



2023

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



Journal

MEETS PROGRAMME 2023

Date	Meet and Venue	Meet Leader
January 10	North/South Day Meet	P Stock/A Burton
February 3	Annual Dinner and AGM, Glenridding	Julie Freemantle
February 14	North/South Day Meet	P Stock/A Burton
March 14	North/South Day Meet	P Stock/A Burton
March 31	Refresh/Improve Your Skills Meet, George Starkey Hut, Patterdale	Mary Eddowes
April 11	North/South Day Meet	P Stock/A Burton
April 7-10	Joint ABMSAC/AC Easter Meet George Starkey Hut Patterdale	Book your own
May 5-8	Peak District Meet Hartington Hall YH	Andy Burton
May 21-26	Scottish Spring Meet, Torridon YH	Judy Renshaw
June 9-11	Rhyd Ddu. Oread Hut, N Wales	Ed Bramley
June 20-23	Mendip Hills - Larkshall Bunkhouse	Mike Goodyer
June 24 - July 15	Joint Alpine Camping Meet, Mont Blanc, Val Veny/Ferret	P McWhinney
July 8-15	Alpine Hotel Meet, Hotel Monte Moro, Saas Almagell Switzerland	Pam Harris
August 20-23	Mid Wales Meet - Corris	Paul Stock
August 22-24	George Starkey Hut Maintenance Meet	Marian Parsons
September 2-8	Tour of Mont Blanc Trek	Paul Stock
September 22-23	Roving Meet, Llangollen Hostel	David Matthews
October 6-8	New Inn, Bwlch, Brecon Beacons	Paul Stock
October 27-28	Presidents Meet, GSH, Patterdale	Andy Burton
November 14	North/South Day Meet	P Stock/A Burton
December 12	North/South Day Meet	P Stock/A Burton
Dec 27 - Jan 2	ABM Twixmas/New Year Meet, George Starkey Hut, Patterdale	Judy Renshaw



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2023 Meets Programme - inside front cover

Current Office Holders - back cover

Cover photo: Oeschinensee from the Doldenhorn Hut by Mike Goodyer

EDITORIAL

Welcome to this year's Journal. The Covid lockdowns now seem in the distant past. This last year saw us catch up with Meets that had been delayed/postponed, so we have a full year to report on.

In addition to the Meet Reports, there are several accounts from members. Three members look back on their times in the mountains. I'm sure that over the last two years many of us have been reflecting on the past. I hope you enjoy these nostalgic accounts.

As Andy mentions on the next page 2023 got off to a good start and we have a full programme of meets for you this year. We just need the weather to pick for us so we can enjoy them. Once again we are returning to Switzerland for the Hotel Alpine Meet with over 30 members attending. The day meets continue and we have two new meets this year in Corris and the Mendips. Thanks go to Paul Stock and the Meet Organisers for another varied Programme.

The London Lecture Programme has resumed at the Civil Service Club in London and importantly has retained the Zoom option that started up during the lockdowns. This has meant that as well as members close to London meeting up again those of us further away still have the option of seeing the lectures. A big thank you to both the organisers and the presenters of these events. A lecture given by David Seddon has been adapted as an article for the journal.



A new feature that we added last year to the website was offering a digital copy of the walks completed on meets. Here is a QR link to the routes from Meets. Once you have clicked on your chosen walk you can download it in .gpx file format. This file can then be uploaded to your GPS, mobile or mapping software.

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 year's activities.

I hope you enjoy the Journal.

Mike Goodyer, Editor

April 2023

PRESIDENT'S THOUGHTS



As I sit and write my thoughts for inclusion in this year's Journal the Club Meets programme has already swung into action, with the Twixmas Meet bringing 19 of us leaping into the New Year in the time-honoured manner but with some very entertaining and relaxing new twists that were enjoyed by us all.

The Annual Dinner numbers were not diminished by last year's Covid outbreak as yet again forty members joined together over dinner at the Inn on the Lake, to listen to Ronald Turnbills interesting and very fitting talk on Hut to Hut walking generally, and the Stubaier Hoehenweg in detail.

Ronald's talk led me, and I suspect many others present to reflect on the over twenty years of trekking in the Alps that we have enjoyed, many of which can now be viewed on You Tube, courtesy of Ed Bramley, who has been busy editing and uploading the stored photographs for you all to be able to see.

The Skills Meet has just successfully completed, with all twelve places being taken up. We look forward to hearing the feedback from those present so that we can better adapt next years Skills content to match the training needs of members wishing to take part in this ongoing venture. Thanks to Mary and her team for running the meet and Mammut Mountain School (Kendal) for providing the two guides, with the addition of a Mountain Photography input on Sunday by Tim Taphouse, and Mike Parsons for his historic Everest equipment input in this the 70th anniversary of the first ascent.

I can feel the momentum growing as I watch members signing up to join in the various meets on offer during the rest of the year. Please have a look at the programme and any updates your Editor puts up on the website, as there are some great new destinations, as well as the tried and tested favourites.

Then all you have to do is contact the Meet organiser and book yourselves on. The details of how to pay via membershipmojo will be sent to you, along with any other relevant info.

We are looking for a new Meets Secretary to take over from Paul Stock when he stands down in February 2024. Please contact me if you are interested in this vital role.

Celine Gagnon has become our new Club Secretary taking over from Dick Murton who has held the role since 2010. Our thanks go to Dick for so many years of valued service to the club. My personal thanks for all his help, particularly with the renegotiating of the Hut partnership with the Alpine Club, and his work to date on the Hut Company Board of Directors.

Heather Eddowes has stepped down as Vice-President in order to concentrate on her role as Chair of the HMC, plus her role as arbiter of the Training Grant scheme. This up to 50% financial support scheme is ready for some more applications from members, having had three more people successfully complete courses during the last year. Daniel Albert has stepped up into the role of Vice-President and has been busy already covering for me at the Skills Meet, and planning other ways we can look to encourage new members and support existing ones in acquiring new skills in a mountain environment.

The second Tuesday of the month day walks continue to get us out there locally, with April's being tomorrow, but we could still do with more involvement among members in other parts of the country which do not already feature.

I hope to meet up with as many of you as possible on this year's meets and help make some of the shared experiences and memories of the beautiful high places that are likely to feature in next year's Journal a reality.

My final thanks go to Mike Goodyer for preparing another bumper Journal providing us with a vibrant and informative record of last year's exploits.

Climb right in and enjoy.

Andy Burton
10th April 2023

Meet Reports

North Day Walk - Peak District Ladybower Circular, February - by Steve Caulton

It was a predictably grey and cloudy sky which greeted Andy, Ed and I as we parked at the Ladybower Inn by the side of the A57 at Bamford, close to the northern edge of the Ladybower reservoir. We were soon availing ourselves of a rather tasty full breakfast which seemed the right thing to do given a chilly breeze promised to be with us all day. Roger joined us and that was the party for the day. Worth noting that if you have a breakfast and become a 'patron' for the day the car park is free.

Suitably attired we began the slow ascent on the clear pathway up onto Derwent Edge looking back on Ladybower reservoir now reflecting clouds in a variety of greys. Beneath these waters lie the drowned villages of Derwent and Ashopton. Pretty cottages, a church and chapel, shops, inns and a Manor House were demolished, and all disappeared when the reservoir slowly filled in 1945. In 2018, the long dry spring and summer saw the rubble revealed and the architecture of a bygone era was on view to those adventurous enough to wade across the mud.

We continued upwards along slippery open pathways, assailed by a cold and stiff Westerly breeze keeping any threat of rain at bay. Ahead lay windswept moors and the famous rock formations which makes this walk so interesting and different. Much loved and visited, these geographical marvels of gritstone have been worn down by wind, rain and all that photography, into weird and wonderful shapes and precarious arrangements that baffle the mind. How they weathered into such complex shapes and parlous stability is perplexing, but I wouldn't put money on guessing how much longer they will remain as they stand.



They have been given some impressive appellations too, their origins born in local legend. The 'Coach and Horses'

probably being the best known due to a passing resemblance from a distance to such a vehicle. 'Back Tor,' which marks the highest point of Derwent Edge and carries the appropriate Trig Point. 'Lost lad', where a young shepherd from the submerged village of Derwent supposedly got lost in a blizzard and died there but not before scrawling 'lost lad' on a rock. Now there is a cairn and a toposcope to mark his tragedy.

From here, high above the Upper Derwent Valley, we had views of Derwent Head and well over to the West, Bleaklow and Kinder Scout. To the East were the outskirts of Rotherham and Sheffield and away in the far distance the just visible, cooling towers and the cranes of Goole or some other part of the Humber Estuary.

Our route was along obvious, decent and passable trackway a good deal of which has now been impressively flagstoned. There were some waterlogged stretches and a few wobbly flags, as Roger found out the hard way, but all was navigable and made for easy walking.

The loveliness of that open moorland we left behind as we descended steeply through Hancock Wood and Walkers Clough to the roadway beside the Eastern side of Derwent Reservoir. A convenient bench afforded us all the ideal spot for lunch whilst we imagined all that had occurred along the very stretch of water in front of us and between the twin towers of Derwent Dam to our left. This exact spot of course was where the famed Dambusters Lancaster Bomber crews had trained for their massive assault on those of the German Ruhr Valley in 1943. Hard to believe they could fly such an aircraft at speed at next to no height in the confines of a narrow valley but unfortunately there were some crashes nearby. Over the years many locals have reported sightings and hearings of an unmistakable Lancaster bomber over the area, linking them to a recorded disaster in 1945.



Derwent dam – cue theme tune...

No such sightings for us sad to say and we passed the Dam towers to take in the spectacle of thousands of gallons of water cascading down in a thunderous, unbroken white sheet to wend its way into the households of Nottingham, Derby and beyond. The two Dams of Derwent and Howden are over a century old now and the style and architecture of their massive stones hark back to the castles of medieval times and wouldn't be out of place in Lord of the Rings.

From there it was a very pleasant and easy stroll along the northern banks of Ladybower Reservoir. Looking across the water we could see where we had spent our morning high up on Derwent Edge and reflected on how good a stroll at 11 miles thereabouts it had been.

It had been a superb walk of contrasts. Open moorland above with great natural scenery set against the manmade wonders of mightily impressive structures taming colossal amounts of water affording a modern landscape to be enjoyed by all who are drawn to the varied opportunities this area offers up.



Ashpton Viaduct and Bamford Edge

We were soon back at Ladybower Inn and it seemed rude not to go in and finish the day with a little liquid refreshment before going our separate ways.

An excellent day, a very good choice of route and good company.

As our dear old friend Myles is wont to say, 'What's not to like!'

North Day Walk – Castleton and the Shivering Mountain, March - by Ed Bramley

Our walk starts in Castleton, where the ruins of Pevensey castle look down on the village. Completed in 1086, the castle was built for William Pevensey, a favoured knight of William the Conqueror. Castleton's fame equally lies below the ground, as the only place in the world where the semi-precious Blue John stone can be found, and our walk today takes us past several caverns associated with this rare stone.

Our walk begins stutteringly around the back streets of Castleton, past the stream flowing through the village, and out onto the moorland, where others coming towards us speak of slippery paths in front. The ground is cut up in places, but we make the bottom of Winnats pass and Speedwell Cavern without mishap. Originally a lead mine, Speedwell cavern is unusual in the caverns in this vicinity in that most of the travelling underground is by boat. Our path continues onward and upward, past both Teak Cliff and Blue John caverns, until we are above the pass itself, and there is a clear route across to the upper flanks of Mam Tor. Known as the Shivering Mountain, the original road still lies in pieces below us, after repeated landslides took it away some years ago. The way up to the



top has a number of cast metal interpretation pieces reflecting the ancient past of the summit, with its bronze and Iron Age hill forts.

Steve and Michele on Mam Tor, afternoons walk behind them

On the tops, the wind is much stronger and colder, so we press on along the wide paved ridge to Hollins Cross before our lunch break, with its views back to Edale, and the Sheffield - Manchester train line. It seems that most people walking the route, and there are a fair few out today, are sheltering in the lee here for their lunch. From there, we can even see where our Peak meet will be in May, on the edge of Edale itself. After our break, we continue along the ridge to Back Tor and Lose Hill, with continuing great views, before we descend into Hope, rather than the more direct route straight back to Castleton. On the way, we cross over a branch line to the nearby cement works, which is a reminder of the mineral wealth of this valley

From Hope, our route returns to over fields to Castleton, alongside Peakshole Water for much of the time, with meanders any geography student would be proud of. The weather continues to be kind as we catch some afternoon sun and mild weather in the valley, before arriving back at our start point. Another grand day out.



On the way up to Back Tor

South Day Walk - Return to the Chilterns, March - *by Judy Renshaw*

Two of us (Margaret Moore and Judy Renshaw) were the only club members who managed to attend the Southern day walk on 8th March 2022, so we picked a route roughly half way between us. The rest of the usual group missed out on a beautiful day with lovely views, sunshine all day, Spring flowers, new lambs, bees, a muntjac deer and many kites.



Judy in Wormsley Park



Margaret in Wormsley Park

We started at Aston Rowant nature reserve near Stokenchurch and took the slightly unofficial path down the open field to the Ridgeway path, under the M40 and south to the crossing with the Oxfordshire Way. Then we went East past Pyrton Hill and up through woods to Wormsley Park and across on the Chiltern Way, through fields with many young lambs to Ibstone. Then North to Studdridge and took a short section of road to make sure we were able to get back over the motorway to our car park.

A very enjoyable day, walking a nice route in good weather.

Refresh/Improve your skills Meet, George Starkey Hut, Patterdale, April *by Céline Gagnon*

After many permutations due to positive Covid tests and unexpected work opportunities, our group “à géométrie variable” settled to 8 members, all ready and eager to brush up on their mountain skills over the weekend. Andy, Heather, Steve and I arrived on Thursday eve so we could make the most of a whole day out Friday. After a swift drink at the White Lion, we went back to the hut to share Andy’s delicious cottage pie and plan our routes for the next day.

After breakfast on Friday morning, we went off in three different directions: Steve climbed over the Dodds from Dockray, Heather and Céline walked back from Troutbeck via High Street and Angle Tarn, and Andy enjoyed the view at the beacon on Thornthwaite Crag.

Steve parked at High Row and walked back down the road to Dockray to take the path up to Common Fell and Swineside Knott. Heading westwards to Hartside on soft snow underfoot he stopped at White Stones to refuel and take in stunning wintery views of Raise, Catstye Cam and Helvellyn. The steady pull up to Stybarrow Dodd was made easier by frequent stops for photos and dramatic views to the south and west. From Watson's a steady pull up north eastwards to Great Dodd followed. From the summit it was clear that the sky was darkening, and that weather was coming in from the northeast – a brief hailstorm rolled in while on descent from Calfhow Pike. The Pike was a great spot for afternoon tea with good views over Keswick to the Solway Firth. Well fuelled with tea and hot cross bun, Steve headed north up Clough Head then on descent from the top of Clough Head to the Old Coach Road and the last leg back to the car.



Andy kindly drove Heather and I to Limefitt Park so that we could walk back to Patterdale via the Roman Road, High Street and Angle Tarn. The initial path was a gentle route along Trout Beck and the valley, providing shelter from the rather cold wind whilst we were lower down. We joined the Roman Road and continued northwards along Hagg Gill towards High Street, glancing the beacon and Thornthwaite Crag on our left, but continuing upwards without stopping.

After a quick lunch on the snowy summit of High Street, a few stones away from the triangulation pillar, we went on the east side around The Knott. We made our way to Angle Tarn, where we were briefly stopped in our tracks by the same swift but intense hailstorm. We had afternoon

tea at Angle Tarn and were entertained by two geese chatting rather loudly to each other. Our last stretch took us home through Boredale Hause and the path down to Rooking.

Daniel arrived just in time to join our small party for dinner at the White Lion, where the fish and chips remains as generous and excellent as ever. Nan and Simon eventually made it to the hut after the longest and most frustrating car journey from Bristol. Early to bed for an early start.



Mike P. joined us as we were getting ready for our skills day. Sam, John and Robin from the Mammut Mountain School in Kendal took us through the plans for the day. We then divided in 2 groups – one experienced, and one younger (I'm happy to say that Heather and I qualified for the young group...).

The experienced gents went to Thornhow on the Grisedale valley side with Robin to learn the ropes (get it?) for steep ground skills, whilst the young'uns followed John up Black Crag to test their navigation knowledge. Steep ground skills included identifying a line of weakness, moving safely as a group, using ropes for safety, and practicing abseiling to descent on difficult ground.

Micro navigation covered reading a map closely, using a compass, handrailing, taking bearings from a map and from a landscape feature, and using pacing to measure distance.

We had lunch together, looking at the hikers going up to and down from Hole in the Wall from our vantage point, then swapped guide and activity so that the younger group could practice rope skills and the more experienced one could get their compass out.

After a fabulous – if rather cold – day of mountain learning, we all went back to the hut to enjoy a much needed and warming cup of tea and some cake whilst listening to John's very informative lecture on mountain weather. Time for a quick shower then onto making dinner, which was chana masala (or chickpea curry), baked cauliflower and naan bread, followed by the traditional apple crumble and custard. We toasted to absent friends, who were with us in spirit and in recipes (Rachel's curry and Johnny's crumble). We chased some Easter Eggs on Nan's treasure hunt – a team effort as was most of the day – then went to bed on full stomachs and happy memories.

Top of Brock Crag



Beautiful weather greeted us on Sunday morning, with the sun warming us a little. After much discussion on where to go, we headed out to practice our newly acquired navigation skills. We walked along the valley through Crookabeck and Beckstones towards Hartsop. then traversed across the fields towards Calfgate Gill where Steve left the group to go up Gray Crag whilst the rest of us went up along the gill than back towards Angle Tarn, navigating our way eastward of the tarn. We took it in turn to lead the walk whilst Daniel was keeping an eye on the sky by consolidating his mountain weather knowledge. Back at the hut for a quick tea break and then homewards for some of us as we left Nan and Simon behind to enjoy another day of quiet contemplation in the Lake District.

A superb weekend all round. I, for one, cannot wait for the next skills meet! Thank you to Mary for organising and to Karen for the chana masala recipe.

North Day Walk - Walking around Ravensdale, Peak District, April - by *Marcus Tierney*

This months walk saw participants gather in the Outside Store in Hathersage. Due to heavy rain at the time of the walk start plans were revised. Instead of the intended walk around the Stanage area a different plan was hatched over an extra coffee followed by retail therapy (well it was for Michele who bagged the most bargains).

The group then made a quick visit to the Ollerbrook Farm bunkhouse to check over the accommodation intended for the upcoming proposed Peak Meet next month.

As the walk had been delayed it allowed for Ian and Harvey the dog to meet up with us and join us for our walk, which started near to Foolow. In fact technically the route started at a small, very small place called Housley. Housley is marked on the map, it has official Housley signs as you enter, but is comprised of only about three houses. Waste of a place name, or rightly recognising their existence? Anyway probably some kind of ancient tax fiddle.



Our route started by crossing the busy A623 onto much quieter pasture land where young lambs were doing what they do best gambling. How young lambs can have any knowledge of betting, hang on poke in the ribs from Michele it's apparently gambolling they do so I will move on.

The group descended along White Rake an old line of mine workings towards Wardlow turning left towards the top end of Ravensdale. At the end of the path there are good views towards Litton and it's a good stop for a break. I know the club have stopped here before.

The walk continued towards the Peter Stone passing metal lids on potholes and soughs left by the old man a name given to the miners of old by the modern potholders. Upon reaching the Yonderman cafe it was found disappointingly to be closed. The group continued through the Wardlow Mires farm, home to a couple of the happiest and unhappiest farmers in Derbyshire, depending on which one you meet. The shortened walk soon found us back to our cars having pretty much dodged all the rain of the day.

The day concluded with a well earned pint and or hot chocolate at the Peacock in Barlow. A most civilised and relaxed day. Or it will have be if nobody mentions again that I paid for all day parking at Hathersage and having got it wrong at the machine actually paid for a coach to park there all day, no seriously don't mention it if you see me.

South Day Walk - Combe Round, April - by Mike Goodyer

The forecast wasn't great - showery day with heavy downpours. At least I would get to use my new overtrousers! We were a depleted group with various regular attendees away on treks or with family commitments. So it was that three of us arrived at the car park above Combe just as the rain was stopping.

Donning our waterproof jackets we set off, in improving weather, along the Bridleway above Combe walking over Walbury Hill along the ridge overlooking Highclere.

After a coffee break in a small wood the waterproofs were discarded and the weather set fair for the rest of the day. Just after Pilot Hill we turned off the bridleway and headed down to Facombe.



We walked through the small village of Facombe with a big church and continued along the track/road to Linkenholt. This was another small pretty village.

St Barnabas church in Facombe

At Linkenholt we left the track and joined the Test Way through Combe Woods, which had seen some clearing of the trees.



We left the Test Way and after lunch we headed towards Buttermere and then continued up Ham Hill to join the Mid Wilts Way Bridleway.

Heading towards Combe Woods

We continued along the Bridleway overlooking Hungerford, shortly arriving at Combe Gibbet. As we arrived back at the cars the rain started again!

We completed the 12 walk, with around 1000' of ascent in the five hour window between the rain showers.

Many thanks to Margaret for organising the walk.

Peak District Meet, May - by Andy Burton

New venue at the Stables Bunkhouse, Ollerbrook Farm, near Edale, and a change of dates from the traditional May Day Bank Holiday weekend, together with other factors nearly conspired to force a cancellation of this meet, as initially only six people signed up for the weekend, in a property that sleeps 14.



David Clear on his first foray into the Peak District joined your Editor and I at the George Hotel in Hathersage for lunch, after which we parked at Millers Dale Station and cycled the Monsal Trail, giving Dave a glimpse of some of the delights of the White Peak, from Chee Tor through to Monsal Head and beyond.

Suffice it to say the River Wye and its many limestone crags and walls did not disappoint.

Eventually ten people arrived at the farm on Friday evening, with six of the early birds walking the ten minutes into Edale on the hunt for grub. The Nags Head was well full by the time we got there, and not taking any table bookings all weekend, so off we tiddly popped down to the Ramblers, where the six of us found perches and settled down to some very promptly served good food and drink, as one of the lasses behind the bar took ownership of our plight, and made things happen.

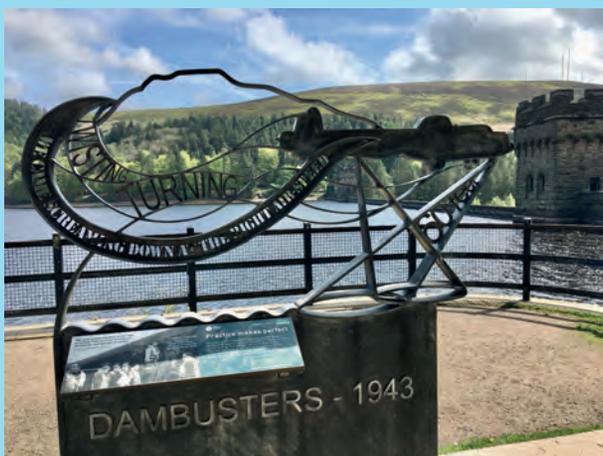
This made the decision where to eat on Saturday night for us. On returning back to base we spent time with Catriona and George, two potential new members, introducing ourselves and extolling the benefits of being an ABMSAC member, as well as listening to their various interesting experiences and what they were looking to do in the great outdoors.

With the arrival of Don and Judy the group was complete, and after discussions about the plans for Saturday, a relatively early night was had by all.

Saturday morning greeted us with clear blue skies and a distinctly cool breeze off the Kinder Scout plateau. Sheila Wainwright and her son were already busy in the lambing sheds as we all got ready.

Ed and Myles prepared their bikes, and here is Eds account of the day:

Myles and I set out early on our Saturday morning sojourn, but we hadn't gone more than a couple of miles before a puncture brought us to an abrupt halt. Out came the spare inner, and with some deft handling of the tyre levers and pump by Myles, we were soon back on the road again; our first destination Hope.



From there, we joined the main road for a few miles, before taking a side road to eventually arrive at Ladybower reservoir. Lovely to get away from what little traffic there was, but there was still a steep pull through the picturesque hamlet of Thornhill, before we arrived at Yorkshire Bridge, at the foot of Ladybower and our last significant climb of the day, onto the main road. From Ladybower, there's a great cycle lane which takes you all the way round to the dams turnoff – more a case of being aware of the pedestrians than the cars. From there, the road by the reservoir was much quieter and the inclines gentle and forgiving, so it wasn't too long before we arrived at the café at Fairholme and the morning coffee refuelling could take place. Just beyond the café area the road is only open to cycles, which made the rest of the ride up to near Slippery Stones at the top of Howden reservoir an absolute joy.

Just beyond our café stop is Derwent dam and a 60th anniversary memorial to the dambusters. Having seen the Lancaster fly through on the 50th anniversary, it still brings home what a feat of flying was achieved.



The rest of our route to the road head at the top of Howden reservoir is a pure joy, with dappled sunlight through the trees. As we wind round the inlet of the river Westend, we can see we will travel about two miles to be 300 yards further on. The terminus of the metalled road is as quiet as the rest of this route, and we take a break for a snack lunch, even spotting a lizard scurrying out of sight in the grass. Our return route covers the same route, but on the way back we spot the sculptures to tin town by the roadside – a reminder of all the navvies who helped build these dams. The return leg goes smoothly and as we enter Hope, we spot a bikers café for afternoon tea. Myles opts for the Bakewell tart, and makes sure it is seen off in customary fashion. Refuelled, we complete the rest of the journey without hitch – even the downhill we'd remembered on the way out don't seem to have turned into significant uphill on the way back. To use

another of Myles phrases about the day – “nothing shabby about all of this”.



The rest of us set off back into Edale to walk along the original start to the Pennine Way from outside the Nags Head pub, heading up Grindsbrook Clough with its interesting little scramble out onto the plateau itself, crossing the moor and finding our way through the Kinder Gates to Kinder Downfall.

Lunch was enjoyed at the Downfall with views out beyond Kinder Reservoir over towards Manchester. We then walked back along the current Pennine Way path to the trig point at Kinder Low, 633 metres, where Margaret, Judy and Catriona posed for a summit photo.

The official high point of Kinder Scout at 636 metres is a mere inconspicuous mound of grass amongst boggy and featureless terrain, northeast of this point.



Continuing on through Edale Rocks and turning left down Jacobs Ladder close to Edale Cross, we made our way down through Upper Booth and Barber Booth and back across the fields to Edale and the bunkhouse for a welcome pot of tea and a great selection of homemade cakes.

Sunday morning we made our way to the Nags Head again to meet up with the ten day visitors who by all accounts were having a bit of a to-do finding parking spaces.



Once everyone had gathered together, we set off back through Ollerbrook Farm and up alongside the brook of the same name under the Nab and onto the traversing path leading to Edale YHA. A stop on the path to chat with a local sheep farmer out on his quad bike gave us a glimpse into some of the difficulties that the community were currently facing. Before descending to the ford where Jaggars Clough and the stile over the wall into Backside Wood meet on the map.

Here the 20 strong group split up with 7 or 8 electing to continue up to Win Hill, (see Ed's account), and the rest electing to wander through the woods and out to the road past the National Trust offices, having found a grassy slope to sit and enjoy lunch close to where the water from Jaggars Clough joins with the River Noe.

