

## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

### The W. H. Murray Literary Prize.

As a tribute to the late Bill Murray, whose mountain and environment writings have been an inspiration to many a budding mountaineer, the SMC have set up a modest writing prize, to be run through the pages of the *Journal*. The basic rules are set out below, and will be re-printed each year. The prize is run with a deadline, as is normal, of the end of January each year. So assuming you are reading this in early July, you have, for the next issue, six months in which to set the pencil, pen or word processor on fire.

#### The Rules:

1. There shall be a competition for the best entry on Scottish Mountaineering published in the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*. The competition shall be called the 'W. H. Murray Literary Prize', hereafter called the 'Prize.'
2. The judging panel shall consist of, in the first instance, the following: The current Editor of the *SMC Journal*; The current President of the SMC; and two or three lay members, who may be drawn from the membership of the SMC. The lay members of the panel will sit for three years after which they will be replaced.
3. If, in the view of the panel, there is in any year no entries suitable for the Prize, then there shall be no award that year.
4. Entries shall be writing on the general theme of 'Scottish Mountaineering', and may be prose articles of up to approximately 5000 words in length, or shorter verse. Entries may be fictional.
5. Panel members may not enter for the competition during the period of their membership.
6. Entries must be of original, previously unpublished material. Entries should be submitted to the Editor of the *SMC Journal* before the end of January for consideration that year. Lengthy contributions are preferably word-processed and submitted either on 3.5" PC disk or sent via e-mail. (See Office Bearers page at end of this *Journal* for address etc.) Any contributor to the *SMC Journal* is entitled to exclude their material from consideration of the Prize and should so notify the Editor of this wish in advance.
7. The prize will be a cheque for the amount £250.
8. Contributors may make different submissions in different years.
9. The decision of the panel is final.
10. Any winning entry will be announced in the *SMC Journal* and will be published in the *SMC Journal* and on the SMC Web site. Thereafter, authors retain copyright.



### The W. H. Murray Literary Prize (1999).

FOR THE second time, several jurors had their reading of the Journal spoiled somewhat by the requirement to read its articles pre-publication! So Bryan Fleming – Hon. President; Ken Crocket – Hon. Editor; Simon Richardson – SMC member, and Dave Hewitt – columnist and editor of the *Angry Corrie*, made their deliberations, whether in an armchair, on a hard route or long walk, or by parallel processing while engaged in some other duty. This year was deemed to be more difficult, due to several articles being close to each other in quality. In the final analysis and totting up of points, *Welcome to the Club* by a Leeds schoolteacher, David Hughes, is the 1999 winner.

The article is, of course, published in this issue, and will also be found on the SMC web site in full. It is a story of a solo hillwalk with an ending which should make the hairs on the back of your neck tingle. Some comments from the jurors are given below. As I have mentioned the closeness this year, it is worth mentioning some worthy runners up. Also judged highly were *Risk and Mountaineering*; *The Classic Scottish Ice Routes*, and *On Seeing the Cuillin from the Cairngorms – Again*.

'*Welcome to the Club* is my number one choice. It was a good story, the descriptions of winter hill-walking were evocative, accurate and vivid. Furthermore the *hero* of the tale was such an arrogant so-and-so, one felt it was about time he met his maker.'

'A spooky story, with a solid, if indirect, message of mountain safety implications behind it. It must be synchronicity at work again, as I have come across several ghostly or spiritual stories this year and indeed am struggling to finish one myself.'

### FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH – a cautionary tale from Douglas Anderson

NORDRE IKERASAQ is not the sort of place where you take things for granted. I knew its menace in the past. From its placid southern entrance it looks like a pretty ordinary fjord. However, deep in the fjord, beneath its towering rock walls, currents run stronger than Lofotens' famous Maelstrom.

In winter the coast freezes to provide good sledging but here the currents weaken the ice and the traveller is in constant danger. Perversely, in summer these currents trap the passing floes, cramming them between islands and promontories, the ice often broken into fragments polishing the rock as it goes by. Though our 15ft boat was small enough to dodge between the swift moving ice, its survival often seemed in the balance.

This day the family's ambitions were tempered by close-packed ice floes jostling and rafting onto each other in the swirling current. After a struggle and no small excitement we extricated ourselves and steered into a welcoming inlet. We set up camp and sat down to consider lesser adventures that might keep us busy until more favourable ice conditions would permit us to continue.

After a day's reconnaissance a plan was laid for a sledge journey inland. A depot was left and the minimum of materials for a four-day sojourn divided up. Unfortunately for me this division was made pro-rata on body weight (something of which I have ample supply). It was with gloomy resignation that I surveyed the deadly load and the 2000ft of rocky hillside leading up to the glacier. By the time I had struggled to the top it was 10pm.

Wilderness travel with a young family is synonymous with late starts – good to have such an excuse – but by 2pm everyone was ready and enthusiastic to be in harness. No great challenge – just happily plodding across the pristine landscape. The day wore on and the frequency of chocolate stops increased. I cast around looking for a suitable camp site. In this part of the world the air is so clear that anything that looks close is far away, and anything that looks a bit farther I knew would take days to reach. The kids were beginning to get tired and even riding on the sledge was not enough to keep them entertained. A site for Camp 2 had to be found soon but there was nothing obvious in sight.

I tramped off towards an unlikely looking summit on the west bank of the glacier to see if from its pinnacle I could spot something. Steepening snow led to a rocky scramble and then a large slab perched just below a tiny rock summit. The slab was at least 50ft across. The actual summit was not more than 15ft higher. The approach was benign but to the north the ground plunged 1000ft vertically to an ice field far below. The sudden exposure was as frightening as it was unexpected. Beyond the summit was a remarkable grassy ledge just the right size for our tent. Sheltered by a low wall of rock but on two sides dramatically open to both the view and the drop to the glacier, a real mountain eyrie. An hour later Camp 2 was pitched there and made safe for the kids with a rope fence. Snow was melted, tea brewed and food prepared, and we were well set for a night on top of this remote mountain in Greenland.

If ever a family photograph was called for this was one such time. Fearing the drop I took excessive care in moving everyone back to the summit. Flushed with success they spontaneously adopted poses appropriate to brave mountaineers. The place to take the picture from was the middle of the 50ft slab. Keeping most of the slab between me and the abyss to the north I established myself near its middle, and taking up my camera I composed the frame. Taking the first picture I thought a second would benefit from more background, so I sidled backwards; camera to eye. My foot caught and rocked on an unevenness in the smooth expanse of granite. It caused me to stop. I took the second picture. It captured a great moment in a great day. Nearly my last.

