nee Midgley)

**CURRENT HONORARY MEMBERS**

Wendell Jones, Don Hodge

**Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club - Membership Details 2019  
(Insert)**

## **Useful Contacts**

### **George Starkey Hut**

**Warden** Marian Parsons on [george.starkey.hut@gmail.com](mailto:george.starkey.hut@gmail.com)

### **Members Booking Secretary**

Tim Ratcliffe on [george.starkey.hut@gmail.com](mailto:george.starkey.hut@gmail.com)

Members must book beds in the Hut before the visit to ensure space is available  
See [george-starkey-hut.com](http://george-starkey-hut.com) for details regarding the hut booking system

**Oread Mountaineering Club** – we have reciprocal rights at the following Huts

### **Hut at Rhyd Ddu, North Wales**

Hut booking secretary – Michael Hayes

Tel: 07771700913      E-mail: [hayes\\_michael\\_j@cat.com](mailto:hayes_michael_j@cat.com)

### **Hut at Heathy Lea, Baslow (Grid Ref: SK 273722):**

Twenty places mixed, offering basic accommodation, 12 in the cottage and 8 in the barn  
Hut booking secretary – as above

# ABMSAC Office Holders 2019

## Committee

OFFICE	HOLDER	ELECTED
President	J Baldwin	2018
Vice President	H Eddowes	2018
Hon. Treasurer	A Burton	2019
Hon. Secretary	R W Murton	2010
Hon. Membership Secretary	E A Bramley	2014
Hon. Meets Secretary	P Stock	2019
Hon. Editor	M J Goodyer	2009
Hon. Hut Warden	M P Parsons	2014
Co opted Committee Member	Julie Freemantle	2017
Committee Member	P Harris-Andrews	2014

## George Starkey Hut Ltd Directors

Chairman	M C Parsons
Chairman from July 19	T Westcott
Company Secretary	J Baldwin
Treasurer	D Buckley