

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

Derek Fabian reports on a Helicopter Lift-off:— Douglas appeared fit and well. Tanned from skiing in the winter and the spring, and from his generally out-door life during the long hot summer of 1995, he failed to show at least 20 of his 84 years. A retired well-known photographer and contributor of illustrated articles to the *Scots Magazine*, he and his wife, Audrey, had been looking forward for a while to this few days away with Ewa and myself on *Mistress Malin*.

Douglas had never landed on the Treshnish Isles, and he suggested these as our goal. We knew, too, that they would be an excellent place for his splendid bird photography; especially with the weather set fine, if – in common with much of the summer – short of wind.

We boarded in the afternoon of August 17, in Loch Moidart, Douglas climbing from dinghy to boat-deck in as sprightly form as any of us, and soon we were under way (motor-sailing, regrettably) and heading westwards along the Ardnamurchan Peninsula. Once past the Point, and heading south, the slight wind was now on the nose and we motored the remaining 15 nautical miles to anchor off Lunga More.

Douglas had begun to feel unwell soon after we passed Ardnamurchan. He started to lose feeling and control in one arm. It was evening and he insisted on coming ashore, but sat in the warm sun while the three of us explored the island and its summit hill for an hour or so. Returning to the boat, across the bouldery shore and into the inflatable, was a tricky procedure with two of us helping him as his sight and his limb-control slowly failed him. The sea was a flat calm. Douglas began to be sick and, tucked up warm in his bunk once aboard, retched almost all night.* We began to suspect a mild stroke, and by 6am next morning we were transmitting a PAN PAN MEDICO call on the VHF.

The Oban Coastguard responded instantly and, after briefly relaying medical information from a doctor in Oban, they had a helicopter despatched from Prestwick to lift off our patient. This is a report on the lift-off experience; a useful lesson on how the downdraft can create havoc, and – since Douglas has since completely recovered from his medically diagnosed mild stroke – perhaps a valuable description for others of what to expect.

With the helicopter (a Royal Naval Rescue Sea King) some 15 minutes away, the Coastguard relayed a message: could we get under way, leave the anchorage, and motor in more open water on a course say due south. And could we be sure the decks were as clear as possible. No problem: the sea was still a flat calm; shorts and T-shirts were all that we needed for garments that morning, even at 6.30am. Engine running smoothly. We towed our dinghy to keep the deck free (normally it would be lashed, inflated and inverted, between coach roof and mast). Clear from the anchorage we made a course, at some 3-4 knots, due south and relayed our new position from the GPS to the Coastguard.

The Sea King appeared (7am), made VHF contact and began to lower a winch man. The downdraft, some 35-40 knots of it, blew us sideways. The nearer the winch man was swung to the cockpit, the farther we were pushed away! More VHF contact – channel 67 – but now the colossal noise of the hovering chopper, plus that of our own engine, drowned almost every word emerging from the speaker even

turned to maximum volume. Some sound-proof earphones were needed. We had none; nor are any such on regular sale at chandlers we have since approached. Eventually, the helicopter drew away, hoisting up the winch man as it went, and then relayed through the Coastguard its request for *Mistress Malin* to be motored at her top speed (7 knots in that flat calm) and for us to be ready to receive a line – which was *not to be attached to the boat* repeat, *not to be attached to the boat!*

Minutes later the helicopter drew in again and a line carrying a weighted bag (of lead shot?) was dropped expertly into the cockpit and was used by us to draw in the winch man, and then by him, only seconds later, to draw in the doctor. Both were clad in heavy water-proof gear (the crew of *Mistress Malin* were now drenched by flying walls of spray) and were wearing sound-proof earphones, fitted with walkie-talkie microphones.

Much of this time was spent airborne by our inflatable dinghy, which – as the chopper then accelerated away – began to twirl like a kite at the end of its painter. The latter finally parted (at roughly its mid-point) and the dinghy came to rest some 100m away in dead, calm water, followed by both lifebuoys which were torn from their teflon-tape fastenings to the pushpit. Meanwhile, the forehatch – shut but not fastened down – blew open and was torn from its hinges, coming to rest, as the chopper drew away and the havoc subsided, with only one remaining, badly bent corner screw holding.

There wasn't a cloud in the sky. The sea was serenely blue. I had been told about downdraft, I mused. Why had I not been prepared? The doctor and Audrey were below attending to Douglas; measuring his blood pressure.

In the space of six or seven minutes we recovered the dinghy, lifebuoys and other odd items from the sea, and had everything, including rescued forehatch and dinghy, lashed fast on deck. The diagnosis below complete, Douglas was to be winched off to hospital; by now hardly conscious, he was manhandled into the cockpit where – with the helicopter coming in to hover overhead abaft the mast again – the swinging bag of shot was already being collected in by the helmsman. In no time the doctor was in the harness and hoisted aloft, and the empty harness drawn by the line back to the cockpit.

Then the turn of the winch man who, cradling to him the now unconscious Douglas (doubly harnessed and being protected as far as was possible from the wild walls of spray by Audrey and the skipper), shouted to us above the din and the chaos of the chopper to feed out the line. We saw why, when the helicopter drew away at speed – horizontally and vertically with the bundle of Douglas and winch man being hoisted in fast pursuit – and the 50m of roughly coiled line on the cockpit floor began snaking out at incredible speed; demon-like in its intent on taking with it, but for the quick reactions of helmsman and skipper, any instrument or fitting, including GPS antenna (torn from its cabling but not lost), that its snaking coils could snatch at – which included any of our limbs in its way.

Suddenly, all was silent; but at that moment we did not know that Douglas was to prove the fighter he is (he has amazed the medics by making a full recovery with no lasting effects – indeed, within 10 days he was planning his next expedition to wild untrodden places) and our thoughts then were with Audrey. We mused, too, on what all of that would have been like in gale-force winds and seas.

** Apparently vomiting is the means by which the body attempts to rid itself of excess fluid build-up following, for instance, a stroke.*

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

(Letter with a Norfolk Postmark.)

'Why have you walked up from Chamonix on a night like this?'

Another dream falls. More pub bull-shit fodder from the Alps. Ordeal climbing. Nice pegs, shame about the Face. Brick-it, frig-it, tick it. Chasing 20-year-old ego-feed from a time before the permafrost melted..

The climber falls, and hangs all upside down over the 800m drop, leg broken. He is suspended only by the tangle of crampon straps in our iced up lead ropes. Cliffhanging, Hollywood style. His fridge-sized belay block has collapsed above me after his partner has taken him off belay. A 10m fall on to our ropes. His crampons are off his boots but the ankle strap and heel piece of one has hooked in our ropes. His belay sling and rope have been severed in the fall by the large block. A lucky tangle away from a further 40m fall. His lonely axes remain hanging from the ice above the belay. Thirty metres above, Jean-Michel hangs impossibly from a snowy handhold, his other hand holding his rope, weighted with the tugging struggles of the dangling man. The ground is Scottish V, mixed, loose and poorly protected. He finds reserves of energy he never knew were there. The injured climber struggles, pulling our ropes, me screaming at him. Hanging in crampons from a poor belay, it is unlikely the belay can hold both men if JM is pulled off. We use our radio to call Chamonix. The injured team, a short wait from warmth, drink, food, safety; for us, impossible dreams for the next 36 hours. 'Gizza lift mate.'

Rocks fall as I brush away the snow, vainly searching for a runner. I torque the axe behind a loose flake, overhanging the belay. Hanging from the axe, crampons flailing madly on verglassed granite, I desperately excavate a snowy crack for a back-bone saving handjam. 'God bless you, Stanage.' Fifteen metres above the belay, with no runners, the rope locks solid, leaving me pumped and scared, in mid-move, transfixed. Helicopter blades liquidize the air below in my potential fall trajectory. 'I could end up on five routes at once,' I chuckle insanely. Below, an aspirant guide *in extremis* on the previous pitch, has clipped in to our slack rope and asked to be top-roped up. I fight gravity, I fight my arms, I fight my sac. Strength ebbs and the rope remains tight.

Night falls as I climb an ice pitch to the false promise of a bivvy ledge. In the dark now, a desperate jamming crack by headtorch, axes jamming, crampons scclattering, sparks flying, no gear. Fighting 18 hours of fatigue. No way can we bivvy here. We do. A full moon. Avalanches derail their sadness down the face. Stars come out. An intensely-magic moment in all the stress. The strange quiet calm at the centre of it all. Months later I want this moment back. Junkie.

Snow falls. Much later, rain drums the bivvy bag. The fine weather has broken. A storm-ridden dawn, rocks soaking wet, the first snow flakes begin to fall. The storm hits. We have a final brew, massage feet, lace up Koflachs, sort out the chaotic tangle of frozen ropes and hardware to which we hung through the night. I start to reascend the now snow-covered rocks, my partner below soon lost in the swirling snow.

I fall, much, much later, in the dark and rain, into the Couvercle Refuge, snow in my hair, tears of relief in my eyes. The guardian says: 'Why have you walked up from Chamonix on a night like this?'

Andrew Walker, NE Pillar Direct of the Droites, August 10-11, 1995.

ROBIN CAMPBELL muses: What is it, and is it a Corbett?— There is precious little to excite the bagging impulse around the Raeburn Hut, so it might be worthwhile to consider the triple-topped hill north of Laggan village. Proceeding from west to east and north to south, the least top is a nameless 795m, the middle top (838m/2716ft) is called Beinn a'Chrasgain and the main top may be called Marg na Craige — the name appears on the 1:10000 map in the vicinity of the summit surveyed at 2736ft, which height corresponds to the 834m of the 1:50000. According to Iain MacLeod's Gaelic glossary in *Munro's Tables* 'marg' may be a black pudding, so this would certainly fit the case: 'a black pudding of stones' would do well as a name for any of the Monadh Liath. So far so good—a fair name and a satisfactory height. However, it should be said the name is written on the map as if it applied to the scruffy crags in the corrie north of the top rather than to the top itself.

The Marg is not in the table of Corbetts, but this seems hard luck, since the high route to higher ground crosses the confused watershed north of the 795m top some four miles distant at a height very close to the critical height of 2236ft. There is no ground survey height for the low point here, which lies between the 2225ft and 2250ft contours on the 1:10000 map. The 2250ft contour runs just south of a tiny puddle on the south side of the pass. Perhaps an outing with poles and clinometers would settle the question, but it may be that the hill should be given the benefit of the doubt. After all, bednights at the Hut are soon to be £5 each! I have climbed the Marg twice and I have to say that it is very dull work.

Robin N. Campbell.

Terrorist, Sinister Buttress, Lochnagar: Brian Findlay and Greg Strange report a free ascent (V, 6) on March 31, 1996 — 21 years to the day of the first ascent by the late Norman Keir.

THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING TRUST 1995/96

FOLLOWING last year's high spending round the Trust this year had less funds available, but has managed to continue its publishing programme and make cash awards to the majority of organisations and individuals who applied and were deemed suitable recipients.

On the publications side, a fully-updated *Cairngorm Rock & Ice Climbs* was published in two volumes along with *Scottish Selected Winter Climbs*. In the District Guide series a revised *Islands of Scotland including Skye* was published.

Comment has been made that the requirements of the Inland Revenue referred to in last year's report — to see elements of education or science advancement present in any application for assistance — will prevent Trustees

from providing assistance to expeditions. It certainly has to be accepted that the world is not as large as it once was and the Trust does not therefore offer assistance for trips to what are now popular and easily accessible ranges by the very experienced. It is certainly not in the minds of Trustees, however, to abandon expedition sponsorship and all such applications considered by the Trust this year appear to have had little difficulty in satisfying the requirement.

As usual the Trust thanks all members of the Club who find the time in busy lives to serve as Trustees or officials. The present Trustees are D.F. Lang (chairman), D.C. Anderson, R.N. Campbell, J.Y.L. Hay, S. Kennedy, W.A. McNicol, D.C. Page, J. M. Shaw, D. Sommerville and N.M. Suess.

The following grants were awarded during the year. It should be noted that because the capital comprising the Sang Award has become too modest to provide meaningful income for assisting expeditions, it has been incorporated into the General Fund which in any event had been used to support Sang for a number of years. Intending applicants for expeditions, or indeed, any purpose should now initially apply to the Secretary of the Trust who will provide the appropriate application form.

J.R.R. Fowler.

General Grant Fund

Grants paid	Jonathan Colville Trust	£768
	CD Rom for Journal Editor	£350
	Scottish Rights of Way Society	£1000
	Elizabeth Allan – Burn on the Hill	£1000
	M.C. of S. – core funding	£10,322
	Scottish Rights of Way Society	£1000
	National Trust for Scotland – field worker	£800
	Neil Skene – trip to Everest base camp	£50
Grants committed		£16,708

Footpath Fund

Grants paid	John Muir Trust – field officer	£2000
	Scottish Natural Heritage – Stac Pollaidh	£7000
	Scottish Natural Heritage – Culag	£4250
	Scottish Natural Heritage – Ross-shire	£5992
	National Trust for Scotland – Glen Coe,	
	Goatfell, Ben Lomond & Torridon	£14,000
	Balmoral Estates – Lochnagar	£4464
Grants committed		£29,400

Snart Bequest

Grants paid	Cairngorm weather station	£490
Grants committed	Dundonnell rescue team	£2000

Land Purchase Fund

Grants paid		Nil
Grants committed	National Trust for Scotland – Mar Lodge	£20,000

MUNRO MATTERS

By C.M. Huntley (Clerk of the List)

Listed below are the 146 additions to the Munroists List, giving the total number of reported Compleat Munroists as 1535. As always a keen interest is taken in how the rate of addition is progressing, and I can report that although we have the second highest number of additions, the rate of change is small. However, I am noticing an increase in the number of multiple rounds and these are given below.

Each entry lists the Munroist Number, Name, and date of Completion of the Munros, Top, Furths as appropriate.

Amendments give the addition of Tops and Furths, but only show the total number of rounds completed and the year of the latest round.

1390	George Galloway	1995	1995	1432	Karl Nelson	1995	1995
1391	John B Boyling	1994		1433	Elizabeth Skeoch	1995	
1392	Hugh Insley	1995		1434	Irvine J Skeoch	1995	
1393	Ron Fosberry	1995		1435	Judy Middleton	1995	
1394	George C Gilchrist	1995		1436	Alastair I F Barrie	1995	
1395	A L McLaren	1995		1437	George Kincaid	1995	
1396	Gordon Birnie	1995		1438	Arlie L Gilbert	1995	
1397	Douglas R MacLeod	1995		1439	Martin Uppadine	1982	
1398	George Page	1995	1995	1440	Paul Birrell	1995	
1399	Ron Johnson	1995	1995	1441	Jim Bryce	1995	
1400	Kate Potter	1995		1442	Isobel Gordon	1995	
1401	Alan Bellis	1995		1443	Ruth Love	1995	
1402	Graham W Beckett	1995		1444	Simon Love	1995	
1403	Patrick J P Nelson	1995		1445	Pauline A Rooker	1995	1995
1404	Gordon Berry	1991	1991 1995	1446	John A Rooker	1995	1995
1405	Harry Hartley	1990	1990 1995	1447	Steve Singleton	1995	
1406	Charles D M Black	1995		1448	Jonathon Whitehead	1995	1995
1407	Jacqueline Cummings	1995		1449	Arthur J Bennet*	1995	
1408	Barry M Rose	1995		1450	Charlie Lodge	1995	
1409	J B Murphy	1995		1451	Malcolm Lomas	1995	
1410	David M Mollison	1995		1452	Eddie B Dealtry	1995	1995 1994
1411	Derek R L Borthwick	1995		1453	Patricia Manning	1995	
1412	Bill Patullo	1995		1454	Thomas W Wright	1995	
1413	Peter Goodwin	1995		1455	Jessie R Milne	1995	
1414	Dominic Goodwin	1995		1456	William A Milne	1995	
1415	Anne Hill	1995		1457	Michael Pratt	1995	
1416	Martin E Hill	1995		1458	Patrick Callan	1995	
1417	Gillian M Shirreffs	1995		1459	Bill Brennan	1995	
1418	Richard C Shirreffs	1995		1460	Bryon D Evans	1995	
1419	Donald W W Smith	1995		1461	Michael D Gillespie	1995	
1420	Brian N Barron	1995		1462	John Coleman	1995	
1421	John M D Anderson	1995		1463	David H Wolfson	1995	
1422	Stephen A Glasper	1995		1464	Erik Bigland	1995	
1423	Johan de Jong	1995	1995	1465	Lyn Tett	1995	
1424	Stuart F Davidson	1995		1466	Ron Spark	1995	1995
1425	David Harrison-Hall	1995		1467	John C Brannan	1995	
1426	Carlene A Hamilton	1995		1468	George Cruickshank	1995	
1427	John D Hamilton	1995		1469	Maureen Daniel	1995	1995
1428	Nigel Murray	1995		1470	Richard L Daniel	1995	1995
1429	Bill E Parry	1995		1471	Iain Harkins	1995	
1430	John W Haughton	1995		1472	Bill Cluckie	1995	
1431	Linda J McColl**	1995	1995	1473	L Liney	1995	

1474 Jim S Bramwell	1995	1505 Gordon Logan	1995
1475 Duncan W Borthwick	1995	1506 Peter Budd	1995
1476 Vonnice Scott	1995	1507 Graham M Hamilton	1995
1477 David Claymore	1995 1995	1508 Elizabeth Sudlow	1995
1478 Graham Jackson	1995 1995	1509 Michael Sudlow	1995
1479 Stephen Hartley	1994 1994	1510 Findlay L Swinton	1995
1480 Ian D Lauriston	1995	1511 Fred Siddaway	1995
1481 Murray Kelso	1995	1512 Neil H Martin	1995
1482 Victoria M L Doran	1995	1513 Joan S Lamb	1995 1995
1483 Iain Roberts	1993	1514 Richard Love	1995
1484 Linda Sillery	1995 1995	1515 Steven Copping	1995
1485 Neil D Ross	1995	1516 Hazel Batty	1995
1486 Graeme Ralph	1995	1517 Lynn Batty	1995
1487 Richard W Foster	1995	1518 R Martin Adams	1991
1488 R J Metcalfe	1995	1519 G D Pirie	1995
1489 John Lloyd	1995	1520 Colin Sinclair	1995
1490 Kathleen Mowbray	1995	1521 Elizabeth S Campbell	1995
1491 Jim Macdonald	1995	1522 Alastair Campbell	1995
1492 John P Ross	1995	1523 David Hughes	1995
1493 William D Nimmo	1995	1524 A N Bartlett	1996
1494 Judy Vallery	1995	1525 Keith Barker	1995 1995
1495 Tom Vallery	1995	1526 John Farrow	1995 1995
1496 James Martin	1994	1527 A H Blandy	1994
1497 Nancy Marsh	1995	1528 James White	1995
1498 Barrie Marsh	1995	1529 Richard R Cooper	1994
1499 Liz Campbell	1995	1530 K Malcolm Smith	1995
1500 A Smith	1995	1531 Douglas Wood	1995
1501 Roy Firth	1995	1532 Margaret Varley	1995 1995
1502 Malcolm Gray	1990 1994	1533 Graeme Morrison	1995
1503 Malcolm M MacRae	1995	1534 Steven Morrison	1995
1504 Fraser Gold	1995	1535 Keith Macrosson	1995

AMENDMENTS

148 D Whalley	1995 x5	626 Bob Wilson	1988	1995
209 Pat Batty	1995 x2	775 Peter Malone	1990	1995
216 Jeremy J C Fenton	1995 1984 1982 x2	816 Rob H Woodall	1990	1995 1990
260 Jim Wyllie	1995 1992 x6 x3	992 Patrick Leahy	1991	1995
329 Donald Lamont	1995 x3	1044 Peter Bailey	1992	1995
375 Robert H MacDonald	1995 x5	1045 Steve Fallon	1995 x3	
409 John Brewster	1995 x2	1160 Peter E Collins	1993	1994
514 Dave Purser	1995 x3	1283 Harry Blenkinsop	1994	1995
555 R Y Howie	1995 1992 1987 x6 x3	1287 Robert J Shapperd	1994	1995
626 Maurice Watson	1994 x2	1292 Julian Ridal	1994	1995

SMC and LSCC members are identified by * and ** respectively.

A YEAR OF CONTRASTS

Scotland has seen the hottest, driest summer for decades followed by the coldest start to the year that most will remember. I'm sure that all those lucky enough to have been out on the hills between Christmas and New Year will have photographs of the bluest skies imaginable for Scotland. Equally, in traditional style, just as we became accustomed to the conditions the inevitable thaw started and the clouds returned.

When the hot, dry conditions started in the summer few could have expected them to continue for so long. Archie Gilbert (1438) reports that when he compleated on Beinn na Lap it was the first hill he had climbed without carrying wet weather gear. Peter Budd (1506) found that he had picked the first days of good weather after weeks of rain to ascend Ladhar Beinn for his last Munro, and Derek Borthwick (1411) simply picked his hottest day to ascend Meall Ghaordie. Derek comments that his choice of Meall Ghaordie was that it was the hill that gave him most pain after he broke his ankle on it a few years ago. Those not so lucky with conditions include George Page (1398) torrential rain, Graham Hamilton (1507) very wet, and Steven Copping (1515), biting spindrift.

Contrast of ages.

The ages of compleat Munroists this year range from 11 to 70-year-olds. Congratulations to Hazel and Lynn Batty (1516 and 1517) aged 14 and 11 respectively who are now on the List before Lynn has even reach teenage years. I suspect that their mother Pat (206) may have had an influence on many of their hill plans. Lynn is certainly the youngest Munroist, and Hazel finds herself somewhere between the fourth and seventh youngest. I am unable to confirm the exact ages of some earlier 14-year-olds. Compare this to Elizabeth and Irvine Skeoch (1433/4) who have compleated at the age of 74, doing all 277 in their retirement years and entirely together.

Contrast the level of companionship on the rounds.

Graham Beckett (1402) climbed all but two solo, and those two were only because he was on a leadership course at the time. A. Blandy (1527) climbed 90% alone, while slightly down the scale Murray Kelso (1481) climbed 75% alone. Almost everyone else has used a wide network of friends to accompany them. The Last One celebrations are usually convivial occasions, but Malcolm Macrae (1503) was disappointed not to have his family only a phone call away. From the summit of Ladhar Bheinn he used his mobile phone to contact home, only to find himself talking to his own voice on the answering machine. Compleating all the Munros on your own could mean that you miss out on much useful information. For example, if Ian Lauriston (1480) had not been accompanied by a party, including four Munroists, on his last Munro, he might never have known that he could register his compleation with the Clerk of the List.

Munro matrimonialis this year include 11 couples of whom the Marshs (1497/8), the Vallerys (1494/5), the Daniels (1469/70), the Skeochs (1433/4) and the Milnes (1455/6) can claim the distinction of *M. matrimonialis totalis*, having done all their Munros together. The Shirreffs (1417/8) have correctly ticked the

current List but believe that the earlier Tables are the true list. Therefore on An Teallach they compleated by their List at 1pm on Bidean a Glas Thuil, but then continued to Sgurr Fiona to compleat the revised List at 2pm. The Rookers (1445/6) think their round would have been a lot quicker if they had not discovered the Pyrenees and found that they too have a List of 3000 tops, in metres rather than feet.

Father and Son combinations include the Goodwins (1413/4), and the Morrisons (1533/4). The Morrisons started and finished together although from the letter it sounds as if they were nearly finished off together when lightning struck them on Maol Chean-dearg. Duncan Borthwick (1475) is following in his father W. D. Borthwick's steps (1015).

Contrasts in what to do next!

Most mention more Tops and returns to old summits in better weather, while Linda Silley (1484) is rather more rash and declares that she and Norman Carrington (1245) are emigrating to New Zealand. Good luck with your new horizons and apologies to Norman for missing out his compleation of the Tops in 1995. Richard Foster (1487) thinks he is about to start exploring the glens more and investigate some of the passes such as the Corrieyairack.

Contrasts in the First and Last One.

With a possible choice of 277 First and then 276 Last Ones it is remarkable how many find themselves following the pattern of Ben Lomond first and then Ben More (Mull) last. For example, Bill Brennan (1459) and Jonathan Whitehead (1448) followed this pattern. The opposite applies to John Coleman (1462) who found himself on Mam Sodhail for his initiation to the hills, but he comments that he was insufficiently switched on to continue the traverse to Beinn Fionnlaidh. I'm assuming he was not alone on that first visit so at least he could blame his companions for their lack of foresight. James White (1528) picked a not uncommon Last One in Ben Nevis but his touch of originality was that he walked the last 50 metres in boots previously owned by the Rev. A. E. Robertson (1).

Contrast the Best and Worst days.

By the time I receive a letter of registration most writers seem to have acquired an almost rose-tinted view of the hills. However, there is no disguising some epics. Ruth and Simon Love (1443 and 1444) described a very long day in the Cairngorms, stumbling back in the dark and eventually breaking into uncontrollable laughter as the downpour continued, and on another day the shock of Simon putting his feet through the cornice on Ben Wyvis and fortunately being held wedged by his shoulders. Another bad day must be walking up Gulvain and not continuing past the trig point to the true summit. How many reading this now are already cringing as they realise their mistake and need to pay another unplanned visit up Gleann Fionnlighe? One or two have mentioned their error so readers will not be alone.

Contrasts in the distance to get to the hills.

This year we have the first Dutchman to Compleat. Johan De Jong (1423) knew

nothing of the Highlands until a chance stop at a bookshop in Leatherhead when he came across *Hamish's Mountain Walk*. This obviously sparked sufficient interest that nine years later he was ascending Ben Chonzie for his 277th tick, accompanied by his wife who was on her first Scottish hill. Those that have much shorter distances to travel are Liz Campbell (1499) and Isobel Gordon (1442) who are residents of Aviemore, and there have been a considerable number from the Moray Firth area.

Contrasts in Publicity of Completion.

Most anticipate a celebration on the top but Iain Harkins (1471) had far more publicity that he could ever have anticipated. As he reached the summit of Ben Nevis he came across *SMC Journal* Editor, Ken Crocket, being interviewed for a programme for Radio Scotland. This was too good a chance to miss for the reporter who must have assumed it had been staged managed.

Contrasts in delay of Reporting In.

I estimate that most take between one week and two months to report, but this year I've had some extreme delays. M. Uppadine (1439) tried to register in 1982 but somehow seems to have been left off the List. He tried again in 1985 and had probably resigned himself to forever belonging to that safety net of number 277, the Unknown Munroist, when he came across my address. Malcolm Gray (1502) completed in 1990 but it was only when he joined a new club that his fellow members persuaded him that completions only count when you are on the List! No such delay for Alan Bellis (1401) who wrote on the same day as his final hill, and Charles Black who wrote the next day. They must have had their letters in the post before the soggy sandwiches and the 'empties' were out of their pack. I was intrigued to see that Patricia Manning's (1453) letter was postmarked Knoydart. Despite giving me much information of her mentors to the hills she does not say whether a Knoydart hill was her Last One. Perhaps the letter was posted shortly after reaching sea level from her 277th tick. Patricia mentions that although in her sixties, she and Mrs Carter (310) are embarking on a second round which will, with the present rate of ascent, take them into their nineties. Presumably, they will then start on the Corbetts.

Contrasts in the time taken.

This year's range of time taken is from three years 11 months to nearly 50 years. Jonathan Whitehead (1448) takes the record for *Munro brevis* while the *Munro longus* include Arthur Bennet (1449), David Mollison (1410), Fraser Gold (1504), and Ron Fosberry (1393). David Mollison talks of his hill clothing in the 1940s being mustard gas decontamination suits which had alarmingly poor friction on any snow. Fraser, who began in 1940, describes his pleasure at finding a 'spring on Ben Lomond, which he had recalled from 1945 being beside the old route of the path and having a chained metal scoop for casual refreshment'. David Hughes (1523) could have quite easily completed in four years but he discovered the Alps and these proved a major distraction. When he did finally come to his Last Hill, his day started in Harris at 5.30am. Then via Skye, Mallaig and Lochaline he reached the summit of Ben More at 9.15pm to enjoy a magnificent

sunset. The round of Douglas MacLeod (1397) which took 25 years from start to finish, disguises the fact that in 1994 he actually did 270 Munros. This was part of a charity fund raising scheme and was done while being based in London. The routine he evolved was to leave his car in Inverness or Fort William and commute each weekend by the BR sleeper service.

The Amendments

The Howies, Geraldine (260) and Robin (555), continue to lead the List as the most polymunroic couple, both completing their sixth round this year. Robert MacDonald (375) did not want to break a tradition of his and completed his fifth round on the same scene as his third and fourth completions – Beinn Fhionnlaidh. He's still teetotal on these occasions and was accompanied by one dog with four completions and a second with only three. Dave Purser (514) completed his plan of ticking all the hills in ascending order. This plan was first publicised in the Journal. He describes some excessive journeys caused by a single Munro coming between adjacent pairs. For example, Beinn Mheadhoin comes between Mam Sodhail and Carn Eighe.

The Corrections.

Errors that have been corrected this year include Kevin Borman (1285) being listed as Borma and David Williams (1286) being listed as William. I suspect it is more than coincidence that adjacent names lost the last letters. Also Eric Drew (910) should have had his Completion of the Furths in the 1994 Journal. Sorry. A longer term error concerns Erlend Flett (152). In the 1981 Tables he was misrepresented as Erland, but by the latest edition Erland (still misspelt) was now given as his surname.

I'm afraid that a number of people were frustrated in their attempts to get themselves registered on the List by writing to some of the mountaineering organisations. Generally letters to our distributor, Cordee, do not reach me, while a few that were addressed to the Scottish Sports Council did get forwarded. Similarly, the Mountaineering Council of Scotland has been conscientious in their efforts to pass letters to me. Could all Munroists please note that the correct address for recording completions and amendments is given below. A SAE is appreciated and ensures a reply. I have given the benefit of doubt to all those omitting the steam proof SAE by assuming that they must have got my address from *The Munro Phenomena*, where it fails to mention SAE.

From July 1996 an A4 certificate will be returned to all those writing to inform me of their Completions. Please enclose a suitably-sized SAE if you wish your certificate. I appreciate that there may be some Munroists already on the List who would like to avail themselves of the certificate. They should write to me with a reference to their Munroist number. All Notification should be sent to Dr. C.M. Huntley, Old Medwyn, Spittal, Carnwath, Lanarkshire. ML11 8LY. Once registered Munroists can also legitimately purchase a tie and/or Brooch.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION

(Geographical Divisions are those used in SMC District Guidebooks)

REGION	CASUALTIES (of which fatalities are bracketed)				INCIDENTS								
					Actual Rescues		Other Callouts						
	Injuries	Exhaustion/Exposure Hypothermia, Hyperthermia	Illness	Total Casualties	Incidents with Casualties	Cragfast or weatherbound	Separated	Lost	Overdue or Benighted	False Alarms	Total Incidents	Animal Rescues	Non-Mountaineering Incidents
All Regions 1994	183 (35)	29 (1)	23 (8)	235 (44)	218	25	19	12	42	10	326	3	10
Northern Highlands	27 (5)	1 –	2 –	30 (5)	26	–	2	–	13	2	43	–	3
Western Highlands	14 (2)	1 –	3 (3)	18 (5)	18	1	1	–	5	–	25	–	–
Ben Nevis	21 (3)	10 –	1 (1)	32 (4)	28	3	–	–	8	–	39	–	–
Glen Coe (Inc Buachaille)	20 (9)	3 –	– –	23 (9)	18	7	–	–	2	2	29	–	–
Other Central Highlands	26 (4)	4 –	3 –	33 (4)	27	–	4	2	8	2	43	1	3
Cairngorms	33 (6)	8 –	5 (4)	51 (10)	36	12	6	4	15	–	73	1	3
Southern Highlands	20 (3)	2 –	4 (3)	26 (6)	26	3	–	1	9	5	44	–	8
Skye	6 (1)	2 (1)	1 –	9 (2)	8	3	2	1	5	1	20	–	–
Islands (other than Skye)	6 (2)	1 –	1 (1)	8 (3)	8	2	1	–	2	–	13	–	–
Southern Uplands	2 –	3 (1)	– –	5 (1)	3	1	1	–	5	–	10	–	10
All Regions 1995	180 (35)	35 (2)	20 (12)	235 (49)	198	32	17	12	8	12	339	2	27

MOUNTAIN RESCUE COMMITTEE OF SCOTLAND

Accident Reports 1995

Compiled by John Hinde

MANY thanks indeed to all for sending me such detailed reports. Again this year, for brevity, I have rarely mentioned the Police in the narratives, as they are always the responsible authority and involved in all rescues.

Again I have often found it difficult to categorise 'Non-mountaineering' and I have usually regarded all off-road activities (off-piste ski-ing, mountain biking, ATVs and trail biking in remote places, hill-loch fishing, stalking, shepherding, etc.) as mountaineering, often with added dangers!

I have not classified people as 'lost' unless they have indeed been found by rescuers called out for them. Some with navigational problems have found their own way out, and I have noted them as 'overdue or benighted' if teams have been alerted. Casualties with injuries, illnesses, exhaustion, hypothermia etc. have not also been classified as cragfast, separated, lost, overdue or benighted, although they may well have been some of these. Some cliff rescues have simply been classified as 'cragfast' until I get fuller details.

AVALANCHES:

Almost 60 years ago, when I was a very young mountaineer, I read an Everest expert who stated: 'Avalanches do not occur in Scotland.' With the confidence of that assurance I waded up some very questionable snow, but I soon learned better because one of my first rescues in Scotland was a casualty from an avalanche in Raeburn's Gully, Lochnagar. However, I still got caught out a couple of times, once culpably, fortunately without injury.

The number of 1995 avalanche victims is frightening, but with all the warnings we pump out, surely nobody is as naive as I was. According to me, the figures are:

Avalanche fatalities in 1995: 10 (in 4 incidents); avalanche non-fatal injuries: 22; totalling 32; and some may not have been reported. I wonder how many have walked away uninjured from slab avalanches during the year, probably more than 100.

So far during 1996 I have received reports of one avalanche fatality in Glencoe, one on Creag Meagaidh and one in the Lake District.

MOST COMMON CAUSES OF INJURIES

(including deaths which are shown in brackets)

Slips, trips, stumbles.....	113 (21)
Avalanches.....	32 (10)
Heart attacks.....	13 (12)
Fall over cornice.....	4 (2)

At least four call outs were caused by separation after people had gone through cornices and been uninjured.

