

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

HAPE Prize. In the 1990 Journal (p.565), a prize was offered for the best explanation of the mysterious acronym HAPE. Contributions ranged from the succinct, if erroneous, HAPE = Hyper-Adrenaline Purge of the Ego (contribution D.E.H. Maden), to the slightly lewd and phallicious (sic) donation by Grant Cornwallis, and finally the winner, Mike Taylor of Peterhead, who has accepted a copy of the Climbers' Guide to 'Arran, Arrochar & The Southern Highlands', signed by both authors. While not intended to be a regular feature of the Journal, the Editor may, from time to time, spur on the reader to keep an eye on the small print by raising such baubles. First the slightly lewd. Some readers may take offense at the following entry, which is largely priapic.

H.A.P.E.

High Altitude Penile Entropy is a distressing flaccidity, caused by lack of oxygen. 'Climber's Droop' normally abates upon return to sea-level, though partners of mature mountaineers report that this is often not the case. Should not be confused with the much more rare High Altitude Penile Erethism (priapia montanus), which occurs only above the 26,000-foot contour. Hope of attaining this sensual apogee is thought to have been the impetus of such thrusting 'giants' as Messner and Bonington. Medical researchers have yet to come across a confirmed case of High Altitude Premature Ejaculation, which is as elusive as the Yeti. (Grant Cornwallis).

The Winning Entry:

Sir,

*Ye claw up heuchs wi' muckle heuchs,
An' ponder Yankee renderin',
Sic acronyms are nae in buiks,
So spier amang yer brethren...
Oor hielan' hills are nae sae High,
Their Altitude gey ordinary,
Bit fan tae Himal's summits nigh,
Bewaur Edema (Pulmonary)!*

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J.M(cGonigal) Taylor

Note: We allowed the winner a little leeway to tailor the verse, and remind the gentle reader that the 'Yankees', of course, drop the digraph in oedema.

Down the Stank. In the Mountain Accident Section of the 1990 Journal, p. 538, there is reference in an accident on March 31st to a guidebook entitled 'Walks in The Trossachs', which refers to a signpost indicating the direction of the Stank Glen route off Ben Ledi. We owe an apology to the author Rennie McOwan, who has written a book with the title 'Walks In the Trossachs and the Rob Roy Country', with which the above reference has been wrongly connected by some readers. As a responsible hillwalker, Mr McOwan's book contains no such reference to the signpost (which no longer exists); in fact he was one of a number of local climbers and walkers who complained to the Forestry Commission about the sign. The Commission, Mr McOwan tells us, have now stopped 'signing up' higher ground, which should help alleviate extra erosion and, perhaps, prevent some accidents.

Scottish Mountaineering Trust Report

1. Office Bearers and Trustees.

Bill Wallace and Bob Hillcoat who had been Secretary and Treasurer respectively for many years, retired at the March 1991 meeting of Trustees. In their place the Trustees appointed John Fowler as Secretary and Bryan Fleming as Treasurer.

As Graham Tiso had indicated his intention to retire as Chairman, Bill Wallace was elected to fill the vacancy.

2. Scottish Mountaineering Trust (Publications) Ltd.

In February 1990 the Trustees were advised that the Inland Revenue had been given additional duties and powers for scrutinising the activities of charities. A likely result of this was that the Trust, because its publishing business was much more than incidental to the carrying out of its main purpose, could lose its charitable status. The Trustees were further advised that it was within their powers to transfer the publishing business to a private company controlled solely by the Trustees. The Company, which would be a separate legal entity, would carry on the publishing business and would enter into a Contract to pay to the Trust a fixed sum per annum or the amount of its profits before tax in any year, whichever was the greater. This Contract, being in favour of a charity, would mean that the Company's profits would be paid to a charity (The Trust) and would not be subject to corporation tax in the Company's hands.

The Company commenced trading on 1 April 1990 and has already paid to the Trust its profits as per the Contract for the year ended 31 March 1991.

3. Annual Accounts.

All members will have received copies of the Annual Accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31 March 1990 which were sent out with the papers for the Annual General Meeting. These showed a "Surplus added to General Fund" of £34,697 and this was after deduction of £10,000 transferred to the Grant Fund to finance projects which were in accordance with the objects of the Trust. Sales of publications have again been satisfactory in the year to 31 March 1991 and a similar surplus is anticipated. £10,000 will again be transferred to the Grant Fund.

Total assets at 31 March 1990 were £248,887 of which the value of stock of publications was £113,488, the remainder being cash deposits and debtors.

4. Grant Fund.

During the past 12 months the Trustees have either paid or awarded the following Grants:-

- 4.1 £2,500 to the John Muir Trust towards the cost of purchasing the Torin Estate in the Isle of Skye.
- 4.2 £500 to the Alpine Club towards the cost of compiling the computerised Himalayan Index.
- 4.3 £500 to Highland Region Council towards the cost of replacing the bridge at Skiary on the Kinlochhourn to Barrisdail path.
- 4.4 £500 to Dundee District Council towards the cost of purchasing and erecting a climbing wall.
- 4.5 £1,000 to the National Trust for Scotland towards the cost of replacing the footbridge across the River Coupal at Lagangarbh.
- 4.6 £1,000 to the Scottish Mountaineering Club for administration costs incurred in connection with the publications of the Trust.

The Trustees also agreed to continue the policy of allocating the greater part of the Grant Fund towards preparing and rebuilding mountain footpaths.

Since the last report the Countryside Commission for Scotland has increased to 85% the proportion of the cost of approved footpaths projects which they are prepared to meet.

In this connection the Trustees agreed to provide funds requested by Bob Aitken who is footpaths consultant to the Countryside Commission for the following footpath repair projects:-

1. In the area around the Sinclair Hut in the Lairig Ghru - £1,500
 2. Allt a' Mhuillin, Ben Nevis - £2,000
 3. Lochnagar - £1,500
 4. Buachaille Etive Mor - £1,500
 5. Stac Pollaidh - £2,000
 6. Ben An or Ben Lomond or The Cobbler - £1,500 to £2,000.
5. Snart Bequest.
The Trustees agreed to lend £5,000 to the Scottish National Ski Council to cover the costs of publishing a book on ski safety.

Bill Wallace.

The Winter of 1947. Iain Smart recollects that one of the 'great winters' of this century was that of 1947, when Scotland was covered for a long time in deep snow. 1947 is still within living memory (the Ed. immediately recollects that he was in his second trimester at the time but read on.) If any members have photographs or reminiscences of this snowfall they would make an interesting Club archive; perhaps even a Journal article. Send any such material to the Editor. Would anyone like to be the Custodian of this Archive?

MUNRO MATTERS

by W. D. Brooker (Clerk of the List)

This year's List is bigger than ever and runs on from Number 715 at which it ended last year. The usual sequence of Number, Name, Munros, Tops, Furths has been used, but this year surnames come before initials or forenames. The Clerk apologises for this break with tradition, which is due to the lack of flexibility and intelligence in the Editorial computer. At least it is the computer which has been blamed. (The Editor meanwhile wishes the data were in a real database on a real computer..)

716	*Bielby Neil	1989	1989	745	Barrett John	1990	1990
717	Tsai H H	1989		746	Waterton James C	1990	
718	Emmerson Edgar	1989	1990	747	Thomson Leonard J	1990	
719	Smith Chris	1989		748	Horner Raymond	1990	
720	Love Stewart	1989		749	Faulds Marion	1990	
721	Greenway Jack	1990		750	Henderson David A	1990	
722	Duff Dave	1990		751	Bowes Gerry	1990	1990 1987
723	Davey V R	1990		752	Massey Philip	1990	1990 1987
724	Davis John E R	1990		753	Brown Andrew	1990	
725	Knox Eric Campbell	1990		754	Haigh Charles R	1988	
726	MacCallum Robert	1990		755	Roberts J Stanley	1988	
727	Critchley Kenneth	1990		756	Lamb W G C	1988	
728	Maltman William R	1990		757	Quine J W	1990	
729	Lackenby Bill	1990		758	Norrie John	1990	
730	Ellis Peter	1990		759	Beeley Alistair M	1990	1990 1990
731	Russell Paul	1990	1990	760	Clark David M	1990	
732	*Maden B E H	1990		761	Cormack Chris B	1990	1990
733	Murray Duncan L	1990		762	Kilpatrick Tommy	1988	1989
734	Rostron Bertha	1990		763	Curlie Brian D	1990	
735	Rostron James W	1990		764	Templeton Andrew S	1990	
736	Clough Neil	1990		765	Grundy Andrew	1990	
737	North Graham	1990		766	Leftley John	1990	
738	Paterson William	1990		767	Lacy Dee	1990	
739	Murray Ian J B	1990		768	Rogers Tony	1990	
740	Carmichael Dan A	1990		769	Taylor Tony	1990	1990
741	Kilbride Andrew R	1990		770	Laing Alexander	1990	
742	Pierce Kenneth	1990	1990	771	Russell John	1990	
743	Turner Ian	1990		772	Worth Robert D	1990	
744	Webb W John	1990		773	Sim George G	1990	1990

774	Murdoch Andrew	1990	815	Beckett Andrew R	1990	
775	Malone Peter	1990	816	Woodall Rob	1990	1990
776	Gray D Nairne	1990	817	Patrick John	1990	
777	Symonds Hugh	1990	818	Dawes Peter A	1987 1987	
778	Ullock J E R	1990	819	Macbeth Fergus	1987	
779	Haddow James	1990	820	**Johnstone Molly	1990	
780	Sutherland Eddie	1990	821	Dutton Alasdair M	1990	
781	Sutherland Norma	1990	822	Dutton Rory N	1990	
782	Semple Guy	1990	823	Sugden Jack	1990	
783	Wilson Frances A	1990	824	Dott Harry E M	1990	
784	Wilson Peter	1990	825	Smith Bernard	1990	
785	Richardson John W	1990 1990	826	Young Ian	1990	
786	Ferranti Jonathan de	1990	827	Craven Pete	1990	
787	Williams Neil	1990	828	Colthart Gordon	1990	
788	Schwartz Klaus	1990 1990	829	McCreath Connie	1990	
789	Arney Malcolm J J	1990	830	Gray J Peter S	1990	
790	Gentles James D	1990	831	Mackenzie William	1982	
791	Steele Bethan	1990 1990	832	Rothnie Les	1990 1990	
792	Steele David	1990 1990	833	Groves Jonathan D	1990	
793	McCosh Andrew M	1990	834	Minns Harry A	1967	1967
794	Coker Iain A J	1990	835	Slack Alfred	1950	
795	Alexander Dennis	1990	836	Guy Margaret	1990	
796	Stallard David	1990	837	Boath Allan	1990	
797	MacCalman Alexander H	1990	838	Lindsay Bruce G	1990	
798	**Graham Margaret	1990	839	Lindsay Gordon F	1990	
799	Brown Fraser	1988	840	Robertson Ian S	1990 1990	
800	Clarke Harold R E	1987 1990	841	Revill Richard James	1989	
801	Bertram W Logie	1990 1990	842	Downie Allan	1990	
802	Spalding Neil G	1990	843	Soper Angela	1991	
803	Matheson Andrew J	1990	844	Underwood Michael A	1990	
804	Ormiston Hugh	1986 1989	845	Powrie Marjorie	1990	
805	Powell Colin G	1989	846	Custance Arthur C	1988	
806	Thompson Ben	1989 1989	847	Hansford John Philip	1989 1991	
807	Scott D C Hunter	1990	848	Fraser Hew B	1990	
808	Barnard John	1990	849	Knight John M	1990	
809	Jones David	1990	850	Muston A J	1990	
810	Wilson Martin	1990	851	Sillitoe H G	1988	
811	Murray W Shaw	1987	852	Picozzi Nick	1990	
812	Clements Stuart	1990	853	McKay Robert F	1991	
813	Weyman Katharine	1990	854	McHardy Douglas	1990	
814	Usher Dennis J W	1990				

The Numbers Game. No fewer than 139 names have been added to the List. The vast majority are the result of voluntary confession but a few have been reported by spouses or associates, with motives ranging from pride to envy and even sheer relief that it is over, or at least temporarily suspended. Others, in numbers unknown, remain Unlisted, doomed to be unsummoned when the Final Roll is called, except of course for the safety net of that crowded berth at (277) The Unknown Munroist. Some free spirits prefer this condition and reports have been filed of others who cannot bear to Compleat and have remained stuck at 276, no doubt to preserve their own personal sense of mystery, a state of *M. perpetua* in fact. Still others, by no fault of their own, have found themselves mislaid by some hiccup in the reporting or recording procedure. An example is (659) David A Smith who was on the List but omitted from the Journal last year. (Having had no fewer than seven Smiths through these pages already the Editor may have had enough of them). (271) E D Clements, 1969, 1982, was another who had been left out, but the most tardy Listing of all must surely be (835) Alfred Slack 1950, who has had to wait over forty years and eight hundred places before his claim got through. (800) Harold R E Clarke had only a four year delay although he may well feel aggrieved at the waste of the s.a.e. which he sent in 1987. The postal service cannot always be blamed as one letter from Hull successfully reached me addressed simply to 'The Scottish

Mountaineering Club Journal, Aberdeen'. Reticence about Completion is not unusual but occasionally premature advances are made. One lady proudly advised me that her 69 year old mother had done her first Munro and 'When she has tackled the other 276 I will write again!'. AMENDMENTS The following are now:-

- (215) D A Baird, 1980,1981,1982. 1990,___ (401) John Limbach, 1985,1986,___
 (260) Geraldine Howie, 1981,1984,1986. (431) Mark McCann, 1985,___,1990,___
 1984,1987,___,1987,___, 1990,___ (486) Peter Bellarby, 1987,1987,1987,
 (295) W A Mitchell, 1982,___,1990 (498) Douglas Wyllie, 1987,___,1989.
 (327) R S Logan, 1981,1981,1981. 1984, (544) Janet Sutcliffe, 1987,1990,1981.
 1984,1985. 1987,1987,1987, (555) Robin Howie, 1982,1984,1988. 1984,
 1989, 1989,___, 1990,1990,___ 1987,___, 1987,___, 1990,___
 (328) A G Haley, 1981,1981,1981. 1986, (574) Freddie G North, 1988,___
 1986,___, 1989,___ (603) Kay Turner, 1988,___,1989.
 (329) Donald Lamont, 1981,1981,___ (640) Matthew Bramley, 1989,___,1990.
 1989,___ (648) James Binnie, 1989,___,1990.
 (336) S T Ramsden, 1984,___,1989. (651) Innes Mitchell, 1989,___,1990.
 (346) John L Brown, 1980,___,1990, 1985,___ (654) W Douglas Allan, 1989,___,1990.
 1990,___ (676) James G Bell, 1988,1988,1990.
 (358) M B Slater, 1984,1987,1987. 1988,___ (678) Stewart Benn, 1989,1989,1990.
 1990,___ (685) Derek G Sime, 1989,1989,1990.
 (375) R H Macdonald, 1984,___, 1987,___ (689) Ian Jones, 1989,___,1990.
 1990,___ (700) Terry McDonagh, 1989,1990,___

Altogether I have had about 150 letters reporting additions or amendments to The List. Some simply convey the relevant information, but others contain narrative, description, observation and even philosophy. From this epistolary harvest come the gleanings which make up this section. Needless to say much worthwhile material has had to be omitted.

Timespans.-Not everybody reveals this aspect but it is clear the range is great. The following table may be of interest to the statistically minded. It shows the duration of 111 first Munro rounds from this year's List.

Duration in years	-1	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41+
% of 111 total	2.7	7.2	19.8	35.1	17.1	13.5	4.5

The vast majority of Completers take over ten years and this confirms that most Munroists contract the disease well after they have taken up hillwalking or climbing. Even the 20% between six and ten years seem to have moved into it rather than set out to do the round as a specific task.

A few only move to completion in their later years. (801) Logie Bertram celebrated his 70th birthday the day before finishing on Ben Lui. (732) *Ted Maden spread the round over 43 years, partly because he was banished to England in mid career, while (574) Freddie North was a classic case of *M. longus* by extending over 52, again from an English base.

At the other end of the spectrum are extremes of *M. brevis* such as the continuous rounds of (812) Stuart Clements and (813) Katherine Weyman who took 113 days and of (777) Hugh Symonds in only 67 days. The latter was particularly notable in that it was done on foot together with rowing the Sound of Sleat and sailing to Mull. About the only way this form of *Automunros* could be further refined would be to swim to the Islands!

Family Affairs. As usual several instances of *M. matrimonialis* are apparent in this year's List - The (734/5) Rostrons, (780/1) Sutherlands, (783/4) Wilsons and (791/2) Steeles. The (391/2) Griffins report a joint experience of *M. claravistitis* with a final clear view from Sgurr Choinnich, Glen Carron. The (260/555) Howies are a matrimonial pair who completed separately before they formed a team, but reinforced things with further rounds together and now have done a fourth. All hills have been ascended by at least two different routes and many by three or more. The (838/9) Lindsays are father and son with the latter only 14 years old. The (821/2) Duttons are brothers who finished side by side and step by step, neither yielding precedence until they were forced into conformity by the alphabetic rules of the List. There are other family features in the correspondence but the prize for the earliest visit to a Munro summit must surely go to Mark Waugh who was born in the cabin of a helicopter during a snowstorm on the summit of An Riabhachan when his mother was unable to wait until she reached Raigmore Hospital. It might seem churlish to say that in spite of this early enthusiasm most of us would agree that in an honest round the peak needs to be done again without such extreme help.

Uniquity.-Since the expression of our individuality is one of the main reasons for going to the hills in the first place it is to be expected that some Munroists are interested to know whether they are the first in this or that category. The truth is that nobody knows for certain since the only records lie in these scribbles. However this year has seen the first ethnic Chinese (717) H H Tsai, the first German (788) Klaus Schwartz and the first Member of Parliament (719) Chris Smith, who is the first M.P. but is far from being the first Smith! (728) Bill Maltman made his round with an approximation to Dow's Rule in that he climbed every Munro from a drivable road point (which must have brought a good dinner and a warm bed within easy reach). (759) Alistair Beeley reckons he was doomed to Munros by insensitive parents who gave him the middle name 'Munro'! Let me take this opportunity to say that although I have plenty of information about Munroists' activities, I am not well informed about how many have red hair, are over six and a half feet tall, have webbed feet and so on, so don't ask!

A posthumous entry is sadly included with (762) Tommy Kilpatrick who died of natural causes at the age of 46 while climbing Crowberry Ridge on Buachaille Etive Mor, his favourite mountain. Tommy was a member of the East Kilbride M.C. and is much missed by his many friends.

The Detail.-(764) Andrew Templeton has an interest in the 'esoteric gems' of Tops mentioned in last year's Journal and now deleted from the Tables. He has visited Sron dha-Murchdi in the Ben Lawers range, Druim nam Bo of Mullach Clach a' Bhlaire (which he ensured now boasts a cairn), and searched in vain for Creag a' Bhraig, supposedly between Meall na Dige and Stob Coire an Lochan south of Stobinian. It has added immense historical interest (and a lot of extra miles) to his round.

A Cornucopia of Experience.-The letters I receive contain much material worthy of inclusion but these are only notes and often I must quote without acknowledgement. It is clear that for the vast majority the collecting of Munros is a very incidental matter compared to the main business of experiencing the mountains. It is a strong call which draws people time after time from as far away as Somerset, or which can make a Munroist who doesn't drive persist to the end.

'It almost cost me my marriage but it was well worth it' will raise an echo in many thankful (and perhaps in some rueful) hearts.

'There is no hill I would not climb again' and 'I have had twenty glorious years' illustrate the feelings in many letters.

There are other dividends:- 'In periods of stress in other areas of life, a tired mind has often been restored by the peace and quiet of the mountains and by simply being absorbed in the physical effort of climbing.'

Vivid recollections abound:-

'Talking to a young mountain hare sat at my feet on Ben Wyvis.'

'A steely inspection by a Glas Maol golden eagle gliding by at ten paces.'

'Charming antics of mother Ptarmigan protecting her rugby team of chicks.'

'A February day of sharp frost and deep, dry powder snow on Seana Braigh.'

'The Aonach Eagach on a perfect spring day when I seemed to have the hills to myself.'

'A June day of cloudless blue and crystal clarity on Blaven.'

'Goggles frosted, compass frosted, watch frosted, - no feet, - utter whiteout, - solo on Wyvis.'

'The frivolous waste of bagging the Knoydart Six in one day from Kinloch Hourn.'

'How helpful stalkers and estate offices can be, if 'phoned in advance.'

'The "excuse me's" and "sorry's" needed to scale Scafell Pike. How lucky we are!'

'Ghostly lights and noises beneath Devil's Point.'

'The Aonach Eagach ridge one Easter when a double cornice broke only a yard from my right boot.'

'A 200ft fall on Beinn an Dothaidh with thankfully nothing worse than a broken wrist and some bruises.'

Mr Normal.-(796) David Stallard, whose round lasted 22 years, speaks for many others when he writes - 'When I did find out about the Tables I must admit I wasn't particularly interested. I went to the hills to rock climb, for snow and ice climbing, to watch birds and wild animals and to "get away from it all". If I thought about Munro bagging at all it was with some disdain... But like so many other people, by the time I had been up about half the Munros I

got interested in finishing them. Like everyone else who has spent enough time in the hills to do the Munros I have had good days and bad days; days when the wind reduced me to a crawl, days of walking on compass bearings for hours on end, times when I could see 100 miles and times when I could hardly see two yards, times of anxiety, times, frankly, of fear, and times of tremendous excitement and jubilation... There are some Munros I won't bother to go back to though I won't name them out of politeness, but many more that I will.

That Final Party.-Champagne corks have been popping like mad all over the Highlands and especially in Mull where Ben More would have added several feet to its height by now were it not for the conscientious way in which Munroists always take their empty bottles away with them. A few still eschew celebration as much too frivolous for such a serious matter, or not in keeping with their own contemplative, or perhaps even misanthropic, approach to the hills. And there are unusual variants like that of (750) David Henderson who celebrated on the summit of Braeriach in the company of 21 dogs! Before you draw any wrong conclusions he hastily adds that they were all with their owners and part of S.A.R.D.A. Poor (759) John Norrie was dismayed to find that few of his usual companions were able to join him on Sgurr nan Gilleann so he held an official celebration on the first Munro he had climbed over 40 years earlier. Not a bad idea really as the common final choice, Ben More in Mull, tends to be such a difficult place to reach! However, that first Munro can be a risky place as (848) Hew Fraser found when he arrived at the top of Stob Binnein as a knackered, drenched and bedraggled schoolboy back in 1966. The teacher gave the shivering lad some amber liquid which, ever mindful of school rules, he called 'cold tea'. Ever since that day Hew has been unable to stay off the hills - or the 'cold tea'.

Centenary Matters.-This being the centenary year of the first publication of Munro's Tables, (450) Gordon McAndrew, the Keeper of the Regalia, has arranged for a centenary version of the Munroist tie to be available. In addition he has responded to the pleas of non-tie wearing Munroists by producing a brooch/lapel badge. The former has '1891-1991' added in red and the latter is a 1 x 1 3/4 inch oval in gilt with the same Munro crest as on the original tie. Both are attractive items and I look forward to obtaining them myself when, if ever, I am Compleat.

Prices are:-	Munroist tie	£8.50	including	exclusive
	Centenary tie	£9.50	post and	to Listed
	Brooch/lapel badge	£8.50	packing	Munroists

During 1991 a contribution of £1 will be made to the Land Fund of the John Muir Trust in respect of each Centenary tie issued.

A special Munroist Dinner to celebrate the Centenary has also been arranged by Master of The Tables Derek Bearhop, Gordon McAndrew and myself. This will be held in the Roxburgh Hotel, Charlotte Square, Edinburgh. Date: Saturday, 23rd November at 6.30 p.m. (When hill weather is at its worst.) Cost: £17.50 per head. Bookings only accepted from Listed Compleat Munroists (plus their spouses or partners, many of whom will have sacrificed so much along the way!).

Orders and bookings for the Dinner to: Gordon M. McAndrew, Bishop's House, 4 Lansdowne Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 5EQ.

Dinner bookings should be accompanied by a 9 x 4 inch s.a.e. Cheques payable to 'Munro Centenary Dinner.' Please indicate if you want information on local overnight accommodation. The Roxburgh is an hotel in which Sir Hugh himself would not have been out of place, so please, gentlemen, wear a tie and lounge suit, if available.

There will be slides, toasts, celebrated speakers and splendid company. It will be a great occasion. Numbers will be limited to 250 maximum, so don't leave it too late or you may miss a unique opportunity. The next one is a century away!

For Entry to the List.-

Notification of Completion giving names of first and last summits and the time taken in years should be sent to W.D. Brooker, 25 Deevie Road South, Cults, Aberdeen AB1 9NA. A s.a.e. (steam-proof stamp) should confer immortality with an entry in the List.