Crossing over the road and under the railway line the path continues on the opposite valley side turning right at Townhead and making its way up to Lose Hill (Ward's Piece).

Here we tarried a while enjoying the views all around before continuing to Back Tor and Hollins Cross where the path from Castleton to Edale bisects the ridge path.

Returning back to Edale and the farm and checking everyone was accounted for, if not all in the same valley, we took our leave of the Wainwrights, who were enjoying a much-earned cuppa themselves with Catriona and George, as Sheila said were swapping farmers tales.

The team on the ridge with Back Tor in the background



Ed: After our gathering outside the Nags Head on Sunday morning, we head east, realising that it's going to be another good day and shorts and T shirt are the order of the day. After passing back through where we are stopping at Ollerbrook, our next landmark is Edale YHA, which is over a mile out of Edale. Beyond there, our path takes a slow rising traverse to Jagers Clough, and on the way we meet one of the local farmers, busy with lambing. George, one of our new members, and a sheep farmer himself, is soon in deep conversation, and enlightening for the rest of us.



At the clough, it's decision time as we've several route choices to complete the day. My own is to follow the high level tracks round and eventually up onto the summit of Win Hill. The biggest feature on the ridge is the remains of an old Roman road, which is also very popular with mountain bikers, which mean it's heads up for the nearly three miles to Win Hill summit. At the top, the reward is a great seat for dinner overlooking the Derwent Reservoirs, and also the Hope valley, and we take some time to drink all the scenery in. From the top, it's a steep descent to the outskirts of Hope, before we begin the long slow climb to the summit of Lose Hill. From there, we have more sublime views back to Win Hill,

and also the Mam Tor ridge, partially obscured in the afternoon haze.

The going is straightforward along the ridge, with a lot of slabs having been laid. Necessary, as this is a popular route with all. As we traverse the ridge, we spot the paragliders above Mam Tor, over a dozen in total, and they look like a set of crows in the afternoon lighting. At Edale Cross, it's a straightforward descent back to the valley and Ollerbrook, ready for the journey home.

This part of the Dark Peak may have changed a bit over the years, but it has never disappointed since we first started coming here as teenagers. Long may that continue.

Thanks to everyone who attended, your support as always is what makes it.

The participants in the bunkhouse were: Catriona and George, David Clear, Margaret Moore, Myles, Ed, Mike Goodyer, Don and Judy, and me.

The day trippers were: Mike and Margaret O'Dwyer, Michele and Marcus Tierney, Steve Caulton, Dick and Lyn, Pete Hammond, Tony Howard and Roma.

Braemar Meet, May - Judy Renshaw

This meet eventually took place in 2022 after being postponed from both 2020 and 2021, and not without complications.



The bunkhouse at the Braemar Lodge hotel, which had originally been booked, closed down so we were offered 2 cabins as replacements. Later the hotel was sold but the new owners helpfully honoured our bookings as well as the agreed price.

Then the shock news came that the hotel itself burned down completely - but the cabins remained untouched, so we were able to use some comfortable accommodation at a good price.

Unfortunately one of the expected group had been in close touch with a colleague with Covid so was unable to join us. However the six of us who did attend had an excellent week, with typical Scottish sunshine and showers, without any days of continuous rain, so we were able to do good routes each day.

We all arrived on the Sunday, including Judy who came on the bus from Aberdeen. Max had been in the area for almost a week beforehand and had booked places for us for evening meals in different venues. In addition there was a well-stocked shop in the village for self-catering. After sorting ourselves out, we discussed a list of possible routes that Max had helpfully provided, most of which were based on the Cicerone guidebook. Since the weather looked uncertain, with some rain, we all agreed on a moderate route for the first day, just north of Braemar, taking in a Corbett and a valley walk.

In the morning we set off, in two separate parties, for Carn na Drochaide. This required driving to the Lin of Dee to cross the river and parking near the Linn of Quoich. Andy, Celine, Max and Judy crossed the bridge (which had been repaired after the guidebook was written) to a few houses at Allanaquoich and started up the hill. We had some deliberation about where to go up, as there was no path and the description did not quite fit what was there. However, we made our way through the heather, which was high and made for quite hard going, then higher up we found some intermittent boulder tracks which helped.

After a short stop on the first top, we traversed to the main top and down a steep, wet descent north-eastwards towards a valley junction and the 'fairy glen' below. It rained for a couple of hours but not too heavily, with patches of brightness. The glen was extraordinarily pretty, with trees in young leaf and all shades of green. Later the sun came out and it became pleasantly warm, so a lunch stop was possible. We saw a lone stag on the ridge, sparrow hawks flying around, and tadpoles in the puddles on the path, as well as hearing the first of the many cuckoos of the week. Roger and Qing had started later, parking in the same place, but went up Glen Quoich to the top and

descended further along. That evening we all managed to squeeze into the busy pub to eat, having been unable to book ahead that night, though the food and service were impressive.



Céline and Andy below the Stuic

Some of us wanted a longer walk the next day, especially one that included a scramble up the Stuic on the Lochnagar massif. Since Max had already done this a few days earlier, he decided to do a different route, though he started with us from Keiloch, a short way east of Braemar. We all had a pleasant walk through the Ballochbuie forest on a good track, and saw a large red squirrel and many birds. Max continued on the track but Andy, Céline and Judy turned off onto a path that appeared to be the correct one from our reading of the guidebook, but later realised this was our mistake. We ended up plunging along a non-path by a river, through rocks and boulders, re-crossing the river several times. This wasted a considerable amount of time and energy. After emerging from the forest, we crossed the tussocky heather moor, taking a while to reach Sandy Loch below Lochnagar for a late lunch. However, we did see plenty of small frogs, red grouse, ptarmigan, mountain hares and some dippers on the way.

A heavy rain shower convinced us that time and conditions were not in our favour for going up the scramble, as it was still some distance away. So we headed up the ridge on the west side and made it to the top of the Stuic (1091m) in reasonable time. On our way down we encountered another heavy shower, this time of hail (cold and unpleasant!). Then we made a bee-line across the moor towards a small corrugated iron shelter in the distance, which took us to the track we should have followed in the morning. Though it was boggy, through deep heather, it seemed comparatively easy after the morning's efforts. We reached the starting point some 9 hours after setting out, feeling well exercised.



Loch nan Eun below the Stuic

Max had followed the correct route (which we should have taken) along the track to the top of the Stuic and around to the top of Cac Carn Beg, the main top of Lochnagar, and back across the moor so he was back well before us! Roger and Qing went up Morrone (859m), the Corbett just south of Braemar.

The following day high winds were forecast, and most people expressed a wish for a more relaxing day. So Roger and Qing went to Inverness and did some sightseeing in the area, Andy and Celine had a leisurely morning (though Celine had to catch up with some work) and later went over Morrone.

I decided to do Creag nan Gabhar (834m), another Corbett further south of Braemar and then did Morrone as well. This turned out to be a lovely round and very satisfying, though windy towards the end. Max gave me a lift to the start, from where the ascent was straightforward, up the ridge to a first and then a second top. I saw more mountain hares, black grouse, curlews and a lone deer. From the top I saw a rainbow below in the valley. The route continued south, down to a wet col then around towards Loch Callater and back on a track along the Glen. There were sunshine and showers intermittently all day, but overall pleasant conditions. The only difficulty was a stretch of the valley where the track went through a deep ford so I had to make my way along a rough section without a path, until a bridge made it possible to reach the track again. Since I was back at the start by early afternoon, I decided to take in Morrone on the way back. The ascent was gradual but quite long, then the wind became very strong indeed so the final section was a difficult struggle until I reached the couple of buildings and masts on the top. The buildings provided welcome shelter for a much needed break, before a quick descent back to the village.



I had expected to see Céline and Andy on the way over Morrone but saw only two other people who were on their way up and said we were all crazy being up there on such a windy day! Later I learned that that Céline and Andy had set out in the afternoon but had taken a while to find the path so were somewhere in the woods below while I was on the hill. They eventually returned around 9.30 that evening, for a very late pre-prepared dinner. We were glad we had not waited for them before eating that evening!

Very strong winds were forecast again for the next day, so this time we all went together on a valley route along Glen Lui, over the pass of Clais Fearnaig and back along Glen Quoich. It was good to be with the whole group and we managed to stay together for most of the way. However, it turned out to be wise to have taken three cars as people's different paces and interests meant that we finished at different times. We started near the Victoria Bridge, west of Braemar, parked along the road

and walked up a good track towards Derry Lodge. Unusually, we met several other groups of people as this is a main route towards the high peaks of Ben Macdui, Derry Cairngorm and others.

We turned off the track on a path up to Clais Fearnaig, a narrow valley with very picturesque scenery that appeared to some of us as if it could have been anywhere in the world, such as the Himalayas or central Asia.

A nice sheltered place above some narrow lochans provided a leisurely lunch spot, again with plenty of wildlife, then we descended to Glen Quoich, with many photo stops and bird watching. The forests around there were in the process of natural regeneration, with fallen trees left lying and small self-seeded saplings growing in random places. This may have accounted for the good numbers of birds to be seen. Max and Judy followed an interesting narrow path across the river for the last part of the Glen, which wound through small forest areas and along the beach beside the river, then crossed a bridge at the 'punch bowl', a natural formation caused by water erosion close to some waterfalls. We all ate out at the very nice local pub that evening, having booked a table for six, making it a pleasant evening.

On the final day it was raining in the morning and high winds were forecast again, so there was much deliberation over what to do. Roger and Qing went to Balmoral to see the castle and gardens and to walk around the grounds. Max and Judy decided to go up Lochnagar by a different and longer route from Balmoral. Andy and Céline were still undecided when we left.

We started from the visitor car park near the castle and set off around 10am in rain, which stopped after half an hour or so. The guidebook took us around various outlying houses, churches and over a nice bridge on the river Dee. It was a bit of a shock to find armed police at most junctions - puzzling until we later learned that the Queen had been in residence at that time. We followed tracks through the forest then out to the south, past a bothy and a small house reputed to be the Queen Mother's cottage. Again, there were hares and black grouse to be seen.

Later we had to leave the track and head across to the base of the first hill, Craig Liath, which we traversed around

*Max bracing against the wind,
Stuic and Loch nan Eun behind*



and went up steeply to a small col, then on to the summit of Meall Coire na Saobhaide (974m). The going was inevitably rough, through boulders and heather. A brief snack stop was required, keeping on the lee side to avoid the worst of the westerly wind. Coming down to a further col was incredibly windy, with gusts reputed to be up to 70 mph at times.

The final ascent was better, as we went up the East side away from the wind, although there was still no path, and reached the main top, Cac Carn Beg (1156m), not long after 1pm. We met one person at the summit, who seemed to be the only other one on the hill that day. We took time to look at the spectacular views down to the loch and its surrounding rock walls before descending on easy paths all the way, with nice rocks, which were smooth but with good friction.

As we came down towards the lesser summit of Meikle Pap, we saw two other walkers in the distance. When they came nearer they shouted out to us, and to our surprise, turned out to be Andy and Céline who had driven to Ballater to look around then decided to continue to Glen Muick and take the more popular route from there. This was a surprise! They continued to the top and came back via a circuit on a similar path.

Judy in Cac Carn Mor



We continued down the side of Meikle Pap, taking a path to the east where the wind funnelled through a gap, with gusts even stronger than before. I was holding onto everything and crouching down to avoid being blown over completely. On reaching a sheltered section we had to stop briefly to sort everything out and cross the valley to reach a good track, which took us back to the edge of the forest from where we had emerged in the morning. The full round back to the car park had taken 7.5 hours, well within guidebook time.

Lochnagar from Cac carn Mor

That evening we all ate in the cabin, with four of us having a most civilised meal together. Andy and Céline arrived back much later, so had to make do with a quick cheese on toast (which managed to set off the fire alarm for the second time this week!).

We all agreed that it had been a thoroughly enjoyable week, with pretty good weather as no days were written off due to rain. Braemar had been a good base, with plenty to do, good facilities and a transport link to Aberdeen. We all wanted to come to Scotland again next year and discussed some possible areas to consider for the future.



Present: Andy Burton, Céline Gagnon, Judy Renshaw, Max Peacock, Qing Wang, Roger James. Unfortunately Hugh Chapman was unable to join us as he had been in close contact with a colleague who had Covid and was being careful to avoid passing it on to us.

Rhyd Ddu Meet – Jubilee weekend , June - by Ed Bramley

With the Queens' Platinum Jubilee celebrations in full swing, we began to contemplate how long we had been coming to Rhyd Ddu and the Oread club hut (Tan yr Wyddfa) as a club, and how long we'd been having a communal meal as an integral part of that meet.



Well, to answer the easier question first. We'd been having a communal meal at Tan yr Wyddfa as an integral part of the meet since at least 2002, with a record of 27 people at one sitting (a full hut, plus others who lived nearby, or who were stopping at the pub). On how long the Rhyd Ddu meet has been going, the earliest date I've been able to find is 1982, when it was a winter meet. After that, it became a spring meet, initially called the Snowdonia Scrambles meet, and was sometimes based with John Berry in Bedgelert, and there were sometimes up to three meets there a year. By the mid 1990s though, the meet had become focussed on the Oread hut and the rest is an evolving history. The long and short of which means a Ruby anniversary for the Welsh meet as a whole, and a China anniversary for the communal meal!

Throughout the extended weekend, we had a variety of routes and aims on the go each day, from walking and climbing, to visiting Roman ruins, and even enjoying the scenery in an extended train ride.

Some people made use of the Wednesday evening start to get a days climbing in on Milestone butte, and found they had Rowan route, a classic 88m 2 star Diff to themselves, despite how crowded Ogwen valley was.

My Thursday option was a round of Cnicht and Croesor slate quarry, starting with the south-west ridge of Cnicht. The lower slopes let you in gently to the mountain, whilst higher up, the angle noticeably steepens, with a further steepening just below the summit.

We are rewarded with great 360 degree views, from out to sea, to Snowdon, and the tip of the quarries at Blanaeu. From the summit, we take a long circling route past several lakes to the disused Croesor slate quarries, which we first visited a decade ago. The size of the spoil heaps and the skeletons of the various cottages stand as reminders to the history and toil that took place here at one time.

From there, there are several options of path back to the valley – ours took us to the café on the edge of the village. An order for tea, Welsh scones and Barra Brith was swiftly placed. Other parties had

View of our Cnicht circuit



ventured to other locations, from walking up Snowdon and experiencing the bank holiday crowds at the top, despite the café being closed, to more climbing, this time on Pinnacle ridge on the East face of Tryfan (175m, Diff, 3 stars)

Friday saw a different passion involved – riding on old steam engines – this time along the Ffestiniog railway all the way into Blaenau. Somewhat different, but the engineering remains a marvel, and we were lucky enough to see an osprey on the way down. As if to confirm our decision, by the afternoon the heavens had darkened, and we were treated to a thunder and lightning display of some ferocity. To compensate, on our return to the hut, we began the Jubilee celebrations with scones with jam and cream, suitably lubricated with a pot or two of tea.

As if to emphasise the fickle nature of the weather, we were back to a decent morning on Saturday for our outing onto the Nantle ridge, which was a first time experience for some of the group. Always a pull up to the initial summit,



once that has been accomplished, the ridge itself is a pure joy. Never tricky, but with some nice moves on it, and the occasional position that would be classed as 'good value'. We paused for lunch at the memorial on Mynydd Tal-y-mignedd, which was constructed in 1887 by workmen of the Prince of Wales quarry to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

After lunch, we descended down the shoulder into Cwm Dwyfor and a set quarry and mine workings I'd not visited before. Aided by various old sled tracks out of here we made our way back to the main route through to the forest track and back to the cottage.

Determined to show the flag for the Jubilee celebrations, we had bunting up in both the dining area and living room of the cottage and preceded the meal with a loyal toast. The meal itself had a couple of Jubilee twists. Starter of homemade Coronation chicken, followed by that British favourite – bangers and mash (with an onion and Madeira gravy), and a suitable twist – the whole formed into a crown shape. To keep things simple for pudding, I let the supermarket take the strain, with options of apple pie, trifle and sticky toffee pudding being dispatched in quick order. By now the story telling was in full swing and continued further in the living room over the last glasses of wine.

Sunday was turnabout weather again, with steady rainfall during the night and continuing into the morning. For some of us, it was a sufficient hint to start the journey home, but for other hardy souls, an ascent to Yr Aran still beckoned to round off another successful Welsh meet.

Participants:

Katriona Archer, David Blackett, Ed Bramley, Andy Burton, Steve Caulton, David Clear, George Harper, Tony Howard, Mike O'Dwyer, Suzanne Strawther, Marcus Tierney, Michele Tierney

Cotswold Meet, June - by Mike Goodyer

Lovely weekend in the Cotswolds. This was our this second visit to the Cotswolds. Some members stayed the weekend, while several attendees came for one day or the other. Up to 10 members enjoyed the two day walks on the west side of the Cotswolds.



Saturdays walk started in Winchcombe and followed the Cotswold Way, taking in the bronze age burial mound of Belas Knapp, to Cleeve Common. We took the Winchcombe Way to the top. Lunch stop was just below the windy top and took the view across the Severn Valley. We returned to Winchcombe for afternoon tea and cake. Despite a couple of rain showers we were mainly in the sunshine. Walk was around 10 miles and 1300' of ascent.



On the Sunday we had moved further North and started the Walk from Broadway. After a hesitant start from the walk leader (me) we followed the Cotswold Way to Broadway Tower. A spectacular viewpoint. It was also the finish the the Cotswold Way Challenge, that started at Cirencester 52 miles away - a walk or run challenge!

We then walked through woodland tracks to emerge at Snowshill for a quick visit to the pub (much loved last year!). After lunch we walked across fields and a tree lined track to finish at Broadway for tea and cake (ice cream for some). Another day of light showers and sunshine. Walk was around 9 miles and 1500' of ascent.



Argentiere Meet, July - by Rick Snell



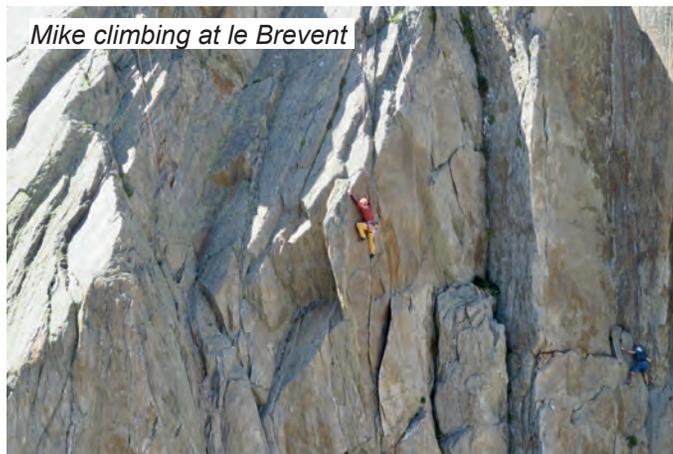
Four of us attended from Yeovil Mountaineering Club this year, for one week only, 9th to 16th July. They were Rick Snell, Stu Mackenzie, Mike Lock, and Rob Parr. Rob drove us there in his van.

We didn't know the campsite, and booking it direct was straightforward, with very helpful owners whose English was fortunately far better than my French. We had slight reservations before arriving as we were not permitted to turn up after 9pm, so had to make an overnight stop on the way, at Dijon, in a cheap but perfectly adequate hotel, with a pleasant evening exploring the town.

Arriving at the site next morning we were somewhat disheartened to see the whole site was on quite a slope, and very relieved to be shown a flat area at the top of the site under the pine trees (It was hot all week) with plenty of room for three small tents, a kitchen tent, and a van, and trees just right for slinging a hammock.

We took advantage of the free bus travel every day to get where we wanted in the Chamonix valley, and that first day took the Planpraz and Brevent telepheriques up to Le Brevent where we spent a while climbing the sport routes near the top station, with the aim of starting a bit of acclimatisation and getting a feel for the area. It was hot.

There were intentions to get up high and do some mountain routes, but in the end we spent almost the whole week rock climbing sport routes in the valley. Condition reports for the area were mixed, with some parties at the meet getting good routes in, but not us. Stu and Mike did start a route on the Aiguille de Blaitiere, from the half-way station on the Aiguille de Midi telepherique, but found that their approach and finding the route were far longer and more difficult than the guidebook suggested, so by the time they had a couple of pitches under their belts it was too late to continue. Other climbers they met had bivvied at the bottom of the route and were able to start early.



Mike climbing at le Brevent



We went to different valley crags every day, the best probably being Vallorcine, where we did a nice seven pitch route whose name escapes me. We did one or two of the many great walks in the area, all of which expose one to stunning scenery of course, although to be honest cooler weather would have been more comfortable.

Mike at Vallorcine

One of the vicarious highlights of the trip was watching the womens' lead sport climbing championship in Chamonix town centre, very inspiring! They all made climbing a 45 degree overhang on slopers look easy. Janja Garnbret won it. Unfortunately we didn't stay for the mens' final as we needed to get dinner down us.



Paul McWhinney was the Alpine Club co-ordinator for the meet, sometimes to be found at the Alpine Club's tent for a chat and a drink. In the time we were there no big dinners were fixed to bring together the various attendees, which was a shame, but then I am as guilty as anybody in not making the effort to organise that. There was however a WhatsApp group set up, which was very actively used and was quite helpful for seeing what conditions other parties had found.

*Aig. Vertes.les Droites. les Courtes
from Aig de Midi lift*

In the campsite bar we met various people we knew from previous years, and the meet for us was overall a great holiday, with no dramatic excitement or scary near misses, so we were happy to have made the effort.



Mer de Glace - a sorry state!

Kandersteg Meet, July - by Andy Burton

With the last hotel-based meet being the 110th Anniversary one at Klosters in 2019, and Pam having stood down from organising this meet after so many years too, the first such meet post the pandemic was an experiment for us all.

Thanks to Paul Stocks excellent research in finding the Alfa Soleil in Kandersteg, all the rest of what follows was made possible.

Mike Goodyer and I arrived at the hotel shortly after 1pm on the Saturday, and met up with Mike and Marian Parsons who had just arrived having driven steadily through Europe in their VW campervan.

A leisurely Fitness-Teller lunch, slightly altered by two large beers and a plate of pommes to share, put us in good shape for a wander around Kandersteg in the afternoon.



To set the scene for the week - Kander valley from the Doldenhorn Hut

Mike (your Editor) and I last stayed in Kandersteg in 1973 on our month-long post 'A'- Level walk along the Bernese Oberland chain using the high-level summer passes, inspired by the writings of Showell Styles in the Climber and Rambler magazine. We camped 49 years ago at the International Scout Chalet on the outskirts of the village, courtesy of Mike's long-standing commitment to that world-class organisation.

So, it was only right that we started our week by walking along the river Kander which runs right through the Scout camp grounds. Enroute, we visited the Allmenalp cable car station to find out when the first and last lifts ran, and bumped into James and Belinda Baldwin who were sat on a bench in the shade by the river. Near here we saw a stoat darting among the rocks on the opposite bank.

Returning in time to find our room and get ready for the pre-dinner drinks and local knowledge briefing, saw all of us gather to listen to Nico Seiler, our host, and his dad Peters excellent advice, on what to do in the valley and surrounding areas, prior to sitting down for our first Menu 1 dinner!

Peter's advice, coupled with the Guest cards for free use of all the uplifts and the local buses and trains, pretty much guided all 19 of us through the week.

Sunday morning at breakfast various plans for the first day's walking were laid. Rosie and Bill Westermeyer with Don Hardy set off first to climb First, 2549 metres

Mike and I wanted to explore the pass over to Adelboden via the Bunderalp or Bunderchrinde with a view to reaching the Bunderspitz at 2546 metres, so we set off for the Allmenalp cable car along with Daniel Albert, Rick and Carol Saynor, Geoff and Pauline Causey, and Katharine and Richard Heery.



With a clear view in the morning sunshine of the Klettersteig/Via Ferrata from the 8-person cable car, and the waterfall flowing down the 400-metre rock face nearby, we all made our way up to Untere Allme, at 1725 metres, and set off uphill towards Obere Allme, at 2017 metres.

Some confusion over the Wanderweg signs to the next watering hole at Untere Aussere, coupled with Peter Seiler's final bit of advice not to overdo it on the first day, meant we all opted for the traversing panoramic path, where photo opportunity stops appeared at each and every corner as a new mountain vista opened up.

With views of the Doldenhorn, Balmhorn and Altels across the valley, and towards the cable car at Sunnbuel and the way up to the Gemmipass, plans for later on in the week began to form. All signs for the mountain restaurant

destination vanished, and all that remained was to follow the slightly homemade yellow sign to Rycher Baergli, and hope that we would find something there.



Lady luck was with us, and under the rock walls of what is called the Klettergarten on the maps, where several people were busy enjoying the climbing, we found a high alpine meadow farm complete with a little seating area tucked round the back, offering drinks and tasty local fare for us to enjoy.

A fairly leisurely Sunday lunch was enjoyed by us all, followed by a steady walk back to the cable car. Here we met up with Rosie and Bill and Don, in the little farm restaurant next to the top cable car station.

Daniel, Mike and I decided to go back down and across the valley to go up on the Oeschinensee gondola, to have a look at the iconic lake that draws visitors from all over the world to this Unesco World Heritage area, and research the ease of signing and access to the higher paths that were highly recommended to us all by Peter.

We returned in good time for dinner and shared our knowledge with the group, and again plans were made for the next day.

Monday morning saw several of us set off to walk up to the SAC Doldenhorn Hut at 1915 metres. This proved to be a steady climb mostly among the trees of the Oeschwald, up onto the rock shelf that lies under the giant slabs and walls of the Aeußerer Fieserock. Here nestles the Doldenhorn Hut with views out across the Kandertal from its seated terrace area, where fresh pressed apple juice and homemade apricot torte (cakes) could be enjoyed. Everyone then made their way round to the other side of the hut, where a view right down on the opal blue Oeschinensee, could be relished by us all, from our various vantage points.



Oeschinensee from Doldenhorn Hut

After lunch Daniel, Mike and I walked back down the way we had come up until we reached the alternative traversing shelf path that takes you around the Biberg, and back down into the valley not far from the International Scout camp. We decided to walk across the valley to have a look at the start of the Via Ferrata that lies underneath Allmenalp. The farmers with their specialised farm vehicles were all very busy cutting and collecting the hay in this quite lumpy valley area that lies in and between the steep sided valley walls and the road, the railway and the river.

Tuesday morning, Marian's Birthday, everyone agreed that we would all go up to Sunnbuel on the bus, and take the large cable car up to Spittelmatte at 1920 metres, with a view to walking up to the hotel at Schwarenbach, which has links with the Club through Otto Stoller who used to guide members for many years on Summer Meet walks in the Alps.

Rosie, Bill and Don made the earlier bus and cracked on, whilst the rest of us went for the 9-45am slot. Luckily, we got a seat before the train disgorged a whole load more walkers intent on doing the same thing. The 10-minute ride in such close proximity to so many people was enough to make sure we didn't do that again for the rest of the week.



The cable car very quickly whisked us all up over 600 metres enabling a great day's walking to be enjoyed by all along this ancient Bronze Age trade route up to the Gemmipass.