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS

- JANUARY 2 – Overdue because of deep snow on Liathach, two men (both 26) turned up just before midnight.
- JANUARY 4 – Seven people descending NE slopes of Meall a'Chrasgaidh, Fannichs, when two of them (both male 36, 29) were carried 100m down by a windslab avalanche. The younger had been struck on the head making him unconscious, but he had come round and walked to the road with bruises and leg ligament injuries. The older had a broken ankle and crushed L vertebra, needing airlift on a vacuum mattress. Dundonnell and Kinloss MRTs, RAF Sea King. 86.
- JANUARY 21 – A roped pair attempted to cut through a snow cornice to finish Poacher's Fall (180m Grade 5), Liathach. The cornice collapsed sweeping both to the corrie. One (m24) was buried from waist down with fractured ribs. The other man (27) was completely buried for more than two hours (fatal). Three others on a nearby route heard the avalanche, the second being knocked off, so they abseiled off. They were able to dig out the avalanched pair. Torridon and Kinloss MRTs carried them out because the helicopter could not operate in the severe weather. 413.
- FEBRUARY 10-11 – Someone reported man walking with crutches on the Rhidorroch track east of Ullapool. Dundonnell MRT traced him but he declined assistance and walked out next afternoon. 40.
- FEBRUARY 18-19 – A man reported that a couple had not returned from a climb on Liathach to their tent in Coire Mhic Nobuil and it had collapsed overnight under the weight of snow. Torridon MRT found them returning from Fuselage Gully. Benighted, they had snow-caved, but declined help and stayed on the hill. RAF Sea King and Dundonnell MRT also alerted. 53.
- FEBRUARY 21 – A man (56) and a woman (35) had carried on after 10 companions retreated from An Cabar of Ben Wyvis. In strong winds and near whiteout they got lost and went down to the wrong glen about 10km to the east. Dundonnell MRT, RAF Sea King. 32.
- FEBRUARY 26 – Descending the Horns of Alligin a path ranger from Gloucester tripped and fell 5m from one terrace to another, sustaining chest injuries. His companion went to phone. Torridon MRT, RAF Sea King. 100.
- MARCH 9 – Tired and delayed by deep snow walking to Coire Mhic Fhearchair of Beinn Eighe, a teacher (m47) and a nurse (f48) were found by Torridon MRT returning to Coire Dubh carpark. 16.
- MARCH 16 – Two men traversing Ben Wyvis were accidentally separated because one of them (65) strayed on to a cornice and fell 100m into Coire na Feola. He walked out unaided, suffering mild hypothermia, but his companion had alerted Dundonnell MRT and RAF Sea King. 88.
- MARCH 21-22 – Search by Assynt and Kinloss MRTs with SARDA for a woman, known to be depressed, missing on Ben Loyal after a car crash. Found by RAF Sea King. 98.
- MARCH 25 – Co-leading a party of 15 teenagers down An Cabar, Ben Wyvis, an instructor fell 16m down a snow slope sustaining cuts and bruises. He was not using an ice-axe or crampons. Dundonnell MRT, HMCG helicopter. 56.
- APRIL 15 – During a deer count on Ben Shieldaig, when out of sight of the other four in his party, a landowner (49) slipped on a mossy stone, falling into a gully and fracturing a lower leg. He failed to make a rendezvous but a sweep search by Torridon MRT and SARDA found him. Airlift by RAF Sea King. 76.
- APRIL 30 – Leading second pitch of South Rib, Stac Pollaidh, in the rain, a climber was killed by head injuries received in a fall, despite wearing a helmet. Dundonnell MRT, HMCG helicopter. 108.
- MAY 5 – Body of a woman found at the base of sea cliffs, Caithness.

MAY 5 – Woman (34) went missing during a coastal walk, Caithness.

MAY 16-20 – Assynt MRT and SARDA called out on 19 and 20 May to search moorland, coast and cliffs at Dunnet, Caithness for a woman (53) last seen on 16 May. No result. 84.

MAY 22 – Walking a low, grassy area with her husband at Achnahaird Bay, north of Achiltibuie, a retired woman (74) slipped, causing three fractures of an ankle. HMCG and HMCG helicopter. 10.

MAY 27 – Walker (m46) airlifted from near Loch a'Bhealaich (Ben Klibreck) with a broken ankle caused by a slip. 8.

MAY 28 – Aultbea, Loch Ewe. HMCG helicopter transferred a cliff faller to Raigmore Hospital with suspected spinal injuries.

MAY 30-31 – A woman legal secretary (46) and a male librarian (38) got benighted in mist. They had gone to climb A'Chioch of Sgurr a Chaorachain, Applecross. Found on road at top of Bealach na Ba. Torridon MRT, RAF Sea King. 61.

JUNE 1 – Descending the SE Ridge of Beinn Damh in mist and rain, a chemist (49) and his companion lost their bearings and went down the very steep, east side of the ridge. The chemist slipped on wet grass, falling 30m with fatal head injuries. Torridon MRT, RAF Sea King. 51.

JUNE 1-2 – A couple climbing Cioch Nose (90m V.Diff.) Sgurr a'Chaorachain were reported overdue at 22.00. Torridon MRT were engaged on Beinn Damh but went to the top of A'Chioch in thick cloud at 0150, finding those reported plus another rope of three. 46.

JUNE 4 – A group of four had descended the steepest part of the NW slopes of Meall a'Chrasgaidh, Fannich Forest, when a woman (50) stumbled and broke her ankle. Stretcher carry by Dundonnell MRT. 74.

JUNE 9 – Walking out from Lochan Fearn, SW of Nedd village, Eddrachillis Bay, an angler (64) slipped and injured his leg. Stretchered 1km by Assynt MRT. 37.

JUNE 22-23 – Three people were reported overdue from a two-day walk near Shenavall Bothy but walked out safe. Dundonnell MRT. 17.

JULY 2 – Tending a sheep in difficulty on cliffs at Reiff, Achiltibuie, a crofter (56) slipped on rock, fell 5m and landed on his back on the rocky shore, suffering two fractures. Stretcher winched by HMCG and HMCG helicopter. 12.

JULY 2 – Two women (64, 46) reported overdue on Coigach coast walk, Blughasary to Culnacraig, turned up safe. Dundonnell team. 6.

JULY 14 – Descending Coire an Laoigh, Beinn Eighe, a consultant (45) slipped on scree and hurt a knee. His wife went for help but he got fed up waiting, walked to the road and thumbed a lift. HMCG helicopter lifted 6 Torridon MRT to search in low cloud. 38.

JULY 15-16 – As the afternoon got colder and wetter and the cloud base got lower, two brothers (55, 46) decided to turn back, but the third brother wanted to carry on to the top of Beinn Dearg. He gave them a compass and a bearing to get to a well-used path. When the summit bagger got down his brothers were missing so he went back to search, in vain. They were found well by Dundonnell MRT and RAF Sea King ENE of Beinn Dearg, a remote area. 63.

JULY 31 – Walker (m51) overdue on Ben Wyvis got down safely.

AUGUST 20 – Motorcycling at the remote Loch a'Choire Mhoir (near the head of Strath Mulzie) the rider (25) hit a rock concealed by vegetation and broke his leg. Airlift by RAF Sea King. Assynt MRT. 35.

AUGUST 21 – A hillwalker (48) scrambling up the Horns of Alligin pulled up on a rock which came away in his hand so he tumbled about 60m down steep ground. Winched (with rib and minor head and spine injuries) by RAF Sea King. Torridon MRT. 46.

- AUGUST 24 – An army captain (27) descending N from Beinn Dearg was about 200m below the summit when she slipped and injured an ankle. Dundonnell MRT stretchered her to below cloud base for airlift by RAF Sea King. 108.
- SEPTEMBER 23 – In darkness and bad weather HMCG helicopter failed trying to get a coastguard team to a walker fallen into a swollen river at Loch Torridon. Later dead on arrival.
- OCTOBER 7 – Assynt MRT was alerted when a doctor (24) was overdue from Suilven. He walked out safely. 1.
- OCTOBER 15-16 – Starting at 10.30 and climbing An Teallach in mist two men (22, 21) made two navigation errors which delayed them, so they got benighted without torches. Escorted by Dundonnell MRT. 21.
- OCTOBER 16-17 – Leading a military party in darkness on a small, rough peninsula SSW of Toscaig, Applecross, a marine officer (23) slipped on rocks falling 6m on to grass. It was suspected he had a spinal injury although most of the impact had been taken by his pack. RAF Sea King evacuation delayed by bad weather. 88.
- OCTOBER 28-29 – At 15.30 hours, and unequipped with navigation gear, torch, adequate clothing or bivouac bag, a novice walker (24) got left behind by her six colleagues at the bottom of the zig-zags 600m E of Stac Pollaidh summit. She tried to catch up with them but could not climb the scree. She descended and got lost heading NE into the wild area of Inverpolly Forest. Fortunately, the weather was good because she was benighted. Dundonnell MRT and SARDA searched all night. Assynt and Kinloss were alerted. She was found by RAF Sea King at 08.30, well, with no hypothermia. 655.
- OCTOBER 28-29 – Fresh from the above successful search, R.137 helicopter evacuated a woman casualty (51) from 2.3km ESE of Craig Youth Hostel. With her husband she had attempted to circumnavigate the base of Beinn Alligin. They had made navigation errors and at 22.00 she had been injured falling, unable to go on. Torridon MRT. 60.
- NOVEMBER 11-12 – After picking whelks and visiting a wreck a man (63) probably blacked out walking home (Cove, Lochewe). Found cold, wet and disorientated at 02.00 after an intensive search by Dundonnell MRT and HMCG helicopter 273.
- DECEMBER 3 – RAF Sea King scrambled to assist Air Ambulance with recovery of two casualties from hillside near Loch Glass, E. Ross. Casualties and two Air Ambulance paramedics winched and taken to Raigmore.
- DECEMBER 24 – Father and son (41, 15) were delayed by a mechanical failure to their 4WD vehicle in Strath Dionard, N of Foinaven. They sheltered in a fishing hut in a whiteout, but eventually got home on foot before midnight, after the blizzard. Assynt MRT and Police could not reach the incident because of roads blocked by snow and fallen power lines. 52.
- DECEMBER 30 – Ascending snow SW of the summit of Spidean Coire nan Clach (972m) of Beinn Eighe, an unroped party of three were avalanched on the open slope 50m below the summit. The snow broke away and they went down 80m, two men (34, 33) being injured. The third went for help and they were recovered by Torridon MRT and RAF Sea King. 40.

WESTERN HIGHLANDS

- JANUARY 20 – Injured person Loch Hourn. HMCG.
- FEBRUARY 24 – A chef (42) walked via Coire Dhuinnid and Camas-Iuinie to Dornie. By taking a wrong path he got benighted but walked out unaided. Kintail MRT. 10.
- MARCH 26 – A publisher (31) slipped on North Ridge of Saileag (Meall a' Charra). She fell 65m into a concave snow gully with serious leg injuries. Kintail MRT, RAF Sea King. 78.

- APRIL 3 – Poorly equipped father and son (60, 13) were overdue climbing Sgurr Fhuaran (1068m) not having started until 14.15. Kintail MRT and SARDA met them coming down near the road. 7.
- APRIL 9 – Teacher (28) descending the path on Meallan Odhar (East Ridge of The Saddle) slipped on wet grass breaking his ankle. Airlifted by RAF Sea King despite low cloud. Kintail MRT. 60.
- MAY 7 – In a party of five descending from the ridge between Carn Eighe and Tom a'Choinich into Gleann nam Fiadh (Affric), a housewife (55) went over on an ankle fracturing it. Airlift by RAF Sea King as Dundonnell MRT reached Beaully 18.
- MAY 13 – Solo hillwalker (60) tripped and broke an ankle. Passing walkers alerted RAF Sea King which airlifted him from Kinbreack Bothy, Glen Kingie. 10.
- MAY 26 – SSW Ridge Gleouraich at altitude 500m. A solo walker ascending the stalkers' path from Loch Quoich came upon the body of an industrial chemist (36) who had died from a medical abnormality. Remains stretchered down by Police. 14.
- MAY 29 – Hillwalker (m37) overdue on Sgurr Choinnich (999m), Glen Carron, walked out unaided during search by Torridon MRT. 11.
- JUNE 9-10 – Israeli men (21, 19) separated to allow the older to complete gorge walking the course of Allt a'Chonais in Glenuaig, Achnashellach Forest. At 18.15 hours the younger reported his companion overdue. Torridon MRT searched the precipitous course of the burn, locating the body submerged at the foot of a waterfall about midnight. It was rope-hoisted from the gorge next day. Trainers had been worn. Death was due to multiple injuries and drowning. 124.
- JUNE 10 – In a party of four on An Sornach (i.e. 2.2km NE of Glen Affric Youth Hostel on the SSE Ridge of A Socach) a forestry contractor (49) died from a heart attack. Airlift by RAF Sea King. 19.
- JUNE 29 – Carn an Alltain Riabhach of Sgurr na Fearstaig, Strathconan Forest. Technician (30) in a party of 16 'stood on ice and slid down', (glissading?). He fell 60m breaking an ankle. Dundonnell MRT and RAF Sea King. 18.
- JULY 17-18 – Descending East Ridge Finger Gully, Sgurr an Fhuarain (Five Sisters) in mist were a woman (34) and her male companion. Going NE not far below the summit the companion fell first; a lump of turf gave way under his feet and he tumbled down the gully for 15m uninjured. She tried to scramble down, lost her footing and tumbled down the gully for 45m with fatal head injuries. Terrain was rough turf vegetation, boulders, scree and rocky ledges. Search for the woman was complicated because the companion insisted they had been descending Sgurr nan Saighead, but changed it on a later radio message to Sgurr na Moraich. Since they had started at Sgurr na Ciste Duibhe he obviously thought they had gone twice as far along the peaks as they actually achieved. The teams deduced it by computing time and distance. Glenelg, Kinloss and Kintail MRTs, SARDA, HMCG and RAF Sea Kings. 394.
- JULY 20 – Boy rescued with broken leg at Loch Hourm. HMCG.
- JULY 22 – Schoolboy (11) approaching Ardentigh Adventure Centre, Loch Nevis, fell down a heathery slope and cracked his head on a stone causing severe swelling. Mallaig Lifeboat, HMCG helicopter. 17.
- JULY 22 – Police successfully searched for a schoolboy (15) separated from his family on the path to Glomach Falls. They had wrongly thought he had returned ahead of them. 2.
- JULY 28 – Housewife (61) died of a heart attack walking near Athnamulloch at the head of Loch Affric. Air Ambulance evacuation. 2.
- AUGUST 5 – Kintail MRT called out for a plumber (34) overcome with heat exhaustion on Sgurr Fhuaran (Five Sisters). They found he was able to walk down with assistance. 28.

AUGUST 15 – A German scout (16) with a badly sprained ankle was lifted by RAF Sea King from moors 4km NE of Erchless Castle, Strath Glass. With four others he had been heading N towards Contin. 9.

AUGUST 19 – Trainee ranger (36) walking with backpack across grass slope 0.5km W of Portuairk, Ardnamurchan Peninsula, fell 10m into a gully, sustaining back and leg injuries. He crawled into the sea to reduce inflammation. His shouts for help were heard by passers-by four hours later. HM Aux CG, RN Sea King 19.

SEPTEMBER 4-5 – Two couples (all 60s) got delayed because one man (68) had arthritic knees. They were walking on glen paths and over bealachs doing an anti clockwise circuit round the base of Beinn Fhada starting at Morvich. At Bealach an Sgairne the other man went to bring car closer but failed to return to group in dark so raised alarm. Group bivouacked then set out at first light. Found near foot of path by Kintail MRT. 8.

SEPTEMBER 7 – Four people stranded at Mallaig. HMCg.

OCTOBER 14-15 – Retired man (57) solo walking Five Sisters used mobile phone to contact his wife from two peaks, but decided to descend to Achmangart due to a failing battery. Other walkers advised him not to descend there. Later he stumbled and fell causing slight injury. He then got cragfast. He was found on the steep SW Face of Sgurr na Ciste Duibhe and winched by RAF Sea King. Glenelg, Kinloss, Kintail and Leuchars MRTs, SARDA. 420.

OCTOBER 15 – On very steep rough ground in Coille Mhialairigh (opposite Eilean Rarsaidh on N shore Loch Houran) a woman (56) slipped and injured a leg. Stretchered down by Glenelg MRT. 10.

NOVEMBER 22 – Missing shepherd at Kilchoan, Ardnamurchan. HMCg.

BEN NEVIS

JANUARY 5 – Demonstrating a controlled fall on Sheepfank Wall, Polldubh, a leader (26) received neck and skull fractures when three 'Friend' runners pulled out and he fell 6m. Ambulance paramedics and Lochaber MRT. 20.

JANUARY 6 – When 8m up the first pitch of Zero Gully, the ice forming a ledge under the feet of the leader (27) broke away, causing him to fall and injure an ankle. Lochaber MRT, RAF Sea King. 19.

JANUARY 25-26 – Retreating from Tower Ridge because of poor conditions, one of a pair slipped and was lowered by the other to a safe place. The alarm was raised at CIC Hut because the lowerer (25) got cragfast. He was rescued by Lochaber MRT and RAF Sea King. 130.

FEBRUARY 2-4 – Two women students (23, 22) attempting Raeburn's Easy Route (250m Grade II) strayed into Glover's Chimney (140m III). They snowcaved for two nights. Kinloss, Leuchars and Lochaber MRTs, SARDA and RAF Sea King searched in atrocious weather till they were found with slight frostbite and hypothermia 150m from the top of Raeburn's Easy. 1628.

FEBRUARY 7 – Descending near Coire Leis Abseil Posts unroped with his wife, a clerical officer (29) slipped and fell 180m to the corrie floor with leg injuries. RAF Sea King. Lochaber MRT. 16.

FEBRUARY 11-14 – Student (22) leading Orion Face fell 100m from 50m above his second (m22). Despite head injuries he regained his second's belay. Both snowcaved for two nights. Second was airlifted out on third morning with frostbite and hypothermia. Leader was located and stretchered to Halfway Lochan in small hours of fourth day but was dead after airlift to Corpach. Lochaber and Kinloss MRTs. RAF Sea King. 571.

FEBRUARY 17-18 – Students (m24, f23) overdue on Hadrian's Wall Direct, back safe. 2.

FEBRUARY 18 - APRIL 13 - Descending SE Ridge of Nevis (CMD Arete) on a bearing of 138° during snowfall, an accountant (40) fell though a cornice into Coire Leis. His companion went back over the summit to get help. A night and day search by Kinloss and Lochaber MRTs, SARDA and RAF Sea King was called off due to deteriorating weather and extreme avalanche danger. Regular searches were carried out by the teams and Nevis Guides. An RAF SARDA dog had given an indication some way up the headwall of Coire Leis among avalanche debris. Several weeks later the same dog gave another indication lower down, a positive finding of the body which was presumed to have moved down with the sub-surface snow pack. 1382.

FEBRUARY 18-19 - During the above search RAF Kinloss team found a confused and hypothermic man (39) on the Ben Track. He had spent an unplanned night on the mountain and got separated from his companion (38). The other man was found 200m away in a similar condition. Both were airlifted by RAF Sea King. 3.

FEBRUARY 25-26 - Party of two overdue from The Curtain or Trident Buttress. Safe.

MARCH 1 2 Two men (28, 27) overdue on Observatory Ridge got down safely next day. Kinloss and Lochaber MRTs. RAF Sea King. 52.

MARCH 18-19 - Descending the Ben into Coire Giubhsachan above Steall Ruins a builder (32) collapsed from exhaustion. One of his friends raised the alarm. RAF Sea King airlifted him to Belford Hospital where he was released. Lochaber MRT. 46.

MARCH 25-26 - Two men (34, 30) got benighted on Observatory Ridge, but climbed through the night, descending the Ben Track next morning. 7.

APRIL 18-19 - Delayed on Raeburn's Easy Route by a crampon loss two men (47, 25) tried to find No. 4 Gully for descent. They stayed in Summit Refuge overnight and were reported overdue at CIC Hut next morning but returned safe. Lochaber MRT, RAF Sea King. 38.

MAY 14 - A rock climber (17) being bottom roped on a 5m climb at Dundee Buttress, Polladubh, fell at the top, dislodging the top belay and falling to the foot. She was stretchered down by Lochaber team with a fractured wrist and bruised side. 18.

MAY 14 - Night/day winch by RAF Sea King of two cragfast climbers in Glen Nevis. Lochaber MRT.

MAY 17 - Descending Nevis Gorge a walker (67) accompanied by his wife and daughter slipped on the path and fell 30m. He suffered serious head and chest injuries. Winched by RAF Sea King. Lochaber MRT. 71.

MAY 18-19 - Solo climber (23) got benighted in Gardyloo Gully. He spent the night on Tower Scoop. Found by a Lochaber team member and escorted.

MAY 22-24 - Solo hillwalker (19) was overdue from an ascent of the Ben by the normal route in slight cloud cover on May 22. Extensive crag and gully searches were carried out by Kinloss, Leuchars and Lochaber teams, SARDA, RAF and RN Sea Kings. Her body was found under crags and snow slopes in upper Coire Eoghainn on May 24. It is thought she went due south from the summit and fell 200m. 1092.

MAY 28-29 - Descending Ben Track in rain and low cloud two competitors in a Three Peaks Challenge went into Five Finger Gully. The two men (43, 38) decided to stay the night. Next morning the elder went up to the Track for help because the younger was hypothermic. He met Lochaber team leader. Airlift RAF Sea King. 37.

MAY 29 - Three male fell runners (48, 35, 14) intended to descend the Ben Track in a Three Peaks Challenge. Instead they went down Carn Mor Dearg Arete in cloud. The 35 year-old slipped and broke two fingers. Lochaber MRT met them at Aonach Mor Carpark. 3.

JUNE 1 The deceased (65) and his son, a doctor, climbed Ben by the track in four hours. After lunch break they had descended 400m when the father died of a heart attack. His son used a whistle to attract others, one of whom called RN Sea King and Lochaber MRT on mobile phone. 109.

- JUNE 24 – Taking part in Three Peaks Challenge, intending to hang glide off Ben summit for charity, a plumber (27) hesitated on take-off and went down a snow slope for 12m. He and the glider were cragfast on the very lip of Orion Direct. Two Leuchars MRT were on hand having completed a training climb, as was a Lochaber member. With others they effected First Aid to pilot, with recovery of him and the machine to the plateau. Suffering cuts, bruises and psychogenic shock he was lifted by RAF Sea King. 37.
- JULY 5 – Couple with an infant-in-arms descending Ben in rain and strong wind were reported because the child was cold and poorly clad. Lochaber MRT attended. 4.
- JULY 22 – Two incidents. Two men (43, 23) out of 80 participants in a charity sponsored walk up Ben, slipped, one going up, the other down, with slight leg injuries. Airlift by RAF Sea King. 8.
- JULY 22 – A leader (36) slipped climbing Vampire at Polldubh. She fell 6m breaking an ankle. Stretchered by Lochaber MRT.
- AUGUST 4 – Another mobile phone alert. One of 22 participants in a Twin Peaks Challenge slipped at Corner 4 of Nevis West Flank Zig-Zags (alt. 1000m) on the way up. Aged 41 he double fractured a leg. Winched off by R.137 (RAF Sea King). 9.
- AUGUST 5 – An engineer (32) twisted a knee slipping on a grass patch descending to floor of Coire Leis. He walked to below CIC Hut before a companion alerted rescuers with a mobile phone. He was walked to top Torlundy Carpark by Lochaber MRT. 20.
- AUGUST 5 – Retired man (66) descending Ben Track below SYHA junction collapsed with heat exhaustion. Stretchered to hospital by Lochaber MRT. He returned from summit via Coire Leis and CIC Hut. 14.
- AUGUST 15 – Descending Ben Track a doctor (50) slipped twisting a knee. He was airlifted from opposite top of No. 2 Gully by RAF Sea King. Lochaber MRT. 14.
- AUGUST 21-22 – Two women (50, 17) reached summit despite taking seven hours because they were tired. Descending to Halfway Lochan they were too exhausted to go on, so husband of one went for help. Lochaber MRT stretchered older woman down (arthritis knees) while younger walked. Both released from hospital after check up. 61.
- SEPTEMBER 17 – A student (53) twisted his ankle, damaging a foot, descending the path down Nevis Gorge. Passers-by helped him to carpark. LMRT. 15.
- OCTOBER 21-22 – Four climbers (43, 37, 25, 24) were overdue from climbing Observatory Ridge. Underestimating the route, the four men sheltered overnight in Summit Refuge getting down to Youth Hostel at 09.30. Lochaber MRT. 6.
- OCTOBER 27 – Lifting her rucksack when bent over caused a stabbing pain in the back of a walker (17) at summit. Unable to walk she was stretchered to below cloud base (915m) by Lochaber MRT for airlift by RAF Sea King 87.
- OCTOBER 29-30 – Leaving Distillery at 11.00 to climb Tower Ridge unroped, two men (30, 29) got benighted at Tower Gap at 17.00. They descended 20m into a gully and dug a snow cave, although without food or bivouac gear. They continued the climb at first light. Airlifted uninjured from Halfway Lochan by RAF Sea King. Lochaber MRT. 37.
- NOVEMBER 14 – At about 800m altitude on the Ben Track a plant operator (27) got cramp in both his legs. Lochaber MRT and RN Sea King alerted by mobile phone. Released after treatment in hospital. 12.
- DECEMBER 22 – Student (21) fell 6m when a crampon broke on icy ground in Coire na Ciste. Rescue helicopter was in area and diverted to airlift him with broken L forearm and broken R wrist. 7.
- DECEMBER 28 – Two men (38, 21) overdue from Waterfall Gully, Carn Dearg Buttress returned to CIC Hut before midnight uninjured, delayed by poor ice condition. Lochaber MRT, RAF Sea King. 50.

GLEN COE

(Including Buachaille Etive Mor)

- JANUARY 2 – Descending Great Gully of Buachaille Etive Mor, unroped, a teacher (35) tripped over his crampons, fell 6m with minor head bump and cut lip. Others raised alarm but he did not require Glencoe MRT, walking off unaided. 20.
- JANUARY 26 – Soloing Curved Ridge, Buachaille Etive Mor, a climber (37) was seen to fall 250m when a crampon worked loose during a traverse. He had skull, pelvic and arm injuries. JSMT used mobile phone. Winched by RN Sea King. Glencoe MRT. 30.
- FEBRUARY 5. Unroped, using crampons, on a traverse of Aonach Eagach, a student (25), tripped at Stob Coire Leith, with back and knee ligament injuries. His companion (see next incident) tried to get him down, then left him in his bivvy bag and went for help. Stretchered down by Glencoe MRT. 36.
- FEBRUARY 5 During the above stretcher carry, the companion (23) helped the team. Almost down at the road he tripped, breaking his leg.
- FEBRUARY 22-APRIL 2 – A research engineer (50), his son (18) and son's friend (m18) were engulfed in a big avalanche in Lagangarbh Corrie, Buachaille Etive Mor. With the engineer's wife they had walked into the floor of the corrie, not intending to go any higher. At 14.00 she had gone down and got worried when they did not rendezvous at 16.00 as arranged. That same night Glencoe MRT found a large amount of debris, which had come from the south down the main line of the corrie. While searching, members of the rescue team had been narrowly missed by a second large avalanche from the west wall of the corrie. SARDA searches, trenching and probing were carried out over the next three days by Glencoe, Kinloss and Leuchars MRTs and RAF Sea Kings. Snow depth was estimated as 20m which could not be reached with specially extended probes, even from trenches dug by the rescuers as deep as 6m with which the area was criss-crossed. Three bodies were recovered from a depth reduced by melt to 4m on April 2 after a further search by Kinloss and an indication by dog 'Inca'. 2513.
- FEBRUARY 25 Police alerted for a couple who were not on the hill.
- FEBRUARY 26-27 – Attempting No. 3 Gully on West Face, Aonach Dubh, two male doctors (24, 23) encountered deteriorating snow and weather conditions. They bivouacked and were helped off next day by Glencoe MRT, tired but uninjured. RAF Sea King recalled un-needed. 57.
- MARCH 4-8 – Three men (34, 30, 29) were reported overdue on March 7 in Manchester/Cheshire area. On March 4 they had been seen roped, climbing Curved Ridge, Buachaille Etive Mor. It is now thought they reached easy ground near the summit, unroped, then fell 300m when caught in a small slab avalanche. Glencoe MRT and SARDA found gear on surface of a small amount of debris. Probing found bodies. Stretchers to airlift by RN Sea King. 286.
- MARCH 19-20 – Glencoe MRT searched when an unattended vehicle was found in a layby. Police had a misleading route plan. Occupants found by RN Sea King, camping in a corrie of Bidean not requiring help. 24.
- APRIL 2-3 – Rope of three male students (23, 22, 20) overdue on Curved Ridge flashed headtorches. Assisted to easier ground by Glencoe MRT. 83.
- APRIL 9-10 – This could be classed as three separate incidents. Belgian school party of 18 was descending a snowfield high on Sgurr nam Fiannaich towards Loch Achtriochtan. Three students (m18, f17, f17) slipped, fell a short distance, stopping against rocks, and all injuring legs making them unable to walk. Stretchered down by a combined Glencoe and Lochaber team. RAF Sea King met bad weather and turned back. 242.

- MAY 8 – A woman (55) and a man (39) walked West Highland Way from White Corries to Alltnafeadh, then intended to go via Lairig Gartain to Glen Etive. By mistake they went up Coire na Tulaich on to Buachaille Etive Mor! Short of time they tried to get directly down into Glen Etive but got cragfast above Devil's Cauldron, The Chasm. Used mobile phone. Winched off, hypothermic, by RN Sea King. Glencoe MRT. 80.
- MAY 13 – In good weather a sales assistant (46) traversing Aonach Eagach with 17 other people, stepped on to a rock ledge which crumbled beneath her feet, at the Bad Step on Am Bodach. She was killed by a fall of 140m. RAF Sea King, low on fuel, went direct to winch her. Glencoe MRT. 60.
- JULY 2 – His helmet (seriously damaged) probably saved his life when a climber (37) fell from pitch 4 of The Chasm, Stob Dearg of Buachaille Etive Mor. A belay gave way and he fell 10m from rock, wet and slippery after a long dry spell. Leg injuries. Glencoe MRT, RAF Sea King. 37.
- JULY 19 – Trapped on the wrong side of a spate river in the Glencoe gorge, a school party on an award hike placed a cold student (17) in a tent to await rescue. She was stretched across on a Tyrolean traverse by Glencoe MRT together with fellow students. 19.
- JULY 22 – Crossing Lairig Gartain and descending into Dalness, a computer consultant (54) fell into the burn. His wife went for help. A gamekeeper helped him down with minor injuries before Glencoe team arrived. 11.
- JULY 29 – With his family of six descending the usual path from Lost Valley in good weather, a walker (72) slipped on gravel, tumbled, striking a tree and falling into the gorge. Fatal. Glencoe MRT, RAF Sea King. 42.
- AUGUST 23 – Glencoe team extricated two women (21, 20) cragfast on D-Gully Buttress, Buachaille Etive Mor in mist. They had got there in error, intending to scramble up Curved Ridge. 65.
- AUGUST 25 – In rain, deceased (31) was leading a party of four walkers down an area of loose rock/scree from Stob na Broige of Buachaille Etive Mor into Lairig Gartain. In a wide gully a boulder measuring 1m rolled down and hit him on the head, knocking him 8m down the slope. Glencoe MRT, RAF Sea King. 38.
- SEPTEMBER 14 – Glencoe MRT were wrongly informed that a woman with a broken ankle was in Coire Gabhail. In fact, she had fallen on a grass slope near the main road lay-by. Difficult carry as she was rather overweight. 5.
- OCTOBER 3-4 – A rope of two men (27, 26) went off route at Central Chimney when climbing Central Buttress, Buachaille Etive Mor, ending up above D-Gully Buttress when light faded. They were cragfast not knowing the route. Assisted down by Glencoe MRT. Due to lowering cloud RAF helicopter could not help. 46.
- OCTOBER 21-22 – With no torch or other gear, a man (48) set out to traverse Aonach Eagach at 15.15 hours. Searches started at 22.00 after four hours of darkness. He turned up at 05.00 claiming to have done the ridge in the dark. Glencoe, Kinloss, SARDA, RAF Sea King. 190.
- DECEMBER 2-3 – Reaching Stob Coire nan Lochan summit at 13.30 hours, two men (34, 30) attempted four descent routes in rain and mist. They bivouacked when it got dark. GMRT found them descending unhurt. 100.
- DECEMBER 8-9 – Three men (27, 27, 24) intended to climb Curved Ridge by moonlight. The weather was good and freezing. They got lost and got into the foot of Crowberry Gully unable to find a safe route down. Their lights were seen by passers-by. Assisted down by Glencoe MRT. 45.
- DECEMBER 19 – An extremely ill-equipped pair of male novices (39, 30) attempted an E-W traverse of Aonach Eagach. There was ice about but they had poor clothing, no crampons or ice-axes. They gave up to await rescue midway between Meall Dearg

and Stob Coire Leith and were winched out by RAF Sea King. Another group had raised alarm. Glencoe MRT. 60.

DECEMBER 23 – Two males (40, 16) intended to climb Curved Ridge but got into Great Gully. Tired and cold they got cragfast on icy rock. Flashing headtorches alerted GMRT at 17.45 hours. The team got them off uninjured by 20.15. 40.

DECEMBER 29 – With two companions unroped, a man attempted W-E traverse of Aonach Eagach. At the first Pinnacle he got cramp in legs. All three winched by RN Sea King. Glencoe MRT. 42.

CAIRNGORMS

DECEMBER 31, 1994 – Mountain biker (32) fell in Glen Ey, Braemar, sustaining an open ankle fracture. Police and Ambulance Service, RAF Sea King. 15.

JANUARY 7, 1995 – A climber (25) broke a tibia and fibula when he slipped on Hell's Lum. Winched by RAF Sea King. Cairngorm MRT standby. 10.

JANUARY 22 – Army captain fell through a cornice on Braeriach. He walked out via Lairig Ghru leaving a less-experienced companion on the summit. Before Cairngorm MRT started searching the missing person had walked out down Glen Einich. 2.

JANUARY 23 – A deerstalker (53) collapsed and died on the east side of Duchray Hill, Glen Isla, during his work. Colleagues carried him from the hill before the arrival of Inverness Air Ambulance.

JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 1 – From a bivouac at Luibeg, on January, a walker (37) was delayed by deep snow in the Lairig Ghru, reaching Coylumbridge after midnight on February 1. Cairngorm MRT. 4.

FEBRUARY 4 – In snow and ice near Ben Vrackie summit, a hillwalker (49) stepped on a boulder, going over on her ankle and breaking it. Tayside SARU and RAF Sea King. 15.

FEBRUARY 11 – Two men were soloing Aladdin's Mirror Direct in Coire an-t' Sneachda. One (47) asked his companion (29) for a rope, and they continued. Older man fell off and pulled down the younger who was not well belayed. The younger was badly injured (head). Cairngorm and Leuchars MRTs, RAF Sea King. 88.