The Patter of Tiny Claws.-We have received a letter from John Chester, Scottish Wildlife Trust Warden on Eigg, pointing out that the crucial nesting period on the Sgurr of Eigg runs from mid-March to mid-July. He hopes that climbers will visit the Sgurr outwith this period, and that such a voluntary restriction will suit all needs, preventing any future confrontations/restriction moves.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS, 1990

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION 1990

(Geographical Divisions are those used in SMC District Guidebooks)

REGION	CASUALTIES (of which fatalities are bracketed)				INCIDENTS							Non-Mountain- eering	
	Injuries	Exhaustion/Exposure Hypothermia, Hyperthermia	Illness	TOTAL CASUALTIES	Incidents with Casualties	Cragfast	Separated	Lost	Overdue or Benighted	False Alarms	TOTAL INCIDENTS		
Northern Highlands	6 (1)	2 —	— —	8 (1)	7	1	2	1	—	3	14	—	2
Western Highlands	4 (3)	1 —	1 —	6 (3)	5	—	2	—	6	3	16	—	—
Ben Nevis	10 —	3 —	— —	13 —	13	4	1	2	4	—	24	—	—
Glencoe (inc. Buachaille)	14 (4)	1 —	1 (1)	16 (5)	16	9	2	—	8	4	39	1	1
Other Central Highlands	10 (2)	7 —	— —	17 (2)	11	2	1	—	1	—	15	3	1
Cairngorms	30 (5)	4 —	3 (1)	37 (6)	31	—	4	4	3	5	47	—	5
Southern Highlands	24 (3)	3 —	3 (2)	30 (5)	30	1	—	3	7	3	44	—	4
Skye	14 (4)	— —	— —	14 (4)	14	—	1	1	2	2	20	—	—
Islands (other than Skye)	5 —	4 —	— —	9 —	7	—	—	—	—	—	7	—	1
Southern Uplands	5 (1)	9 (1)	3 (1)	17 (3)	13	2	1	3	8	1	28	—	4
All Regions 1990	122 (23)	34 (1)	11 (5)	167 (29)	147	19	14	14	39	21	254	4	18
All Regions 1989	130 (20)	15 (1)	13 (4)	158 (25)	141	8	15	12	25	14	215	3	11

CAUSES OF INJURIES IN 1990 (where known)

(of which fatalities are bracketed)

WINTER

(meaning snow, ice or frozen turf underfoot, not meaning just the time of year)

Winter Hill Walking.....Slips.....	5	(1)
Winter Hill Walking.....Slips on neve.....	4	(1)
Winter Hill Walking.....Slips on rock/snow.....	1	(1)
Winter Hill Walking.....Slip on ice.....	1	(1)
Winter Hill Walking.....Slip descending.....	1	
Winter Hill Walking.....Slip wearing crampons.....	2	
Winter Hill Walking.....Walk through cornice.....	4	(1)
Winter Hill Walking.....Exhaustion/Hypothermia.....	3	
Winter Hill Walking.....Glissading.....	1	
Winter Hill Walking.....Glissading in crampons.....	1	
Winter Hill Walking.....Avalanche.....	4	
Snow Climbing Roped.....Avalanche.....	4	
Snow Climbing Unroped.....Slips.....	4	
Mixed Climbing Unroped.....Slips.....	2	(1)
Mixed Climbing Roped.....Slip.....	1	
Ice Climbing Roped.....Slip.....	1	
Ice Climbing Roped.....Avalanche.....	1	
Off-Piste Skiing.....Slip.....	1	
Winter Local Walking.....Hypothermia.....	1	(1)
Winter Conditions Total (25%).....	43	(7)

SUMMER

Summer Hill Walking.....Slips.....	26	(3)
Summer Hill Walking.....Slips on wet rock.....	5	(2)
Summer Hill Walking.....Slips on dry rock.....	4	(1)
Summer Hill Walking.....Slips descending wet rock and grass	3	(1)
Summer Hill Walking.....Slips on wet grass.....	6	

Summer Hill Walking.....Slips on paths.....	2	
Summer Hill Walking.....Slips on scree.....	2	
Summer Hill Walking.....Slip descending.....	1	
Summer Hill Walking.....Slip on wet tree root.....	1	
Summer Hill Walking.....Slip on sea cliffs.....	3	
Summer Hill Walking.....Slip crossing fence.....	1	
Summer Hill Walking.....Slip crossing burn.....	1	
Summer Hill Walking.....Tripping over a stone.....	1	
Summer Hill Walking.....Ledge gave way.....	1	
Summer Hill Walking.....Illnesses.....	11	(5)
Summer Hill Walking.....Hypothermia.....	18	
Summer Hill Walking.....Exhaustion.....	9	
Summer Hill Walking.....Sore Knees.....	1	
Summer Hill Walking.....Muscle strain.....	1	
Summer Hill Walking.....Cause not known.....	1	(1)
Summer Local Walking.....Cause not known.....	1	(1)
Summer Local Walking.....Slips.....	4	(2)
Summer Local Walking.....Slips resulting in drowning.....	2	(2)
Rock Climbing Unroped.....Slip.....	1	(1)
Rock Climbing Unroped.....Arm pull-up dislocated shoulder...	1	
Rock Climbing Unroped.....Heat Trauma.....	1	
Rock Climbing Roped.....Slips.....	3	
Rock Climbing Roped.....Slip on dry rock.....	1	
Rock Climbing Roped.....Slips on wet rock.....	2	(1)
Rock Climbing Roped.....Handhold gave way.....	1	
Rock Climbing Roped.....Karabiner failed.....	1	
Abseiling.....Abseil point failed.....	2	(1)
Abseiling.....Hit by falling rock.....	1	
Abseiling on Sea Cliff.....	1	
Tree Climbing.....Slip?.....	1	
Mountain Biking.....	1	
Paragliding.....	2	(1)
Summer Conditions Total (75%).....	124	(22)
<hr/>		
Sub Totals —Slips (not rock climbing)	82	(16)
Avalanche	8	(0)
Illness—all in summer conditions	11	(5)
Rock Climbing and Abseiling	15	(3)

MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS 1990

Compiled by John Hinde

RESCUE man-hours expended on each incident, are stated in figures (when known) after each narrative.

Further accidents may need to be listed in the next issue as some reports for 1990 have not been received (April 1991). The first quarter of 1991 has shown an alarming increase in fatalities on Scottish mountains and sea cliffs: over 20 deaths, of which 15 happened in 28 days. I hope to visit teams to get some first hand reports but there seems to be no real pattern or trend from the accounts I have seen. There are 11 varied activities/causes: 4 people have died from slips on neve, 4 from slips on ice climbs, 3 from avalanches, 2 glissading and 2 deaths of non-mountaineers on sea cliffs. Other causes seem to be: fall over a cornice in remote off-piste ski-ing, a piste ski fall, one hypothermia fatality, one hillwalker died from getting lost, and one fell through thin ice on Rannoch Moor.

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS

MARCH 25th—Couple with son hillwalking on Beinn Eighe. Gordon Suckley (53) tripped on descent (scree and snow) in good weather. Despite head and leg injuries he managed to walk to the burn below the NE Spur of Creag Dubh. Son alerted Torridon MRT which guided in an RAF Sea King at night. By that time Sheila Suckley (49) was hypothermic. 35.

APRIL 2nd—A man with a dog got lost when snow was falling. Having been taken by boat to the head of Loch Glencoul and intending to walk to Kylestrome, he turned up Glen Cassley 14 miles away to SE and in exactly the opposite direction. Assynt MRT. 12.

APRIL 4th—A pair came to a buttress on Corrag Bhuidhe of An Teallach. Trying to find a way round, Ian Buchan (19) slipped on snow and rock and was killed falling 300m down Constabulary Gully to about 150m above Loch Toll an Lochain. RAF Sea King lifted Dundonnell Team to the coire mouth, but a stretcher lower/drag of 5 hours was necessary due to winds and darkness. 159.

APRIL 11th to 13th—After a disagreement with his friend, a 24 year-old who suffered from depression separated and bivouacked near a bothy at Sandwood Bay (south of Cape Wrath). During a search by Assynt, Dundonnell and Leuchars MRTs he was found by RAF Sea King. 130.

MAY 6th—False Alarm occasioned by a tent being abandoned during rain. Torridon and Kintail MRTs. 7.

JUNE 18th—False Alarm. Two separate parties in Coire an Laoigh of Beinn Eighe reported whistle blasts of International Distress Signal. Torridon MRT. 11.

JUNE 22nd—An Award party were walking from Drumbeg (Eddrachillis Bay) to Loch Assynt. S. Taylor (15) tripped on a stone and sprained his ankle. Evacuated by Assynt MRT using an Argocat.

JULY 29th—Separation incident on An Groban, Loch Gairloch area. Changed plans and family anxieties led to Dundonnell MRT alert. 2.

JULY 29th—Descending Slioch, Hugh Waterman (57) slipped on a path in the SE Coire breaking a tibia and fibula. Both Torridon and Kinloss MRTs commented on vicious midge attacks during the rescue and were relieved by the arrival of HM Coastguard helicopter. 54.

AUGUST 17th—Search by Assynt MRT, RAF Sea King and HM Coastguard for Arnaud Lauisse (23) who was lost for several days in the Cape Wrath to Sandwood Bay area. He was found by HM Coastguard helicopter at Loch Airigh na Beinne on the afternoon of 18th, cold and unhurt. 250.

AUGUST 26th—Andrew Thompson (51) slipped when descending wet rock and grass and fell down a 15 ft. outcrop, badly straining his groin. It was on Liathach behind Glen Cottage. Torridon MRT. 27.

OCTOBER 10th—Mark MacNeill (12) got cragfast on 40 ft. seacliffs at Keiss Castle near Wick. Rescued by HM Coastguard using a double lower with Wick lifeboat standing by.

OCTOBER 29th—False alarm caused by a report of a red flare seen near Inverael. Dundonnell MRT. 32.

NOVEMBER 11th—Scrabster Coastguard Cliff Team recovered an injured 42 year-old from Thurso sea cliffs.

WESTERN HIGHLANDS

FEBRUARY 18th—Party of 5 was descending from Forcan Ridge of the Saddle in poor visibility. They were going down a snow-slope diagonally when it avalanched carrying all 5 for 200 to 300 feet. 4 were completely buried; the other managed to extricate 3 of his mates, all uninjured. One was completely buried and apparently lost. One man went for help whilst the others, aided by a couple of other people in the vicinity, carried on searching. After the best part of an hour they were attracted to a spot by some noise/sound. They dug down 3 ft., then probed with axes and found the missing man buried a further 3 ft. under heavy, wet snow. Francis Scott (43) was uninjured except for a stiff neck. Kintail MRT. 25.

MARCH 24th—A party of 9 was traversing Sgurr na Ciste Duibhe in strong, gusting wind and heavy, wintry showers. Ian Selby (47) was seen to stumble a step or two backwards and then fall down the north side of the ridge. He had given no indication of any problem and uttered no sound. He was seen lying about 50 to 200 ft. below. David Burnie (34) went to tend the casualty while the others got down off the hill.

Kinloss, Kintail & Leuchars MRTs were involved in a difficult night search and rescue of Burnie (slight exposure). Selby's body was left for recovery by RAF Sea King in daylight. He had died instantly from the fall, but inadequate waterproof clothing may have led to hypothermia before the fall. 824.

APRIL 15th—Colin Twamley (45) was unable to walk out from Camusrory, Loch Nevis and was evacuated by Mallaig lifeboat and HM Coastguard. 18.

MAY 2nd—Benjamin Hatt (59) and Doreen Hatt (60) were overdue from a walk round to the Falls of Glomach recommended in a booklet. The booklet neglects to say the trip is 18 miles and the going wet and rough. Kintail MRT. 8.

MAY 6th—False alarm. Two campers had abandoned their tent up Glenuaig in bad weather and spent the night in their car. Kintail & Torridon MRTs. 6.

MAY 20th—Myra Campbell (37) felt ill after traversing A'Chralaig and Mullach Fraochchoire. She and a friend were overdue and were found slowly descending a glen to Loch Cluanie by Kintail MRT. 17.

JUNE 2nd—Vain searches continued through to November for Richard Bruce Pearce (46) around the Spean Bridge, South Laggan and Tomdoun areas. He had left Spean Bridge in early June planning to walk the West Highlands to Cape Wrath. MRTs involved included Police, Dundonnell, Cairngorm, Kintail, Lochaber, RAF Wessex, Royal Marines, Gordonstoun School. A huge number of man-hours have been spent.

JUNE 13th—False alarm caused by a climber's rucksack being left on Stob a'Chearcaill of Ladharr Bheinn. Glenelg MRT. 35.

JUNE 23rd—A party of 7 were climbing Forcan Ridge of The Saddle in wind and rain. On easy ground above the Bad Step, Elizabeth Mathews (51) slipped or stumbled and tumbled 200 ft. Rescued by Kintail MRT & RAF Sea King but died in hospital 3 weeks later. 42.

JULY 2nd—Jamie Penman (14) slipped on wet grass and injured his ankle on Bealach an Lapain (the col just west of Saileag). Kintail MRT & HMCG helicopter. 18.

JULY 7th to 8th—Party of 3 separated from 9 others and stopped by a swollen river trying to walk from the head of Loch Morar to Loch Arkaig. Found by Lochaber MRT & RAF Sea King. Airlifted. 20.

JULY 10th—Separation incident during walk in Glen Affric. Bertrand Maes (19) carried out original plan—to go to Allt Beithe Youth Hostel—when others turned back in bad weather. Dundonnell MRT & SARDA. 75.

JULY 14th—False alarm. Red flare maliciously fired near Loch a' Ghille Ghobaich, Mallaig. Lochaber MRT, HM Coastguard, Mallaig Lifeboat, RAF Sea King. 50.

SEPTEMBER 23rd—A party of 8 was delayed on the Five Sisters Ridge. They descended Sgurr Fhuaran S. Ridge and were benighted 1 mile from the road with only one unserviceable torch between them. Found by RAF helicopter at 07.00 on 24th Kintail MRT. 24

DECEMBER 10th to 11th—Sven Straume (31) was benighted on Beinn Hiant, Ardnamurchan. He walked in safe just after a search by Lochaber MRT started. RN Sea King. 50.

DECEMBER 25th—Search by RAF Kinloss & Leuchars MRTs, Lochaber, HM Coastguard and civilian volunteers for James MacLean (70) at Kilchoan Village, Ardnamurchan Peninsula. He was found dead in the sea 5th January 1991. 169.

BEN NEVIS

JANUARY 3rd—Wearing light shoes or trainers and inadequate clothing; without ice-axes, crampons, or navigation equipment; Benny Jorgenson (30), Jonathan Goodchild (16) and Mark Crawshaw (16) tried to find their way down Nevis Tourist Track in poor visibility by following tracks in the snow. They spent the night huddled together (no spare clothes or bivvy gear) above a waterfall just below the snowline in Five Finger Gully. Next day they tried to reascend but made poor progress in snow, so they were airlifted by RN Sea King. Lochaber MRT. 173.

FEBRUARY 3rd—Well equipped; Nicholas Sutton (26) and Martin Whitehouse (21) got lost trying to get down Nevis in storm and snow and went into Five Finger Gully. They bivouacked and were found (uninjured) by Lochaber MRT next day when descending the Tourist Track in better weather. 16.

FEBRUARY 17th—After separating from his party and going on alone, Adam Henley (24) got lost and benighted and so he bivouacked near Nevis summit. He got slight hypothermia and frostbitten toes and fingers. Lochaber MRT found him next day descending the Tourist Path and carried him down. 40.

FEBRUARY 24th—Steven Beard (18) slipped when traversing into Observatory Gully from Tower Ridge. A belay failed and he fell, breaking a wrist. His rope partner and another pair bivouacked with him. Next day he was stretchered down by Lochaber MRT. 210.

FEBRUARY 24th—Four men (20s and 30s) were benighted in horrendous weather on Tower Ridge. They bivouacked and extricated themselves next day. Lochaber MRT. 30.

MARCH 5th—Garry Smith (17) twisted a knee when solo hill-walking. In a bivvy bag he survived 2 nights out in very bad weather. He was found at 3,300 ft. in a boulder field on Carn Dearg NW by Leuchars MRT. Suffering hypothermia he was lowered 500 ft. and then airlifted by RAF Wessex. Lochaber & Kinloss MRTs, SARDA. 978.

APRIL 5th—After traversing the Ben, Elizabeth Price (42) got exhausted between CIC Hut and Glen Nevis. Lochaber MRT. 15.

APRIL 14th—Although high avalanche risk had been forecast, David Miatt (51), Bryan Stadden (34) and Christopher Begley (32) tried to climb out of Upper Coire Leis to the right of the Abseil Posts. Unroped, all 3 were swept down 500 ft. when they triggered off a knee-deep windslab with a crown-wall 50 ft. wide. Stadden and Begley were able to walk out and help Miatt who had a broken leg and abrasions. He was stretchered to CIC Hut by climbers from there and nearby, then flown out by RAF Wessex. Lochaber MRT. 30.

APRIL 21st—Two men were overdue climbing Orion Face, but they walked out next day. Kinloss MRT, RAF Wessex.

APRIL 30th—Fallen walker Red Burn Gully had a broken arm and collar bone. Airlifted by RAF Wessex.

MAY 7th—Wearing Doc Marten boots and glissading from the Carn Mor Dearg Arete, Adrian Glover (23) lost control and cut his scalp on a rock. Lochaber MRT & RAF Wessex. 12.

- MAY 27th—Victoria Bird (18) slipped on the Tourist Path at Red Burn breaking an ankle. Lochaber MRT & RN Sea King. 15.
- JULY 8th to 9th—Neil MacLennan (28), Alan Goodman (27) and Carla How (27) got lost and benighted on Nevis summit in mist. They were found by Lochaber MRT descending the Waterslide. 7.
- JULY 21st—Sarah O'Donnell (13) slipped taking a short cut down a gully descending the Tourist Path and broke a leg. Lochaber MRT & RAF Wessex. 27.
- JULY 29th to 30th—Christopher Lane (40) and Kevin Bell (38) got benighted and cragfast on the Orion Face due to heavy rain. Lowered off by Lochaber MRT. 96.
- AUGUST 2nd—Descending the Tourist Path, Annick Madelaine (56) slipped, bruising her face and a thigh. She was stretchered down by Lochaber MRT. 37.
- AUGUST 20th—Gordon Grant (41) became unable to finish his descent of the Ben because of sore knees. Lochaber team leader happened to be in the area; he radioed a RN Sea King helicopter which he spotted overhead and which also happened to be in the area, unconnected with the incident—and so the casualty and his daughter got a quick lift to hospital, for nothing serious fortunately. 4.
- AUGUST 30th—Jeanette Marsh (51) got separated from her niece, Sylvia Watson (36) when going up the Tourist Path. With inadequate clothing and shoes they got into difficulties in bad weather. They were helped separately off the hill by other walkers. Local MRT called out. Slight exposure and bruises.
- SEPTEMBER 4th—Graham Critchley (20) slipped when pushing a mountain bike up the Tourist Path and lacerated a shin. Lochaber MRT. 9.
- SEPTEMBER 9th to 10th—Dennis McCulloch (40) and John Pease (39) got benighted (due to wet rock and exhaustion) on Observatory Ridge. The rock dried during their overnight bivouac so they were able to climb the top 5 pitches next day. Lochaber MRT, RAF Wessex. 22.
- SEPTEMBER 27th—Catherine Byham (23) suffered slight hypothermia on Nevis Path. Helped by other walkers. Lochaber MRT. 13.
- NOVEMBER 3rd—Teaming up with 2 hillwalkers, Timothy Walker (20) tried to climb Tower Ridge. The two got frightened off by the technicalities at two different places, but by then Timothy could not get down. He continued up the route, then went off it on to Echo Traverse, then on to Rolling Stones, where he got cragfast. Rescued by Lochaber MRT, RAF Sea King.
- NOVEMBER 6th to 7th—A pair of climbers were apparently overdue from climbing Tower Ridge, but later one refused to admit they were overdue. Lochaber MRT, RAF Sea King. 20.
- NOVEMBER 30th to DECEMBER 1st—Jason Myels (23) and John Graham (28) benighted on N.E. Buttress at the Man Trap.

GLENCOE

(including Buachaille Etive Mor)

- JANUARY 7th—False Alarm. Torch flashes and waves reported on the lip of Coire na Tulaich. RAF Wessex. Glencoe MRT. 26.
- JANUARY 14th—A search in the dark by Kinloss & Glencoe MRTs & RAF Wessex located Helen Wilson (29) who had become separated from her husband in very bad weather near the summit of Sgor na h-Ulaidh. She had got down alone to Fionn Ghleann. 150.
- FEBRUARY 1st—False Alarm. Camping lights seen in a storm in Coire nan Lochan. Glencoe MRT. 6.
- FEBRUARY 6th—After a late start and because of wind and deep powder, a party of 3 decided to leave the crest of Aonach Eagach at the Pinnacles and go down the Glencoe side. Marc Ferris (27), Simon Bailey (22) and Carol Keeble (21) got cragfast 200 ft. down. Lowered to easier ground by Glencoe MRT. RAF Sea King aborted at Inverness due to bad weather. 63.

- FEBRUARY 15th—When leading Pitch 2 of Deep Cut Chimney, Stob Coire nam Beith, on poor ice, David Torrington (23) was knocked down by a loose-snow, channelled avalanche, injuring his back. Glencoe and various RAF MRTs & RAF Wessex. 42.
- FEBRUARY 22nd—Party of 3 overdue on Aonach Eagach. Glencoe alert. 4.
- FEBRUARY 26th—David Green (31) and Peter Leeson (25) were blown off the summit ridge of Buachaille Etive Mor down the south side. Uninjured, they bivouacked. Next morning Green climbed back up a pitch but Leeson had untied and scrambled down to Glen Etive. Green went down Coire na Tulaich and was met by MRTs. Glencoe, Lochaber & SARDA. 80.
- FEBRUARY 26th—Attempting to traverse Aonach Eagach in poor weather, Christopher Breyton (20) and Richard Hughes (19) tried to get down from The Pinnacles as it got dark. They were cragfast 200 ft. below the ridge. Lochaber MRT could not find them in the terrible storm. Next day Glencoe & Lochaber MRTs with 3 RAF lads, with the help of a high powered telescope and radios, were 'talked' to the correct ledge and lowered the 2 down. 68.
- FEBRUARY 28th—A guide and her 3 clients were delayed by an electrical storm on Sron na Lairig. Glencoe MRT. 10.
- MARCH 1st—After traversing Aonach Eagach without problems, Gerard Brett (31), Joe Simpson (30) and Peter Frost (28) mistook Clachaig Gully as the descent route. After a few abseils their rope jammed and they were cragfast above Jericho Wall. Glencoe MRT pulled the trio out of the gully using 2 ropes from different angles. RAF Sea King was recalled en route. 55.
- MARCH 4th—John Omerod (31) fell on snow from near the top of Lost Valley Buttress and broke his leg. Stretched down by Glencoe & Lochaber MRTs. 128.
- MARCH 4th—At the bealach between Stob Coire nan Lochan and Bidean nam Bian, M. Livingston was adjusting his crampons when he fell down into Coire nam Beith, sustaining head, spine and abdominal injuries. Glencoe MRT carry, followed by RN Sea King airlift. 48.
- MARCH 4th—Bill Murrie (31) fell on Buachaille Etive Mor (Curved Ridge or D Gully Buttress?). He was left dangling over a crag, tied off to an ice-axe belay while his companion went for help. A Plas-y-Brenin party got him out of trouble. Leuchars & Lochaber MRTs. 88.
- MARCH 4th to 5th—Dave Donaldson and Dave Robertson (both 44) finished climbing Deep Cut Chimney, Stob Coire nam Beith after it got dark. They went towards Beinn Maol Chaluim and snowcaved, then walked in safe to Clachaig next afternoon. Glencoe, Kinloss, Leuchars, Lochaber MRTs, RAF Wessex. 370.
- MARCH 4th to 5th—During the search for the above pair, 2 other chilled climbers were found abseiling, who told of 2 more in a snowcave 300 ft. from the summit. Allan Vaughan (57), Craig McConnel (36) Ian Fleming (31) and Alex Runciman (29) got benighted climbing North West Gully, Stob Coire nam Beith in poor conditions. They dug a palatial snow cave complete with down gear and a stove. Next day 2 abseiled and were met by rescuers. 2 stayed in the cave: one because he had lost a crampon, the other because he was cold and the climb too hard. Eventually, in winds that required crawling, the snowcave was found by rescuers. The 2 men were motivated and 'pulled' to safety, then walked off the hill. Glencoe, Kinloss, Leuchars, Lochaber MRTs, RAF Wessex. 370.
- MARCH 9th to 10th—In very heavy rain, RAF Leeming MRT found a missing pair, moving very slowly westwards along Aonach Eagach (Stob Coire Leith). Omar Pirzada and David McKee (both 21) had been benighted. Also Glencoe MRT and RAF Wessex. 148.
- MARCH 24th—Carrying good crampons in their sacs, an unroped pair were going up to the bealach between Bidean nam Bian and Stob Coire nan Lochan on the Coire nam Beith side. Euan Craig (29) stopped to read his compass. He was wearing bendy boots on hard ice. He stuck his axe into the slope, then slipped down steep rock and ice. A strong gust of wind hit him at the time he fell. Conditions were very hard during the rescue with frightening gusts of wind reaching 100 mph with snow splinters blasting eyes and faces. At the base of the hill comprehensive resuscitation efforts were made in a RN Sea King helicopter but Craig was dead. Glencoe & Lochaber MRTs. 134.