With views up to the Balmhorn and Altels and the Rinderhorn on our left, alongside the Swiss stone pine forest, at Arvenseeli, on our right, we hardly noticed the steady climb up to the Schwarenbach Hotel. Marmots were occasionally heard but not seen. The hotel provided drinks and a generous slice of Heidelbeeren torte (Myrtille tart) before we carried on up to the Daubensee, with an unusual sighting of a couple of sheep grazing in among the rocks on our way up.

Stop at the Hotel on the way to the Daubensee.

Looking back at the Hotel

Daubensee



The Daubensee, according to the blurb, is Europe's highest natural lake fed by glacial and snow melt waters. It reaches its highest water level in July, and by the end of October, all the water percolates away through the porous slate rocks leaving the dry lake bed safe to traverse.

On the last Sunday in July the annual Shepherd Festival is held here, with the shepherds herding up to 800 sheep, so the two we saw were not unusual at all up here! This festival celebrates the close relationship between the Valaisian and Bernese communities.

Here on the upper path, we met Rosie and Bill on their way back from the pass, both very excited by the view of the Matterhorn and many other peaks they had identified.

Mike and I noticed that at 2200 metres alongside the path were a wide variety of different plants that we had not noticed lower down, among them little deep azure blue gentians and groups of the large distel thistle.

At the pass, 2350 metres, we were treated to the ultra-modern Gemmi Lodge that sits alongside the Gemmibahn cable car. This uplift brings people from Leukerbad in order to enjoy the spectacular views of the mountains of the Valais, including the Matterhorn, Dom, Dent Blanche, and the Weisshorn, to mention but a few, that this lofty perch affords.



Here Mike and I tarried long enough to enjoy a cold one, and be joined first by Daniel, then by Richard and Katharine and Rick and Carol, on the overhanging terrace of the restaurant. It would have been very easy to stop here all late afternoon and evening drinking in the views, but the last lift down from Sunnbuel at 6pm, focussed our attention on making a start back.

View from the Gemmi Lodge

Daniel and Andy walking down from the pass.

Daniel, Mike and I decided to consume our food and drink in a little sheltered crease in the land, full of alpine flowers, before crossing the neck of the lake at the pass end to walk on the opposite side of the Daubensee. We saw the others pass by on the path heading back too, so that was everyone accounted for. We all made it back in time to get on one of the last cable cars down, and met up with a couple more of our group waiting for the bus at Sunnbuel.



At the evening meal we were joined by Pam and Alan, and Marian's Birthday was marked with yet another very convivial gathering over food and drink.

Whilst enjoying another balmy evening sat outside the hotel after dinner plans were made to go and explore the Gasterntal in the morning.



First view of Gasterntal

Eventually the tumultuous river waters steady off as we reach the Gasterntal proper. A preserved and protected alpine pasture landscape opens up as you walk around the grounds of the Hotel Waldhaus. We made a bit of a detour to the waterfall at Bise, that higher up must bisect the path up to the SAC Balmhornhuetten, which sits on a 1956 metre perch looking out across the whole area. Some of our group walked up to this delightful hut during the week (See Bills account and photos below).



Crossing back over to the other side of the valley we made our way up mainly through mixed woodland to the settlement of Selden and continued on to the Berggasthaus at Heimritz, where we enjoyed a welcome drink and homemade raspberry cake.

Berggasthaus at Heimritz

Daniel, Mike and I made the earlier bus which dropped us off at the Sunnbuel cable car. We took the path to the left of the lift station, which makes its way up alongside the Kander river gorge, crossing over the river to join for a short distance the private road, that on payment of a fee can be accessed by car, in the narrows shown as Chluse, on the map.



We then continued on round the corner to where we could see up towards the headwall in the end of the valley at Kanderfirn, the source of the Kander river. Here we turned round and set off back on the opposite side of the river for a short while, crossing back near Selden, having negotiated a couple of hanging bridges. Here we saw some of our group enjoying similar comestibles at one of the two hotel gardens to be found here in Selden. This is also where the private parking is and the local KanderReisen minibus service drop-off and pickup stop.



A steady walk retracing our steps with one last drinks stop at Hotel Waldhaus, to enjoy the late afternoon sunshine, before committing ourselves to the inevitable shade in the gorge, which was even more spectacular now due to all the increased flow from the melting glaciers and snowfields high up in the mountains above us.

We made the bus with five minutes to spare, ensuring we were not late for dinner. Just as well as Wednesday's evening meal was when Nico and his team pulled out all the stops with a Gourmet meal for us all, as we marked Pam's 80th Birthday.

Pam very kindly responded by offering to organise next year's hotel-based meet in the Saastal, with a view to us being able to visit the Britannia Hut during the week in early July 2023, to view the new stove, and celebrate with local SAC members there.

For Thursday's outing Mike and I decided we would try again to cross the ridge between Kandersteg and Adelboden, with a view to reaching the top of the Bunderspitz at 2546 metres. With a quick uplift in the now quite familiar Allmenalp cable car, we set off up over the Bunderalp.

At the col we met Heather and Don coming up from the other nearby Bunderchrinde col, with tales of having negotiated some lengthy vertical metal ladders, on the Adelboden side of the pass. Together we all ascended to the top of the Bunderspitz. Here we were able to sit, and enjoy some lunch with the 360-degree view of the mountains of this part of the Bernese Oberland chain. Having put our names, and that of the Association in the summit book, we began our descent.





With a refreshing large bottle of Rivella cooling in the trough at the farm café, right next to the cable car, having our name on it, again we enjoyed the lovely vista that these little high alpine pasture stops afford in the late afternoon sunshine, particularly secure in the knowledge that the nearly 500 metres of steep descent will be effortlessly managed in eight minutes by the Allmenalp cable car.

Refreshment stop at Untrallmenalp, with Hohtürli in the background

Friday's walk for Mike and I were always going to be the highpoint of Hohtürli (Literally translated High Little Door) at 2778 metres, with its spectacular views down into Kiental. With various members of the group having completed this walk already as the week had evolved, we talked Daniel into joining us too.

With the Blümlisalp Hut situated just above the pass providing us with shelter and sustenance just as it did all those years ago, and the Oeschinensee gondola easing both the initial up, and the final bit of down, plus carrying much less in our rucksacks, made for a very enjoyable and steady day.

The Heuberg and Oberbaergli areas were as beautiful and spectacular as Peter Seiler had promised they would be, with stunning views down onto the Oeschinensee, and up to the glaciers and their associated summits.



Group above Oeschinensee

Above the last farm the landscape becomes more and more mountainous, leaving the high pasture well below. With occasional glimpses up to the Hut encouraging us on, we, each at his own pace, continued making

upward progress until the pass on the ridge was attained, and the lofty aspect of this gateway between two valleys could be enjoyed and photographed.



In the shade of the door way to the Hut we met Mike, and after soup and drinks, and a few photos of the three of us, we set off back down to Kandersteg. At Oberbaergli we took the left-hand path down closer to the lake, and returned in time with many others reluctant to leave this glacial oasis hidden amongst its mountains, to the gondola station.

Blümlisalp Hut

The meet ended with another fine evening meal, and an informal thanking of the Alfa Soleil team who had looked after us so well all week, and to all the attendees for their excellent company on our various days out in the mountains together. We all agreed that Kandersteg and the wider Kandertal had once again done us proud.

Herzlichen Dank meine Lieben, as they say in this part of the world.



Alternative Kandersteg

Attending the meet were Marian and Mike Parsons, Belinda and James Baldwin, Ann Alari and Derek Buckley, Carol and Rick Saynor, Rosie and Bill Westermeyer, Katharine and Richard Heery, Pauline and Geoff Causey, Don Hardy, Daniel Albert, Roger Newson (short visit) Heather Eddowes, Mike Goodyer and Andy Burton. Very Special guests for a couple of nights were Pam Harris and Alan Norton.

Photo contributions from Andy Burton, Mike Goodyer and Carol and Rick Saynor.

Trip Notes from Bill Westermaeyer

Saturday - Rosie and I drove from Divonne-les-Bains today to begin this year's ABMSAC Meet. Based on recommendations from Pam, Roger, and Jill, we decided to make a side trip to the Kiental before heading to Kandersteg. This is the next valley over in the direction of the Lauterbrennen Valley. We parked at Tschingel just before the road rose steeply and narrowly and virtually impossible to drive, especially when Post Buses were on the road. From here, we hiked steeply uphill along a roaring stream, eventually to reach Griesalp, with its impossibly beautiful views of the Blumlisalp and other peaks high above. Griesalp itself had several hotels and restaurants and was the start of hikes to the Blumlisalp and Gspaltenhorn Huttes. As beautiful as the area was, there was too high a concentration of people here. We continued on to Golderli and shortly thereafter found a bench and had lunch as we gazed out over the valley. Continuing, we walked along a beautiful balcony for some time before descending steeply back to the Kiental and thence a short way back to our car at Tschingel. The hike was about 4 miles long and gained approximately 350 meters in elevation.

We then made the short drive to Kandersteg and checked into the Alfa-Soleil Hotel, where we paid a little more than the standard rate to have a balcony and view of the mountains. We were just able to see the Doldenhorn Hutte from our balcony, about 750 meters above us. All-in-all, we had a beautiful view. Later, we checked out the town and walked about a mile. People began arriving in the afternoon, and at 6:30 we were given a welcome drink and a brief summary of hikes we might like to do. Dinner, this night, as indeed for every other night this week, was a raucous event, with non-stop, overly loud chatter.

Sunday - Today, Rosie, Don, and I climbed a small, but prominent peak above the top of the Almenalp Lift called First. Our total ascent was about 825 meters, which we did in two hours, beating the posted time by 30 minutes. The distance was about 8.6 miles. Not bad for a first full day. We saw many wildflowers, plus herds of grazing brown cows and flocks of sheep. Some inquisitive sheep high up the slope came up to us when they saw us eating, clearly wanting a change of diet from grass. We had good weather most of the day, but on the summit itself clouds drifted past, often obscuring the views. Only occasionally could we see the Oeschinensee far below us and off in the distance. Back at the top of the lift after a slow descent, Don bought Rosie and I drinks, a beer for me and a Rivella Blu for Rosie. Others showed up a few minutes later and shared their exploits of the day with us. The three of us clearly had exerted the most effort on this day, but we did not feel overly tired.

Monday - We had a larger group today to ascend 750 meters to the Doldenhorn Hutte, a roundtrip distance of about 7.5 miles. In addition to Rosie and Don, the hikers were Rick Saynor, Richard Heery, Mike Goodyer, Andy Burton, and a new meet attendee, Daniel. At the top we had great views of the Oeschinensee and of Kandersteg far below. Also, we had a great view of First and of the long ridge that connected it to the Bunderspitz. While climbing First, we had seen several people slowly making their way along this ridge. It looked quite difficult from a distance, but the people we saw were not using ropes and only occasionally needed to use their hands for balance. After returning from the Doldenhorn Hutte, some of us ascended the Oeschinensee lift to do a brief reconnaissance of the trail to the Blümlisalp Hutte. The sign indicated that it should take 4 hours to reach the hut, not the 5.5 that Andy had thought. That was encouraging! Rick, Richard, and I had a beer at the top of the lift while Rosie descended to the town. There were far too many people here for our taste.

Tuesday - We decided, with others, to ascend the Sunnbuel Lift and to hike in the direction of the Gemmi Pass. I had a modest goal in mind to begin with, as I thought that reaching the Daubensee would be enough for the day. However, upon reaching this goal, it appeared that without too much extra effort, we could make it all the way to the Gemmi Pass and so look down upon Leukerbad below and the high Alps off in the far distance. And so we did.

The hike itself was not the most dramatic we have done, being mostly in stark, treeless terrain; however, once we reached the Gemmi Pass itself and could look upon the Alps to the south, the long walk was worth it. We could see the Matterhorn, Weisshorn, Dom, and many other high peaks. Fabulous! On the return, we hiked along the Daubensee, then passed many in our group still heading up the upper trail (road). Further along, we met up with Jeff Causey heading down by himself. The three of us then took an alternate, and much nicer, route at the base of rocky cliffs back to the top of the Sunnbuel Lift. The only down note of the day was that we had to walk all the way back to our hotel from the bottom of the lift, about 2 miles, as the once-hourly bus had just recently left. All-in-all, we hiked about 22.22 km and ascended about 600 meters.

Wednesday - I was determined to have a “down” day today. However, after much confusion about how to get into the Gasterntal, when to go, and who was going, we finally set out with Richard and Katherine in their car. We parked at the base of the Sunnbuel Lift and walked into the valley from there, paying 7 CHF to park. Others paid 15 CHF to drive all the way to Selden along a very narrow road that had one-way time restrictions. Ten or more years ago, Rosie and I went with Roger on a bus to Selden and from there we took a trail over the Lotschepass into the Lotschental, and thence down a lift, to a bus, and finally to a train that took us back through the Lotschberg Tunnel to Kandersteg. The Gastertal is a beautiful near-perfect U-shaped glacial valley, similar to the Lauterbrennen or Yosemite Valleys—but without the crowds. The four of us stopped at the Hotel Waldhaus for a drink and enjoyed a classic Swiss mountain view. Later, we scouted the start of the trail leading to the Balmhorn Hutte. It is our intention to climb it on Friday—assuming we survive tomorrow’s planned big hike to the Blümlisalp Hutte. Somewhat later, I was determined to turn back so as to reserve energy for the Blümlisalp Hutte. Rosie later joined me, while Richard and Katherine continued all the way to Selden before turning around. All had a great day. This evening, our group was treated to a “gourmet” meal, a 5-course meal that was indeed excellent.

Thursday - Bastille Day! After our “rest” day, Rosie, Richard, and I set out to do our big hike to the Blümlisalp Hutte. We caught the earliest lift possible, which was a few minutes before 0830. There were two possibilities to reach a place called Oberbargli, a high route and a low route. We chose the upper route on the way up and took the lower on the way down. Both had spectacular views of the Oescheninsee, the one from higher up, the other from much closer to the lake. The route was a constant uphill slog, not especially pretty except for early views of the lake. Richard was a little nervous traversing some of the steeper exposed slopes, but he had no problems. After 3 hours and 39 minutes, we reached the hut and had great views of the Blümlisalphorn and of many glaciers above us and of the Kiental below. We could have walked all the way to Griesalp from here had we wanted to. It is unclear what our total denivelation was, but from the map I calculated that we had climbed at least 1220 meters. (My Apple watch, curiously, indicated that we had gained considerably more in elevation, but I have not trusted it since I changed the measurement from feet to meters. Need to check this). At the hut, we saw two people launch their parapentes, which they had carried up from the bottom, and sail away high in the sky. I wished that we had had this option! We congratulated ourselves on a good hike back at the hotel and ordered large beers. It seems we were very dehydrated!



Friday - I wasn't sure I wanted to do a big hike after such a long day yesterday. However, we had spoken about hiking to the Balmhorn Hutte during the week, and by the time breakfast was over, I was talked into doing it with Rosie, Don, and Heather. It turned out to be the most spectacular hike of the week. Starting up from the Sunnbuel Talstation, we first walked into the Gasterntal along the Kander River Gorge. Past the Hotel Waldhaus the valley opened up into a beautiful U-shaped glacial valley. After a short distance, we turned onto the trail leading to the Balmhorn Hutte. This is a steep and very exposed trail, although not a difficult one. There were plenty of cables to provide assistance when necessary. High above the valley floor, the similarities with Yosemite Valley were striking. The hut itself was quite small. We were greeted by the hut warden with tea and a biscuit. We ordered a delicious barley soup, while Heather had rosti. After a pleasant lunch, we climbed a little higher to take photos. We also saw a lone girl descending and discovered that she had climbed a peak called the Gasternspitz some 800 meters above the hut. This peak did not show on our map, although not surprisingly Roger Newson knew about it. Perhaps for another year! In all we climbed about 800 meters. This was our last day of hiking. I judged that we had climbed a total of more than 4750 meters for an average of about 680 meters per day.



Saturday - On the morning we were to leave for home, we learned that Rick Saynor had tested positive for COVID. He and Carol immediately decided to return home without even staying for breakfast. Later, we learned that Alan Norton, who had been at the meet for only two days, had also tested positive. And we now know that Carol Saynor has also tested positive. We ourselves appear to be negative, but we wonder how many more of our group will eventually test positive as a result of close proximity during the Meet. I guess it was inevitable that some would contract COVID during this week of hiking, but it was nevertheless a down note on which to end the meet. Thus far, all who contracted COVID appear to have only mild symptoms.

Trip Notes from James Baldwin

The meet for the Baldwin's was a very up market visit after camping in 1976 with the children and Youth Hostelling in 1960. A walk up to Oeschinensee and back, a visit to Schwarenbach and walk back down the valley past the BMX track plus a gorgeous walk alongside the Kander River through the gorge into the Gasterntal valley were our limits of highish altitude. We were happy to walk amongst the mountains rather than up them.

We had the excitement of part of a new walking route that follows the Lotschberger rail line from Frutigen up to the Sunnbuel lift south of Kandersteg. We decide to walk along high-level paths to the east of the valley but instead of a downhill walk we found ourselves walking uphill. The GPS recorded significant ascent whilst only descending 400ft over the 11 miles to Frutigen, but we had outstanding open views and glimpses of the train line as it winds in and out of the rock face.

Having tested a route, we decided to walk down the signed path. This was significantly easier and quicker down to Blausee within a *Naturparc*. It turned out to be a magnificent tourist trap with a big car and coach park and expensive

entrance fee, which we managed to negotiate down to half price after pointing out our ages and then told we had further discount for our guest card.

This so-called nature in the Alps was a strange experience. The lake was a wondrous blue but the trout within were raised artificially in their own fish farm. We looked and left it with its crowds for what was described as a hidden natural area. We entered through a gate to encounter alpacas grazing a long way from their normal habitat.

The route from Blausee climbs past the Rne. Felsenburg castle, the rail line goes under the castle in a short tunnel, and down to Inner Kandergrund. This part of the route was challenging in that the path was narrow, steep and in places in poor condition due to rock falls with notices to remind you to keep moving! A considerable amount of iron work has been added to retain the cliff face, catch rock falls, and prevent further falls. In one section a large concrete buttress supports the rock above and rail line. The end of this section has been made walker friendly by the installation of numerous metal stairways jutting out from the rock face and almost over the rail line.

The final part of the walk runs alongside the rail line and through hay meadows to the 1906 Kander viaduct, Rne. Tellenburg castle and into Frutigen station where the bus and train to Kandersteg run hourly.

Along the route instructive panels give the history of the railway, started in 1906, and ways of life along the way and its challenges and finally telling of the end of matchmaking in Frutigen in the late nineties with a pretty picture of the box. The line was opened in 1913, double tracking was completed in 1992 and flatbed car transport introduced in 1960.



Kander viaduct at Frutigen

We were amongst mountains whilst adding interest to what we thought was going to be a gentle downhill walk, while everyone else was going high up we were going up in a different way to go lower than Kandersteg.

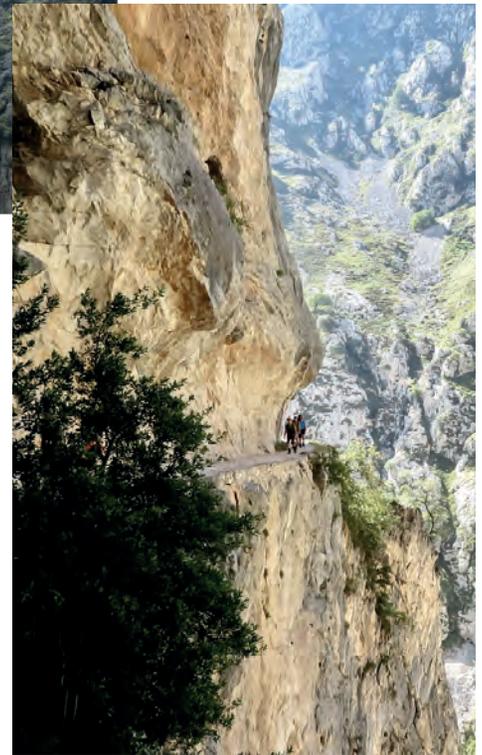
Picos de Europa Meet, September - by Paul Stock

We all met at Bilbao airport for a transfer to Potes, or more precisely Tama, at 1:30pm on the 3rd September. Mike, the owner of our accommodation Casa Gustavo, kindly picked us up in his minibus for the 2 hour journey. On arrival we were greeted by Mike's wife Lisa and given the grand tour of the quaint and very rustic 500 year old farmhouse. After our rooms were allocated and we had unpacked we took a familiarisation trip to the local town and walked back along the river.



Cares Gorge

On Sunday, after a hearty breakfast, we were transported to the start of the Cares Gorge (Garganta de Cares). Mike gave us our directions and we started to ascend to the col which was the highest part of the walk. It was a particularly hot day. The route followed the river which was seldom seen in the deep gorge. As the sides of the gorge closed in it gave some very welcome shade. The path then followed the remains of an old canal through tunnels and cut out pathways on the steep gorge sides. We emerged on our linear walk at Cain where Mike met us at the local hostelry for some very welcome refreshments. During our trip back to the accommodation we stopped on a few occasions for short walks beside the road. On one of those short walks we saw a rare black squirrel. The drive back included a trip over the pass Puerto de Gloria.





Ridge up to Peña Mora

On the Monday we were again transported for a linear walk to the village of Bejes. The plan for the day was to walk over two ridges and ascend Peña Mora then descend to our accommodation at Tama.

After descending from the first ridge we were having difficulty establishing the path on the ground and detoured via a more substantial farm track to the second ridge. In the Picos it is very common to find cattle and sheep guarded by large dogs. In general these dogs are reasonably friendly but they certainly ensure their duties are carried out.

The fields contained many wild flowers but there was an abundance of crocuses. On the farm track we encountered a snake which certainly caught me off guard but it slithered off harmlessly into the undergrowth. After lunch the group split with 5 of us doing a minor scramble up a ridge to the top of Peña Mora at 2103m. The views from the top were stunning and we were treated to a close fly by from a couple of vultures.

On our way down we met the others for a loose descent through a gully and a long ridge path to Pendes village where we picked up the pilgrim trail back to the accommodation.



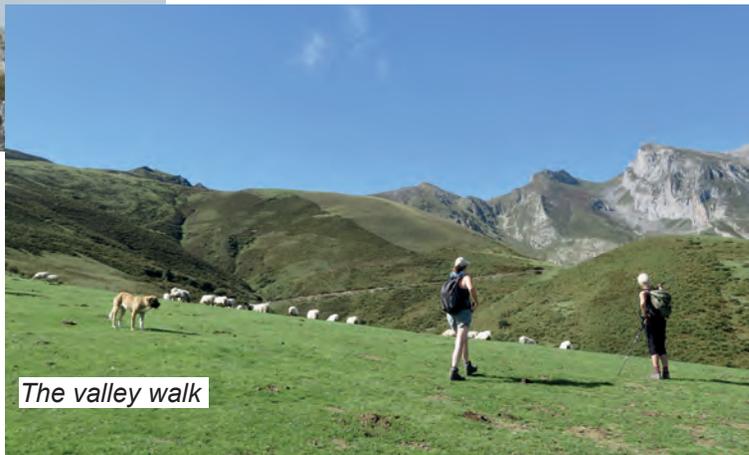
On the summit with the shrine

On Tuesday we planned to do another linear walk along the Ridge of Corsicao. On arrival at the Collardo de Llesba we dismounted from the minibus into some rather inclement weather. The morning forecast of rain had proved to be correct. This altered our plans with us splitting into two groups one traversing the ridge and the other following an old pilgrim route just off the ridge. The ridge group passed over 3 peaks, Peña Gustavo, Peña Caascajal and Corsicao at 2235m. The lower group encountered a mass of approximately 40 vultures on a cow carcass.



Ed and Paul on a wet Peña Corsicao

The descent from Corsicao was 1600m to the village of Espinama which certainly took its toll. The two groups met below a lake and Mike and his dogs joined us.



The valley walk



On Wednesday we had an early start to catch an early cable car at Fuente De. The objective of the day was the peak of Horados Rojos.

At the top of the cable car we were greeted with the limestone rock scenery of the central massive. It is similar to the Dolomites. The early part of the walk involved a gradually rising path across large scree fields. Once we reached the col at the rear of the mountain it was a minor scramble to the top. This was the highest point reached by us during the week at 2508m.

Heather on the way up



The descent was a reverse of the way up but 3 of us took a short detour. There were quite a few Chamois first thing in the morning just along the tops of the scree fields.

On our return to the base of the cable car we visited the shops whilst we waited for the minibus to take us back to the accommodation.

The team on the summit

On Thursday we did a linear walk from Puerto de Gloria pass to Cucayo. The route finding initially proved a little difficult to the ridge but once we established the ridge path it was much better. We passed over the summits of Peña de Portillo de las Yeguas, 2103m and Alto del Naranco 2219m and onto the Collado del Robidario where we took lunch.



Mike G on the way up to A. del Haranco

After lunch we followed a river valley to meet Mike. It was a long descent of 1800m to village of Cucayo. That evening we received the very sad news from home of the passing of our Queen.

On Friday we took another linear route from Cucayo to Caloca via Peña Astra (Bistru). From Cucayo we crossed the river and up to Collada de Arruz. Enroute we engaged with some friendly farmers in a car who kept us on the correct path. From the summit of Peña Astrua (or Bistru) at 1987m we had views of our target village.



Team on the summit of Peña Astrua

Initially it was a steep descent through heather clad slopes and finally across fields with cows and dogs. Some of the dogs and bulls were a bit vociferously in their duties.

We were very surprised to find a very nice restaurant in such tiny hill village clearly visited by outsiders, the drinks were well received and it had wonderful views.

Every evening we had dinner at 9pm, often outside especially when it was warm and often it was beautiful traditional local cuisine. Mike and Lisa at Casa Gustavo were the perfect hosts and without their hard work and the use of their minibus we would have had a very different experience.

We left very early on Saturday for our return journey to Bilbao. It had been a really fantastic trip to the Picos and I would thoroughly recommend it to anyone.

Attendees: Andy Burton, Ed Bramley, Heather Eddowes, Mike Goodyer, Alison Henry, Judy Renshaw, Rick Snell and Paul Stock.

Photo contributions: Ed Bramley, Andy Burton, Heather Eddowes, Mike Goodyer, Judy Renshaw and Rick Snell.

Grinton Meet, September - Report by Ed Bramley

For the Friday afternoon arrivals on this meet, Yorkshire was giving a typical welcome – the rain so long desired had now decided to arrive in some quantity. Prudently, we all met up at one of the local café's in Richmond's main cobbled square, before visiting one of the local museums; the Green Howards museum for the more militarily inclined and the Richmondshire museum for those who wanted a glimpse behind the scenes of local life. Suitably entertained whilst the squalls passed, we then made our way up valley to Grinton Lodge YHA, our home for the weekend. Standing part way up the hillside above Grinton, the hostel affords great views over Swaledale. Inside, the hostel offered good facilities, both for those having meals provided, and for those self-catering, not forgetting the lounge with large leather settees and chairs, ideal for unwinding with a local beer afterwards.

Saturday we were up and off early, so we could make the short journey up-valley to Gunnerside, where three additional members and a guest joined us for our walk. Even at 9am, a goodly proportion of the car parking space was already taken. The first part of our walk, through woodland adjacent to Gunnerside Gill, gave us no indication of the strange landscape that was to dominate much of our route. It was only when we broke out into open country that we came across the first feature that hinted at what this region was once famous for – lead mining.