I looked down to see what my foot was rocking on. I could not understand the white, five-foot circle by my heel. I paused, trying to make sense of the illusion. The instant realisation dawned I leapt away, propelled by a surge of adrenaline. Staring back, I stood shaken by terrible thoughts.

The sun's light had spread the rock's colouring evenly to hide a hideous trap. After standing transfixed for a few moments I got down on my stomach and inched back to the very lip where my heel had rested, and looked in. The hole was almost circular, about five feet across, its walls some 20ft deep and of exactly the same lichen covered colouring as the top surface of the slab. The sun lit its sides and top equally, flattening them into a single plane.

Viewed just two feet from its edge, this hole was invisible. At the bottom where shadow ought to have formed there was none; there was no bottom, only air. The slab was completely undercut, and light, reflected upwards from the glacier far below, lit the sides of the hole with the same evenness and intensity as the slab above, creating a devilish illusion. Only when the observer stood on its very edge was the hole visible. Peering down I could make out a mysterious granular texture

before recognising huge blocks of ice lying on the glacier below, the remnants of a massive avalanche. I remembered my family sitting a few feet away, now mystified by my antics and the stream of expletives assaulting their ears. I contemplated again the disaster so narrowly averted, another inch – overbalancing, the sides so smooth, flashing past – and then the free fall 1000ft to the glacier below! I'd have felt so silly in that free fall, like a man walking reading a newspaper stepping into a manhole – one minute content with life – the next...

The following day we sledged onward, still comforting myself with the occasional expletive. I had cause to remember Edward Whymper's words: 'Go into the mountains if you must but think well to every step...' – Timeless advice!

### **Scottish International Winter Climbing Meet 1999**

OUR MAN in High Places, Simon Richardson, reports:– In early March, 60 climbers from 24 countries met up with 50 British hosts at Glenmore Lodge for five days of winter climbing. The weather was superb, and the Scottish mountains were in their best snow and ice climbing condition for several years.

Guests and hosts alike were quick to appreciate their good fortune, and a feast of superb climbs was done from Glen Coe to Torridon, and Nevis to the Dubh Loch. Naturally, many climbers were eager to sample the great Scottish classics, and numerous ascents were made of Zero, Point Five, and Hadrian's on the Ben and Smith's and North Post on Meaghaidh.

Many visitors focused on mixed routes, and in the Northern Corries, Fallout Corner, Savage Slit and The Message had many ascents as did Sticil Face and Scorpion in the Loch Avon Basin. Superb ice conditions on Liathach meant several teams enjoyed Poachers Fall and Salmon Leap, and the renowned Test Department was hammered with at least four ascents.

The appetite for hard climbing by some of the more accomplished visitors was awe-inspiring. Marko Prezljelj from Slovenia, for example, notched up ascents of Red Guard, Sticil Face Direct, Citadel, Shield Direct, Test Department, Salmon Leap, Deep Throat and Fallout Corner – a lifetime's worth of hard Scottish classics in a mere five days! Alex Huber from Germany concentrated on technical snowed-up rock climbing in the Northern Corries and came away with a repeat of Big Daddy, a new direct finish to White Magic, and the first ascent of the desperate Great Escape on Fiacaill Buttress. America's Pete Takeda climbed Men In Black in the Northern Corries and on the Ben made an early repeat of The Shroud and ventured onto the headwall of Observatory Buttress to make the first ascent of Never-Never Land.

For those with energy to spare, the evenings were kept full with seminars on ethics, the environment, and a review of mixed climbing standards throughout the world, which left little time for networking at the bar – perhaps the most important aspect of an International Meet!

All in all, this was a superb five days and congratulations must go to the MCofS and the BMC for hosting the Meet, and Glenmore Lodge for their warm hospitality. Sincere thanks are also due to the UK Sports Council, the Scottish Sports Council, and Marmot, for making the Meet possible. And whoever chose the dates deserves a medal – this was the best possible advertisement for Scottish climbing one could ever imagine.

### The Mariner's Horizon

ALAN HUNT reports: Reading Derek Fabian's notes on his trip to New Zealand in the 1997 Journal prompted me to recall my own ascent of Mount Aspiring.

In September 1994 I left Inverness with my wife, Fiona, and our two children, Ross and Rachel on our yacht, *Blue Biscay*, and transited the Caledonian Canal bound on a west about circumnavigation. We had planned on two years away. In the event it turned into three.

After a few minor excursions in Madeira and Gran Canaria it wasn't until we reached the Pacific, where the cooling waters of the Humboldt current eased the effect of the tropical heat, that the urge to climb a high point on the islands we visited was again translated into some form of definitive action. It began in the Galapagos where the hills are reminiscent of the Paps of Jura and nearly ended there in the ensuing battle with the evil thorn scrub that protects the middle and lower slopes. French Polynesia wasn't much better with fights in almost vertical rain forest that finally finished off my family outings. Here the local 'guides' had hacked a way up the main peaks of the island and even fixed the Aonach Eagach-like awkward sections with bits of extra fat binder twine. Fiji's Mount Victoria, the same height as Ben Nevis, although a long way inland, was a snip. At its base, we stayed in the home of the local village chief, a traditional offering to visitors that is both hospitable and generous. They don't eat people any more but you are expected to join in the ceremonial drinking of a potion made from dried Kava plant root, mildly narcotic and rather like over-dosing on Fisherman's Friends.

New Zealand's high points are many and some still active. In North Island several volcanoes were climbed complete with soaks in the hot springs on the descent and perfect weather in South Island saw family trekking at last become a popular activity in the Fiordland and Mount Aspiring Parks.

In 1984, Fiona and I had retreated from French Ridge hut on Mount Aspiring in typical 'Norwester', stair-rod rain. Here I was again, this time with perfect weather but no gear. Trainers are fine for bush walks and even gravelly volcanoes. Aspiring needed proper boots, crampons, ice axe, rope, harness, prussik loops and a companion to pull you out of the 'slots' and generally be around in moments of anxiety.