- MARCH 28th—One of a party of sixteen, Claire Gunn (22) fell 200 ft. on neve in Coire na Tuilach, injuring a wrist and ankle. Another party of hillwalkers from Blundells Boys School stretched her down to an RAF Wessex. Glencoe MRT. 22.
- MARCH 31st—Two men climbed the Direct Route up Crowberry Ridge, Buachaille Etive Mor, by Abraham's Ledge. Near the top of the ridge, one of them; Thomas Kilpatrick (47); had a heart attack. He was stretcher winched off by RAF Wessex but found to be dead on arrival in hospital. Glencoe MRT. 28.
- APRIL 1st—Una Stewart (26) slipped descending a gully below the Bad Step on Stob Coire Sgreamach on the Lost Valley side. She hurt her ribs and a wrist. She was winched into an RAF Wessex after very difficult flying in the dark. Glencoe MRT. 62.
- APRIL 10th—A pair were delayed climbing Central Buttress, Buachaille Etive Mor. Half an hour after midnight James Swift (25) was preparing an abseil 10 ft. above his friend. By the light of a headtorch Peter Kenyon saw Swift lean back as if to test the anchor. Suddenly he was seen to fall backwards down a steep cliff face. Next morning Kenyon discovered an easy way down and found Swift's body. Lower and carry by Glencoe MRT. 52.
- MAY 2nd—Jonathon Hayter (30) and James Coubrough (28) were traversing Aonach Eagach, which was clear of the snow and ice of the winter. At The Pinnacles, due to the lateness and the trouble Hayter was having with the climb, they left the ridge and went down the Glencoe side. On the difficult way down they separated. Coubrough found a way down. Hayter, cragfast in a gully, was found by Glencoe MRT and roped to the gully lip. A Royal Navy Sea King was guided in by strobe light and winched Hayter and the team aboard. 32.
- MAY 16th—Brian Gilfoy (33) fell from Lost Valley Buttress and was killed. It is thought he was trying to avoid a long slope of hard spring snow as he did not have the gear to be on a dangerous buttress. As he went alone, and none knew his intentions, a large search was necessary. Small clues in thick mist—first orange peel then a sock, fallen from his rucksack—led to the quicker discovery of his body which was hundreds of feet higher up, lodged inside a bergschrund. He was thought not to have fallen very far as he only had a small, deep head wound; so perhaps a helmet could have saved him. Glencoe, Leuchars & Lochaber MRTs and RAF Wessex. 42.
- MAY 27th—Leading the first pitch of Rowan Tree Wall, E. Face Aonach Dubh, in bendy hill-walking boots, James Bellarby (17) fell and sustained head injuries and unconsciousness. Undoubtedly his life was saved by his helmet which had extensive damage to the top and sides. One 'Rock' running belay had been placed but it pulled out. Glencoe MRT and RAF Wessex. 328.
- MAY 27th—A husband and wife were overdue climbing Shibboleth on Buachaille Etive Mor. Their son (10) and another man were also reported missing but all turned up safe. Glencoe MRT. 8.
- MAY 28th—Janet Paveley (41) slipped on tree roots on the Tourist Path to Signal Rock, breaking a leg. Glencoe MRT. 6.
- JUNE 9th—False alarm caused by youngsters flashing torches on Pap of Glencoe to tell friends they were OK and intended to spend the night on the mountain. Glencoe MRT and helicopter (recalled). 21.
- JUNE 12th—On the Pinnacles of Aonach Eagach John Hamilton (23) suffered heat trauma, and some of his 24 companions were cragfast nearby. Hamilton was shaded and given water, then oxygen when airlifted by RAF Wessex. His companions had extricated themselves but were guided down by Glencoe MRT. 36.
- JULY 12th—Descending from Stob Coire nan Lochan, a party of 3 missed the narrow path down the Lost Valley. Trying to relocate the path Frederick Kelly fell 50 ft. and was seriously injured, being flown by RAF Wessex to hospitals in Fort William and then Inverness. Glencoe MRT. 28.
- AUGUST 7th—Glencoe MRT were placed on standby for a night search of Aonach Eagach, for a pair overdue, who turned up safe. 2.
- AUGUST 11th—Traversing Aonach Eagach from E. to W., Neil Buchanan (20) seemed to be going a bit fast for safety. At the W. end of The Pinnacles he went a bit higher than the normal path. His friend shouted that he had gone the wrong way. Neil stopped and swung his sac on to one shoulder, as if he was about to jump (south) back on to the path. He was seen to wobble then fall (north) hundreds of feet to his death. Stretcher carry by Glencoe MRT and airlift by RN Sea King. 60.

- SEPTEMBER 2nd False alarm. Shouts were reported from near No. 6 Gully on the W. Face of Aonach Dubh. Later it was thought to have been either sheep or a party of geologists making the noise, or perhaps red deer if the rut had started early. Glencoe MRT and RAF Wessex. 50.
- OCTOBER 19th—Two men collecting bonsai trees were cragfast in Dalness Chasm, Glen Etive. One escaped by tricky climbing; the other was roped out by Glencoe MRT. 13.
- OCTOBER 19th—At the above incident, a cragfast sheep was also rescued.
- OCTOBER 21st One of three, Joyce Smith (63) was descending Sgor na h Ulaidh by the old fence line (Steep loose ground) when she slipped and tumbled a very long way down. She escaped with minor head, leg and chest injuries. Glencoe MRT and RAF Wessex. 36.
- OCTOBER 23rd Rock climbing on North Buttress, Buachaille Etive Mor, Stephanie Flute (25) became cragfast. Her companion escaped in thick mist but he gave Glencoe MRT a wrong rescue location (Great Gully Buttress). Rescued unhurt. 181.
- DECEMBER 15th to 16th—Edgar Emmerson (67) got lost in thick mist on Stob Coire Sgreamach of Bidean nam Bian. When benighted he fell on some rocks with minor injuries, then survived in a bivvy bag and found his way to Glen Etive next day. Glencoe MRT and RAF Sea King (recalled en route). 21.

OTHER CENTRAL HIGHLANDS 1990

- FEBRUARY 3rd to 4th An unsuccessful search by Lochaber and Tweed Valley MRTs for a SARDA dog missing on Aonach Mor.
- FEBRUARY 10th Descending Beinn Bhan, the easterly peak of the Ballachulish Horseshoe, David Bonham (25) slipped on snow covered rocks and broke his leg. A friend ran very fast for help, and an RAF Wessex, on exercise, was flying over a Glencoe MRT member's house at the exact moment of call out, so a very fast rescue was effected. 23.
- FEBRUARY 13th Mary MacDonald (65) fell down a steep cliff near her home in Onich and was found dead. Evacuation by Glencoe MRT. 4.
- FEBRUARY 25th—Leuchars MRT found Iain Young (54) exhausted, exposed and with a broken CALIPER. His companion had lost sight of him near the summit of Beinn a'Choirainn (L. Laggan) when he fell through a cornice. Uninjured he had crawled for four hours. Also Kinloss, Lochaber, SARDA and RAF Sea King. 345.
- FEBRUARY 26th to 27th—Descending Coire Leachach of Stob Coir' an Albannaich, Glen Ceitlein, Leslie Witt (32) fell through a cornice and sustained a pierce wound to his skull. His friend Andy Jefferson (37) then fell through the cornice and was badly injured. Witt went down a few feet to 'spy out' the ground below when Jefferson fell past him a further 600 feet. Witt down for help after he had been unable to resuscitate Jefferson because of facial injuries. Fatal. Glencoe, Kinloss and Leuchars MRTs, SARDA, RAF Wessex. 1,562.
- MARCH 4th RAF Wessex rescued an injured person with leg and pelvic fractures, shoulder and hand injuries. One of the four winter hillwalkers, the person had fallen through a cornice 3 miles north of Dalmally.
- APRIL 8th—Despite having placed 2 runners, when Gary Latter (27) fell from 20 ft. up the first pitch of Mother's Day (E4) (Steall Gorge) he hit the ground and injured his back. He was able to walk out to the road. Lochaber MRT. 9.
- APRIL 28th—Ian Perrin (32) and Robert Cherry (30) became cragfast 100 ft. below the summit cornice of Ben Alder in the Garbh-choire. They spent the night on the steep snow and ice while the third member of the party had gone for help. Low cloud and a washed-out road along Loch Ericht made rescue difficult, although an RAF Sea King lifted Cairngorm MRT to Culra Bothy and keeper George Oswald stayed out at Culra with his Garron. The cragfast pair had to be lowered 1,300 ft. 123.
- MAY 26th An angler from Glasgow was left behind by his party by the edge of Loch Ba, Rannoch Moor, Glencoe MRT. 2.

MAY 31st—One of 12 scrambling up a steep section on the north face of Sron na Creise, Black Mount, Basil Herbert (36) pulled up with his arm and dislocated his shoulder. Airlifted by RAF Wessex. Glencoe MRT. 47.

JUNE 8th—Andrew Cushian broke an arm and injured a leg descending Ben Cruachan. Strathclyde Police MRT. Helicopter airlift.

JUNE 23rd—One experienced man (53) with four novices (male twenties) were attempting to walk six Munros in the Mamore Forest. Descending the last peak, Sgurr a'Mhaim, they got stopped by fatigue and mist coming in. Escorted into Glen Nevis by Lochaber MRT. 15.

JUNE 30th—RAF Wessex rescued walker with suspected ankle fracture from Rannoch Moor.

JULY 10th—Alexander Grey (52) slipped on a small outcrop of wet rock when descending the side of a gully near Stewart's Cave (west side of Ballachulish Horseshoe, above Kentallen) receiving cuts and bruises to his head, arm and leg. Stretchered down by Glencoe MRT. 20.

JULY 15th—George Bowie (30) and Karen Bowie (27) got cragfast on the vegetated forest crags 500 yards south of Steall Cottage in Upper Glen Nevis. Helped down by Glencoe MRT. 31.

OCTOBER 26th—Very difficult rescue by Glencoe MRT of a collie, cragfast on a tiny ledge in a deep gully (the Garbh Allt of Stob Dubh, Glen Ceitlin). 36.

DECEMBER 15th or 16th—Helicopter scrambled when a hillwalker was overdue in Glen Etive, but he walked off safe.

OTHER CENTRAL HIGHLANDS 1989

MAY 24th 1990—Body of Edgar Agudelo (33) Columbian student, found by a gamekeeper on a hill five miles north of Newtonmore. He was first reported missing in London on April 27th 1989.

CAIRNGORMS

JANUARY 1st—After an intended bivouac at The Shelter Stone, John White (46) and John White (26) got lost on the Macdui Plateau and spent a second night out in a forced bivouac. Cairngorm MRT, SARDA.

JANUARY 3rd—Out walking with a black labrador on the cliffs at Muchalls, Kincardine, Dawn Hillcoat (22) tripped over her dog and fell 70 feet, sustaining body bruising. Rescued by Ambulance, Fire Service and HM Coastguard.

JANUARY 4th—Approaching the foot of Twisting Gully, Coire na Ciche, Beinn a'Bhuird, to do a climb, two men had just reached the snow level, when one of them—Moir—spotted a powder avalanche about 350 feet above them. He shouted to Kenneth Ferguson (30) to take cover, then took shelter himself behind a large boulder. The avalanche funnelled into Twisting Gully. The main part swept over Moir and he was able to get out of the debris. Ferguson was 100 feet below him, conscious and on top of the debris but with a broken leg. Grampian Police and Braemar MRTs, RAF Sea King. 138.

N.B.—This was one of the few, if not the first, powder snow avalanches to be reported in Scotland. JH.

JANUARY 4th—Steve Aisthorpe (26), Robert Owen (40) and Dr John Barker survived an avalanche, or avalanches, in Coire an t'Sneachda, Cairngorm but suffered injuries. RAF Sea King.

JANUARY 10th—Barbara D'Arcy-Thomson (79) probably swept from rocks on east bank of River Findhorn at Randolph's Leap. RAF Sea King.

JANUARY 13th—Richard Howard (16) got lost in mist on Dreish and followed a burn down into Glen Prosen instead of Glen Clova. Tayside Police S & R Unit.

JANUARY 16th—Stuart Maddock (36) walked ahead of his 2 companions when returning to Cairnwell Ski Centre from An Socach summit. He got lost in mist and was found at 2215 sheltering behind a peat hag in a blizzard near the head of Glen Baddoch. Grampian and Tayside Police and Braemar MRTs. 150.

N.B.—This is one of the few places in the Highlands where it is recommended to be safe to follow a burn down when lost. JH.

- FEBRUARY 4th—After a climb on Craig Rennet, Martin Brown (29) and Trevor Hughes (20) got lost in darkness on their walk back, but got down to Glen Doll safely. Tayside Police S & R Unit.
- MARCH 2nd to 3rd—Allan Coombes (35) and Tony Page (31) got lost near Cairngorm summit during a walk round the Northern Corries. They were benighted, then walked out to Tomintoul. Cairngorm and Kinloss MRTs, SARDA, RAF Sea King. 384.
- MARCH 3rd—Ian Swarbrick (30) broke an ankle when he fell from 30 ft. up the first pitch of Shallow Gully, Lochnagar. The ice was very thin and both tools pulled out. In falling he pulled 4 runners; 3 of which were ice-screws. Grampian Police and Braemar MRTs, RAF Sea King. 26.
- MARCH 4th—Kinloss MRT on exercise saw a climber fall down the Goat Track, Coire an t'Sneachda, Cairngorm. He broke an ankle and wrist. He was carried a mile on an improvised ski stretcher, then flown out by RAF Sea King. 40.
- MARCH 11th—RAF Sea King airlifted David Edwards (50) who injured his shoulder ski-ing in Coire an t'Sneachda, Cairngorm.
- MARCH 17th—James Harrison (59) left skis and rucksack with his companion near the lower summit of Lochnagar to go to Cac Carn Beag. He got lost returning and could not reunite, but managed to get down to Bridge of Dee unhurt. Grampian Police and Braemar. 56.
- MARCH 18th to 20th—Lucas Bunt (61) was crossing the Lairig Ghru with his son when he slipped between two boulders at Pools of Dee, breaking an ankle. They walked to Corrour Bothy. Rescue was delayed because they did not know how to get help and there were few people about. Grampian Police and RAF Sea King. 14.
- APRIL 7th—One experienced climber tied up with three novices and climbed Parallel Gully A, Lochnagar. They took 10 hours on the route due to inexperience and the loss of a crampon. Grampian Police and Braemar MRTs. 18.
- APRIL 17th—Christine Hall (64) hurt a knee and ankle when she fell on rough ground at the top of Birnam Hill, Dunkeld. Stretchered down by Tayside Police S & R Unit. 12.
- APRIL 29th—Celia Thomson (40) sprained her ankle by stepping in a rabbit hole. Rescued from Loch Callater Lodge by Leuchars MRT.
- APRIL 30th—Two teenage youths trapped by tide on rocks at Portsoy. Rescued by MacDuff Inshore Lifeboat.
- MAY 6th—Grampian Police and Braemar MRT lowered the body of a man (20) from crags at the Pass of Ballater. He had been camping at the top of the cliffs, drinking heavily, and died from a fall down the cliffs. 51.
- MAY 18th—Allan Payne (22) suffered abrasions and bruising in falling on scree on Creag Loisgte in The Pass of Ryvoan. Cairngorm MRT, RAF Sea King and Inverness Air Ambulance. 15.
- MAY 25th—Running along a path above a river gorge near Edzell, Jacqueline Sutherland (14) fell 50 ft. into the ravine, breaking a wrist and a collar bone. She was roped out on a stretcher by Tayside Police S & R Unit. 10.
- MAY 26th—Richard Young (26) sustained serious head injuries in a fall climbing at Huntly's Cave Rocks, Grantown-on-Spey. Stretchered to road by companions and police then airlifted.
- JUNE 2nd—Heart attack victim (dead) Glen Einich. Body plus three cold and wet companions lifted to Glenmore Lodge by RAF Wessex.
- JUNE 10th—Hit on the head by a falling rock when abseiling off 'The Needle,' Shelter Stone Crag, Brian Sheddon (32) was left dangling. Two Aberdeen climbers devised a method of lowering him 400 ft. to the bottom. An RAF Wessex and a Sea King helicopter could not reach him due to bad weather, so he was stretchered to Glenmore Lodge, then airlifted to hospital by RAF Wessex. Cairngorm, Glenmore and Kinloss MRTs, SARDA. 440.
- JUNE 25th—Cairngorm MRT used a wheeled stretcher to evacuate Agnes Jourdan (22) down Windy Ridge, killed in a paragliding accident. 15.
- JULY 10th—An RAF Wessex took Walter Robertson (67) from the ridge of Carn a'Mhaim suffering from a heart attack. Grampian Police. 3.

JULY 11th—HM Coastguard descended sea cliffs at Whiting Ness, Arbroath to ascertain injuries to a woman (24) fallen over. Body recovered by RAF Wessex.

JULY 14th—RAF Sea King found body of John Caldecott (66) swept down River Spey when fishing at Carron.

JULY 29th—Fallen climber/hillwalker? at Calvine (off A9). Recovered by ambulance. RAF Wessex.

JULY 30th—Botanising on a steep scree slope of Glas Maol at the head of Caenlochan Glen, John Fisher (80) stood on an unsupported turf ledge. The ledge gave way and he fell 50 ft. getting cuts and severe bruising. Tayside S & R Unit and RAF Sea King. 3.

AUGUST 4th—Two experienced walkers on Ben Macdui, carrying the party's map and compass, left five companions behind. The five (aged 21 to 32) went to Glen Avon instead of Glen Derry. Grampian Police and Braemar MRTs, RAF Sea King. 55.

AUGUST 26th—Leaving mountain bikes at Etchachan Hut, five people without maps and compasses tried to get to the top of Ben Macdui in thick mist. Sweep searching for the summit, Paul Cooper (25) and Paul Feldman (24) got separated from the others and went down the Lairig Ghru instead of Glen Derry. Grampian Police MRT. 6.

SEPTEMBER 2nd to 4th—Searches by RAF Wessex, Aberdeen, Braemar and Grampian Police MRTs for Kasspar Tuerler (24) who had gone mountain biking over the Lairig Ghru to Aviemore and Keith after saying he would be back at Inverey Youth Hostel two days earlier. 220.

SEPTEMBER 9th—Rory Mitchell (23) fell out of a tree at Bob Scott's Bothy near Derry Lodge, fracturing a femur. Aberdeen MRT. 12.

SEPTEMBER 9th—After mountain biking over Beinn a' Bhuid, Philip Williamson (28) fell off his cycle on a path near The Sneck and injured his ankle. RAF Wessex, Aberdeen, Braemar and Grampian Police. 70.

SEPTEMBER 12th—Fully packed rucksack, with tent inner inside, found abandoned at almost 4,000 feet on Braeriach near Wells of Dee. The matching, erected, outer tent was found by searchers on top of Coire an Lochain about a half mile north of the rucksack. Braemar and Grampian Police MRTs, RAF Wessex. 48.

SEPTEMBER 25th—False alarm. Search for Michael Coggan (21) a mountain biker missing in Cairngorms, who had gone off elsewhere. Braemar and Cairngorm MRTs, RAF Wessex. 10.

SEPTEMBER 28th—William Milne (55) walking on slippery rocks at the edge of a fast flowing river (Linn of Dee, Braemar) fell in and was drowned. Body recovered by Braemar MRT using ropes and a Landrover winch. 12.

OCTOBER 29th—Stephen Hill (23) was leading a climb on the upper crag at Craig-y-Barns, Dunkeld. Thirty feet up he clipped into a peg in place. Three or four feet above that he got tired and allowed himself to drop on to the runner, believing it would hold him. The karabiner—a DMM Males 2000 Kg—snapped and he fell to the bottom, breaking an ankle. Tayside Police MRT. 2.

The krab is to be sent away for tests. It was an old karabiner and a bit worn but the incident has caused some apprehension.

NOVEMBER 1st—Hill walking incident due to a glider forced landing. Anthony Baker (51) landed on Cock Cairn (4 miles ENE of Mt. Keen). Due to darkness and poor weather Tayside Police S & R Unit went out to make sure he got off the hill safely, but he got down himself. He was very fortunate to escape injury. 28.

NOVEMBER 10th—Woman (23) suffering from suspected food poisoning at Derry Bothy. Aberdeen MRT. 5.

NOVEMBER 23rd—Two Nordic skiers swept 100 ft. on Coire an Lochain. Uninjured. Presume no rescue?

NOVEMBER 25th—Six climbers uninjured when caught by an avalanche in Coire an Lochain. Presume no rescue?

DECEMBER 11th—False alarm. Premature alert was caused despite the subject having told his girl friend not to worry if he was a day late. He had been delayed by deep snow crossing Lairig Ghru and snowcaved near Sinclair Bothy, but he had all the gear and was shocked to be found by an RAF Sea King. Cairngorm and Braemar MRTs. 60.

DECEMBER 22nd—Fallen climber in Coire Cas, Cairngorm, airlifted to Inverness with head and back injuries by RAF Wessex. Tried snowclimbing when temperature was +6. Suspect no helmet. Route unknown.

DECEMBER 25th to 26th—David Wharton (27) was avalanched on an easy, open snow slope in Coire Brochain of Braeriach. The wet snow avalanche carried him 300 feet, injuring his jaw and pelvis. His companion sidestepped the avalanche, went down to Garbh Choire Bothy for sleeping bags etc. which he took up to David, and then walked out to Linn of Dee for help. RAF Sea King and Wessex helicopters. Aberdeen, Braemar, Grampian Police and Saint Athan MRTs.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

- JANUARY 27th—Glissading down the North Face of Ben More when wearing crampons, Nigel Smith (19) fell over 200 ft. and broke both legs. Stretchered by Killin MRT from above 1,000 metres and then airlifted by RN Sea King. 212.
- JANUARY 28th to 29th—Robert Craig and James Nixon (both 26) were benighted on Beinn Narnain. Strathclyde Police and Arrochar MRTs, RN Sea King. 78.
- FEBRUARY 11th—At 3,000 feet on the North Face of Ben More a slab avalanche swept down a whole party of 8 who had been going up a slope of deep snow. They fell 500 ft. but 7 were unhurt. Gary Webb (22) was impaled with an ice-axe in his abdomen. His friends slid him down to the forest on a bivvy bag, then stretchered him to the road on a wooden gate. Killin MRT. 63.
- FEBRUARY 14th—100 ft. below the summit of Ben More on the North Face, James Wilson (27) tripped on ice and fell. A crampon caught and his leg was fractured. Helped by his partner he slid to near the road. Killin MRT. 2.
- FEBRUARY 25th to 27th—Vain search of hills, forests, and coast at Skipness, Argyll, for Robert Hunt (40) who had left a suicide note. Strathclyde Police. HMCG, RN Sea King, SARDA and Volunteers. 400.
- MARCH 3rd—A party of 6 were overdue after retreating from Ben Lui in a gale with rain and sleet. Delays were caused by some having to be roped down. Killin MRT helped at an individually roped crossing of a swollen burn at the base of the hill. Before that the leader, Peter Bellarby (53) had been fully immersed and swept down the burn. 6.
- MARCH 11th—John (11) and Stuart Davis (9) were overdue from an ascent of Dun-na-Cuaiche, Inveraray. Strathclyde Police and Arrochar. 8.
- MARCH 18th—Ochils MRT and RAF helicopter helped in search for 2 boy prisoners who were either lost on the hills or had run off. 36.
- MARCH 20th to 21st—The body of Helen Bruce (34) was found by Leuchars MRT at 550 metres at the foot of a crag on the north side of the N.E. Ridge of Beinn an Lochain. She had been walking with a male companion. Strathclyde Police, Arrochar, RN Sea King. 478.
- MARCH 24th to 25th—Search after heavy snowfalls in the Ochil Hills for 5 schoolboys who had camped off their planned route. Found by RAF Wessex and Ochils MRT. 16.
- APRIL 2nd—Timothy Buries (17) suffered serious hypothermia during a 3 day expedition over Ben Lawers to Kinloch Rannoch. He was evacuated from Glenmore Bothy (in Gleann Mor, just south of Schiehallion) by RAF Wessex with 2 other students (male 18, 17) suffering slight hypothermia. Tayside Police and Tayside MRT. 71.
- APRIL 20th—John Gregson (58) died of a heart attack ascending Ben Ledi in good weather. Killin MRT, RAF Wessex. 18.
- APRIL 21st—Graham Symington (62) survived a heart attack at Corriearklet Glen, Trossachs. Lomond MRT, RAF Wessex. 14.
- APRIL 21st—4 girls on an award scheme were overdue on Ben Lomond. Lomond MRT, SARDA. 12.
- APRIL 27th—Robert MacDonald (67) stumbled when descending from Creag na Callich (Tarmachan Ridge) breaking an ankle. Dry weather. Killin MRT, RAF Wessex. 39.
- MAY 12th—Descending a footpath on Ben Ledi, Joan O'Deill (54) slipped on wet grass and fractured her ankle. Helped by the other 3 in her party she got down to the forest road. Killin MRT. 7.
- MAY 12th—John Young broke an ankle when running in the Ben Lomond Race. He slipped on dry scree. Lomond MRT. 26.