As we crested a rise, the middle part of the Gill came into view with spoil heaps, ripped hillsides and mine buildings in many different states of repair dominating the view like something from Lord of the Rings. At the same time, it held a strange fascination, making sense of the chaos we could see in front of us – mine entrances, places where water wheels would have been, ore stored and crushed, and wondering just how hard such a life would have been.

Bunton mine & Gunnerside Gill

Old Gang smelt mill

A little further on, at the bottom of the valley, we came across two sets of buildings. The first was a peat store consisting of multiple arches for one wall and a short distance away was the remains of a smelt mill, with the rubble that was its flue running up the hillside. Further upstream still we needed to cross the Gill so that we could climb to the top of the plateau, but today made more entertaining by the previous days rain. After a gradual ascent and descent, we then had our main ascent of the day, following the line of one of the old lead veins up the hillside. Old lumps of lead ore, each weighing several ounces, could



easily be found along the track. On cresting the top of the rise, the landscape continued to be lunar, with the remains of the old veins still clearly visible, and devoid of any vegetation, even leadwort.



Open to the element, the temperature now dropped significantly, and the occasional squalls now picked up in frequency as we headed for our late lunch stop at the Old Gang smelt mill. As if to emphasise the point, the final few hundred yards to shelter gave us all a soaking, before we could get in the shelter of the old buildings.

Our way for some time now had been easy and wide – a good levelled track leading across the moorlands, and this continued after lunch as we descended to Surrender Bridge. One last pull up put us on a limestone bench that we followed round the hillside, offering great views up- and down Swaledale, finally descending back into

Gunnerside to complete a great day out. Saturday evening we enjoyed the hospitality of the Bridge Inn, including local beers and all retired replete to the hostel.

On Sunday, it was another early off, this time starting in Reeth, just a couple of miles away from the hostel. Our route took us up the lowest part of Arkengarthdale, broadly following the Arkle Beck as far as Langthwaite, and then back again. A significantly less wild and industrialised landscape than the previous day, there was nevertheless no shortage of things to spot, starting with a slow worm catching the sun on our path. Further along, the blackthorn trees were burdened down with sloes and inevitable thoughts of some went to gin. As we descended to the river,

there was still much evidence of the 2019 floods that so impacted this valley, with scores of ripped up trees virtually blocking the river at one point, whilst at others, it looked like an outflow moraine from a large glacier, with rocks and stones pushed way out of the normal river bed.



To add some levity to our route, we decided to make the short hillside climb up to the hamlet of Booze, but were neither rewarded with a sign, or a pub. Instead, as we descended towards Langthwaite, we were greeted by a sunlit vista of the village, clustered around the pub, which was to be our lunch stop. As we entered, we could have been back forty years or more, as this, along with the neighbouring bridge, featured in the opening credits of the original 'All Creatures Great and Small' and inside the pub were mementos from the filming that took place. So too were

photos of the flood damage, showing the devastation inside as the floodwater exceeded the height of the bar. After a very relaxing session in such a cosy Dales pub, we headed back down valley to Reeth on the opposite bank, where a final cuppa and cake awaited us before our journeys home.

Whilst most people went for the walking option, Dick and Lin went for the e-bike alternate. Saturday - Grinton - Gunnerside - Muker into strong headwind most of the time, Keld, then a long pull up to the Tan Hill Inn, rewarded by a mainly gentle descent to Reeth and back to Grinton - 33 miles and over 3300 ft of ascent/descent.

Sunday - meant to be a gentler day, ha-ha. Grinton, then backroads to Crackpot and up to Askrigg common, with a number of gates on hills making restarting fun. Bolton Castle for tea and cake and then back to Grinton avoiding the bullets from the active firing ranges. 30 miles about 3400 ft descent.

Attendees: Catriona Archer, Dave Blackett, Ed Bramley, Andy Burton, Steve Caulton, Heather Eddowes, Mary Eddowes, George Harper, Dave Matthews, Dick Murton, Judy Renshaw, Elsbeth Robson, Lin Warriss & 1 Guest

Brecons Meet, October - Report by Mike Goodyer

Once again we were based at the New Inn in Bwlch and were made very welcome by Neil and Sarah. Up to 13 members attended the meet with two staying nearby in a camper van. Evening meals were taken at the pub and the Black Welsh Beef pie was still a favourite!

The weather forecast was looking a little bleak, but we were blessed with reasonable weather. Over the weekend different outings were made by different groups, so each group have helped compile this report.

The Northern team arrived shortly after midday, having had an early start. Mike had recently arrived, so after donning boots the four of us were off before 1pm for an extended walk around Langors Lake and back via the Brecons way from Mynydd Llangorse.



View across Langors lake

We set off from Bwlch along the 'Three Rivers Ride'(see Sundays walk for a further reference) and walked up to the church on the lake shore. Setting off around the lake we were surprised how dry it was underfoot. Visiting the hide didn't reveal any unusual birdlife, but continuing pass reed birds and woodland we shortly arrived at the cafe on the North shore. Quickly refreshed we pressed on through the village of Llangors and headed steeply uphill to the ridge. The path was often indistinct, but on reaching the ridge the broad path shortly led us to the trig point. Easy downhill walking took us back to the pub, just as the part of the Bristol team arrived.

Everybody arrived in time to enjoy dinner at 7pm. Plans were then hatched for the next day.

There were three teams for Saturday - the waterfall team, the canal team and the Black Mountain team.

Waterfall walk - by Rick Snell

Saturday was always going to be the poorer day for weather, so some of us opted for a valley walk, actually a rather popular “waterfalls walk” down part of the Afon Mellte from Ystradfellte to Pontneddfechan and the River Neath (Afon Nedd), then back up the Nedd to the cars again.

Walkers were Mary, Johnny, Alice, Rachel Alison and Rick.



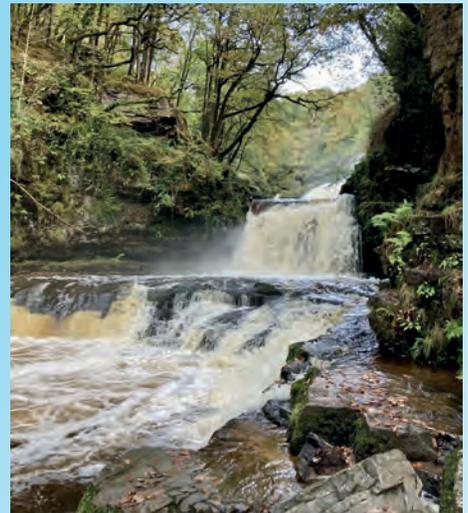
We were in for a treat, as the woods had all sorts of mushrooms and toadstools coming through, everywhere was wet, and the rivers were in spate after rain overnight, so the waterfalls were all giving their best performance. Part of the path at one section of the Avon Mellte was closed off due to collapse and accidents in the summer, but it did not affect our walk much.

At one point on the Afon Mellte the path crosses the river by going behind a waterfall about ten metres wide and with plenty of spray to wet us.



Coffee and tea was enjoyed at a good cafe in Pontneddfechan just before joining the upstream section, and plenty more waterfalls awaited us on the way up. We went far enough upstream for the path to become impassable and we were forced off-piste up a steep bank and through various sheep fields before regaining a bridle path towards the cars. We all know that what's marked as a bridleway on the map is a very variable event on the ground, but this one was exceptional, involving

a high ladder-type style over a stone wall with wire above, and no way through for a horse or bike.



The walk was somewhat marred near the end, on the same bridleway, by massive amounts of disintegrating discarded silage bag wrapping running down into the local waterways. Mary took a video which we have submitted to Natural Resources Wales (Welsh equivalent of Environment Agency).

Apart from that, we all had a great day out, and got back to the cars more or less dry!

'Canal and River Circular Walk' - by Steve Caulton

We awoke Saturday to the promised splatter of rain on the window panes but by the end of tea and toast the sun was shining benignly but with no guarantees of staying that way. Like some horses I'm better on the flat than over the fences so I opted for a low level circular amble to take in the local geography.

I had the pleasure of Andy's company and we made for the nearby village of Llangynidr to partake of a fry up at the Walnut Tree cafe. Suitably replete we fell onto the towpath of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal heading



eastwards towards Crickhowell. By now the sun was on our side and the waterway a picturesque delight as the rays picked up the waning colours of autumnal trees reflected in slow moving water. An occasional breeze shook loose a hail of acorns to plop like machine gun fire into the peaceful flow. They are surprisingly painful to the head as we discovered.

Our scenic saunter ended at the Llangattock Lime Kilns, a revelation of local industry and reason for the canal. Much remains and it has become a popular mooring for boating enthusiasts.

Canal towpath

After a downpour, lunch and a pint of Guinness in Crickhowell prepared us for the walk back to Bwlch along the north bank of the River Usk. The water flows fast enough here to attract waterfowl aplenty and it was still sufficiently warm for insect life to capture one's attention. We were busy observing a damselfly, sedate enough for Andy's photographic attentions, when we were subject to the sudden ire of an aggressive Labrador. Apparently we had upset it not only by being there but because we had backpacks. We promised not to be so inconsiderate in the future.

Our path continued towards the imposing Glanusk tower bridge over the Usk and past a monolithic stone marked on the map as 'The standing stone'. Known locally as 'The fish stone' it stands around fourteen



feet tall and does look like an upright fish. A possible Bronze Age route marker it pointed our way well enough.

Steve and the Fish Stone



The privately owned Glanusk estate is a holiday venue for those with deep pockets and fishing is the main activity. A very nice, well spoken young man, who we suspect was more than an estate employee, politely explained that the level of the river was down by two feet. Fish numbers were down to but what the angler was trying to catch by casting into the trees on the opposite bank is a mystery.

With no objections from him as to where we were headed we pressed on as per our map route. A very nice path along the riverbank, took us past the Gliffaes Hotel high up on our right. Clearly a Victorian pile it was a top rated hotel until very recently. Now local gossip has it that of all people an Egyptian princess has acquired it and intends to live in splendid isolation protected by bodyguards. Whether it is just chinese whispers or a future walk along the Usk will see us confronted by swarthy scimitar wielding guardians in flowing headdress remains to be seen.

Not yet the land of the Pharoahs the signed footpath nevertheless changes depending on estate activities and we found ourselves on a private road. Way above the river now we had little alternative but to be naughty boys and carry on.

In a field near Llwyn-y-fedwen on the map we spotted 'The Gliffaes stone'. Very much like the Fish Stone it stands on private land but we chanced a closer look and found it guarded by a flock of unduly curious sheep. Another striking example of Wales' Celtic past and a Scheduled monument.

We emerged just topside of the lovely bridge above Llangynidr village, Andy from a gateway and me over a wall.

If we try it next year we may never be seen again!.

From there it was a walk back to the New Inn and a cup of tea. A 15 mile circular adventure and a lovely walk apart from the confusion of the Glanusk estate which, being wiser after the event, I'm sure is easily avoided if there is a next time.

Gliffaes Stone



For several years I had planned to do the Fan Brycheiniog round, but other forays in the Brecons or low cloud had always thwarted my plans. We woke to improving weather and shortly after breakfast Ed, Martha, Nan and Anna



joined me in the drive round to the start of the route just North on Glyntawe.

Setting off along the Beacons Way we quickly turned up the hillside and followed a good trod approaching the ridge. It was a windy day, but mainly high cloud which gave us extensive views. Fast moving low cloud dropped short sharp showers on us, some with hail!

The Beacons Way came up from Llyn y Fan Fawr below and followed this for the next few miles. We stopped briefly in the summit shelter during one of the heavy showers and then continued along to the trig point. It was now very blustery. The group decided to continue the walk along the edge to come down beyond Llyn y Fan Fach. There was extensive works going on at the reservoir. The rain showers had now stopped and we had a short lunch break, trying to find a spot out of the wind.



Llyn y Fan Fawr



The blustery summit

After lunch we followed a good path on a watercourse and then cut up a well defined trod to reach the bottom of the spur of Fan Foel. Here we rejoined the Beacons Way path, which we followed, past the Lake, all the way back to the road. We had thought that now we were low down we would be sheltered from the wind, but no the valet was alike a wind tunnel! As we got below the lake the blistery wind stopped us in our tracks a couple of times!

A brilliant 13 mile route with far reaching views, but not recommended in extreme winds or poor visibility. We were back at the bunkhouse shortly before 6pm for a late tea and cake fix. Everybody was ready for their dinner!

After a hospitable evening at the New Inn the Sunday was bright and sunny and everybody agreed to join up for a group walk. We said our goodbyes to Alice and Rachel and then set off in a convoy up to Gospel Pass.

After a slow journey up to Llanthony Priory the road narrowed and there was then an interesting 10 mile drive up a narrow single track road to the Pass. Luckily as we were in a convoy vehicles coming down from the Pass (mercifully few) pulled in out of our way. The limited parking at the Pass was already full, owing to a group of campers selfishly using the hard standing for their tents and camper vans! We continued on to a large parking area below Hay Bluff to start the walk.



Hay Bluff

Rather than take the direct route up the front of Hay Bluff we ascended the easier angled Offa's Dyke Path to the ridge and then turned towards the Bluff. The stone path that was laid several years ago has blended into the hillside and makes the way easier and keeps you off the fragile peat areas.

The views from Hay Bluff were far reaching, looking North beyond Hay on Wye and over the Black Mountains and to the Brecon Beacons.

We followed the path down to Gospel Path and after a short lunch break continued up to Twmpa (Lord Hereford's Knob). It was good to see that the much eroded path up from the Pass had been repaired. We continued along the edge for a while before dropping down to pick up the Three River Ride (used on Fridays walk).



Looking towards Gospel Pass
and Hay Bluff from 3 River Ride



We then had a lovely afternoon walk in the autumn sunshine slowly walking back up to the bottom of Hay Bluff.

At the end of the walk a group of us dropped down to Hay on Wye in search of afternoon tea. Anna, Nan and Martha raced ahead and got to the Hay Castle Museum Café just before they shut. The follow up group were only allowed in to join them! It was worth it.

*Attendees: Andy Burton, Ed Bramley, Steve Caulton, Rick Snell, Alison Henry, Martha King, Anna Kaszuba, Rachel Howlett, Nanette Archer, Alice Quigley and Mike Goodyer (Mary Eddowes and Johnny in the camper van).
Photo contributions from: Martha, Andy, Rick and Mike.*

Presidents Meet, October - by Andy Burton

With the A592 having major roadworks this autumn Ed and I plumped for an afternoon walk in the Yorkshire Dales on our way up to Patterdale. An emergency gas leak on the A629 near Low Bradley and its resultant long queue of traffic, prompted a quick 'U'-turn and the next right off into the hills, to end up at the village of Lothersdale, which sits on the Pennine Way.

The sight of the Hare and Hounds at high noon proved too much of a temptation for us both. A glass of Hetton bitter from the Yorkshire W.R. brewery alongside a 4oz steak, parmesan frites and salad, proved a diversion worth exploring.



After lunch we parked up near Langscar and walked down under Pikedaw Hill through the old workings and settlements into Malham. As we cleared from under the claggy cloud cover, one of Ed's favourite views of Malham, with its impressive cove and ancient limestone walled field system, opened up.

Walking up to the cove and enjoying it almost to ourselves we continued up onto the limestone pavement above, through the dry valley under Ing Scar and Watlowes climbing up through the nick at Langscar Gate back to the car.

Arriving at the Hut around 7-30pm we found the fire on, always a treat, and friends gathered, sharing food and drink and conversation in the warm embrace that we have all become so used to.

Saturday morning nine of us set off for Glenridding, whilst others set off bagging Wainwrights and other routes, near and far.

The nine of us met Nicky Sproson who runs Walx Helvellyn Ullswater and Hiking Highs from her office next to the river and the National Park office.



There we were introduced to our Nordic poles and accompanying wrist loops, and began our training on the green, migrating once Nicky was sure we could actually use the poles without tripping over, onto Jenkins field, for some more training, working in pairs in order to improve our rhythm.

Nicky then took us up through the grounds of Patterdale Hall along the woodland path at the side of Grisedale Beck where some mixed ground training took place. Continuing out of the woods to the bridge, and up the steeper grassy slope practicing traversing uphill and down and introducing us to skipping with poles.

Ready for the off!

Nearly lunchtime

We headed off up to Lanty's Tarn, which was now full of water again, in stark contrast with its level in the summer. Nicky showed us the location of the old icehouse, before we walked up around the storm blasted woodland to have our photo taken by the large boulder/erratic?

Lunch was taken on the grassy knoll complete with bench looking out over Glenridding to Ullswater. Followed by us walking along the higher leat path to the footbridge above the Greenside Mine YHA up the path under Catsty Cam to where Nicky pointed out the cable, now exposed, from the first HEP system in the valley which provided the mine and the school with electricity.



We all elected to return on the higher path rather than end up clicking our way down the concrete road from the mine. As we came back down past Eagle Cottage, I think Nicky was surprised to see most of us skipping in line astern down the path behind her accompanied by renditions of Bring me Sunshine.

Returning to the Hiking Highs office and handing back all our hired equipment, it turned out that Roger was the lightest on his feet, and that everyone had gained something useful from the day. Many thanks to Nicky for an informative fun day out.



Awaiting dinner in the hut

Twenty sat down for dinner in the Hut on Saturday evening to enjoy the culinary delights of Andy Hayes cooking.

Menu:

Starter - Dark rye and sunflower bruschetta with mashed avocado

Main course - Slow braised Brisket in Stout & Stilton..

..or Sicilian Stuffed Peppers on fresh tomato and herb sauce all served with roast Hassleback potatoes, carrots steamed with butter, celeriac and potato purée, broccoli

Dessert - Freshly Picked Pears poached in Amaretto and Vanilla pod syrup with Lemon Shortbread and Clotted Cream Cheese and biscuits

Strawberries dipped in white and dark chocolate

On Sunday morning a similar sized group joined Mike Parsons, pretty much reversing Saturday's Nordic Poles walk, as Mike shared his recently acquired knowledge of glaciology with us all. Other attendees continued seeking out Wainwrights, and other local walks.

We all returned damper than we set out, with a better understanding of 'U'-shaped valleys, truncated drainage, and local erratics, in good time to decamp in daylight out of the valley.

Many thanks to all who attended my second Presidents Meet and mucked in to make it a most enjoyable weekend. Special thanks to Nicky Sproson for the Nordic Poles training, and Andy Hayes for the great food for all banquet.



Out on Sunday morning taking in the geology

Attendees: Catriona Archer, George Harper, Judy Renshaw, Don Hodge, Alison Henry, Rick Snell, Ed Bramley, Andy Hayes, Dave Matthews, Heather Eddowes, Myles O'Reilly, Mike Griffiths, Ian Mateer, Daniel Albert, Howard Telford, Roger James, Mike and Marian Parsons, and yours truly.

Photo contributions: Andy Burton and Ian Mateer

North Day Walk - Wildboarclough and Shutlingsloe, November - by Dave Matthews

Meeting point for the walk was Clough House car park (free but no facilities) near the hamlet of Wildboarclough twixt Buxton and Macclesfield on the western edge of the White Peak district. Thus a little further west than usual but 6 hardy souls travelled from Nottingham and Chesterfield to join Dave Matthews by 10.30am.

Local "peak" Shutlingsloe (506m) – the Cheshire Matterhorn!- towered nearby but on weather advice from Ian Mateer, who consulted his dog Harvey and possibly his GPS device , we set off in a loop which left Shutlingsloe to the end of our walk. A wise decision as we kept the wind and rain to our backs for most of the hike and it cleared by the afternoon giving us clear views from the summit.

The walk itself commenced up a stony trail beside Cumberland Brook- very picturesque- leading to a narrow path up to open moorland- waterproofs on! A gradual ascent brought us up to the Cat and Fiddle, former pub but now gin distillery, which sadly offers no refreshments (except gin) to the passing trade.

Undaunted we turned downhill via a narrow path which hugged a steep clough (ravine) down to Bottom o' the Oven- another hamlet with another closed pub- where we lunched al fresco beside a stream before climbing up a steep footpath to Forest Chapel-officially St Stephen's, an isolated place of worship with few discernible local inhabitants. Dave Matthews popped inside and maybe it was coincidence but not long afterwards the skies began to clear and the sun emerged! After a short road walk we turned onto a forest trail which eventually brought us to the western approach to Shutlingsloe, paved with slabs .



The ascent from here took little time and we were rewarded with fine views all round: eg Croker Hill, Jodrell Bank and Beeston Castle to the west, Manchester to the north, the Roaches to the east and Mow Cop to the south (all approx.!). It was rather blowy but dry. We then descended by the eastern path, steep in parts, and within 20 mins were back at base.

All round a good walk! About 8 miles and 2000' of ascent/descent.

Attendees: Dave Matthews, Andy Burton, Steve Caulton, Marcus and Michelle Tierney, Ian Mateer and Mike Griffiths. Not forgetting Harvey, (14 yrs), who led most of the way!

PS apologies from Heather Eddowes who was away but recceed the walk with Dave last week!

South Day Walk - A walk around Savernake Forest, November - by Mike Goodyer

Nine members and guests meet at Great Bedwyn, near Marlborough in Wiltshire for this ramble around the Savernake Forest. Great Bedwyn was an important medieval market town. Now its main claim to fame is the railway station with links to London Paddington. In addition, there is free parking both at the station and the nearby canal trust car park!

Today we had two members, Rosie and Richard, and two guests, Fi and Steve, joining us for the first time. We were all prepared for a mixed weather day and for no pub or café on route.

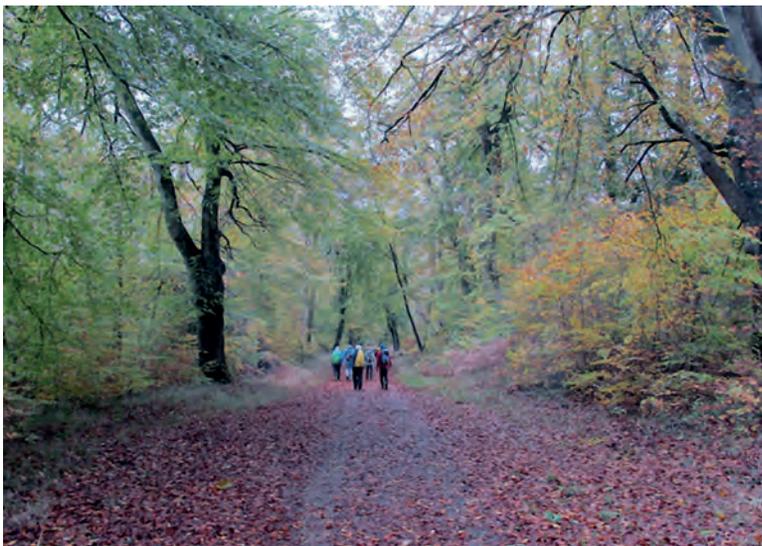


We set off down the main street and quickly reached the village outskirts and went up the track, Hatchet Lane. We followed the good bridleway, passing Stock Common and Bedwyn Common to arrive at St Katherine's Church. This delightful flint built church was at the end of single track road and the Great Bedwyn CofE Primary School was next door – a good two miles from the village. We stopped for a short break for a second breakfast for those who had travelled a distance.

Continuing the walk we were soon entering Savernake Forest. Savernake Forest is the only privately owned ancient forest in Britain. The forest is mainly a mixture of oak, beech and birch trees and is more than 1000 years old. The first written record is in a charter of King Athelstan in AD934, it refers to the forest as Safernoc. It is currently leased to the Forestry Commission.

For the next three miles we followed a series of well maintained tracks through the forest. We walked down Three Oak Drive to cross the Grand Avenue, laid out by Capability Brown, which runs from the A4 in the North through the forest to Tottenham House – the seat of the grand owners of the forest. At the end of the drive was a large monument. This over the top monument was built by the Earl of Ailesbury in 1790. It was dedicated to King George III in 'Commemoration of restoration to perfect Health from a long and afflicting Disorder'.

A nearby fallen tree made the perfect picnic spot – and it had started to rain. Although the rain was heavy we were mainly sheltered by the leaf canopy and the rain had nearly stopped when we moved off.



After a slight, avoidable, detour we retraced our steps to reach Lover's Walk. Following this green lane we quickly reached a minor road and the Kennet and Avon Canal. The sun was now out and an enjoyable walk along the easy towpath led us back to Great Bedwyn, passing the Crofton Pumping Station which was shut for the winter.

The only café in the village shuts at 3pm during the week so we said our goodbyes and returned home. A 13 mile walk with around 1000' of ascent.

Twixmas and New Year Meet 2022/23 - by Judy Renshaw

This year's Twixmas meet saw a total of 19 attendees, most of whom stayed in the hut. We had a mix of weather extremes, from thoroughly wet and windy to beautiful sunshine with snow on the tops. In the evenings many games were played, sociable dinners were enjoyed and some unusual and unforgettable musical experiences were provided. Most people stayed 3 nights, from 30 December to 2 January.

On New Year's Eve the morning was almost dry but the rain became steady as the afternoon progressed. However, three parties went out from the hut.



Andy, Mary and friends took the Hare Shaw route up Place fell and came down by the main path.

Sonja and Pamela took a different route over Place Fell and returned via the lakeside path.

Judy, Jeannie, Sandra, Vanessa and Daniel went to Aira Force (where the waterfalls were spectacular after all the recent rain), over several summits of Gowbarrow and over Little Mell Fell, before returning on the Ullswater Way around the front of Gowbarrow.

Don undertook some essential repairs and examination of the roof spaces in the hut.

In the evening, meals and snacks were shared in several groups, mulled wine and other beverages were the prelude to many games, including varieties of quiz games, the 'Werewolf' game and a riotous 'Chocolate Game', in which the aim was to throw a dice to attack a huge bar of chocolate as fast as possible with a knife and fork, while dressed in hat, scarf and gloves. The highlight for some of us was playing tunes after midnight, including 'Auld Lang Syne', on a set of antique hand-bells, as directed by Simon, our musical expert.

New Year's Day was seriously wet, so some people opted for gear shopping in Ambleside. Others took short local walks which led, in some cases, to the pub and in others to the community pop-up café at Glenridding, where Marian was again helping out. Some of the pub-goers later went over the col below Glenridding Dodd and down to Seldom Seen.

More games followed in the evening, though we all had a quieter and earlier night.

Don watched the traditional lake swim (in the rain) at Glenridding before visiting the pop-up café, then examined yet more leaks around the hut.

New Year at the Hut and in the snow on Helvellyn



The next day was spectacularly sunny and clear, with snow on the higher tops. Some people were staying another night and others delayed their departure for long enough to get out and take advantage of the lovely weather.

Andy, Mary, Jonny and others went over Helvellyn and were able to enjoy the snowy conditions. Judy, Jeannie, Sandra and Vanessa had a quick trip over Place Fell and were able to see clear views of fells in all directions, which was particularly satisfying as two of them had not been here before.

The journeys home were pretty slow for many, due to a mass of vehicles on the road, but it had been worth it!

Present: Andy Burton, Anna Kaszuba, Daniel Albert, Don Hodge, Eudald Rossell Vivo, Jeannie Worsfold, Jonny Taphouse, Judy Renshaw, Marcus Allard, Marian Parsons, Mary Eddowes, Mike Parsons, Nanette Archer, Pamela Holt (AC), Sandra Wynn, Sonja Hoffman, Simon Palmer, Vanessa Osicki, Will Priestly.