FEBRUARY 11 – New snow on an icy base. Five men (aged 27-18) were injured by a windslab avalanche on the Goat Track, Coire an-t' Sneachda. Four were seriously injured, with two critical. They were flown out by RAF Sea King in turbulent conditions. Leuchars, Cairngorm and Valley MRTs. 184.

FEBRUARY 11 – Soloing Red Gully, a man (44) fell and injured an arm, ending up with the avalanche casualties from the above incident (at the same time).

FEBRUARY 11 – The fourth incident of the same day in the same corrie. Two climbers overdue in The Runnel turned up safe.

FEBRUARY 12 – Practising ice-axe braking with an inadequate run-out slope, a male student (20) got spine injuries from a steep drop into a burn NE of Chalamain Gap. Stretchered by Cairngorm MRT. 68.

FEBRUARY 12 – Two men (51, 35) got separated when one stopped for a call of nature on The Stuib, Lochnagar. After searching for over two hours the older man used a mobile phone, so Grampian Police MRT checked likely descents. Both turned up safe. 3.

FEBRUARY 14-15 – Experienced climber (29) fell 50m into Parallel B Gully when the snow slope collapsed while attempting to surmount the cornice on Parallel Buttress. His fall, down the other side of the ridge from his second man, was stopped by the rope so that his second was jerked up some 2m above his belay. The leader was able to tell his companion that his leg was badly damaged. He was securely tied off, then the

second completed the climb and went for help. Recovery the same night was impossible due to blizzards in excess of 200km per hour. At 14.00 on 15th anchors were placed above the leader, but an abseiler found him to be dead. He was lowered into the corrie and evacuated by Snow cat. Aberdeen, Braemar and Leuchars MRTs, RAF Sea King. 1300.

FEBRUARY 18 – Ice climb leader (19) tripped over a crampon on Backdoor Route, Lochnagar, spraining his ankle. Aberdeen and Braemar MRTs. 35.

FEBRUARY 18 Party of five with poor navigation gear overdue on Broad Cairn found making their way off the hill by Aberdeen MRT. 6.

FEBRUARY 18 – Four overdue on Lochnagar and Broad Cairn found by Aberdeen MRT. 45.

FEBRUARY 18 – Pair overdue on Lochnagar found by Aberdeen MRT. 20.

FEBRUARY 18 21 A pair of cross country skiers decided to separate on Glas Maol. One (44) carried on, compass navigating, and walking because of a broken ski. He had passed Cairn of Claise but returned to it, then got lost near the summit. He bivvied for three nights during some severe weather then walked back to near the A93 where he was spotted by RN Sea King helicopter. He sustained some frostbite. Later skis were found at a bivvy site near the summit of Druim Mor (961m) above Caenlochan Glen. Aberdeen, Braemar, Grampian, Leuchars and Tayside MRTs, SARDA, RAF and RN Sea Kings. 3644.

FEBRUARY 21-22 – Three men were navigating in poor visibility between Cairn Toul and Stob Coire an t Saigdeir. Two walked through a cornice and fell a long way, but were uninjured in deep snow. Their companion went for help. They were found walking out by RAF Sea King. Aberdeen, Braemar, Grampian, Kinloss MRTs, SARDA. 198.

FEBRUARY 22-23 – Two ski mountaineering brothers (30, 19) had their map blown away at Loch Avon. In bad weather they missed the Saddle, then missed Fords of Avon Bothy. They were found in a snowcave by RAF Sea King in Glasath, one of the heads of Water of Caiplich. Cairngorm MRT and SARDA. 45.

FEBRUARY 23-24 – A party of four men (37-23) took nearly eight hours to climb Spiral Gully, Coire an-t'Sneachda. They got lost on the plateau on a clear night and descended Fiacail Ridge. Found by Cairngorm MRT. 70.

FEBRUARY 25 A pair turned up safe after being overdue climbing Broken Gully, Coire an-t'Sneachda. Cairngorm MRT. 2.

FEBRUARY 26 – Man (46) fell 10m at Red Craig, Glen Clova. Arm injury. Sea King.

MARCH 4 Two instructors (f43, m33) and six students (f43, males 58, 45, 37, 36, 30) were practising ice-axe skills and crampon techniques a few metres from the top lip of Coire Laogh Mor, Cairngorm. A windslab avalanche swept them down, some over rocks, almost to the corrie floor. Fortunately, they wore helmets, but still had head and other injuries. Four were stretcher cases and four walking wounded. Two RAF Sea Kings could only evacuate from Ciste Car Park, and later from Aviemore because of deteriorating weather. Cairngorm, Glenmore and Kinloss MRTs, Avalanche Project staff, Cairngorm Ski Patrol. 85.

MARCH 4 Ski mountaineering near Ben Macdui, a pair decided that the escape routes from Loch Avon over Cairngorm Plateau were too dangerous because of avalanche risk. They returned via Strath Nethy reaching Glenmore before midnight. Cairngorm MRT. 2.

MARCH 4 - MAY 27 – Bodies of two well-equipped male climbers (both 22) with heavy climbing gear, wearing plastic boots and crampons, chipped out of an ice floe on Lochan Coire an Lochan, Cairn Lochan on May 27 were the pair missing since March 4. From the evidence of (1) a neck slung compass set at 35° (a reasonable bearing for coming off the plateau in the Twin Burns area); (2) both wearing head torches; (3) a

rope stuffed in a sac as one would at the end of a hard route; (4) ice hammer and helmet found in sacs (only one ice-axe recovered); it would appear that the pair had climbed their chosen route (unknown), finished in the dark, and been avalanched on the west wall of the corrie as they navigated down. They may have been moved farther down on to the frozen loch by subsequent avalanche(s). Post mortems found death from avalanche asphyxiation. For 12 weeks extensive searches of the whole eastern area of the High Cairngorms had been carried out by Cairngorm MRT and by team members and others in their spare time. Official searches were by Aberdeen, Braemar, Cairngorm, Dundonnell, Glenmore, Kinloss, Leuchars, RAF Sea King, SARDA (Scottish, Lake District and Welsh) Official search and recovery person/ hours 3736.

MARCH 6-7 – Couple lost hillwalking in Aviemore area. Safe. Cairngorm MRT. 2.

MARCH 15 – Two bodies roped together (both m. aged 38, 26) were seen at 13.00, 15m below the foot of Parallel Buttress, Lochnagar lying on old avalanche debris. They had been spotted climbing well at 11.00 on Parallel B Gully on the snow ramp above the chimney. It is thought the leader slipped on steep snow/ice near the top of the climb. Friends said their intention had been to climb Parallel B and Eagle Ridge in one day. Braemar MRT. RAF Sea King. 14.

MARCH 15 – A mountain guide in crampons slipped and fell badly walking out of Coire an-t'Sneachda. Surprisingly his ankle was fractured despite wearing plastic double boots. Carry by Cairngorm team. 88.

MARCH 16 – Using the rim of the main corrie of Lochnagar as a 'handrail' as they navigated east, a pair of male walkers (31, 29) lost sight of each other in mist and a snow flurry. While out of view the older one walked through the cornice and fell 150m into the corrie. He managed to climb back up through the cornice, but his companion, after searching for him with a GPS, alerted rescuers. Both walked out safely. Aberdeen and Braemar MRTs. 15.

APRIL 2 – Climbing in Pass of Ballater a lead climber (20) placed three 'Rocks' as runners for two ropes. 18m up on an overhang his left hand slipped. All the runners pulled and he suffered compound ankle and finger fractures when he hit the ground. Despite a damaged helmet he escaped serious head injuries. Braemar MRT. 9.

APRIL 22-23 – Flying over Fords of Avon Bothy, with rescue experts checking March 4 disappearance, R137 (Lossiemouth) spotted 'HELP' stamped in the snow. A walker (35) without proper gloves and gaiters had underestimated terrain and snow depth, taking 14 hours from Ryvoan. After a night in the bothy he tried to get back but more snow had fallen so he returned to shelter. Airlifted to an ambulance at Glenmore suffering mild hypothermia and, possibly TETANY brought on by distress, not frostbite as originally thought. 7.

APRIL 23 – Deep, wet snow and waterlogged ground delayed two men (79, 68) walking Auchallater to Loch Muick via Dubh Loch. Braemar, Grampian Police and Aberdeen MRTs. 31.

MAY 1 2 – Soloing Central Buttress, Lochnagar, a man (28) is presumed to have slipped on wet rock. Braemar MRT was informed next day and found his body at the bottom among boulders, with evidence on the buttress that he had fallen. There was snow on the approaches and gullies, but on May 1 the buttress had been in summer condition with wet rock in places. RAF Sea King. 87.

MAY 1 – Climber (m28) with head injuries rescued by helicopter near Slains Castle cliffs, Cruden Bay, Peterhead. HMCg.

MAY 5 – Cliff Rescue at Arbroath by HMCg.

MAY 12 – Male climber (20) fell 5m to the ground when a belay came out while climbing The Trap, Craig a Barns, Dunkeld. Detained overnight for observation after concussion (although helmet was worn). Tayside Police MRT. 17.

- MAY 19 – After midnight, Braemar MRT used a rope winch system to stretcher hoist a drunk man (20) who was injured trying to cross River Cluanie at a gorge in the village. 16.
- MAY 24 – Cliff rescue by HMCg at Burghead.
- MAY 31 – Rock climber (m23) suffered head injuries at Cummingstown, Burghead, Morays. RAF Sea King.
- MAY 31-JUNE 1 – Search by RN Sea King and civilian MRT for mountain biker (m48) overdue in Dunkeld area.
- JUNE 1-2 – Injured by a 50m fall on snow in Coire Dhondail, a school teacher (26) tried to walk out, camping in Glen Einich. Next day she was evacuated by Police vehicle from the ford at Allt Ruigh na Sroine.
- JUNE 4-5 – Picked up very tired by Police near Derry Lodge, a father and son (43, 14) who had descended Ben Macdui in low cloud, going via the Shelter Stone in error. 2.
- JUNE 10 – Not far from the site of the Angus Sinclair Hut, a nurse (65) was airlifted by RAF Sea King. She became exhausted on Lairig Ghru Sponsored Walk, but recovered. 6.
- JUNE 11 – On a sponsored walk from Aviemore to Linn of Dee via Bynack More, an experienced walker (69) got nausea and dizziness at the Shelter Stone. He said it was due to a change of medicine for heart palpitations. Police gave him a lift from near Derry Lodge but he was better by then, declining medical help. 2.
- JUNE 13 – Cliff rescue at Cove, Aberdeen by HMCg.
- JUNE 18 – Braemar MRT lowered a dog to safety from an unstable, vegetative, rock ravine 5km WSW of Braemar. The dog had fallen 20m to a ledge 12m above the Corriemulzie Burn. 2.
- JUNE 21 – Man (37) overdue from three-day Cairngorm walk turned up OK. 1.
- JUNE 24 – Only two out of 750 walkers doing a sponsored walk from the Dee to the Spey had to be airlifted by RAF Sea King. A man (67) and a woman (60) were flown from Fords of Avon Bothy with heat exhaustion. 4.
- JUNE 27 – Experienced male walker (62) died of a heart attack at Rothiemurchus path junction, en route to Blair Atholl from Coylumbridge. He had insisted on continuing with a female companion carrying both packs. She initiated recovery using a mobile phone. Cairngorm MRT, RAF Sea King. 72.
- JUNE 27 – Cliff rescue of youth at Whittings Ness, Arbroath. HMCg.
- JULY 7 – Cliff rescue. Hopeman. HMCg.
- JULY 10 – Cliff rescue at Logie Head, Cullen by HMCg.
- JULY 23 – Cliff rescue. Auchmithie. HMCg.
- JULY 24 – Woman rescued by RAF Sea King from cliffs at Arbroath.
- AUGUST 8 – Descending SW slopes of Coire an Lochain, Cairngorm a walker (54) fractured her ankle. Evacuated by RAF Sea King to Raigmores. 8.
- AUGUST 11 – Cliff rescue. Covesea, Lossiemouth. HMCg.
- AUGUST 13 – Cliff rescue. Cullen. HMCg.
- AUGUST 17-18 – A roped pair of male climbers (36, 33) got cragfast at The Tower on Parallel Buttress, Lochnagar, having climbed three pitches in darkness. In the small hours they used camera flash to pinpoint position to rescuers at Meikle Pap Col. They had been climbing Parallel Gully B normally well within their capability, but a huge rockfall in May 1995 altered the climb; large detached rocks on the side walls and gully bed delaying them. They twice had to move left on to the buttress to decrease the objective dangers. Braemar MRT lowered one member from the summit plateau to drop a top rope to the cragfast pair. RAF Sea King on site left the rescue to the team. 71.

- AUGUST 24 – Three boys (all 16) cycling Minigaig Pass from Glen Bruar to Kingussie got benighted and bivouacked at 43/800890 exhausted. Next day they got to Drumguish via Gleann Chomraig, though easier glens were available if they had used good maps. Search by Cairngorm, Kinloss, Leuchars and Tayside MRTs, RAF Sea King. 92.
- AUGUST 27 – Mountain cyclist (31) carrying his bike up the track above Bachnagairn (head of Glen Clova) slipped and badly injured an ankle. Stretchered down by Tayside MRT. 36.
- AUGUST 30 – Man (27) slipped descending Ben Macdui by Choire Mhor. Reported injured by member of party but others helped him over Lairig Ghru to Coylumbridge. Cairngorm MRT, RAF Sea King. 12.
- SEPTEMBER 26-27 – Kinloss team called out to search for a hillwalker (61) near Blair Atholl, but he turned up safe. 165.
- SEPTEMBER 27 – During snowfall on Sgoran Dubh Mor, a computer consultant (m40) was reported to be hypothermic. Flown out by RAF Sea King. 8.
- SEPTEMBER 29 – Reaching the summit of Beinn Iutharn Beag, an experienced walker (46) died from a heart attack. His companion used a mobile phone to get help. RAF Sea King. 14.
- OCTOBER 7 – Cliff rescue. Portknockie. HMCg.
- OCTOBER 11-12 – Two bar assistants (m23, f23) were separated from six colleagues in mist on the way to Ben Macdui. Completely lost they built a shelter from the winds at Fingers Ridge, Coire an-t'Sneachda. Walked out next day and found by a Cairngorm MRT and SARDA crag search. 216.
- OCTOBER 15-16 – Scotsman (30) and Scottish woman student (28) suffered from cold and wet after a night out 2km. west of Sandy Hillock. Intending to walk from Glen Doll to Glen Muick by Bachnagairn and return by the Capel Mounth track, they got benighted because of navigation difficulty and stayed put awaiting daylight. Found by RAF Sea King at 02.30. A strobe light was detected on night-vision goggles. Braemar and Tayside MRTs. 110.
- OCTOBER 28 – Braemar team started a search for a woman (60s) reported missing by her husband after they got separated crossing bogs, after they had missed the Fungle Track, Forest of Birse. She got out OK. 8.
- NOVEMBER 4 – Solo walker (35) died of natural causes 500m SE of the summit of Cairn Bannoch (1012m) . Braemar MRT, RAF Sea King. 15.
- NOVEMBER 12-13 – A party of five split up twice into two pairs and a single. A pair with maps reached Sgoran Dubh Mor, but the abandoned novice (51) was left on the ridge in mist with no navigation gear, torch, food or proper boots. It is thought he got down by Coire Ruigh na Sroine, taking eight hours and missing rescuers in the forest. Cairngorm MRT, SARDA.176.
- NOVEMBER 19 – RAF Sea King rescued injured shepherd after a fall in Glen Doll.
- NOVEMBER 19-21 – Braemar, Cairngorm, Kinloss and Leuchars MRTs, SARDA and RAF Sea King expended 846 person hours searching for a plumber (44) lost on the Western Cairngorms in mist and snow. He left his car at Achlean on Sunday, got lost on Carn Ban Mor it is thought, travelled SE across the Great Moss, down Glen Geusachan to Lairig Ghru on Monday, out to Coylumbridge uninjured on Tuesday. 846.
- NOVEMBER 25-27 – Cairngorm, Kinloss and SARDA alerted for a male pair (both 24) overdue from a two-day expedition to Macdui and Braeriach. They got lost in cloud on November 26 and bivouacked a second night. RAF Sea King started searching but they walked out. 32.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

- JANUARY 1 – Central Gully, Ben Ledi four males (31,16,15,14) going up a steep gully became cragfast at the top due to lack of experience and equipment. Found by Killin MRT and winched out by RN Sea King. 34.
- JANUARY 2 – Solo retired walker (63) slipped on ice on Conic Hill and broke his leg. Lomond MRT and Ambulance Service. 22.
- JANUARY 3 – Walking on The Cobbler a woman (31) slipped on ice and broke a leg. Carried down by Dumbarton Police MRT. 10.
- JANUARY 3 – One of four descending SE from Ben Lui slipped on a patch of ice after removing crampons. He (28) sprained ankle. Stretchered by Killin MRT. 72.
- JANUARY 8 – Descending Ben Challum with two companions David Ellis (55) died from a heart attack. Evacuated by Killin and Kinloss MRTs. 180.
- JANUARY 11 – Missing person. Connel. HMCg.
- JANUARY 12 – Easy Gully, E. Face, Beinn Ime. A man (28) in a party of two suffered pelvic and arm injuries in a channelled wet snow avalanche caused by a cornice collapse. Stretchered to base by Arrochar and Dumbarton Police teams then transferred by RN Sea King. 68.
- JANUARY 12-13 – After extensive searches by Killin, Leuchars, Lomond and Ochils MRTs, SARDA and RN Sea King the body of a solo hillwalker (61) was found at about 1000m altitude near the NE Ridge of Ben More, Crianlarich. Wearing light boots, and not carrying an ice-axe or wearing crampons, it appears he slipped and fell sustaining head injuries. He then seems to have made a shelter, but fell again, stopping on a snow slope among boulders, where he died from his injuries and hypothermia. Stretchered 300m to an airlift by the RN helicopter. 687.
- JANUARY 19 – Ochils MRT on stand-by for a solo walker of retirement age. Crossing the Ochils from Blackford heading for Tillicoultry, he turned up in Dollar, an error of about 4 km.
- JANUARY 21 – Well-equipped university hill-walkers got lost in a white-out on Creag Mhor summit at the head of Loch Lyon, and found by farmer in Glen Lochay. Killin and Leuchars MRTs. 41.
- JANUARY 22 – Two male students (23, 18) delayed by bizzard and deep snow on Sgiath Chuil, Glen Dochart. Killin MRT. 21.
- JANUARY 27 – Alva Glen search by Ochils MRT and SARDA for missing girl (11). 30.
- JANUARY 29 – Arrochar MRT stretchered woman (39) from near Narnain Boulder on The Cobbler after she suffered a leg injury from a slip on névé. Emergency call was from a mobile phone. 54.
- MARCH 4 – Walker (m25) overdue in Tillicoultry from a snow walk up Ben Cleugh. Ochils MRT. 16.
- MARCH 4-7 – Strathclyde Police MRT called out for a man (32) delayed on Beinn Achaladair by waist deep snow. He had intended to return on 6th. 21.
- APRIL 16 – Walker (29) going up Ben Venue slipped in mud, grabbed a fence and dislocated her shoulder. Lomond MRT, RN Sea King. 49.
- APRIL 16 – Ochils MRT called out for arm injury to boy (9) who had slipped on a wet path in Dollar Glen and fallen to the bottom of a ravine. 2.
- MAY 1 – Body of a heart attack victim (m49) found by walkers near the summit of Cruach Ardrain, Crianlarich. Killin MRT, RN Sea King. 21.
- MAY 3 – Rn Sea King airlifted walker (63) with slight head injuries who slipped down steep rock and grass descending NW down Ben Lui. He fell 10m. Strathclyde Police and Killin MRTs. 14.
- MAY 8 – Ochils MRT searched popular paths after a flare was seen. 8.

- MAY 12 – Boy (14) in a party of 10 descending north from Stob Coire Bhuidhe (Cruach Ardtrain) slipped on wet grass and suffered bruising. Carried down by Killin MRT. 18.
- MAY 23 – Crashed paraglider reported. False alarm. Ochils. 2.
- JUNE 18 – RAF Sea King lifted hillwalker (60) from Beinn Ghlas with suspected heart attack.
- JUNE 25 – RAF Sea King lifted woman with broken ankle from Schiehallion.
- JULY 7 – False alarm. Search by RN Sea King and Ochils MRT for a missing person. 70.
- JULY 29 – Greenock man (18) hyperventilated ascending North Ridge of Stob Binnein. Evacuated to hospital with heat exhaustion by RAF Sea King. Killin and Leuchars MRTs. 24.
- JULY 30 – Parapenting from the top of 150m SW facing crags of Slackdhu (495m) in the Strathblane Hills, a man (31) soared for a very short time prior to his canopy collapsing. He was killed by falling among boulders. Lomond MRT, RN Sea King. 30.
- JULY 30 – A paraglider (28) was flying from Myreton Hill (378m), west of Alva. His canopy wingtip came out of an upward thermal so the 'chute partially collapsed. A controlled descent was possible to 8m but then he fell free sustaining spine and abdominal injuries. Ochils MRT, RAF Sea King. 28.
- AUGUST 8-9 – Scottish father (35) and son (9) were descending a path through woods in darkness after rock climbing on Ben A'n, Trossachs. Benighted without a torch they decided to stay put until first light. Killin MRT traced them and guided them down by 02.30. 8.
- AUGUST 12 – One of three inexperienced walkers attempting an expedition on Beinn Chabhair, a woman (29), became exhausted. She was rescued by Killin MRT and RN Sea King. 17.
- AUGUST 13 – A student (34) slipped on wet grass descending Silver Strand Footpath on Ben A'n breaking her ankle. Stretchered off by Killin MRT. 17.
- AUGUST 16 – Ochils MRT on stand-by for a person who left a route card but did not go on the hill.
- SEPTEMBER 8-9 – Solo walker (m25) seriously injured by a 60m fall down a crag on Ben Challum. Terrain was grass, rock and scree. Found by RN Sea King. Killin MRT. 53.
- SEPTEMBER 23-24 – Four boys, aged 13 to 19, attempted an ambitious expedition of 32 km. which included circuit of the base of Ben Lomond. Benighted in poor weather with inadequate footwear, clothing and gear they were found on route by Lomond MRT and SARDA. 92.
- SEPTEMBER 28 – Killin MRT and RN Sea King helped in the evacuation of a heart attack victim from the Glen Lyon slopes of Meall Garbh. The man (60) died during deerstalking. 40.
- OCTOBER 14 15 – Trying to walk round Loch Katrine two women (68, 65) and a man (65) got cragfast on the south shore near the east end of the loch. One was recovered by boat from the shoreline; other two from farther up by use of lights and ropes. Killin and Lomond MRTs, SARDA. 35.
- OCTOBER 15 – A walker (50) on Beinn Ghlas Nature Trail slipped on wet grass and injured his knee. Stretcher carry by Killin MRT. 4.
- OCTOBER 17 – A dentist (38) deerstalking in upper Coire Chroisg (West Corrie of Stuc a'Chroin) fell down a deep hole and strained his groin. Winched into RN Sea King. Killin MRT. 24.
- OCTOBER 19 20 – Trying to get from Ardeish Pier to Inversnaid by the West Highland Way, a man (39) failed to get past a rockfall at Rob Roy's Cave and turned back. Rescue boat, Lomond MRT, SARDA. 34.

- OCTOBER 21 – A barmaid (21) slipped on a wet path descending Ben Venue fracturing an ankle. She walked some way down aided by three companions, but was then stretchered by Lomond MRT and SARDA. 77.
- OCTOBER 22 – After crashing a car 2km. west of Aberfoyle, the confused driver (29) set off up the hill above Milton. His body was found by SARDA dog below a small cliff. Lomond MRT. Police helicopter. 118.
- OCTOBER 28 – Paper Caves Path, Clach Bheinn, Loch Eck. Mountain student (m14) made a high step up on path and knee ‘popped’ – probably subluxed patella. Stretchered by Benmore Centre. 18.
- NOVEMBER 19 – Couple (m45, f43) descending SSE Ridge, Beinn Dubhcairg, Crianlarich. Woman got cragfast. Man went to help and also got stuck on wet rock with no torch. Used mobile phone to alert rescuers. Helped down by three other walkers. All airlifted safe by RAF Sea King. Killin MRT. 80.
- DECEMBER – Ochils MRT searched Dumyat (418m) near Stirling and found a fitted sheet carefully pegged out on the hilltop. It had caused local concern when spotted by road users. The area had been used by parapenters. 19.

SKYE

- FEBRUARY 9 – After reaching the top of a snow gully on Bruach na Frith two women (both 26) descended it. When quarter of the way down, one slipped, collided with the other so that both fell 50m. The one who was knocked off sustained a broken leg. Airlifted by RAF Sea King. Skye MRT. 16.
- APRIL 2-3 – Four men (19-27) got lost trying to go over Sgurr Alasdair from Coir’ a’Ghrunnda into Coire Lagan. They walked out next morning from a bivouac. Skye MRT. RAF Sea King. 51.
- MAY 6 – Scrambling on Sgurr Dubh Mor with five companions, a man (25) fell 10m when a large handhold broke away. He sustained a compound tibia/fibula fracture. Initial treatment by Kinloss MRT. Tension lower to a col and carry to below cloud by Kinloss and Skye MRTs. Airlift by RAF Sea King. Teams and companions evacuated from Coruisg by RNLI lifeboat. 376.
- MAY 6-8 – After climbing Fluted Buttress on the Coireachan Ruadh Face of Sgurr MhicCoinnich two men (30, 21) became cragfast because their ropes jammed while abseiling down the East (Coireachan Ruadh) Face of Sgurr Dearg, probably on or near O’Brien and Julian’s Climb. Word came out from a boat that they were overdue at Coruisk Hut, thought to be climbing Fluted Buttress. They were not pin-pointed by Skye and Kinloss MRTs until after their second night out, despite whistle communications, because of bad visibility. Rescue was difficult and protracted in atrocious weather, including snowfall. Both suffered hypothermia. They were winched by RAF Sea King from the foot of the buttress after being lowered. The younger climber, who had inadequate clothing, died from cold during or after rescue. 722.
- MAY 26-27 – Main Ridge traverser travelled through the night, then attributed his overdue report as a misunderstanding. Leuchars and Skye MRTs, HMCG helicopter. 32.
- MAY 29 – A guided party of five separated from one of their number on the east slopes of Bla Bheinn South Peak. She (53) had decided not to continue, planning to meet them when they descended from the summit. Despite hours of searching in rain and mist they could not find her and called out Skye MRT. She was found and brought down before midnight. 72.
- JUNE 22-23 – A leader (48) fell 6m on Integrity (Sron na Ciche) injuring his leg. His second managed to help/pull him to the top of the climb. He managed to hobble into Coir’ a’Ghrunnda then his colleague went for help. Skye MRT, RAF Sea King. 44.

- JUNE 29 – Man (31) climbed unroped to the top of the smaller of two pinnacles, Old Man of Storr, but got cragfast halfway down. Skye MRT safely lowered him 16m. 42.
- JULY 2 – A RAF Sea King scrambled for two hillwalkers missing near Sligachan was recalled when they were found safe.
- JULY 4-5 – On a day of good weather, a retired man (70) took the morning boat from Elgol to Coruisk, saying he would catch a later return boat, but he missed the 17.00 boat by 15 minutes and bivvied overnight. On July 5 there were flash floods, low cloud and strong wind. Boatman alerted rescuers and Mallaig Lifeboat was used to transport Skye MRT to Coruisk. 94.
- JULY 6-7 – When roped climbing on Sgurr Alasdair two males (45, 17) got lost in mist when they got separated from two others. They sheltered for the night and walked out when mist cleared next day. Skye MRT, RAF Sea King. 38.
- JULY 12 – Roped climbing on The Cioch a couple (both 21) misjudged the time required, having started at 13.45. In poorer weather they waited on a ledge from 22.00 to 04.00. They had started descent when spotted by Skye MRT. 37.
- JULY 13 – People on Sgurr nan Gilleann reported hearing a large rockfall and a human cry. One said he saw a flare. Skye MRT and HMCG helicopter searched vainly. A recent rockfall was found. 'Flare' was thought to be rock shrapnel sparks. 93.
- JULY 18 – Seven tourists rescued at Loch na Beiste. HMCG.
- JULY 31 – A solo geology student (21) collecting or examining rocks on the seaward side of Ben Cleat, Elgol, fell into a gorge. Her body was found by RAF Sea King. Kinloss and Skye MRTs, SARDA. 108.
- AUGUST 1 – Suffering asthma during a walk in Glen Sligachan, a schoolboy (15) was unable to continue. RAF Sea King evacuation. 8.
- AUGUST 30 – A climbing instructor (32) fell 12m (back injuries) when a handhold failed as he was leading The Needle, The Storr. Two of his three running belays pulled out so he fell to the ground. Skye MRT, HMCG helicopter. 35.
- SEPTEMBER 8 – Two people stranded at Kilt Rock. HMCG.
- SEPTEMBER 24 – Standing at the base of The Needle, Quirang, a woman (63) was hit by rockfall and sustained leg injuries. Skye MRT, HMCG and HMCG helicopter. 36.
- OCTOBER 7-8 – Overdue on the Cuillin Ridge Traverse in storm force winds, two climbers (41, 40) completed the ridge after a bivouac. Skye MRT, RAF Sea King. 132.

ISLANDS OTHER THAN SKYE

- FEBRUARY 10-APRIL 7 – A Glasgow student (18) had been missing since early February but there was no confirmation of his being on Arran. His body lay in a gully near the northern part of A'Chir Ridge covered in snow until after the melt. He had sustained multiple injuries and was found on April 6. Stretcher carried overnight by Arran MRT. 231.
- APRIL 15 – Walking with her husband on a steep hillside east of Marvig village, Lewis, a woman (58) slipped on rock and broke an ankle. Airlifted to Stornoway by HMCG helicopter.
- APRIL 16 – One of six hillwalkers (47) slipped on a path in Glen Sannox, Arran, in rain and mist injuring an arm. He walked off. Arran MRT involved. 24.
- MAY 4 – A male fell runner competing in the Western Isles Challenge was descending NW from Clisham, North Harris. When 250m down from the summit he was seen to dislodge a large boulder which struck him on the head. Airlifted by HMCG helicopter to Stornoway where a minor scalp wound was sewn.

- MAY 9 – Walking on Askival, Rum, two people agreed to separate and rendezvous later. One got worried when they missed each other and alerted rescuers. HMCG helicopter found the other (f29) safe at the rendezvous.
- MAY 24 – South Harris. HMCG helicopter evacuated a walker with a fatal heart attack from Toe Head to Stornoway, Lewis.
- MAY 28 – Trying to retrieve a child's shoe a father of three fell through a cliffside hole as his family looked on. Scolpaig, North Uist. Fatal. HMCG helicopter evacuation.
- MAY 28 – Crossing a ridge near Dibidil, Rum, a walker (49) slipped, falling 3m and fracturing hand bones. HMCG helicopter.
- JUNE 8 – With inadequate gear and food, a solo walker (29) hoped to get from Kinloch Castle, Rum, to Dibidil and back. He was found, exhausted, by ground searchers before midnight at a bothy at Harris. HMCG helicopter. 4.
- JULY 4 – Missing boy, Raasay. HMCG.
- JULY 7 – Missing male walker on South Uist turned up safe before arrival of HMCG helicopter for search.
- AUGUST 28 – Cliff rescue, Easdale. HMCG.
- SEPTEMBER 25 – Cliff rescue, Mull. HMCG.

SOUTHERN UPLANDS

- MARCH 5-6 – North Corrie of White Coomb (822m), NE of Moffat. A solo hillwalker (49) from Galashiels died of hypothermia buried in a self-triggered avalanche at about 700m. He was swept down 60m. It was reported as an open slope windslab, of wet snow with a cornice collapse during thaw conditions. He was found by a SARDA dog. RAF Sea King, Moffat HRU, Borders SARU, Tweed Valley MRT. 763.
- MARCH 21 – Man (29) out for a walk from near the start of the Pennine Way at Kirk Yetholm, got lost and benighted. Turned up at Mounthooly Farm, College Glen, which is over the Border. Borders SARU. 38.
- MARCH 24-25 – Galloway MRT were lifted by RN Sea King to The Merrick summit. They found the two local men on the west shore of Loch Enoch. One had a bruised arm. All airlifted. SARDA used. 143.
- APRIL 22-23 – Borders SARU on stand-by for expedition group of six. Walking from Reddesdale on Pennine Way they failed to reach Blindburn on River Coquet (England) camping 40min. short of their rendezvous. 10.
- MAY 12-13 – Tweed Valley MRT, Borders SARU, and SARDA searched the Pentland Hills and Edinburgh Friday evening and Saturday for a local, retired man (80), with unseasonal snow underfoot. He was not found. 1228.
- MAY 13 – One of two climbers on North Berwick crags got stuck on a ledge after a short fall. He was rescued by Fire Service. Tweed Valley MRT called out. 24.
- MAY 31-JUNE 1 – Four women (18-20) on an award expedition failed to reach White Laggan Bothy, Loch Dee. Found by RN Sea King next morning on the path south of the bothy, 3km walk from it. They were safe and carried on with the hike. Galloway MRT and SARDA. 24.
- JUNE 4 – Borders SARU called out for a child (8) lost in mist on Woden Law (424m hill 2km from English border). The child belonging to neighbours, had become separated from a couple with two children. Found safe by local farmers using motor cycles. 9.
- JUNE 22-23 – Man (65) overdue walking S. Upland Way from Dalry to Glen Trool and then on to Newton Stewart, about 50km in very hot weather. Galloway MRT and helicopter on stand-by. 15.
- JULY 1 – Walker from Burnmouth flown to Melrose Hospital by RAF Sea King.