- MAY 16th—Crossing steep, wet ground on A'Chrois, Adrian Grinnoneau (20) injured his back when he slipped and fell 40 ft. Strathclyde Police and Arrochar MRTs. 20.
- MAY 20th—Intending to swim in Menstrie Burn, Arnold Carruthers (17) one of 4 walkers, slipped on steep dry grass (wearing trainers) falling 20 ft. over rocks and sustaining concussion and severe bruising. Stretchered out by Ochils MRT. 15.
- MAY 23rd—Paul Roddie (16) was missing overnight despite a search of his intended route along Menstrie Glen. In good weather he must have changed his route. He was found dead next day by RAF Wessex at the foot of Craig Leith, Alva. Probably slipped on steep, dry grass. Ochils and Leuchars MRTs. 234.
- MAY 26th—One of 2 going down the Stank Footpath from Ben Ledi, Brenda Ashwood (50) was wearing fashion sports shoes with smooth soles which gave no grip or ankle support. She slipped on steep, dry grass and broke a fibula. Stretchered down by Killin MRT. 16.
- JUNE 3rd—False Alarm. Wrong information about a pair walking to a fishing site. Ochils MRT. 23.
- JUNE 10th—Chimney Arete, Cobbler North Peak (Severe). Robert Stewart (26) slipped on dry rock and fell 30 ft.—Breaking an ankle—before being held on the rope. Airlifted by RN Sea King. Strathclyde Police and Arrochar MRTs. 68.
- JUNE 14th—In Silver Glen, Margaret Finlayson (53) broke a tibia and fibula when she stepped off the path to look in a burn. She wore trainers which slipped on damp grass so she sat on her leg. Ochils MRT. 3.
- JUNE 25th—Paul Moutray (16) suffered muscle strain in a leg, when engaged on an award hike in Milton Glen, Ben Ledi. Killin MRT. 8.
- JUNE 25th—A SARDA dog with Lomond MRT found Eugene McGuire (40) suffering from exhaustion after he had separated from a group walking the West Highland Way. East Ridge of Conic Hill. 14.
- JULY 3rd—Helicopter evacuation of injured boy from cliffs at St. Andrews. HM Coastguard.
- AUGUST 4th to 5th—Janet McNab (46) and Pamela McKenzie (33) were overdue from supervising an award hike. They were found by Tayside Police S & R Unit on a path just above the head of Loch Lednock. Having no whistle and only a small torch they had been unable to signal when they saw initial search activity. RAF Wessex. 22.
- AUGUST 10th to 11th—False alarm for a missing pair in Menstrie Glen, caused by a lack of family communication. Ochils MRT. 18.
- AUGUST 11th—Fife Fire and Rescue team assisted Leven Coastguard in rescuing a 13 year-old from sea cliffs at Elie.
- AUGUST 19th—Eliza Pym (58) slipped on steep, wet grass descending the Ledard Footpath near the top of Ben Venue. When her companions were helping her down she suffered shock and exhaustion and could not continue. Stretchered by Killin MRT. 48.
- AUGUST 19th—Richard Webster was carried down by stretcher by Lomond MRT and volunteers from Ptarmigan, Ben Lomond. He tripped and broke a leg in poor weather. 36.
- SEPTEMBER 6th—John Cooke (71) was found dead by SARDA dogs on September 10th. He had slipped and fallen 30 ft. down a rock face amongst vegetation. Wearing trainers he had been out for an evening stroll along the West Highland Way from Inversnaid Hotel. Lomond and Killin MRTs. Police Underwater Unit. 277.
- SEPTEMBER 8th—East Lomond Hill, Fife. Paraglider with injured knee stretcher airlifted by RAF Wessex.
- SEPTEMBER 15th—Male (late 50s) dead from a heart attack on Beinn Achaladair airlifted by RAF Wessex.
- SEPTEMBER 16th—Descending towards Stank Glen from the summit of Ben Ledi, William Turner (67) slipped on steep grass and broke a leg. Killin MRT and RAF Wessex. 27.
- SEPTEMBER 25th—Brian Morgan (56) slipped on wet scree descending from the summit of Beinn Bhuidhe. Benighted he was met walking off. In hospital he was found to have an arm fracture and bruised ribs. Strathclyde Police and Arrochar MRTs. RN Sea King. 54.

- SEPTEMBER 25th—Separation incident on Ben Lui. One of two men (44, 38) reported the other missing. They had separated because one was slower due to tiredness. He turned up safe but exhausted. Killin MRT. 3.
- OCTOBER 27th—Myra Orr (44) slipped on a wet tree-root descending a steep path at Birks of Aberfeldy Nature Trail. Stretched out with a broken ankle by Tayside Police S & R Unit. 6.
- NOVEMBER 12th to 13th—Alexandra Moores (30) and Julie Whiteside (27) got lost in cloud, missing a path and descending the much steeper (west) side of Gannel Burn. Benighted, they bivouacked till found by Ochils MRT. Central and Tayside Police. 14.
- NOVEMBER 16th—Descending steep, wet grass in Wellies, John Swanson (22) slipped and slid 60 feet, bruising and spraining an ankle. Airlifted (from Tullich Hill, Glen Douglas) by RN Sea King. Strathclyde Police. 13.
- NOVEMBER 24th—A group of 17 on a night navigation exercise in Tillicoultry Glen had been told to stay put if the mist came down, and so they did! Ochils MRT. 3.
- DECEMBER 30th—Cramponing alone near the summit of Cruach Ardrain, Neil Keith (49) stumbled down steep neve, broke an ankle and was unable to move. Two hours later he was lucky enough to have his calls for help heard by a pair of walkers, one of whom went down to alert Killin MRT. He was found by them in a blizzard and stretched down. 228.
- DECEMBER 31st—False alarm. Flare reported on Dumyat. Ochils MRT. 2.

SKYE

- JANUARY 28th to 29th—False alarm caused by a car with climbing gear left at The Storr. Search by Skye, Kinloss and RAF Sea King. 108.
- APRIL 12th to 13th—Skye and Kinloss MRTs stretcher lowered a woman with a dislocated shoulder 800 feet down the steep north slopes of Bruach na Frith, from where she was airlifted at night in heavy snow and strong winds by an RAF Sea King. Stornoway Coastguard helicopter was also involved. 160.
- MAY 5th—Donald Barrie (23) fell 50 feet from the Fourth Pinnacle of Sgurr nan Gilleann when his rock abseil point failed. He punctured a lung and broke an arm with back injuries also. Skye MRT, Police and RAF Sea King. 24.
- MAY 17th to 18th—Searches along cliffs near Kilmorree for Rosemary Scott (67). She was found dead.
- MAY 28th—John Lomas (33) was injured by a slip on the S.E. Ridge of Sgurr nan Gilleann in good weather. RAF Sea King. 6.
- MAY 31st—Skye MRT and Police stretched Joanne Law (15) from lower Coire Lagan when she sprained an ankle. 12.
- JUNE 3rd—Conn Cremin (35) suffered multiple fractures: back with no paralysis, neck, ribs and kneecap; when he fell 60 feet from near the top of the Thearlaich-Dubh Gap. He had been leading the pitch and slipped on greasy rock. He was wearing a helmet. Skye MRT, RAF Sea King. 74.
- JUNE 12th—Leading the Bhasteir Tooth, Robin Watts (59) fell 80 feet to the bottom when a handhold gave way. He wore a helmet and sustained pelvic and chest injuries. Skye MRT and Police stretcher lower. Winched by RAF Sea King and airlifted to Broadford then to Raigmore hospitals. 103.
- JUNE 12th—False alarm. Uninhabited tent near outlet of Loch Coruisk. HM Coastguard helicopter, Skye MRT. 10.
- JUNE 16th—Fallen climber. HM Coastguard helicopter (with Skye MRT member from Glenbrittle) double lifted injured man (Quentin Mair) from near summit of Sgurr na Banachdich. 12.
- JUNE 25th—Paul Bennet (25) slipped on a ledge in Garbh-choire (wet rock) gashing a leg and twisting his ankle. He was helped by his companion back down to Coruisk, then waited in a tent near the bad Step. Skye MRT, Police and HM Coastguard helicopter. 33.

JULY 7th—Search for walker (Male 25) at Dunvegan. Safe.

JULY 9th—An RAF helicopter began ferrying Skye MRT and Police to search for Arthur Edwards (67) (who separated from his son on Sgurr na Banachdich) when he turned up safe. 64.

AUGUST 8th to 9th—David Wilson (47) slipped on wet rock when leading the NE Face of the Centre Peak of Bidean Druim nan Ramh, falling past his client about 40 feet into a gully, and sustaining concussion despite wearing a helmet. His client went to Sligachan for help after putting Wilson in a sleeping bag, covering him with a flysheet and tying him to a belay. At 20.00 hrs. RAF helicopter could not help because of bad weather. At 01.00 on 9th. Skye MRT reached the scene but found only the gear. At 05.15 Wilson was found dead 200 feet below. Evacuated by HM Coastguard helicopter at 10.00. 150.

AUGUST 12th to 13th—Search of moorland hills and high cliffs of peninsula (Dunvegan Head) for Mark Drew (25) overdue. Turned up safe. Skye MRT, HM Coastguard helicopter. 12.

AUGUST 17th—Michael Dennis (20) with hand and knee injuries abseiling at Kilt Rock, Staffin. Strop lifted by HM Coastguard SK61N using all 300 feet of winch cable. 8.

SEPTEMBER 7th—Peter King (35) was found dead in the Great Stone Shoot by 2 hill walkers, having fallen 600 feet from Sgurr Alasdair summit in rain and mist. Skye MRT, RAF Sea King. 34.

HMCG SK61N diverted to Mayday for sinking boat.

SEPTEMBER 12th—Two brothers near Sgurr Sgumain summit separated to try to find a descent route. James Warren fell 100 feet on to a ledge and was fatally injured. Wet rock. He was found by RAF Sea King but recovery was delayed to 13th because of danger. Skye MRT. 285.

SEPTEMBER 22nd—One of five walkers, Siegud Dubois (M) was double lifted by Coastguard helicopter suffering from minor injuries. Spotted at the foot of sea cliffs at Ru Idrigill, Uig Bay. 10.

OCTOBER 11th to 12th—Paul Binks (37) got lost on Gars-bheinn. Found by RAF helicopter. Skye MRT, Police. 22.

ISLANDS (other than Skye)

APRIL 10th—Buntly Fleming (70) broke her ankle when she slipped on wet grass on a path near Guirdil, Isle of Rhum, wearing chamfered heel boots. Rescue by HM Coastguard helicopter. 5.

MAY 10th—A'Chir Ridge, Isle of Arran. Jane Lim (29) slipped on wet rock and injured her leg. Arran MRT, RN Sea King. 12.

JUNE 10th—John Reid (52) slipped on scree in Glen Rosa, Arran, and tore a tendon in his leg. Stretchered out by Arran MRT. 8.

JUNE 28th—Hillwalking in Glen Trollamarig (E. Coast of North Harris), Mr A. R. Wardie broke a tibia and was stretchered-winchd into an HM Coastguard helicopter. 4.

SEPTEMBER 14th—Bennan Head footpath, Arran. Bresda Hansen (50) slipped on dry scree and dislocated her elbow. Carried out on a stretcher by Arran MRT. 30.

OCTOBER 6th to 7th—Loch Suainaval, Isle of Lewis. Four walkers: Caroline Wade, Vryan Green, Bridget Ekin and Dr Ian Reekie, were missing in remote, rocky hills SW of Loch Roag. Despite camouflage of green wax jackets and wellies, one in a white shirt, waving, was spotted by HMCG helicopter. All well but cold. 4.

NOVEMBER 8th—Giles Evans (18) suffered mild shock when she got lost and overdue in Rhum. Found long after dark by NCC searchers. Fortunately a route card had been left. 10.

SOUTHERN UPLANDS

- JANUARY 13th—Hillwalking on Cairn Law, David Willingham (43) stumbled when crossing fence, injuring his spine. Stretchered off by Tweed Valley MRT. 49.
- FEBRUARY 10th—Moffat Grey Mare's Tail area. 5 soldiers suffered exposure during a training exercise in rain and wind. Lifted by RAF helicopter. Moffat Hill Rescue Service. 50.
- MARCH 12th—Mentally disturbed boy (9) lost in Kirkconnel old mine workings. Found safe. Moffat Hill Rescue Service. 34.
- MAY 2nd—Robin Shaw (29) broke his ankle crossing Buchan Burn when descending Merrick. With boots he would probably have been OK, but he wore sandals as it was a hot day. Galloway MRT, Police, Ambulance. 42.
- MAY 10th—Peter Leam (60) broke an ankle coming down Buchan Burn. Slip on grass. Galloway MRT, Police, Ambulance.
- MAY 26th—14 pupils on an award hike missed a track at Whiteholm (above Daer Reservoir, Lowther Hills) and were 6 hours overdue. Turned up safe. Moffat Hill Rescue Service. 40.
- MAY 26th—A woman and 2 young children were overdue in Mable Forest near Dumfries. Turned up safe. Moffat Hill Rescue Service. 16.
- MAY 30th—James Logan (76) had been out all night. He was found by Tweed Valley MRT, Lothian Sub-Unit and SARDA stuck in a bog. He was rescued and stretchered out. 85.
- JUNE 9th to 10th—SARDA dog found James Logan (76) soaking and cold in a wood at a Residential Home. Night search by Tweed Valley MRT. RN Sea King on standby. 100.
- JUNE 15th to 16th—Tweed Valley, Lothian and SARDA did night and first light searches for a man (49) missing in the Moorfoot Hills after a domestic dispute. RAF Sea King and Wessex helicopters. 344.
- JUNE 18th—False alarm (good intent) following reports of a parked car. Couple had been camping. Moffat Hill Rescue Service, RN Sea King. 30.
- JULY 8th to 9th—Search overnight by Moffat Hill Rescue Service, joined at dawn by RN Sea King, for a man (Downs Syndrome) from an adventure centre at Eskdalemuir missing beside a swollen river. The helicopter woke him from his sleep in a derelict cottage and he was found safe walking on a road. 120.
- JULY 10th—Child cragfast at Grey Mare's Tail. Moffat Hill Rescue Service arrived to find child had been walked off scree by father. 12.
- JULY 18th—Separation incident: one of four walkers went astray near Over Pawhope Bothy. Moffat Hill Rescue Service. 15.
- AUGUST 14th—In darkness, Moffat Hill Rescue Service stretchered an exhausted old lady down from the summit of Criffel, Solway Hills. 80.
- AUGUST 17th—Man (49) walking near the top of Grey Mare's Tail path reported as having a heart attack, was in fact a diabetic suffering from low blood sugar. Treated by a doctor. Moffat. 20.
- AUGUST 30th—Pentland Hills. Male hillwalker collapsed and died. RAF Wessex helicopter.
- SEPTEMBER 2nd—Moffat Team called out for a mentally retarded young man missing from a walk. Turned up safe. 20.
- SEPTEMBER 8th—Fell runner lost and overdue from a training run. Turned up safe. Moffat Hill Rescue Service. 10.
- OCTOBER 1st—Peel Fell, Cheviots. Tweed Valley MRT and SARDA called out for 2 missing boys (both 12). Walked out safe. 24.
- OCTOBER 17th to 18th—Elderly male walking the Southern Uplands Way became ill at Brattleburn Bothy. When Moffat Team arrived he had recovered but abandoned the walk after another illness. 32.
- OCTOBER 21st—Dunbar Coastguard Cliff team rescued a youth from sea cliffs at Dunbar and lowered him to an inshore lifeboat.

- NOVEMBER 26th to 27th Searches by Galloway, Moffat and SARDA teams for a missing man with suicidal tendencies carrying a shotgun. He turned up safe. 145.
- DECEMBER 2nd - Fallen walker had fallen ON summit of Carnethy Hill, Pentlands, with no vertical drop. Dead on arrival of RAF Wessex.
- DECEMBER 8th - Moffat Hill Rescue Service searched Moffat Water area in a blizzard for a shepherd long overdue. He was found crawling on his hands and knees against the wind and snow. 15.
- DECEMBER 18th to 19th A man (80) walked 3 miles in carpet slippers and shirt sleeves on a bitterly cold night. Night and dawn searches were carried out by Lothian, SARDA and Tweed Valley teams. His body was found at an ancient tower near Peebles (215392). He had fallen and died of his injuries and/or exposure. 172.
- DECEMBER 27th Search by RAF Wessex for soldier missing in Pentland Hills. Not found.
- DECEMBER 30th Steep NW slopes of Carlvain Hill, Moffat Hills. Mack Pedersen (27) fell on icy snow and broke his ankle. Tweed Valley MRT, SARDA, RN Sea King. 58.

NON-MOUNTAINEERING INCIDENTS

- JANUARY 1st Glencoe and Kinloss MRTs helped Ambulance, Fire and Police Services at a road accident in Glencoe involving 2 cars and 7 casualties. 20.
- MARCH 3rd Search of South Ugie River, Longside, Peterhead by Grampian Police MRT and RN Sea King for a man who had left a suicide note. He was found dead by civilian searchers. 16.
- APRIL 5th - Cessna 210 aircraft crash on Dunbrach Hill, Fintry. Crash guards, assistance to investigators and recovery of 2 bodies was carried out by Killin, Leuchars, Lomond, Ochils, Strathclyde Police MRTs and RAF Sea King (Boulmer). 340.
- APRIL 30th Shackleton 2 aircraft crashed at Northton, South Harris, killing all ten on board. Kinloss MRT, RAF Sea King, HM Coastguard and HM Coastguard helicopter. 1,296.
- MAY 19th to 20th - Kenneth McDonald (22) working on railway maintenance (Finart Viaduct, West Highland Line) fell and got concussed and wandered off. He was found by Strathclyde Police MRT. 12.
- MAY 20th - Woman canoeist (24) died in River Findhorn. RAF Sea King.
- JUNE 27th Kinloss MRT assisted recovery of injured navigator and dead pilot from a Canberra crash at Kinloss. 202.
- JULY 23rd - Rachel Young (12) slipped on Gruinard Beach when running into the sea, twisting a knee. Dundonnell MRT. 8.
- JULY 23rd Gavin Wolkoff (15) injured his hip falling 100 ft. from cliffs at Cove. He had been cycling along the cliff top. Aberdeen Coastguard Cliff Rescue Team and Aberdeen Inshore Lifeboat.
- AUGUST 11th Carnoustie Coastguard investigated a motor cycle at the cliff bottom at Auchmithie. No person was injured.
- AUGUST 22nd False alarm. Search by Killin MRT for a light aircraft reported to clip trees 1 mile north of Strathyre. 90.
- SEPTEMBER 5th Killin MRT recovered the body of a woman (72) from a gorge at Bracklin Falls, Callander. Suicide. 56.
- OCTOBER 18th Torridon MRT called out for a forest worker who had broken a leg trapped under a 4-wheel AT Vehicle at Coulags, Loch Carron. On arrival they found he had been rescued by Air Ambulance from Inverness. 13.
- OCTOBER 27th Galloway Team, Police, SARDA and HM Coastguard searched shores of Rascarrel Bay, Auchencairn after 2 feet had been found cut off at the ankles. However the search was called off when the feet were thought to be other than human. 125.
- NOVEMBER 21st RAF Sea King from Boulmer found the wreckage of a light aircraft crashed at Dunbar Moor, Lammermuir Hills. Dead pilot was David Barrett (49). Leuchars, Lothian, Tweed Valley MRTs, 2 RAF helicopters. 730.
- DECEMBER 8th Tweed Valley MRT called out to assist with motorists trapped in snow on A7 at Middleton Moor. Rescued 4 trapped vehicles in Yarrow Valley. 23.
- DECEMBER 26th - River Esk, Langholm. Moffat Hill Rescue Service searched 15 miles of banks for a man thought to have fallen in. No trace. 135.

IN MEMORIAM

ROBERT CARMICHAEL STUART LOW

WHEN YOU were with Mike, even on quite a long expedition, you would get little idea of his past achievements. There were many aspects to Mike's life at which he excelled.

He gained an engineering degree at Oxford and went into railway engineering, finally being chosen as Engineering Director of the newly formed company, British Rail Engineering.

He went to France in '39 with the Royal Engineers. Came out at Dunkirk to further training at Lochailort, then to Malaysia and Thailand, where he was wounded - escaped to India via Java and Ceylon. He took part in the North African and Italian campaigns - was awarded the M.C after Cassino where he was wounded again and invalided to the U.K, later becoming O.C.T.U Chief Instructor with the rank of Major. It does not take much imagination to appreciate the character and resilience that goes with that sort of history.

Mike joined the Club in '47, and although living in the deep South was often seen at New Year and Easter Meets. After retiring from the Railway, he made several treks in Nepal. In '77 I was delighted to be invited to join him and George Roger on a trip round Annapurna, delightful too to discover that wildlife and birds meant as much to him as mountains. He was in fact secretary of his local county wildlife trust.

One final mention must be made of a most engaging habit, or art, of pulling out his sketch-book at any odd moment to capture some incident, making a diary with sketches and cartoons. I am lucky to have some of these, which I treasure.

Douglas Scott.

JOHN WILSON

JOHN WILSON died in March 1990 after a long illness which had kept him off his beloved hills since 1984.

John started climbing and skiing at an early age. He was the leading light in the foundation of the University Mountaineering Club when he went to St Andrews in 1933.

All his days on the hills were recorded in his diaries, which he kept continuously from 1934 until his last entry on the 6th May, 1984. The accounts contain an amazing amount of material, and sum up a wealth of experience and proficiency which very few among us have ever been able to rival.

John was a member of the JMCS before joining the SMC. He was also a member of the Scottish Ski Club and the Alpine Ski Club. He edited the first edition of the Southern Highlands District Guide. He was a keen and expert photographer.

Of a tough and wiry build he appeared to be untiring on the hills. His climbing achievements were many. Perhaps the two most notable were his first ascent of the Long Climb on Ben Nevis with J.H.B. Bell, and the complete high level traverse of the Alps on ski from Galtur to Chamonix. The former must still rank as the longest continuous rock climb in the British Isles.

Reading through his diaries brought back many happy memories. One entry for January 1953 at the SMC Meet at Newtonmore recalled the occasion when John and Earl McEwen produced skis and skins for Bob Elton and myself, both of us at that time completely inexperienced skiers. The ascent of Geal Charn in the Laggan hills was the easy part. On the way down Bob and I were both completely out of control, while Bob collided with a stag which was also floundering about in the deep snow. John's only comment in the diary was that Bob was fortunate to have hit the rear, and not the front end of the stag.

Another occasion remembered was an ascent, mainly on skis, of the Briethorn at first light, from the Italian side. The climb up was slow, as we were all suffering from the effects of the altitude. After reaching the top, there followed a long descent across the Furgg Glacier (no lifts or pistes in these days) and down to Zermatt. The last two miles were completed in darkness and I remember feeling very tired. John's account concluded with the entry 'a lazy and satisfying day'.

John was a man of great humanity. Supportive and kind, he was always available to help out his friends without a thought for himself. He was an ideal climbing companion who showed kindness and consideration to the weaker members of the party. He was always prepared to consider the other point of view. A disagreement was always a discussion and never an argument. He rarely lost the twinkle in his eye and a sense of humour was always present.

During the last six years he was often in great discomfort, but he would always brush aside enquiries about his health with the reply 'I'm all right', and then show great interest in his questions about the doings of others.

John will be greatly missed by the many friends who were lucky enough to know him and who treasure the many happy memories they shared with him. Our sympathies are offered to Joan who did so much to help and support him during his illness.

Arnott Russell.

WILLIAM CAMPBELL CARMICHAEL b.1903 d.1990

DUE TO ill health, Bill's climbing years were prematurely terminated in 1964.

Until then, he was a familiar and popular attender at the meets of the Glasgow section of the J.M.C.S before the war, and at S.M.C meets thereafter.

His military bearing and long, raking stride made him easily identifiable, even at a considerable distance, on the hill.

We first met at the J.M.C.S Easter meet at Blair Athol in 1934. The total gathering of eight included the late Ian McKinnon who, by repeated and over-enthusiastic glissading on a mixture of Ben-y-Glas' scree and snow, succeeded in removing the seat of his trousers.

Thanks to Bill's sense of decorum, a Sunday newspaper was purchased and inserted into the offending garment and the haven of the Glen Tilt Hotel safely reached without besmirching the Club's reputation.

Our strides matching well, we enjoyed many long and happy hill days such as the circuit of Coire nan Gall from Sgurr Mhor over Sgurr Na Ciche to Ben Aven. This was before the North of Scotland Hydro Electric Board enlarged Loch Quoich into a reservoir.

On another memorable day we did Ben Tarsuinn and a'Mhaighdean from the Heights of Kinlochewe during the exceptionally stormy S.M.C Kinlochewe meet in the fifties.

Bill was a faithful attender too at our annual S.M.C summer holidays, based at the Sligachan Hotel. Graced by the presence of Myles Morrison and his vintage Rolls Royce, and favoured by perfect weather, we enjoyed consecutive June fortnights on the ridges and faces of the Cuillin with a stealthy visit to the Mountains of Rum as a bonus. Bill loved the hills and latterly it was heartbreaking for him to see us set off without him.

He was a Glasgow Academical and subsequently controlled the family chain of chemist shops in the southside of Glasgow.

A keen Territorial, he was awarded the Territorial Decoration before the war, entailing over 20 years of pre-war service. During the war he served in the Burma campaign as a Staff Officer, finishing with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

An outstandingly fine and upright man, his death is a great loss to the Club and our sincere condolences go out to his charming wife Ailie, and daughters Elizabeth and Flora.