Southern Day Walk, January 2023 - by Judy Renshaw

Based in the Chilterns, the route took a 10 mile clockwise circuit from Hambleton, near Marlow, up through tracks and woods to the picturesque villages of Turville, Fingest and Skirmett. Rain was forecast throughout the day, with the main front passing over by midday, so we were not sorry to have a slightly delayed start after some traffic problems. Although it runs through pretty countryside it was not at its best, due to very low cloud and mist. Fortunately some parts were on tracks but there were also plenty of woodland paths, with liquid mud making progress somewhat challenging, especially on the hills.



We left out some of the longer detours, such as the steep hill to the Turville windmill, saving this for another day in drier conditions. A good sheltered lunch stop was provided by the church porch in the village. We saw and heard a number of red kites, also saw a muntjac deer and a herd of around 8 or 9 roe deer running through the woods. After returning to the start, the rain stopped for long enough to enjoy a welcome tea and tea-cake at the Hambleton village shop before setting off for home. We all agreed that the walk had been good, despite the weather.

We are considering repeating some of the previous day walks this year and next as some new members and friends have started to join us (possibly doing some of the walks the other way round). Also differing weather conditions would make a quite different experience. This particular walk could well be enjoyed in sunnier times and with more members participating.

Present: Margaret Moore, Mike Goodyer, Judy Renshaw

Annual Dinner and AGM, Glenridding, February - by Andy Burton

The 2023 Annual Dinner weekend began for me like they mostly all have done over the years, with a drive up to Calverley, where Ed kindly offered to drive again. A quick cuppa and a righteous number of biscuits, a transfer of kit, and the treat of a clean dry garage for the Skoda, and we were on our way.

Resisting the temptations on offer as one drives through the Yorkshire Dales, and with the promise of a home cooked meal waiting for us at the Hut, courtesy of our Editor, we made good time indeed, passing the Queens Head at Troutbeck without a second glance.

A communal meal for four at the Hut instead of the White Lion has become quite a regular thing now, as the pub still struggles to guarantee serving meals. With Suzanne having got the fire going well, and drinks of choice being supplied just in time for Mike to declare that dinner was served, what's not to like.

Plans for the Friday were made with some route and parking advice supplied by Suzanne, which saw four of us park up and don our waterproofs close to the Sun Inn in Coniston and set off towards the fells of the same name. Crossing the Miners Bridge, we continued up the Coppermines Valley, slowly ascending in the dreek until we finally popped out on Wetherlam top at 762 metres.



Above the Copper Mines in the gloom

Here the wind speed increased dramatically pressurising the rain even more. We turned left and followed the top path until a path heading down presented itself in the Black Sails area. As we descended the weather cleared sufficiently for us to be able to see Levers Water, and eventually the waterfalls that were spouting out at its southern end into Boulder Valley.

We tucked in left just before Kennel Crag and descended down the well-preserved mining ramp back into the Coppermines Valley reversing the route up in the morning back to Ed's car.

Some indication of how damp this little 7-mile excursion had made us was the fact that we did not tarry at the Sun Inn, electing unanimously to return to the Hut, but not before treating a quiet corner of Coniston to the sight of four fine physical specimens stripping down to the waist to put on some dry clothing.

Friday evening was well served by another culinary delight, this time from the Bramley kitchen, and puddings were provided by your Meets Secretary on both occasions. In keeping with Annual Dinner tradition, we all made our way down to the Inn on the Lake to meet up with those club members who were staying there, and it was just great to see everyone and have an informal catch up. By the time we returned to the Hut some more of the people who had let me know they were staying at the Hut had arrived and were settling in too.



Saturday morning saw Ed, Mike, Paul, Daniel, Roger, Judy and Myles set off for a walk from the Hut. The walk went up to the top of Angle Tarn Pike, via Boredale Hause, continuing round the tarn and up to the Knott. The winds were very gusty on the tops! They returned via Hayeswater down to Hartsop and then took the back lanes to Patterdale.

Team bracing themselves against the strong wind on Angle Tarn Pikes

Ed has done a write-up of his day which I include here.

Things just don't work the same any more

We'd made the pull up onto Boredale Hause and it was already obvious that some were travelling faster than others. As we turned south, into the cold prevailing wind of the day, that difference became amplified, and we were faced with making the potentially unpalatable decision to split into two groups. I turned to my friend and said, "At the next junction, I think you and I need to take the shorter option, straight down to the valley. How do you feel about that?". After a short reflection, the answer came back, "Yes, you're right – I'm finding days like this are increasingly hard work".



So we set off down into the valley – I was concerned about what I'd just done, but knew it was the right decision. But perhaps I should have appreciated that true friendship runs deeper than that, and our talk and mood became one of recounting the many adventures we'd enjoyed together. "Did you spot yourself on the latest video – the one of us in the Karwendel – the one with the horrendous screes day after day?". "Yes, they'd even got a shovel to put the path in on one particularly steep bit".

"Or after we'd finished the Freedom Trail over the Pyrenees, the overnight bivouac where we were nearly all cold in our home-made tents. Not forgetting your delight when we reached Barcelona and the Marina, when a speedboat came in with what can best be described as a live figurehead on it?"

"What's not to like" I think was your reply, probably capturing the thoughts of the rest of us as well.

"And our many trips to Morocco, including the edge of the Sahara".

Whether it was the glissade and the aircraft carrier style arrest as you shot down the last slope from the summit of Mount Toubkal, or enjoying freshly baked bread under the stars, the memories came back thick and fast.

As we sat eating a belated lunch by the side of Hayes Water, recounting further shared experiences, we realised there are some things that the years can't take away; friendship being one of them. And the realisation that if we can't solve things in one way, then we can certainly have a good go at trying to solve them in another way.

I set off to find where Michele and Marcus and Margaret and Mike O'Dwyer were staying near the White Lion and join them on a walk from there. The five of us set off around the back of the Patterdale Hotel where there is a footpath leading up to Glenamara Park.



We continued up past Oxford Crag and onto Arnison Crag with its good value extensive 360-degree views over Ullswater and the surrounding fells, before heading out to Trough Head and the steep path up onto Birks at around 600 metres. Here we joined the path up St. Sunday Crag before contouring round onto Gavel Pike, 784 metres, and Lords Seat to enjoy the vistas these two places afford.

Once again, the wind speed and its chilling factor became much more noticeable, but thankfully sans yesterday's rain. We all decided we had had enough of the high places for the day, and that a brisk descending walk back to Glenamara Park was in order. I returned to the Hut and enjoyed afternoon tea together with the gang before getting ready for the evening at the Inn on the Lake.

Always a bit of a miracle that us sweaty oiks manage to brush up so smartly for dinner in relatively short time order? By contrast the ladies of course just glow and glide seamlessly through the whole process, or so I have been told.

The AGM went smoothly with the annual administration duties of the club being formally fulfilled in the presence of the attending members, where there were many familiar faces and a fair smattering of new ones too. Switching into Annual Dinner mode I met our guest speaker, Ronald Turnbull and his wife Clare, and after testing of the audio-visual system for the evening with Don's assistance, all 40 of us were able to relax and enjoy the evening together.



The decorated room at the Annual Dinner

Selection of our Treasures



Sunday morning came and we were joined at the Hut by Ronald and Clare. After a little look round at what facilities the Hut had to offer, Ed, Roger and I set off with our guests for a walk-up Place Fell.



Roger and Ed atop Place fell

As we walked and talked it became clear that Ronald had an extensive knowledge of the Ullswater valley. Once we had topped out at the trig point on Place Fell, Clare's first time there, we made our way down to the restored sheepfold at Low Moss and had some lunch.

We then followed the path down under High Dodd past the disused quarry and its quite substantial building ruins with Scale How Beck on our left and its impressive set of little falls tumbling down alongside us until the former mining ramp ran out and we joined the path along Ullswater back to the Hut from the barn now converted into a café and rooms close to Sandwick.

Afternoon tea and cake was enjoyed at the Hut with our guests who were planning to stay for another night and visit Gowbarrow and Aira Force on Monday. This ended another very fine Annual Dinner weekend at the Hut .

Paul, Mike G. and Margaret M. went up Wansfell to the Pike from Troutbeck church and enjoyed extensive views across the west and south lakes before continuing their journey home from there.

Other members got out and about on the Fells over the weekend with some staying on and took advantage of another day of fine weather on the Monday, with Celine bumping into Ronald and Grace somewhere on the Gowbarrow round.



Paul and Margaret on Wansfell Pike

'My thanks go to Julie Freemantle, your Membership Secretary, for organising everything with the Inn on the Lake for us. Heather Eddowes for getting the room ready, and Don Hodge for preparing both the rolling slide show of the years Club meets, and the audio-visual equipment that enabled Ronald to be able to share his photographs with us all during his after dinner talk.

Thanks to everyone who made the trip up to the Ullswater Valley to join in the fun. I hope you all enjoyed the proceedings as much as I did.

See you all next year and on as many meets as you can during 2023.

Members Reports

Back to the Bernese Oberland by Pamela Harris

My first visit to Switzerland was to Wilderswil, a small village near Interlaken in the Bernese Oberland. It was June 1948, only three years after the end of the Second World War, and the first year that foreign holidays to countries outside the sterling area were permitted by the British government.



We lived in the railway town of Swindon, where my father worked for the Great Western Railway - "God's Wonderful Railway" as all who worked there called it. One of the perks was free travel in Britain for all the family, and for my father and children under six, it was free abroad too. So I was taken out of school a week before my sixth birthday as, with little money to spare after the war, my free place was a considerable saving, although my mother and elder sister paid only 25% of the fare. An added bonus was the exchange rate of twenty Swiss Francs to the pound - unbelievable today now it is not much more than one!

It was an exciting journey for two young children, first the train to Paddington, then the "boat train" to Folkestone, cross-channel ferry to Boulogne, and finally the night train to Basel to arrive in time for breakfast in the station buffet, with freshly baked bread rolls, curls of real butter, and black cherry jam. This was an unforgettable experience for in Britain food was still rationed after the war - and was to remain so until 1954. My mother was still talking about it when she was 90, and once I started working in Switzerland, I had to take her a pot of black cherry jam on each of my visits home.

At Basel we joined the wooden seats of the third-class Swiss railway carriages for the onward journey to Bern and Interlaken, and finally arrived at the small station of Wilderswil and the chalet-style Hotel Alpenrose. My mother's sister had stayed here in the 1930s, but we were their first British guests since before the war and were made a great fuss of by the two sisters who ran it. When I took my mother for a stay in 1984 the two sisters still ran the hotel, and after they retired, their youngest niece took over until it was finally sold in 2015.

Wilderswil in 1948



The food at the hotel was one of the highlights of our stay, for it was a real treat to enjoy unlimited quantities of butter at breakfast time and meat at dinner. We returned to the hotel for several years following, and another of my memories is of being there on August 1st one year for the National Day celebrations, when the hotel gardens were decorated with red and white paper lanterns and Swiss flags, and the dessert was meringue chalets filled with cream.



Lútschine River at Wilderswil

Unspunnen Castle

Our parents took us for walks every day, to the ruins of the medieval Unspunnen castle, across the fields to Interlaken, and along the Lútschine river. And, with the spectacular view of the Jungfrau from the hotel gardens, it was here that my love of the mountains began, although on that first visit I never dreamt that one day, many years later, I would reach its summit.

And so, when it came to celebrating my 80th birthday in 2022, I knew that Wilderswil was where I wanted to be: to look out at the Jungfrau again, to eat in the beautiful gardens of the hotel, and to walk across the fields to Unspunnen. In a glorious week at the beginning of July we did all these things and many more. The Jungfrau had not lost its splendour, and dinner in the hotel gardens was even better than I remembered.





At the station

From Wilderswil a cog railway climbs slowly up to Schynigge Platte at an altitude of 2000 metres, a free ride on birthdays. We were lucky for it was brilliantly sunny on mine, so this is what we did, enjoying glorious views of the three classic giants of the Bernese Oberland: the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau.



Before setting out on one of the higher trails, we explored the Alpine Garden near the train station, created nearly 100 years ago. The plants here are all native to Switzerland, with over 750 species of the 900 plants which grow above the tree-line.



All were labelled and many were in flower for our visit, including gentians, alpenrose, a white alpine poppy and a tiny glacier pink. At the highest point of the garden we found a bright blue alpine clematis climbing over a conifer.



Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau from Schynigge

Various hiking trails started here, the longest of which heads eastwards and climbs up to the Faulhorn before descending to the lake at Bachalpsee and on to Grindelwald. This is what I have done in the past, but with advancing years we decided that the first part of the climb up to the ridge overlooking Brienzner See was long enough. The views were glorious, with the lake shimmering below, Interlaken in the distance, and the mountains before us.



Lake Brienz from the ridge

Looking down on Interlaken

We continued along the ridge towards the Laucherhorn and then turned back towards the station on a lower path, where the views and flowers were equally spectacular. As we walked along, the sound of music got louder and we came across a delightful mountain café where the guests were being entertained by accordion players and yodellers.



Wilderswil is an ideal location for visiting other resorts higher up the valley, and on Alan's birthday, the day before mine, we caught the train to Lauterbrunnen, past several dramatic waterfalls, and on up to Wengen and Männlichen high above. It was another gloriously sunny day, and once again the views were magnificent, with the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau visible all day.



View from Männlichen

We first walked up to a small peak above the cable-car station, past an information board showing the different routes up the Eiger North Face, and then set off on one of our favourite walks, along the flower-studded trail to Kleine Scheidegg. On our arrival, I was reminded of Alasdair's Alptrek in 2005 when we had passed through here in equally glorious weather. In the past I have always returned below the Jungfrau to Wengernalp, but this time we decided to take the trail to Alpigen, below the dramatic North Face of the Eiger. As we descended towards Grindelwald, the view ahead was dominated by the Schreckhorn and Wetterhorn at the end of the valley, first climbed by the Victorian alpinist Alfred Wills on his honeymoon.

However, not all days were sunny, and it was a rather cloudy day when we returned to Grindelwald to take the cable-car up to First. We hoped the weather would clear and we would get some good views, but sadly this was not to be, and the surrounding mountains remained shrouded in cloud. Despite this, we set out for Bachalpsee, surprised at how many others we met on the trail, like us making the best of a gloomy day. After a quick picnic lunch at the lake, we decided not to continue up towards the Faulhorn but to take the gently descending path down to Bachlager and Waldspitz, where we joined the bus route back to Grindelwald.



Eiger North Face from Alpigen

A cloudy day at Bachalpsee



Arnold Lunn monument



Fortunately the sun returned the following day, so we caught the train from Lauterbrunnen to Mürren, where we discovered the statue of Arnold Lunn, who founded the Alpine Ski Club in 1908 and organised the first slalom and downhill ski races in Mürren. In 1952 he was knighted for his services to British skiing and Anglo-Swiss relations.



Jungfrau from the Almendhubel

We then took a small funicular to Allmendhubel, another spectacular viewpoint, from where we set out on the “North Face Trail” looking across to the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau again. Along the way there were information boards at regular intervals with the names of those who had made first ascents of the various routes, with details of their climbs and the gear they used. The well-marked trail led past the alpine restaurants at Suppenalp and Schilt on a circuitous route back to Mürren, from where we walked along to Grütschalp before catching the train back to Lauterbrunnen after another magnificent day’s walking.

Orchids above Stechelberg

During our week’s stay we also had time to explore shorter, less frequented walks: above the small “self-service” lift from Isenfluh to Sulwald; from Stechelberg at the end of the Lauterbrunnen valley to Berghaus Trachsellauen, where we found the most glorious bank of orchids; and from Wilderswil to Gsteigwiler, all with lovely views of the Jungfrau.

In such beautiful surroundings, where better to spend a birthday! And we plan to return at the same time next year.

Photos by Pamela Harris and Alan Norton



If at first you don't succeed..... by John Dempster

My first visit to Switzerland was in 1967, when a group of us went to Zermatt. The Matterhorn towers above the village and looks totally unclimbable, partly because of the foreshortening. (In fact the Hornli Ridge, which runs from the summit towards Zermatt, ascends at an average angle of about 40 degrees) We climbed a couple of easier peaks, the Strahlhorn and the Rimpfischorn, and our thoughts turned to the Matterhorn. Graham Daniels, who was in the party and had climbed it previously, opined that it looked in good condition, so Tony Sperryn and I decided to have a go.



Hornli Ridge

We duly walked up to the Hornli hut and checked in. Then, mindful of the old adage "Time spent in recce is seldom wasted" we decided to have a look at the start of the route. Immediately outside the hut there is a rock pitch of about 20'. We scrambled up this and went a short way further. The route here is by no means obvious. There were scratches on the rocks everywhere, and several parties were descending, bringing a good deal of loose rock with them. All in all it seemed very unpleasant.

We returned to the hut where we looked at the Visitors' book. I noticed that a few of the names had a cross against them, which I took to mean that they had been killed on the mountain. After a long discussion we decided that the Hornli Ridge was not for us. The following morning we traversed across the Testa Grigia, and reached the Theodul hut. On the next day we climbed the Breithorn by way of a very easy snow plod, at least allowing us to claim a 4,000m peak. (This of course was before the construction of the cable car to the Klein Matterhorn). Thus ended my first attempt on the Matterhorn.

In 1976 Roger James and I were in Zermatt and we decided to make another attempt. Again, we spent the night in the Hornli hut and got up at about 4.00am in the hope of making a good start. Unfortunately there was a queue of parties, mostly with guides, waiting to climb the short rock pitch (see above). The guides were quite shameless, pushing their way past the non-guided parties which we courteously allowed them to do. As a result we lost about an hour, and by the time we eventually got to the top of the rock pitch the guided parties were well ahead so we had to find our way through the next section, where route finding is difficult.

But we pressed on, climbing the Moseley slab and passing the Solvay hut, an emergency bivouac, to reach the Shoulder. The next section is, surprisingly, almost level. This leads to a steep and exposed section protected with fixed ropes. We climbed to the top of the fixed ropes, but by now we began to be worried about the time – the guide book warns about the danger of being benighted on the mountain, particularly in bad weather.

We were in thick cloud and couldn't see the summit. A party of German climbers were coming down so I asked them in my halting German how much further it was to the top. The reply was "ein stunde" (one hour). We decided that



Approaching the Solvay Hut

the risk of being benighted was too great so we turned round. As we expected, the descent was almost as slow as the ascent, and by the time we reached the Solvay hut it was almost dark, so we decided to spend the night there.



The night was one of the most unpleasant I have ever experienced. We had little food and nothing to drink and were badly dehydrated. There were bunks in the hut with a few filthy blankets, which had been appropriated by a Japanese film crew, who were already in residence, and proved to be heavy snorers. It was very cold and we used our rucksacs as partial sleeping bags. We set off down at first light, passing the guided parties on the way up. When we reached the Hornli hut we asked the warden for some breakfast and he asked us where we had spent the night. When we told him he added insult to injury by saying that there was a charge for staying at the Solvay hut and relieved us of 15 francs each. Thus ended my second attempt.

John having a break

Roger near the summit

Roger and I were determined not to be defeated so we were back in Zermatt in



John and Roger after the climb

1980. We resolved not to repeat the mistakes of our previous attempt. As before, a queue had formed at the first pitch, but we refused to let the guides push past us. Sharp elbows were deployed and there was a good deal of cursing but we held our ground. As a result we were able to follow the guides through the next section, and although we were unable to keep up with them all the way we avoided wasting time looking for the route. It was a glorious day and when we got to the top of the fixed ropes, where we had turned back on our previous attempt, we could see the summit clearly, at the top of a straightforward snow slope. Had we known last time how close we were we would probably have pressed on. The snow slope took us less than half an hour to climb. The view from the summit was spectacular with all the Alpine peaks clear, probably the finest view I have ever seen.



We descended in good order, reaching the Hornli hut at 6.00, after a 14 hour day. We decided to celebrate by spending the night at the hotel adjacent to the hut where we duly wined and dined ourselves.

Thus ended my third attempt on the Matterhorn. It will always remain the high point of a fairly undistinguished climbing career.

Kandersteg revisited – by Mike Goodyer

In 1973 when we had completed our 'A' level exams Andy Burton and I set off on a trek across the Bernese Oberland. Starting at the end of June we set off from the shores of Lake Geneva and over the next few weeks walked to Meiringen.



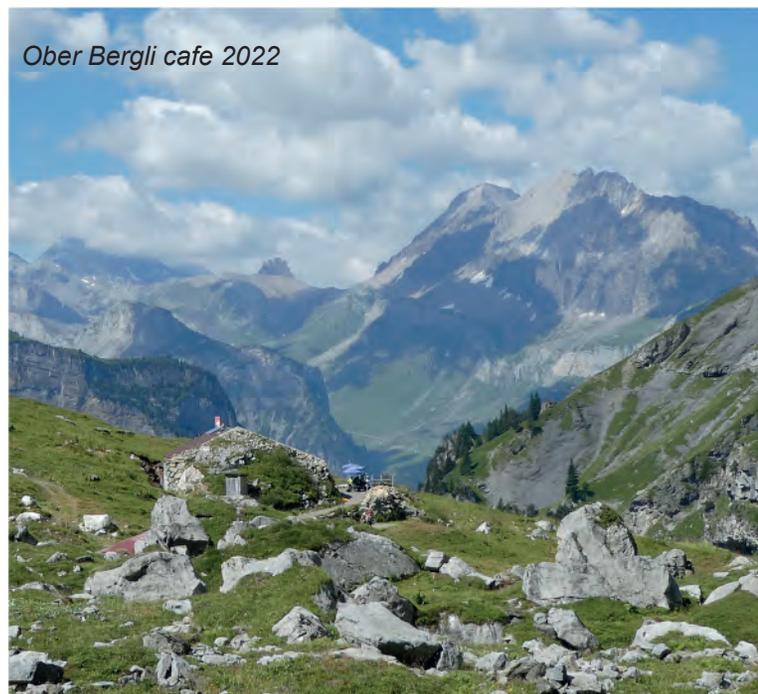
By 8 July we arrived in Kandersteg and stayed at the International Scout Centre for a few days R&R. On 12 July, suitably rested, we packed up camp and set off for our next objective – Hohtürli.

International Scout Chalet



Thoughtful 18 year old

On 15 July last year, 49 years later, Andy and I along with Daniel Albert alighted from the gondola at Oeschinensee and started our walk up to Hohtürli.



Ober Bergli cafe 2022

I was amazed how the track had changed overall.

Diary entry from 12 July:

“The scenery around the lakeside is very impressive and beautiful, until one realises that we have to climb up to the pass. The lake is quite long and wide, the route goes round the side and above the lake in some trees.

The going was easy through the woods, but then it gradually got steeper and followed the cliffs around the lake. The path suddenly took a turn for the worse and went up a rock face! It was so steep that a wire hawser had been bolted into the rock and used to haul yourself up! After this the path picked its way across a stream, past a waterfall and through a derelict village, Ober Bergli (2-3 houses and a cowshed)”

There is now a popular watering hole at the 'derelict village'!

The scenery above Ober Bergli has changed over the last 49 years. The photos say it all.



On our 1973 trek we had hoped to go over Hohtürli and down to Griesalp.

“The way steepened and the last few metres were extremely steep and then I was on Hohtürli. The top was solid rock and ice and a very cold wind had sprung up. The way down the other side was very steep and it was covered in thick swirling chilly fog, I could only see about 3 feet down. Attempting to go down in that kind of fog could prove to be very dangerous....Andy came up a few minutes later and agreed that it would be foolhardy to attempt the descent in the thick fog.

We now looked for somewhere to camp, the top of the pass was solid rock and compact snow and ice – not ideal for a campsite. Higher up, above the hut, offered no better place to camp.”

We stayed in the hut that night. We were always watching the money and this was an unexpected expense. After refusing to pay the 'wood tax' I was made to cook our food outside the hut in the cold. Other people staying at the hut offered us food and a young guy working at the hut supplied us with 'leftover soup' later in the evening. We had a comfortable night in the hut, but next morning we met the friendly hut warden and again made me cook outside again.



"....as the hut warden wouldn't supply any water, unless I paid for it, I took my sheath knife and dug out 2 ice bricks from the ice outside the hut. In next to no time the stove was on and the ice melting and the porridge was bubbling away."

The photo shows the hut well below any snow/ice in 2022.

Hohtürli the second time around

I never expected the changes to the mountains to be so severe in my mountaineering lifetime.

Time has also had an impact on the two 18 year olds setting out on their mountaineering exploits!



Honeymoon Klettersteig and Via Ferrata - by Marcus Tierney

Michele and I were married in January. Although our first trip away after the wedding was to the ABMSAC annual dinner, we couldn't really call it our honeymoon!. After a couple of years of limited travel opportunities due to COVID we were keen to make our first trip back to the Alps and our belated honeymoon a memorable one!

Early on Michele and I decided to drive to the Alps. Recent complexities in air travel and not to mention the huge increase in flight cost and car hire were our main reasons for driving. Using the Eurotunnel and then three nights on the way down to enjoy one night in Namur and two in Rothenburg ob der Tauber meant that the journey was relatively leisurely and enjoyable. Walking the city walls in Rothenburg was a great way to view the old defences and architecture of this old town.

For those new to the concept, a Klettersteig (climbing path) and a Via Ferrata (iron path) are one and the same in German and Italian. Protected climbs using fixed wires as protection with many of the climbs finishing on fine summits. Some routes follow lines created by soldiers during The Great War, others have been created more recently by local guides sponsored by the local authorities to promote tourism. A VF (Via Ferrata) lanyard, a harness, a helmet, tough gloves and a good head for heights is all that is required. The quality of climbing and difficulty can vary greatly. Good route descriptions and gradings can be found in the various available guide books this should mean that climbs can be selected to suit all abilities and fitness levels. The Dolomite VF's are graded "1" up to "5" subdivided by "a", "b" and "c". eg "3c". It should be noted that like all Alpine ventures objective dangers can never be totally avoided. More on this later... In particular due to the length of some of the climbs a good eye on the weather is required to avoid being caught on the wires in an afternoon storm, which are common in the Dolomites.

Our first port of call after our journey down was the interesting city of Innsbruck in Austria, staying in the suburb of Rum nearby. Intending to climb the Wankspitz, Keisermas and Innsbruck Klettersteig we only managed the latter due to wet weather, also both the Wankspitz and Keisermas were temporarily closed. Two days of walking included watching hundreds of competitors in the Red Bull 400 In which competitors of all sexes and ages run up the Innsbruck ski jump against the clock.. This looked short but gruelling. Some of the emergency services teams participating wearing their full equipment including one fire fighting team who wore large heavy leather belts with huge steel carabiners. Huge respect for these guys, many of whom topped out completely spent after only (only !) 400 metres. Not to waste a day we also used the Bergbahn cable car to walk up Rangger Kopfl 1939m in the Alpenrosensteig area. A timely stop at the Roskogelhütte allowed us to have a beer and watch the rain, a pastime we got well used to over the coming days.

On our last day in Innsbruck we woke to a very cloudy day. A sneak peek at the local mountain webcams showed an inversion and we soon set off in the hope of enjoying being above the sea of cloud. On one side there was an inversion over the Inn valley, on the other a totally cloudless and sunny view across the Karwendal. A traverse of



On the summit of Kemacher



Michele moving up

the Innsbruck Klettersteig was completed in full sun. This route was repeating a route followed by ABMSAC members in Sept 2012. On this occasion I was not violently ill as I was on the previous occasion although I did leave plenty of blood on the route after running my finger into a splintered wire end. This route is an easier graded Klettersteig, albeit quite sustained. We enjoyed superb views over Innsbruck and towards the Karwendal. A good first climb that got us back into using our VF kit. We left Austria and then travelled on to Carezza in the South Tirol.