NON-MOUNTAINEERING

- JANUARY 25 – Northern Highlands gunshot victim transported from Ben Aliskey to Wick by RAF Sea King. Dead on arrival. 10.
- FEBRUARY 18 – Search of wet forest for butcher (19) who wandered off after a car was badly damaged and he was thought to be injured. Lomond MRT, SARDA. 4.
- FEBRUARY 18-APRIL 8 – Search of Loch Lomond by ROSPA rescue boat, divers, Lomond MRT, SARDA, RN Sea King. An angler's boat was found upturned north of Balmaha. William Ballantyne (45) found dead south of Balmaha by Police helicopter. Alistair McQuillie (37) found dead by canoeist on Inchfad on April 8 (water level lower). 1152.
- FEBRUARY 21 – SARDA and Moffat HRU searched woodlands around a village in Langholm area for a woman who later returned home. 9.
- APRIL 14 – Cairngorm MRT, SARDA and RAF Sea King searched for a woman (42) said to be depressed, missing from a guest house near Lagganbridge. Gone for a short walk she had probably road-walked 10km and was found near a dam at Glen Shirra. 54.
- MAY 5 – Leuchars MRT diverted from Arran exercise for PLM Squirrel helicopter crash near Lochgilphead. Pilot was killed, the only person on board. Crash dealt with by RN Sea King, HMS Gannet.
- MAY 6-7 – Search for girl (15) missing from home. Safe. Moffat MRT. 24.
- MAY 17 – Police dogs, RAF Sea King and Leuchars MRT searched lochs and forest for a missing patient from Stratheden Hospital, Fife. Safe. 62.
- MAY 21 – Southern Highlands. Woman (66) slipped on grass near her home and fell 10m to the bed of a small gorge. Fatal. Killin MRT. 9.
- JUNE 23 – Leuchars MRT treated an injured (later fatal) motor-cyclist near Loch Laggan, providing oxygen, stretcher and special gear. 5.
- JUNE 30 – Woman (39) missing from hospital at Melrose. Located safe same night. Tweed Valley MRT and Borders SARU. 36.
- JULY 2 – Kinloss MRT treated three casualties from a collision 8km east of Inverness. The driver of the other car was dead. 6.
- JULY 9-10 – SARDA searched in Ochils for a runaway youth (16) later reported safe. 13.
- JULY 30 – Kinloss team treated a motor-cyclist and his young son (pillion) injured in involvement with a pick-up truck 1.5 km. N. of Contin. 12.
- JULY 31 – Tweed Valley team, and SARDA, searched banks of River Tweed for a boy (8) who disappeared while swimming in a pool. Body resurfaced in the pool later. 8.
- AUGUST 29 – Tweed Valley MRT and SARDA called out to search for a male missing after a road accident. 15.
- SEPTEMBER 4 – Border SARU searched River Tweed for an elderly patient later found safe. 17.
- SEPTEMBER 23-28 – Leuchars MRT and RAF Sea King searched open ground and quarries in Charlestown area of Dunfermline for a missing man (84). Not found. 152.
- OCTOBER 11 – Tweed Valley MRT and SARDA searched paths and forest at Innerleithen for a disturbed youth (m17) later found safe. 16.
- OCTOBER 22 – Tweed Valley MRT and SARDA called out for a person missing from hospital. She was found safe by Police. 20.
- OCTOBER 24-26 – SARDA and RAF helicopter searched Cromdale Hills near Lynebreck for a diabetic (59). Cairngorm MRT called out. Patient found in Inverness. 6.
- NOVEMBER 25-26 – Search of Bridge of Orchy area by Leuchars MRT, HMCG helicopter and SARDA for a manager (m27) after a car crash. Not found. 147.
- DECEMBER 8-17 – Full searches by Braemar MRT found a man (36) dead from chest injuries behind a fishing hut on River Deveron near Huntly Castle. 257.

IN MEMORIAM

**Tribute to W.H. (Bill) MURRAY, OBE
j. 1945, Honorary President.**

Spoken at his funeral by Donald McIntyre, March 26, 1996.

There is a region of heart's desire
free for the hand that wills;
land of the shadow and haunted spire,
land of the silvery glacier fire,
land of the cloud and the starry choir
magical land of hills;
loud with the crying of winds and streams,
thronged with the fancies and fears of dreams.

There are perils of knightly zest
fit for the warrior's craft;
pitiless giants with rock-bound crest,
mystical wells for the midnight rest,
ice-crowned castles and halls, to test
steel with the ashen shaft;
realms to be won by the well-swung blow,
rest to be earned from the yielding foe.

All that the wanderer's heart can crave,
life lived thrice for the lending,
hermit's vigil in dreamlit cave,
gleams of the vision that Merlin gave,
comrades till death, and a wind-swept grave,
joy of the journey's ending:—
Ye who have climbed to the great white veil,
Heard ye the chant? Saw ye the Grail?

(These stanzas are from *Knight Errantry in Collected Poems of Geoffrey Winthrop Young*, published by Methuen & Co. Ltd, London, 1936. The poem has 10 stanzas, of which these are numbers 7, 8, & 10. Bill used stanzas 7, 8, 9, & 10 preceding the Acknowledgements in *Mountaineering in Scotland* and he acknowledged Mr Geoffrey Winthrop Young's permission to reprint them.

GWY was born in 1876 and died in 1958. He was 'one of the greatest mountaineers that Britain has produced'. He lost a leg in the First World War.

Bill introduced me to GWY's poetry, which have had a profound influence on me. Although the *Collected Poems of Geoffrey Winthrop Young* was out of print, I wrote to the publisher and was fortunate in acquiring two copies. I once met GWY at an SMC meeting in Edinburgh.

I still have copies of two other GWY books: *Mountain Craft* (1920) which was my textbook, and *On High Hills* (1927). My copy of *The Grace of Forgetting* (GWY's autobiography) I gave to Bill.)

A photograph, signed W.H. Murray, had a special place in my Father's study: it was the bearded, somewhat ascetic face of an Elder in my Father's congregation. I gave Bill that picture of his Grandfather, after whom Bill was named.

I have several photographs of Bill, including his passport photograph dated June 47 – it was for his first post-War expedition to the Alps. One, with the hood of his anorak over his head, reminds me that Bill spent time at a Benedictine monastery. I met Bill at the JMCS meet at Kingshouse in 45, a few months after his release from Prisoner-of-War camp. I immediately started climbing with him on weekends through the great winters of 46 and 47. Bill waited for me at Queen Street station with his old Morris eight and gave me a camp-bed at his mother's house, which was then Bill's home. When Bill and his mother moved to Loch Goil, my sister stood in for me and scrubbed the floors. Unfortunately, the water came through between the floorboards to the rooms below. Bill was 10 years older than me, and was like an older brother – or like a kindly master with a novice. I was keen to learn, and he to teach. His smiles at my struggles and enthusiasms come through whenever he writes about our comradeship. Of our week in Glen Affric, before the dam was built, he wrote: 'Having no plates we ate straight out of the pot, keeping pace with each other in spoonfuls. In its detail this way of feeding gives illuminated glimpses into a man's character. A valuable essay could be written on the subject, with a long and learned title.'

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, thy victory?

In the summer of 47 I went to Switzerland to spend a year studying Alpine tectonics. On the point of leaving, I learned that Bill was in hospital after a serious accident in the French Alps. I flew from Edinburgh to Basel and made my tortuous way to Gap, where I found Bill and Michael Ward still in blood-soaked clothes. They had been climbing with John Barford on the Ailefroide when they were struck by falling rocks. Bill and Michael had fractured skulls. Michael – with whom I had climbed on Nevis – had no idea who I was. John Barford was dead.

When I visited Bill four years ago in the Vale of Leven hospital, he was gravely ill. He had little strength to speak, but he told me he was going to die. Indeed the doctors thought this very likely. Bill looked on death, and indeed on every eventuality, with a quite extraordinary composure. He knew no fear.

Sitting in a slit-trench at dusk waiting to be overrun by the 15th Panzer Division, Bill systematically destroyed everything of use to the enemy. He came across an address book: every name in it was the name of a mountaineer. He reflected on how much he had learned from these men, and been given by them, and thought how little he had been able to give in return.

Bill wouldn't want us to mourn for him! As an experienced mystic, he was confident that through death he would arrive at a higher level of perception and adoration.

Integer vitae scelerisque purus

The man whose way of life is characterised by moral integrity, and whose heart is pure, needs not the weapons of lesser mortals . . .

Bill exemplified the truth of Horace's words. He trained himself to develop Purity, Fearlessness, Truthfulness, Selflessness, Humility, and Love of all fellow creatures. Again and again Bill advised us that: 'Our search for beauty on the mountain has to be a conscious one. . . . Wings do not grow of their own accord.'

Describing his first ascent – the Cobbler – he wrote: 'The rock had beauty in it. Always before I had thought of rock as a dull mass. But this rock was the living rock,

pale grey and clean as the air itself, with streaks of shiny mica and white crystals of quartz. It was a joy to handle such rock and feel the coarse grain under the fingers. . . . From that day I became a mountaineer.'

Bill knew that I, too, loved rock. Of one of the many climbs we made while Bill was writing the *Rock Climbing Guide to Glencoe*, he said: 'I looked up and confess to a twinge of conscience at encouraging McIntyre to face as leader the dire troubles in front. But I need not have worried. He is a geologist. Rock in any shape or form, at whatever angle, is the delight of his heart. . . . If he were ever about to fall off an overhang he would, just before parting company with the rock, draw his tongue over the surface to bring out the colour. I have observed him do this at other times and feel quite confident he would do it then.'

A fellow Prisoner-of-War encouraged Bill in meditation, which Bill continued to practice for the rest of his life. He also contributed two breath-taking articles to the Journal: *The Evidence of Things not Seen* in 1946 and *The Approach Route to Beauty* in 1948.

'May it not be possible,' he wrote, 'by some practical method to help one's mind to grow in awareness of beauty, to develop that faculty of perception which we frustrate and stunt if we do not exercise? The answer is that growth may be given to the spiritual faculty as simply as growth and health are given to the body – by awakening it from slumber, and providing nourishment and then by giving hard exercise. In this work there is no static position; one goes on, or one drops back. Therefore, and above all – persist.'

My mind fills with memories of being on mountains with Bill. A storm on the Matterhorn, and climbing SC Gully (joined by Tilman) were notable occasions. Another classic climb was Crowberry Gully jointly with Bill Murray and Bill MacKenzie. But there were two supreme days – or rather nights. The first was a winter camp on the summit of Bidean nam Bian, when on a moonlit night we found ourselves above the clouds.

. . . at my feet
 Rested a silent sea of hoary mist.
 A hundred hills their dusky backs upheaved
 All over this still ocean and beyond,
 Far, far beyond, the solid vapours stretched,
 In headlands, tongues, and promontory shapes,
 into the main Atlantic.

Are not the mountains, waves and skies a part
 Of me and of my soul, as I of them?
 (Lord Byron *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* 3:75)

Night and Morning on the Mountains

'The most acutely difficult expedition to achieve on mountains in this country', Bill wrote, 'is a moonlight climb in winter. . . . The problem is to combine leisure with a full moon, a hard frost, and a clear sky. . . . Success needs patience, long and persistent patience. . . . But at last the record frost of February 47 brought the long-sought opportunity.'

In *Undiscovered Scotland* Bill described how we traversed the Aonach Eagach ridge from east to west, then from west to east, and waited on the summit of Meall

Dearg for the dawn. For Bill 'corrie and mountain are the natural altars of the earth, to be used as such before one goes'.

I was privileged to share the experience with him. Wearing our padded flying suits, we sat down facing east. 'We fell still. We drove from our heads every thought of self and simply observed the scene detachedly, allowing it, and nothing else, to flow into us.'

'We knew, as surely as men know anything on earth, that the implacable hunter had drawn close. . . . One's ear caught the ringing of His footstep; and one's eye, *gleams like the flashing of a shield.*'

In *The Evidence of Things not Seen*, Bill wrote: 'Unlike the Lady of Shalott I failed to break the spell and gaze straight upon the ultimate reality; yet the hills that night were big with it; its signs unmistakable. It is this that mountaineers style *the mystery of hills*. Put more broadly, it is the mystery of the universe, where the forms of man or mountain may be likened to veils that reveal its being and yet mask the true essence.'

'Something in that night cried out to us: that the world was full of a Divine splendour, which must be sought within oneself before it might be found without: that our task was to see and know. From the deeps of the earth to the uttermost star above, the whole creation had throbbed with a full and new life; its music one song of honour to the beautiful; its Word, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory . . .*'

'Sunrise opened the final movement. . . . The act of adoration had begun, for this was the sun's hour of morning song. In that we shared; for we could say to ourselves: *We had stood as sure stars stand, and moved as the moon moves, loving the world.*'

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
(Gerard Manley Hopkins *God's Grandeur*)

'We had set out in search for adventure and we had found beauty. Thus we had found them both in their fuller sense; for in the architecture of hill and sky, as in great art and music, there is an everlasting harmony with which our own being had this night been made one. What more may we fairly ask of mountains?

'The truth is that in getting to know mountains a man gets to know himself. That is why men truly live when they climb.'

Bill concluded this account with these words: 'We came down in the forenoon to a point about a thousand feet above the Glencoe road. We found a patch of sun-bathed turf, on which we curled up side by side. There kept running through my head, between waking and sleeping, a recently read verse:'

Thou shouldst die as he dies,
For whom none sheddeth tears;
Filling thine eyes
And fulfilling thine ears
With the brilliance . . . the bloom
and the beauty . . .

This is *precisely* what Bill Murray did. And it's his wish for us.

Donald McIntyre.





I REMEMBER well my first climb with Bill Murray. It was in June in the mid-30s. Rob Anderson and I were at the Sutherlands' hostel at Glen Brittle, drying out after a wet walk from Sligachan when two others appeared equally soaked. They were Bill and Ross Higgins. Next morning the weather relented, so, Ross not wishing to climb, we invited Bill to come on our rope. This should merit an exclamation mark since in future climbs he was usually in the lead. It was a day to remember, a scorcher, but brilliantly clear. It was also our first day in the Cuillin. We went up Sgurr Alasdair, by the N. Buttress, along the ridge, over the Inaccessible and down with the sun. All the time Bill climbed as though born to it.

Bill's enthusiasm and climbing ability developed rapidly. So did a feeling or opinion in the JMCS, interesting to think of now, that our seniors in the SMC were becoming fuddy-duddies, somehow standing in the way of progress and censoring parties who returned from hard ice-climbs long after dark. At the centre of this movement was the notorious quartet, Murray, MacKenzie, MacAlpine and Dunn. During this period they pioneered many hard routes and first winter ascents.

JMCS monthly meetings in Glasgow in those days tended to end in vigorous discussion. Bill, a most eloquent speaker, was not interrupted during the silences in his well-ordered discourse. There was some puckish humour inevitable with people like Archie MacAlpine around. Once, in the general talk before a club dinner, Bill was in earnest discussion, menu card held behind him, Archie slipped round and put a match to it, Bill wheeled round, for a moment speechless. Bill did not become so involved with technique or with one area to the exclusion of exploring and delighting in the varied ranges in Scotland. And contrary to the opinion that his pre-war climbs were the pinnacle of his climbing achievement, it was more a range that maintained its height well into the Fifties, from the Alps to Everest.

Possibly the best climb we had together was in the narrow confines of SC Gully, that spectacular ice-route on Stob Coire nan Lochan. Oddly, perhaps my chief recollection is of standing for an infinity of time on steep ice hemmed between vertical walls which stretched above to meet the same infinity. I watched Bill cutting the classic way. First a horizontal line with the pick, then downward blows with pick or adze to clear out a neat triangle, the trick being to alter the blows to the toughness or fragility of the ice. Soon he was cutting hand holds too, as the surface steepened in swelling bulges, slowly he disappeared from sight, the rope followed, chips of ice rattled down. That one pitch took him nearly two hours of unrelenting care and effort.

It seems unnecessary to relate the stories of Bill's doings already told so brilliantly in his first two books. So turn to the man himself and read, or re-read, the living epics of one of the finest mountaineers of his time. But there is one other incident I must recall. It happened on Uja Tirche, in Garhwal. There were four of us, Bill, Tom MacKinnon, Tom Weir and myself. We were on a tiny spur overlooking an ice-chute which narrowed steeply to the corniced apex of two ridges. We were descending from the summit and had taken off our crampons as the snow was soft and balling up, and we now had to cross the slope. Bill tested the ice and found it wet and brittle, again crampons were a hazard. He carried on cutting steps, large and tiring. The afternoon was wearing on but the thin veil of mist had cleared revealing an incredible sight of light and depth of bottomless dusk, Kamet dominated the north, a white spearhead, with the nearer ridges of Tibet merging into the distant plateau.

Climbers at the top of Fiachail A' Choire Chais, Cairngorm. Photo: Jas Hepburn.

Charlie Hornsby and Roddy Kirkwood on the summit of Everest during the 1994 British Mount Everest Medical Expedition. Photo: Hornsby Collection.

After a while he came back and the rest of us each did a stint, then Bill went out again cutting, cutting, against the increasing drag of about 200ft of rope. When he finally stepped on to the faraway ridge we felt a share in his relief. By the time the last man had crossed, using a sling with a karabiner sliding along the rope the stars were out and the last light almost gone.

That effort of Bill's in closing the long arc of steps must have been one of the finest feats of icemanship up to that time in the Himalaya.

D. Scott.

I FIRST met Bill Murray in either 1932 or 1933 when we both worked in the same Union Bank of Scotland Office in Glasgow, although in different departments. He was younger than I by five or six years and for the next two years we remained on nodding terms only.

I was surprised when he turned up at one of the training meets run by the JMCS. It happened to be at Arrochar and I remember saying to him 'What brings you here?', and his reply that he had just joined the Club and wanted to learn how to climb. To which I replied that he would go with Tom MacKinnon. And so things moved on.

At an Easter Meet based at Kinlochleven, on the first day of which Tom and me went over all the Mamores starting off from Fort William, we were met on our arrival at Kinlochleven by Kenneth Dunn who had a marvellous piece of news. All our travel problems were now solved. The club had a new member, who turned out to be Bill's brother-in-law, Archie MacAlpine, the owner of a car.

Everything changed after that and a foursome was born. Our progress together from then on was to climb, in summer particularly, every route in Glencoe and Nevis, especially Rubicon Wall. Bill became very good indeed, bags of determination and a great companion. Some of our routes were new. This was but the prelude. Bill and me began to see other possibilities such as how the classic routes could be attempted in winter conditions when the mountains were plastered in snow and ice and were at their most beautiful, and on this we embarked despite heavy criticism by the SMC Committee of the time for what we were doing. This in no way deterred us.

Our winter climbs in Glencoe – Garrick's Shelf, Crowberry Gully, Deep-Cut Chimney on Stob Coire Nam Beith; on Nevis – Tower Ridge, Observatory Ridge and North-East Buttress, Comb Gully, Observatory Ridge again (J.H.B. Bell, Bill and me) in wonderful conditions at the beginning of May when at the day's end the moon rose on one side and the sun set on the other. Bell observed afterwards to me – 'there is one thing – it will never be popular in the SMC.' It was the beginning of progress!!

This progress included quite a few advances in equipment with head torches, short ice-axes (adapted from a slater's hammer, the idea of Bill Bennet, who ran a slater/plumber business in Partick, Glasgow), slings, karabiner (frowned on at the time), boots from Lawrie (the best at the time), windproof outer clothing.

I often speculate as to what would have emerged had not the war intervened. After the war, Bill joined the SMC and soon became involved with the Glencoe Rock Climbing Guidebook, with the assistance of several of his friends in checking

out. We were also active in the acquisition of Lagangarbh, another idea which was not viewed enthusiastically by the Committee of that time, but which prevailed. Much has been written by Bill himself about specific matters and others will contribute to their own view of his achievements.

For me, there is a great gap in the departure of a friend of more than 60 years, one with whom I do not believe I ever had a fundamental altercation, and with whom I could discuss our commonly-held view that mountains were part of our lives, and mountaineering a way of life and not a sport. In his later life, he expressed to me one great regret – that he had not learned to ski and thus enjoy the mountain scene from a different angle.

My profound sympathy goes out to his wife, Anne.

He leaves very pleasant memories.

W.M. MacKenzie.

Bill Murray's work in mountain conservation

'Choice words, and measured phrase, above the reach

Of ordinary men . . .'

Wordsworth, *Resolution and Independence*.

BILL MURRAY stands alongside James Bryce and Frank Fraser Darling in the pantheon of Scottish conservation. He made a major contribution to the protection of Highland landscape through his writing, through his work in voluntary and official bodies, but also through the inspiration he provided by his writing and his example. This may yet prove to be his greatest legacy to Scotland.

Bill's commitment to mountain landscape of course is self-evident, if latent, in his earliest mountain writing – though it is intriguing to note that as a fiery young tiger in the 1930s, he felt no qualms over the impact of the new Glen Coe road, a source of huge dismay to older and more Salvationist observers. The transcendental vision of *Mountaineering in Scotland* and *Undiscovered Scotland* has come to colour many of our attitudes to our mountain landscapes in the same way as it has informed our view of Scottish climbing. But it was not until 1960, when the National Trust for Scotland in an inspired moment commissioned Bill to undertake the survey ultimately published as *Highland Landscape*, that he was brought up sharp against the need to protect these landscapes against the further ravages of hydro development and afforestation. The authority and conviction of that book (the more remarkable because, as Bill admitted, the fieldwork was carried out over a period of six weeks' camping in filthy weather, doubling as a honeymoon) has ensured that its impact, modest at first, has been long-lasting and pervasive. *Highland Landscape*, published in 1962, provided much of the basis for our current, still inadequate, system of landscape protection through the designation of National Scenic Areas. Its superb characterisations of our diverse topography, often close in quality to blank verse, are endlessly quoted in area studies such as that from the recent Cairngorms Working Party, proving – if proof were needed – that no-one has yet improved on them. As with the writings of Sir Walter Scott, Bill's articulation of the essential qualities of Highland landscape has permanently enhanced our perceptions.

After *Highland Landscape*, Bill had a long relationship with NTS as the Trust's mountain adviser. Ultimately, however, he found his position increasingly untenable with successive conflicts over the interpretation of Unna's instructions and related matters; he finally resigned from the post in 1982. I cherish a memory from one of an apparently endless and inconclusive series of meetings in Glen Coe with the Trust in the Seventies and Eighties to discuss Those Bridges, when (the rest of the group having dwindled, distantly debating, into the Hidden Valley) Bill and I rested companionably on a knoll above the Coire Gabhail gorge. In reminiscent vein Bill described how in the Thirties he and JMCS friends would cross the river below Coire nan Lochan, boulder-hopping under heavy packs. 'I was good at it,' he said; 'The others quite often fell in.' This with his most endearing wry grin, abashed at his own small vanity. With Bill you had to wait patiently for such moments, but you waited willingly.

Bill became actively involved in countryside conservation and its politics in the later 1960s. As a result of the Countryside in 1970 Conference (in which Bob Grieve and Tom Weir played a major part within the Scottish Study Group) the Countryside Commission for Scotland was established in late 1967. Bill was appointed as one of the founding Commissioners, serving three terms from 1968 to 1980, a stint in which he was exceeded only by Duncan Ross. Over the years the Commission involved Bill in a huge amount of unpaid work, and much tedious time-consuming travel across the grain of the country from Loch Goil to monthly meetings at Perth.

To his credit, Bill was no politician. He probably lacked even the guile to be a reasonably effective committee operator, finding it difficult to make common cause with fellow Commissioners of very disparate interests to form or join any kind of power bloc. A man always as precise in his own utterances as in his carefully crafted writing – indeed, sometimes meticulous to a fault in that regard – Bill found it hard to thole the less-inhibited approach of 'commissioners who had no intimate knowledge of the countryside – . . . whose awareness was strictly confined, – yet who could all express strongly confident opinions on subjects of which they were quite profoundly ignorant'. Unfortunately, that capacity remains virtually one of the prime criteria for membership of public bodies. Bill's own standards of judgment and integrity were of the very highest, while pretension was entirely absent from his character. Usually humorously tolerant of human foibles, he was scathing of what he saw as arrogance, wilful ignorance, underhand dealing, or naked selfishness.

What Bill did bring to the Commission was his total commitment to mountain recreation and mountain landscape, a field knowledge of Scotland virtually unmatched (especially in the early days) by staff or other members, and quiet authority. The Commission was to draw heavily on these assets when it formulated its system of scenery protection in *Scotland's Scenic Heritage* in 1978. After a valiant but ultimately unsuccessful struggle to pioneer a system of objective landscape classification, Commission staff fell back on a largely subjective evaluation in which their debt to *Highland Landscape* is often self-evident.

However, both Bill and the Commission were sorely tested by the furious wrangle which erupted over the Coruisk track and bridges only a few months into the life of the CCS (for younger members of the Club, the fullest published

account of this seminal event can be found in (*SMCJXXIX*, 111-120). I know that Bill himself agonised as to whether or not he should have resigned from the Commission over its inept and unpropitious handling of this first key issue. He had strongly advocated the protection of wild country for its own sake (at that time a novel concept in Scotland) as one of the key roles for the new Commission in a powerful personal credo which he published in the *Scots Magazine* at the time of the CCS's creation. He put a huge amount of work into resisting both the initial proposals to build the track and bridges, and subsequent plans to bring the track into a usable state and to replace the bridge at Scavaig after it was destroyed by a 'storm'.

At almost the same time as he became a Commissioner, Bill became Chairman of the Scottish Countryside Activities Council. SCAC originated in a conference convened by the Ramblers' Association in 1967 to assemble recreation interest groups to advance their cause with the new CCS. It drew on a wide range of countryside interests, especially from the West of Scotland grass-roots of rambling and cycling, youth hostelling and camping, but also from the senior climbing clubs. Recognising the crucial role of strength in diversity, Bill fostered and directed SCAC from 1968 to 1982 with understated authority and sagacity. He commanded immense respect and affection from the members. SCAC was never intended as a radical lobbying force – the varied interests of its member organisations have always acted as a constraint on the more exuberant factions – but it became, and has survived as, a useful consultative and representative forum, a respected moderate voice. Under Bill's chairmanship SCAC actively promoted the conservation of wild land in Scotland, drew on Adam Watson's survey work on bulldozed tracks in the Cairngorms to badger CCS and the Scottish Office into limiting further damage, led the campaign against the Grampian Way long distance footpath proposal, and carried out useful surveys on topics ranging from rights of way in Central Scotland to camping and caravanning problems in the Highlands.

I suspect that Bill derived minimal enjoyment from his long involvement in Commissions, Councils and Committees – he chaired about 100 SCAC meetings in all – but he probably regarded them as a necessary evil to which concerned individuals must contribute time and mental energy, which in his case might have been more profitably directed to writing. He conducted meetings of SCAC Council with his invariable courtesy, gravity and careful expression, but in Executive meetings he would occasionally come out with flashes of the puckish humour that he kept for comfortable company – humour as dry, as smooth, as the finest *fino muy seco*. When in 1981 SCAC aligned itself with the Mountaineering Council of Scotland and other conservation bodies against the Lurcher's Gully proposals for ski development at Cairn Gorm, Bill gave evidence at the Public Inquiry in Kingussie. Diffident as he was, he manifestly did not relish any part of that experience, but the sincerity and passion of his evidence clearly carried much weight with the Reporter.

In his seventieth year, Bill appeared to resolve to shed most of these larger and more demanding commitments. His handing over of the mantle of SCAC in 1982 was implemented with characteristic decision and directness. Having decided it was time to go, he assiduously phoned round all the member bodies, informed

them that he was retiring, and gave them a firm directive that I would succeed him. Then he told me. By way of revenge I persuaded a very willing SCAC to create the role of Honorary President for him, and picked his brains mercilessly for years thereafter.

However, Bill also took on a great fistful of other roles. He was President of the Scottish Area of the Ramblers' Association from 1966 to 1982. Having identified (with Donald Bennet, Sandy Cousins and others) the need after the Coruisk fiasco to reform the doddering Association of Scottish Climbing Clubs as the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, he served a term as the second President of MCS (1972-75). He said himself that it seemed appropriate that he should follow Bill MacKenzie in the role, though he did not anticipate the enjoyment he had derived from following Bill in earlier days. He was a founder member of the Friends of Loch Lomond when that group was set up in 1978, and served on its Council until 1988. The Friends' Newsletter for Autumn 1992 includes a nostalgic panegyric on 'The old Loch Lomond road' which shows to perfection the Murray capacity, undimmed by age, to blend acute perception of landscape with vivid and precise expression. In such writing he forces us to recognise that which we had seen, but never truly perceived.

Even in his seventies Bill lent his support to the new bodies that sprang up to pursue the vision he had articulated for the protection of wild country. He took an advisory role in the formation of the Scottish Wild Land Group in 1982. He was a founding trustee of the John Muir Trust (1984-86), helping to provide the Trust with the springboard of solid credibility from which it has gone on to achieve great things within a remarkably short time span. He was a Patron of the Scottish Council for National Parks from its reconstitution in December 1990. In all these roles he not only gave freely of his time and experience, but contributed inspirational articles for newsletters and campaigning publications. The last of these, a foreword for a booklet on Scotland's mountains for Scottish Wildlife and Country-side Link written only a few days before he died, is a fitting epitome of his view of the relationship between climbing and conservation.

In his concern for the protection of mountain landscape and wild land, Bill Murray has exerted a powerful influence that has extended well beyond Scotland. US Vice-President Al Gore, in his highly-regarded conservation treatise *Earth in the Balance*, quotes Bill with obvious respect and admiration. The inspirational quality of Bill's writing, with its flame-like intensity and clarity, is such that in future years he may well be recognised and esteemed more in that conservation role even than for his contribution to mountaineering.

In our age of flexible morality and uncertain conviction, Bill Murray came closer than anyone I have known to the model of a man *sans peur et sans reproche*. On casual acquaintance he could appear distant, but to those to whom he extended his friendship he showed absolute loyalty, infinite kindness, and touches of wicked humour. We who had the privilege of knowing and working with him over many years strive to emulate and to carry forward the quietly passionate commitment of this most humane of mountain conservationists.

R. Aitken.

PROFESSOR SIR ROBERT GRIEVE j. 1944

ALL OF US have to die, and the last thing an active climber wants is to be the oldest occupant in a geriatric nursing home. My memories of Bob are of a tall athletic man who accepted every challenge life threw at him, whether it was a hard crux on a summer or winter mountain, or a difficult political decision that would expose him to success or failure.

I took the photograph that accompanies these words after he had led three hard routes in Ardgour, all of them first ascents. He was a Grandfather then, yet he was climbing better than I had ever seen him. The date was 1963. In the past 15 years he had travelled the world, refusing tempting offers of work, because as a Town and Country Planner he felt his destiny was in Scotland.

In 1965, when he was President of our Club, I remember him arriving so late at night I knew it couldn't be a social call. It was to speak aloud his troubled thoughts to a friend. The gist of it was, that having resigned his job as Chief Planning Officer in the Scottish Office in order to occupy the first Chair of Town and Regional Planning in Glasgow University, he had been invited by the Scottish Secretary to move to Inverness and be Chairman of the Highlands and Islands Development Board for five years.

Bob's level headed wife, May, had advised him to make the move in case they appointed somebody worse. I recalled Bob telling me that when he got married in the mid 1930s they set off from Glasgow on a tandem on their honeymoon, and in three weeks covered 650 miles. Northward of Garve many of the roads had grass growing down the middle. During that trip, because the back wheel collapsed under the weight of their camping gear, he had to rebuild it twice.

At the SMC centenary dinner, held in the banqueting hall of Blair Castle, in the spring of 1989, Bob in proposing the toast to the Club, recalled the time of the depression, the discovery of the mountains by working class folk like himself, and the camaraderie of the interesting characters you met who were addicted to the hills. At that time the Cuillin had the magnetism of the Himalaya. As for the SMC, he said he had once thought of it as a bunch of stuffy old gentlemen. (That provoked a good laugh and approving cries of 'Here! Here!')

Yes, the age structure of the Club is a lot younger now. But Bob recalled his reverence on meeting the old pioneers who had opened up the mountain ways; A.E. Robertson whom he visited frequently in Morningside before his death; Percy Unna who enlivened every AGM by his wit and good sense; Sandy Harrison who died last year after 70 years of membership; Willie Ling and George Glover, explorers of the far northern cliffs, and Stuart Jack who always sang the Club Song with quavering emotion – grand old men.

I've just been rereading Bob's article, *A Great Day*, in the Club's volume *A Century of Scottish Mountaineering*. It was wartime and he was on holiday with his wife and young family at Pirnmill. He had arranged to meet Hamish Hamilton in Glen Rosa for an attempt to climb the Rosa Pinnacle by the South Ridge Direct. Without transport Bob had to be up early and batter across the hills more or less in a straight line, and a happy moment it was when they met.

They achieved what they had set out to do, and with minimum detail, Bob conveys the exhilaration of the climb; but while Hamish had only to jog down for dinner at the hotel, Bob himself had to fight his way back over ridges and glens in

a rising gale that drained his remaining strength. Seventeen hours from leaving the cottage in early morning he reached the door at 11.30pm.

He ends his story thus: 'My wife at the fire turned to the opening door with a degree of apprehension warranted by the hour, and the place. She looked at my face and then at my clothes. "Did you have a good day of it?" she asked. I found my lips stiff and reluctant. "A great day," they said. But I was thinking – as so many times before and so often since – of the difference between the black jolting hostility of the mountains at night, of the intractability of boulders, peat hags and rivers, and the warm, lighted comfortable precision of a human dwelling.'

Bob reckoned that he owed pretty well everything he had become in life to the great outdoors: mountaineering, canoeing, skiing. The huge gathering of colleagues and friends filling St. Giles Cathedral on December 16 for the Memorial Service, spoke volumes on the impact Professor Sir Robert Grieve had made on all who ever associated with him – the twinkling eyes, and the humour he brought to bear on any subject, often with an appropriate aphorism snatched from his exceptional memory and wide reading.

T. Weir.

TO THE above excellent account I would like to add a few remarks on the Grieve of the late 1940s to mid-1950s, a period when his contribution to the society of Edinburgh climbers was probably maximal – at weekends as an SMC member on the JMCS bus and on Thursday evenings at Daddy Milne's bar in Hanover Street. He more than anyone provided the sheer joy of those get togethers.

Others contributed their own sense of humour and of practical fun, uproarious or thrown, but yon tall beaming Bob with his round, bright eyes and spectacles radiated a whole midsummer of personal accomplishments, a selfless warmth of delight that melted nearly every heart, and even won grudging admiration from the one or two staunch Defenders of the Dour, who professed to disapprove (when anyone was looking) such 'blarney'.

It played about all he said, illuminated his marvellous stories; and few could resist its blandishments, least of all the owner of it who, after a particularly outrageous triumph, would lean back, drain his malt, and suck his moustache with the quizzical satisfaction of a large benign tom cat. But – and this is the extraordinary thing – it was never cattish, never malicious, but was powered by a most generous and sympathetic Humanity. And though charm lubricated all he said and did, its flowing was unconscious (even if sometimes unashamedly indulged in!) and weighted by a questing intelligence and basic gravity that saw him through the most (to us) dispiriting places of work to eventual high public success.

Daddy Milne's, however, rather than the political corridors, witnessed his finest performances; there he acted his stories superbly, without self-consciousness. The whole room, not just our fireside, fell silent, agape, as he stalked a stag (so many were gamekeeper tales) on hands and knees round chairs, beneath tables, with a continuous carefully whispered narrative in the best JMCS Gaelic; when the climax was reached, an audible gasp broke out, and the audience stamped and shouted applause. Bob, flushed and brow-mopping, resumed his seat, happy at causing such happiness.