J. Norman Ledingham.

JAMES F. HAMILTON

BACK in the scanty times when every trip north to the hills started by passing the rusting bulk of 534, there were growing bands of youths seeking the refreshment of the countryside and especially among the mountains. Among these neophyte stravaigers the name of Hamish Hamilton was well known as a climber and a character. Chance led him to join the Tricouni Club, a group who met at Cranstons Tea Rooms - it was a mixed club and pubs barred women - on Friday nights to arrange weekend outings. It was one of quite a few clubs with similar aims but it claimed to provide over forty outings - plus annual holidays - each year.

Hamish, a Salesman by occupation and a Mountaineer by disposition was personable, ebullient, exciting, enthusiastic and super optimistic, or as Drummy Henderson grumbled 'Any time at all he looks three drinks ahead o' everyone else'. He was a superb climber with lithe, cat-like movement, content mostly to repeat recognised routes, but on occasion he had the inborn prognostic ability to discern a new route and climb it on sight. This he amply demonstrated on Agag's Groove, the South Ridge Direct on Cir Mhor, and the Central Buttress of Coire Mhic Fhearchair.

After climbing, his prowess as a driver of motor bikes and cars was notable, many said notorious. He was the first person to take me from Coupal Bridge to Tyndrum in under half an hour. He had a private condition of travel when you went on his bike, which was that if he was caught for speeding you paid half the fine. I duly subscribed on several occasions. He had some spectacular car crashes from which he emerged unscathed. Swimming seemed second nature to him and he could cover long distances in chilly water with evident enjoyment. A party of us rowed from Tarbet across Loch Lomond to climb Ben Lomond by way of Ptarmigan. A strong wind was blowing when we came back to return, strong enough to make Bill MacKenzie sling his boots round his neck as a precaution. Hamish just swam back.

His list of pursuits was extensive. Golf and skiing he maintained all his life. Photography and lecturing were in the same category. Camping, where he was adept at lighting fires in the most obstreperous conditions, sleeping in bothies and howffs. Hostelling and sleeping out. There was a transcendent night at Coupal lying out in our bags when a stag silhouetted itself against a full moon just clearing the ebony black moorland.

Hamish was the 22nd person to complete the Munros. On an odd impulse one weekend we went a bit South of Inverary where he led two of us to the top of the then highest tree in Scotland, a bit over 180 feet. This constant, enthusiastic pursuit of new and varied pursuits, his friendly approach, widened his appeal to an even wider circle of devotees and added to his list of requests to give lectures.

He made quite a number of climbing visits to the Alps extending later to many winter visits to ski. A little known trait was playing the mouth organ, a welcome backing to camp fire singing. On an ascent of the Cioch Direct, Hamish leading, a companion found a pitch almost beyond him and called for a tight rope, when from aloft came the musical strains of the 'Wild Rover'. A very anxious face demonstrated the realisation that only one hand was taking in the slack. In atrocious conditions he would display a singularly wry sense of humour. On the redoubtable last pitch of Crowberry Gully he had toiled cutting out a stance for a long time then, just as he was raising his foot to step up, the stance slid away. Hamish peered downwards shouting 'Why, oh why did I just buy a new radio set?'.

When we came to the start of the crux pitch on the first ascent of Agag's, Hamish found wet mud and loose stones. He took off his rubbers to continue in his safer socks and looked down to me asking 'If I chuck down these loose stones will they hit you?' 'Of course they will' I protested. 'Ah well' was the reply, 'see that the rope isn't cut'. All the stones missed me by about a foot.

He thoroughly enjoyed the 50th Anniversary of the first ascent of Agag's Groove when we had a celebratory dinner at Kingshouse, in 1986. Four of the members of the two parties to climb the route on the same day in '36 were present, and nostalgia was unrestrained.

Alistair Borthwick dedicated his book 'Always a Little Further' to Hamish, giving a sketch of him redolent of his character. He was a most memorable member of the Club who will be remembered with affection and pride.

A.C.D. Small.

When Jimmy Hamilton joined the Tricouni climbing club, pre-war, the two women members pointed out that they had two Jimmy's already . . . "we'll call you Hamish", they decided.

So Hamish it was and that name now has a special place in the history of Scottish Mountaineering and his colourful and irrepressible spirit will be ever associated with Alastair Borthwick's gallery of outdoor characters of the 1930's.

When Hamish joined the SMC at the end of the War he hardly fitted the Club image; the atmosphere that clung to him was of a cheerful recklessness, a by-passing of the miles. In fact, he was simply reflecting changing times. Other clubs had risen before the War which were based on the easier attitudes of the engineering shops and shipyards of Clydeside, Borthwick's book was closer to that and—as I personally know—portrayed it accurately. Mountaineering was becoming 'democratic' and the Club was inevitably changing, too, whilst holding pride in its own special conventions and history.

But Hamish had his own conventions which, to the end, did not include mechanical aids; his climbing was not cerebral—no theories, no mechanism, press on. Swimming across lochs, foaming rivers—or jumping across river canyons—were regarded in the same light. He was not reckless, simply lion-hearted. He knew exactly what he was doing, thought rapidly, and used his craft and guts to get up and over.

A host of memories crowd around me as I write; but I am choosing only a few from his earlier days 50-odd years ago. One is the first ascent of the Rosa Pinnacle Direct which I described long after in the 1963 Journal. I can only add to that account the remarkable fact that he led it in less than one hour. When he climbed Clachaig Gully (for its second time) what remains in my mind is (a) his speed of ascent and (b) his current food-fad. We did that climb on raw eggs and tomatoes—one of each at every other pitch! At another period of his gastronomic life dried bananas were regarded by him as miniature power stations, and we would chomp them down in all kinds of airy situations.

Another notable memory is of Arch Gully in hard winter conditions when the rest of the party (since night approached) petulantly wanted to retreat. 'Shower of bloody defeatists' came from on high out of the fearsome dusk—and we meekly followed to a nightmarish but masterly finish in darkness.

Finally, his dynamic organisation of David Paterson and myself as a rescue party on Observatory Buttress. At the shortest of notices, he drove us up overnight from Glasgow. We were on the summit of Nevis at dawn, climbed down with stretcher, found on a ledge the body of the 19-year-old Cambridge University climber (who had fallen a long way) and brought him down in a grisly and frightening series of stretcher operations. He drove us back overnight through a terrible storm of wind and rain, uttering picturesque maledictions on the pub in Fort William which refused us a dram of whisky on a specious argument about war rationing.

As an end-piece, a vignette of his eternal optimism: a long hard climb in winter in Glencoe in the early days of the War—and we missed the last bus. We had to start work next morning. We stood on the road, freezing, no transport, no food, no hope. I must have girmed a bit and his merry eyes and black moustache grinned at me out of the darkness: 'Cast your bread upon the waters, Bob, and it shall be returned unto you, pan loaves with jam on them'. And a few minutes later up the Glen came an army lorry and gave us lift back to Glasgow.

Hamish was the most courageous man I have ever climbed with. He gave me back confidence at a crucial period of my life when I badly needed it—this because he also had great human warmth and insight and was, indeed, a genuinely religious man. A day or two before he died he joked to me about meeting on the other side. I do not know what heaven he visualised—the world's history has produced many—but his might be a gentler version of Valhalla.

Bob Grieve.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

New Members

The following twelve new members were admitted and welcomed to the Club in the year 1990-91.

- Christopher Cartwright (26) Student, Netherlee, Glasgow.
- Graeme E. Ettle (22) Nightwatch, Aviemore.
- Andrew G. Kirk (29) Sales Representative, Glasgow.
- Richard J. Lockie (44) Lithographic Print Consultant, York.
- Alison J. Naismith (34) Psychiatrist, Glasgow.
- Timothy Pettifer (42) Art Director/Copywriter/Photographer, Largs.
- Simon M. Richardson (30) Petroleum Engineer, Aberdeen.
- James G. Robb (27) Professional Engineer, Dundee.
- Ronnie Robb (31) Personnel Advisor, Dyce, Aberdeen.
- Carl J. Schaschke (26) Lecturer, Hillhead, Glasgow.
- Grant D.K. Urquhart (33) Radiologist, Glasgow.
- Christine I. Watkins (36) Outdoor Education Organiser, Balloch.

The One-Hundreth-and-Second AGM and Dinner

The Prologue: GOTTERDAMMERUNG

The saga so far:- Long, long ago when the Alps were enstocked and the Bens unMunroed, the Bengods and the Benmaidens roamed the hills in tweedy amity. Then the Bengods resolved to feast and conclave in monogenderous starched shirt splendour and to set themselves apart from all earthly beings. As time passed, the Bengods accumulated the sacred Benlore and had it engraved and encased between red boards. And they did hold yearly feasts before the Winter solstice at which a few male mortals were permitted to join their wassail.

But then the dwarves who laboured to engrave the Benlore came under the sway of the Trustlings (a mysterious body of immortals immune from sword or spear). Guided by the Flying Leithman (now under a curse to roam the seas for evermore and never again set foot on ben or moor), the Trustlings learnt to use the arcane Tables of Munro to transmute the Benlore into gold. Now, as the Bengods gathered for their conclave and feast in the Forest of the Fish Eagle, their ancient order had to face twin challenges - a faction led by Droid Redbeard sought to admit the Benmaidens to their ranks and sacred rituals and the Knight of the White Dustjacket was determined to lead a raid to seize the Trustlings gold.

ACT1, The AGM

An AGM which had the potential of being the most contentious of recent times was carried through without blood being spilt. You may consult your Minutes for the details, I will just pick out a few personal observations in random order.

The historically most important item - the vote on the acceptance of women as candidates for membership - was preceded by reasoned debate on both sides. The vote, with 78 votes for and 35 against, was not far above the required two-thirds majority of those voting and there was a large number of abstentions. Definitely more of a passive acceptance of historic necessity than a burning desire to throw down historic barriers.

The problem of the Trust/Club relationship was well aired and, although some positive steps have been taken, it is likely that the relationship will continue to be uneasy. The spectre of taxation liabilities and the consequent reduction in the monies available for the charitable aims of the Trust overhangs all like a dodgy cornice. Again the debate was carried out

with restraint despite the opportunities for engaging in confusion and animosity. Dave Jenkins' swift little seminar on tax liability was much appreciated and may well have done something to relieve the 'utter confusion' of some members.

Outside our own little internal difficulties, the spectre of access and land management emerged at a number of points throughout the meeting. The questions posed by the proposed National Parks and the move towards management of popular mountain areas are potentially more serious than having to sneak past a few abusive serfs and will be a leitmotif in our annual opera in the coming decade.

ACT2, The Dinner

The Dinner as a dinner was not a success and represented a sad fall in the standards which we have enjoyed at Nethybridge in recent years. The Dinner Secretary bristled even more than usual and promised one of his famous Letters to the Management.

Bill Wallace, in his Address to the Club, noted the election of Syd Scroggie to Hon. Member and, on a sadder note, reported on Bill Murray's poor state of health. (Now recovered - Ed.) He also surveyed a wide range of Members' activities from the Himalayas (including a second British ascent of Ama Dablam) to somewhat lesser crags at home. Again, the questions of land use and access were acknowledged. The Toast to Our Guests and Kindred Clubs was ably proposed by a kiltless Malcolm Slessor. The tenor of his remarks was such as we would expect from one of our favourite eccentrics and his gifts for timing and emphasis lent an added gloss.

That the reply came from Heather King of the LSCC seemed historically apposite. It was also a welcome change from some of those male representatives we have suffered from in the past. An urbane and polished performance.

At the end of two hardworking and eventful years of Presidency, Bill handed over the symbols and authority thereof to Iain Smart who has the task of guiding the Club through a period which may see some interesting additions to the membership.

Bob Richardson.

Editor's Note: In the Journal last year we noted the retirement of the above reporter, and made the tactical error of praising his work. With the ensuing rush of blood to the head, he has reclaimed the position. The somewhat unusual style shown above brings into mind again his recent cycling accident, though we will not, at this stage, be interviewing any of the candidates who kindly offered to step into the temporary breach.

Easter Meet - Kinlochewe Hotel - 1990

This meet was less than successful from the point of view of weather, accommodation and service. No records of what was done has come down to us.

Present (an incomplete record only):- Members - W. Wallace (President), Jim Donaldson, Iain Ogilvie, Iain Smart and, say, half a dozen others. Guests - P.J. Sellar.

New Year Meet 1990 - 1991 Raeburn Hut 31st December - 1st January 1991.

The hut was double booked. The 'official' party was small. The President reached the hut on ski from Dalwhinnie on Hogmanay as the roads were blocked by several feet of snow. The weather, however, was clear and windless and the moon shone from a stormy sky. W. Jeffrey and G. Little (with a large party) were already there and preparing to overwinter.

On New Year's Day the roads were surprisingly opened by an efficient mechanical blower. Bad weather, starting in the early hours of the New Year, prevented any climbing or skiing.

Present - I. Smart, W. Jeffrey, G. Little (and guests), G. Urquhart (and 2 guests)!

Easter Meet - Knock an, Sutherland 28th March - 1st April 1991.

The meet was held at Tom Strang's comfortable establishment near Inchnadamph. It was well attended. Several members who were unwilling to camp had to be turned away. Book early for next year. The weather was mixed, the 29th dry but stormy, the 30th warm and sunny, the 31st and 1st high wind and rain. Slesser and the President traversed Stac Pollaidh from East to West (numbed fingers notwithstanding) and visited the cliffs of Breabag for a scramble. Wallace and Turnbull traversed Cul Mor and Cul Beg and on the worst day of all visited the waterfall of Eas Cul Ailean. The others climbed Quinag and Cul Mor and visited the entrances to the caves and sink holes. The Strang establishment featured excellent cooking, a log fire with store fireplace cum climbing wall rising to the roof (first ascent, J. Fowler) and a luxurious sauna.

Present were:- Members - Iain Smart (President), D. Bennet, Sandy Cousins, J.R.R. Fowler, R. Chalmers, T.B. Fleming, C.C. Gorrie, Iain Ogilvie, J.R. Marshall, Malcolm Slesser, Oliver Turnbull, W. Wallace, Ivan Waller.

Iain Smart.

J.M.C.S. REPORTS

Edinburgh Section.- During the past year our membership levels, due to a balance between emigration and recruitment, have remained more or less static, at around 60. There is a core of 30 or so more active members.

The committed and enthusiastic climbing activity seen over the last few years has continued. Due to the seemingly endless refurbishment of the Heriot-Watt climbing wall, midweek indoor training has transferred meantime to Meadowbank. Weekend meets have been generally well-attended. The Shelter Stone meet was again blessed with good, if cool, weather, and was attended by about a dozen members. Those who participated in the Onich meet, an annual favourite, were driven by cold, persistent drizzle into Fort William to sample (several times per diem) the cuisine of the NervousSport Restaurant, the dubious over-chlorinated delights of the over-heated and over-crowded swimming pool, and the interesting climbing wall.

Last winter, a snowless Scotland was abandoned by our keen skiers, in favour of Yugoslavia and Switzerland. Summer excursions were prolific, and ranged from New Zealand and Norway to the usual European venues, including the cosmopolitan Matterhorn.

Our annual dinner and AGM were held in the Kingshouse Hotel. Despite indifferent weather on the Saturday, a handful of members ventured into some gloomy, high recesses of Glencoe, and contrived to descend in the dark, thereby being too late to attend the AGM. After a huge dinner, and being mellowed by wine and a dram or two, we were lavishly entertained by our guest speaker from the senior club, Paul Brian, with his tales of times and scenes, past and present.

The November slide night was a very civilised affair, held in a member's flat and enhanced with refreshments (including home baking). As usual, there were prizes for those slides voted to be best in various categories; such was the high standard it was often difficult to reach a decision.

Our huts go from strength to strength, very largely due to the tremendous amount of time and effort expended by our custodians. If you want to stay at either hut, such is their popularity that you need to book several months in advance - you have been warned!

The year has seen the demise of the Gloucester Hotel, used by us for our weekly Thursday pub night for very many years. We now use the nearby St. Vincent Bar, where the beer may be good but we have to compete for space.

1991 has started encouragingly with what seems to be the best winter conditions for many seasons. This has prompted frantic and enthusiastic activity, in pessimistic anticipation of an early and massive thaw.

Office Bearers: *President*, J. Murdoch; *Hon. President*, J. Fowler; *Vice-President*, A. Chow; *Hon. Vice-President*, Mike Fleming; *Treasurer*, N. Suess; *Hon. Secretary*, B. Leatherland, 57 Charles Way, Limekilns, Fife KY11 3LN; *Smiddy Custodian*, F. Fotheringham, 49 St. Valery Place, Ullapool 0854-2354; *Jock's Spot Custodian*, A. Borthwick, 2 Aytoun Grove, Dunfermline 0383-732232; *Committee*: R. Dalitz, B. Donaldson, I. Simpson.

Glasgow Section.- 1990 was a hive of activity both at home and abroad. Despite another disappointing winter leaving most of us with a meagre collection of routes completed, good ice was to be found later on in the season. Point Five and the Orion Direct were both soloed in April by a member. There were also reports that the best pickings were repeatedly to be had on midweek climbs.

Those who had given up on the winter scene waited patiently for the long days of sun-kissed rock. The Secretary was the first to find his way south of the border and into Wales, while the Treasurer travelled even further afield to the coastal cliffs of Southern Spain. Not everyone, though, had been thinking of rock. The cold climbs and ambitious routes of Mount McKinley provided the objectives for two separate expeditions involving Section members.

June saw the return leg of the Czechoslovakian exchange set up in 1989. The Czechs completed the 2,000 miles from Prague in a fleet of Skodas laden with cheap petrol on the roof racks and beer in the boots. A reception held in the Clachaig Hotel formalised the start of their three-week visit. Apart from bagging a selection of the finest routes around the Highlands, the most notable incident was the loss of the minibus and rescue van (sent to assist) down an embankment on Skye.

There was no official Meet abroad over the summer, although there were two expeditions to Nepal. The first of these made an ascent of Island Peak, while the second, involving six members, attempted another trekking peak, Paldor. Good progress was later hampered by late monsoon snows and the team retired empty-handed.

One member found himself in Tanzania and took a stroll up the highest point in Africa, Kilimanjaro, while another could be found a little further north on Mt. Kenya. A certain member with too much time on his hands completed three weeks in the French Alps then hiked over to Czechoslovakia. He then met up with other members for some sandstone climbing in Ardspace, so continuing our friendship with the Czechs.

The Annual Dinner was held, as last year, in the Kingshouse Hotel and was well attended. Robin Campbell entertained us with his witty after-dinner speech. Autumnal meets were also well attended, and the early snows during Advent saw a flurry of activity in the Northern Coires. Many hope that this will be a taste of things to come for the winter months ahead.

Office Bearers for 1991:- *Hon. Member*, W.H. Murray; *Hon. President*, Dugald Mackie; *Hon. Vice-President*, Bill Forbes; *President*, Ian Thompson; *Vice-President*, Colwyn Jones; *Secretary*, Carl Schaschke, 50 Kelbourne St (3/L), Glasgow G20 8PR, Tel: (041) 946-8304; *Treasurer*, Anderson Foster, 14 Minerva Court, Finnieston, Glasgow; *Coruisk Hut Custodian*, Sandy Donald, 55 Mossmill Park, Moray IV32 7JX, Tel: (0343) 820932.

Perth Section.- Overall membership of the club has dipped slightly over the past year with 61 members, 5 honorary members and 14 ladies. However this is countered by the highest number of introductory associates for a couple of years. It was decided not to continue the advert in the Climber magazine as it appeared to have only marginal effects on membership enquiries. The magazine has failed to register this fact as the advert still appears!

There were 15 meets during the year, which is the same as last year, and the average attendance remained at 10. The figure disguises considerable variation with several well-attended meets during the year and a couple of meets with a total attendance of five! Hillwalking is still the mainstay of the club's activities though rock climbing venues have been very popular this year. The CIC winter meet, normally very popular with climbers, was a disaster again this year due to wet, mild and windy winter. There was only one completion during the year. This year's innovation was a cross country skiing weekend whose success was greatly enhanced by George's expert tuition and just about the only heavy fall of snow during the winter.

The club was represented at the SMC, the Edinburgh, Glasgow and Lochaber Sections, and the Grampian Club dinners during the year. Our own Annual Dinner this year was held at the Fife Arms Hotel, Braemar. The speeches were by Bob Milne and Grahame Nicoll with a special presentation by the latter for the best epic of the year. The Annual Joint Lecture with the Perthshire Society of Natural Science was given by Dr Alan Donaldson on the Rannoch School Rain Forest Project. There were three mid-week meets during the winter months which continue to be popular; one was a showing of the BMC video on Avalanche and Crevasse, another was a visit from Kevin Howett the Mountaineering Council of Scotland's National Officer, and the last was the President's evening.

The Annual General Meeting was held in Perth in December at which the following officers were elected: *Hon. President*, Bob Milne; *Hon. Vice-President*, David Wares; *President*, Alex Runciman; *Treasurer*, Tom Rix; *Secretary*, Ron Payne, 70 Spoutwells Drive, Scone, Perth PH2 6SB 0738 51412.

London Section.- The past year was a great success for the London Section, with improved organisation and high enthusiasm exploiting the predominantly fine weather. Meets were well-attended, with the 'body count' averaging out at about 15-20.

Rumours are totally unfounded that the Section has changed its name to the Junior Motorcycling, Canoeing and Sailing Club of Scotland. Visitors to Glanafon in the 'winter' months may have been excused the misunderstanding as newly rubberised members waffled on about greasing their gimbals. At least we now know who to blame for the Gogarth tide forecasts. The Major's Glencoe meet is now rather more firmly consolidated than the snow conditions usually encountered during it. Cornwall was wild, wet and windy, and that was just inside the tents. A spring heatwave for Blackrock Cottage ensured not only fulfilled ambitions on the rock but even swimming in the Coe, (honest! It was that hot). Then followed a succession of excellent spring meets noted for good weather, attendance and general frivolity (some of us still have the bruises to prove it) - Low Hall Garth in Little Langdale, Cwm Eigau Cottage, the Three Stags Head in the Peak District - where fiddles were fiddled and tables used as a stage for the more acoustic members. Lundy was an absolute classic and a commitment instantly made for a return visit in 1991. Somehow the Barn, the granite and the Island stood up to the attrition of 14, even if our finger tips didn't. Post Alps saw the familiar wet early autumn weather at Bowderstone Cottage in Borrowdale. Three meets were held at Glanafon including the 'once-a-decade' work meet. The cottage was transformed in a flurry of brush and hammer wielding, although into what we're still not too sure. It is now a far cosier place for both ourselves and visiting clubs, and all Sections are particularly welcome to come down and experience the joys of Welsh rock, river and hill (OK so we need the cash.)

The membership situation was reviewed and following a Stalinesque purge by Fulmer Gladstone membership now stands at c.45. Approximately 20 of these are 'regularly active', and some even go climbing (!) Popular excuses for not climbing included sailing, canoeing, ski-ing, caving, mine exploration, and mountain biking.

Pete Tibbets produced several excellent circulars which continue to stimulate enthusiasm and assist in publicising events, if not actually confirming when and where they take place. In addition to much activity in the UK, members climbed in the Alps, Africa, the Himalayas and Malta, including rock jocking in the Verdun, the Massif Central, Boux, (France), Finale, Mello, (Italy) and in Spain. The lean snow conditions in the Alps produced some good rock routes, and some grand hills, including the Piz Badile, the Cengalo, the Dru, Mt Blanc du Tacul, the Grand Capucin, and the traverse of the Blanc from the Miage to the Midi.

Secretary: Andrew Walker, 24 Rowan House, 3 Mitten Road, Birmingham B20, *Treasurer:* Robin Watts, Glanaber, Trefriw, Llanrwst, Gwynedd, OJTL 274, *President:* Steve Gladstone, 36 Meadow Close, Hockley Heath, *West Midlands Hut Custodian:* 18 Glanafon Street, *Bethesda:* Peter Whitechurch, 1 Dale Cottages, Tangier Lane, Frant, Tunbridge Wells, East Sussex.

Lochaber Section.- No report received.

S.M.C. AND J.M.C.S. ABROAD

The Alps

GERRY MCGARRY reports:- 'I met up with Raymond O'Brien in Chamonix during July of 1990. He was spending 3 months in Argentiere before moving on to Czechoslovakia to climb in Ardspace and Teplice. This severe level of hardship was a result of his recent adoption of student status!

The weather throughout the summer was excellent and we got off to a good start by climbing the North Face of the Petite Aiguille Verte. This is a short but sensational training climb, the main part of which is 100 metres of steep ice. The whole face is devoid of turf and slush, and we had to get used to the hardship of perfect axe placements wherever we wanted them. After this we dandered up to the Argentiere Hut and climbed the Aiguille d'Argentiere. Reaching the summit shortly after dawn we were rewarded with the spectacle of the sun's rays filtering through a translucent fringe of ice crystals on the cornice. The hot weather was sending regular avalanches down the north face of Les Courtes and while I was sunbathing on the moraine I looked up in time to see a car-sized boulder erase our footprints before continuing down at 10 ms⁻². We then turned our attentions to the Aiguille de Tour which we climbed by the Table de Roc ridge. The lower part of this climb proved to be dangerous rather than difficult as our choice of route consisted of wobbling aretes and granite porta- ledges. Just as we were beginning to regret that we had ignored all the abseil tat at the foot of our gully we stumbled across the correct line. Once on route this climb proved to be a gem. The rock was sound and the move to gain the table was mind boggling.