Carezza is a small ski resort overlooked by the Latemar on one side and Rosengarten on the other. One of the advantages of staying in Carezza is that when staying in the local hotels they will provide a free lift and bus pass which we intended to utilise to the full. Local guides will tell you that a visit to the Lago di Carezza is a must so we did. Unfortunately as it was late in the season it's mostly dried up and sorry looking. This does not stop hundreds of tour busses stopping here and the area resembled Skegness on an August Bank Holiday. Better to visit this beauty spot earlier in the year when the lake is full, but it will still be busy.

The first days in Carezza saw low cloud and some rain. Two days of walking were enjoyed using the Paolina chair lift to the Paolina Hutte.

Onward routes included visiting Refugio Roda Di Vael and Kolner Hutte for refreshments. The advantage of the bad weather is that we were able to familiarise ourselves with the area. Both the Rosengarten and Latemar mountain areas look worthy of a revisit in the future.

On the next day we intended to climb the VF's Masare and VF Roda di Vael graded 2B. The two routes traverse the two mountains via ridges. The very good Rockfax Dolomite guide compiled by James Rushforth recommends a traverse from South to North. Ascending from the south we soon found that virtually everyone else's guide book recommended the opposite. This meant we were heading against the flow but it caused little problem as there were opportunities to pass. Upon reaching the Forcella del Diavolo there is an escape route down a chimney with a ladder. After considering continuing, the rain began to fall and made our decision for us. We descended at this point to the Refugio Roda Di Vael. A typical busy mountain Hut. Neat tip here, just lower down is the quieter Pederiva Hut this is the one the locals use. The elderly proprietor is proud of his home made grappa. If he likes you he will share with you his various grappa.... he did like us!

The following day with better weather forecast we were able to traverse in full the VF's Roda di Vael at 2806m and the Masare. This time starting at the Vaiolin Pass we traversed North to South across



Between VF Masare & VF Roda di Vael

the two Via Ferratas including repeating the VF Masare in the opposite direction. Of course this time we met many parties travelling in the opposite direction! If you do this VF, do it any way you want as there seems to be no right or wrong direction. Apart from being popular the combination of the two routes do offer a really good full day, traversing two fine peaks with superb views in all directions including the nearby Vajolet Towers. The descent route at the southern end of the VF Masare again passes the Refugio Roda Di Vael. After descending via the Paolina lift we again got back in the car. That afternoon we travelled onwards to Corvara in Badia, a lovely evening drive with great views as we crossed the Paso Pardo.



View from the Refugio Roda di Vael

Corvara in Badia is a favourite of ours, situated in a beautiful valley overlooked by the Sassongher mountain. There are numerous VF's of all grades. The downside of the easy access to the routes is their inevitable popularity. A photo taken by me on the Piscadou Klettersteig resembles the famous picture by Nirmal Purja of queues on Everest. On our arrival we bought a lift pass for three out of any four days which allows access to all sides of this beautiful valley.

Our first route in this area was the brilliant VF Piz da Lech graded 3B. Using the Boe Gondola and the Vallon chairlift we rose high above the sea of clouds in the valley. A short walk leads to the VF. Fortunately on this day the climb was very quiet. The highlight of the route are two very exposed ladders, the second of which has an awkward out

of balance exit. The exposure at this point is superb, as is the view from the summit at 2911m. From the summit the views below across to the Sassongher, Colfusco, Corvara and towards the Boe are more than worth the effort. The descent allows a good view across to climbers on the ladder sections of the route. After descending to the valley by the same route we dumped our gear at the hotel before heading up the opposite side of the valley by cable car to enjoy a coffee as the afternoon wet weather arrived.

The VF Brigata Tridentina (named after an Italian army division specialising in mountain warfare) otherwise known as the Piscadou Steig is probably the best and most certainly the most popular VF in the area. A 15 minute walk leads from the Tridentina car park to the start. The climb this day was a mixed affair due to the aforementioned crowds on the route. One roped party of five ahead was enough to slow progress to a crawl. The quality of the route is however very good, If you want to do this route go very early morning or late afternoon weather permitting. The route tops out at the Refugio Cavazza al Piscadou. Beer and Bratkartoffeln were then order of the day. We chose the alternative descent route via the Val Mesdi which descended this impressive valley. Certainly much quieter and more interesting than the normal descent down the rather scruffy Val Setus, but it is a longer descent.



The following day was a transit day heading for a stay at the Refugio Pomedes near Cortina. With good weather forecast we were keen to use the day. Just down the valley from Corvara is the small village of La Villa. Taking the Gardenaccia chairlift and a further ten minute walk found us at the start of the short and relatively new VF Les Cordes .The route name translates in Ladin to “The Ropes”. This VF was created by local man Matthias Peccei in 2019. An easier VF suited to beginners which had enough steep sections to slow down the several families already on the route meaning delays for those behind. However this was a fun route ending at the Gardenaccia hut. A short descent to the chairlift followed and we were soon back to the car.

A short drive via the Falzerago pass found us parking at the Refugio Dibona. From here a thirty minute walk meant that we could traverse to the Refugio Pomedes via the VF Sentiero Astaldi a longer but more interesting route to our lodgings for the next few days. The evening sun lit up the amazing rock strata on this route. We also saw several chamois grazing on the steep slopes and a lone marmot standing proudly on guard on the slopes below.

The Refugio Pomedes stands above Cortina and was built in 1954 in anticipation of the 1956 Winter Olympics. The mens downhill that year started just above the Refugio. Later one of the first Via Ferratas in the Cortina area was built with the start again being just above the hut. This VF has several sections but subsequently has become known as the VF Punta Anna, a superb VF with longer and shorter alternatives.



Bridge on the VF Briggatta Tridentina

With a good forecast we were keen to climb the VF Giovanna Lipella which is given a 4C grading. The route is named after an Italian soldier who was posthumously awarded the Gold Medal for valour in the First World War. This was unfinished business for me having climbed the first half with Ian Mateer in 2010. Ian and I were unable to complete the second half due to ice. I subsequently climbed the second half with our current president Andy Burton during the ABMSAC trip to Cortina in September 2014.

Leaving the Refugio we again traversed the VF Astaldi and a further hour saw us at the route. The VF starts up ladders and tunnels dug by the Italians during WWI and emerges overlooking the Il Castelletto whose summit was blown off by mines laid at the end of the tunnels in an attempt to displace the Austrians. The route continues, always interesting, traversing and ascending the west side of the Tofana De Rozes. The route eventually emerges at the Tre Dita, a popular escape point. After a short break and a weather assessment, a further traverse east led to the final part of the route. Steep climbing ascends into a huge amphitheatre, in places the water was running down the face making climbing very difficult on the vertical sections. The descent to the Refugio Gioussani is best forgotten as it was to coin a phrase 'a tottering pile of choss'. A brief beer and rest at the Refugio was followed by a further traverse back along the VF Astaldi to the Pomedes, our longest day of the trip by far.

The following day it rained, then it rained a bit more and then it continued. We were actually glad of the rest as we had had several days without one. Sitting in the Refugio playing cards having coffee and later a beer, we heard of the passing of the Queen. Both we and the Refugio staff were saddened by the news. We stood and raised a glass of something very small and strong to acknowledge the service she gave to our country.

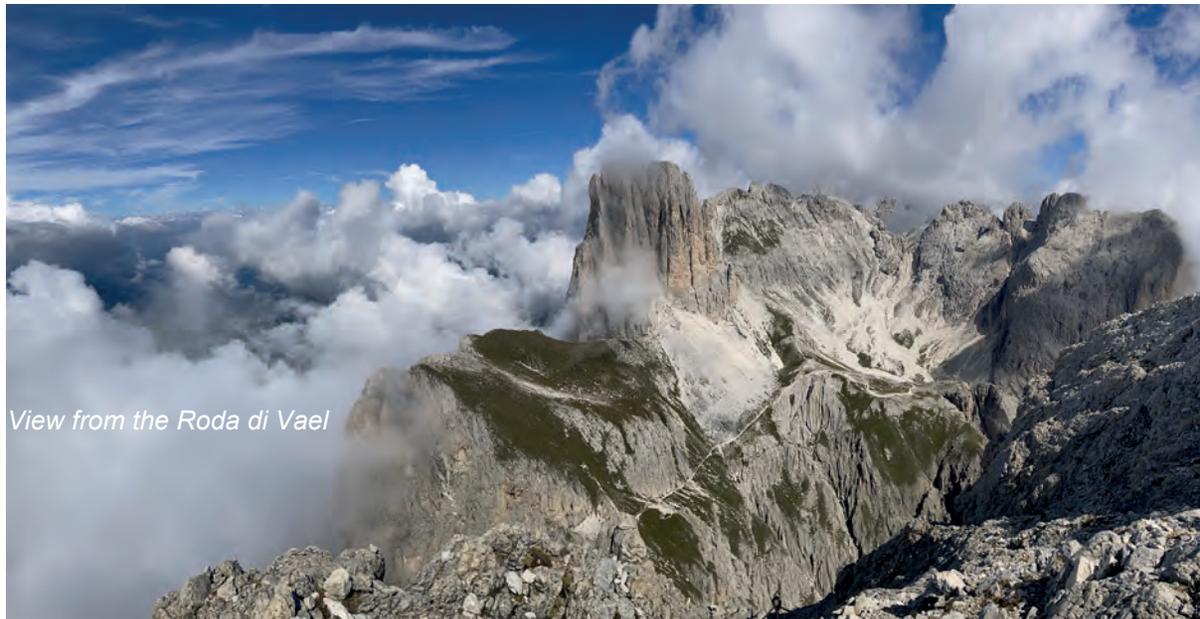
The following day we dodged more rain and descended to Cortina for a very expensive wet day in the town. We enjoyed the day off and were treated to a procession of concourse Ford Cortina's gathered there for a rally. It was only the following day that it dawned on me why they'd chosen Cortina for the rally. Doh In my defence I was tired, I'd had a couple of beers and I was suffering a major hit to my wallet!

An improvement of the weather meant we could "tick" some more routes in the Cortina area. A short walk and cable cars saw us rise all the way to the Freccia nel Cielo cable car station just below the summit of the Tofana Di Mezzo at 3244m. From here a short walk leads to the start of the VF Lamon Formenton a relatively easy grade 2B. We were surprised to find that there had been a fresh fall of light snow so the start of the VF a descent from the summit was quite tricky. On our arrival on the peak it was blue sky all around but within minutes the Cortina side of the mountain was covered in cloud but the other side remained bright sunshine, although in the shade it was very cold. We were aware that the footpath was closed at the other end of the route, so a circular route could not be achieved. We arrived at the summit of the Tofana di Dentro in lovely sunshine but were unfortunately

continually buzzed by a drone used by the juvenile delinquents on the summit so did not stay long. The weather did look like it was deteriorating anyway so we were glad to get moving.

After reversing the route we began the climb back up to the summit of the Tofana di Mezza. By this time the weather was worsening and we had “graupel” (soft hail) bouncing gently off our helmets. Nearing the end of the route Michele suddenly fell back and shouted “Duck!” Actually I believe what she said had an “F” in it too!. As Michele fell backwards a large breeze block sized rock missed Michele’s head and struck me a glancing blow on my right shoulder, more rocks followed hitting my leg. The rockfall was over in a moment, bruised and shaken we hastily completed the route. As mentioned earlier the objective dangers are always there in the mountains and have a disregard for guide book grading. We considered ourselves very lucky to walk away from the incident without serious injury. Descent was by the same cable cars and unusually the cable car operator treated us to some music. Fortunately nearly all the occupants were Metallica fans and we all sang along because nothing else mattered.

Another enforced rest day with slightly doubtful weather and nursing some bruising, we travelled up to the Refugio Faloria by cable car. The cable car affords good views of the VF Sci Club 18. From the Refugio a path 222 is marked “Dolomiti panoramic path”. This path descends with great views over Cortina and across to the Monte Cristallo range. In the far distance we could see the back of the famous Tre Cima towers which looked very busy with cars parked all the way down the access roads. This put us off a plan to visit the area to do a VF on the Monte Paterno. After reaching the Tre Croci pass we ascended again by cable car to the Refugio Son Forcia. It was sad to see the unusual Stounies gondola still out of action, closed due to financial and administrative reasons. There are no plans yet to replace the gondola which means that the VF Marino Bianchi and Ivana Dibona are now very difficult to access. After a lunch at the Refugio we descended to Cortina via various paths. A very pleasant rest day.



Our final full day in Cortina found us again at the Faloria cable car. Ascending the first half of the cable car to the Mandres mid station we got off and began our forty minute walk to the base of our route that day. As we walked we noticed that the continuation cable car had stopped above our heads and did not move again for a couple of hours.



VF Sci Club 18

VF Sci Club 18 graded 5B was built in 2009 and was at that time the hardest VF in the area. That mantle has been taken by the VF Magnifico Quattro which is graded 6B and is situated in the Val San Nicolo valley. VF Sci Club 18 is a modern “engineered” Via Ferrata It provides steep sustained climbing on very good rock which is just starting to show some polish. The VF is very well equipped and the staples have rubber buffers on the steeper sections which decrease the loading on the lanyards in the event of a fall.

We were so fortunate that there was no one else on the first cable car intending to do the same climb as us. Further those unfortunate enough to be on the cable car we’re stuck in it for two hours after it broke down. This also meant that there were no cable cars for two hours so we had one of the best and most popular climbs in the area completely to ourselves. As we were in the shade and we were on the climb early it was quite cold but we soon warmed up as the climbing is strenuous and steep. As there was no one else pushing us or holding us up we were able to have a leisurely three hours climb to the top. This was followed by lunch at the Rif Faloria enjoying the panoramic views over Cortina and across to the Tofanas. This was the final climb of our trip and a fitting climax to our holiday.

If you haven’t tried Via Ferrata and perhaps don’t have a lot of climbing experience, this is a great way to introduce yourselves to alpine climbing. The equipment can be bought reasonably cheaply or can be hired from

many outdoor shops in the areas mentioned. It is possible to hire a guide to take you on the climbs but this can be expensive, however they have extensive knowledge of all aspects of alpine climbing.

Our return home was via Illertissen and Namur adding to our collection of German and Belgian beers on the way, meaning the car was twice as heavy on the return journey. The Eurotunnel again provided an efficient and quick crossing.

If anyone is interested in experiencing Via Ferrata and would like advice in planning a trip, Michele and I would be happy to help

Don and Judy's adventures on the Oxford Canal - by Don Hodge

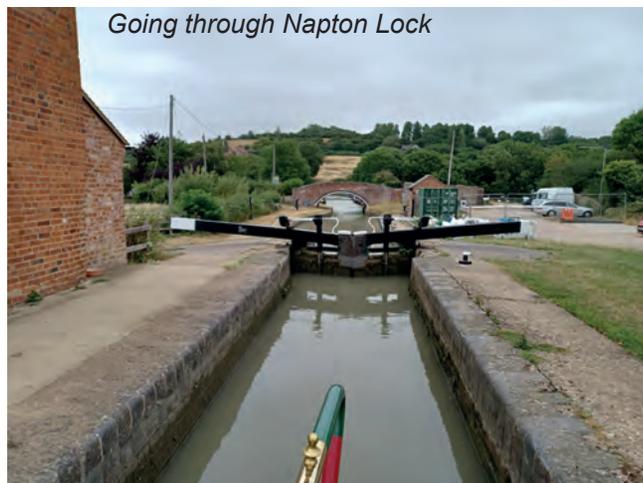
It was supposed to be a restful holiday for me and Judy. Since I don't seem to be able to walk as far and fast as Judy nowadays, we decided to do something different from our previous walking and climbing holidays, so we decided to hire a canal boat for a week. We live very close to the Grand Union canal and have explored several other canals in the country on foot or by bike so I thought that a narrow canal would be more picturesque and chose the Oxford canal as being suitable. After searching the web for suitable canal boat hirers we chose to start at Braunston, which is SE of Coventry and SW of Rugby. As the time of the holiday approached, we both came down with Covid and had to delay the trip, but fortunately the hire company had a slot two weeks later.

The specification of the canal boat was "a 48ft semi traditional stern narrowboat, fitted out to a very high standard and is perfect for a couple's romantic escape". It included a fully equipped galley, saloon with TV and radio, bathroom including a shower, and a sleeping cabin.

We arrived at the boatyard and loaded masses of food onto the boat, intending to eat mostly on board. Since we were first time canal boat users the canal hire company gave us instructions about the boat, including daily greasing of the propeller shaft, frequent filling up of water, mooring the boat and battery charging, then we walked up to the nearby lock and watched others operating it. We had told the hire company that our intended route was south along the Oxford Canal and, after a bit of uncertainty, they confirmed that it was open. At about 3pm, back on the boat after our one hour tuition, our instructor came with us for a couple of hundred yards then I steered to the bank rather badly to drop him off and then we were on our own in a 15 tonne unresponsive expensive floating hotel.

We were using an Oxford canal map produced by Heron Maps, which gives a lot of information about the canal itself and the surrounding area. Soon after leaving Braunston going west, we came to the junction between the north and south branches of the Oxford canal and turned left in the direction of Oxford. This first section of the canal is wide as it is shared with the Grand Union which is a wide canal and has no locks and after 4 hours we moored near to Lower Shuckburgh and cooked our meal on the full sized gas cooker.

Next day, we parted company with the shared canal and headed south on the narrow Oxford canal by Napton on the Hill. From here, you climb through nine locks up to the summit level and, in spite of its being our first attempts at using locks, it went smoothly. We decided that I should drive the boat on this staircase and that Judy would operate the lock paddles and gates as these locks were close together this would also allow her to walk along the towpath



Going through Napton Lock

to get more exercise. Opening the paddles and gates was hard for Judy as she is no heavyweight, but fortunately other boaters were able to help at times. After Napton Top Lock, the canal goes round a hill then twists and turns in every direction, including back north. We arrived at Fenny Compton and managed to find a space to moor as it is right beside the Wharf Inn and a campsite, so is very popular. Since the pub was so convenient we decided to eat there in the evening but, having been so popular during the day, they had run out of many of the menu items and also draught beer!

On Monday we continued south and soon entered a section called "Fenny Compton Tunnel" which was originally a tunnel, but was dug out in 1870 leaving a straight but very narrow 1km stretch of the canal with few passing spaces, but fortunately we did not meet any other boats.



Along this section of the summit level, we grounded and in spite of all our efforts to refloat the boat, we had to be dragged off by a boat going in the opposite direction, which then itself grounded! The next stage was the descent from Claydon Top Lock down to Cropredy. Whilst waiting to enter one lock, I tethered the mooring line with a clove hitch onto a bollard and went to help with opening the lock paddles, but when I looked back at our boat, I saw it drifting in the centre of the canal as the knot had undone. Fortunately I could reach the mooring line from the towpath and pull the boat to the bank.

At Cropredy we moored before the lock and walked into the town to investigate and found the the Brasenose Arms, which we booked for dinner. The town is famous for at least two things, firstly the battle of Cropredy in 1644 which was the first English Civil war and secondly the Cropredy music

festival, formerly the Fairport Convention music festival.

Next day we filled up the water supply by the turning point in Cropredy then continued south towards Banbury, and soon saw that boats coming up the canal were grounding near to a bridge, but eventually they managed to refloat and continue. Since there was no turning point (winding point) before Banbury we were forced to continue.

On the way we grounded two or three times but with great difficulty managed to get going again, using both the 10 foot long pole and lots of forward and back revving of the propeller. We moored just before the winding point and walked into the Tesco store to buy supplies, before returning to the boat and doing my first three point turn in a 48ft canal boat. Our concern was that we had to retrace our route back to Cropredy and knew that we would ground again as the water levels were so low. At one point we were helped by canoeists who got out of their canoes to help push us, at the same time that other canal boats were pulling and we were using the 10 ft pole. Nearer Cropredy, where we had seen boats getting stuck by a bridge in the morning, we again grounded and it took ages for us to get going again. We moored just opposite the canoe club, exhausted after the days efforts and cooked our food in the galley.

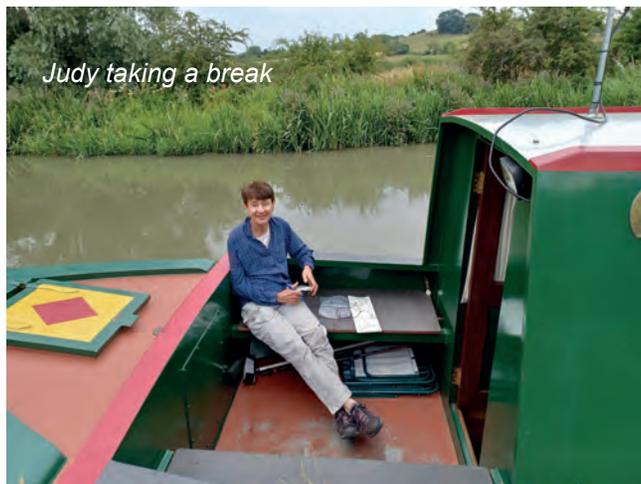
The next day we got stuck just as we tried to enter the lock, but fortunately canal trust staff and other boat users were able to pull us into the lock. Apparently the next section (pound) had been completely dry during the night and we had to wait until the canal trust staff allowed water to flow into this section. Water shortage is a problem this year, not only because of low rainfall, but the lock gates leak badly and people have left paddles open. The next 8 locks took us back up to the summit level, and we went through the "Fenny Compton Tunnel" section again without meeting oncoming boats, much to our relief. We passed by Fenny Compton and the Wharf Inn, which was not crowded as it was not a weekend and made another water stop, then followed the very twisting canal around Wormleighton.

When we had passed this area on our way south, we had seen vast areas of spoil in the fields to the south east and this day there were many lorries and earth moving machines working here. We then saw notices on either side of the canal referring to HS2 which would be crossing the canal at this point. We continued a bit further on and stopped below Priors Hardwick at a nice quiet mooring, leaving the descent of the nine Napton locks until the next day.

On the Thursday, we passed through all the locks with other canal users coming in the opposite direction helping us with the paddles and gates. We reached Napton Bottom Lock and the Folly Inn at lunchtime, and since there was a convenient water supply there, we got out the long hose and topped up our water. The map showed that there

was a village store close by in Napton on the Hill, so Judy walked there, a bit further than expected to buy some tomatoes and nectarines. There were no more locks on our route and we passed by the junction where the Grand Union Canal goes to Coventry. In the afternoon we passed by a field with a large herd of Buffalo looking impressive with their big horns. We moored below Flecknoe, and booked a table in a pub called Old Olive Bush. That evening we walked along the towpath then up the minor road to this village on the hill. Most of the clientele were from boats moored near us, and the lady running the pub had to do everything on her own, including serving drinks, taking orders and cooking the meals, however everything was first class.

We had one more day re we had to return the boat by 9am on the Saturday, so since we were not far from Braunston our starting point, we decided to do a short section of the north section of the Oxford canal. We had intended to go



as far as the Hillmorton Paired Locks, which have three gates for two locks, thus only allowing one-way traffic. At the junction of the canals, we filled up with water and shortly afterwards, we grounded badly and it took over half an hour to refloat the boat. We could see that another boat had also grounded not far ahead and since there was no turning point we had to continue north. Because of this upset we turned round at the first winding point at Dunchurch Pools Marina and retraced our route, stopping at lunchtime by Willoughby Wharf before the point where we had grounded in the morning. During our lunch stop as we were sitting on the towpath, we saw a grass snake swimming in the canal a couple of times. After lunch, we motored as carefully as possible to stay in the deeper water, until we arrived at the junction with the Grand Union canal. Braunston was close and we moored opposite the Boathouse Inn and walked into the village to investigate the three pubs, one of which we booked for dinner. On our return to our boat, we called in at

the office of our starting boatyard to tell them that we would be returning the boat next day on time.

On the Saturday, we travelled the short stretch back to the boatyard and unloaded our gear, including our left-over food.

The trip was enjoyable, passing through beautiful countryside with stunning views and wildlife including many swallows, moorhens, two mink and the snake. We even had moorhens walking the tightrope along our mooring rope trying to get onto our boat, plus dogs jumping in from the towpath. There was a lot of camaraderie with other friendly boaters helping us at the lock gates and when we grounded. If the water level had been higher we would not have been so stressed about getting stuck, with the possibility of not being able to refloat the boat. We both suffered bruises and strained muscles trying to refloat the boat and I am sure that the propeller suffered a lot as it was hitting stones on the bottom of the shallow canal. The weather was perfect, but with a strong wind at the start and we only had rain once or twice when moored in the evening. We might like to try it again some time, but would want the water level to be higher.

What we needed after this trip was a holiday so we booked an airbnb place in Kent, in a converted stables on a former farm and went to see Judy's relations, visited a national trust property and went swimming many times.

The opening of the Dartmoor Way, May 2022 - by Andy Burton

Over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend I was very fortunate to be invited to the official opening of the Dartmoor Way to represent the ABMSAC.

Due to Covid-19 this Festival had been postponed from May 2020 till now. I travelled with James and Belinda Baldwin to the launch at the Watermark Centre in Ivybridge on the Friday afternoon and helped with the setting up of the hall for the event. The opening address was given by Kate Ashbrook, then Chair of the Ramblers, and the responses were by George Coles, the Chair of Dartmoor Way CIC and the Project Manager Michael Owen.

James wrote a good article on the development of the Dartmoor walking and cycle route from original inception in 2000 to its completion in 2020, in the Club Journal of the same year, which gives you some idea of what perseverance and cooperation such a nationally important project requires.



The Walking Route is a well-signed 108 mile circular route which winds its way through the foothills of Dartmoor, linking towns, villages and hamlets along its length. The route is suitable for walking at most times of the year. Spring's fresh and vivid new growth; the glories of high Summer; Autumn's stunning colours and the stark beauty of Winter all provide exciting times to enjoy the Dartmoor Way.

In addition to the main circular route, there is the 22.5 mile long High Moor Link. This allows the walker to follow a 'figure of eight' route, or alternatively enjoy either of the shorter north or south circular routes.

There is also a 95-mile-long cycle route of the same name with a 27 mile High Moorland link which Mike O'Dwyer and my youngest son had a go at last summer completing about half of the distance in a day.



The festival following the opening consisted of a programme of guided walks over three days starting from locations around Dartmoor following sections of the Way. Members from various local Ramblers and walking groups lead these walks designed to offer a variety of walk distances and terrains to suit a range of walking abilities, plus a family cycle ride.

A walk was also arranged for disabled people riding in "Tramper" type buggies, a good number attended. The Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNP) have taken this on and are offering routes on the moor for this type of vehicle accompanied by the able bodied.



On Saturday James and Belinda and I set up in the National Trust car park at Parke, near Bovey Tracey, which also is the HQ for the DNP Authority. Our guide for the days 8-mile walk was David Arcott, who was ably assisted by Jim.

The team of walkers on Saturday.



We followed the Dartmoor Way through parkland and woods, then a stretch of the ancient Templar Way tramway to our highest point on the edge of Haytor, via Green Lane and Low and High Brimley through fields and tracks, then paths through a farmyard back to our start point.