My yacht's proper mountaineering kit comprised of a pair of rock boots and a harness, (you never know when you may need them) and a day sack. The rest was make do, including very non-breathable waterproofs. Fiona dropped me off at the road head, Cameron Flat in the Matukituki in the late afternoon and I was soon at Aspiring Hut. I had hired boots, crampons and an ice axe from Geoff Wyatt, a Wanaka guide. He had also given me a copy of a route description for the ascent of Aspiring via the Colin Todd Hut and a photocopy of the appropriate map section. I didn't have a rope or anybody to tie it to. Shortly after I arrived at the hut a descending UK forces team of six or more turned up. They had climbed Aspiring by the North-west Ridge two days previously, returned to the Colin Todd Hut on the descent and carried on down the following day. I quizzed one of the less knackered members of the team as to the difficulties of the route and was reassured by his response. Not technically difficult if you hit the right way but sufficiently awkward to slow you down when moving together roped up. It had taken them 12

hours for the round trip from the Colin Todd Hut. Moving together wasn't going to be a problem. Let's hope I would find the right route.

I only made one error the next day, when I followed the wrong track in the bush and wasted an hour or so climbing toward the Liverpool Hut. Should have had a proper map. After that I hit the right river crossing, an easy way passed Scott's Bivvy, an exciting scramble to the right of the headwall stream that promised an even more gripping eventual descent and finally arrived at the Bevan Col. Only the Bonar Glacier to cross and I would be at the hut, but what about the slots? More luck, a helicopter arrived right on cue and dropped a Kiwi Guide and clients off. They were going to camp on the glacier and climb the South-west Ridge the next day. Yes, they would keep an eye open for me as I followed the UK team's track across the glacier to the hut. It was fine, just a few big strides here and there and lots of light walking. The tiny beat-up old hut was due for replacement later that season with a smart new model but this would suit me fine for one night. Gear on two of the bunks suggested company and sure enough high up on Aspiring's summit cone I could see two figures. I reckoned they wouldn't be back until late and it was well dark when the door burst open and two young stuffed but pleased Aussies came in.

I left the hut an hour before dawn and reached the main ridge at first light. The top of Geoff Wyatt was spot on and made route finding not too difficult, or perhaps I was lucky. The route was rather like an elongated Clach Glas to Blaven traverse, until the final snow slopes and summit crest and made for relatively risk free and speedy solo travel and I was on the summit just before midday in perfect weather. What a buzz! What a great climb. What views. What a day. Gobsmaacking beyond belief. Then check in with the park authority. The Aussies asked me if I had enjoyed my 'walk' and where had I been. I have to admit a deal of smug self satisfaction when I told them. Then across the softening glacier, schussing the névé slopes, down the lethal headwall scramble and more down, past Scott's Bivvy and on to the Aspiring Hut, 36 hours after I left it. Impelled by momentum, high on adrenaline and full of being alone, the prospect of a night in the busy hut didn't appeal but my rendezvous with Fiona at the road head wasn't until the following day, so I pressed on and spent the night in the tiny bothy of Cascade Hut, about an hour from the road head with nothing but the mice for company.

After that the Glasshouse mountains, north of Brisbane, with the children, seemed a snip but the company was welcome. Odd high points were climbed as we voyaged up the Queensland coast but the inviting Lochaber like peaks of Hinchinbrook Island proved to be well protected by estuarine crocodiles and impenetrable bush. We should have got up something in Indonesia but our cruising permit didn't allow the time and the next high ground visit was Penang Hill in Malaysia's humid atmosphere. That really made us sweat. Above the tea plantations of Sri Lanka, we once again enjoyed the cool mountain air and the vision of 'blue remembered hills' stretching into the distance, even if most of the journey had been by public transport. An attempt on the Great Pyramid was thwarted by the whistle blowing Egyptian guards but we did manage a walk around the pine forested Mt. Trousos on Cyprus. You can drive to the summit and walking around offered a more pleasant alternative. A gorge walk in Crete and a great day out on the second highest peak on Majorca and that was it. Now it's back to ticking off those Munros. Twenty something to go at the last count.

## THE SLUGAIN HOWFF STORY

By Ian Mitchell

MY FAVOURITE chapter in Tom Patey's *One Man's Mountains*, is without doubt *Cairngorm Commentary*, which describes the sub culture of the mountaineering world there in the later 40s and through the 50s. For, apart from the intrinsic charm and humour of the writing, it describes the Cairngorm scene much as I stumbled upon it a generation later in the 60s. The Gorms were still relatively quiet – at least on the Braemar side – utilised largely by Aberdonians, though of a newer breed, and it was interesting to find that the almost universal nick-naming we practised had a pedigree in Patey. While our group sported names like Fishgut Mac, Stumpy, and Mealie Pudding – and a later one adopted the collective epithet of Winners and Diners – Patey's associates ran about with names like Sticker, Esposito and the Hash Kings.

The bothies were the same; Corrour, and Luibeg (with old Bob Scott) being a favourite. Another aspect of the Cairngorm mountain culture Patey describes is the howffs, especially those of Beinn a' Bhuid, still widely used in the 60s. According to Patey howffing was given a popularity boost by the appearance of Jock Nimlin's article in the 1949 issue of the *SMCJ*, and the piece's initial effect was to lead to the construction of the Smith Winram howff, or Mac's Howff in one of the corries of the mountain. However, there is a bit of Cairngorm Confusion in Patey's account of a couple of the other howffs lower down the mountain, and I have been an unwitting conveyor belt for this confusion, in the book *Mountain Days and Bothy Nights*. I would like to correct the account given on pp.78-9 of *One Man's Mountains*, regarding this 'village of howffs' as Patey describes them, and which I retailed. I am able to do this because of the simultaneous and entirely serendipitous contacts recently established with two of the persons involved in the construction of what were the pair of major howffs in that village.

As is common with oral history, the details in Patey's article are largely correct, but mis transposed, conforming to the good old Aberdonian principle: 'Nivver spyle a story, wanderin gin it's true.' Leaving aside Mac's howff, already mentioned, and the Raymond Ellis howff, which had no attempt at concealment and whose ruins are visible from the walk in to Beinn a' Bhuid, there were two main howffs, both heavily concealed rivals for the title of the Secret Howff. One was Freddy and Stickers howff, constructed by the Kincorth Club, the other was, in Patey's book, called Charlie's Howff; the latter is the present, extant – though still secret – still used Slugain howff.

Patey gives 1954 as the date of the construction of Freddy and Sticker's Howff; this is an error. That howff was built *before* its rival, Charlie's Howff, whose construction can be dated, by accurate hangover methodology, to exactly 1953, and Freddy Malcolm (telephone conversation with myself, 25.11.98) recalls his and Sticker's howff was built about 1951 or 1952, as a base for Freddy and his companions' explorations and new routes in Coire na Ciche.