He had a sweet Irish-tenor voice and when the Welshmen (they were miners then) filled Daddy Milne's after Murrayfield he would captivate them with songs

from the Gaelic, along with Dick Broon's deep-voiced offerings of *Gleann a' Chaolais* and suchlike: so that pausing between their flawless harmonies of *Cwm Rhondda* or *Cyfri 'r Geifr* some silicotic pensioner of them would lean and whisper 'Duw, we may have the voices, boy, but you have the bloody TIWNS!' This JMCS-Gaelic propensity of Grieve – always (like his name-sake) a Heroic-Romantic – exhibited itself as memorably-spurious Fingalian Lays featuring various legendary SMC members in due translational garb: A.E. Robertson, for example, appearing as the Greatest Eater-of-Bens of them all.

After closing time we would engage, at the kerb, that famous Hanover St. One-Man-Band to play alternately Orange and Green - *Dolly's Brae* or *Kevin Barry* - while passers-by cheered, or not; those were primitive days. There often followed Serious Discussion at the Mound before dispersal, during which Bob eagerly opened safety valves and lamented his role as a Non-Directional Superfluous Man approaching the Male Menopause, bewailing somewhat unconvincingly his Romantic Fate while, say, MacIennan or Hewit, Ritchie or Russell slapped him down with mercilessly ribald Common Sense. The streets were otherwise quite silent then, at eleven o'clock. Primitive Days.

Of course, he survived to wield, by the skills of his richly-varied character, considerable power in – usually – the right places. But when he had achieved (that I am certain he truly considered) his most cherished promotion, the Presidency of the SMC, he would often return, in thoughtful talk, to those Ambrosian Nights at Daddy Milne's, those herb-smokingly hilarious trips on the JMCS bus (cf. SM CJ xxvii, 153, 1961), and behind all this to evenings of descent from the summit, when he would kneel at some burn to slake his thirst before rising and delivering a mock-elegiac salute to his mountain. Mock? There was no mockery in the man. Let us finish with a translation by MacKechnie from the old Gaelic poem *A' Chomhachag*, so much a part of his (and our) heritage.

It was a long unbroken companionship between the water
and me, the sap of the great hills without drunkenness;
and I drinking it without stopping.

G.J.F. Dutton.

ALEX SMALL j. 1945

CLIMBERS come in all shapes and sizes. Talking about his frailty of gait, Alex Small explained it this way: 'The thing to remember is that I had polio and therefore couldn't take part in team games, and I was distinguished through most of my youth by the fact that I wore bandages on both knees as I was constantly falling. But at the age of 15 or thereabouts I found I could walk reasonably well and far. And then I found this book by T.C.F. Brotchie with the walks you could do from the tram termini round about Glasgow. And having done a whole lot of these I found myself on the Campsies and there to my astonishment I saw three gentlemen tied together with a rope, climbing a piece of rock.'

I was not one of these gentlemen, but in 1932 or early 1933, it was below Slack Dhu, the biggest escarpment of terraced basalt on the Campsies, I first came upon Alex Small, seated at a wee fire, a sketch-pad in one hand, busily drawing with the other to capture the scene before him. Round the fire were the Clydebank boys, early explorers of the crags who had yet to form themselves into the Creagh Dhu

Club. My pal, Matt Forrester, and I were in competition with them and drew for the first ascent of Coffin Gully, a horrible place.

That day, though, we were not carrying a rope, content to do an easier route to the right of the gully, and when Alex Small asked if he could join us we nodded assent, unaware of his handicap. On the awkward approach by scree and boulders we were wondering if we were wise, his balance was so poor. But once on the rocks, Matt ahead and me close behind Alex, he needed only advice and a helping hand occasionally.

We marvelled at his guts, while thinking that with his obvious physical handicap it was unlikely he would ever be a confident climber. How wrong we were. Before long he had joined the Tricouni Club and the JMCS, regularly attending meets and taking on hard climbs. In 1986, when I was President of the SMC I had the pleasure of being at a celebratory dinner in Kingshouse to commemorate the most notable ascent of 1936, the climbing of Agag's Groove on Buachaille Etive Mor.

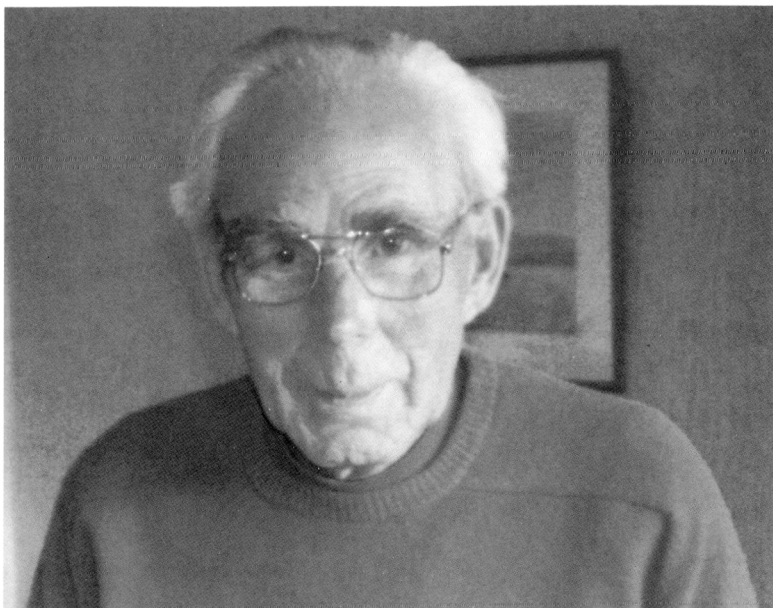
On August 16 that year two parties, three in each, were in competition on the sheer wall, thought to be impossible by the fathers of the Club. On Curved Ridge witnesses had gathered to watch; one of them Bill Murray with his camera. Of the climb he wrote: 'No photograph can convey its sensational aspect as we watched from below: on no short climb (360ft) have I seen a bolder lead.'

The six climbers were all members of the JMCS. Alex was in the party that got there first, roped up, donned sandshoes, and with Hamish Hamilton leading, Alex Anderson middle man, and Alex last, they were on their way. Hamish made history, too, by losing a sandshoe on the way up, and as Alex put it: '... added to his numerous distinctions by making the first hopping descent of the Curved ridge on a solitary rubber shoe.' MacKenzie, Dunn and McAlpine were the second party.

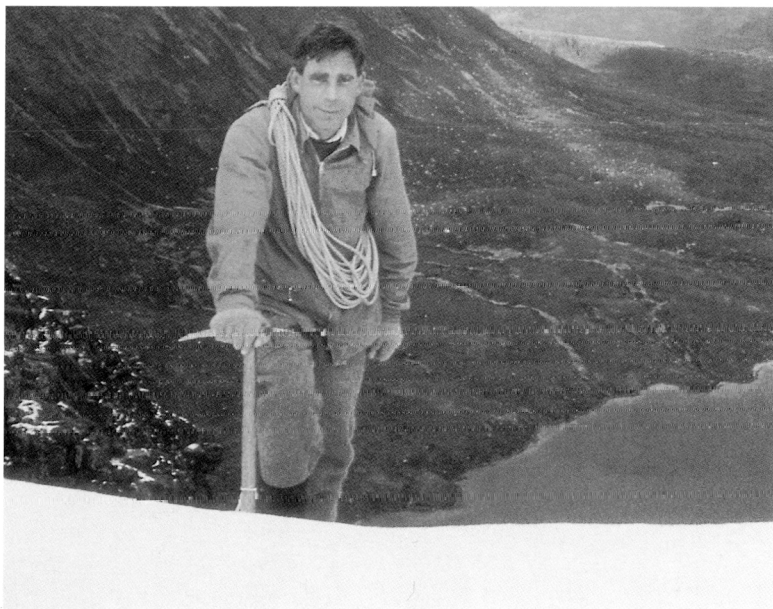
Four of the six who did the climb on that day 55 years earlier were at the dinner table, and the banter was good when the Principal Toast to Agag's Groove was made, the keynote being nostalgia for the good old unsophisticated days before mechanical devices crept in to make climbing safer. Hamish said: 'Ironmongery was frowned upon. If you carried a piton with you, you were regarded as a softie. I think free climbing has much more to offer than the present mechanised approach, but then I'm one of the older school and this is understandable.'

Alex said: 'It was literally free climbing, no slings, nothing. You knew if you came off it was going to be quite rough. The Journal for 1938 reports Alex's exploration of Fracture Route with Jim Wood in August, and a fortnight later climbing it throughout with Hamish Hamilton. In September, again with Jim Wood, he opened up Helical Route, describing it '... as earnest and energetic with open, varied climbing and splendid situations, although original only in its middle section'. Hyphen Rib he thought worth following '... for its interesting moments'.

By the time he did these routes he was using the Crowberry Direct as a route of descent from the Crowberry Tower. One of his most memorable descents, though, occurred on November 27, 1938 on Stob Choire Odhair below the summit on a 45° snow slope which avalanched and carried Jim Wood and Alex down 300ft to 400ft, Wood breaking his ankle, and Alex, with typical understatement, describes their return to Blackmount Lodge as 'difficult and trying'. He brings out a good point, that in the event of injury to the lower leg the boot should not be removed but tied tightly in place. 'By doing so it was possible to proceed, carrying almost normal weight on a fractured tibia.' Alex does not mention his own leg injury, nor did this second affliction dent his enthusiasm for winter climbing.



GILBERT LITTLE. *Photo: Don Green.*



GEORGE PEAT. *Photo: A.H. Hendry.*



ALEX SMALL on Beinn Ghlas. *Photo: Donald Bennet.*



ADAM WATSON. *Photo: Tom Weir.*

The two page *In Memoriam* notice of the death of Hamish Hamilton was written by Alex Small and Bob Grieve. (SMCJ 1991). Bob described Hamish as the most courageous man he had ever climbed with. I think most who climbed with Alex would apply the same accolade to the disadvantaged, but ever cheerful, Alex in his active years. Sadness entered his life latterly.

Not until I was raking for photographs did I find one, showing Bob and Alex on top of the Douglas Boulder. It was there on Ben Nevis that Alex proposed to Celia, a school teacher, as was Alex, and jointly after marriage they staffed Tarbet Primary School. At weekends it was open house to their climbing friends.

T. Weir.

ALEX SMALL was one of the great characters of the Club during his 50 years of membership. Despite the severe physical handicap which dogged him all his life, he had an unquenchable courage and enthusiasm for the mountains, and a rare sense of humour. The hospitality, which he and Cis gave to climbers at the schoolhouse in Tarbet during his years as headmaster there, was legendary.

The highlight of his climbing career, the first ascent of Agag's Groove, is part of Scottish climbing history. He kept going for many years after that, but at an ever slower pace. The pleasure of a day out with Alex had to be weighed against the probability of benightment, particularly in winter.

In addition to his Presidency of the Club, Alex was President of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland from 1976 to 1978. He was a dedicated member of the Club who filled many lesser, but no less demanding, roles: as custodian of Lagangarbh in the years when the juvenile delinquents were still active; as Convener of the Western District Committee when he had the responsibility of finding speakers to entertain the Glasgow audiences; and as Editor of District Guidebooks for which he had the task of extracting manuscripts from reluctant authors, which might be likened to getting blood out of a stone. All these roles he carried out with his customary good humour.

His unfailing cheerfulness and friendship were an inspiration to all who knew him, and for that we will remember him.

D. Bennet.

ADAM WATSON Sen. j. 1956

ADAM WATSON SEN. was born in May 1895 at Mains of Philorth near Fraserburgh and died seven weeks before his 100th birthday in hospital after a short illness.

On discharge from the Royal Artillery at the end of World War I he set up as a solicitor in Turriff where he became Town Clerk.

It was his schoolboy son with a passion to know all about the Cairngorms who started him hillwalking at the age of 50, putting his car at his disposal, driving him to the hills, sharing his days on foot and on cross-country skis. In 1951 he was in the Jotunheim with young Adam, Tom Weir and Douglas Scott. In the Fifties he climbed with Patey and others on the sea cliffs of the North East and in the Cairngorms. In the mid-Fifties he had a number of further trips to Norway climbing in the Jotunheim with the Norsake Tindeklub, in Romsdal with Arne Randers Heen, in Lofoten with Svolvaer climbers and alone in the mountains of Lyngen and Dovre Fjell.

He was a member of the Inverarnan fraternity in its heyday immortalised in a couple of lines in Patey's version of the Club Song:

*All the Bergkameraden will return to Inverarnan
Descending from the mountains through the snow.*

Inverarnan in the Forties and Fifties was a Temperance Hotel run by the Girvan family. Nevertheless, it offered unbelievable hospitality to mountaineers and its New Year parties were legendary. The Bergkameraden included Rob Anderson, Bob Grieve, Hamish Hamilton, Bill MacKenzie, George Roger, Douglas Scott, Tom Weir and others. On that side of the country he climbed the good winter routes of those days. On the other side of Scotland as well as climbing he made many, many ski mountaineering expeditions often alone but also with the eastern equivalent of the Bergkameraden: his son, Mike Taylor, Bill Brooker, David Grieve and Derek Pyper.

Adam was a strong, all-round mountaineer, out in all weathers summer and winter at an age when most mountaineers are operating from an arm chair. Although never a leader of hard rock he could follow up to severe standard. As for ski-touring he gave it up, reluctantly, when he was 89.

Tom Weir recalls: 'What springs immediately to mind about Old Adam was his willingness to fall into line with anything you proposed and his generosity when it came to putting your interests before his. As for food his rucksack was well-stocked with goodies from the hotel where he lodged. Often enough he would meet me off the train, pick up Young Adam at his digs, drive to Braemar and then on up to Bob Scott's at Luibeg where we were always welcome. On one occasion we arrived at Bob's cottage in the wee sma' hours having driven through a blizzard until abandoning the car on the blocked private road.

We then had to pole the final miles on skis. This would be in the Fifties, notable for hard, snowy winters. This period was ideal for ski touring if you could get your car to the hills (in those days snow clearing was less efficient than it is now) and no one was bolder than Adam who made the most of every day.

He was tall with an upright bearing and clean shaven. There was a time when he looked younger than his white haired son. Sorrowfully, I heard of his death from bronchopneumonia. I thought he would reach the century.'

I.H.M. Smart and T. Weir.

GILBERT LITTLE, CBE, j. 1958

IN AN appreciation at the funeral in Perth, a former colleague declared that he was Little in name only, a view which would be shared by those who climbed with Gibby.

He came fairly late to mountaineering, while living in Dundee, but after joining the Grampian Club quickly became both ultramontane and salvationist, though he would probably have denied both descriptions. He just enjoyed being on and among hills and in the company of kindred spirits.

Gibby suffered multiple injuries in a fall of more than 100ft on Crystal Ridge, Coire Sputan Dearg, in 1954. This brought a pause in his rock climbing, but he was more annoyed by having to withdraw from the Grampian Club's Alpine Meet that year.

He was soon back on the hill and climbing with the verve which he had shown before the accident. While ever helpful to others in gaining their Munros, he was

what might be termed a reluctant bagger himself. He was persuaded to the completion of the Munros and Tops in the presence of 22 witnesses on Stob Coire Dhuibh above Loch Laggan in 1974. He had joined the SMC in 1958 and served on the Committee 1959-63.

By profession a water engineer, Gilbert Little's early career was with the Metropolitan Water Board with whom he served throughout the London blitz. After the war he moved to Aberdeen. Then from 1947 to 1961 he was water engineer for Dundee. From 1961 to his retirement in 1975 he was engineer/manager of the Lower Clyde Water Board.

No respecter of rank or dignity, he ruffled many feathers but made few, if any, lasting enemies and had a wide circle of friends of high and low degree.

Football enthusiast, malt-whisky connoisseur and collector, skilled gardener, photographer and the most generous of hosts, Gibby enjoyed a full life. It was shared with his wife, May, and continued into their retirement years in Comrie.

That life might well be summed up in the words of an SMC acquaintance, who in describing Gibby's driving to a fellow member in the Kingshouse bar, said it was 'con brio ...'

D. Green.

GEORGE PEAT, OBE, j. 1936

THERE is in the CC Journal of 1959 the following quotation from Colin Kirkus: 'All it is necessary to know about mountaineering is that we want to be in the right place at the right time with the right companion.'

Some of our older members must feel that George was the right companion. George started climbing after graduation. He was an athlete and competed in decathlons. This interest led to his being a judge at the Highland Games in Edinburgh and the Olympic Games in London. In 1938 he soloed the Cuillin Main Ridge and he was an early Munroist (28 *G. Peat 1957,-,-). In completing the Munros he took his car to places thought impossible and used roads which were later flooded.

He first went to the Alps in 1957 and 1958 and encountered bad weather which did not put him off. In 1959 the weather was better and on that occasion there were four SMC Georges climbing together (Peat, Ritchie, Roger and Freeman). This was probably the occasion referred to in Campbell's article in SMCJ 1971, xix, 351-355. When these four gentlemen left an Alpine hut someone said in a penetrating English accent: 'If there is one thing I'm sure of, it's that these four old gentlemen won't get up the Dent d'Herens.' And somebody answered darkly from the corner: 'Dinnae be too sure o' that. They're in the SMC.' They got up of course.

In subsequent summers he climbed in Switzerland - Valais, Bernina, Bregaglia, Oberland and Glarnerland. Then he made summer visits to the Dauphiné - a happy time but for the beginning of his eye trouble. His last mountain was the Dom in 1975 after he had retired as Convenor of Ross County. In 1976 he was growing blind. For years he did a daily round of seven miles near his home with a 'Seeing Eye' dog. His courage carried him through operations to remove his eyes. We were good friends for 54 years. We enjoyed many companionable silences. He did not let his love of golf intrude too much. He served the Club as the first Custodian of the Ling Hut. I only hope his memories of his climbing days sustained him through the 17 years of his blindness.

A.H. Hendry.

JIM ANTON j. 1929

MOST of Jim Anton's contemporaries have long gone and it falls to me, as one who knew him in his later years, to record his contribution to the Club and to pay my own tribute.

Jim spent a major part of his working life as a National Park warden in New Zealand. On retirement, he returned to Scotland and settled at Contin where he spent the rest of his life at his cottage, Sandpipers. He had a part time post as a water bailiff and enjoyed a quiet, but active, life until invited to be custodian of the Ling Hut.

Jim was 75 at the time, so obviously, old age is no protection from a Hut's Convener who urgently needs a new custodian and has noticed that you live only 40 miles down the road from the hut. As a custodian myself, he had my sympathy.

This was when I first met Jim and went to many of his work parties over the next seven years. He was a lively and interesting character, and despite a generation gap, we got on well. Jim was very conscientious and did a lot of hard work at Ling on his own.

Inevitably, advancing years slowed him down and when into his 80s he found the task too much and stood down.

I would like to record my admiration for a perfect gentlemen from a different generation and the Club's indebtedness to a good servant.

G. Peet.

MARK 'Cheeky' SINCLAIR j. 1987

I HEARD it on the radio: 'Two climbers killed on Parallel B Gully, Lochnagar.' Never for a minute did I believe it would be Mark and Neil. This winter has been so hard, so many callouts, we had just been talking about this two days previous in his mountaineering shop.

Mark joined the Royal Air Force Kinloss Mountain Rescue Team in the mid-1970s. He was superbly fit and on his first day on the hill bombed everybody into the deck. It was the usual Fort William party that night and we staggered back, had two hours sleep and then dragged him round the 12 Mamores Munros. He lost a bit of his cheekiness on that long day, but gained a nickname 'Cheeky'.

He quickly became a very competent mountaineer, specialising in winter mountaineering. Kinloss is ideally situated for the far north-west of Scotland, where he did a lot of new middle grade winter routes on Beinn Dearg, Liathach, Seana Braigh and An Teallach. In these days it was *en vogue* not to report your new routes, unlike nowadays.

Cheeky started to grow up as any mountaineer can because we are all children at heart, and soon became a party leader and a winter leader. On his first annual winter course as an instructor, which was held in the Cairngorms, I arrived late and Cheeky was sporting a black eye and missing two bottom teeth. The Royal Air Force Mountain Rescue Team's have a tremendous rivalry and in these days it was as bad as Celtic and Rangers. Cheeky had said something in his usual arrogant way to a young Leuchars troop, who then battered him for his cheek.

Next day he took the same young troop up one of the classic routes in Hell's Lum in the Cairngorms in wild conditions when the rest of us were hiding doing

techniques. He got off late at night having dragged the young troop across the plateau in a typical Cairngorm blizzard. His honour regained, they then sorted out their problem in the pub and became good friends.

In the early 1980s his climbing and his ability had gone beyond any of the current team and he was climbing regularly on the Ben doing many of the classic routes such as Orion Face Direct, Point Five, Galactic Hitch-hiker, Zero Gully, all solo. This was 1980, such is the measure of the man.

He travelled abroad to the usual places courtesy of the services: the Alps, the Himalayas, Peru and Canada, but his main love was winter climbing. In 1982 he was a member of a six-man expedition to climb Canadian ice. During this trip he did 30 routes including many British first ascents and including a few new routes. As the weakest member of this group I was having my usual epics, but after the first few days, Cheeky took me for a week which was the best week's climbing I have ever had. Most of the routes we did were nearly 1000ft long which were descended by abseiling and fairly serious down-climbing. Cheeky constantly proved his competence as a mountaineer, always looking after us all and soloing around, putting in protection, giving us confidence and help pushing our standards, and keeping us all safe.

But it wasn't just the climbing that mattered, the social scene was incredible. As we climbed Monday to Friday we took the weekends off and the parties were all weekend, without a doubt this group of unknown Scottish climbers out-drunk, out-talked and out-climbed some of Canada's top climbers. Mark was in his element in the alpine club hut library in Canmore, surrounded by thousands of books on mountaineering with a good dram and telling tales. This is what it is all about, glorious days.

He followed this trip up with a four-day visit to Kenya where he climbed the Diamond Couloir by the direct route, up and down to the summit in 24 hrs and back in Scotland without time to post his cards.

Lately, his heart was in North America and many of his recent adventures were in Alaska where he went to climb on some of the most remotest and magnificent peaks in the world. He loved the similarity to Scotland and to his love of winter climbing.

Cheeky was a very proud member of the SMC, dressed in his kilt with a good dram in his hand, he was very nationalistic and enjoyed the annual dinner in Fort William. Again he was in his element talking mountains. He was always getting the Mickey taken out of him, especially by Neil. Further embarrassment came on a trip to the CIC Hut when Neil and myself full of whisky danced on the table. Neil told Cheeky he had carved his name on the table, Cheeky walked out of the hut in disgust, it was all a joke.

Cheeky met Libby 10 years ago and they met fittingly in Clive Rowland's climbing shop in Elgin. It was the happiest I'd ever seen him. Libby was already a mountaineer with Moray Mountaineering Club and her family love the mountains and the outdoors. Mark and Libby went everywhere all over Scotland climbing and walking and the photos all over the house express the deep love they have for each other and the mountains. Libby gave him freedom to climb and do whatever he wanted, and as selfish as we mountaineers are, she never stopped him doing anything. They set up Moray Mountain Sports in Forres, and soon had a steady business where local climbers could meet, have a coffee and talk climbing. He would regularly spend time with the many young people who came in and give them

the benefit of his vast experience. He would regularly take people out, old and young alike and how many people in this area here have gained from his experience? Even his mother-in-law, aged 65, has 17 Munros to do, and did the Inaccessible Pinnacle in Skye on an awful day recently with him. His love for mountaineering was infectious and the history of Scottish mountaineering, especially in winter in the Cairngorms was his forte. He met Neil through the shop and they developed into a very formidable partnership. This was a partnership of youth and experience that climbed some of Scotland's hardest classic routes and put up a few new ones.

Cheeky could be arrogant, selfish, competitive and moody, but he could also be very kind-hearted and took many of us in including myself during times of personal trouble saying: 'Stay as long as you like, no problem.' That was the other side of him.

His dad started him off walking and climbing round the Arrochar/Loch Lomond area and he was always vanishing a bit farther each time. This must have been where he got his love for the mountains. He had a great passion for life and he loved children as Libby's nieces and nephews will tell you, like most mountaineers he was still a child at heart. He had 10 years of sports that he excelled in, but his passions was mountains and mountaineering and he developed into a tremendously safe and caring mountaineer. We have lost an outstanding friend and one of life's great characters but I feel he is still there watching, laughing and telling us how hard it was when he did that route or hill always in worse conditions. He is always watching our epics, we will all miss you and we will all take care of Libby and the family. Thanks for the memories.

D. Whalley (Heavy).

'Better to be a tiger for a day than a sheep for a lifetime.' Inscription on memorial plaque for Alex MacIntyre (killed in the Himalayas, 1982).

JAMES G. MESSER j. 1974

JIM MESSER was a lad o' pairts. His talent in diverse fields always shone through. When he was starting to climb with friends from the Dental School in Glasgow he would arrive with interesting gear. 'Where did you get your ice axe, Jim.'

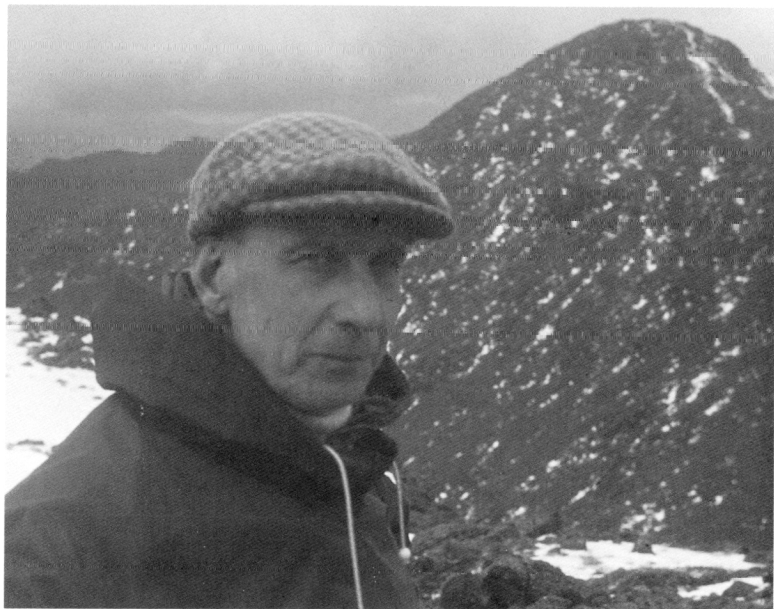
'I made it'. The axe head, like his crampons, he had forged himself and had carved the heft. His music career started in school when he made his own guitar.

He hailed from Ayrshire and Arran was one of his climbing haunts. I remember being with him on JMCS meets to Arran in the Sixties. The weather seemed to be always fair for these events. We would hire bikes, camp at the turn of Glen Rosa and head up to the crags. In the evening we would nip down to Fisher's bar and return in the dark, not always without incident.

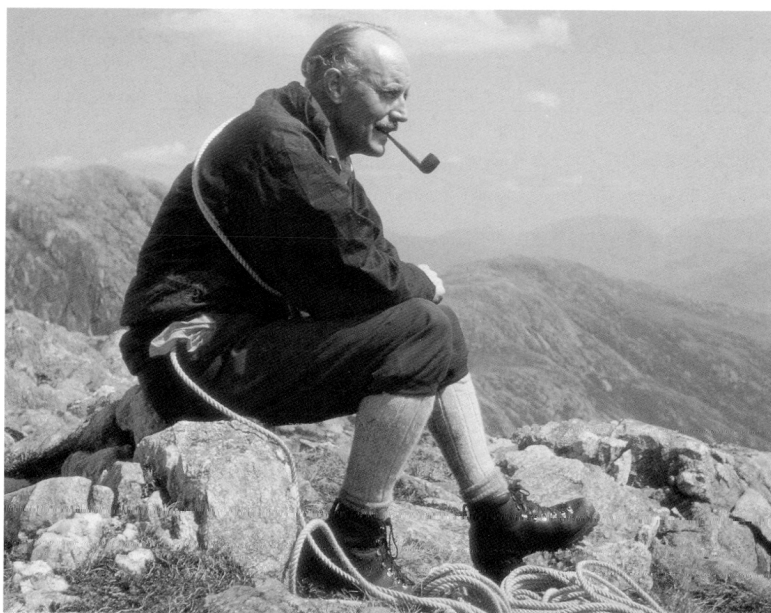
He graduated as a dentist in 1964 and joined the JMCS about that time. An early appointment which was to have a fundamental effect on his life was with the International Grenfell Association in Labrador. This is an organisation which provides health care to the remote communities of Labrador. Jim was struck by the atmosphere of the wild country in which he worked. This was a short appointment but he returned for two years 1967-69 and finally settled there in 1976, from 1978 onwards as Director of Dental Services. He did important work in the development of methods for preventing tooth decay in the Labrador communities and was



LEN LOVAT on Central Buttress, Buachaille Etive Mor. *Photo: Tom Weir.*



BILL MURRAY. *Photo: Bill MacKenzie.*



BOB GRIEVE on Garbh Bheinn. *Photo: Tom Weir.*

awarded a doctorate by Glasgow University in 1992 for a thesis on this subject. He met his wife, Ruth, in Labrador (she was a nurse with the Grenfell Association).

In June 1969 we visited Ruth and Jim in Northwest River on Melville Inlet. Barbara and I with Eric Henry joined Jim in a trip to the Mealey Mountains which lie to the South of Melville Inlet. We chartered a de Havilland Beaver floatplane to take us to a high lake and spent an enjoyable week exploring the Cairngorm-like mountains. We named some of the local features and if anyone wants to know why Beartooth Mountain is so called I can explain. We found a tooth on the summit. It is a bit small for a bear but we did find fresh bear tracks nearby. Maybe it was from a deer which had been eaten by a bear. The shape of the mountain resembles a big molar and what would be more appropriate name for a dentist to devise. The last time Jim visited us before he died, he presented us with the tooth and we now show it to our friends and tell them that there must be few people who can point to an *objet d'art* in their living room after which a mountain is named.

Although Jim's work as a dentist was mainly in conservation – he lectured in conservative dentistry at Glasgow for seven years – he was also a skilled surgeon, taking on difficult work in recreating smashed jaws for accident victims. His skill with his hands was much admired by his colleagues. This was reflected in his work as an artist. Many of us cherish our original Messer watercolours; his paintings were often shown in Nevisport shops and they can be seen in the Postgraduate Centre at Glasgow University. He was well known in Labrador as an artist. Also he was a very good musician. He played jazz clarinet and saxophone and in later years did excellent work as the director of an air cadet squadron band in St. Anthony.

In the parts of Labrador where Jim lived and worked the opportunities for mountaineering are somewhat limited but he would seek out crags for summer and winter visits, the latter being approached by snowmobile.

Throughout his time in Labrador he felt a strong attraction pulling him back to Scotland. He returned regularly; sometimes for longer sabbatical leaves. On one of these visits I remember climbing the Stob Ghabhar Couloir with Jim and Andrew James, emerging onto the ridge to face the setting sun on a crisp winter evening.

Jim had cancer diagnosed in July 1995 and he died in September of that year. His contribution to society was positive in many ways and his family, his friends, and the people of the communities of Labrador have good reason to mourn his passing.

I. MacLeod.

SHERIFF LEONARD SCOTT LOVAT, d. April 21, 1996, aged 69.

IT IS A SAD coincidence that the death of Bill Murray should be followed by that of Len Lovat one month later. The coincidence is that Bill Murray's *Rock Climbs in Glen Coe and Ardgour*, published in 1949, was updated 10 years later by Len. The number of routes had doubled in that time so the Buachaille had a volume to itself, the remainder required a second volume.

Len began his rich climbing career with the Glasgow University MC, and when he first climbed Buachaille, he found it to be his natural habitat. When he had his 60th birthday on July 1986, he wrote in the Journal: 'Where else, therefore to celebrate it than on the rocks of the Buachaille with Tom Weir, climbing companion of a lifetime . . . our pleasure on the Buachaille remained undiminished.'

Eleven years older than Len, I felt young again in his exuberant company and it was Len's enthusiasm that so whetted my own shrinking appetite that I felt I had been given a new lease of life. As he put it: 'We moved light-footed on long runouts of 120ft medium nylon rope in the belief that the leader would not fall. At that time in the late 1950s free climbing was not so different from the previous 25 years, but a new breed of younger climbers were appearing, and using a proliferation of equipment offering protection on hard rock and ice.'

Len was at home on high-angle ice before front-point crampons came into fashion, repeating the classics of Nevis and Glen Coe in vibrams and using a wooden-shafted ice-axe. Our biggest day on Nevis was in 1954, from a tent in the glen reaching the foot of Tower Ridge and starting up Observatory Ridge while hut occupants were still in their beds, climbing it, descending Tower Ridge, then by Slingsby's Chimney and the North East Buttress to the summit.

In that fine article *Thirty Years Ago* in the 1987 Journal, Len philosophised thus: 'What do we all share? Is it just a common interest in a high-level gymnasium? Are we solely concerned with degrees of difficulty or scale or technique? Surely not. Mountaineers are varied and change, but the mountains remain constant in what they offer to the generations who find adventure on them. They offer, beyond difficulty or scale, a far greater dimension, which is complex and probably beyond rational analysis; but it is a dimension which is there for young and old. So I salute the young mountaineers of 1987 on their remarkable attainments. And I salute my old comrades of 1957 and remind them of the feeling behind the words of George Meredith –

'Would you know what it is to hope again and have
all your hopes at hand? Hang upon the crags at
a gradient that makes your next step a debate
between the thing you are and the thing you may
become.'

As for his work as a Sheriff, he told me that no matter how rotten he may have been feeling, he came to life whenever he put on his gown and wig, symbols of the law. He loved the stage setting, the drama, and the actors. I've never been to a Jury Trial, so never realised it had a funny side, though he had to maintain a lugubrious visage. Regaling me with the court proceedings, he used his marvellous gift of mimicry to play the part of the accused, his defending lawyer, witnesses, and his solemn self as judge. His acerbic wit was relished by journalists, and the Sheriff Lovat got much honourable mention in the Press.

It was ligament injuries, caused by falling down a stair while carrying a piece of soiled baby linen, that was his first set-back, then bowel complications, which combination forced him to go easy on the mountains. Now he turned to ornithological ploys with me, and did the occasional rock climb, too occasional though to maintain his old standard. Then came the mortal blow, of a brain disorder affecting his memory, and forcing him to accept retirement. Alas, the disease intensified and he had to go into care.

The hundreds who attended the Requiem Mass in St. Aloysius Chapel, Garnethill, Glasgow, included many of his old climbing friends. An honest and deeply religious man, he had reached his tapmost elevation.

T. Weir.

J. R. Marshall continues: We attended Len's funeral mass, where he lay in state, mid the splendour of St. Aloysius's grand interior, swathed in the empathy of congregation, choir and a host of priests, eulogising on the man and his great contributions to the civic, social and ecumenical aspects of a conscientious life.