Taking a break on the Granite Way

Sunday we elected to join the slightly longer of the two walks setting off from Buckfast Abbey with our guide Eric leading us from the Abbey car park with its impressive fully functioning watermill powered by water from the Holy Brook, up through Burchetts Wood, alongside the Mill Leat on to Langaford stopping for lunch in the grounds of Holne Church, a full on Dartmoor granite building housing a stunning early 16th century roodscreen and pulpit, a magnificence of medieval colouring and carving.



Buckfast Abbey



We continued through the woods to Hembury Castle, an Iron Age hill fort which subsequently had an early Norman motte and bailey constructed on the same site, returning back to the Abbey to enjoy an afternoon tea in the impressive café and grounds.

James atop the hill fort

On Bank Holiday Monday we elected to join in on the walks offered by the Okehampton Walking Group. We met our walk leaders at the recently refurbished and soon to be back in regular service Okehampton Railway station. I joined the group doing a reservoir walk incorporating stretches of the Granite and Dartmoor Way's.

We set off under the railway and across the golf course into an area of woodland full of bluebells where we walked through patches of their elusive but distinctive scent.



One of our guides was a keen bird spotter, being able to identify many of the little birds by their calls. I joined in as we walked around Meldon reservoir by pointing out the call of a cuckoo, my first of the year.

After a lunch by one of the brooks that fed into the reservoir, we set off up onto the moor proper and made good use of the little Dartmoor Way signs put up by the volunteers in the run up to the official opening. Here we had extensive views of various Tors and rock outcrops, that many walkers on the moor bag in the same spirit as Munro bagging. The return route took us over the impressive Meldon Viaduct busy with walkers and families out cycling.

The Viaduct was built for the Plymouth line in 1874. It is unusual in being constructed of wrought iron. It is 175m long and carried the line 36m above the valley floor.

James and Belinda wrote an interesting article on their journey to walk to all 390 recorded Tors and Rocks in the 2018 Journal and Michael Owen supplied the photographs, as they all became more and more involved with the creation of this walking route around Dartmoor.



My thanks to everyone involved in the project for inviting me and James and Belinda for their generous hospitality and good company over the whole weekend. I hope to be able to return to this area and explore more of the Dartmoor Way with friends and family in the future.

West Highland Way

Three gentlemen of a certain age set out to show that there was some life left in the old bones
by Mike Goodyer

This was a walk that was planned pre Covid and was rescheduled for this year.



Day 1 Milngavie to Drymen – 12.5 miles, 780' ascent



We left the GSH in Patterdale at 6am and arrived at the start, after a second breakfast, at 10am.

We set out towards Drymen through Mugdock Country Park and along an old railway line, passing the Glengoyne Distillery along the way. We stopped at the little café at Dumgoyne and sampled the Haggis bon bons.



Crossing over Endrick Water at Gartness we arrived at the Inn in the late afternoon.

Day 2 Drymen to Rowardennan – 15.8 miles, 2450' ascent

Left Drymen at 9am and headed towards the Conic Hills. We enjoyed a detour along the whole ridge, taking in all the summits.



We then descended to Loch Lomond to Balmaha. Time for coffee and cake.

After paying our respects to Tom Weir (creator of the walk) we continued along the banks of Loch Lomond, walking along beaches and up and over wooded glades in the afternoon sunshine. A lovely walk.

Approaching the Conic Hills with Loch Lomond beyond

Active Recovery Day, no 1 – 8.5 miles, 3100' ascent

Another early start saw us ascending the good path up to the top of Ben Lomond and over the tops and down via the Ptarmigan Ridge back to the loch side.

The day improved as we went along, finishing in sunshine on the Hotel for refreshment.

Team on the summit of Ben Lomond



Day 3 Rowardennan to Inverarnan – 14.6 miles, 2200' ascent



Lovely walk along the Loch side in spring sunshine, the path was tricky in places. We stopped for coffee and cake at Inversnaid before continuing along the wooded path.

Through the trees we got glimpses of Tarbet and Inveruglas on the opposite bank and the small ferries. We passed the Doune Byre Bothy on our way to our chalet at Beinglas Farm at Inverarnan.

Last look at LochLomond

Day 4 Inverarnan to Tyndrum – 12.3 miles, 1630' ascent

A great hike through some lovely forest paths and spectacular scenery. We stopped above Crainlarich for lunch with the Crainlarich Hills as a backdrop.

After lunch we walked through areas of cleared forest, the lumberjacks have been very busy. The maps now need updating!

In the distance we caught a glimpse of a snow topped Ben Lui.

We then passed the ruins of Fillans Priory, along with its ancient graveyard.

We continued along the river to Tyndrum. We visited the 'Green Welly Stop' to stock up on lunch for tomorrows big walk across Rannoch Moor.



Crainlarich Hills come into view

Day 5 Tyndrum to Kingshouse – 20 miles, 2090' ascent

A brilliant walk passing through the Bridge of Orchy, morning coffee and scone stop. Suitably fortified we were ready for the walk over Rannoch Moor via the old drovers road to Glencoe. We were impressed by the far reaching views in glorious sunshine. A late lunch on the edge of the moor was most welcome.



Walking across the moor was fascinating. We detoured up to Rannoch Point for great views across the moor. We were soon crossing the Glencoe ski area and dropping down to the road and then to the new Hotel at Kingshouse.

View from Rannoch Point

Day 6 Kingshouse to Kinlochleven – 9.2 miles, 1320' ascent

After a restful night and excellent venison burgers at the Kingshouse we set off for a shorter day over the Devils Kitchen and back down to sea level.

Another day of stunning views and weather. The scenery brought back memories of many days spent winter climbing in Glencoe. At the pass we saw our first view of Ben Nevis.

Arrived in Kinlochleven in the mid afternoon and enjoyed a couple of well earned pints.



Off down Glencoe to the Devil's Kitchen

Day 7 Kinlochleven to Fort William – 15.8 miles, 2080' ascent

The last day of the WHW. Another day of lovely views in perfect walking weather.



As we climbed up to the Larigmor we paused to look at the Pap of Glencoe and then higher up the Mamores came into view. Our route skirted the big peaks and then Ben Nevis came into view. We walked through the much depleted forest high up in Glen Nevis and then took the forest track down into Fort William.

Ben Nevis comes into view



After passing the 'original finish' point we walked up the High Street to the new Tom Weir bench – the new finish.



Bonus Day, Ben Nevis – 10 miles. 4260' ascent

Refreshed from our exertions of the WHW we had an 'active recovery day, no 2' with an ascent of the Ben, via the Tourist Route.

We were all tired but happy on completing the way. The Ben was to be the cheery on the icing of the cake.



After taking a taxi ride up to Achintee and set off up the path. We had extensive views across Glen Nevis, seeing yesterday's descent route and the Mamores. The last 100m was a snow field, where our crampons made the going easy.

From the summit we could see forever.

On our return we rehydrated at the Ben Nevis Inn at Achintee.

Overview: We completed the 96 miles in great weather, having some magnificent views, great overnight stops, good food and by no means last good company for the week.

We were surprised by the number of walkers, the different nationalities and the range of ages doing the walk. We were the oldest group on the walk that week.

We used Gemini Walks to book our overnight stops and move our luggage each day.

TH Somervell in the Alps- *David Seddon*

Shortly after I gave a talk on TH Somervell to the ABMSAC and other clubs in October 2022, I had the opportunity to inspect several hundred watercolours and ten or so oil pictures held by a member of his extended family. Amongst these were 20 or so pictures of the Alps that have never been exhibited. I have used a few of these to illustrate this article.

TH Somervell was a final year medical student when on 28 June 1914, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire was assassinated in a faraway city he may never have heard of. Like most of the population, he could not have imagined that 36 days later, Britain would be at war. His instinct was to enlist immediately in a combat unit, but he was firmly instructed, as were other medical students, to continue his studies and qualify. The 'need for

doctors would be great', they were told – prescient words indeed. From 1915 onwards and now a Captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps, he was attached to one of the many Casualty Clearing Stations (CCS) which had been set up a few miles behind the front line. These CCSs served three purposes. Lightly wounded men were treated and returned to their units. Those more seriously wounded but well enough to be evacuated by train would be transferred to base hospitals for further treatment. Those who needed immediate surgery would be operated on at the CCS itself. His first experience of battlefield injuries occurred in June 1916 and as a result of 'friendly fire' from British artillery. His busiest times as a surgeon were during the first few days of the battle of the Somme and also the final German offensive of March 1918. As the British front line was pushed back in late March of that year, his CCS came under shell fire and was, with all its equipment, hastily abandoned.

Somervell's application for membership of the Alpine Club, submitted in early 1921, reveals much of his achievements in the Alps. In 1913 he climbed the Diablerets, Oldenhorn and Dents du Midi. At Montenvers, he found two other climbers, a parson by the name of Buxton and the Bishop of Sierra Leone that made up an ecclesiastical party seemingly led by the guide Jules Simond. In his autobiography, *After Everest*, Somervell notes that his first Alpine climb was to the Col des Grands Montets and his second Alpine climb was the North Arête of Aiguille du Moine. Near disaster was to follow when the Bishop fell off above an overhang and dangled in mid-air, 'like a pendulum'. Somervell was able to lower him to safety. Ascents of Aiguille de l'M, Petit Charmoz and the Col du Geant were to follow in a more conventional style but perhaps without the Bishop.

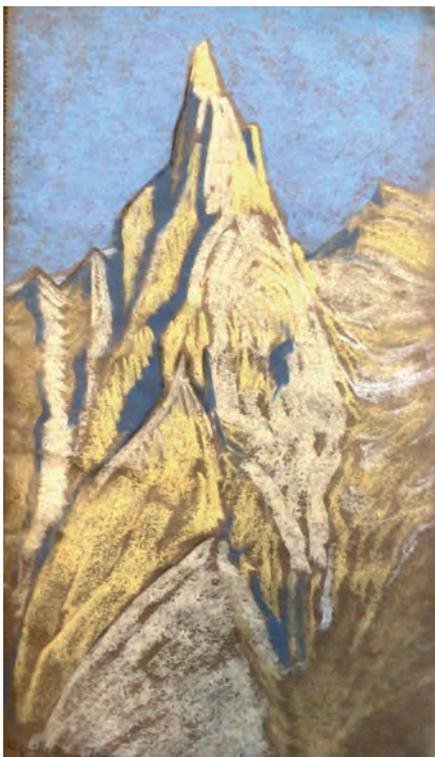


Dent du Geant and Grand Flambeau from Col du Geant (watercolour undated)

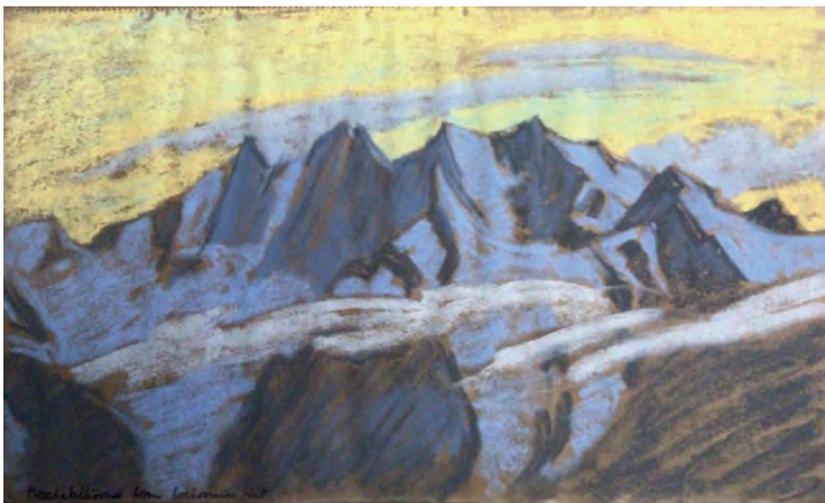
In 1920, he and fellow members of the Fell and Rock (Solly, Bower, Meldrum and Bentley Beetham) completed an ambitious programme. Although failing on the west ridge of Aiguille du Chardonnet, they climbed the Petit Aiguille Verte, Aiguille du Grandes Charmoz, Aiguille du Midi and the Grand Flambeau. Moving to Zermatt, they traversed the Matterhorn to Pic Tyndall, climbed the Dent Blanche and Wellenkuppe and traversed the Zinal Rothorn. Finally,

in the Dauphine they climbed Pic Coolidge and the Grande Ruine amongst others. Despite this not unreasonable tally of peaks, his application to join the 1921 Everest expedition was turned down. In *After Everest*, published in 1936, Somervell gives the year of these ascents as 1919. However in his application to join the Alpine Club, the year given is 1920. I have assumed the latter to be correct.

In 1921, Somervell was based at Bonneval and Ceresole with McCleary, Thorneycroft and Symonds. Their climbs included Grivola, the Herbetet, Gran Paradiso and a new route on the south wall of the Cresta Gastaldi. From Courmayeur, his party traversed Mont Blanc to Chamonix. Somervell then climbed the Grepon and the Dent du Geant before moving to Saas Fee where, with Bentley Beetham and Roberts, he climbed the Allalinhorn from the Britannia hut and the Rimpfischhorn before descending towards the Zermatt valley. They crossed back into the Saas valley by traversing Dom and Taschhorn, just reaching Saas before dark after a 'terrific struggle' with the glacier above the Langenfluh. They then completed the Portjengrat-Weissmies traverse.



Aiguille de la Tsa (undated pastel)



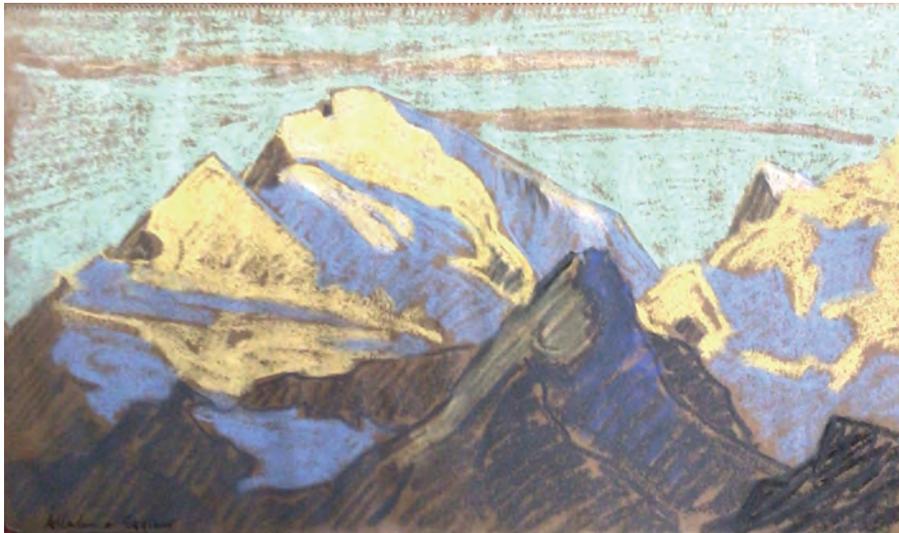
Mischabel from the Weissmeis Hut (1921 pastel)

In the summer of 1923, and with his brother Leslie, Beetham and others, Somervell climbed over 32 peaks in 6 weeks. Beginning in the Dolomites, he climbed the north east ridge of the Langkofel with his brother and Frank Smythe. The Mount Everest Committee had asked Somervell to provide references for Smythe and Beetham for the 1924 Everest expedition. More of that later. Moving to the Oberland, his party traversed the Eiger from Scheidegg carrying the oxygen equipment destined for use on Everest the following year. He submitted a report to the Mount

Everest Committee critical of the weight and awkwardness of the apparatus. They then climbed the Schreckhorn, Finsteraarhorn (traverse), Aletschorn and Bietschhorn before travelling to Randa and climbing the Weisshorn by the Schaligrat. Their *grand finale* was to have been a complete traverse of the Ober Gabelhorn, Wellenkuppe, Trifthorn, Zinal Rothorn, Schalihorn and Weisshorn but this plan was thwarted by bad weather on the summit of the Ober Gabelhorn.

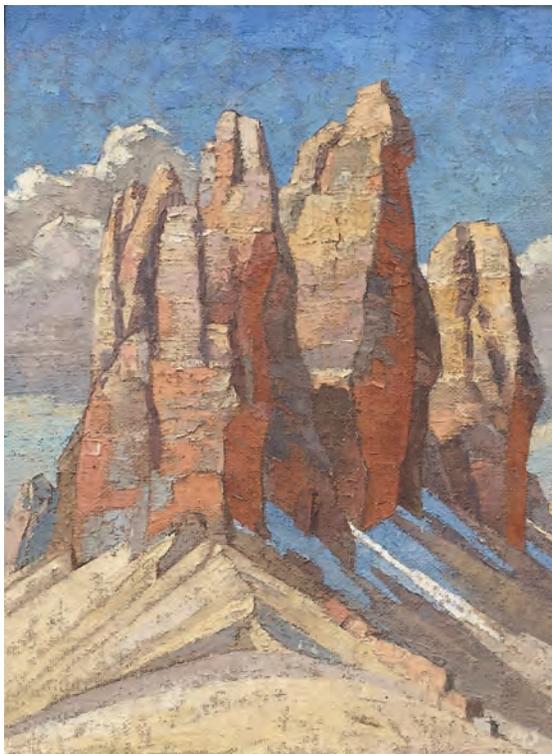


Matterhorn (1921 pastel)



Egginer and Allalinhorn (1921 pastel)

In a supposedly confidential note to the selection committee at the Royal Geographical Society, Somervell was to prefer Beetham over Smythe. This proved to be a monumental misjudgement! Beetham was to be incapacitated by dysentery and sciatica during the 1924 expedition. He did not climb above camp 3 and never visited the Himalayas again. Smythe however, was to complete first ascents of *Route Major* and *Sentinelle Rouge* on the Brenva face of Mont Blanc in 1927, climb on Kangchenjunga in 1930, climb Kamet in 1931 and equal the altitude record on Everest in 1933 as well as climbing on Everest in 1936 and 1938! Might the outcome of the 1924 Everest expedition have been different if Frank Smythe had been selected instead of Bentley Beetham or Andrew Irvine?



Tre Cime di Lavaredo (oil, undated)

Somervell was to visit Zermatt again with his two sons, Jim and David and others, in the 1950s. They climbed the Wellenkuppe together but I suspect Somervell *pere* left the higher peaks to the younger members of the party.

Somervell's work in India is well described in his 3 books, *After Everest*, *India Calling*, and *Knife and Life in India*. I have also written articles about TH Somervell that may be found in the *Alpine Journals* of 2005, 2020, 2022 and the *Himalayan Journal* of 2006. A fuller record of his life, and images of many of his pictures is held at the Alpine Club, London. If you are the proud owner of a Somervell picture, I would be pleased to hear from you.

Development and Training

The Development and Training package was set in 2019 to encourage members who wish to develop their skills. The aim is to increase skills, promote the ABMSAC and increase membership.

The package was finalised by Paul Stock and approved by the committee. Heather Eddowes, coordinates the scheme. The application requirements are presented on the website.

Three members had their applications for training approved during 2022. The reports are presented below.

Report on Rock Skills weekend 10-12 June - by *Daniel Albert*



With support from an educational grant from ABMSAC, I attended a weekend of instruction organised by the Exped Adventure Company from Staveley, near my home in Kendal. Exped run guided tours in mountainous areas around the world, often going to places off the major tourist “bucket lists”. The instruction weekends are mainly for tour participants, for whom the price is included. The Rock Skills weekend is an opportunity to visit/ revisit skills for moving over rocky terrain using ropes for security and for descents.

There were three participants on our course. Two booked to go on a rock traverse of the High Atlas Mountains and me. We met with Ian, a mountaineering instructor on the Friday night at the Kendal climbing wall.

There we reviewed roped climbing, starting from the very basics of tying in to a harness. All the while, we were able to discuss how the techniques might translate into bigger projects.

As is often the case, I was better at knots and the others were better at climbing

Saturday was very blustery. It was the day that the Great North Swim was cancelled. We met up at Dungeon Ghyll in Langdale and walked up to Stickle Barn Crag. Here we consolidated our learning by climbing a short rock route (Diff or V Diff, depending who you ask). We spent a lot of time discussing gear placements and the formation of safe anchors. We then practiced abseiling, first on a single pitch and then with a double pitch where we learn to make ourselves secure on a small ledge, before pulling the rope through and roping down to the bottom. A lot of time was spent working on safety aspects of abseiling: from anchor security to considerations of what will happen if you “let go of the rope”.

Sunday was spent under the guidance of a different instructor. Mark is one of the owners of Exped Adventure. We took the skills from the previous two days and broadened them out onto mixed climbing and scrambling terrain on Raven Crag Yewdale (Hodge Close). Now we added taking coils of rope and moving together. All the while practising our clove hitches (one-handed now) and Italian hitches.

Overall there were a lot of useful individual tips to pick up during the weekend. But the real gain was learning to put it together into a safe efficient way of moving over varied rock terrain. It built on the skills from the club skills meet in April very well. Many thanks to the club for financial support.

Plas Y Brenin, 14-18 July: Mountain Skills Course Report - By Mary Eddowes

After a long drive through hot heat wave air from Salford in the south west, up through soft green mid Wales and



The group! Steven, Guy, Louise, Mary and Jo by Nant Gwyd

into rugged Snowdonia, I arrived late on Sunday evening at Plas Y Brenin. It was my first time at the National outdoor centre in Capel Curig, and as I unpacked the car and got my bearings I felt a little nervous as well as excited for the week ahead. I had hoped to do the 5-day mountain skills course in 2020, but the pandemic meant plans had to change. But finally I was here, with the intention of reminding myself of forgotten skills, learning some new ones and spending a week fully immersed in the beautiful Welsh mountains of Snowdonia.

We were a group of five, aged between 20 and 52, all here for different reasons, but united in our love for the hills and our curiosity to learn and explore. Our instructor was Iona, a highly qualified and enthusiastic mountaineer who led us through the week with endless positivity, encouragement and patience.

Day 1: Navigation

After a slow start in the classroom and incredibly high heat wave temperatures in the valley, Monday was a gentle introduction to the area and each other, with the main focus being navigation techniques and choosing strategies. We began by looking at the 5 Ds of navigation:

Description Distance Duration Direction Danger

These became the top takeaway of the week, and Iona's favourite quiz for us at each turn.

We left Plas Y Brenin on foot, lathered in suncream and in sun-hats and took our time to navigate Iona's planned route with precision, using only the natural features of the landscape as guides.

Many wild flowers, (including heath spotted orchid and dwarf checker mallow) were noted during the early part of the walk, with flora changing as we moved up the valley and ascended towards Crimpau. Before the summit, we left the marked footpath and ventured onto access land in the hot afternoon sunshine, taking compass bearings from the map and land features to navigate to the unnamed '405' peak, and back down to the Gwydyr forest and the relief of leafy shade below.

I was already feeling confident with map reading and navigating using features (from an early life of Eddowes family adventures), I was however aware that my compass reading was unpractised and I was out of my comfort zone in using one. I hoped that the week would help me improve in skill and confidence.

On our return to Nant Gwryd Lake, the group stripped off sweaty clothes and bathed hot bodies in the silky cool lake. What a refresher! What a relief! And then for tea and cake on the terrace Plas Y Brenin style... a brilliant end to a great first day!

During the week we also looked at other navigation techniques, including aiming off, pacing, hand-railing, contouring, following a bearing, taking a bearing down a feature and night navigation.

Route: From Plas Y Brenin centre, Towards Crimpiau, across to '405' and back through Gwydyr forest, crossing the river at Capel Curig and finishing with a dip in the lake at Plas y Brenin.

Day 2: Scrambling

Starting early to avoid the continuing heatwave, we drove to the Ogwen valley cottage at Cwm Idwal, and began our walk at the visitor centre at 8.30am in 24 degree temperatures. We took the main path up to Llyn Idwal, and enjoyed the slate window stones which helped us get our bearings on our premier visit as a group to the valley. My fast heart rate and slow going pace reminded me that I'd had Covid only 2 weeks before and needed to take it a little easier than normal.



Slate window stones



Mary representing the ABM at Llyn Idwal



Glyder Fach - last leg

Upon reaching the path to lead us up Y Gribin's grade 1 scramble, we paused for some scrambling pointers from Iona "Goat feet, small steps, quiet feet" and to learn the important equation; "Risk = Likelihood x consequence". We then had a gentle practice on a jumble of rocks overlooking the lake. Stunning views! One of the group had a nasty fall on Tryfan 4 years earlier, so was nervous in anticipation of the scramble to come. Moving slowly as a group and in support of each other, we had a fantastic climb in glorious sunshine and increasing wind along the ridge and up to the col between Glyder Fach and Glyder Fawr.

Upon reaching the col, we turned eastwards and skirted underneath Castell Y Gwynt and scrambled up and over the other worldly rock formations to the summit of Glyder Fach.

With the hint of thunderstorms on the horizon, we were hurried off the summit (sadly missing the Cantilever stone) and back down the mountain, descending via the southern col of Tryfan and the Cambrian way past Llyn Bochlywd and making it back to the minibus before any lighting could catch us. Another refreshing swim for me and then a hearty PYB dinner with the group outside on the terrace.

Route: Starting at the Ogwen valley cottage, at Cwm Idwal, we took the path up to Llyn Idwal, to then enjoy the grade 1 scramble up Y Grybin, Glydr Fach, back up to the col between Tryfan and Glydr Fach each and down the Cambrian way past Llyn Bochlywd.

Day 3: Expedition

Today was a morning of expedition list writing, packing, and preparing to put gear to the test in the wild. I decided to try out the kit from the centre, with the intention of later investing in my own gear. Other members of the group brought their own kit and it was great to have a proper look at the various tents, stoves and rucksacks in the mix. I borrowed a Fjaelraven Abisko Lite 1-person tent, RAB sleeping bag, Trangia ethanol stove and 55 litre rucksack.



View west down the Afon Anafon valley towards our camp (mine was the green tent in the foreground)

Iona talked us through route planning and due to the north westerly high winds, she decided to take us closer to the coast and to a valley where we would be protected in our camp.

We set off in windy overcast weather, but as we traversed around the side of Drum on the old Roman road, views over to the Menai Straights and Anglesey were clear with blue skies in the distance over the Irish Sea. The clouds cleared further as the day progressed.

The chosen valley to set up our camp had numerous ancient hut circles, the beautiful Afon Anafon and about twenty wild ponies cavorting around it. I pitched my tent close to the stream in a gorgeous spot. The beautiful golden sunset was shining up the valley.

It was Guy's birthday, so after dinner (rehydrated spag bol!) we played some silly games, sang 'Happy Birthday' and two of us made a 'pass the parcel' out of the groups' dry bags, chocolate, cheese and rehydration pudding. Lucky Guy! And apparently a first for a PYB training course!



Then once it was dark we all headed off, armed with compasses and head torches on a night navigation walk up and around the valley, taking in steep terrain, many streams to cross, impenetrable bracken and huge furry moth caterpillars. We all commented at how disorientating the dark can be, even with all the tools to navigate! It was certainly a brilliant learning experience.

Route: Minibus to car park at the base of Foel Lwyd, west along Roman road overlooked by Foel- Ganol and Yr Orsedd, up the Afon Anafon valley to wild campsite.