I, having to work for a living, had to return to Glasgow at this point, but poor old Raymond had to put up with a further 2 months of perfect weather. During the remainder of his first season he ticked off the Y Couloir of the Argentiere, the Forbes Areté of the Chardonnet, a scrappy ridge on the Tour Noir, the South Ridge of the Aig. Moine, the Couzy route on the Aig. de l'M, the Cosmic Areté on the Midi, and Mont Blanc, Mont Mauduit and Mont Blanc du Tacul. In addition he keeps telling me about his attempt on the Fieure Brown (possibly descriptive rather than eponymous) of the Blatiere. This ends in a storm with him abbing off after having climbed the hard bit. Then, of course, there was the time he was avalanched off the Eigerwand having just climbed the second ice field in E.B.'s but that's another story'.

Walter, Klaus and Pierre (As told by Andrew Walker).

Stumbling onto the chain sawed crest of the Flammes de Pierre, the pillar is revealed suddenly, blood orange in the day's lateness. From our mid height bivvie-site, the sensation is one of colossal vertical size; of both dizzy depth and awesome height. I'm cliché-ridden, gobsmacked, stunned. Jean Michel joins me and his jaw drops an inch. Silence. The setting sun turns the cloud tops below a fiery red, and the granite golden. The horizons, sharp-edged and black, die back into the shadows below a clear evening sky. Hollow inside with butterflies and the winking uncertainty of dreams about to be realised.

One fondue, six hours and a sound doss later (I got the inside berth...), we three are abbing in the dark down the crumbling flanks of Les Flammes, a vertical building site of lightning and frost shattered rubble. The world has an unreal night-time numbness: a nightmare tower of Babel, of confusion, stonefall, fumbling darkness, jammed ropes, pendulums, incoherent shouting and headtorch pin pricks. I feel too clumsy and heavy to embrace the commitment of the day ahead. And should we fail on this colossus, do we reascend this lot, or descend the bowling alley couloir below? Into the valley...

I'm abbing free and can see a ledge by headtorch very close. I misjudge the distance and the amount of rope left and ab straight off both ends of the doubled ropes. I fall for two seconds before embracing a tree trunk-sized flake in an instinctive full nelson, feet dangling free and the darkness still resounding to the clatter of stone fall and the booming of my heart. Four hours of this finds us pendulumming across the lean, verglassed bones of the snowless couloir, to the relative safety of the queue at the pillar base.

Klaus is all dangling and all spinning over the void, above the Couloir, perhaps 20 feet up and 2,000 feet down. The Teutonic solution to this 'overtaking manoeuvre gone wrong' is to jump off the ends of the ropes: he lands on a tiny sloping ledge covered in loose stones in the main runnel of the gully, clattering to a stop before the abyss. Released from its load, the ropes flick back up even higher, way out of reach. So much for short cuts. See you later, Klaus (we did too).

The Green Lizard has old wooden wedges for rotten teeth, and a long, thin, mean tongue. We're vaguely in the region where Hamish cracked his skull and jolly conversational banter has not yet surfaced today. I've a photo on the wall at home of this point: three pale faces, clustered - looking upward and anxious, open mouthed and looking like no one I know. People have said to me since, 'who's that?', pointing at me in my Kodak-captured fear. I've quite a few more of various arses subsequently silhouetted in an astral blue sky.

The face is snowless and the morning chills are dissipated by some gobsmacking climbing. Layers are shed and sleeves rolled up. All the planning, plotting and calculating evaporates in the joy of climbing classic granite in superb surroundings. The Pillar soars up and up endlessly, and we live one pitch at a time, setting no goals and measuring no time. Relaxed, the pitches blur together into one long, good feeling. Rotating stints at the sharp end, we each lead six pitches, and all three have done a second turn by mid-afternoon. Steve does some excellent grooves and cracks, and then I lead some tailor-made jamming and laybacking pitches. JM leads up to the start of the central section, where the climbing changes up a gear or three and is characterised by very steep, thin cracks and slabs. Our Piola topo is way out in grades and description. We meet him on the Montevernais train returning to Chamonix afterwards and, replying to our queries, he says 'Je n'ai pas'!!! The chameleon granite turns from hard dawn white to soft sunshine yellows and is of superb quality.

A purple-blue-black pressure squeezes over and around the Jorasses like the slow-moving black wave in a recurrent nightmare from my youth. This ominous foreshadowing is compounded by a close buzz from a gendarmerie helicopter, its doors open and the figures inside waving, watching and waiting. We give them the thumbs up and they probably beat us back to Cham by 24 hours. We become absorbed into the experience and know no other.

Slowly we draw level with our bivie-site on the Flammes. It seems desperately close across the couloir but it's going to be 15 hours before we collect our kit and descend. Steve leads the Rebuffet Crack, very overhanging but plenty of gear - where Hamish dangled 'like a corpse from a gibbet'. Bonatti went away right from here, irreversibly and awesome, under the roofs and across the dripping icy slabs towards the ridge. Huge rock and ice falls punctuate the afternoon and underline the lean conditions. Belays become delays. The Austrian Crack looms above and it's my lead again ('what, already, you bastards!'). I have a panoramic dump on the parties strung out below and erroneously run the two pitches into one. Fifty vertical metres later I crawl onto a ledge on the stretch of the ropes, simultaneously expending the last of my gear and my strength, totally knackered. I wondered what those funny little ladders were that the French party has....

The upper pitches seem endless and it starts to clag in. The Austrians behind us are getting us to clip their gear in for them, but despite this and their etriers are struggling to keep up. While JM pushes out the next pitches (a fine slab of white granite under a roof, then a steep, clean layback), Steve traverses off to the lip of all things - harness off, kecks down, hanging by both hands off newly acquired tat, he finds a typically subtle way to remind the party below who won the 1966 World Cup, amongst other things.

Someone with stronger guts than me could have had a photo of 'turd in flight' with the Aiguilles bristling beyond over the Mer de Glace - but I've already got a numb left testicle from the hanging belay, an empty sit harness on one rope and an out of earshot Swiss on the other, so I give the John Cleare bit a miss. Still, an impressive dump, even by Senior's high lack of standards - (Spectre was the height of decorum by comparison, old chap).

It's eight in the evening when we reach the Shoulder - twelve hours from the bottom of the pillar and sixteen hours on the go from the bivie on the Flammes de Picre - OK considering the delaying belaying and the three of us on two ropes. Gathering darkness, clag and snowfall are promising us a Boys Own Adventure in the descent, if we can find it in the swirling murk. Difficult route finding and some spiraling, dangling abseils down massive icy chimneys take us to a hanging belay in their dripping bowels. We're racing the cbbing daylight and coming a poor second. Steve does a huge diagonal abscil out of the icy-chimney, reaching a ledge on the full stretch of the rope and a bit more. Descending last, wild with anxiousness lest the ropes

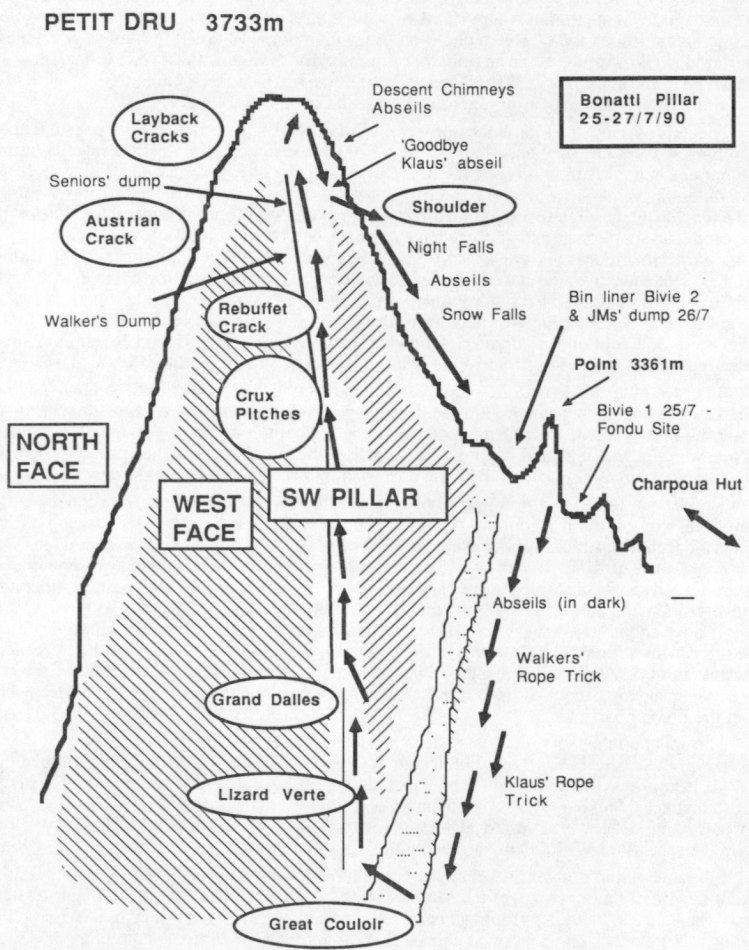


Fig. 1 : Scatological correlation of ascent of Dru with climbers bowel movements.

don't run, I find JM belayed on the ledge trying to lasso me with a sling before I spring up and away across out of reach; or worse, spring down to join him only to let the ropes spring up and away as they shrink back to a mere 50 metres. In the end I clip into the sling proffered from below and jump fall slide off the doubled ropes, grabbing the loose end in passing as it springs through the plate and pulling it down with me as I drop. JM fields me in and we have a mega-campanology session retrieving the ropes. The parting mist reveals the South West Ridge a stone's throw and a pitch or three away. Houdini would have been proud of us.

This became the 'Goodbye Klaus' abseil, their shouting echoing out of the icy overhanging chasms of the chimneys above, darkness falling fast and the storm brewing - (imagine a dark Transylvanian forest at sundown, the atmosphere about right) - an evil place to spend the night, fifty metres apart separated by their dangling jammed ropes, pondering on the uncertainty of the night and the problems of the morning; 'Goodbye Klaus, and good night. See you later!' (We didn't).

Thunder preceded the snow, snow preceded the lightning. Tatters of fixed ropes dangle across to the shoulder and down the ridge, remnants of a TV broadcast of a Catherine Testicle 'solo' ascent. We part scramble, part climb, part abseil, occasionally clipping in to the less scrawny of the 'fixed' lines. It is now definitely dark and positively snowing. Steve is particularly keen to get 'home', having lightened his load of such alpine peripherals as a headtorch and bivie-bag.

'...Give us some light over here Andy...'. The Almighty responds quicker than I do, and somehow upstages my ebbing Petzl-power - the lightning bolt illuminates everything for hundreds of yards (most of them vertical), before plunging us into sulphurous darkness again. 'Thanks mate' quips Steve as he disappears down the ropes on the next ab. The warden at the Charpoua watches our headtorches on the ridge and thinks we got toasted in that one. The odd express-train roars off the *Flammes de Pierre* below us into the *Grand Couloir*. Waiting on ledges between abs we have time to savour such aesthetically satisfying vistas as 'Dru by lightning' and 'rockfall by headtorch beam'.

It's well gone midnight; we're just well gone. Twenty hours on the go, and none of us would have exactly walked past a warm dry bed. It's pitch dark and large snow flakes drift across the ridge. The mass of Point 3303m asserts itself through the gloom and separates us from our bivie site and sleeping bags. Its not clear if its up and over or down and round. I ab down and skirt across sloping slabs and scree - it instinctively feels right but in the end I retreat, having been in my ignorance only five minutes from the key to the route, and perhaps only twenty minutes from a warm doss. We have one of our famous high altitude group discussions, not forgetting to include all the necessary components: briefness, blasphemy and boycott - OK, so its bivie time!

JM pulls up his fibre-pile trows, and unpacks a sickening range of excellent Swiss bivie gear, including bivie bag, ground sheet and over sheet. Not forgetting to have an almighty dump next to Steve's shivering head, he retires to bed. I'm a short ab below, bivie-bagged but shivering: watching the storm pass over the Blanc, the rumbling and lightning leaving the stars and the cold clear night in its wake. I spend a ravenous few minutes eating the congealed layer of whatever it was in the bottom of my sack. The prospect of a night out at 3200m only 300 metres from a warm Rab bag, food and stove was made only marginally more bearable by the thought of Senior above me, shivering his nut off in a co-op bin liner. I can see the future Migros adverts for their dustbin liners: 'As used by British climbers on the Dru'. The odd explosion from the flanks of the ridge punctuates fitful dozing of the 'too cold to sleep' variety.

The pre-dawn crunch of Senior at my ledge-room-door - I feign sleep then lie about a lie-in - 'so comfy and warm am I'. He is not in a good mood and for some reason seems keen to resume the descent. His frozen and sleepless night in his oversize plastic carrier bag was exacerbated by having to spend the night huddled on his ledge next to JM's late night dump. Our bivie-site is reached in a matter of fifteen galling minutes.

The Blanc goes sunrise rouge across the *Mer de Glace*, still far below. We pause to recover our crampons and ice axes before descending the upper Charpoua glacier. Within two hours we'll be drinking the best coffee in the world at the Charpoua, a thirty-six hour round trip; in five hours I'll be taking that photo, three men on a Montanvers bench, biggest mucking smiles in the world; in twenty-four we'll be on the bench at Lac Neuchatel, ogling the girls, drinking beer, roasting on the pebbles and swimming it all off in the sandy, warm lake; skinless fingers tingling in the waters....living it up in those all too transient hours between swearing 'Never again, you bastards!!' and plotting 'What next, team?'.

JOHN STEELE and BARBARA GIBBONS spent 10 days (April 1990) ski touring in the northern Italian Alps, in and around the Gran Paradiso National Park. This lies roughly between Aosta in the north and Val d'Isere to the south. The whole area is cut by 4 main valleys; Grisenche, Rhemes, Saveranche and Cogne, with most of the main peaks on the watershed to the south. These are served by a network of wardened huts.

Peaks climbed; Traversiere, Galisia from the Benevolo hut and Paradiso, Tresenta, Ciarforon and Etret from the Emanuelle hut.

Notes: Very limited public transport is available at this time of year. Most huts/hotels have to be booked in advance. The National Park is a revelation in terms of the abundance (and tameness) of the mountain wildlife, the result of a generation of protection and conservation.

The Mediterranean

A.L. CRAM writes:- In September 1990, my wife and I returned to the Island of Kefalonia in the Ionian Sea, to find the ordinarily placid anchorage at Argostoli enlivened by two warships of the Royal Navy, bright in light grey paint and dressed overall with flags. Dazzlingly white uniforms with full dress gold braid served to remind the populace that the Navy had been first on the scene of devastation after the great earthquake of 1953 had levelled nearly all the buildings. With prescience, the rescue ship had taken on board heavy lifting gear. The population was evacuated.

After visits to the familiar tops of Enos Eros (5705ft) and Gioupari, I was able to pick out the recently bulldozed road over the shoulder of the Evmorfia group into the heart of the Agia Dianti (3485ft). The problem was to find the beginning of the new road which, thoughtfully, had not been extended downwards through the maze of service tracks.

The new road with typical elan had been burst upwards in a series of double bends, strewn shards of crystalline rock and fragments of grey dolomite to left and right, rending a way over a pass and into a cirque with a perimeter of rough looking tops. Here one was hard put to it to distinguish between damage by earthquake and roadmakers. On this day and subsequently, much toil was spent on the sharp limestone rock, calling forth often colourful descriptions in demotic Greek.

Fittingly, as a climax to the memorial service taking place at the foot of the mountains, without warning a great deluge broke over Argostoli, lacrimae rerum, as it were. Yet we remained dry on the sunlit hillside, a curious inversion of experience.

North America

GRAHAME NICOLL writes:- Bruce Kerr and I flew to Vancouver in mid July 1990, intent on a four week rock climbing tour of the region. We picked up our hire car, a brand new Toyota with only 100 miles on the clock, and within an hour were at Squamish, a small logging town trapped between the sea and a series of roadside crags up to 1500ft high. After a few days on shortish routes we felt ready for the big classic of the area - The Grand Wall (5.10c/A2). Five reasonable pitches took us to the base of a fearsome corner crack - the split pillar (see front cover of Mountain 118). This was only overcome after I had taken a spectacular back flip and head first fall. A further six pitches of mixed aid and free climbing led to the top.

We then moved east into the mountains and spent a week in the Bugaboos. The weather here had been poor for a while but turned good just as we arrived and remained so until the day we left! Tremendous spires of perfect granite combined with easy glacier approaches and a luxurious hut made this the best part of the holiday. We completed four climbs; the N.F Ridge of Bugaboo Spire, the W. Ridge of Pigeon Spire, the S.W Ridge of Snowpatch Spire and the highlight of the trip - the Beckey/Chouinard Route on the S. Howser Tower. From a

bivouac on the Pigeon/Howser col this gave us 2500ft of superb crack climbing at a sustained HVS/E1 standard in a very remote setting. Comparable to the Bonatti Pillar but without the crowds and fixed gear. The two crux sections were most memorable - a very awkward off-width crack on pitch 10 in which Bruce got his leg stuck for a few worrying minutes, and the tension traverse on pitch 17 which we managed free, by way of a strange, lurching move round an arete to pinch the rounded edge of a second arete. From the summit we abseiled the east face in some haste as it was threatened by a big melting cornice.

A drive to Calgary to look up some old friends resulted in a weekend's climbing in the Ghost Valley Wilderness with a bunch of locals, complete with children, dogs, picnic tables and lots and lots of beer. The climbs here were on limestone of variable quality, and the sight of Big Andy in his lycra tights, rapping blank walls with his Hilti, showed us that French tactics are well established in the Rockies.

We had hoped to go north to the Lotus Flower Tower next, but due to a rise in cost of the flight in (the helicopter from Tungsten is no longer available) this idea was abandoned and plan B put into operation. A couple of days were spent on the steep but juggy crags at Lake Louise then we headed south to the U.S and a quick tour of the Cascades. However, at the border they wouldn't let Bruce in. I thought they must have heard about his flatulent curries but no, it was here we discovered that Brits entering the States overland (not by air) require a visa. A day spent at the U.S consulate in Vancouver rectified the situation and soon we were over the border and back on the granite at the Index Town Walls. Godzilla (5.9) was the best route done here though it was so hot that more time was spent in the river than on the rock. We then headed over the Stevens Pass to Leavenworth where it was even hotter, 97 degrees. The climbing here was more amenable though, and we did a few routes at Castle Rock and also Outer Space (5.9) on Snow Creek Wall, which had been recommended to us by almost everyone we met - justifiably so. We noticed a considerable inconsistency in grading between Index where we failed on a 5.10a, and Leavenworth, 50 miles away, where we both soloed a 5.10c!

Liberty Bell was our last climb. This is a 1500ft tower of perfect granite rising above beautiful pine forests. We chose Liberty Crack (5.11b/A3) on the east face and arrived in the evening in time to climb the first two pitches, which included the huge Lithuanian Roof, and abseil down to a comfortable bivouac. We jumared back up the following morning and continued up pitch after pitch of superb cracks and corners to the top. A leisurely drive the following day took us back to Vancouver where we returned the car, which by now had almost 3000 miles on the clock.

South America

GRAHAM LITTLE reports:- In 1988 I joined forces with a trio of Stoats (members of Birmingham University Mountaineering Club) for a somewhat ambitious attempt to traverse the Huandoy peaks of the Cordillera Blanca in Peru. Our four man team was quickly reduced to two through illness and nearly to one when I tore the tendons of my ankle bouldering at base camp. Adrian (Dangerous) Baker and I eventually made the first ascent of a direct line on the SE face of Huandoy Este (900m, ED) encountering some of the most formidable snow formations the Andes has to offer. (See article in 'High', No. 74.) The abseil descent down the crumbling north face proved even more of an epic. I rounded off my Peruvian experience with a trek around Salkantay and a visit to Machu Picchu.

This year, again teaming up with the now infamous Dr. Adrian Baker, I plan a three week crossing of the Andean chain from Chile to Argentina climbing four of the Andes' highest volcanoes en route. Our first peak, Cerro Ojas del Salado is the world's highest active volcano and at 6900m the second highest peak in the western hemisphere (only slightly lower than Aconcagua). The accurate heighting of the volcanoes in the southern Puma de Atacama is a secondary objective of the expedition as is sampling the excellent wines of Chile and Argentina.

Graham E. Little.

Africa

JOHN STEELE and BARBARA GIBBONS spent 4 weeks (January 1991) travelling in Kenya. The first 10 days were spent in Mount Kenya National Park. Access was from the presbyterian mission at Chogoria to the east of the main massif. Ascents were made of the third highest peak, Lenana, by a mixed route on its northern (winter) flank, followed several days later by Nelion (17,022ft) via the SE (summer) face route (Gd IV).

An exit was made via the Sirimon route to the north which involved a 30km hike to the main road and thence to the nearby town of Nanyuki, famous for straddling the Equator and serving the best cold beer on the line!

Notes: There is currently a mandatory charge of around 300Ksh (£7) per person per day in the Park. Porters and guides now appear to be the norm on the mountain.

HAMISH BROWN reports: - With various friends, I spent several months in 1990 exploring some lesser-known ranges in the Atlas Mountains, Morocco, and can report enthusiastically about the untouched opportunities for both rock climbing and Alpine-like snow routes. With 2 days of rain in the original 3 months (Jan - March) the south of Morocco in particular offers a tempting alternative to Scottish winters! I would be happy to help any small climbing groups interested with information, pictures, maps, etc. The Alpine Journal for 1990/91 has an extensive Moroccan bibliography.

Morocco is very much a country where 'knowing the ropes' is a great advantage so I would indeed be happy to pass on information. The mountains are like Chamonix or Zermatt a century ago with nascent local guides and services appearing, but the scale is so vast that it will be a long time before there is any change to the mediaeval way of life, the dramatic villages and colourful, cultivated valleys. Entry is often by camionette (pick-up), an experience in itself, and local mules can take the donkey work out of the hard trekking or establishing a climbing base. One can sleep/eat in local houses or bivouac/camp. From Feb - June water is seldom a problem, assuming normal snowfall. The Berber people are incredibly hardy, friendly and hospitable and involvement with them is memorable, Moroccan food is good enough for Robert Carrier to have lauded it, ancient cities like Taroudant and Marrakech or Essaouira (on the coast) are excellent for rounding off time in 'the nearest truly exotic world'. Prices for travel, food, accommodation, etc., are about the lowest I know for any mountain region.

TOUBKAL AREA. The Toubkal massif south of Marrakech is well-enough known and has English language guidebooks. I keep my gear permanently in a home above Imilil and the owner, Ait Idir Mohammed, has rooms which are available for climbing or trekking parties - a good alternative to the often overcrowded, regimented CAF refuge. British climbers have been scarce of late but the area, with the highest peaks in North Africa (Toubkal 4167m), offers a wide range of climbing and some superb high level traverses - a bit like the winter Cuillin. The Hotel Ali in Marrakech is much used by climbers, skiers, trekkers, and the Imilil guides; recommended. Bus/shared taxis operate from nearby Bab er Rob to Asni (YH, hotel, Sat. souk, shops), whence shared taxi/camionette/truck will take one to Imilil.

ANTI ATLAS. Being south and west of the main ranges the weather here is sunny nearly all year. Occasional winter snowfalls. Agadir nearest airport and bus/taxis on to Tafraoute, the only real town in the Anti Atlas. No local guides as such but the Jbel el Kest above the beautiful, verdant Ameln Valley offers a wealth of rock faces and scramble ridges. In February (Almond Blossom Festival) Bob Dawes and I hired a Land Rover to take us up to Tagoudicht, the highest village, and packed up from there for several bivvies from which we climbed all the highest summits - just below the Munro height of 3000 feet. The rock is clean and there are endless faces and ridges, all unclimbed. Round Tafraoute itself the landscape is a weird granite jumble of weathered boulders and heaped towers, offering an entertaining coda to the bigger Jbel el Kest.

SIROUA (SIRWA) (3305m). For years we've looked south from Toubkal to this isolated volcanic upthrust and, after 2 aborted attempts, we made a successful ascent in March. Meeting Charles Knowles and Keith Skeens at Agadir airport we went by bus via Taroudant to Taliouine (Taliwine - ou usually is a w sound) where Ahmed and Michelle's idiosyncratic Auberge Souktana was our starting point. Ahmed, a desert Berber, is a qualified guide and organised the practicalities (tents, with two mules, etc.) and also produced fantastic tagines (meat and veg. stews) each night. A demanding 3-day tramp took us ever upwards through

stunning scenery to a coire camp under the summit plateau. Rising from this plateau the summit cone gives a scramble ascent. Northern slopes were still very snowy but the area has plenty of other towers and is very complex. If less of a rock climbing area the week long round trip was a superb entity in itself. We grabbed Jbel Gueliz on the way to a gorge camp and, on the way out, we descended several gorges, came on Morocco's unique cliff village of Tisgni (houses like swallows' nests on a 1000 ft wall) walked by fields of saffron, and had one bivvy at Tisli in an area of contorted conglomerate spires quite unlike any place I've ever seen. Our last day's walk gave non-stop rain, a glutinous mud-tramp of 5 hours to the main south road, to be met by Ahmed's assistant with a car. A thoroughly recommended trip, Feb - April or Oct - Nov.