It was the kind of send off we don't see much of in the climbing community and I was impressed, having no idea of his high post mountaineering station in life, yet instantly recognising in the impassioned accounts of this later life, our Len, the solemn face that could flash into life with fun, the great command of language used to telling effect and always the touching kindness he could show others.

However, it's not the senior Len I wish to commemorate but the long-legged, gangling guy with that gentle face set behind a magnificent West Highland nose, the guy who was such fun to be with back in the Fifties.

I can see him now, seemingly always in a salt-and-pepper jersey, cloth cap and huge boots, holding court in Lagangarbh, for he dominated the active contingent of the Glasgow SMC, and having shouldered the task of updating Murray's Glen Coe guide, he was forever exploring obscure ways and encouraging or directing his entourage to similar endeavour.

Archie, George and I as regulars from the East naturally gravitated into his company to do many memorable routes, which then and now remain as signal points in our mountain memories.

Of these I recall a sunny ascent of the Chasm; gully climbing was quite popular then probably because they could be sociable and it was very pleasant to soak in the warm sun, parked on water washed boulders, engrossed in conversation whilst somebody led the sharp end up the next stint, often completely forgotten by the debaters.

On this occasion however, once in the Cauldron we decided to use the direct exit, which was terrific but for the icy deluge pulsing over the upper chocks, I exited blue with cold to the pleasure of sun baked rock, so stripped off, wrung out my gear and redressed to bring Archie up. I was near to dry when Len forged through, his jersey growing longer and more voluminous till he floundered onto the warm rocks like a landed salmon, in a welter of water and explosion of hilarity at the completion of such a splendid climb.

Then there was the Dalness Chasm, that trip was like a school picnic till we got to the Barrier pitch. Archie, Boston and I went for the back wall but Len, ever considerate went by the left wall to give me some protection but thereby committing himself and Tommy to a most unpleasant vegetative traverse to regain the line.

The climb above faded out of expectations but, of course, the company and crack made the day.

One of the most memorable of all however, was when Len invited Archie and I to join him for a winter ascent of his summer line Scabbard, in Coire nan Lochan. We accepted with enthusiasm and charged off into the coire to assemble on the ledge under the main corner where Len and I babbled away while Archie, the anchor man, organised the belay and made sure we did as we should.

The crack and slab were in atrocious condition, verglassed and unfriendly, Len

naturally in the lead progressed laboriously, two feet up, one back down, whilst I helped sustain his advances, providing my axe head as his occasional stance for a fresh launch and an endless stream of vocal support as he battled on into the niche where in desperation he banged in a peg.

Len was impressed by its security. I was, to say the least, sceptical. No matter I was hauled up to crouch in dependence on this suspect peg and induced to act as a ladder for the now fired up Len, who stepped up off my shoulders and struggled to another serious move, where he resorted to a long peg vertically into the moss to safeguard the final passage, expressing doubts as to its worth as he stormed up the now easy groove above.

Archie and I followed, being near to knackered getting the long peg out of the tenacious moss but enthralled by the superb climb the big man had shared with us.

Len was without question a very competent climber who thoroughly enjoyed exploring the glens to clarify old routes, inevitably to make many new ways. It is little realised that he made more than 50 good new ascents in diverse areas across the Scottish Highlands.

We had some fine seasons in the Alps, during which I grew to understand and respect him even more for his ability to handle difficult situations and people with humanity and understanding (after all I must have been a bit of a handful at times).

One case which illustrates this side of Lovat was when he and Patey were charging up the N.E. Face of the Pain de Sucre when they realised the two climbers following their steps far below, were the same two who had asked earlier how to get on to the Ryan Lochmatter. They tried to advise them of their mistake, without success, then pressed on to beat the sun. Suddenly, the two below were careering down the ice runnels to disappear over the rimaye in a horrifying fall. I think if it had been Patey or I, we would have rattled up the climb and alerted a rescue at the cable station. However, Len insisted they descend to help these men, where it was found they had, fortunately, fallen into a crevasse on either side of a snow bridge to be saved by the rope, amazingly to escape major injury. So the valiant rescuers helped recover the unfortunates and chaperone them down to the organised recovery service and safety.

Typically, Len instead of bearing them a grudge, insisted we visit the one remaining in dock to wish him well, he was massively bruised but otherwise nothing more serious than a hugely swollen head which looked like an old leather football, with seeping slits instead of the normal orifices.

Insulation from the reality of mountain experience is the paradox of today's climber; imagine never having been soaked to the skin, near frozen to death or no security and no rescue organisation to pluck one from certain fate, yet these were all vital elements in the forging of men like Lovat (old fools have protested thus for ages). He was a great companion, specially remembered for his folk and Spanish Civil War songs rendered around the camp fire or his full blooded arias reverberating around the Dolomitic spires.

Buachaille Etive Mor was his special home, he celebrated his 60th birthday there in fond reunion with his old stomping ground, it would have been fitting to repeat the visit a decade on, but sadly, events dictated otherwise when he succumbed to his illness a few days prior to his 70th birthday.

I FIRST MET Len in Greenland in 1958 on the seminal Expedition to the Staunings led by the redoubtable Professor Slessor.

As someone said at the time when you take Len on a trip you take half of Scotland. This referred to his ability to mimic in a humorous, but nevertheless kindly way, the voice and character of so many different types of people from mighty Advocates and their Criminal Adversaries to the doucest member of this Club – all provided rich material for his gift. Len was in the centre of the Scottish intellectual tradition, a Cockburn of this century with a fund of legal stories from Braxfield to the present day, widely read in European prose and poetry, a believer in Scotland yet internationally-minded. Catholic in mind as well as religion, he could quote as easily and unpretentiously from George Campbell Hay as from William Shakespeare and sing with equal authenticity *The Bonnie Earl o' Moray* and *La Banda Rossa*.

He was also a bold and well-controlled performer on rock and a thoughtful contributor to the metaphysics of the irreversible move. In Greenland he made some intrepid first ascents. I had the impression, however, that he was so responsive to the immense beauty of the place that he found it difficult to concentrate monomaniacally on climbing alone. This, of course, is one of the problems encountered in Greenland by sensitive people. None of the Club had the misfortune to appear before him when he was Sheriff of Lanark which is just as well because the sentence would have been exemplary and delivered with salt.

I.H.M. Smart.

KEVIN WILSON j. 1986

KEVIN WILSON died untimely on Maundy Thursday 1996. He was pushed off the final raise to plateau by a snowslip at the top of Pumpkin. His partner that day, Richard Harrison, luckily got away with sprained ankles. Creag Meagaidh was held in high esteem by Kevin despite or because of various incidents that took place there. January 1986, a dire retreat off Ritchie's, March 1988 avalanched out of Raeburns from just below Smith's nearly to the howff, climbing the Wand while cornices from Diadem to the window collapsed at random and the perennial sport, locate the Window in the Whiteout.

Kevin got into the SMC in 1986 (no one from Yorkshire joins, they only ever 'get in') and I reckon he was one of the most active members until his death. His life revolved around mountaineering and his mountaineering revolved around Scottish winter climbing. Even trips to Nepal were classed as training for Scotland.

Consider his year. Spring – rock climbing and a trip to Skye or Arran before the midges attain optimum density, maybe a bit of Mediterranean sunshine provided there was climbing or mountain walks. Summer – a trip to the Alps and some extended hill walking. He did the West Highland Way last June with his wife, Julie, and his son, Daniel, who was 13 on Easter Monday. Autumn – would be either Nepal or wet bothy trips to places I had never heard of and Munros I had only ever seen as names on the list, plus some back-end scratting about in the

Lakes. Then the Dinners looming up, he always wanted to do a route before hand and most years he got up something. Get through the festivities with a trip to the Lakes or spend it at his cottage at Upper Auchintore, Fort Bill. Then the real thing. Short days, blowing a hoolly and poor conditions but so keen he was always out. As the days lengthened and real ice appeared he was in Scotland plugging away, fully fit and brimming with confidence then it gets warm and all too soon the season's over. Kevin did Central Gully this year which was his 50th different route on the Ben. That includes most everything classic, bar the modern desperates. One night in the summit shelter after Tower Ridge in 1979 was enough. An experience he strove mightily to avoid repeating. Mind he was a good man for a night out, him and Pete Boyle spent a night out on the Eiger and Kevin and I sat like two warehouse pigeons for a 12 hours on Kongde Ri in 1988.

He didn't think much to the bivvy camps we had on Terseringma either. Sat at bivvy one, half in the tent he got bricked. Thought he was OK, set off up the ropes a couple of hours later, on a vertical section and working hard he passed out. The self rescue was successful but he called it a draw so did not get the summit. Then there was the time Clothier bricked him from the first pitch of Point Five. Kevin retired hurt, I joined Clothier and Cartwright. Two months later on Indicator Wall, Clothier bricked his lad Neil . . . and wanted to join Kevin and I. We agreed but were adamant he would not be allowed above us. Somehow he outwitted us and led the last pitch and yes, he bricked us both but only scrapped us bark. By 1986 Kevin had 10 Alpine seasons under his belt and always climbed at an Alpine pace. If he was going any slower you knew it was hard.

He was the common denominator of the York winter team. He rang round, we met at his house and exploited his hospitality once he bought Heather Bothy up at Fort Bill. We were all much put out when he let it to Alan Kimber for a full winter then started letting it all year round. Where were we supposed to stay ?

We did four trips to Nepal together, great mountaineering. In 1988 we flew to Kathmandu knowing nothing, but what Kevin gleaned from the Lonely Planet Guide. None of the agents in Kat wanted to know about a party of two so we ended up with a very dodgy agent but an excellent Sirdar, Angrita Sherpa. He got us organised and we obtained a permit for Kongderi (6187m), we walked into Namche Bazar, down and across the river, up through the forest, found a base camp for a crack at it. We spent a couple of days acclimatising, took a paddle up the glacier, bivvied and at it. All went well, good mixed route and on the summit about an hour before dark. We started abbing down looking for a ledge, nowt doing. So bivvied on a sloping shelf all but hanging off the ice screws and no sleeping bags. Fourteen abbs the next morning to get back on the glacier, one rope was cut by stonefall on abb number four and deteriorated steadily every time it went through the figure eight. We did not have enough kit to do shorter abbs. Angrita had baked us a chocolate cake but we were too knackered to eat it that night. We went back to Namche and to a walk up to Pangpoche and Ama Dablam base camp. Having seen Ama Dablam we wanted to climb it.

The trip's official title was 'The British Ama Dablam Expedition 1990' but it could well have been York Mountaineering Club back-end meet (organiser Kevin Wilson) as all the members were from the York area. Another good trip with four out of six on the summit including Kevin.

1992 was just Kevin and myself fired up for Shingu Chuli from the south. We arrived in Kat but our gear didn't. It was coming on the next PIA, flight, PK 268 which went down short of Kat. A very sobering experience as we were waiting with the friends and relatives of the victims. We only lost our gear. Options were various but choice obvious, try and rake some gear together and carry on. We spent three days buying, hiring, borrowing gear then a flight to Pokhara. Angrita went in a taxi with the kit. He hired porters and another taxi to Dhampus where the Annapurna trail starts. Good walk into Machapuchare base camp from where we started prospecting for a way into our valley, not obvious, local knowledge essential. We hired three local boys to carry the gear in so they showed us the way and very devious it was too. That put us in a cave with the Manx Mice, and the local lads away down. We lugged everything up to where we needed to be, got up the icefall and glacier to just below the face and our intended line, then it snowed, a lot. Kevin and I froze in our cotton vests for a couple of days and reviewing the situation decided to go up and try and retrieve the gear we had cached and then go down. Next morning after much burning of juniper, Kevin, Angrita and I went up and eventually located and brought down the kit. We all dropped into crevasses at some point. We packed next day and carried down the day after. A good trip but no summit.

Kevin wanted to do something a bit different so before we left Kat we made an application for a permit for Gaurishankar which had not been climbed on for years. We eventually got the permit for the back-end of 1994 but could not get the brass or the climbers together. 1995 it came right and away we went with the three SMC members in a team of seven.

A hard trip. Bad weather early on, stonefall and no decent camps meant we only made it up Terzeringma (6333m) which is a subsidiary peak of Gaurishankar before running out of steam. We did however, come out of the Rolwaling over the Trashilabtsa pass into the Khumbu (Everest region). We all agreed that was one of the best mountaineering jaunts ever. We had made a good decision leaving Gaurishankar as about 10 days later there was once-in-100-year snowfall which I understand eventually took 80 lives throughout the Himalaya. We would have been well extended on the ridge between Tierseringina and the south summit of Gaurishankar (2.5km long and all above 20,000ft).

Then there were the work parties, Kevin being a plumber and a gas fitter he had done a fair bit of work in the CIC. Initially, to curry favour with the old governor but after fitting the new stove he became almost possessive as the new patron.

Kevin had started taking Daniel climbing last year. One of their first routes together was Curved Ridge on the Buachaille. Julie wants Daniel to carry on with the climbing which is an indication of her attitude and lets all hope Daniel 'gets in' in the fullness of time. If he develops half of Kevin's enthusiasm and commitment he will be among the right sort. They both supported Leeds United and Kevin had a annual bet with Geoff Allman, £10, on who would be farthest up the league! Leeds or Man. United. Kevin even thought he had a chance of winning this season but as it turned out it does not look like Geoff will collect unless there is something in the will.

He was a great companion on the hill, as reticent to speak as the best of the old timers, a good man for telling the tale while supping his ale. I've never seen him

rattled, he always wanted a window open and now again complained about his back. At his wake the phrase we all associated with him was: 'Bye I'm sweating like a bastard.' He was a great exponent of another Yorkshire maxim.

See all, hear all, say now't
 Eat all, sup all, pay now't
 And if thee ever does out for now't
Do it for thee sen.

Or maybe that was just the SMC rubbing off on him.

We all draw on the bounty of the Scottish hills, the challenge, the pleasure, the vigour, but think on, occasionally a toll is levied. Kevin paid the toll.

Nick Harper.

H. ADAMS CARTER

'AD' CARTER, the long-time editor of the American Alpine Journal died in March 1995. In 1983 he graced our annual dinner in Glasgow with (and I quote the scribe of the day, Geoff Cohen) 'an outstanding lecture and slide show' of his expedition to Nanda Devi, 46 years after the first ascent of which he was the organiser. On this occasion Willi Unsoeld's daughter Nanda Devi Unsoeld tragically died, and as GC noted 'the sensitivity of Ad's account was remarkable . . . and left his audience inspired and moved.'

Ad was a mountaineer in the heroic style, yet tolerant of the new trends. He had a delicious sense of humour and a natural kindness. Born and bred in New England he took in his first peak at the age of five and his last a few days before his death at the age of 80. Fitted out with two new hip joints in his later years, he continued to rock climb and ski. He died quite suddenly one lunchtime, at home. As his wife, Anne, said 'Ad was always lucky'. His contribution to mountaineering has been enormous. By 20 he had climbed all over the Swiss alps. On the National Geographic's Yukon expedition (1935) he made the first crossing of the St. Elias range. In 1937 he was a member of the US Olympic ski team. He participated in 18 expeditions to Peru making many first ascents and introducing numerous young people to the joys of high altitude expeditioning. In 1970 he ran a relief expedition after the great earthquake on the eastern slope of the Cordillera Blanca.

He edited the AAJ continuously from 1960, and was just finishing the proofs of his 36th journal the day he died. He brought it to the point where it was the most important annual in mountaineering. His correspondence was enormous. Every inquiry received a reply; thus he knew everyone in mountaineering. No-one passed by Boston Airport, but he met them, dined them, climbed with them, either at his home in the suburb of Milton or at his family home near Mount Washington. We are privileged that he shared a few moments of his busy life with the SMC.

Malcolm Slesser.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

New members

The following nine new members were admitted and welcomed to the Club in 1995-96.

John Ashbridge (34), Geophysicist, Methlick, Aberdeenshire.

John Bickerdike (47), Chartered Civil Engineer, Largs, Ayrshire.

Graham Dudley (38), Geologist, Fintray, Aberdeenshire.

Brian Dullea (32), Doctor of Medicine, Clackmannan.

Andrew Huntington (24), Dentist, Edinburgh.

Julian Lines (26), Geologist, Aviemore.

Geoff Lowe (39), Social Worker, Inverness.

William Stephenson (34), Consultant Engineer, Aberdeen.

Neil Stevenson (21), Student, Glasgow.

EASTER MEET – TOMDOUN HOTEL

This gathering of the Club has declined in popularity of late due largely to the deplorable weather experienced at Easter in the last few years. However, the appointment of a new Meets Secretary with clearly greater influence in such matters changed things at a stroke and those present enjoyed for three days the best of Scotland at its wonderful best. The occasion was thus restored to something of the status of Easter meets past.

The organisation even extended to engaging the hotel boats which were used by all with great enthusiasm to access those remote hills at the west end of Loch Quoich taking out the loch-side slog and avoiding the perils of Scott Johnstone's 'notoriously difficult' Abhainn Chosaidh – reduced on this occasion to a sluggish stream.

Disasters were few. One member temporarily lost his wife in the forests while hastening back to the hotel for the Saturday dinner (commendable) and the Secretary grounded the entire fleet on an island in Loch Quoich attempting a short cut to the far end of the loch (lamentable).

This is not a climbing area but no true mountaineer could fail to have appreciated the superb walking conditions of dry underfoot, firm snow over 600m and shimmering blue skies with wonderful visibility. Hills ascended included Ben Aden, Sgurr a' Coire-bheithe, Sgurr nan Eugallt, Sgurr an Fhuarain, Sgurr na Ciche, Garbh Cioch Mhor, Sgurr nan Coireachan, Gairich, Sgurr Mor, Sgurr a' Mhaoraich, Gleouraich and Spidean Mialach.

Those present included the President R.N. Campbell, R. Allen, D.A. Bearhop, G.T.B. Chisholm, G. Cohen, A.G. Cousins, T.B. Fleming, J.R.R. Fowler, G.S. Johnstone, P.F. Macdonald, G. Macnair, W.M.S. Myles, R.J.C. Robb, M. Slessor, I.H.M. Smart, A.A. Thrippleton, O. Turnbull (Meet Secretary) and W. Wallace. The guests were D. Allan, S. Allen and I. Cumming.

J.R.R. Fowler.

CIC MEETS

Another winter of generally poor climbing conditions in the west made its impact on the meets at CIC. Of the seven arranged meets, two had no recorded attendance and the largest attendance on the others was 13. Won't do chaps – use it or lose it (you could always scrub the floor).

For most of the winter there was very little ice (except on the path) and a lot of unconsolidated snow. When things did improve, both the lower and the upper routes suffered from lack of ice. Many routes did not form at all – for example, the Minus Gullies, the Psychedelic Wall area and The Curtain. On the other hand, an unusual lack of cornices allowed ascents of the rarely-climbed Winter Chimneys at the beginning of April. When some sort of conditions did finally arrive at the beginning of March, members' activity verged on the frenzied with the few classics that were in any sort of condition receiving multiple ascents.

The continuing lack of car parking facilities is causing difficulties and it is worth noting that there is local agitation in support of providing a car park for climbers' use. Whether or not anything will come of this remains to be seen. In the meantime, it should be noted that parking on the grass verge of the main road is viewed with disfavour by the local constabulary.

R.T. Richardson.

The One-Hundredth and Sixth AGM and Dinner 1995

Milton Hotels' offer to host our Dinner in the Milton Lodge – the twin *gulag*-type property near the distillery – was declined and the Club returned to the Alexandra for the third and probably last time for the present. The afternoon function took the form of a lecture by Vic Saunders who surprised the company by inviting people to leave – those who had been unsuccessful in obtaining the goggles necessary to watch his stereo slide presentation to full effect. This was no mere climbing slide-show but an examination of the architecture and space of India and Nepal – both concepts dramatised by the slide format. A quick change to party clothes and back to the hard chairs in the hall for the annual meeting. This was, by the standard of recent years, a dull affair with the President bringing the meeting to a close in a record 45 minutes. Bob Richardson was thanked for his long service at the CIC, Donald McIntyre was thanked for reorganising the archives and Donald Bennet and Bill Runciman were thanked for their work on the Concordat on access. All this appreciation left only the poor old Trust as the outlet for aggression and paranoia and it was, I think, eventually agreed that a Trust report might be included in the formal business as a courtesy to the Club. The future role of the Publications Company would also be examined.

And so on to the cramped surroundings of the dining room where choux swans floated once more in puddles of raspberry coulis. The President spoke (and sang) eloquently in a balanced speech welcoming new members, remembering those who had passed on and reflecting sadly on his inability to effect change through the transience of his office which he likened to clinging to Bill Murray's 'mere rugosity' in comparison with those appointed officials who can weather Presidential storms on the comfortable ledges and wide terraces of their offices. A period of Irish blarney followed as Phil Gribbon introduced our guests, who like the members, were uncertain if they had been insulted or praised. Some splendid and innovative piping was provided by Iain Macleod followed by the customary vocals from Curly Ross.

So where to next year? It looks likely to be Strathpeffer.

J.R.R. Fowler.

JMCS REPORTS

London Section:— An active core of 30 can be inaccurately inflated to 60 paid-up members by including the senile and infirm, err . . . sorry, respected club elders and the inevitable unenviable fatties on The Committee. Biggest mistakes of 1995 included: Handing the circular over to the cognitively disparate Nigel the Mad, and allowing Tony Buj and Steve Senior to breath fresh air in to the meets programme. The latter resulted in a February meet at that noted ice-climbing centre, the Roaches. Sloth was a bastard in Footfangs . . . Rod Kleckham (token authentic Scot) replaced the long-serving but not very high-standing Peter Whitechurch as hut bookings person and general hypocritical castigator of visiting University Mountaineering Clubs. By far the worst errors of the committee was letting in new members like Trevor Milner, Geoff the Postie, Huw Perkins, Chris Combrie and Tim Brew.

The Club meets remained a rich collage of disparate and apparently unreconcilable personality defects: knives flying, bodies falling, couches bouncing. About 13 well-attended official Club meets were held, plus many more impromptu (and subsequently disowned) crash-and-burn affairs after, or instead of, work. This included a well-organised and attended (but ultimately boring) Club dinner at the Tyn Y Coed in Snowdonia. The more youthful age profile of the Section (i.e. now includes members under 60) prompts a rethink for this event in 1996. Scotland featured highly in official and unofficial activities. The former included the well-attended 'Cesspit Meet' with the Glasgow Section and a Spring idyll on Arran. It also included Fryers' post-Parallel B game of 'Hunt the rucksack' in a white-out.

Exotica: Members climbed in Yosemite and at Tuolumne Meadows in the US, with accidental (honest!) 'trundle of the year' award going to Team Jordan/Walker off the Nose of El Capitan. In the European Alps, ascents included the Droites North-East Spur Direct, the Hirondelles Spur on the Grandes Jorasses, and a new Piola classic on the Petit Jorasses. At the Wendenstock members climbed the modern classics of Sonnenkonig and Aureois, and two different teams visited the Mirroir d' Argentine and the Dolomites.

Several trips were made to the Himalaya, including Chris Combrie to Everest, Gavin Jordan to the Karakoram and Hugh Jordan to Nepal. Other hardened mountaineers visited the Picos d' Europa, Spain, Norway, Lundy and Corsica. Plans for 1996 include trips to Alaska, Nepal, Lundy, Yosemite and the Alps.

An increase in harder rock climbing grades was observed drunkenly from a distance through the summer heat haze. Ascents such as The Axe and Midsummer Night's Dream by the likes of Perkins, Fryer and Applegate causing much fear and loathing by less-gifted seconds. In addition, there was an increase in memberless members climbing in the HVS/EI category, notably Hartshon and Blake, who also exported their skills and questionable standards of personal hygiene to Norway. The egocentricities of desk-bound male psyches led to many insane soloing escapades, with Millstone, Cloggy and Gogarth providing the full range of disappointingly hard-landing options. Watching Perkins's Kama Sutra-like contortions trying to belatedly change in to his harness halfway up a 6b gritstone horror was particularly interesting. The heat wave meant Gogarth featured highly in soloing and traversing escapades, with a particularly memorable interface with the Irish Sea after a plummet off the first belay of Pentothol. The climber on the pitch below seemed quite surprised as we went past.

Off the crags the membership left its usual assortment of marks, scratches, splashes, stains and craters on a range of roadside crash barriers, river boulders, harbour jetties, lane hedges, roundabouts, carpets etc. Memories are varied: burbling Italian V twins; seeing a Friday night light burning in the window at Glanafon; a Cloggy-side bivvy complete with slug butties; that 100th route at Gogarth; Big Steve hitting Nigel the Mad with a couch (!); seven bike crashes in as many months, including two at the same roundabout by the same person.

President: Andrew Walker, 1 Hancock Court, Main Road, Bamford, Derbyshire S30 2AY Tel.: 01433 651707. *Hut bookings:* Glanafon, Snowdonia – Rod Kleckham, 129 Weydon Hill Road, Farnham, Surrey GU9 8NZ. *Secretary:* Steve Gladstone, 36 Meadow Close, Hockley Heath, Solihull, B94 6PG.

Andrew Walker.

Edinburgh Section:– Membership remained healthy during the year at approximately 70 members and welcomed the arrival of six new members. A majority of the Club members maintained an active interest in mountaineering pursuits throughout the year. Twenty weekend meets were arranged during the summer and winter months. Traditional evening midweek climbing was enjoyed, weather permitting, around the central belt and beyond – proving to be popular with those attending.

The Shelter Stone, in June, was perhaps the most popular and successful meet of the year – 15 members were to be found on various hillsides, crags and contortions around the Loch A'an basin. Other venues included Skye, Torridon, Ben Nevis, Glen Coe and the Lake District.

On the international front, the section was well represented across the continents. Europe proved popular once again with several parties making climbing trips to France, Austria and Switzerland in the course of the year. Interest in Norway saw a resurgence during the summer months with three groups making various 2000m ascents in the Jotunheimen and Hurrungane areas. Farther afield, our regular Asian rock-rat visited Ao-Phra-Naang in the Krabi region of Thailand during the Spring. Another member, while working (holidaying) in Nepal on his medical elective, visited the Khumba region and the Everest base camp, ascending Kalo Pattar (5500m). South America was also visited by one member with two fellow SMC members during a month-long visit of the Cordillera Vilcabamba and Cordillera Blanca regions of Peru.

The section's two huts, the Smiddy at Dundonnell and Jock's Spot at Newtonmore, continue to be popular mountaineering bases, much to the credit and effort of the hut custodians. On a lighter note, the only complaints to date with respect to last year's roof improvements at Jock's Spot is that several members have noted lost sleep due to the increased natural lighting – on the other hand more people should miss the rafters!

Officials elected: *President*, F. Van-Wijck; *Hon-President*, J. Fowler; *Vice-President*, K. Holden; *Hon-Vice-President*, N. Suess; *Treasurer*, C. Stupart; *Secretary*, R. Sinclair, 11B Fettes Row, Edinburgh, EH3 6SE; *Smiddy Custodian*, F. Fotheringham, Tigh na Sith, Braes, Ullapool; *Jock's Spot Custodian*, A. Borthwick, 2 Aytoun Grove, Dunfermline; *Committee:* D. Buchanan, N. Cruden, C. Eilbeck, B. Finlayson and S. Holden.

R. Sinclair.

Perth Mountaineering Club (JMCS, Perth Section): While the Club's mixed membership has remained at a similar level for the last couple of years (around 80, including honorary members), there are now plenty of introductory members who will, hopefully, swell the ranks.

The club held 15 official weekend meets last year, augmented by summer evening climbing and barbecue meets, winter climbing wall trips, slide evenings and lectures. Our first 'foreign' meet for a while was held in Donegal and provided a wide range of activities from scuba diving and climbing to hillwalking, sunbathing and scree-running at 26 weeks' pregnant. (This last activity being limited to relatively recent members of the Club.)

It was the turn of the Perth Section to arrange the Whole Club AGM and dinner for the JMCS. These were held at the Glen Clova Hotel happily coinciding with the Glen Clova Beer festival. The main result of the AGM being continued male-only ownership of the JMCS – bah! humbug! etc.

Our own dinner was held at the Sligachan Hotel in Skye, addressed by Hugh Evans – an expatriate guide there. Thanks Hugh.

The Club also participated in the Mountain Mind Quiz this year – having the misfortune to win. Consequently, next year's event will (provisionally) be held at the Perth Civil Service Club on Wednesday night, March 12 next year.

If you want any information about the Club, or the Section, feel free to call me on 01738 828058, but please hurry – I am currently trying to prepare a case for replacement on grounds of diminished competence.

The following officials were elected: *Hon. President*, Donald McIntyre; *President*, Chris Bond; *Hon. Vice-President*, Robin Campbell; *Vice-President*, Mel Crowther; *Secretary*, Antony Lole; *Treasurer*, Tom Rix; *Auditor*, John Rodger; *Newsletter Editor*, Mel Crowther; *Meets Secretary*, Grahame Nicoll; *Committee*, Iain Robertson, Ray Lee, Linda Beaton and Allan Vaughan.

Andy Lole.

Glasgow Section:- 1995 was a year of steady consolidation for the Section with an encouraging increase in the numbers attending the regular meets. A total of 22 meets were held in Scotland and a number of informal meets abroad. As usual most members were also active on the hills outwith organised meets.

The early part of the year was characterised by the lack of snow early in the season, followed by too much snow later on. Combined with the lack of the usual freeze-thaw cycle this resulted in few winter routes for most members, however, for some this was compensated for by the excellent ski-mountaineering available for much of the winter.

The good summer weather during 1995 encouraged a number of people onto the rock and many good weekends were enjoyed. The weekend meet to Elphin in early May proved memorable with many members enjoying sun-drenched rock at Reiff and warm hill days with excellent visibility. Other memorable meets occurred on Arran in early June, the Cobbler on midsummer night, including what may be the first didgereedoo recital on the summit, a visit to the North-west to climb the Old Man of Stoer, and a weekend meet to Beinn a' Bhuird in late June. All of these meets coincided with warm sunny weather and a host of classics were climbed.

Unfortunately, our trips to the Hebrides this year were not blessed with similar weather and two trips to Skye, in May and July, were met with the usual Skye

downpour. However, the most memorable island trip of the year occurred on the Glasgow September weekend on Rum, when 11 members were stranded for an extra day on the island due to high winds causing the ferry to be cancelled. Luckily CalMac bowed to the onslaught of phone calls from the only phone box on the island and laid on a special sailing the following day.

Despite the good weather at home, many members headed abroad and once again America proved a great attraction. Routes in Colorado (Longs Peak, Eldorado Canyon and Rocky Mountain National Park), California (Yosemite Valley and Tuolumne Meadows), and Wyoming (Wind River Range and the Tetons) of varying difficulty were ascended. Europe also featured on the list of attractions with the Alps, Spain, and the Czech Republic being the main destinations.

Section membership, with three new members during the year, is currently steady at 85, of whom 20 are life members.

At the AGM in November the following officials were elected: *Hon. Member*, W.H. Murray; *Hon. President*, Benny Swan; *Hon. Vice-President*, Neil Craig; *President*, Peter Cairns; *Vice-President*, Andrew Sommerville; *Secretary*, Donald Ballance, 1/R 11 Airlie Street, Hyndland, Glasgow, G12 8QQ, (Tel: 0141 357 3073, Email: D.Ballance@mech.gla.ac.uk) URL="http://www.mech.gla.ac.uk/JMCS/"; *Treasurer*, Andrew Sommerville; *Coruisk Hut Custodian*, Sandy Donald, 15 Smeaton Avenue, Torrance, Stirlingshire, G64 4BG, (Tel: 01360 622541); *Committee*: Iain Cumming, David MacDonald, Neil Marshall, Alasdair Reid, Ian Thomson.

Donald Ballance.

Lochaber Section:— Over the last year membership has remained virtually the same at around 50, including two Honorary Members. Most members are active on the hill and a few just enjoy the gathering at the annual dinner.

Several meets were held throughout the year with varying attendances, the most popular being Inver Cottage, Achnasheen, and an old favourite, Ling hut, Torridon. In the summer most members were content to do their own thing. During the very hot spell, many took advantage of the cooler evening with a lot of activity on the Pollidubh crags.

The Section meets informally in the Nevis Bank Hotel on Thursday evenings and last year there were three slide shows which provided good entertainment.

Throughout the year the Section's hut at Steall, Glen Nevis was well used, with most weekends being booked up. The new porch-come-drying-room is nearing completion and a plinth was laid for a compound to house large Calor gas bottles, to eventually do away with the small butane bottles inside the hut. Materials are now being gathered to renew the roofing.

At the end of October the annual dinner was held at the Ocean View Hotel, near Aultbea with around 40 members and guests in attendance.

Officials elected were: *President*, I. Donaldson; *Hon. President*, W. Munroe; *Vice-President*, I. Walker; *Hon. Members*, B. Bissell, D. Scott; *Treasurer*, G. Bruce; *Secretary*, K. Foggo, 19 Abrach Road, Inverlochty, Fort William. (Tel: 706299). *Hut Custodian*, J. Mathieson, 43 Drumfada Terrace, Corpach, Fort William. (Tel: 772599).

K. Foggo.

SMC AND JMCS ABROAD

Europe

Rounding Ireland in *Mistress Malin* 1995

DEREK FABIAN and EWA MAYDELL report: A circumnavigation of Ireland had been floating around in our thoughts of summer cruises for some years, but with never enough time in hand to do justice to the splendid anchorages and scenery of Ireland's west coast. However, the skipper's retirement a year ago, and the exchange of our GRP Vertue *Malindara* for a Swedish wooden Fantasi 31, *Mistress*, which we sailed then from Goteborg to Scotland's west coast via Shetland, Orkney and Cape Wrath, gave us both the time and the greater comfort of a larger boat. This is not to mention the persistent northerly winds at the beginning of June this year which prevented a north-bound alternative (and will now keep for another year). On June 6 the crew had mustered at our base in Loch Moidart: Robin Chalmers who had sailed with us from Sweden in 1994, John Grigor from New Zealand, Derek as skipper and his wife Ewa as deck hand and galley slave. A 'day or two' of work became nearly a week when it blew up and near gale-force northerlies prevented us at times from even boarding *Mistress Malin*, pounding the seas at her mooring off the Loch's south shore

It was June 12 before we set sail, to round Ardnamurchan in the evening and to reach the shelter of Tobermory where – having discovered in Loch Moidart that we had a battery charging problem – we diagnosed a faulty alternator. Failing the next day to find a replacement we devised, with a temporarily installed isolating switch, a doubling up of the 'domestic' batteries into the dyno-charging circuit of the engine battery. Much of this second day was lost. But who minds, in picturesque and sun-bathed Tobermory? Thus we sailed in the evening light only as far as Salen in the Sound of Mull for the night. However, on June 14 a 56-mile sail took us to West Loch Tarbert on Jura; the inner loch, with its spectacular raised beaches had been a favourite haunt in many past years.