Day 4: Expedition & river crossing

After a night of broken sleep with the sound of wind, rain, hooves and horse breath, we breakfasted in the hut circle before packing up camp and stomping up the valley to Llyn Anafon in light drizzle. Navigating across the bowl of the upper valley we came to the Cambrian Way footpath along the ridge and ascended Drum to have hot chocolate on the summit, heated on the Trangria. What a treat! We took in the far views to Anglesey again with lunch, before finding our way back down past the sheep to the van and to Plas Y Brenin and the hot showers.

Back at the centre we had a session focusing river crossing (in helmets and buoyancy aids although the river was only a trickle). Iona got us to try crossing as a group in 'line astern' a 'wedge' formations. Then it was tea and cake time before unpacking and a post expedition rest.



Line astern crossing formation - from left to right - Louise, Steven, Mary, Iona

Route: Afon Anafon valley camping spot up to Llyn Anafon, cross country to join the Cambrian way and summit Drum, then following the Cambrian way back to roman road and to the van.

Day 5: Rope skills

The heat wave was definitely over. Achy tired bodies and wrapping up of the week were taken into consideration for our final day. Iona planned a shorter walk and rope work session after requests from the group. Using three different maps (OS 1:25, 1:50 and Harveys 1:25) we navigated up to Ffynnon Llugwy and then up to the col between Carnedd Llewlyn and Pen yr Helgi Du. It was great to compare the different levels of detail and note our personal favourites - mine was the OS 1:25. We made the decision that with limited time, it would be best to summit Pen yr



Mary being belayed by Jo

Helgi Du and take the shorter route home in time for cake! Iona found a suitable place on the rocky ridge for us to try body belay and anchoring.

After a soggy lunch on the ridge, we ascended the summit and were tasked with defining the exact highest point of the flat topped mountain using compasses and precise contour and rocky outcrop observation with magnifying glasses. A challenge but good practice at precision nav!

On our return to the centre we ate our final tea and cake in the bar and all reflected on our week in Snowdonia and favourite moments of the training. The scramble and expedition camp were my highlights - and meeting such a fantastic group of people. They all expressed an interest in coming along to an ABMSAC meet to see what our club is all about.

Route: Parked at Gwern Gof Isaf NT campsite, walked up To Ffynnon Llugwy, and the col between Carnedd Llewlyn and Pen yr Helgi Du, descending on the southern path via the leat.



I'm grateful to the ABMSAC for their financial support, through the 'Development and Training' scheme, which allowed me to take part in this training. Thank you very much for the opportunity!

Reflections on Fell and Moorland Leader Training – *by Mike Griffiths*

Introduction

Hill and moorland leader training is training for those who want to lead hill walking groups on day walks in defined terrain in summer conditions. I recently had three excellent days with 'Beyond the Edge' for Hill and Moorland leader training. With excellent course companions we had great days out in the Peak District with tuition and skills practice. The 3 day course took place on 3rd September and was based at the Sir William Hotel in Grindelford. We had one instructor for a group of 6 people. The group comprised a mixture of experience we all shared a passion for the benefits of outdoor activities. It's interesting because some of the party were not experienced with the night navigation component of the training.

The Syllabus

The syllabus has many elements which are listed below:

- Walking and route finding
- Navigation
- Hazards and emergency procedures
- Equipment
- Responsibilities of the Leader
- Group Management
- Access, Conservation and Environmental knowledge
- Weather
- Background knowledge

Practice is a key part of the training. Skills maintenance, continual professional development and logging of hill days are an important part of being a leader in the fells, moors and mountains.

The Course

The opening part of the course was a reminder of the role of the BMC, we reflected on the many ways in which the BMC supports the climbing community through training, access, supporting clubs and governing competition climbing. The importance of the mountain training association for underpinning training of instructors involved with a range of outdoor activities. Training is approved and assessed by the MTA (Mountain Training Association), thus ensuring instructors receive the correct training and are skilled at the right level. Part of this activity is the maintenance and logging of outdoor activities by keeping an activity log which is available to the MTA. For this we use a system called DLOG. Through its local groups the MTA also provides an excellent range of activities to enable maintenance of corporate professional development.

Key Things to Remember for Navigation

Much of the activity was taking it in turns to walk legs on a variety of walks in the peak district. Navigation skills were both taught and practiced over the three days including some rather tricky assessment level points and a night navigation session. For us conditions were brilliant and we had excellent days in the Peak. A couple of acronyms were key things to remember

- Aspect, Angle, Altitude
- Direction, Distance, Details, Dangers

The AAA one referred to looking at the hillside and using the features (i.e. the three AAAs) to match where we are located. An important practice was that when navigating legs we use at least 3 points of evidence to determine location. It's important to become quite disciplined and to stick to this rule. The evidence needs to be robust too!

Basic principles of leadership

We put a lot of thought into our activities and role as a leader. We learnt that one of the first things is our duty of care and to keep one another safe. Time for another acronym
safety – duty of care

- inform
- enthuse
- entertain

Thinking about this was actually quite fun scribbling away was helpful

The planning of trips requires a lot of practice. It's useful to break this into stages i.e.

- month before
- week before
- day before

The section on activity planning considered a whole host of activities including questions about the health and fitness of the party. Ensuring that the party is appropriately equipped and trained for what they are setting out to do. Three things to consider for the party are as follows

- Acceptance of risks statements
- Health questions (e.g. insist on personal medication such as asthma inhalers, epipens etc.)
- Clear terms and conditions
- preparation of route cards with appropriate escapes and identification of risks



At one point I became somewhat bogged down with the need for risk management. It became apparent that many of these issues can be addressed through the planning aspects identified above. After more classroom work it was time to get out again. We practised leading groups, navigation and generally had good discussions when we were out and about on Eyam Moor. It was interesting to multi-task and practice navigation whilst entertaining your party. We tested shelter tents and some different survival aids. Also important were some principles for simply taking care of people for example POMU position of maximum usefulness, this is for helping people across stiles, obstacles etc. protect on downside

Assessment

The assessment for hill and moorland leader takes place over three days and involves the following tasks.

Day 1 lead the group

may be an emergency prepare for an emergency and be appropriately equipped (15-60 minutes)

Day 2 lead group night navigation

Day 3 weekend assessment - at a later date

Reflection and Recommendations

The course worked really well and was relaxed and fun, it helped that the conditions were excellent. We did receive

immense value in honing our party leading skills and developing planning and risk assessment. On the night navigation session the inevitable occurred and the spare head torch was required for one of our party. The best part of the course is putting into practice your skills and just being out in the hills training. The classroom sessions were valuable, it's important to take the timeout to cover some of the theoretical aspects such as preparation, planning, risk assessment, weather etc.. but planning a great adventure is fun!

The course does not include the assessment, this takes place on a separate weekend after practicing the skills developed on the training weekend. The key to being successful in this role is ongoing training, logging and practicing/shadowing with colleagues.



Planning notes

I certainly have a lot to do but I'm looking forward to that. It's necessary to practise the following:

- Micro-navigation – practice finding features e.g. ring contours, assessment level features get the strategy right choose the correct attack point
- Have great discussion points and get information to hand for example on the phone 3 heather types (crossed leave heath and bell)
- A couple of emergency techniques for scenario
- First aid revision

Putting into practice what you've learned is always important even if it's leading a group yourself or helping out with some navigation. On one of our recent evening runs I was involved in a bit of route planning! I'm really grateful to the support of the Association of the British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club for a grant to cover part of the course fees.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH MEMBERS OF THE SWISS ALPINE CLUB

Minutes of meeting held at the Inn on the Lake, Glenridding at 1745 hours
Saturday 4th February 2023

The President Andy Burton was in the chair. 35 members were in attendance.

1. Apologies for absence: Andy Hayes, Elsbeth Robson, Pamela Harris and Alan Norton.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on Saturday 29th January 2022: No amendments were suggested.

Proposed by Belinda Baldwin, seconded by Marian Parsons

3. Matters arising: There were no matters arising.

4. Election of Officers and Committee:

a. The President and current Vice Presidents' terms of office expire in 2024.

b. The Treasurer's term of office expires in 2027.

c. Dick Murton has decided to stand down as secretary but is willing to remain on the committee to allow continuity, particularly as one of the Directors of the GSHL, with a view to stepping down from this role towards the end of the year. Celine Gagnon has agreed to take over the role of secretary and will take over the role as one of the Directors of the GSHL once familiarised.

d. The Meets Secretary's term of office expires in 2025. Paul wishes to stand down early. At the time of writing, no successor has been formally proposed.

e. Mike Goodyer has undertaken the role of editor since 2009, having been extended under the rules of association. Mike is willing to continue in this role, with the full support of the committee.

d. Daniel Albert as a co-opted member, does not currently have a fixed term. He has agreed to take over from Heather Eddowes as Vice President, with a view to taking over as President in 2024. This frees up Heather's time to concentrate on her other role as Chair of the Hut Management Committee.

g. Roger James' term of office expires this year. Roger is willing to continue on the committee.

h. The term of office of Andy Hayes as elected member expires in 2024.

li. Judy Renshaw continues as a co-opted member of the committee. No term of office is specified in the rules of association.

j. Ian Mateer is continuing to support the GSH website and booking system.

As there were no new nominations and no objections to any of the above nominations and changes proposed at the meeting the above list stands.

5. Hon Treasurer's Report

This Treasurer's report was circulated in the December 2022 newsletter.

It is perhaps appropriate for me to start my annual report by looking at our finances in terms of the bigger picture. The past financial year has seen the activities of the club return to a near normal state, which means significantly more income and expenditure around meets, whilst at the same time, engaging in more support for training and also meets themselves.

Global and UK events have decreased the value of our investments and the returns we get from them, but they remain at a healthy level. As our year end corresponded with a particularly turbulent time in UK politics, this has impacted on the value of our investments, and I will be giving an update at our AGM on how the value of our investments have changed since then. At present, I can report that there has already been a recovery of around 10% in the value of our investments, as compared with the end of our financial year.

Turning now to the detail of our income and expenditure account for the past financial year, our assets as a club continue to be significant. The total market value of our investments was over £157,000 at the end of the financial year. In addition to our cash reserves (in both deposit and in savings accounts) is over £71,000, giving a net asset value of the club of over £207,000.

Whilst the income from investment dividends and bank interest has decreased slightly from last year, our total yearly income from all of these sources was still over £4,500. In contrast, our net income from membership was £1,258.26. Looked at in another way, our investments continue to provide us with over 75% of our club income each year.

Our expenditure has increased by nearly £10,000 since last year, for the reasons including:

- A one-off donation of £8,000 to the Britannia hut, as our contribution to a new stove in recognition of the 110th anniversary of the hut.
- Training activities supported by the club.
- Support to meets during the year.
- Payments in advance for future meets in the current financial year. These increases are aligned with committee thinking to date on how to use our existing funds wisely.

Given that our investments form the major part of our income each year, I am firstly arranging for diligence checks to be carried out, to ensure that the value of holdings we have is being broadly maintained over the long term. In addition, we will be seeking professional advice on our holdings, the level of return we receive and the associated level of risk. Furthermore, I will also be looking at ways to make the clubs' administration of any holdings it has more straightforward, given lessons we have learned over the past few years.

Finally, with the support of the committee, we continue to look at how we use our funds wisely, to the benefit of our members and the local and outdoor community, and I hope this is something we can return to as our ideas and planning develop.

Ed Bramley, Hon. Treasurer

22 November 2022

Proposed by Paul Stock, seconded by Myles O'Reilly.

6. 2023 Presidents Report

Welcome to your 2023 Club AGM.

These last twelve months have seen the Club return steadily back from the restrictions and cautions imposed on us all by Covid-19, and the various detailed reports that you will hear this evening clearly show that.

One of the positive benefits has been the introduction of Zoom for both our committee meetings and those of the Hut Directors and the HMC, which continue on a quarterly basis.

Zoom has also gone on to greatly expand the attendance at the Winter Lectures both in actual numbers, and by allowing members to take part wherever they happen to be in the world, with Internet access. The combined attendance figures from within the room at the CSC and online is always over 60 and often approaching 100 attendees.

Another positive benefit has been the introduction of the North/South day walks which when combined with the regular meets made twenty-one meets available to members throughout 2022.

A new training/skills meet was introduced for both new members and existing members in 2022, as well as a Nordic Poles training opportunity and a guided glaciological walk for attendees on the Presidents meet.

With the return of the hotel-based meet in July at the Alfa Soleil in Kandersteg, and the joint camping meet returning to Camping du Glacier in Argentiere, and the Picos de Europa meet finally taking place in Northern Spain, the European part of our programme came alive again too.

With 270 of you taking part overall in these events, it is safe to say that our active core is very much that. My thanks go to everyone who have made these great days and evenings out or in possible.

Our support for the local community within the Ullswater valley continues with annual donations to the village community fund and the Patterdale Mountain Rescue Team.

This year we added to that support by donating to the Patterdale Primary School to help fund their Forest School and Garden Club, and it was great to hear through Marian that the school had won awards in the Cumbria in Bloom Schools section of the competition.

At the request of one of our members attending last year's AGM we made an extra donation to the Friends of the Lake District, who we support annually through the Postcard link within the club website.

This donation was earmarked to help with the replanting of trees after the damage wreaked by Storm Arwen in November 2021. The membership is holding at 175 and there will be a slight increase (£1.25) in fees implemented by the BMC for 2023.

The membership facility continues to evolve, with the ability to pay via Stripe by credit card or phone payment now being available to members.

The Journal and the website and Facebook pages continue to inform and hopefully entertain members about what we are all doing and what the ABMSAC is about.

You all know the drill by now, please keep sending your adventurous and individual stories to your Editor, with accompanying photos in the fullest fattest version you can, so he can see them both online and in the Journal.

As always, I would like to thank your committee for their continued support and enthusiasm in helping to run this fine Club on our behalf.

7. Update on the George Starkey Hut (GSH)

The current lease runs until 2044. The leasehold has increased, after the 4 yearly review, to £11391.13 per annum. Next one 2026.

Work by the Hut Management Committee has continued during the year on maintaining the building and ensuring that all the legal and safety requirements have been met.

The Fire Safety Certificate and the annual PAT test was completed along with an H&S inspection.

The major refurbishment planned for this year was the Ladies Washroom. The work was due to start during August but the research and a final agreement about the best way to deal with the outside walls - damp & insulation could not be achieved in the time frame. Roger James has devoted a lot of his time to researching possible builders & fitters for the project. Both he and I made 2 trips to the hut specifically to meet and discuss the project with the only builder who chose to pursue the potential work. (Trying to make informed decisions about an area outside ones expertise has proved to be difficult when conflicting opinions exist) But we shall persevere and set time aside during the coming year for the refurbishment.

Once completed the Men's washroom will be the next project.

A proposal to improve the Drying Room further was suggested by some members. This was evaluated with a detailed analysis by a member who had successfully overseen the improvement of the drying room at the Oread Club hut in Wales. Approval has been given for this to be done - now hopefully in the spring/summer 2023.

Remedial work was made to the front of the gable above the kitchen which had deteriorated. Repairing the woodwork, replacing the mortar work between the green decorative wood pattern and painting was completed in April 2022.

The Maintenance Meet, in August, was attended by 9 members who cleaned & sorted. Glorious weather accompanied the meet enabling members to get out on the hills after a morning of work or at the weekend. This is an important part of the upkeep of the hut and more volunteers will be needed in the forthcoming years. Many hands make light work - with more time out on the hills for all concerned.

Wi-Fi has now reached the GSH Andy Burton, an ABM Director, pursued the Openreach Community Fibre in Patterdale, as only a director of GSH Ltd could liaise with Openreach. Cable was attached to the hut (at high level) and Wi-Fi was enabled in the hut. This seems to be working well. Andy, again only a director can do this, is also liaising with our water company. It has been an on-going issue to move the water meter from near the road edge to a more manageable position - ideally to just outside the kitchen where the water enters the property.

GSH financial year runs July to the following June so bearing this in mind:- July 2020 to June 2021 - Covid Pandemic resulted in 225 bednights July 2021 to June 2022 - 1033 bednights. There have been several rebooked weekends left over from the Covid closures.

There have been no Health & Safety incidents to report.

Fortunately GSHL received a further grant from Eden Council of £2667. But that really is the end of that income stream. But unfortunately the uptake of availability at the hut has not increased as expected. Clubs and members are using the hut but not bringing a 'full house' and so the income for bed nights is down. With the current financial crisis developing it is hard to see that an increase in the use of the hut is likely as walkers and climbers will be subjected to the same financial constraints as the rest of the population. Fuel/travel to the hut is probably one of the most expensive aspects of a 'weekend in the Lakes' trip now.

A suggestion was made at the AC AGM in Nov 2021 to introduce 'free bednights' for AC members and has now been acted upon. This was introduced at the beginning of April 2022. It allows AC members to book bed nights in the hut for a card payment of 45p per night. The outstanding bed night fee, currently £9:55, less the Free-to-Book fee, is then paid by the AC to GSHL. The use of a debit or credit card means that names and membership checks can be done. The trial is continuing, and subject to review.

A very major concern is the escalating cost of electricity at the hut. Heating is via storage heaters. All cooking uses electric cookers. An obvious method of saving is to re-insulate the roof and the sloping ceiling/walls of the 3 dormitories. This would best be done in conjunction with the re-roofing of the main roof. Estimates are being sort.

Tom Curtis has done an initial evaluation of the benefit of insulation of the main roof which unsurprisingly shows a potential saving of at least two and a half thousand pounds per year. Currently the annual cost of electricity for the coming year (2022-23) is estimated at six thousand pounds. This does not allow for the high rates of increase that consumers are now experiencing.

In order for members to make use of this great facility here in the heart of the Lake District bookings can be made online or, if necessary, through the Booking Secretary. Use www.george-starkey-hut.com for bookings, history, general information; george.starkey.hut@gmail.com for advice or have a problem about a booking; hmc@george-starkey-hut.com to contact HMC.

John Dempster queried why the roof repairs and insulation which were identified as being necessary several years ago still had not been completed in spite of the known benefits. He expressed disappointment at the long delay. Heather responded by stating that this was all before her time as Chair of the HMC. She was therefore unable to comment or respond in detail.

8. AOB No other matters were raised.

9. Date of next meeting is proposed as Saturday 3rd February 2024 at the Inn on the Lake.

Dick Murton & Andy Burton, February 2023

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th September 2022

		Notes	2022	2021 Restated
Income				
	Net income from subscriptions	1	1,258.26	1,256.23
	Net adjustment for membership subscription accounting change	2	-	1,093.66
	Dividends and Bank Interest	3	4,152.08	4,714.85
	Brooks MacDonald income reinvested	3	433.28	383.16
Total income			5,843.62	7,447.90
Expenditure				
Journal & Newsletters	Journal		- 1,559.34	- 1,373.36
	Newsletters		- 19.62	- 16.65
Meets	London Lectures	4	- 510.08	-
	Net support to meets	5	- 738.76	-
	Annual Dinner	6	- 997.10	- 100.00
Training	Training Grants	7	- 1,100.00	-
Donations	Patterdale Mountain Rescue	8	- 150.00	- 450.00
	PCC of Patterdale	8	- 750.00	- 250.00
	Friends of the Lake District	8	- 100.00	-
	Britannia hut stove - 110th anniversary	8	- 7,954.37	-
	Mary Stevens Hospice	8	- 200.00	-
	Himalayan trust		-	- 500.00
	Dartmoor Way		-	- 300.00
	Bloodwise		-	- 300.00
GSHL	GSHL - Specialist advice	9	-	- 768.00
	GSHL - Other	9	-	- 145.90
Administration	Tax on interest and dividends		- 191.14	- 254.03
	Administration		- 280.78	- 573.35
Total expenditure			- 14,551.19	- 4,681.29
Surplus / (Deficit) on Club activities			- 8,707.57	2,766.61
Increase / (Decrease) in market value of investments			- 16,434.21	32,158.90
Surplus / (Deficit) on Club activities			- 25,141.78	34,925.51
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30th September 2022				
Fixed Asset Investments				
	Investments at market value	3	157,230.39	172,707.73
Current Assets				
	Club deposits to venues for future meets	5	2,007.31	600.00
	Cash on deposit		47,825.41	59,247.16
Total Current Assets			49,832.72	59,847.16
Current Liabilities				
	Club members deposits paid to club for future meets	5	-	- 350.00
Total Current Liabilities			-	- 350.00
Net Assets			207,063.11	232,204.89
General Fund				
	Balance brought forward from previous accounting year		232,204.89	76,954.00
	Prior year adjustment to show investments at market value		-	120,325.38
	Re-stated balance brought forward from previous accounting year		232,204.89	197,279.38
	Balance transferred from Income & Expenditure account		- 25,141.78	34,925.51
Carried forward at 30th September 2022			207,063.11	232,204.89

1. MEMBERSHIP

	2021/22		2020/21	
	No.	Amount	No.	Amount
New Members: Oct-Dec previous calendar year	2	59.00	1	26.00
Memberships renewed	176	6517.16	187	7,198.76
Members with zero payment	4	-	3	-
New/renewing Members subsequent quarters (iii)	7	169.00	4	110.00
TOTAL Membership income		6,745.16		7,334.76
SAC Membership bulk payment (i), (ii)	24	-2,046.63	28	-2,523.28
SAC - Chf transfer fee		-15.00		-15.00
TOTAL SAC related payments		2,061.63		-2,538.28
BMC affiliation payment – New Members Oct-Dec previous calendar year	2	-40.52	-	-
BMC Affiliation payment	162	-3,280.50	175	-3,520.00
BMC Affiliation payment subsequent quarters (iii)	7	-104.25	1	-20.25
TOTAL BMC Affiliation fees		-3,425.27		-3,540.25
NET Income to ABMSAC		1,258.26		1,256.23

- (i) On behalf of SAC Members paying via ABMSAC.
- (ii) SAC credit for 2022 is Chf 115, due to membership changes after bulk payment made.
- (iii) Only the payments into and out of the club are shown. Where payments are pending, these will appear in the Accounts next year.

2. ADJUSTMENT FOR MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION ACCOUNTING CHANGE

This was a one-time set of adjustments to change from a purely financial accounting year to alignment with the membership year, carried out last financial year.

3. INVESTMENTS

The investment house for a number of the investments the club holds has changed over the past year and the details are set out below. To give a more accurate picture of the net value of the assets of the club, the accounts this year show the current market value of the investments, as distinct from their original cost.

Current name	Former name	No. Units at year end	Type of payment
Aberdeen Standard	Standard Life	7782	Accumulation
Brooks MacDonald Sterling Bond	Lloyds Investment Fund	11,438	Accumulation (Jersey)
Brunner Investment Trust 25p		4,320	Dividend
Invesco Select Trust 1p	Invesco Income Growth Trust	10,374	Dividend
LionTrust	Architas MA Active Growth	6,541	Accumulation
Murray International 25p		1,665	Dividend
Witan Investment Trust 5p		12,825	Dividend

	This year end	Previous year end
Aggregate market value of investments	157,230.39	172,707.73
The original cost of holdings, including Brooks MacDonald Re-investment and change in unit value of accumulations	21,180.32	20,223.45
Total dividends and interest, including interest on fixed rate bond and change in unit value of accumulations	4,585.36	5,098.01

4. LONDON LECTURES

The amount shown is the total cost of the London lectures in this financial year. Previously, the AAC had already made a 75% contribution to the staging of those lectures. Going forward, ABMSAC will cover the initial cost of the lectures, and then claim a contribution back from the AAC.

5. NET SUPPORT TO MEETS

This includes:

- Deposits already paid to the club last financial year by members.
- Deposits already paid to venues by the club last financial year.
- Deposits paid by the club this financial year for meets next financial year.
- Support provided to meets where fixed numbers of spaces had to be booked, but the uptake was less than the total.
- Support for the Welsh meet meal and wine, to mark the Queens' Jubilee.

6. ANNUAL DINNER

The cost of the annual dinner reflects a number of payments, including the guest speaker and menu cards, as well as an amount of wine for each table.

7. TRAINING GRANTS

Under this heading are included the group skills training session run at the George Starkey hut in April, and a further skills session at the Presidents' meet in October. Two training grants were made this financial year, but due to timing, the refunds will appear in next financial years' accounts.

8. DONATIONS

The club has made a number of donations during the year, the most notable of which was a donation of nearly £8,000 to provide a new stove for the Britannia hut, linked to their 110th anniversary. Other donations, which will continue on an ongoing basis, reflect our connections with both the local community and the wider mountaineering community.

9. GSHL RELATED MATTERS

No new professional advice was sought up to the end of this financial year.

Ed Bramley
Honorary Treasurer
Date: 21 November 2022

In my view the financial statements are in accordance with the Associations accounting records as at the end of the financial year shown above and disclose a deficit for the twelve month period then ended.
No work of an audit nature has been carried out.

Ian Featherstone
Hon. Examiner
Date: 21 November 2022

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
1978 F E Smith & J P Ledeboer
1979 J P Ledeboer & F P French

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 -2021 J Baldwin
2021 - A Burton

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
2018-2023 Mrs H M Eddowes
2023- D Albert

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
2010-2023 D Murton
2023- C Gagnon

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 Sperry
 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
 2014-2021 E A Bramley
 2021 - J Freemantle

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 Jeurwine
 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- 2021 A Burton
 2021 - E A Bramley

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 Llwyn - 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 -2018 M Reynolds
 2019 - 2020 S Crisp
 2021 - I Featherstone

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

1974-1977 J P Ledebor
 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 Jeurwine
 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 Ledebor
 2001-2002 Wing Commander H D Archer, DFC

HONORARY SOLICITORS

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

CURRENT HONORARY MEMBERS

Wendell Jones, Don Hodge

Useful Contacts

George Starkey Hut (www.george-starkey-hut.com)

Members must book beds in the Hut before the visit to ensure space is available.

See the Hut website for details regarding the hut booking system.

Warden Marian Parsons. Contact on george.starkey.hut@gmail.com



Oread Mountaineering Club (www.oread.co.uk)

We have reciprocal rights at both huts.
Tan Yr Wyddfa, Rhyd Ddu, LL54 6TN, North Wales
Heathy Lea, Baslow (Grid Ref: SK 273722)
To book see the hut booking link on the website



Swiss Alpine Club (www.sac-cas.ch/en)

SAC members can log onto the site using their membership number and puk number (see membership card).

Get up to date information about routes, huts and suggested tours in summer and winter.



BMC (www.thebmc.co.uk)

All UK members are automatically members of the BMC.

The website has up to date information on access and conservation to mountain areas.

Contact- phone 01614456111 email - office@thebmc.co.uk



ABMSAC Office Holders 2023

Committee

OFFICE	HOLDER	ELECTED
President	Andy Burton	2021
Vice President	Daniel Albert	2023
Hon. Treasurer	Ed Bramley	2021
Hon. Secretary	Céline Gagnon	2023
Hon. Membership Secretary	Julie Freemantle	2021
Hon. Meets Secretary	Paul Stock	2019
Hon. Editor	Mike Goodyer	2009
Hon. Hut Warden	Marian Parsons	2014
Training coordinator	Heather Eddowes	2018
Co opted Committee Member	Andy Hayes	2019
Co opted Committee Member	Roger James	2020
Co opted Committee Member	Judy Renshaw	2021

George Starkey Hut Ltd

ABMSAC DIRECTORS

Andy Burton, Dick Murton, Ed Bramley

HUT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (ABMSAC)

Heather Eddowes (Chair), Derek Buckley,
Don Hodge, Ian Mateer, Marian Parsons.