Among the new routes Freddy was involved in were : Trident, the Carpet, and Hourglass Buttress, characterised in the 1965 SMC guide as 'the best and hardest route in Coire na Ciche and one of the best in the massif'.

Patey describes the howff's building as taking place in the much-quoted passage:

'The building materials were brought from Aberdeen to the assembly line by the Herculean labours of countless torchlit safaris which trod stealthily past the Laird's

very door, shouldering mighty beams of timber, sections of stove piping and sheets of corrugated iron.' (*One Man's Mountains*, p.78).

Again this is an error, or rather, a transposition. Freddy informed me that the bulk of the building materials for the Kincorth Club howff came from the ruins of Slugain Lodge down below in the glen. This howff lasted, Freddy recalls, till the early 60s when it fell into disuse; on my first visit to Beinn a Bhuid in 1965 the Kincorth Club howff was ruinous, but Charlie's Howff was in good repair – and still is, approaching its half century. Freddy did say however, that his hut was *not* the dive Ashie claims it was in the attached account of the construction of the still existing Charlie's Howff; though it was clad in peat for camouflage, Freddy suggested the inside of his howff was as comfortable as, indeed initially more cosy than, its rival. Perhaps the pair should get together for a few drams to resolve the question. There was certainly an element of friendly rivalry in the construction of the howffs. Ashie recalls being miffed that Freddy and Co. had snaffled the debris of Slugain Lodge, and envious that they had been beaten in the construction race, and he challenged his rivals thus: 'Oh aye, it's a richt using second-hand material tae save a six mile cairry, bit fit aboot weet rot and wid worm? Will it stand the test o' time?'

It is clear from the attached, wonderfully fresh account by Ashie Brebner, that the howff which involved the smuggling of materials past the laird's door, was the still extant one, not its Kincorth rival. Among those who constructed the howff, Ashie is himself cited by Patey as 'Ashy'; 'Charlie' was probably the Charlie Smith, the Harbour Board diver in Ashie's account, mentioned by Patey as whistling some obscure aria on the Strachan's bus, and the stone mason in charge of construction, Jim Robertson is described in *Cairngorm Commentary* as being always 'engrossed in Marx', on trips from Aberdeen to Braemar. Clearly an interesting group of working class heroes, whose tale remains to be more fully told.

With all due respect to Nimlin, other West Coasters and to the caves of Arrochar, the howffing tradition in the Cairngorms goes back much farther than any other. There is the Shelter Stone, used by bandits in the 14th century, there is the Black Bothy in Glen Geldie, a construction marked on Farquarson's map of 1724, still used by hill-goers in the 60s, and now a listed archeological monument. The Beinn a Bhuid howffs are certainly the most numerous, and hopefully the wee gem approaching its half-century, described in awe and astonishment by my 10-year-old son as 'the best place in the world', will continue to provide the service it does to mountaineers until at least its centenary. In times to come it might even attain the archeological status of the Black Bothy. In the meantime, it should certainly, in the interests of historical and nomenclatural accuracy, regain its title of 'Charlie's Howff.'

Ashie's letter missed the re-type setting of *Mountain Days*...by a few nights. It will probably be another decade before I can make amends for that, but hopefully this note goes part of the way to rectifying my repeat of an old mistake.

### Letter

THOUGHT I would drop you a line to clear up a few points about the Slugain Howff.

My nephew sent me a copy of your excellent book recently and drew my attention to the chapter on the Howff. I was one of the original builders in 1952-3.

Let me explain how it came about. I can be specific about the dates because of a few things which will become clear in the story.

Between 1949 and 1952, a group of us climbed a lot on Beinn a' Bhuird camping as usual in the Fairy Glen. We got fed up coming back soaked to a wet tent and so the idea of a bit more permanent residence came up.

Freddy Malcolm and Sticker Thom had built a dark hole out of peat with a tin roof on the other side of the gully from the present howff. (They were the Kincorth Club). But it was dark and dingy and we wanted a more up-market residence.

Six of us were involved. Jim Robertson a stone mason; Charlie Smith a diver with the Harbour Board (in the days of diving suits with steel helmets); Doug Mollison who worked in the Town House; Jack Doverty, a steel erector; Jack Innes a dental mechanic, and myself, Ashie Brebner.

It was quite clear that though we were being harried by the keepers all the time, they never came into that gully so it was a logical place to build. The back wall of the rocky outcrop seemed the ideal place because it would save us building a fourth wall.

We spent the whole autumn of 1952 building the walls choosing the right stones from the nearby scree. We came across a few hibernating adders I remember. This was all easy stuff because all the materials were at hand. We now had the problem of carrying in the other parts past the keepers.

At that time, most of us had to work on a Saturday morning. Charlie was the only one who could get up the Slugain on the Friday night and he managed to smuggle some of the basic materials past the keepers' houses late at night.

We usually took the 3.15pm Strachan's bus on the Saturday and it must have been February or March 1953 that we were ready for the heavy materials to come in. I say this because there had been the Great Gale in January that year which took down most of the trees around Invercauld and would play a part in the story.

We all arrived at Bon Accord Square with all the roof parts. Mostly timbers and a tarpaulin which would be a temporary cover until the corrugated iron could be smuggled in. The problem was we were going to arrive at the Invercauld gates while it was still light so the plan was for us to come off the bus at Inver spend some time in the pub and catch the next bus up under cover of darkness.

One of the big brewers had taken out a special 'Coronation Ale' which was great potent stuff. (It was Coronation year) and by the time the next bus arrived we could hardly stand up. I well remember that I had the tarpaulin which was laid across the frame rucksack and was both gigantic and heavy. The conductress was almost rolling on the floor at our antics in trying to get all the bits and pieces through the narrow bus door.

As you know, it's no distance to the gates and we staggered off the bus into total darkness. So total that we immediately lost touch with each other. We stumbled through the gates completely forgetting that all the trees from the gale had never been cleared. We clambered over fallen trunks and branches and within a few yards each of us was completely disoriented. I found myself with Jim Robertson and we decided that as soon as we found a clear space we would set up his Arctic tent. You may remember these had a sock as an entrance and the tent poles went up through a seam on each side of the sock. In our befuddled state we couldn't find the seam so just stuck a pole up and draped the tent over us.

We woke at first light to discover we were in full view of the big house and got up in a panic, gathered all our scattered materials and set off in search of the others. The first one we found was Doug Mollison. He was lying upside down, rucksack still on fast asleep with his legs draped over a trunk. He had fallen over it the



previous night and fell fast asleep in his present position. We roused him and located the others. It was still very early so we decided that we would take a chance and get past all the houses as quickly as possible. Once in the Slugain we were able to slow down.