With another early start on June 15 we caught the S running tide through the Sound of Islay and, the wind now also astern, we quickly covered the distance along this narrow channel. Almost before we knew, *Mistress Malin* was passing the Point MacArthur Light and was heading out into the wide Sound of Jura. The wind freshening, Gigha and then the full length of the Mull of Kintyre Peninsula were soon left abeam; gusts reaching Force Seven made for an exhilarating, if cold and wet, passage across the North Channel to shelter in Carnlough. We found the tall ship *Lord Nelson* to be lying at anchor, just outside the small fishing harbour where we tied up for the night. Finding a pub open after a late dinner was not easy, but eventually we had our first tastes of Guinness, pub live music and Ireland.

June 16: Coastal passage to Belfast Loch, in calmer seas and light winds. We tied up at the Carickfergus Marina, by the Yacht Clubhouse. Too late again to seek out entertainment in the town but the clubhouse restaurant, The Wind Rose, was welcoming and well-stocked with food and drink. Then, the 17th: a day in Belfast. Bus to the city centre, a long walk-around, a visit to the Ulster Museum, lunch (more Guinness), and some land navigation to seek out the Sculpture Park, which we found to be hardly improved by a number of eccentric sculptures.

June 18: A brisk 63-mile sail south-bound in the Irish Sea took us to

Carlingfordlough. Just before we reached its entrance a strange, unmarked but naval looking vessel, lying at anchor and yet flying no flag, caught our attention and John at the helm – and well up on military airborne and seaborne vessels but unfamiliar with this one – steered us close to it for him to photograph. This prompted an immediate reaction: an inflatable was launched, manned by six marines of huge stature and clad in khaki diving gear. They sped after *Mistress Malin*. We were interrogated politely but sternly and informed that they were a Coastguard vessel on special duty, wishing ‘to keep a low profile’. This, after all, was the border between Ulster and the Republic, we mused – feeling distinctly bemused.

And so into Carlingfordlough, to drop anchor off Greencastle. But the harbour master, when we paid a shore visit to the castle, reported the holding to be poor and suggested in view of a southerly-gale forecast that we should pick up one of his moorings. We did, and later found the unmarked coastguard vessel on a mooring nearby; but no strong wind materialised.

June 19: Today Drew Sommerville was due to join us, as fifth member of crew, overlapping for one week with Robin. Dublin, or more precisely the Howth Marina, north of Dunlaghaire, was to be the rendezvous – which we reached with unusually plenty time to spare. The marina entrance has ‘truly Irish’ markings which fail to indicate the shallow water at one end of a sea breakwater and, having radioed ahead to be allocated a berth by the harbour master, we spotted now both the berth number and Drew already there beckoning us on, just 50m from that end of the breakwater wall. Almost disbelieving the Seafarer as the depth indicated dropped relentlessly, we grounded; fortunately only a mud bank, but there were rocks too and tide was at dead low springs. The harbourmaster, who admitted later to having been distracted as we entered and having therefore not radioed his customary warning to visiting yachts, had the club launch racing around the other end of the sea wall in less than a minute and insisting on passing us a line – just as we, with our own engine, were slowly extracting ourselves from this embarrassing predicament – and then towing us first sharply into unseen rocks before finding deeper water. Thank heavens for *Mistress Malin*’s cast iron long keel! But why cannot that customary radio warning be replaced by a clearer marking (or a mention made in the Irish W Coast pilot)? There must be other visitors occasionally arriving at low springs.

Howth we found is so quiet in the evening that it is almost impossible to eat out. But there was one busy restaurant, The Casa Pasta, where tasty (pasta) dishes were more than tempting for a hungry relieved crew. There appeared, too, to be several parties – to all of which we duly received friendly invitations simultaneously; and so once more the Guinness flowed.

June 20: What better than a day to see Dublin? Its unusually interesting museum, with an amazing collection of (well displayed) Celtic artifacts. A bus tour of the city centre was also impressive, and we finished the day with a very Irish experience: a musical pub crawl led by two professional fiddlers, touring interesting pubs with their commentary on history of the city and the origins of Irish folk music, not to mention their delightful musical recitals – which gradually lost that professional precision with the pints of Guinness put away at every stop. It was a merry crew that returned by train to *Mistress Malin* that night, ready for what proved to be an uneventful 46-mile passage motoring the next day, June 21, to Arklow.

June 22: From Arklow, rounding Tuskar and South Rock in a brisk easterly, to

reach Dunmore East by evening. We rafted up alongside one of the many fishing boats in the busy, smelly, tiny harbour; and later gratefully accepted, in the welcoming and ever-friendly local yacht club, the offer of a mooring for the night in the yacht club marina. A splendid dinner that evening; one of Ewa's never-failing scrumptious meals aboard which included 'home baked' pizzas, and bread produced almost daily in the ship's oven.

June 23: Short 24-mile passage from Dunmore East to Dungarven. The entrance to the land-locked river harbour there is tricky; an extensive shallow sandy bay has a dredged channel described in the Irish coastal pilot as being clearly buoyed. We could see no buoys beyond the starting large red can buoy! Proceeding slowly, though still under sail, with the sandy bottom barely inches below our keel we received a call on the VHF from a friendly motor craft who, failing to identify his vessel – and there were dozens crisscrossing the bay – instructed us to turn back and follow him in. We never did work out which boat had radioed, but rapidly dropped sail, as our Seafarer had made it increasingly clear we would need to, and turned about to motor almost as far back as the can buoy before we could detect with the glasses a line of thin marker poles floating in a blue haze – far apart and virtually invisible in the bright sun – which indeed turned out to mark the long narrow channel leading to the river inner harbour.

With *Mistress Malin* safely tied up and drying out in the mud at a pontoon alongside the tidal river wall, we learned – in response to our comment to a helpful harbour attendant that the way in was a trifle 'unclear' – that the buoys had been removed the previous year, to be replaced in time by up-to-date buoyage. Meanwhile, many visitors had been running aground. The floating perches were few and were temporary.

With the tide ebbing *Mistress Malin* was soon heeling at 30° to normal, making life aboard anything but normal. Good reason to sample the splendid local seafood, Guinness and Prawer Whiskey. Plans were laid for the next day which had been assigned to sampling the local hills – the Knockneal Mountains.

June 24: We were tipped from our bunks to an early breakfast as the tide settled us into the mud once more. A taxi was procured to take us to a convenient starting point. We would hitch-hike back for a departure before the evening ebb. With a Blue Peter pennant flying aloft, three of the party, having slightly mis-read the map while completing a traverse of hills, made it back aboard with just 15 minutes to spare before we would be fast in the mud again. We retraced the channel at speed, with both river current and fast ebbing tide astern; but wind in the bay was ahead, making for spectacularly confused seas until we reached open ocean where, heading eastwards along Ireland's southern coast, the wind now fell astern.

We made Ballycotton harbour long before the sun was set. Once rafted up – on a Saturday night – to one of the many fishing boats we felt guaranteed a good night's sleep and leisurely morning. Not so: the swell set in and adjustments to mooring warps of the inside craft needed constant attention to prevent the outer craft of the broad crowded rafts from riding into one another; and *Mistress Malin* had the bowsprit of a handsome and vintage German cutter just two metres, at times much less, from her stern.

Then in the morning June 25 we fared no better: one inside fishing boat wished to put to sea; the whole of three broad rafts had to be reorganised, and the cutter we learned had its engine in need of repair. Another of the fishing boats was lined up to tow it to Kinsale. To cap the scene, a mooring marker buoy, dragged below the

surface by one manoeuvring boat the previous evening, then lodged its 25mm thick ground warp around our propeller. No way could we dislodge this shackle; the water in the tiny harbour being opaque with silt and oil, even a dive overboard failed to achieve anything. We resorted to our sturdy propeller mounted 'stripper'. It did the trick, but the 'Ferodo' lining of our gearbox forward clutch cone took a toll, of which we were made just aware on engaging forward gear for the remaining three weeks of the voyage.

Meanwhile, we gratefully put to sea without breakfast, heading for Kinsale. It was well after mid-morning. And already a memorable day for Robin's last on this cruise. We found a berth near the Kinsale Yacht Club. It was the Sunday of the Fastnet Race finish but the prize giving was over and the clubhouse deserted. However, the bar was open for Guinness and showers.

June 26: Robin disembarked (with some sadness for all) after being hoisted to the masthead for some chore, or was it photography. The day was lost to maintenance, and repairs to the heads. Diesel was to hand on the quay, but its pump too gave up and we had to wait for its repair, which gave time for Derek to hitch a lift 12 miles to a yard up river where parts for the heads pump were found (salvaged from a 'derelict'). By way of consolation for these delays we dined at a Pub called The 1601, the year of a Battle of Kinsale. Our evening ended in huge style with live music and songs accompanied by violin and melodeon. Friendly atmosphere and great fun.

June 27: To Bantry Bay with a detour, in the fine weather, to take in the Fastnet rock at close hand. The Rock had the last laugh, for on the return to our track, near Sheep's head, a sudden squall had us furling the genoa and reefing the main – not to mention our becoming soaked to the skin. In Bantry Bay we dropped anchor in a magical spot at the foot of Hungry Hill. It was the Skipper's birthday and a special dinner aboard soon satisfied the hungry crew; then plans were laid for another day of hill-walking. Thus June 28 was spent in traversing Hungry Hill, in near-tropical weather. Then a swim in the warm seas of the bay was followed by a visit to one of the smaller islands where dozens of sea birds were nesting. The terns were hatching and became noisily worried by our visit, and by the danger to their untidy gravel nests, containing one to three green-spotted eggs.

June 29: To Dingle Bay (64 nautical miles), diverting to examine the famous Skelligs at close hand. The Great Skellig, or St. Michael, has an historic monastery and can be visited by chartered ferry while the Little Skellig, brilliant white with guano, is the largest gannetry in Ireland. The air was filled with a snow-storm of screaming gannets. And then in Dingle Bay we were entertained by Fungi the local dedicated dolphin with his large following of tourists in chartered boats from Dingle Harbour.

June 30: An early start, but Fungi appeared to be on duty 24 hours a day. We met him as we departed Dingle Bay, at 0530h. This time we had him to ourselves. Shortly afterwards we were in thick fog. Bad news because we were heading for Blasket Sound, a difficult narrow passage between Blasket Island and the mainland. The tide would be against us despite our early start and could be flowing at four knots; moreover, Blasket Island produces a magnetic anomaly. But we felt confident of our GPS; until, that is, we were in the sound with zero visibility and compass rendered useless, and found our distance to first waypoint increasing when steering towards it.

This was compounded by our Navstar software having a 'bug' that causes it to

signal bearings of 360-369 when it means 000-009; a signal that the cockpit Navdata repeater refuses to accept, causing it to show a bearing to the previous waypoint while indicating the new waypoint. And much of the passage through the sound is just east of north. Graphics to the rescue: now we found the value of the Navstar plot-mode, creeping from waypoint to waypoint, along the plotted track on the GPS screen (gone were our doubts about the usefulness – even superfluousness? – of this mode of navigation). An experience to be remembered! We cleared the fog at Sibyl Head and with the wind abeam reached for the River Shannon, dropping anchor at 18.00h off Carrigaholt Castle; a perfect setting for farewell dinner aboard for John.

July 1: An early start for John, whose leave was at its end. He disembarked, to hitch and bus to Dublin from where he had a flight booked. The remaining crew of three set sail for the 50-mile passage to the Aran Islands and were soon being entertained by a school of dolphins dancing around the bow wave. Entering Kilronan Harbour we turned into the wind and motored the final mile. Suspicious engine noises (water boiling in the exhaust), rising engine temperature and finally, as we dropped anchor, ominous fumes from the engine compartment, heralded a water-cooling fault.

Investigation revealed a split in the exhaust hose between silencer and engine; while overheating had caused failure of another water hose and potential failure of a fuel line! Our water pump appeared to be working, so the cause was still a mystery. By astounding good fortune – it being a Sunday morning July 2 – the only other boat in the harbour, *Squirrel*, was crewed by a marine engineer Adrian Blyth, and his wife, from Galway. Adrian was able to help with sections of excess hose taken from *Squirrel's* engine, but the root cause of the overheating remained to be diagnosed.

A visit ashore in the afternoon showed Kilronan to be swamped with tourists from the mainland, many on rented bikes. Cycling is the best form of travel in the Aran Islands but there is a limit to the number of cyclists its narrow roads can accommodate. We noted tourist shops, full of sweaters similar to Scottish Aran knitwear, and other attractions reminiscent of the Cumbraes. Returning aboard we weighed anchor for Clifden, hoping to round Slyne Head before the strong winds forecast turned northerly. But just 20 minutes of motoring due west into the wind after clearing Killeany Bay revealed a still overheating engine, plus now a slight Diesel seepage.

Mistress Malin was turned about and the sails set for what became a superb sail with following wind to Galway; made the more entertaining by our passing a splendid fleet of West Coast Hookers, participants in the annual Galway to Kilronan race. We headed for New Harbour and the Galway Bay Sailing Club marina, and anchored off the clubhouse close to where *Squirrel* was moored. A phone call enlisted the help of Adrian in the morning for a lift into Galway to locate a replacement fuel hose.

Its installation failed to stem the diesel seepage but a visit from Adrian, and a dram or two before dinner on July 3, led to the discovery of a superfluous bleed-screw in the fuel line, sealed in by the engine's 22-year-old paintwork and now loosened by the overheating. Meanwhile, the westerly was increasing to gale force and our enforced delay was proving timely; though it took much of another day before the 'mystery' was traced to an unusual water impeller failure (its central core had become detached and engaged only intermittently at low engine revs). The remainder of that day and the whole of the next July 5 we were gale bound,

remarkably sheltered although New Harbour appears open to the west. A sight-seeing visit made now to Galway was entertaining. Among other interests were the wooden sculptures on the paved side-walks of the large Corrib River, flowing through the centre of the city, from whose banks many fishermen cast their lines endlessly, unperturbed by pedestrians and cyclists.

July 6: By afternoon the gale had begun to abate and we set reduced sail for the Aran Islands once more, but this time to Portmurvy on Inishmore the largest island of the group. A beautiful bay with a semicircle of golden sand. We landed and strolled to a prehistoric fort Dun Angus, built on the edge of a 500ft cliff, whose constant erosion by the sea endangers both the fort and the related archeological dig. Our day finished with a must for the Aran islands, sampling the local speciality at a seafood restaurant.

July 7: The weather was fine, the wind westerly and we made 57 miles broad reaching round Slyne Head and then High Island to reach Killary Bay, a long fiord-like inlet between hills, reminiscent of Ronas Voe in Shetland. Not many anchorages, and our choice was five miles from the entrance, a tiny village on the north shore, Bundoragha, where the hills and a salmon river come down to the sea. The former were the menfolk's objective for the next day, July 8, while Ewa planned a provisioning trip, three miles by dinghy, to Leenan village at the tip of the inlet. Thus Drew and Derek did the horseshoe of hills including Mweetrea (sounds African) in warm swirling mists, welcoming the westerly breeze, while Ewa became duly soaked rowing with wind opposing tide, and returning using the outboard against wind and swell.

July 8: The final day of Drew's leave, and so an early (0545h) start for the long 67-mile coastal passage to Broadhaven, passing Clare Island, Achill Head, a string of islands west of the Mullet peninsula, and finally rounding Erris Head at the northern tip of this peninsula; much of it, regrettably, motoring. Spectacular cliff scenery, especially Achill Head. Dropping anchor off the Coastguard slipway, we met Roger Aldcock from Cornwall, unemployed and so single-handling his South Coaster, *Hershel*, around Ireland, rebuilding her as he went. Ashore, to procure a taxi for Drew's departure in the morning; and another farewell dinner aboard, with fresh prawns from the fishing catch ashore.

It blew up again the following day, July 10, and soon after Drew had disappeared, with Roger sharing his ride to Belmullet to seek a parcel (a part for his engine) at the post office, the crew of *Mistress Malin*, now just two, had to seek shelter from a rising southeasterly by crossing to the far side of Broadhaven Bay followed later by *Hershel* on Roger's return. By then the wind was a screaming Force 7-8, and we had to stand by to go to Roger's rescue – communicating with him by VHF – as *Hershel* limped across painfully slowly (clutch slipping) to the sheltered side of the bay. Here we sat out the gale until late afternoon; and then made a landing to find that a store, reported to be 3km from the shore, was an 8km walk each way.

July 11: Some of the most exciting sailing of the cruise was to come, including this day on which the light southerly freshened steadily to Force 5-6 and with it astern we covered 69 nautical miles from Broadhaven (departing 0625h) past Dunmore Head and the magnificent Stags, across Donegal Bay and around Rossan Point to reach Boylagh Bay and drop anchor in the crystal clear water of wonderful Church Pool. A memorable passage; all adjectives well justified. There followed a leisurely morning, July 12, ashore waiting for the tide stream to turn northwards and take us in lighter winds a gentle but intricate nine-mile inner passage through

lurking skerries to Aranmore, or Aran Island. Yet another 'Aran', also famous for its sheep and aran sweaters.

July 13: A day in which the sailing was good and the goal for the day, rounding Bloody Foreland, became almost secondary to deciding the destination for the day; the latter kept moving in the way that destinations do when one's craft is covering the distance. And *Mistress Malin* seemed intent on reaching as close as is feasible to Malin Village at the head of the notorious drying Trawbreaga Bay, just SW of Malin Head. We had a high spring tide and the right timing to make this possible, but the pilot warns that sailing craft entering across the breaking sand bar at the entrance may find they have to remain in the bay for longer than intended; there is only one deep enough pool for anchoring, well in on the S shore, but the tidal rip is fierce. We weighed up the conditions; they appeared perfect. And when would that chance come again? But what the pilot fails to say is that the sand bar at the entrance, and the sandy river banks, are constantly shifting. This we began to suspect was so from our now-trusted Seafarer readings, and was confirmed by a local family who visited us from the far shore as we dropped anchor. They had watched as we grounded for a while on a sand bank (with gladly, and by design, plenty of still-rising tide to go) before reaching with much relief the isolated deep pool. All too isolated, as we found later, for it proved impossible to reach the far shore by dinghy in the ebb tide race; thus Malin Village remained un-visited by *Mistress Malin's* joint-owner crew. The local family also reported that Trawbreaga Bay has on average one visiting yacht approximately every five years. It was with their sketch of where the sand bar at the entrance now lay (the pilot was written in 1991) that we were to make our escape safely on the still-rising flood tide in the morning.

July 14: With a 0730h start we made a tense exit from Trawbreaga Bay and headed north around Malin Head and Inishtrahul Island: then NE for Islay, planning to reach Bowmore in Loch Indaal by early afternoon. Not to be so: the notoriously fickle tides in that section of the North Channel took over and with the wind dropping away we motored endlessly at full throttle, making at times only one-two knots in the direction of the Rins of Islay and yet seven knots through the water. And the pilot warns that . . . 'it is not unknown' . . . in some conditions . . . 'for the S-going tidal stream to run for as long as 11 hours'. For seven hours in the tide race the sea was an oily calm but for those sinister tidal vortexes that seem to detach the helm from the keel. Eventually, we dropped anchor off the Bowmore distillery at 1950h. The 40-mile passage had taken more than 12 hours. The town was quiet by the time we made it ashore after a meal; but we procured a bottle of Bowmore malt at a mini-supermarket to celebrate a return to Scotland.

July 15: A further shore visit and then it was too late to catch the north going stream in the Sound of Islay, so we headed for Gigha, crossing our southbound track from Loch Moidart of five weeks ago to the day. In the bay at Ardmish on the E side of Gigha, for the first time since Kinsale we found ourselves among more than two or three boats at anchor. Yachts from around The Mull were rafted up three to a mooring and their numbers increased all evening to a count of 60 or 70.

July 16: A short passage, 33 miles of mostly motoring, through the Sound of Islay to Oronsay. We dropped anchor with plenty of time to roam ashore. The island has changed but little over the years; but the Priory of St. Columba is now ordered and well maintained by a resident keeper. Built on the site of a former Celtic monastery,

it is probably the most important ecclesiastic antiquity in the Scottish islands next to the abbey on Iona.

July 17: The wind was light and we made a late (1045h) start for the Treshnish Islands, heading northwards through the Sound of Iona. But the wind increased to Force 5 and 6 from the SW and big seas to the west of Mull caused us to abandon thoughts in the late afternoon of a Treshnish anchorage; so with a broad reach around the Point of Ardnamurchan, we continued – through a magnificent and classic sunset evening – to *Mistress Malin*'s home base in Loch Moidart where we picked up her mooring at 2330h. This is a loch whose intricate entrance one would not recommend in the dark, but with 23 years of accumulated 'local knowledge' we had no problem. A fitting finale to a five-week cruise in which we logged a total of 1266 nautical miles, with some 490 of these either motoring or motor-sailing (in a summer of generally light, but at times contrary and strong winds).

(Log awarded the Clyde Cruising Club Donald McNamara Trophy).

The 1995 Yachting Meet on the Scientific Research Ship (Irish style) *Mistress Malin.*

Drew Somerville writes:-

The Skipper was on his engine
Changing the diesel filter
The rest of the crew were lounging about
Slightly out of kilter.

The 1st Mate Ewa, she's quite a diva
Was cooking an elegant stew
The rest of the crew were hungry as hell
And stuffing the cruising chute clew.

The 2nd Mate Robin, the GPS boffin
Was plotting another course
But his own true flair
Was the Bosun's Chair
And Lazy Jacks way up aloft.

Kiwi Grigor, the crew's trick cyclist
Was really quite off-pist
The hospitable Irish all flew past
And left him pretty aghast.

That Rasds chap, he joined the ship
At Howth Marina fair
He kipt in t'focsle with Robin the Mate
Who could ask for anything mair?

We by-passed the Wicklow Mountains – too good a wind, too near civilisation (Dublin), no interesting anchorages, the Skipper wanted to sail on – I don't know, I vos only obeying orders.

Third stop (on the right) was Dungarvan, a tricky little port that played hard to get with a dearth of buoys, but with true Irish hospitality the day was saved when a wee motor boat called us up on Channel 16 and urged us to follow him in, thus avoiding some potentially embarrassing sandbanks. There was further scientific research that evening as we planned the following day's mountaineering. The Comeragh Mountains were approached (by taxi), the Skipper had invested in a brand new 1/50,000 Irish OS map of the area, so we all knew where we were until he and the 1st Mate left us on our own with a mere 1/250,000. The three mapless ones collect a marvellous coire with green lochan but found the Irish miles a bit long until the penny dropped – they had gone a ridge to far – damn all small scale maps. Not to worry, they may not have been able to hitch a lift or call a taxi but Irish hospitality in the form of an old Republican got them back to harbour before the Blue Peter sailed into the distance.

The 2nd Mate jumped ship at Kinsale, and then there were four to enjoy a good pub meal in the '1601' and entertainment by melodian Dan O'Boyle, as well as carrying on with our serious scientific research.

Having got the loo into better shape, and more watertight, the 1st Mate allowed us a long sail – by Galley Head, Cape Clear, Fastnet, Mizzen Head, Three Castle Head and Sheep's Head to Adrigole Harbour, a truly idyllic anchorage and ideally situated for a god horseshoe round of the Caha Mountains. Hungry Hill may not be a Munro but it had its own challenges as we navigated our way between grassy ramps looking for weaknesses in the strata. In spite of (heat) haze there were great views of Bantry Bay, the Kenmare River (really a fjord) and the rest of the Caha range. Adrigole Mountain is only half the height of its big brother Hungry Hill, but it still entertained us as we fought our way to the wee grocers to regale ourselves with 7UP and choc ices.

It's another perfect morning as we head farther clockwise round Erin's fair isle to take in The Skelligs, Little Skellig being the largest gannetry in Ireland with lots of guano to prove it while big brother Skellig Michael, with nae guano, is an ancient monastic site: but there's no time for culture, we have a date with Fungi the Dingle dolphin and a last Irish meal for our antipodean warrior, John. We don't allow him to jump ship at Dingle, he had to suffer a bit more before being allowed to escape – read on. There was an interesting sunrise the following morning, a harbinger of fog. The brave crew are not disheartened, they've got GPS after all, but Blasket Sound has a magnetic anomaly, and then Murphy's Law comes into force – there is a slight glitch in the GPS repeater system highlighted when Rasds has to ask where north is! He is instantly promoted to Lookout while greater seamen than he have a serious scientific discussion on what the hell to do with visibility at about 50m and (apparently) no navigational aids available – will the Skipper buy radar next? Comes the cool mid—European accents of the 1st Mate: 'Vy don' ve use de graffiks?' The aforementioned graphics were a whim of the Skipper when he was investing in his GPS – it would entertain the Grandchildren! To cut a long story sideways graphics save the day and when the sun peeps through the mist it's in the right place.

We have to draw a veil over the next few days – engine trouble and contrary winds. A week after the Caha Mountains we sail into a superb fjord – Killary Harbour – just below the Mweelrea Mountains. Saturday and the weather is starting to break but the Skipper and Rasds have a great day doing the Mweelrea horseshoe.

Rasds' three-week pass is running out fast and we're on the edge of nowhere but

a spanking wind drives the *Mistress Malin* at speeds up to 7 knots and we reach Broad Haven at the south west edge of Sligo Bay where Rasds jumps ship (and then there were two) with every hope of reaching Glasgow the same day – fond hope, but that's another saga.

For the complete sailing saga you are referred to the *CCC Journal*.

As regards the mountaineering we are proud to record that no Irish Munros were bagged but three great days were enjoyed on the hill.

As to the extremely serious scientific research it was proved beyond any shadow of a doubt that the farther South you go, the better the Guinness.

SIMON RICHARDSON reports:— At the end of July, Chris Cartwright and I visited Chamonix and spent two weeks climbing in the Mont Blanc range. The first route on the sports plan was the Pilastro del Sorriso on the East Face of Monte Gruetta above the Italian Val Ferret. This intriguing rock wall had fascinated me for nearly 15 years, but it is rarely climbed due to a long approach up the chaotic Gruetta glacier. Fortunately, heavy snowfall the previous spring rendered the crevasses passable, although the huge gaping bergschrund gave Chris an interesting mixed pitch. Once established on the wall, the climbing was sustained and enjoyable, although the route-finding kept us guessing all the way to the top. We were unable to climb the aid pitch at two thirds height, so were forced to find an alternative line, and in doing so made an unwitting first free ascent of the route.

The Aiguille du Jardin was the next mountain on the agenda. The weather forecast was unsettled, so we went up to the Couvercle Hut to wait for things to improve. Needless to say, the predicted storm never arrived, so we spent a sunny morning climbing a modern rock route on the Pinnacles du Moine. Extreme incompetence, meant that we only realised that we were climbing the wrong mountain when we reached the summit with two pitches still to go on the topo!

Impatient to get to grips with the high mountains, we set off next morning for the Aiguille du Jardin, and the perfect orange granite of its South Pillar. The only existing route took a line up the left edge, but we were tempted by the line of cracks leading into the prominent corner on its right arête. Ten pitches of sustained rock climbing took us to the top of the pillar by mid afternoon when the long overdue storm arrived.

It flashed and boomed just enough to frighten us, but fortunately it didn't put down much fresh snow. Next morning, after four pitches of mixed climbing, we reached the summit and joined the Jardin Ridge. Two hours of classic mountaineering took us over the Grande Rocheuse to the Aiguille Verte – a really enjoyable way to pick off three 4000m peaks. We descended a snowy Moine Ridge and reached the Couvercle just in time for a welcome dinner.

After a route on the Aiguille du Praz Torrent in the Aiguilles Rouges, it was time for our *grande finale*, a direct ascent of the South Pillar of Frêney. Circumstances conspired against us at this point. The weather forecast was poor, and Chris's wallet and passport were stolen. Having come here three years in a row with this objective in mind, I wasn't going to be put off easily however, so after a rushed visit to the British Consulate in Geneva, we set off for the tiny Eccles bivouac hut high on the south side of Mont Blanc.

Our gamble with the weather paid off, for two days later we were 200m up the pillar, eyeing up the imposing central section, which was etched out against a

crystal blue sky. Previous ascents had avoided this by traversing left, and climbing the gully to the left of the pillar, but our proposed line took the central chimney which cut through the bulging crest. Overhanging and draped in icicles, it would not have been out of place on a cold November day on Lochnagar. Five absorbing pitches led to a series of easier cracks and grooves. The weather was still perfect, so we bivouacked about 100m below Mont Blanc de Courmayeur. Next morning, two hours of ridge-bashing took us to the summit of Mont Blanc, and the realisation of a cherished dream.

To complete the high mountain experience, we traversed Mont Maudit and Mont Blanc du Tacul, before crossing the Vallee Blanche and taking the cable car down to Italy. All that now remained was to take a taxi to retrieve the car from Val Veni, drive back through the tunnel, and thank the weather for smiling so kindly on us during our short stay.

Adventure Climbing in the South West

James Hotchkis reports:— In September 1995 Stan Pearson, myself, Grahame Nicoll and Mel Crowther climbed on the sea cliffs in the south west tip of England, in weather reminiscent of France in the spring and at a time when the heatwave in Scotland had ended some weeks before. Narrow hedged country lanes, Cornish pasties and a limitless selection of beer in country pubs was so unlike Scotland that we felt as though we were abroad.

The granite and greenstone cliffs on Cornwall's north coast offered magnificent climbing. Unlike the continent there were no bolts. Frequently we abseiled down to sea ledges and climbed back out. The climbing was wholly different from Scotland but, with the vagaries of the sea, tides and freak waves, just as exciting. We climbed many of the classic routes at Bosigran such as Suicide Wall, Bow Wall, Little Brown Jug, Anvil Chorus, Paragon and Variety Show. On the north Cornwall coast desolate moors, with 4,000 year old hedges (complete with preservation orders!), speckled with ancient disused tin mines stretched to the edge of the sea cliffs. A sense of history pervades the area. Bow Wall is still something of a test-piece, nearly 30 years after Joe Brown led the first pitch.

The rock at Bosigran and surrounding crags such as Chair Ladder, the Great Zawn and Carn Gloose was tough and reliable with generally solid protection. On Carn Gloose, Astral Stroll gave an excellent four pitch E1, traversing low across the sea and then up through bands of overhangs above a huge cave mouth. There was no-one else on the crag, our company being the sea birds and the crashing waves. Variety Show in the Great Zawn also deserves a mention. An abseil into the Zawn lands one on sea ledges which are splashed with spray. The crux crack line of the climb was a vertical 90 foot pitch; it involved laybacking and jamming in a spectacular position, high above the waves.

We also climbed at the Lizzard, Berry Head and Avon Gorge. Moonraker gave an exciting limestone excursion, particularly in view of our very late start for the traverse around the back of the cave to the start of the climb. If one ignores the guide book recommendation of completing the traverse within two hours each side of low tide one risks not only getting one's feet wet, but also falling into the sea. Try swimming with your climbing gear!

Either before Scotland comes into season or in the autumn Cornwall is a superb location; adventure climbing at its best.

Himalaya

British Nanga Parbat Expedition 1995

SANDY ALLAN reports: Sandy Allan and Rick Allen (both SMC) accompanied Voytec Kurtica (Poland) and Andrew Lock (Australia) on an expedition to the unclimbed Mazino Ridge of Nanga Parbat (26,600ft) in Pakistan. The Alpine-style expedition was led by Doug Scott who has tried the route twice previously. The proposed route starts close to the Mazino Gap and takes a line to the ridge and then along the ridge at an average height of 23,000ft (approx.) for several days, where it meets the Schell Route and from there to the summit.

The group flew to Islamabad and drove to Skardu. From there mountain bikes supplied by Raleigh Bicycles were used to traverse the Deosai Plain to the road junction leading to the village of Tarishing from where porters were hired and the three-day walk to base camp began.

Several forays were made on the route but the team had to descend on several occasions due to bad weather conditions. Eventually, after a concentrated eight-day push the team reached 23,000ft and part way over the ridge but were turned back by bad weather on the corniced knife-edged ridge which made the progress and retreat very awkward.

The climbers arrived at base camp at the end of July in bad weather, missing the good weather which gave Alan Hinkes and company good weather for their ascent of K2. Thereafter the unusually heavy monsoon affected climbing most high-altitude climbing in the area.

The expedition received grants from the Mount Everest Foundation and British Mountaineering Council. The climbers would also like to thank Berghaus, Mountain Equipment, Lyon Equipment and many others for their assistance in supplying equipment.

The expedition was also used as a vehicle to raise funds for Scottish European Aid and Children in Crisis.

Morocco

Anti-Atlas

HAMISH BROWN reports: In the autumn of 1995 Hamish Brown and party raided south from Taliouine, (south of the Toubkal/Sirwa massifs) to climb Jbel Iguigul (2323m), an easy enough venture but rewarding years of mystery over a hill big enough to show a snow summit on distant horizons when motoring in the Souss. Jbel Aklim, at 2528m is the highest of the Anti-Atlas summits and the Jbel Kest range (highest 2359m) near Tafraoute are the best-known. Jbel M'Quorn (2344m) and other isolated peaks also offer good sport. Being far to the south this is a range offering plenty of trekking and climbing in both the winter into spring season and in late autumn. Hamish can offer fuller information, maps, etc., to the area, and elsewhere in the Atlas.

REVIEWS

Cairngorms Vol. 1 and 2:— (Scottish Mountaineering Trust, 1995. £11.95 each. ISBN 0-907521-45-2 and 0-907521-46-0).

Thanks must go to Allen Fyffe and Andrew Nisbet, as well as numerous contributors for what by and large are very good guidebooks. Their intimate knowledge of the Cairngorms and enthusiasm for the area is evident – various anecdotes, helpful tips and points of interest are well expressed, The grades given are as a result of a consensus and the consultation exercises have paid off. The continued introduction of a two-tier winter grading system is generally well implemented and is welcomed by most activists.

Guidebook writing can be a hazardous task – you are walking into the firing range and, inevitably are going to be sniped at. I would shoot on a few points.

There are a few errors which should not have made it to print. For example, Vertigo Wall in winter is described as ‘an outstanding truly mixed route.’ Howff-Dweller takes a right-facing not left-facing corner. A route on the diamond slab is inexplicably omitted. Some anomalies occur in the graded list. For instance, Stone Bastion appears at the bottom of the E5s in Vol. 2, but (more realistically) appears in the middle of the E4s in Vol. 1. These are hardly major errors but they don’t contribute to what is otherwise a very professional end product.