WESTERN ATLAS. An area which has suffered complete neglect by British climbers until recently, the hills above Taroudant offer unusually fine rock-climbing and/or Alpine ascents in our winter season. It was an enthusiastic local, Aziz, who persuaded me to visit the Tichka Plateau in 1989. We immediately decided to return in 1990, with the Siroua pair and Kit Nelson, splitting our 10 days between 'plateau' and the fangs of the highest peak, Tinergwet (3351m) which so dominates this skyline behind Taroudant.

Aziz took care of the practicalities, arranging camionettes when needed, and accommodation/memorable food in local houses when we were not bivvying. Snow melt stopped our vehicle's approach and the ascent to Tigouga gave a roasting walk, even though mules bore off our rucksacks and left us free to explore side valleys, falls, etc. Mules also took our gear up to the Tichka Plateau rim, reached by a track of endless zigzags. (Mules are a sane rather than an easy option. There's no point exhausting oneself on the hot, tough approaches and then failing on the climbing routes as a result.) The plateau is simply the top gathering of waters of the great Oued Nfis which flows east through the heart of the Western Atlas before breaking out northwards near Amizmiz. It is quite a deep valley, not a plateau. We skittered down snowy slopes to cross to azibs (summer goat shelters) to bivvy on the few bare patches of ground. A long day on crampons won us Imaradene (or Tazziwt) 3351m, the highest peak on the northern rim. From it we looked, east and west, along long ridges of peak after peak, offering fantastic winter traverses while, northwards surrounding the upper Seksawa country lay bare rock peaks of considerable character.

We traversed to Wajir Oudadine 3139m aware of big rock walls of rock below our corniced ridge. One prow jutted out like three Shelter Stone crags on top of one another. (Envy of the potential was balanced by relief at an inability to climb such routes now.) A long haul took us right up the valley to the Tizi n' Targa (pass) and, after an easy ascent of Askawn 3078m from it, a dizzy descent (c. 100 zigzags) to the upper Medlawa valley to bivvy at the highest azibs. The walk down valley next day was stunningly beautiful, as was the old caid's house we stayed in. 26 passengers and bales of walnuts made the camionette next morning an experience; in the afternoon we walked across a many hued pass to reach Imoulas in the next valley west. Mules could only go so far then we packed through gorges of Himalayan stature to bivvy as high as we could before a 4 a.m. departure for Tinergwet, 3551m. Daylight and icy winds found us on the saddle east of the peak after toiling (for 3 hours) up abominable rubbish. The shaly peak gave interesting scrambling. We were back in Imoulas that night, in Taroudant the next, then Agadir and home. Without Aziz's (and my own) knowledge, much less would have been achieved, and it is well worth tapping local help. This was a March trip but February - June would be good months, also late autumn. High sun is too hot for pleasure at lower levels.

Earlier, with Bob and Barbara Dawes, we'd gone up to Imouzzar, a spectacular bus ride from Agadir. Superb hotel above falls. After a day exploring we walked east for 3 hours, slept out and, in 7 hours next day, broke through to the Agadir-Marrakech road. Hot, but a very scenic trek.

IGDAT area. With the highest peak (3616m) west of the Toubkal massif this region above the Oued Nfis is little known. Dehydration is a real danger and plenty of liquid intake is essential. We took a variety of 'British' teas and, for bivvies, tins of meat, dehydrated vegetables and muesli - all other foods can be obtained in towns locally (Agadir, Taroudant, Asni). Duty free whisky and cigarettes were welcomed. I can supply addresses for both Ahmed and Aziz: a 3 week trip split between them would be memorable. It was memorable for us, and we were all 'old Morocco hands' but that is why we keep going back. We think Morocco is magic.

I've written Information Sheets to all these areas, which I'm happy to supply for 10 stamps and a large SAE: 21 Carlin Craig, Kinghorn, Fife KY3 9RX.

The Himalaya

CURLY ROSS writes: In early October Hamish Henderson, Benny Swan, Andrew James, Stewart Orr, John Miller, Moira MacLeod, Enid Brown and myself set off for the Khumbu area of Nepal.

The plan was to complete a 24 day trek and climb Gokyo Peak, Kalla Patar and our main objective of Imjatse 20,403ft. This would be a personal high for all of the team and a first visit to the Himalaya. We decided to use an agency (Mountain Travel) to organise our Sherpas, camping equipment and permits. This would save a tremendous amount of time, not to mention transporting all the paraphernalia halfway around the world.

Kathmandu provided the ultimate culture shock; colour, noise, people, smell, poverty, friendliness, prayer wheels, prayer flags, temples, throng. After a few days to adjust we set off for the plane to Luckla at 9,300ft near the Sagarmatha National Park. (S.N.P.) Some of us felt at home. We arrived in very cloudy conditions and after a landing more reminiscent of a Spitfire we were ready to meet our Sherpa team and headed into the most spectacular place on earth.

Our acclimatisation schedule took us up the Dudh Kosi into the Sherpa village of Namche Bazaar, which I think surprised us by its size and amenities. After completing the relevant documents we first of all headed up to the village of Thame, through countryside very reminiscent of Scotland - pine trees, mountain streams and good but rough paths.

The trick is of course to gain height slowly and not contract AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness); more people drop off from that, than anything else. Next we were off to the area of Gokyo to climb Gokyo Ri 18,000ft. We passed through Khunde where the Edmund Hillary hospital has been built to assist the Sherpas. From the summit of Gokyo Ri you have fantastic views of Everest, Makalu and Cho Oyu. Then it was over the Cho La Pass at 18,300ft and into the Everest valley and of course the Khumbu glacier.

Lobuche is the last settlement before heading up to Everest base and Kalla Pattar and was a real dump. Hundreds of expeditions had left more than enough junk. However the reward of climbing Kalla Pattar (18,500ft) with its view into the Khumbu icefall, Everest and Nupse were quite unsurpassed. We celebrated the climb with the highest Burns Supper ever held at 17,000ft. Finally we traversed out of the Khumbu valley and into the Imja valley for Imjatse or Island Peak as it is better known. The whole of this area is dominated by Ama Dablam and the huge wall of Lhotse, and tends to dwarf Imjatse; nevertheless we pressed on and finally completed the peak on a sunny but cold day. Imjatse was first climbed during the 1953 Everest expedition to test the oxygen equipment and provides an excellent alpine type ascent after a high camp at around 18,400ft.

The summit at 20,304ft is reached by a steep ice wall and wonderful snow arete to give a magnificent panorama of the surrounding peaks.

The trek back to Namche and Luckla were among the finest days walking I have ever experienced. It was with a heavy heart that we left Luckla and our Sherpa friends, but not without a final ceilidh and an emotional Auld Lang Syne before that take off into the void.

GRAHAM LITTLE writes: In 1985 four SMC members; Sam Galbraith, Sandy Reid, Calum Smith and I visited the Parbati Himalaya, India, with the obscure, unclimbed Point 5840m being our primary objective. Many challenges beset the team before setting foot on the mountain including the tracking down of our missing crate of gear to a customs depot in Bombay and the extraction and transport to Delhi of same. This delay either cost us the peak or saved our lives as a massive dump of snow forced a hasty retreat from one third height. More snow followed precluding a further attempt. Sam Galbraith's terse message sent up with the porters 'We had an epic. Hope all is well. Just get out' well conveys the mood of the moment. I snatched a solo ascent of a small peak above base camp, to be called Pandu Pap c. 4500m and in between lying in the thermal springs of Khirganga and sharing a chillum with the local Sadhu climbed Khirganga Dome c. 3850m with the remarkable Derek Fabian who was paying a social call en route to Japan. After a slight tussle with the police in Kulu, I made a mapless solo trek over the hills to Dharamsala then crossed the great ridge of the Dhaul Dhar via the Idrahar Pass, 4297m, into Chamba. After a quick visit to the shell pocked Golden Temple of Amritsar I caught the slow train to Delhi where an acute dose of dysentery brought the journey to a sticky end. All in all a varied trip.

In 1989, again with an S.M.C. team, I returned to the Himalaya, this time to the Kishtwar area of Kashmir. Bob Reid, Roger Webb, Dave Saddler and I had plans to climb the formidable Kishtwar Kailash, 6400m, but due to the loss of our hill food and some equipment by Air India we switched to two slightly lower, more accessible unclimbed peaks. Climbing as two man teams both peaks were ascended on the second attempt to be named Rohini Sikhar, 5990m (D. sup. via the SW face. See article in 'High', No. 89.), and Sentinal Peak, 5950m (AD via the SE face). Dave and I completed the experience with a trek over the Poat La, 5490m, to Padam in Zanskar then back to Delhi via Kargill and Srinagar. Such are the stresses of Himalayan travel that even the very mellow Dave Saddler lost his cool when he discovered that the bus seat ticket that he'd spent the best part of a day queuing for in Kargill was number 36 - there were only thirty five available seats on the bus.

REVIEWS

Gabe's Fall and other climbing stories.- Peter Lars Sandberg (Diadem, 1990, 156pp., £12.95, ISBN 0-906371-63-5).

One of the dangers of sharing the Editor's life is that of being asked to read some of the many books which land with a great thud on our doorstep. Peter Lars Sandberg's 'Gabe's Fall' was one of these delightful books.

The book is a collection of strongly emotional short stories, where Sandberg uses climbing situations to paint the characters' physical and emotional struggles. The stories reflect the characters' stormy relationships with others, and ultimately how they face themselves.

'Gabe's Fall' was born from Sandberg's own embryonic experience. It demonstrates a young climber's arrogance and false sense of security while climbing with a female he loves. The story uses simple language to describe deep seated feelings and emotions. It also teaches that one should never underestimate nature.

'The Old Bull Moose of the Woods', first published in Playboy (!), has been described as being 'outrageously sexist'. However, I found that the heroine, an excellent climber, actually gets all she wants and asks for... The hero happens to be very obliging. I wonder whether it was found sexist because of where it was first published, rather than what it actually reflects. The story shows that a capable female climber easily proved what she could do, and how far she could go in her physical relationships.

'Calloway's Climb' is about a failing marriage and the elementary feeling of jealousy; ordinary events of life really, rather than a climb. This story won the Foley Award for the Best American Short Story in 1974.

'B Tower West Wall' interdigitates an impressive and dangerous skyscraper climb with crime and blackmail, and once again reflects the hero's feelings as a father.

Both 'The Devil's Thumb' and 'Hawsmoot' demonstrate the value of experience in climbing, and human nature as well; the need to continue climbing and prove that an ageing climber is still capable. 'The Rhyme of Lancelot' is on the importance and need of something more than love and companionship in a relationship, regardless of age.

From a general view the only point I did not like is Sandberg's use of extremely long sentences which form a paragraph. I enjoyed reading this book. Although fictitious the stories were believable, and demonstrated human nature well. Even non climbers should find it interesting.

Aysel Crocket.

Snow and Ice Climbing:- John Barry (The Crowood Press, 1987, 144pp, £9.95, ISBN 1 85223 587 X). Reprinted in paperback, 1990.

This is a basic instruction book, describing the snow and ice climbing techniques move by move and runner by belay. Which it does in the John Barry style, informative but not dictatorial and made readable with intermittent anecdotes. The disadvantage is that I find the book somewhat personalised, the collected opinions and experiences of John Barry, probably inclusive of his former Plas y Brenin colleagues. And judging by the book, John Barry's experience of British winter climbing is limited to ice climbing in Wales and on Ben Nevis.

I find John Barry's idiosyncratic writing style somewhat irritating but this is less likely to be a problem for the intended reader, the rock climber who wishes to extend into snow and ice climbing. But the reader will find an alternative omission, the lack of discussion of the mountaineering aspects of the sport. Not all icefalls are beside the road (not in Scotland anyway). There is no discussion of when to put on and take off crampons, including factors such as balling up in sticky snow, or cutting steps across a small patch of icy snow on the approach, or tripping over crampons on steep ground. These are difficult decisions for the beginner. Further omitted mountaineering skills include weather interpretation, choice of venue according to conditions, and navigation. Another obvious skimp is the brief section

about mixed climbing, considering that worthwhile ice climbing conditions are far from universal. On the plus side, John Barry's obvious enthusiasm for the winter climbing sport comes across well. One can detect some mixed feelings, knowing well that the most rewarding start to winter climbing is to get out and do it. But equally it is not the safest and formal instruction makes a big difference.

The book is not aimed at the SMC member but rather the winter newcomer, but there are several technical points with which I disagree and which could be debated amongst Journal readers. Chapter 1 is about equipment. 'The banana pick... is designed to make extraction easier'. I thought it was designed to cause less ice shattering (and therefore better penetration) because the point was less steeply angled while maintaining the overall droop of the pick. Discussion of adze design recommends a large steeply-inclined adze for climbing unconsolidated snow but this seems a simplification because this use is limited without two adzes (and therefore a separate hammer, popular a few years ago) and also because steeply-inclined adzes are poor for torquing. Filing of tools and crampons is recommended but Aberdonians never do it because it wears them out faster.

Chapter 2 is Snow and Ice Skills and starts with crampon use, deliberately ridiculing excessive jargon (French, German and American technique). With this I sympathise, except that he goes on later to describe flatfooting as appropriate on ice up to 55 degrees, even showing cheating pictures of Ade Burgess pretending to do it. Good luck beginners! The pictures of bracing with an axe are similarly unrealistic. After hinting in Chapter 1 that clipping into axes is complicated and unnecessary, he spends 4 pages on it in Chapter 2 without saying that prior organisation of sling lengths is critical, or discussing the ethical qualms of many. The statement 'If rock predominates, treat it as a rock climb and drop both axes' is doubtful even in Wales and 10 years out of date in Scotland.

Chapter 3 is Belaying and Protection. The importance of a good stance to supplement the intrinsically weak snow belay should be at the beginning of the snow belay section, not as a note at the end. He doesn't say that the choice between a buried axe and T-axe belay depends on the depth of harder snow layers. The New Zealand foot brake is discussed without mention of the more useful standing axe belay (Stomper). I would say the best positions for two ice screws to belay in smooth ice are 1ft across and 3ft up. Is Barry's 1ft apart enough? The ice bollard for abseiling is tedious compared to the 'Abalokov thread', a thread made by two ice screw holes. And are threaded icicles really that weak?

Chapter 4 is Starting Out, perhaps the most important, and it should have been Chapter 1. The section on snow shelters is rather idealised for benighted climbers. The section on training (what is its relevance to starting out?) is a gimmick, showing photos of tree climbing with axes (which is both damaging to the trees and potentially to the climber), when there are those who take training for winter very seriously.

Despite these discussion points, I would expect the book to be useful for beginners to complement practical experience (under instruction or otherwise) but it is far from comprehensive. I would like to think that the big print and lack of detail was to make the book readable, not because its preparation was rushed for commercial reasons. But to his credit, John Barry has not forgotten that winter climbing is supposed to be fun.

Andy Nisbet.

Rock Climbing in Snowdonia: - Paul Williams (Constable, 1990, ISBN 0 09 468410 3 £9.95)

This is the latest in the now classic Constable guidebook series on rock climbing in North Wales. The title is slightly misleading, since not only are the best of the Snowdonia climbs described, but also those of Central Wales and the sea cliffs of the Llyn peninsula, Anglesey and the North Wales coast. Almost 500 climbs are described in full, giving a fair spread through the grades. The route descriptions are clear and full of useful hints on how to get the most out of the climbs. The directions to and from each crag are also well described and the photo-diagrams are excellent (largely because of the clarity and correct contrast of the photographs). The action photographs are also good, although some are by now rather well known and it would have been nice to have some in colour. The layout of the text is similar to previous editions; my one comment is that the type emphasis of the headings is in 'inverse' order, with the climb names in large bold type but the crag headings so small that it's easy to miss them. Overall, one of the best of the current guide writers in Britain has produced another

polished professional book full of splendid climbs which, with luck and the 5 hour drive, could become memorable personal adventures. Is this guidebook a good buy for readers of the SMC Journal? If you are planning a holiday in North Wales and would like to visit a wide range of different crags, yes, this is the book for you.

Roger Everett.

Coming Through:- Andy Fanshawe (Hodder & Stoughton, £14.95)

When I first received Andy Fanshawe's new book, my first reaction was an initial glance through its contents and the thought, 'not another expedition book'. An initial reaction, I am glad to say, which was very quickly dispelled.

Fanshawe's account details a four-year period in his life from 1986 to 1990. It takes in an expedition with friends to Chogolisa in the Karakorum, his experiences as the newly appointed National Officer of the BMC, 'yeti hunting' on Menlungtse with Chris Bonington, and ends with a winter ascent of the North Face of the Eiger.

So although it covers various trips and expeditions, these turn out to be more than just a chronology of peaks and routes, but become instead settings in which people live, play, laugh, argue and die. It is death which plays an important part in the book. Fanshawe loses two friends in climbing accidents - Liam Elliot on Broad Peak, and his best friend John Taylor in an avalanche on the Ben which Fanshawe himself barely survived. Such traumatic experiences take Fanshawe some time to come to terms with. As the story unfolds we see the author maturing from a somewhat impetuous, impatient young climber into an individual more at ease with himself, the people around him, and the mountains he climbs.

The narrative is liberally spiced with character sketches and incidents of his fellow climbers and comrades. Most of them succeed, and are particularly illuminating and/or funny. But on several occasions I was left with the feeling that perhaps more could have been expanded upon. My particularly favourite scene is where the camera crew on the Menlungtse expedition were attempting to shoot footage of the expedition convoy heading up to the Lalung La.

I also felt that the build-up to the Menlungtse trip was slightly less than interesting. Still, events on the hill outweigh that minor criticism.

In all, a very readable and enjoyable book. As a bonus, the photos reproduced within are of a particularly high quality. Go for it!

George McEwan.

The Handbook of Climbing: Allen Fyffe and Iain Peter (Pelham Books, 373pp., illus., £20, ISBN 0-7207-1805-8)

This tome was handed to me amidst a welter of jokes associated with my competence, or lack of it. I will come clean. I have muddled by for years and am incompetent at times (potential climbing partners beware), and so am an ideal reviewer.

One's first instinct on picking up the book is to compare it with Blackshaw - do, but it's better. Amongst the spate of instructional books on offer this is the definitive item. It takes you from basic first steps in climbing through winter and the Alps, and ultimately by a build up of knowledge and skills to the greater ranges. This is not a book written to serve the financial needs of a big name who has to sell books to make a living. Rather, it is a carefully thought out and planned explanation of all that we do or ought to do. It is packed with knowledge and helpful hints, all superbly illustrated with custom photographs and, perhaps most importantly, clearly explained.

The book should be good as it is endorsed by the B.M.C. (but sadly not the M.C. of S.), and it is written by two people with a wealth of climbing experience, both personal and instructional. Moreover, they are both Scots.

In addition to the various sections on Rock Climbing, Snow, Ice, Winter and Alpine Climbing, there are Appendices covering interesting if not essential areas such as Snow and Avalanches, Navigation and First Aid. Additionally, it is interesting to see information on Training and Psychological Skills. They are brief, but meet the needs of this book. These last two sections were written by Ally Morgan and Len Hardy. The only failing is that a third Chapter on Injuries (Physical and Psychological?) might have been included.

So why should you or I buy the book, surely it is for beginners? I would suggest that we all have something to learn from a text such as this, beginner or expert. As a source to dip into I have found it invaluable, for informing, refreshing and reinforcing.

Failings? A learned fellow reviewer in a comic called *High* spotted a couple of errors in some diagrams, no doubt these will be ironed out in future editions. More seriously, the book has obviously been used as a publicity vehicle for wee men with Patagonia tops. Witness the wee guy with the beard or the wee fat guy posing on page 104. What has happened to all the stickmen beloved of this type of book. Seriously, the book has few flaws and £20 is not much for a book you will use time and time again - buy it!

Neil Morrison.

Mountaineer. - Chris Bonington (*Diadem*, 192pp, £17.95, ISBN 0-906371-97-X).

I get the feeling, like confessing to a continued enjoyment of *Led Zeppelin*, that owing up to respecting Chris Bonington is no longer likely to result in instant credibility loss. His reputation among many climbers, however, has probably still some way to go before he gets the credit he is due. One of his mistakes may have been to survive. In general, we prefer our legends dead.

His contribution to mountaineering is one thing, his contribution to its literature perhaps something rather different. One thinks of the formula expedition books, openly written to fund the ventures they describe, in particular. On first appearance, this book, a large, lavishly-illustrated coffee table effort, seems to fall into a similar category as so much of his previous work: aimed at those who consider Bonington, because of his 8000 metre profile, as 'Britain's best climber' (we've all met them), and who want to look at pretty pictures, experience the vicarious thrill of looking down a vertiginous slope on Everest's NE Ridge while still in the armchair. Well, they won't be disappointed. But look harder, for there may be something here for you.

In the course of what is a remarkable career, which I surely don't need to chronicle, Bonington has accumulated a wealth of truly magnificent photographs, as well as some of great historical interest. This book is their showcase, and includes shots by those who have climbed with Bonington. See down clad, duvet booted Bonington beside flat capped, baseball-booted Whillans, fag in hand, preparing to bivouac during their successful first ascent of the Central Pillar of Freney; an anxious Bonington on the Hinterstoisser Traverse during an unsuccessful attempt on the Eigerwand, and a very boyish looking Ian Clough during the first British ascent; Clough on the Grandes Jorasses; Whillans in drag en route for Patagonia; the Eiger Direct; I could go on and on. For myself, perhaps one of the most striking things about many of these photographs was the fact that, being in colour and in the main excellently reproduced, they don't feel dated; the experiences of the past become more accessible, more obviously a part of what I know. The spontaneity and humour of many of them also help.

Naturally enough, the Himalaya dominate the book, from a very traditional ascent of Annapurna 2 in 1960 to a very traditional ascent of Everest in 1985, with all that lies between. Some of the photographs are wonderful, just one example being a wide-angle shot of the Western Cwm; there are more good mountain photographs here than I have ever seen together before.

People and places figure, too, as I have indicated above; besides intriguing character shots of climbers past and present there are photographs of Blashford Snell, in full imperial gear (pith helmet and all), firing a pistol at bandits, of traditionally-dressed Khirgiz people in front of their yurt, of the Potala dominating the dreary modern Lhasa.

What of the text? The short answer is that you don't buy a book like this for the words. Each section gets an introduction (perhaps the most interesting being that on Climbs from China), while the photographs are accompanied by a commentary which can best be likened to that which you might expect in the National Geographic. I found it no less satisfying for that. This is an illustrated journey, where you pause to take in the grandeur of the mountain scene before you, or imagine what it must have been like to have been there. Sometime words are superfluous.

Bob Duncan.

'Free Spirit - A Climber's Life.' Reinhold Messner. (Translation: Jill Neale. Hodder & Stoughton. London. ISBN 0-340-42900-3. March 1991.)

'By The Rocket's Red Glare...'

I first reviewed Messner's writing in 1975, with the publication of *'The Seventh Grade'* (Kay & Ward, 1974). That book began with his student days, when he climbed a greased pole, and finished with his personal nightmare on Nanga Parbat, Armageddon for so many climbers, where he lost several toes and one brother. Seventeen years span the two books, and we might reasonably expect to see some difference in his outlook, if not his style. In 1974 he was not ready to fling open the shutters to his soul - he did not yet have sufficient life experience. So has he changed? Bypassing much of the early years, including details of his first climbs under his father's tutelage, let us go straight to what was probably a crucial experience in his mountaineering career - Nanga Parbat, 1970.

His first mistake, of course, was getting involved with the infamous Dr Herrligkoffer, though at the time it seemed to offer the only chance at a first Himalayan expedition. Messner was then only 25, his brother Gunther even younger. Messner had, it seemed, mastered the Alps, and was ready for the next quantum leap. Two other climbers dropped out, and his brother was invited on the expedition. Three of them reached Camp 5 in worsening weather. A pre-arranged system of coloured rockets would give the climbers some idea of the weather - red was bad, blue good, red and blue doubtful. The rocket was red, but they decided to continue, as this, they had earlier discussed, would be their last chance due to lack of time. Messner left alone at 2 a.m., climbing up mixed ground in the Merkl Couloir to reach ice slopes under the South Shoulder. Later in the morning he was joined by Gunther, and the brothers continued upwards to gain the summit.

Night fell as they descended to the Merkl Col, bypassing the Couloir which Gunther felt would be too difficult to descend. Here they made a forced bivouac without equipment. Gunther was affected by the extreme cold, well below -30°C , and kept trying to pick up a non-existent object. The next morning Messner saw two others from the expedition in the Couloir, but communication failed and the other two, thinking the brothers happy, continued towards the summit.

The second, and fatal mistake had taken place. On the long, overnight descent down the Diamir Face, Messner got ahead of Gunther, who probably fell victim to an avalanche or sheer exhaustion. Messner stumbled about the foot of the face and spent another two nights out looking for his brother. Eventually meeting some peasants he was helped to a village and gradually made his way towards Gilgit. By a freak chance, he was obliged to spend a night in a hostel, where the remainder of the expedition was also holed up, by now on their way back home. Messner must have left much between the lines, as his sole comment on that meeting, some eight days' after their last radio conversation, was that the meeting was 'very sad'. The expedition contract may have had something to do with this reticence, as it prevented Messner from making any independent report. He felt, he said after the expedition, 'frequently labelled and muzzled'.