When we got to the building site, we discovered that Charlie was quite annoyed that we hadn't turned up the previous night. We had an arrangement that he being there ahead of us, would walk to an outcrop at about the time we were leaving the trees and into the open glen. We would flash a light, he would flash back and he would go back to the howff and put the tea on ready for our arrival. He was even more annoyed when he discovered we were in the pub.

The building work went very well. The only one with any building experience was Jim Robertson. He had taken all his stone mason tools and acted as foreman giving each of us a job to do.

He told me I would help him put in the dwangs. I hadn't the faintest idea what he was talking about but soon discovered that they were pieces of timber driven into cracks in the cliff wall to which the roof timbers were nailed. By the Sunday night we had all the roof timbers in position, the tarpaulin in place and another course of stonework on top to hold it down regardless of wind.

Over the course of the next few weeks, we kept a tighter control of the 'Coronation Ale' and managed to get in all the corrugated iron so that by the spring it was complete.

We were all mad about Italian Opera and before the days of transistors Charlie would have miles of aerial trailing everywhere, twiddle the knobs in a tiny radio and with earphones in a billy-can we could all hear opera broadcast directly from Milan. That was a great experience at that time.

We used the howff regularly over the next few years but by 1957 life was taking each of us in different directions. That was the year of Asian Flu and I am afraid Jim Robertson died during the epidemic. We scattered his ashes on top of Beinn a' Bhuid.

When Bob Scott retired to Alanaquoich, Charlie started knocking about with his daughter. I met him again once when I was with Bob. It was only recently that I was up the Quoich and looking at a favourite camp site of ours on an island in the middle of the river. I saw a small stone and when I put binoculars on it discovered it was a memorial to Charlie who had died in 1984. I assume Bob's daughter had put it there.

You may be interested to know that the same group erected the memorial to Bill Stewart at Foxes Wells on Lochnagar. Jim Robertson carved the stone and we carried up the materials.

If you decide to reprint your book sometime and require any information about that period I would be happy to assist.

P.S. I came up to Strathpeffer in 1963 to start a business running natural history holidays, walking and climbing, from which I am just about to retire, so happily was able to continue with a love of the hills professionally. But the hills of Braemar are still home to me. Went back with my son to the Slugain and decided to show him where the howff had been. Was absolutely delighted to find it still in use and some refurbishing had been done.

Ashie Brebner.

### THE SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING TRUST – 1998-99

TRUSTEES met on June 4, October 1, 1998 and February 11, 1999 (the meeting on February 12, 1998 was covered in last year's Journal).

During the course of these meetings support was given to the 1998 Scottish Savoia Kangri Expedition; the Jonathan Conville Winter Course 1998-99; the purchase of a PC for the New Routes Editor, and replacement of gas installation at the JMCS Coruisk hut. Support was also given to a number of footpath projects – Clachnaben Footpath Trust, The Footpath Trust (formerly known as The Ross and Cromarty Footpath Trust) for Stac Pollaidh and Beinn Damph. Further support was given to the National Trust for Scotland for footpath works in Glencoe.

Standing grants are made over to the MCofS toward administration costs, including the Access Officer, and of course the SMC benefits through annual royalty payments for the use of the Club's name in publications and a substantial portion of the production costs of small-print Journal pages is met by the Publications Company.

Footpath projects consume most of the Trust's available income. Although advice is sometimes sought on the technical aspects of a footpath project, any feedback from Club members regarding any SMT-funded path work would be appreciated.

The Munro CD Rom project is achieving reasonable sales. If sales continue steadily more copies may have to be produced early next year.

The Directors of the Publications Company during the period are T. B. Fleming (Chairman), D. J. Bennet, K. V. Crocket, D. F. Lang, N. M. Suess, A. Kassyk and D. C. Page.

The present Trustees are R. T. Richardson (Chairman), T. B. Fleming, D. C. Anderson, D. C. Page, C. D. Grant, A. Kassyk, S. Murdoch, P. W. F. Gribbon, S. M. Richardson and B. R. Shackleton. A. Kassyk and D. C. Page are Trustee Directors and provide liaison between the Publications Company and the Trust.

Bryan Fleming has recently stepped down as Treasurer and we should all record our heart-felt thanks for his long service. J. Morton Shaw, 7 Kirkbrae Terrace, New Deer, Turriff, is the new Treasurer.

#### **The following grants have been committed by the Trustees.**

##### *General Grant Fund*

1998 Scottish Savoia Kangri Expedition	£500
Jonathan Conville Winter Courses 98/99	£1000
SMC PC for New Routes Editor	£510
JMCS Courisk Hut Gas Installation	£1000

##### *Footpath Fund*

Clachnaben Trust	£2000
Footpath Trust – Stac Pollaidh	£8000
Footpath Trust – Ben Damph	£3000
National Trust for Scotland, Glencoe	£20,000

James D. Hotchkis.

## THE SPOON

### Part 2

By Malcolm Slesser

*For the first part of this modern tale of archaeology, if that's not too Irish, see the 1998 SMCJ. And the truth, as we all know, is still out there...Hon. Ed.)*

HAVE YOU ever thought what life would be like without a spoon? A fork, a knife, a plate, a mug, but no spoon. Well, of course you could manage, no doubt adapting to dog-like licking or slurping noisily from your mug. Nonetheless, the lack of a spoon definitely undermines the quality of one's life. This would be further aggravated if all those around you had their spoon. A certain paranoia would be inevitable. But imagine the frustration if someone else claimed and captured your spoon, even if the loathsome fellow lent 'his' to you after he had tucked into his own supper.

It was knowing the unique value of a spoon that led me on a certain Greenland expedition some 40 years ago to bore a hole in the handle, thread a string through it, and, when not in use, keep it at all times around my neck. You would think this policy was fail-safe. Not only would the spoon look different (by virtue of hole and string) from those possessed by others, but it would be impossible to counterfeit.

To the mountaineer accustomed to the luxuries of mountain huts, these precautions may seem to be bordering on the manic, but I can assure you I have seen spoonless expeditioners, and it is not a pretty sight. They are like dogs waiting at the master's tables. They cannot eat as fast as the rest, and so go hungry.

I did not adopt the hole-and-string approach in my early expedition days. I was then naive, believing in the essential goodness of Man, especially mountaineers, and the *esprit de corps* that must surely envelop expedition life. It took me but weeks to come to terms with the *homo economicus* of Arctic expeditions, where it requires a ruthless streak simply to stay alive.