I would be critical of the photographs. The balance is good, i.e. summer-winter, historic-aesthetic, harder routes-easier routes, but several of them have been published before. While some are excellent and inspirational, some are disappointing and mediocre – pictures you wouldn’t even show at your local slide night far less publish for the nation to view. The picture of Steeple, for example, does nothing to portray one of Britain’s finest and most satisfying mountain routes – it could have been taken on a 15ft outcrop. The reproduction of some slides is also suspect – yours truly does not have black hair! The picture of Yeti on the back cover of Vol. 2, of the climber front pointing his rope, is not of Chris Forrest (he took the photo) but is the grand master of Scottish winter climbing himself, Andy Nisbet. The front cover of this volume – of the big raking systems on Central Gully Wall – is disappointing. The routes farther left are much more photogenic and could have provided a much more inspiring picture.

The starring system seems to have been taken on rather half-heartedly with harder winter routes being unstarred. It is also iniquitous on some counts. I don’t think that saying the Dubh Loch is a great crag so we will be harsh with stars is fair. It is also inconsistent because the same ideal hasn’t been imposed on the Shelter Stone Crag where routes are generally starred (mostly with due cause, although a few climbs could have shed a star).

Routes like Bombadillo, The Israelite, Perilous Journey, The Wicker Man and The Improbability Drive would get three stars if they were on other cliffs but only get one star here. Flodden would surely fulfil any criteria imposed for a three-star route. Solitaire at Broad Cairn bluffs – while being a good route – is relatively minor compared to titanic adventures such as Sword of Damocles, The Bedouin, Dragonslayer, Groanmaker, The Shetlander or Web of Weird/Hybrid Vigour, yet it receives two stars, these routes, unbelievably, receive none. Did the authors think that those who have done these lines lack the integrity to accurately rate their quality?

I'm quite happy with the relative trickle of climbers visiting the mighty Dubh Loch but it would be good to see a few more souls savouring the experiences on offer – some more stars to encourage people wouldn't have gone amiss.

The guides seem a bit expensive to me (no jokes about grippy Aberdonians please). Maybe the deadline for printing could have been extended to allow for the brilliant summer weather when people were obviously active in new-routing. As a result we have some routes stuck in on a page by themselves and other routes, including two E7s have not made it to print. This is a shame considering the length of time we will probably have to wait for further Cairngorm editions. Less haste in the guidebook production would have paid off.

Having said all this, I recommend these guidebooks as essential items for the bookshelves of anyone interested in doing brilliant mountain routes in the Cairngorms.

Wilson Moir.

Magic Mountains:- Rennie McOwan. (Mainstream Publishing, 1996. £14.99, ISBN 1-85158-707-1).

Our present home has a toehold on one of the hills making up the Ochils. The blurb on the book jacket tells me that the author was brought up at the foot of the Ochils. Our hill has, by repute, a ghost, but one not included in McOwan's book. This is not surprising, as almost every bump, hollow, Glen, village has a ghost, or ghostly story attached to it. The ensuing volume of complete Scottish ghost stories would be unbindable.

Rennie McOwan has, in this book of 160 pages and 28 short chapters; collected stories of hauntings; sightings; sounds and ambience, some well known, some less so. There is no index; it is not a scholarly book in that sense, but it has tales worth reading and re-telling, preferably before the dull red glow of a bothy fire.

Rennie expresses surprise that bothies should be so often mentioned in tales of ghosts. I'm not. It may be that those who stay there are often in a strange (to them) environment. Brought up in the noisy cities they look to the hills and moors for an escape. Tired after a long walk they are suddenly enclosed by the smoky dark walls of some lonely bothy, the only sounds the strange, unearthly wailings of some coastal bird, or the unclear mumblings of a nearby burn. The noisy stove quiets for the last time that evening and the silence rushes in under the door. They fall asleep at last, perhaps lulled into Lethe by a wee dram, only to be rudely awakened by the crash of the bothy door, footsteps next door, and the hairs on the back of their necks prickling upwards. (I had this last phenomenon as a young boy - it does happen given sufficient terror!) Complete the tale yourself.

My only bothy 'experience' was in that archetypical venue Ben Alder Cottage. Sleeping with head just above the wooden floor, as is one's practice, sleep was ruined by mice who all night long, it seemed, rolled huge boulders noisily up and down under the floor. It's not that I'm a disbeliever in tales of hauntings, it's just that I've never had any experiences sufficiently weird to stretch my normal beliefs. I'm in good company of course. I discount most stories that have happened to those physically or mentally stretched beyond the normal – the mind begins to fill in the gaps when the body is exhausted. I also discount most stories where there is even the slightest whiff of money, or sensationalism. Recent sightings of railway barriers in the Cairngorms might just be such an example.

The author does mention a fairy circle he once knew on 'our' hill, one formed by the action of frost and time on a grassy hollow. But now a track has been dug out of the hillside and in the building of it the fairy circle has gone, the spell has been broken. Mood is everything. One of the colour photographs in this book is in the fine pine forest of Glen Derry. McOwan has cleverly included an elfin like figure in the mid distance, one with a red hat and long, white beard. Looks awfully like Adam Watson Jun. in fact. But if you didn't know, you might think it was an elf, or dwarf, or Hobbit, and so the mood would be set. We want to believe, but can't.

It is important to try and record the legends, and McOwan has made a fair stab at doing just that. But we need a bit more than conjecture, and rumour and local gossip and fine old Gaelic stories told over countless peaty reeks. And until that happens, all we have is a collection of iffy tales handed down, or a boisterous set of active mice under a bothy floor, or a sudden gust of katabatic wind slamming shut the bothy door.

And, oh but I'll have to go, there's someone knocking at the door . . .

Ken Crockett.

Burn On The Hill – The Story of the First 'Compleat Munroist':— Elizabeth Allan (Bidean Books, 1995, 184 pps, £17.80).

If your book collection includes a fair number of Weir's, Murray's, Gordon's, Watson's, Brown's, Humble's, McNally's, Perry's and Firsoff's, then buy this book and enjoy both its content and possession, for it will complement and enhance your hill library. For your money you will get a fascinating insight into the life and times of the Rev. A.R.G. (Ronnie) Burn, a life member of the SMC who tramped the Scottish hills and glens between 1914 and 1927; 'compleating' both Munros and Tops (558 in total) by July 20, 1923.

Ronnie Burn followed on the heels of his fellow cleric, the Rev. A.E. Robertson, albeit some 22 years later, but was the first Munroist (of two) to also scale the Tops; a feat repeated only six times before the early 1950s. (I have the impression that, if Ronnie Burn had enjoyed AER's financial status and long holidays, he might well have become the first person to complete the Munros in one continuous circuit; for he undoubtedly had the passion and stamina. Sorry, Hamish.).

But back to the conception of the book which, in itself, is a fascinating story. About 22 years ago, a London book-collector, G.H. Wright, purchased 10, small clothbound notebooks for 'a trifling sum' which turned out to be the personal diaries of Ronnie Burn, and his visits to the Scottish hills. The books gathered dust until, in 1986, Wright saw Adam Watson's TV documentary on *The Cairngorms*, and was motivated to write to the presenter to make further inquiries about the books and their author, and to obtain advice on a suitable Scottish institution to which they could be gifted. (They now reside in King's College Library, Archives Department, University of Aberdeen).

Watson showed the diaries to Elizabeth Allan, his co-author of the classic work *The Place Names of Upper Deeside*, and she decided they must be published in book form, as a valuable record of Highland country life and social ways of the time which, essentially, were late Victorian in nature, and in terminal decline.

While Allan set about editing, and writing the work, Adam Watson gave us a fascinating foretaste of what was to come, in a diary extract in issue No. 181 of the Journal (1990, pages 400 to 402) — which relates to the New Year Meet in 1918-19, when Ronnie spent four days in the company of Harold Raeburn, then 53

compared to his 31 years. Unfortunately, Adam's discerning contribution is not reflected in Allan's editing, for this passage is relegated to just over one page in the book. (I do wonder if we might not have had an even more enjoyable work if Watson had cooperated with Allan, particularly in the selection of passages relating to Club history, or interesting routes).

No photograph of Ronnie Burn has come to light yet, although we understand he was of short build with a pronounced hunchback, and a somewhat shabby appearance. The majority of keepers, shepherds and estate workers, and their long suffering wives, extended what hospitality they could afford – and freely shared much valuable information on routes, local history and place-names – so it must have been particularly galling for them to have Ronnie haggle over the 'B&B' rate for the night; one of his less endearing habits.

He could, however, be very generous within his limited means: lending his treasured Shearer's Ben Nevis Panorama to Miss Grant, cook at Corrour Lodge, then buying her a new copy at Fort William. And he left £50 in his will to Katie Scott, daughter of the Scotts at Altbeith, Glen Afric, whom he first met when she was a shy 13-year old. Katie's first impression of Ronnie was that 'he looked like the mountain troll in the fairy tale.'

Much of Burn's life was filled with hardship and sadness, which Allan handles in a most sensitive manner. His nadir came in the mid-1930s when, after redundancy and death of his father, he was reduced to living in a working mens' hostel in Edinburgh. Fortunately, in 1938, he obtained a job with the Oxford University Press, as a Greek and Latin proof-reader, and this lasted until 1967 – well past normal retirement age. In addition to his beloved hills, Ronnie also had a passion for books – several thousand of them, of which 500 shared his tiny office at the OUP.

Ronnie's books must have been a great comfort in his later life, but it is sad to think that his tenure of the hills occupied so short a part of such a long life. But how he enjoyed those hill days, even if the very occasional companion did not. Speed and distance, allied to a stamina bordering on the stubborn, produced some mind blowing periods of activity, without, on many occasions, the benefit of rest days. In the three days from July 6-8, 1923, Ronnie knocked off 35 Munros and Tops in the Cairngorms, and 12 days later, his odyssey was completed.

This is a good book for long, wet, winter nights (or long, wet, summer evenings) when, equipped with a few OS sheets, Moir's *Scottish Hills Tracks* and a dram, one can relive some of Ronnie's more ambitious expeditions and reflect on how much the man valued the hills and hill people of Scotland. Because the book is based on personal diaries, we are able to savour a completely spontaneous, non commercial and passionate celebration of the hill scene of the period.

The book is, in my opinion, the second-best Munro-related title yet, the honours still going to *Hamish's Mountain Walk*.

I feel Burn would have appreciated Brown's writings and attitude to the hills. Perhaps, too, Burn would have met his match in terms of Brown's fleetness of foot. 'C'mon Ronnie, let's bag those two before supper.'

While reading the book for the first time, I thought that Ronnie Burn was, perhaps, just a little daft. An uncharitable thought perhaps I felt, but one which lingered with me until I read Rennie McOwan's obituary to W.H. Murray, wherein he recalled Murray's dictum that 'the human race is composed of just two species: those who climb and those who don't, the daft and the sober'. But 'daft' to Bill

Murray meant, in the old Scots sense, 'unreasonably happy'. Ronnie Burn was, surely, exceptionally daft.

Criticisms of the book? Yes, a few. An index would be helpful. Also, it is, or has been, difficult to obtain. I got my first sighting in Thin's at Aviemore this Easter, six months after publication. (My own copy, which is numbered 274 of, I believe, 2000 copies, was obtained direct from the publisher, post free).

And, finally, the book's sub-title: 'The Story of the *first* Compleat Munroist'. Unless Elizabeth Allan is trying to be controversial, I feel it is misleading and inaccurate. If you 'compleat' you have done the Munros, and enter the Hall of Fame. The achievement is not conditional on bagging the Tops as well.

Elizabeth should have clarified the position in her first chapter, and put the Revs Robertson's and Burn's respective feats into a proper historical context and relationship. This would not, in any way, have diminished enjoyment of the work, or respect for Ronnie Burn.

Maybe, of course, she is not convinced that AER did actually compleat?

Ian Hamilton.

Footnote: If you do purchase and enjoy this book, and like reading about life in Scotland's remote places and Highland deer forests, then I recommend two other titles from Bidean Books: *Isolation Shepherd* by Iain R Thomson, and *Memoirs of William Collie - a 19th Century Deerstalker*. The former is available in paperback, the latter in hardback from the publisher (but a bit pricey at £20.00). Contact Iain MacKay, Bidean Books, Torgormack, Beaully, Inverness-shire.

Landmarks – An Exploration of Great Rocks:— David Craig. (Jonathan Cape, £20.00, 334pp. ISBN 0-224-03510-x).

David Craig's earlier book about rock climbing, *Native Stones*, contained some of the best and most evocative descriptions of rock-climbing experience I have ever read. *Landmarks* is not centred on climbing but on the rocks themselves, particularly on those which are prominent features of the landscape, but the descriptive quality of the writing is as high as ever.

A subject as wide as this must inevitably be done selectively but the geographical coverage is extensive, beginning with some of the canyons and mesas of the American West, moving through Australia, Southern Africa and the Pillars of Hercules to Greece and Turkey, taking in Maccu Pichu in Peru and homing in on the British Isles. Similarly, the aspects discussed are multilateral; physical structure and geology, fauna and flora, cultural, historical and spiritual elements as illustrated by rock paintings and other evidence, are all considered in appropriately differing degrees of scale and intensity. Obviously, there is much more to be said about Uluru (Ayer's Rock) than The Woman Stone on Ben Avon, but it is a pleasant experience to enlarge the understanding of places and features that you thought you already knew fairly well. David Craig is an explorer of landscapes in various dimensions, chronological as well as aesthetic and physical, and his command of language enables him to convey his feelings and experiences convincingly.

Being written by an enthusiastic rock-climber, the descriptions contain a good deal of detail, with a clarity of style which allows the reader to accompany the author not only on the visit but on the ascent itself wherever relevant. I have been to a number of the places featured in this book and my memories have been

supplemented. Others which I have wanted to visit but never managed to reach I have been able to experience vicariously through these pages.

There are 16 pages containing 17 colour and 14 monochrome illustrations, and a dozen more of bibliographic notes and references. This is a travel book, but a very unusual one, and quite fascinating to anyone with an addiction to rocky landscapes.

W.D. Brooker.

Mountain Bothies Association Journal 1995.

This issue benefits from the new technology, with striking photographs on the front and back covers. It tells of the problems stemming from the growth of the outdoor industry. The days of the brother and sisterhood of the hills when you could belong to a peacefully romantic coterie are passing. The bothy-using people served by this excellent association are becoming too numerous and too careless. The size of the problem is steadily becoming too great for the programme of maintenance to be run by part-time dedicated romantics. There are mysterious internal tensions. There is a lot of good writing about present and future problems of bothies and bothying. An attempt is being made to return to the oral tradition so that only the right kind of user will acquire details of the location of bothies. We can only wish them luck.

There are good articles on certain bothies and a crossword puzzle. This year's Journal is recommended reading

The prevailing flavour of *Weltschmerz*, however, is expressed on the last page in the last lines of a poem by Hamish Brown:

'Even the bothy book
(Full of obscenities)
Cannot stop the tide and the wind.'

I.H.M. Smart.

Himalaya Alpine-Style:-- The most challenging routes on the highest peaks:

Andy Fanshawe and Stephen Venables (Hodder and Stoughton, 191pp., abundant photographs, line drawings and maps. £35. ISBN 0 340 64931 3.)

This remarkable book should have appeared for Christmas 1995 but as some aspects of the production were deemed unsatisfactory by the authors, publication was held over and the book did not appear until March of this year. This respect for standards is embodied throughout the book. The book presents the story of 40 ascents on major peaks across the Himalayan chain from Rakaposhi to Kanchenjunga performed by small self-contained parties. The adaptation of Alpine-style climbing to the greater order of immensity of the Himalayas is an inspiring story. It is an achievement brought about by a small international elite. One can only have respect for those with the skill and confidence and iron nerve to take on these intimidating lines.

Although in 'coffee table' format the book transcends that classification as a butterfly transcends its chrysalis. The photographs are varied, informative and big enough (thanks to the double spreads of the coffee table size) to give some impression of the vast scale of the Himalaya. There are plenty of action shots. All are taken and reproduced with care and artistry. They range from the frankly dramatic and intimidating to the homely and even gallus. For example, one photograph shows a nonchalant figure standing on a narrow summit with a

cellphone in his hand. The caption reads: 'Lucas radios the girlfriend at base camp from the central summit of Annapurna.' Such *sang froid* on a mountain that has killed so many! Since the participants in this extreme game know full well the penalties of bad luck or misjudgment this aspect is taken as read and not dwelt on in the text: as the authors make clear they are primarily producing a book for climbers who do not have to be reminded that there is always a bullet in the empty revolver.

The writing is clear, concise, has a feel for history and is salted with understated humour. The maps and line diagrams are succinct and show a classical attention to combining clarity with economy. This book will appeal alike to the participating elite, to those who aspire and to those of us who can only climb at this standard in our minds. The book will be a classic. All connected with its production deserve our congratulations. A point of local interest is that the impressive photograph on the front jacket shows Hamish Irvine approaching the South-west summit of Chogolisa; another is that one author, Andy Fanshawe, was killed in a climbing accident, not in the Himalaya but here in Scotland on Patey's dark Lochnagar.

Iain Smart.

Over the Himalaya:— Koichiro Ohmori (Diadem Books, 44 double spread uncaptioned photographs with separate keys. £25. ISBN 0-906371-15-5).

This is another book prepared with care and attention and, one must say, love. It consists entirely of aerial photographs of the Nepal Himalaya made from a single-engined aircraft, a Pilatus Porter PC-6. The double spreads of the 'coffee table' format show crisply-detailed, beautifully-reproduced photographs of major mountains and mountain complexes in seven different regions of Nepal, all taken, for obvious reasons, in very good weather. The uniformly high standard of the photographs is however, overwhelming; there is, unfortunately, a limit to the number of perfect views that the mind can absorb. Nevertheless, this book is a desirable acquisition if you are condemned to modern wage slavery in a ruthlessly-competitive economy. You can almost bodily enter these pictures and embark on a vicarious Walter Mitty ascent by a bold route of your own choosing. The faraway look in your eyes may make your employer wonder if he is extracting the maximum amount of work from you and he may think of replacing you with a less distracted android – but nothing in life is without risk. The photographs with their crisp delineation of detail will be particularly valuable for real-world mountaineers who are planning routes on any of the mountains illustrated. The photographs are not cluttered with captions. Identification of topographic features is given in small-scale reproductions at the end where technical details of the photography are also supplied. The text is minimal but as excellent and crisp as the photographs. It includes a brief, readable synopsis of Himalayan geology by Yugo Ono. As a pilot, or rather an ex-pilot, and a timid one at that, I particularly enjoyed, if fearfully, the section on *Flying over the Himalaya*. '... the plane fell 3000m emerging from the turbulence just above a glacier... the view – during the descent – rapidly alternated between sky and valley. My light-meter floated in front of my face. Several hundred pieces of candy that had been in a box floated throughout the cabin'. Experiencing this book and the previously reviewed *Himalaya Alpine-style* makes me slightly dissatisfied with spending my life as a time-serving mediocrity. But then, given my genetic make-up, I really had no choice.

Iain Smart.

Scottish Winter Climbs:— Compiled by Andrew Nisbet and Rab Anderson. (Scottish Mountaineering Trust, 1996. £16.95. ISBN 0-907521-47-9).

To me the title of this book evoked some nostalgic thoughts of bleak and sometimes glorious Highland days in the early 1980s when I too compiled a winter-climbing guide to the Scottish mountain's, coincidentally called *Scottish Climbs*. In that work I was assisted by the graphic hand of Graeme Hunter (and other members of the Club) even though the icy tome was for 'Constable' who dared to embark on the sacred slopes of guidebook publishing. Anyhow, that was way back in 1982 and a lot of snow has fallen and thawed since then and the tools of the trade have changed too. The business end of ice axes have drooped, then tried to rise again in what has ignominiously been called the 'banana' pick.

One of the criticisms of a 'selected' guide is that it often appears to deliberately omit good routes; but a good route, like an Old Master is often in the eye of the beholder. In other words, a selected climbs compiler can seldom win. However, this *Scottish Winter Climbs* has a good and varied selection of routes, covering the principal areas of Scottish winter activity, even the humble and generally snow-free Cobbler gets well-deserved attention. A peppering of colour pics adds allure, depicting adrenaline-stirring idyllic scenes. But we all know the truth behind blue-sky pics. Winter climbing is a game of hide-and-seek, when your objective is often obscured by cloud or blizzard and you are vainly looking for it.

The alternative is often a waiting game for 'conditions' or the overnight abortive journey to be greeted with horizontal rain which abandoned the eastern Atlantic in undue haste to catch the weekend climber on Saturday or Sunday morning. We all know that we winter climb for those magical moments when things drop into place. Scotland is a great place to be high on a crisp morning, when the klunk of the ice hammer and the rasp of sharp crampons bite the still air. And it's cheap – the guide I mean – after all, being selective you get one for the price of six. Some of my friends from the other side of the Wall will ungraciously say that it should go a bomb in Aberdeen.

The introduction makes sense and there are useful hints for the uninitiated. The two-tier grading system gives a good, overall assessment for a given route, but of course, Mother Nature always has her say in winter.

Scottish Winter Climbs can be summed up as a useful companion with a good selection of routes.

Hamish MacInnes.

Mountain Footfalls:— Ian Mitchell. (Mercat Press. 1996 £8.99. ISBN 1-873644-53-1.)

Those who, like me, have enjoyed reading previous books co-authored by Ian Mitchell, will find within this book more bothy blether washed down with a guid song and a few drams. Here are more humorous tales of the antics of the author and his friends as they progress from one bothy to another, mixing with different folk of the hills. The book also goes further by enlarging the idea of exploring the hills and bothies of today's Scotland. It introduces alongside each humorous tale historical information about the glens, their past inhabitants, crofters and early mountain pioneers. These snippets of recent history come from the late 19th and early part of this century, and put intriguing real-life flesh on the landscape and deserted half-ruins seen today.

The author draws some parallels between the past and present power of

landholders and estates by showing in snapshots the background to the modern hills. More variety is added to the book by the use of some excellent black-and-white scraperboard drawings by Ross Gillespie and by the format of the book, taking the reader through some of the traditional calendar festivities. A cold and wet January and a Burns Supper to Midsummer, Guy Fawkes, and, of course, Hogmanay and 'should auld acquaintance be forgot'.

Ian Mitchell has tried successfully to throw a spotlight on a few pieces of the history of Scotland's landscape, so that 'we should not forget'. He also keeps the reader smiling at the modern day's characters within.

Malcolm Simmonds.

The Game of Mountain and Chance:— Anne Sauvy. (1995. Bâton Wicks. £8.99. ISBN 1-898573-15-8.)

This paperback edition is the first in English, the book having been published first in France, in 1985. We can only surmise that the gap was due to her talents as a writer of short stories going unrecognised, at least in this increasingly xenophobic island, until her collection *Flammes de Pierre* ignited sufficient interest. But, of course, publishers are in deep financial trouble. Witness the smaller number of book reviews in this Journal; we normally review what we are sent. This year, like last summer, a drought has all but dried up the burn. Sometimes we are now sent a Press Release asking us if we wish to review such-and-such a book. Increasingly, we are not even asked. Sometimes an enthusiast, such as the redoubtable IHMS, reviews books we have not been sent, a sort of freebie if you like.

What the publishers may care to consider is the quality of the reader of these reviews. I would argue that with the SMC Journal they could be pressing the right button, the one marked 'Q' for quality. We may have fewer readers than some of the other publications they fire off review copies at, but our readers are almost certainly far more committed. End of plea, and thanks for this review copy, which, as with all other books sent here for review, go to the Club Library. I should remind readers that anyone may refer to this Library, with prior arrangement with the Librarian.

However, I enjoyed the short stories here too much. That is, I found myself tearing through the stories impatient to get at the next one. Just like a walk over a hill on a good day the reader here must set a proper pace. Ration yourself. Book a spot in your diary: 'Thursday pm, bed-time story, one from Sauvy's latest collection.'

It could be the one about how the Ice Fairy and the Snow Fairy, being somewhat pissed off with the shenanigans of the Rock Fairy messing up their glaciers decide to pay a visit on the old bag. You'd think the Ice Fairy would be a glittering creature of transient beauty, sparkling, translucent etc. right? Wrong. She's another old hag, just like her crony the Snow Fairy. So would you be after too long in the high Alps. The problem reviewing a book with short stories such as this one is that I cannot spoil them for you by revealing the endings. Suffice to say that the ending of the Ice Fairy, as with many of the other delightful and clever stories here, is just right.

There are 16 short stories, ranging in style from the truly ridiculous, to science fiction, to a true and haunting love story. To come across one such story in a club journal would be a delight; to find this collection would be to risk an overdose of happy reading. Buy, beg, borrow the book and forget to return it. And every night, before your eyes droop with sleep, ration yourself very strictly to one story only.

Ken Crocket.

3000 PLUS – The Munros:— (Gordon D. Henderson. £7.95. ISBN 0-9527381-0-4.)

This is the fourth edition of Henderson's Munros Map. It is in colour now, with lists of the summits, and allows the Munroically affected to do their thing in their leafy suburban living rooms (see reviews of TACit Press books) with felt-tip pens, sticky labels etc. etc. etc. What Mr Henderson does not mention, perhaps due to some minor and no doubt passing embarrassment, is that the previous editions were published with the deep involvement of the SMC and Trust. Knowing that the map was going out of print, we naturally communicated with the author, but received a deep and long-lasting silence. Now we know why. For a deep and searching review of the map, by those who wield a more powerful laser, I could do no better than commend the interested to the April/May issue of *The Angry Corrie*.

I have a copy of one of the older editions, which never made it to a wall. I feel that the new edition, like the price, has become a tad bloated, but then these things tend to have a natural progression. Each copy sold donates 50p to the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland. The new map will no doubt sell, but I can't help feel that somehow the balance, the karma, has been tilted. I prefer something smaller, more simple, more – functional. This, as with some other areas of the Munro Phenomenon, takes it into more serious ground. Some of the author's decisions are going to raise eyebrows – Gaelic names for the hills for example. You won't be doing Ben Vorlich here, you'll find a Ben Mhur 'laig. Markings of selected bothies. The bothies need to be hidden and kept secret, not put on a map. And no advice on how to find out about the bothies anyway, so why tempt the tired walker with a potentially (as some of them are) locked bothy?

The Mountain Rescue Posts are marked, but again I'm not sure why. If you stagger off the Ochils with a need for help don't bother knocking on the door of the Scout hall in Menstrie, it will probably be locked except on Scout nights. Give me colour, but make it red in a glass with French bread and cheese. The map, as it acknowledges at the foot, is based on information in *Munros Tables*, published by the Scottish Mountaineering Trust. The cheeky chap.

The Grahams and the New Donalds:— (TACit Press, Alan Dawson, £1.70, ISBN 0-9522680-2-7).

The Murdos:— (TACit Press, Alan Dawson, £1.70, ISBN 0-9522680-3-5).

Both of these booklets have 20 pages and provide basic, if well laid out, lists of their respective groups. To risk repetition; Grahams are Scottish hills between 2000ft and 2499ft, New Donalds are Scottish Lowland hills over 2000ft, and Murdos are Scottish hills of 3000ft with 30m drop (eh? feet and metres mixed?).

As one who over the years has done his fair share of Munros and other hills, but can easily resist the dubious charm of Munro-compleation, these lists somewhat bemuse. But I can see their use. I mean, if you collect stamps you should do it right, sticky hinges, books, stamp fairs, small ads, clandestine and furtive meetings in leafy suburban living rooms with sticky hands. The triumph of the long sought after stamp, the completion of another section, the stamp in better condition to replace the old, the excitement of the hunt. Just don't let it take over your life. Look at poor old Murdo Munro. At least he has tempered the obsession with two simple messages, printed on the back cover of the Murdos. 'You are allowed to climb hills not listed in this book.' And, 'You don't have to climb a hill just because it's listed here.' Out of the hothouse that produces the *Angry Corrie*, Scotland's only fanzine devoted to the Munro sub-culture, 10% of the cover price is donated to the John Muir Trust. Need I say more?

Ken Crocket.

Journals of Kindred Clubs

The American Alpine Club Journal, 1995. Editor H. Adams Carter.

This is the most impressive club journal I have read: 410 pages, about 90 photographs, 18 in colour; 17 full articles, 203 pages of Climbs and Expeditions and then Book Reviews, Club Activities, Obituaries etc.

Most of the general articles are about North America with the remainder in the Himalayas. Some of the climbing sounds incredibly hard and committing, e.g. N. Face of Mount Hunter, *Deprivation*, 2000 vertical metres, up and down in 72 hours, 90 pitches of thin ice, totally psychotic mixed climbing, two 95° cruxes and the ice was black hard and evil, . . . that is the future of Alaskan climbing. At the other end of extreme climbing is *Octopussy* a frozen waterfall near Vail providing some of the most unlikely ice climbing photographs. Grade M8 : 'Figure-four resting positions in ice climbing gear, . . . turned upside down and threaded my left leg over my right elbow, wedging the toe of my boot under the rock roof . . .

Not all are like this and some are general or historical articles of straightforward interest. All are well written without the pretentious style of some US Clubs.

The Climbs and Expeditions section is extensive, even to the extent of including the 1995 SMC Staunings Alps Expedition which Adams Carter had heard about from some source unknown, perhaps the Danish Polar Centre, and wrote requesting a report. If they regularly go to this degree of searching, past journals should be one of the better sources of information on Arctic climbing.

This is the last of 35 AAC journals to be edited by H. Adams Carter who died in April 1995 as it was being printed. It is a worthy epitaph.

Ian Angell.

Canadian Alpine Journal (1993-5).

We of the SMC could perhaps take a leaf from the CAJ. In the past five to six years the Canadian Alpine Journal has been transformed from a slightly dreary annual booklet – of similar size and format to our own journal – to a splendidly illustrated modern-style publication. Before this transformation, and again like the SMC journal, it was full of excellent writing and material but poorly presented.

Printed now on glossy quarto-size paper, the 1993-5 issues feature reports of several significant Himalayan expeditions, plus a string of interesting articles. The latter range, in 1993, from *Guided Fantasy* by Gerry Kent, a client's view of being led up the North face of Mt. Temple in the Rockies, to a cautionary tale by Maurice de St. Jorre, describing his skiing companion's 30m fall into a crevasse – and successful climb out – during a week-long ski trip in the BC Caribou range near Mt. Robson. While in 1995, they include *Sea of Vapours*, thought and visions during the climbing of three frozen waterfalls, one of them with that name, on Mt. Rundie, and two separate reports by Eric Trouillet and Markus Kellerhals on extensive climbing in the Stikine region of the Coast Range mountains, on the Alaska-BC border; of general mountaineering interest, but especially interesting, perhaps to some of us in the SMC and JMCS who made an early expedition to there with MEF funding in 1965.

The articles are splendidly illustrated with black-and-white photographs, using colour regrettably only for jacket photographs; which is where the SMC Journal would handsomely win out. The photography is particularly fine – as one might expect – in the illustrations accompanying reports on the Himalayan expeditions. Of these, there are no less than three in 1993 alone, all to Nepal: *Janu* (as the French christened Kumbhakarna) in the Kangchenjunga region, by Bill Durtler and Rob Driscoll; *Ama Dablam*, . . . *The Clean Way*, by Kobus Barnard; and *Manaslu, A Lightning Sky*, by Geoff Powter, in the Nepalese range near to the Tibetan Plateau. These reports make good reference articles for would-be climbers of these mountain ranges, as well as interesting reading in themselves. Similarly the so-nearly successful attempt by a Canadian team to reach the summit of Everest without oxygen in 1995, from the Chinese side using the classic North Col Route, is well written up by John McIssac.

Several articles too will become good reference material for those who may have their sights on the Canadian mountains: we sometimes need reminding that there are nearly 1000 miles and four further distinct mountain ranges between the Rockies, which border the Provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, and BC's Pacific West Coast. Vast territories to explore, and the superb north ice-face of Kates Needle (Ken Bryan and Norrie Harthill, on our Scottish expedition in 1965, did the west ridge) still unclimbed! Eric Trouillet's article features a splendid photograph of this north face, by Bob Enangonio. Plenty here for climbers of the SMC, and its editorial board, to note!

Derek Fabian.

On The Veg:— Etchachan Climbing Club Journal 1995.

They all thought it was to be a trilogy for the 1970s, but no, out of the blue appears this, the latest offering from those misfit reprobates on the North-east coast, near Cove. They say good things are worth waiting for, so after a gap of 16 years is this latest edition with its snappy 1990s title worth its £2 price tag?

For a club with fewer than 40 members (no one really knows for sure) the quality and standard of the seven climbing articles is very high and provide a first-class read; these are interspersed with humorous cartoons of club members – old and new.

The article by Wilson Moir I particularly liked. Based on extracts from his diaries, it provides us with an insight to his thought and feelings on the day. His description of a solo ascent of The Needle left me with sweaty palms and gasping for breath.

For so small a club to have produced such an excellent publication is to be commended; perhaps therein lies a lesson for ourselves to consider putting pen to paper and contribute to our own Journal.

Brian S. Findlay.

Also received: Bernina and Bregaglia. Selected Climbs. By Lindsay Griffin. (Alpine Club Guide Books. 1995. ISBN 0-900523-60-3, 475pp, many illus.)

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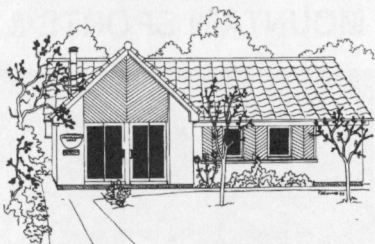
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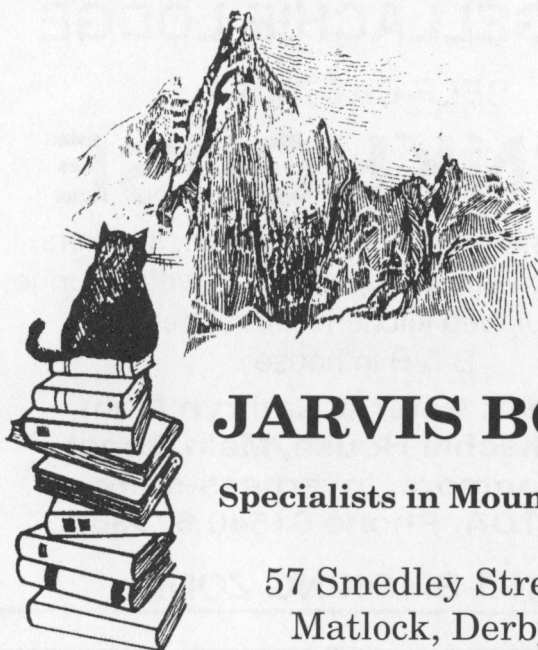
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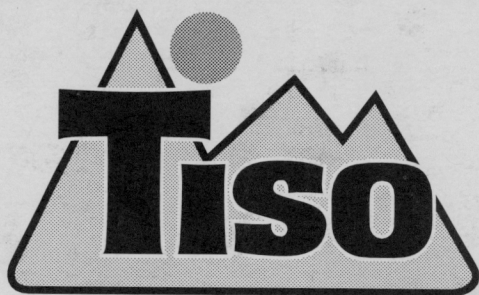
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