But Nanga Parbat shaped the young Messner. He admitted a responsibility for his brother's death, he had encouraged him, had not sent him back down, had gone on too fast on the descent. He also saw however that hindsight could not undo this, that it would not help his brother if he gave up climbing. It hardened him also, so that he became mistrustful of people; when they 'smiled at him enthusiastically, he did not believe them'. A sort of forced 'Herrligkoffer immunisation booster', if you like.

After Nanga Parbat there was a reaction, a turning inwards, so that he came to like all solitary big peaks, their dangers notwithstanding.

'It was the same icy light,' he wrote, watching the night peaks from his parents' home, 'which, on clear nights, lay over the great mountains, the same stillness, the same air.' In the high camps, alone, he knew a paradoxical security. There he would be responsible for himself alone.

Successive expeditions bred slowly gathering success, which in turn bred envy. To begin with he 'reacted aggressively to expedition leaders who did not select me, to climbing partners who slandered me and "friends" who wanted to finish me off.' Messner had discovered an instinct, mistrust of all and sundry. In life, he commented, as on a mountain, there must be difficulties. This is, of course, naivety showing, but it is a partly endearing openness which is an advance over the more youthful ignorance common to us all.

In 1975 Messner and Peter Habeler made a fast, unsupported ascent of the North West Face of Hidden Peak (8068m), against the odds given by the experts. They had left the rope behind to save weight, carrying a tiny tent for bivouacs. They gained the summit on the third day of climbing. Two days later they returned to base camp. Their five-day success had put Messner ahead in the international race, a position in which he felt life was good.

But the pressure of participating in this race had its price, as when, in 1977, he returned from an unsuccessful attempt on Dhaulagiri to be told by his wife Uschi that the marriage was finished. Messner, in this short chapter (most of the chapters in this book are short), touches several times on the pull between the 8,000m peaks and a more normal life, including thoughts about his wife. This might be written with hindsight, but is none the worse for that. At the conclusion of the Dhaulagiri chapter he states that at that moment of marital crisis he had wanted to be back at the turning point on the mountain there he would have lived (died?) a part of his life again in a different way. For Messner, this was a key episode in his life. I have already posited Nanga Parbat as a key point in his career, but it is possible to have several major nodes in a life, especially when one is intent on climbing 8,000m peaks with minimal support.

The necessarily obsessive nature comes through following his ascent of Everest with Habeler, without supplementary oxygen. No sooner was he back at base camp than he was aware that he was not content; the next challenge had jumped into view, Nanga Parbat solo. This he succeeded in doing, in 1978, followed by the Abruzzi Ridge on K2 in 1979, and a death and failure on Ama Dablam, also in '79. Finally in 1980 came the successful solo ascent of Everest, leaving the sack in the small tent for the final day's climbing. Was he as mad as Maurice Wilson he asked himself, that English religious fanatic whose solo attempt on Everest in 1934 had its inevitable end? On the summit Messner knew that he could do no more – he could only stand up to go down. (At this point popped into my head the ridiculous image of Messner hopping up and down, trying to achieve another metre in altitude. If there were peaks on a moon of Jupiter, I thought, he'd try to be there, even if oxygen were a necessity.)

The remainder of the book, well translated to my eyes, is for the main taken up with Messner's record bagging, starting with the ascents of all fourteen of the world's eight thousands. Here he confirms my own finding, that climbers are no better people than the rest of the human race, there being honest and dishonest, complacent and willing, envious and joyful amongst their ranks. They might differ, Messner thinks, by shining through in life or death situations.

Having achieved so much, more than any normal physiology could manage surely, Messner found peace walking over the continent of Antarctica, peace through working on his organic farm in the Tyrol, and peace, probably more than in any other way, through handing over his crown to the Slovakian climber Tomo Cesen, who in 1990 made the first ascent, solo, of the South Face of Lhotse. The last chapter is unusual, in that it relates this feat, finishing the book with the comment that Messner thinks Cesen the greatest climber in the world.

So what do we gain from this book? That the author has changed along life's path, that some of his early problems were due to his ignorance of some aspects of human nature, and also that, climbing ability besides, he must have led a charmed life at altitude. He returned from one expedition to find another brother dead, struck by lightning on a climb. His long-suffering mother asked him to stop attempting the Himalayan giants. He had, in any case, climbed most of the big names.

If we take his final chapters at face value, Messner has matured as a person, complementing his climbing career. Goldmund has returned home. We can only wish him well for the long life he expects to enjoy, turning over the thin soil on his mountain home, self-sufficient in food.

This book is interesting. Had it been suddenly exposed to a climbing public only twenty years ago it would have been disbelieved, such are the physical deeds described within its pages. That the physical prowess is necessarily accompanied by the mental attitude is briefly alluded to here. Messner, after all, cannot ever fully unburden himself. That he has to the extent shown here, is a testimony to the elemental forces to which he has been exposed, and through which he has passed.

Ken Crockett.

South West Climbs - rock climbs from Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset and Jersey. Pat Littlejohn (Diadem, 1991, 288pp., £14.99, ISBN 0-906371-82-1).

Let's clear one point right away, before friends write in; I have never climbed in any of the above areas, though I once did hitch down to Cornwall on the strength of a postcard from a schoolfriend. So I am concerning myself with the look and feel of the guide, not its accuracy as regards routes, which we should probably take for granted. And it does look and feel good, apart from its hard cover. Surely a plastic cover is even more necessary, given the risk of wind-blown spume and spray?

But then, the cynics would lean over and tell us, the card covers thicken up an otherwise thinnish book - at 288 pages it is lean - especially when you find that every page has either a photograph, photodiagram, map, sketch, or a combination of any four of these. This said, there are still 501 routes, just over half of which are E1 or up. The photodiagrams are surprisingly good for the most part, and where photographs were either missing or not up to quality, diagrams have been used, often thumbnails, but none the less useful for that. But the publishers have of course forestalled these criticisms by explaining that the format is taller, so there are more words on a page, and the cover is laminated, so it is tougher than it looks. Climbing on Cornish granite it had better be.

The thoughtful reader will come across many sympathetic lines in this book, viz., this from the Introduction 'It's (the South West) value as an adventurous climbing arena is becoming greater year by year as the Continental trend of "equipping" routes creeps on to certain British cliffs, eliminating self-reliance and threatening to destroy the essence of the sport.' Tell that to the wee boys with their Hilti drills and bolt kits, not that they would listen much.

The history makes interesting reading, with honourable mention of the late Tom Patey, then doing his National Service at Lymington. 'His ascents', writes Littlejohn, 'were always on sight and usually had an epic quality. On Sarcophagus, onlookers described him "battling upwards, hurling ivy and abuse into the surrounding atmosphere".' Bolting gets laid into later, with a repeated leitmotiv of first ascents using bolts followed by later ascents without, surely a good enough argument against. If you're frightened of being frightened, then maybe you should take up another game, or pull back a notch, ego permitting, of course.

This is a selected guide which would be added to my library, given that I was heading that way to climb. It's just so far away, and there's so much here to do you understand, including sea cliff climbing if that's what you like, that as yet I feel no strong pull, despite the lure of this attractive guide. And one final nicety; each route has its first ascent details where they should be, under the route name, not stuffed into a tedious chronological list at the back.

Ken Crockett.

The Rock Climbing Guide to Europe. -David Jones. (Crowood Press, 1991, 255pp, £12.95, line illustrations, ISBN 1-85223-450-4).

France, our author tells us, is the most important rock climbing country in the world. The sport has come of age in the 1980s, with thousands of bolts being placed, he continues, so we have a marked contrast with the foregoing area and guide to England's South West coastal crags. But then the crags are quite different in many ways (and there are over 600 in this guide!), from the sun-dappled boulders in the woods of Fontainebleau, to the overhanging limestone found in many locations. The vastly better weather is what makes so much of the Continental climbing a pleasure, which makes the pro bolt argument given by Jones at the beginning even more specious. In Britain, he says, the weather makes the placement of protection a slow and miserable game, so why not bolt routes. If he has to scramble so hard for a defense then he must feel unsure of himself. Some climbers enjoy finding and placing protection; it's part of the fun to them. And have a thought for all the wee gnomes who would be out of a job if we stopped using the nuts they so busily polished for us in some grotty Welsh cave, little red faces bobbing up and down furiously in time with their (that's enough - Ed.)

More seriously, Jones has done another good service here with his Continental companion guide to finding crags. Included, along with crag guides to Southern Britain, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy and Spain, are details of the 188 circuits at Fontainebleau and over 400 routes on the Tunbridge Wells sandstone. It is, of course, a guide to use, and not admire, though the two column layout helps. The crag research in the Spanish section is but rudimentary, as Jones himself admits, but some information is better than none he thinks. It must have been a grind to write.

Ken Crockett.

Rock Climbing in Scotland.-By Kevin Howett (Constable, 1990, 467pp, £9.95. ISBN 0-09-468760-9).

MacInnes, always ahead of the rat pack, must have been pleased when this guide came out; a vindication in theory if not in style of his two prototypes of the selected guide in 1971. His foreword says it all in studied understatement.

Kevin Howett has done a masterly job. That often weak area, the diagram, is one of the really strong points in this guide, together with the maps. This is simply the best selection of crag diagrams in any Scottish guide and the consistency of their quality will ensure that the artist in question will soon be having a queue of other guide book writers at his door. The photographs do not quite come up to the standard of the diagrams - some are much better than others - and it surely must be regretted that all save the front cover, which is excellent, are in black and white. Colour photographs enhance a guide almost more than anything else, but they cost and I cannot help feel that if there had been a smattering of colour throughout, then this guide would stand head and shoulders above the rest.

The layout of the text and the route descriptions are clear and concise. There is evident enthusiasm, as on page 242, describing the Main Wall at Diabeg 'the climbing is indescribable'. Absolutely! This is not a guide for the drab at heart but an exuberant romp through all that is best in the Highlands and Islands and Lowlands. Three star routes burst from every other page and superlatives abound. You may not agree with all the gradings but here at last is the technical grade used for all areas, dispelling the dubious northern mists of Scottish VS forever. A brave man too - he has the sense to grade Chimney Arete and Whither Whether on the Cobbler at VS 4b, which may remove the mystique somewhat but will reduce the number of gobsmacked Severe leaders. A pity he did not feel free to up-grade Integrity in the same vein. One could argue that such routes had more cache as Severs, Severs that is with the killer punch, thrown at the unsuspecting, preferably English climber and lovingly cherished by gnarly old Scots as an example of a real climb, a Bannockburn for southern scoffers who think everything below VS hardly worth putting a rope on for. Fortunately he has left a few nasties lurking within the pages, which will jolt the innocents who believe in the written word and number.

So if the diagrams, maps and routes are all competently written up, where are the quibbles? Well historically there are one or two curios, for instance are there really two G. Latter's roped in tandem to climb Rock of Ages at Dumbarton and though I may have been on the hill for some time, I still was not dragged up, at the tender age of 14, by Tom Patey to climb Enigma Grooves, though R.W.P. Barclay was and that merely left me to do the direct finish in 1979. As for omissions, well the most currently obvious are Ardmair and Reiff, outcrops maybe but Reiff is a major climbing ground by anybody's reckoning. These are relatively minor points but perhaps the most curious is the attempt to 'grade' midges by a three star system. The midges are represented by pictograms, one being tolerable and three representing the heebie-jeebies. Believe me, it might be one midge category one minute and when that gentle breeze stops the next it's three, with boats being abandoned at great speed in all directions.

Many of the quality climbs are covered in this excellent guide and for the moment it is the best overall guide to Scottish rock climbing. It does not attempt to replace the comprehensive guides but for those wanting to pick and choose, here's your alternative to carrying a sac-full of guide books around the country.

John Mackenzie.

The Northwest Highlands.- By Donald Bennet and Tom Strang (1990, Scottish Mountaineering Trust, 340 pp., 108 illustrations, 28 maps by John Renny, £17.95. ISBN 0 907521-28-2).

The new Guide is to all mainland hills north and west of the Great Glen. Remote and unpeopled as that huge mountain region is, continual changes through the years require record - new roads to speed the tourist, new forest plantations that blanket the hill - approaches, dams that flood old ways through the glens, and new industries that impair the scene, such as widespread fish-farming and the oil construction yard at Kishorn. The new roads have also sped the climber, whose intensive explorations on the cliffs bewilder newcomers, and sped too the Munro and Corbett-baggers of frenetic energy. The guidebook is therefore doubly welcome as aid to access, especially since the two editors have done a most efficient job. Donald Bennet covers the south area from Morvern to Glen Carron, and Tom Strang the north from Applecross to Caithness. Both write clearly and concisely to a well thought-out design, each

explaining the best and also the quickest approaches to every mountain (ways that do not usually coincide). They spell out valuable detail largely absent from guides to either Munros or rocks. They do not of course cover the cliffs except in the general sense of showing where the recent decades of exploration have been, winter and summer. They maintain good balance between the natural and social histories of the different mountain groups, with helpful notes on access, public transport, accommodation, and paths.

An introductory chapter has notes on weather, Nature Reserves, drove roads, rights of way, caves and geology - the latter by Noel Williams. The illustrations are thickly spread, enhanced by using only one to a page. Colour prints predominate. All are of good quality, but not so the few black and whites. The 28 maps by Jim Renny are models of clear simplicity.

W. H. Murray.

One Step in the Clouds, an omnibus of mountain fiction compiled by Audrey Salkeld and Rosie Smith (1990, Diadem and Sierra Club Books, 30 short stories, 6 novels, 1 play, 1056 pp., £16.95. ISBN 0 906371-92-9).

The book opens with the compilers' most informative review of mountain fiction, which, for the benefit of all mountaineers, ought to be reprinted in their clubs' journals. Its main theme, that despite common opinion there is no dearth of good mountain fiction if a search be made, is borne out by what follows. I read this book with a growing and grateful surprise (the gratitude going to the editors for their hard conscientious search). My only real criticism is a double one: first, that their final product is far too big and weighty for comfortable handling, and second, that the two parts should have been more properly divided for publication as separate books. Together they appear to me like an ungainly monster. Part one, a 287 page anthology of short stories, would have read better by itself - a division to be preferred because the shorts and the longs are of different genre; that is, they call for and receive from authors quite different kinds of writing, which do not mix well in one book. The mere fact that both are fiction is insufficient pretext for an unhappy juxtaposition.

The shorts are a mix of old and new; the new wisely predominating and the few old allowing us to make useful comparisons. The latter include Montague's 'Hanging Garden Gully', Maupassant's 'Ulrich', and Menlove Edward's 'Scenery for a Murder'. I may say at once that the anthology has nothing to surpass Menlove Edwards, unless it be Montague. In comparing old with new, I find that writers from Scotland fare well. By happy chance, Ken Crockett's 'October Day' is immediately followed by Maupassant. Under that comparison Crockett is much the more skilful writer. His story of a teenager's first climb on Salisbury Crags shows real, creative imagination in the build-up of the boy's background environment of last century and of his natural motivation. Maupassant's story is a too contrived, theatrical drama, maybe included for the sake of his name, but none the less a choice of interest to us all as being so remote from the master's normal scene-settings. Robin Campbell contributes 'The Case of the Great Grey Man', one of his ingenious Sherlock Holmes collection, which read as no way inferior to Conan Doyle. This particular tale, linked to Norman Collie and Hugh Munro, has appeared in the SMCI, its imaginative excellence already known to us. Geoff Dutton's 'Doctor' stories are represented by a new one titled 'Midges'. These have a keen readership, among whom I am not included, although respectful. Farce has to be still more outrageous before it wins my mind.

The novels come to me as a much bigger surprise in their quality and variety. I seem to have known hitherto only the duds. There is indeed more literary talent around than I had guessed. As before, one old novel, Elizabeth Coxhead's 'One Green Bottle', provides a standard of comparison. It wears well after 40 years, retaining a depth and sensitivity that most climbing novels notably lack. The best of the other half dozen is to my mind David Harris's 'Vortex'. He is Canadian. His story of drug traffic through the North Cascades has cunningly built-in suspense, growing throughout, yet has a natural, unforced dialogue, a wide variety of characters, and a proper exposition of their human relations as a true novel should have. It even points a moral in showing how easy it can be for both men and women to get sucked into a vortex of criminal living almost involuntarily. This novel, printed here for the first time, seems to have lost its due reward. It deserved publication as a 200-page novel standing in its own right, as had Coxhead's. The rest of the too big collection would have benefited by such a reduction (as would its authors), and still have held enough merit within its 600 pages to survive and sell.

W. H. Murray.

Outcrops.—By Terry Gifford (Littlewood Arc, 1991, 58pp, £5.95, ISBN 0946407-62-2).

This short anthology of poems, with a gritstone overhang illustration for the cover, is mostly about climbing, with some other ancient rocks looming up out of the mist for variety. I looked through it for lines which would change my life, but was disappointed. Asking too much I suppose, but to publish a poem is to be one of the brave and chosen ones whom I look up to. There are some lines and even poems I like, as in '*Somewhere Above Swaledale*', in which the old, familiar outcrop afternoon is enacted by two climbers.

All it needs
is fifteen feet
of weathered rock,
a hole in the ground
without a name
will do
for a winter afternoon...'

And '*Wall*', telling of the stone life, as shifting as the plants and roots that move the stones on a garden wall.

Stone blossoms in the mountains
With lichens, moss and ferns,
Green tying into green like
The art of a dry-stone wall.'

I suspect that Gifford may be an acquired taste, or that his rhythm did not echo mine, for there was something I could not quite grasp in many of the poems, for which I blamed myself. I found syncopation with '*Rocca Di Perti*', where the printers had reduced the leading between the lines so as to mimic, I suppose, the massive bulk of stone.

They were cutting the mountain
into pats of butter,
great pale blocks,
unmelted even in this heat,
left on a shelf
above the shimmering valley.

Out of the natural tumble
of rounded rocks and bushes
they'd cut a box
into this living shoulder
with clean scalpel blades.

I had to touch its walls
to believe its smoothness,
finger the slicing of pink crystals
sparkling from the granite whiteness,
hear, in the evening stillness,
the breaking of atoms
inside this gentle mountain
from which basilicas are built.

Mr Gifford does good work for the mountains, viz., he has a slide/poetry performance entitled '*Ten Letters To John Muir*', which has raised money for the John Muir Trust (to arrange this, contact Burbage Books, 56 Conduit Rd, Sheffield S10 1EW, 0742-668813). Methinks however, that in his poems he tries too hard with the words. Compare with Dutton, elsewhere in this Journal, to see what I mean. Both feel for the subject, but Gifford's words seem as a thin veil to me, an interstellar gas cloud diffusing the glorious light from the nebula. Or read Miroslav Holub, or even Yevteshenko in parts. For me, a Curate's egg.

Ken Crocket.

Journals of Kindred Clubs

The Alpine Journal 1990/91 (Frederick Muller in association with The Alpine Club, 338pp, £17.99, ISBN 0-091743-18-4).

This is still the Alpine Journal, despite its being published commercially at a rather high price. This edition contains the usual selection of articles, reports and notes from all over the world, with 90 illustrations into the bargain.

The Himalaya are well represented by a number of articles, most of which describe lightweight expeditions climbing 'alpine style', which seems appropriate for a journal of this name. The Alps, surprisingly, are catered for mainly by articles of a historical nature - Una Cameron's remarkable record of climbs in the 1930s, and Hamish Nicol's in the 1950s.

Elsewhere in this edition there is a fascinating variety of climbing tales from nearly every corner of the planet - Alaska and Columbia, Tasmania, Corsica and Skye to name but a few.

Donald Bennet.

The American Alpine Club Journal 1990

Simply the best - even the cover, which this year uses part of the new map of Mount Everest.

Three articles relating to climbs in the Himalaya are an aperitif to the six devoted to Mount McKinley (Denali) National Park, viz, Mount Russell's East Face; Foraker's Infinite Spur; Hunter's Northwest Face; Eroica, Mount Hunter; Moose's Tooth and Huntington and finally Denali's West Rib Solo in Winter. Enthralling and awe inspiring when weather statistics of 200 m.p.h winds and temperatures of -77°F (-61.5°C) have been recorded.

This harsh environment proved fatal for an experienced Japanese team attempting a winter ascent of McKinley. All three members perished, the leader Noboru Yamada having previously climbed nine 8000-metre peaks and Everest three times.

An amazing survival epic was enacted by two Anchorage climbers. Attempting to climb 'The Elevator Shaft' on Mount Johnson, the leader climbed 40ft, above his runner to an ice window, when suddenly the entire ice formation on which he was climbing collapsed, the column of ice falling down the couloir. Fortunately the runner held, but the leader fractured his hip. During the next SEVEN days the pair were hit by Eight different avalanches before they were finally rescued. This is worth a book of its own.

There's more; not content with all the Alaskan daring-do, 70 pages are devoted to the Glaciers of Alaska and adjacent Yukon Territory. Space is found to tabulate the 55 crossings of Greenland's Inland Ice over the last 100 years - No 22 being Past President Bill Wallace and Co.

Global Climbs and Expeditions - it's all here, Topo line drawings of new routes in Patagonia, Book Reviews and 56 First Class photographs.

I implore members to borrow this volume if only for armchair excitement, or to contemplate The Ten Commandments of Sustainable Climbing!

Doug Lang.

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Articles for the Journal should be submitted before the end of January for publication in the following issue. Lengthy contributions are preferably typed, double-spaced, on one side only, and with ample margins (minimum 30mm). Articles may be accepted on floppy disk, IBM compatible (contact editor beforehand). The editor welcomes material from both members and non-members, with priority being given to articles of Scottish Mountaineering content. Photographs are also welcome, and may be black and white, unglazed glossy prints, preferably 250mm by 200mm, or colour slides. All material should be sent to the Editor, address as above.

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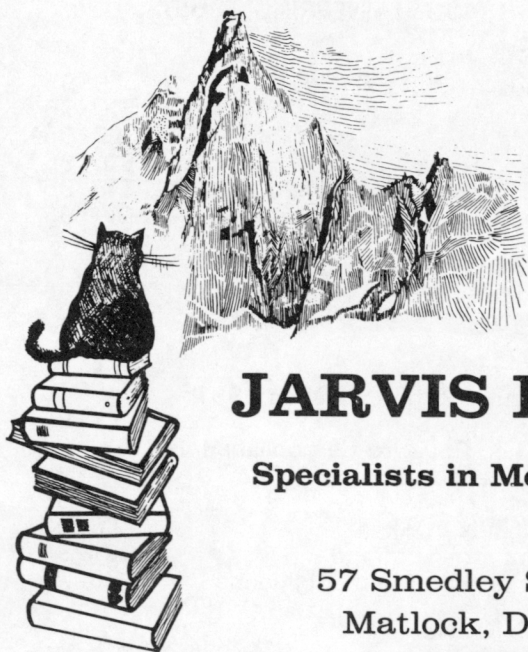
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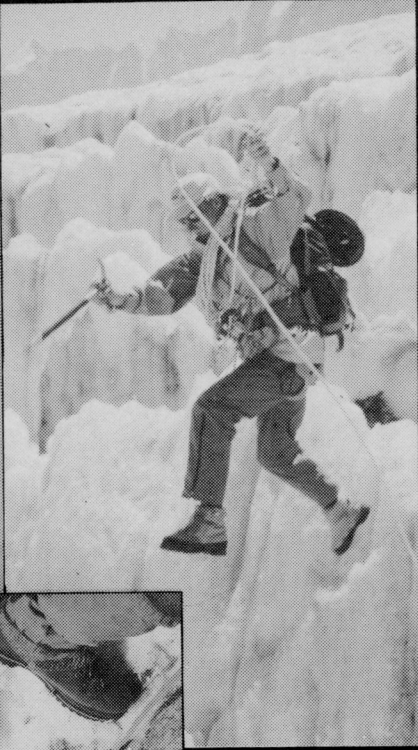
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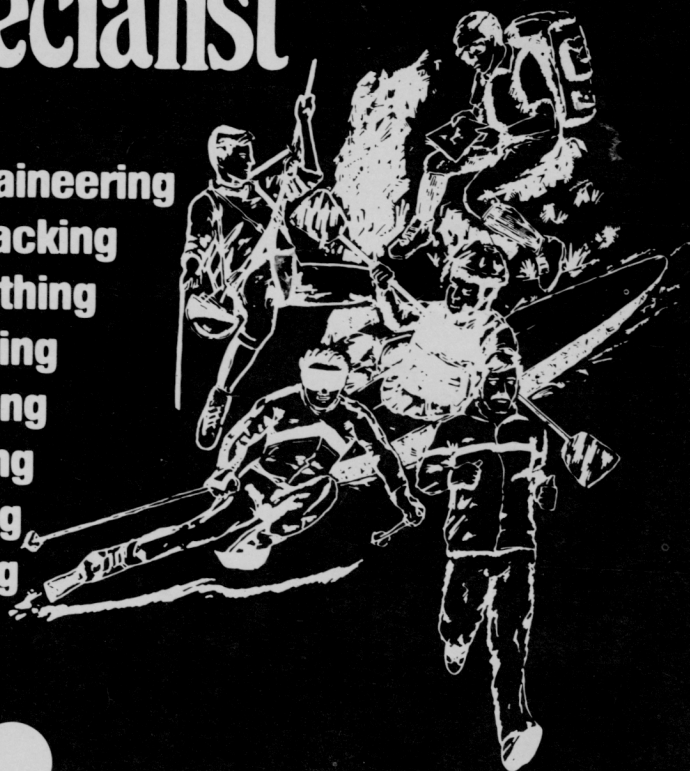
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