And so, as we embarked from our plane at Mestersvig, NE Greenland in July 1958, I had my spoon dangling around my neck, yielding a comfortable pressure between my chest and my outer clothes. I had no worries and the prospect of an exhilarating two months with eight good comrades and true. Little did I know that even then one of them was already coveting my spoon.

My first surprise was to find someone else was also up to this expeditionary trick. I saw at once that an additional secret mark was necessary. So with the pointed end of my trusty knife I etched a elegant 'S' on the handle.

Well, all went well, and for seven happy weeks I had a spoon and ate well, if frugally. One day, carelessly laying it down after washing it to attend to some other task it was no longer there on my return. Searching, beseeching my stony-faced companions, combing the screes and moraines all yielded nothing. At the next communal meal I asked Dr. S if I might have a look at the spoon dangling

from his neck. Begad and begorrah if it was not mine! I can tell you, when one has lived as close to a spoon as I had for those seven weeks I knew every stain on the string, every blemish on its faded silver, every dent in its scratched surface. MY spoon was around Dr. S's neck! Naturally, I assumed that this was just an amusing practical joke. But the aforesaid doctor assumed an altogether proprietorial attitude. He had the gall to pretend it was his spoon. You would have thought that caught red-handed, with the evidence of an 'S' on the handle he would have humbly handed it back, perhaps even with a word of apology. Not a bit of it. The scoundrel maintained that he also had etched an 'S'. I pointed to the fact that my 'S' was a craftsman's 'S'. He countered with some stuff about how he was accustomed to wielding a delicate scalpel, and that this was his 'S'. I was unwilling to enter into the unseemly procedure of dragging it off his neck by force, and anyway he is bigger than me.

So the last week of the expedition was spent sharing my spoon, which when not in use found its way back round Dr S's neck! I do not claim that Dr S's bugs, viruses etc. are any more virulent than my own, but I can bring forward seven witnesses to testify that washing, either himself or his spoon, was not a common sight. I survived, however. And there the matter would have rested had it not been for the following quote given in an article by Charlie Orr in Vol. XXXVI, No 189 (1998) of our Journal. 'Given the nature and constitution of your party take very good care of your spoon'. I am reliably informed that this remark came from the aforementioned Dr S. Some people will go incredible lengths to cover their traces.

In 1960 I happened to return to the site of the camp at which my spoon had changed necks. Like many sites in the Arctic, nothing had changed over the intervening two years. The same boot marks stood out clearly on the shingle, the ground where tents had stood still showed a depression, and there was the ring of boulders where we had sat around the cooking tent. And there, adjacent to one, was Dr. S's spoon – string, hallmark and a'.

I have often wondered at what was the sequence of events back in 1958 and what had gone through Dr. S's mind. Bearing in mind the essential goodness of the man I come up with the following theory. Dr. S finds his spoon missing, sees mine upon the water's edge and claims it – shall we say innocently, though that says little for his powers of observation, if much for his survival instincts. He then (later) finds his own spoon.

It is now too late to retract without loss of face. So as one of the last to leave that camp, he carefully deposits the spoon partially hidden under a boulder. He is not to know I shall be the first person to re-inhabit this camp two years later. He could, of course, have thrown the evidence into the fjord, but as a good Arctic man he couldn't bring himself to waste anything.

What is really amazing is that, Para Handy like, he has convinced his own inner consciousness of his version of the story. If ever there was a case for psychological analysis, this is a classic.

Dr. S is still expediting. My advice to anyone travelling with him is, if I may quote his own words, 'take very good care of your spoon'.

## MUNRO MATTERS

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

This year there are 153 names to add to the List of Munroists and the numerous amendments follow. The columns used are Munroist's number, name, year of Munros, Tops and Furths. \* SMC member. \*\* LSCC member.

1914	Janet M. Parkin	1998		1965	Andrew A. Isles	1998	
1915	John S. Dickson	1997		1989 1966	David Brotherton	1998	1998
1916	Ian Hunter	1998		1967	Christine Murison	1998	
1917	James L. Snedden	1998		1968	David Murray	1997	
1918	Peter Simpson	1998		1969	Alexander May	1997	
1919	Brian Jarman	1998		1970	Andrew Jeffreys	1998	
1920	Ernie Potter	1998		1971	Tim Clancey	1998	
1921	Chris Chadwick	1996		1972	Rona Connolly	1998	
1922	Gerry Moore	1998		1973	Marion McFarlane	1998	
1923	Leslie Fraser	1998		1974	Gillian Steele	1998	
1924	C. W. V. Harris	1998		1975	Kate James	1998	
1925	Patrick Hamilton	1998		1976	Helen E. Ross	1998	
1926	Yvonne Holland	1998		1977	J. Plume	1998	
1927	Christine Carter	1998		1978	William G. J. Joss	1993	
1928	Norman Carter	1998		1979	William Robb	1998	
1929	Jon Metcalf	1998		1980	Iris Coghill	1998	
1930	Martin Scoular	1998	1998 1998	1981	Bill M. Edgar	1998	1998
1931	Julie A. Stone	1998		1982	Ken G. Forman	1998	
1932	Joyce Durham	1998		1983	D. F. Easton	1998	
1933	Dave Irons	1998		1984	Keir W. Gordon	1998	
1934	Colin MacLachlan	1998		1985	Donald Gow	1998	
1935	Simon Pledger	1998		1986	Walter Russell	1998	
1936	Malcolm R. Booker	1998		1987	Howard Barlow	1998	
1937	Richard Blake	1998		1988	Joanna Bradshaw	1998	
1938	R. N. Day	1998		1989	Keith Bradshaw	1998	
1939	James Leslie	1998		1990	Alan Fraser	1998	
1940	Andrew L. Smith	1998		1991	Pat Hay	1998	
1941	Andrew Armstrong	1997		1992	Alan Crichton	1998	
1942	Gordon J. McNally	1998		1993	John Nisbet	1998	
1943	Michael J. Hurst	1998		1994	Campbell Singer	1998	
1944	Cathie Collins	1998		1995	Neil Hutton	1998	
1945	Harry Poole	1998		1996	C. Keith Theobald	1998	
1946	David Brown	1998		1997	Michael Curtis	1998	
1947	Sandy Edward	1998		1998	Malcolm S. Webster	1998	
1948	David G. Barnes	1998		1999	Clare Chiba	1998	
1949	G. R. Lund	1998		2000	Rati Chiba	1998	
1950	William F. MacTaggart	1998		2001	Gordon Morrison	1998	
1951	Margaret Prentice	1998		2002	Charles Kennedy	1998	
1952	Douglas Prentice	1998		2003	Bob MacDonald	1998	
1953	Trevor Bridges	1998		2004	Chris Wright	1998	
1954	Robert Davidson	1998	1998	2005	Varlien R. Vyner-Brooks	1998	
1955	David Moulding	1996		2006	David Price	1998	
1956	Gordon Gauld	1998		2007	David Oldham	1998	
1957	James Ferguson	1998		2008	Ian R. Williamson	1998	
1958	Samuel R. Logan	1998		2009	Alan Dawson	1998	1998 1987
1959	Grant D. Sneddon	1998		2010	Mary Cox	1998	1998
1960	**Janet R. King	1998		2011	Keith Adams	1985	1991
1961	Dave Jones	1998				1991	1995
1962	Dick Sim	1998				1995	
1963	Michael Hoult	1998		2012	Dave Tyson	1998	1998 1987
1964	Kenneth Christie	1998		2013	Stephen B. Gaughan	1998	1998

2014	*David Kirk	1998	2041	John Donohoe	1989
2015	J. Gordon Grant	1998	2042	Brian McDaid	1990
2016	Allan G. Carr	1998	2043	Dave Reynolds	1992
2017	J. M. P. Steven	1998	2044	Douglas Philp	1998
2018	Jim McCaig	1998	2045	Ron Bryson	1997
2019	Norman Veitch	1998	2046	Joan Sherry	1998
2020	Ernie J. Wilkins	1998	2047	Peter Birbeck	1998
2021	W. R. Strachan	1998	2048	Linda Lane Thornton	1998 1998
2022	Graeme Gatherer	1998	2049	Andrew Thornton	1998 1998
2023	Phil Broughton	1998	2050	Gordon Laverie	1998
2024	William Rankine	1998	2051	Robert J. Keery	1998
2025	Edward T. Meek	1998	2052	Ronald R. Tutty	1998
2026	Colin D. G. Pennycoo	1998	2053	Bruce Brown	1993
2027	Chris Danson	1998	2054	Eddie Gillespie	1994
2028	Paul Cook	1998	2055	Steven J. Marsh	1998
2029	Gregory M. Cox	1998	2056	Elaine Gray	1998
2030	Campbell C. Watson	1998	2057	Alan J. Murray	1998
2031	Robert J. Cattnach	1998	2058	Alan Stewart	1998
2032	Anthony Shellard	1998	2059	Stephen Ward	1998
2033	Malcolm J. Mackenzie	1998	2060	Keith Foster	1996
2034	Kenneth J. Mason	1998	2061	*Ronnie Robb	1998 1998
2035	Eleanore Hunter	1998	2062	Dave Robb	1998 1998
2036	David G. Niven	1998	2063	Howard Roper	1998 1998
2037	Michael Blackwell	1998	2064	Robert Garrett	1998
2038	Jonathan Barclay	1998	2065	Dave Little	1998
2039	Geoff Mattock	1998 1998	2066	James G. Anderson	1998
2040	Arthur Whittaker	1989			

### AMENDMENTS AND CORRECTIONS

The multiple rounds continue to rise and I understand that I should be expecting even more from Stewart Logan (327) now into his 10th round as he has recently retired and expects to devote more time to the hills! Also I had news from Miles Hutchison (23) who is believed to be the earliest Munroist still amending, with a third round and a first for the Furths. The following Munroists have added to their record in the List. To save space only the year of the most recent round is given with the second line referring to the number of rounds. In some cases the entry is to correct an error from the List published in the 1997 edition of the Tables, although the amendment may have already appeared in an earlier *SMCJ* i.e. the Griffins had their second round omitted. Also Stewart Logan was reported as having added a ninth round in 1997 although I have since confirmed that this was premature and the entry below is correct. The columns given are Munros, Tops and Furths.

23	*M. Hutchinson	1998	1955	1998	636	John Allen	1998	1996
		x3		x2			x2	
82	W. Shand	1968	1968	1969	670	Willis Marker	1989	1998
83	G. G. Shand	1968	1968	1971	692	Chris Peart	1989	1990
108	Brian Edridge	1994			700	Terry McDonagh	1998	1990
		x4					x2	
189	David Lane	1979	1980		955	Joyce C. Stephens	1991	1991
327	R. Stewart Logan	1998	1998	1981	1040	James Gordon	1998	1994
		x9	x9				x3	
391	Brenda D. Griffin	1994	1989		1256	Keith Yates	1998	1997
		x2					x2	
392	Mervyn Griffin	1994	1989		1258	Michael Hanlin	1993	1998
		x2			1397	Douglas R. MacLeod	1995	1997 1998
346	John L. Brown	1998	1990		1526	John Farrow	1995	1995 1998
		x5			1559	Graham G. Hemsley	1996	1997
634	Bill Miller	1987	1998	1991	1612	Steve Mann	1996	1998

1630	James M. Thomson	1996	1996	1998	1711	Stewart Newman	1997	1998	1998
1640	Geoff Scott	1994		1997	1809	Roger Smithies	1995		1997
1660	John Kirkham	1996	1998		1879	*Peter Stewart	1997	1997	

As extrapolated a few years ago the 2000th Munroist is now listed only a few months ahead of the other Millennium. By a quirk of the transition through the 1000th Munroist, we had the names Robertson and Munro reappearing. This time, the second millennium of Munroists finishes with Rati Chiba (2000); not a name previously seen in the List although, perhaps, from a strong mountaineering pedigree as his family originally came from Bombay, the home of the Himalayan Mountaineering Club and the *Himalayan Journal*. The alternative 2000th Munroist can be considered as Charles Kennedy (2002) if the blank numbers of 284 and 666 are not counted.

The third millennium of names has already included a member of the church – the Rev. Gordon Grant (2015) thus continuing the link started with the first two Munroists. However, the subsequent Clerks of the List have not maintained the early fashion of affording Munroists of the church their rightful titles and so while the Revs Robertson (1) and Burn (2) keep theirs, (2015) stays as plain Gordon. When Jonathan Barclay (2038) rang me to ask about the procedure for registering a completion he casually mentioned that he had done the round in 99 climbing days within eight months based in what I thought he said was Grantown (on-Spey). However, the fast round became even more impressive when I received his letter from Grantham and he described his tour as including 17,000 miles of driving in order to tick all the Munros and most of the Tops. Lengthier rounds have been registered by William Rankine (2024) 37 years, Alan Stewart (2058) 44 years and Bill Edgar (1981) 60 years. In addition, there have been rounds taking slightly shorter times but concluded at fine ages. For example, Harry Poole (1945) 70 years and Robert Keery (2051) 72 years. At the opposite end of the age scale is the final Munro party of Alan Fraser (1990), in which Alan was proud to introduce his five-year-old son to the delights of the hills in a joint First and Last celebration.

Slightly more decrepit company joined Helen Ross (1976) at her Last Munro evening celebrations, in the form of the effigy of none other than Sir Hugh, who was last out and about at the Munroist's Centenary Dinner in 1991. It seems that if you invite Robin Campbell to a Munro DO, 'Sir Hugh' won't be far away! Varlien Vyner-Brooks's (2005) illustrious company for his last Munro included Bear Grilys apparently fairly fresh from his ascent of Everest last May. Less sociable was Norman Veitch's (2019) last tick in which he found himself ascending Stob na Broige solo, as his companion for the day cried off at the last minute. David Kirk (2014) also had a low turnout for his celebrations on the top, as his colleagues had ensured that the serious celebration happened the night before the ascent. As a result, few mobilised themselves the next day, although when he finally came to walk out from Coruisk, he had the pleasure of finding his car adorned with shaving foam, care of his lethargic friends. I'm surprised the Skye rain had held off long enough to leave the foam in place. Perhaps the embarrassment restrained David from recording his completion for five years.

Another very delayed report came from Keith Adams (2011), who then countered the delay by declaring a triple completion. Selecting your final Munro is never easy and Stephen Ward (2059) chose Ben Lomond since it was the nearest

hill as the crow flies, although in reality a 200-mile drive since he has to circumvent the Lochs Long and Lomond from south of Dunoon. Another resident of Scotland with a long journey time to the 3000+ hills is Dick Sim (1962) now living in Arran. However, few would complain at being so close to such a select group of Corbetts, of which Dick says he has climbed Goat Fell at least 100 times.

The vast majority of Munroists record that the accumulation of ticks was more a slow erosion of the list over many years of walking, rather than a clear start date, and Robert Keery (2051) describes well the transition from casual interest to serious intent to addiction to finally total obsession. Most Munroists are well qualified to express an opinion on the finest hills of Scotland although Campbell Singer (1994) goes one farther and expresses opinion on the best bar meals (i.e. Loch Leven Hotel gets a good rating). Alan Murray (2057) found that the worst experiences always involve a bad dose of midges.

A number of errors get corrected every year spread throughout the List. Of these Fred Siddaway (1511) was the hardest done by. He duly registered completion in 1997, and in 1998 was listed again as having added the Furths. Unfortunately, he was completely (completely?) omitted from the List that went into the Tables. He discovered the error while browsing the book in a shop in Ullapool and was dismayed to find no Siddaway at number 1511 and no Siddaway anywhere else. Needless to say no purchase was made other than a stamp to fire off a letter to me. Similarly, John Greener (1728) found that at least his first name was in, although the surname was missing. Some errors originate in the actual letters that I receive. For example, when George Page (1398) and Ron Johnston (1399) wrote a joint letter of completion George misspelled Johnston. As a result it appears that Ron has felt George is in permanent debt to him, usually taken in the form of a pint. However, when they were requesting certificates, George decided to get the List corrected and his debt cleared. During the year Dave Hewitt (of *Angry Corrie* fame) contacted me concerning the many duplicate names on the list and questioned whether there really are so many Robertsons, Smiths, Banticks etc., who climb the hills (see Dave's article elsewhere in the Journal). As much as I can confirm from the letters in the archives, none are duplicates, although if anyone suspects differently I would be pleased to know.

Finally, over the years I have received a number of inquiries on whether Sir Fred Hoyle should be on the List as he devotes an early chapter in his book *Home is Where The Wind Blows* to a round that was completed on Blaven in 1980. Therefore I did manage to contact him to find that he was more than happy to remain within the ranks of 284 (formerly 277). Talking of the Unknown Munroist slot, the Munroist right next to (277) is Gerry Knight (276) who commented, when he wrote to order a tie, that he had at one time considered that he had the next best number to Munroist No. 1. Unfortunately, he has found that 276 is really a 'moveable feast' and his privilege is now a distant memory.

Those wishing to add their names to the List of Compleat Munroist should write to the Clerk at the address below. I am always pleased to hear of your experiences, time take on the round, age, etc., etc., and I much prefer to hear direct from the Munroist. Once registered, Munroists can claim a tie and/or Brooch. A colour A4 certificate is available to mark the Completion so please enclose an A4 sae. All notification should be sent to Dr. C. M. Huntley, Old Medwyn, Spittal, Carnwath, Lanarkshire. ML11 8LY.



## E-MAIL TO THE EDITOR

### What's a Munro?

MARGARET SMITH, with husband Keith (both Australians and both closer to 60 than 50) spent seven weeks in May and June, 1998, sampling some of the walking and climbing trails in England, Wales and Scotland. We started with sections of the South-West Coast Path in Cornwall, then we hiked up Pen Y Fan, Corn Du and Cribyn in the Brecon Beacons National Park. In superb weather, we climbed Snowdon, which was similar to the climb up Victoria's highest mountain, Mt. Bogong (just over 6500ft) and then we climbed some of the higher peaks looking over Wastwater, in the Lake District National Park. Next stop – Scotland.

Driving north towards Roybridge, browsing in a guidebooks, I saw a reference to 'The Munros' and 'Munro bagging'. 'What's a Munro and what on earth is a Munro bagger?' 'Sounds like a carpetbagger in a kilt,' said the driver. 'Wonder if we'll meet any?' Well, we did meet a Munro-bagger or two, or maybe 102. In fact, everywhere we went we met people with packs and maps and books, all earnestly studying the routes up the next Munros on their lists. We also found that these enthusiastic people, without exception, were friendly and cheerful, and happy to tell us all we wanted to know about Sir Hugh Munro, the Rev. Robertson, their own achievements, the lists of Munroists and all about the 280 (give or take a few) Munros.

Ben Nevis was initially our first choice, but as our days at Roybridge went by, the weather got progressively worse and our opportunities washed away with the rain. Eventually, we continued, without a Munro, but confident that things would improve as we travelled west. We had four days at Cluanie Inn, during which time the deteriorating weather gradually undermined our optimism. We read a lot, spent a rainy day in Skye, and another rainy day travelling to Plockton and Torridon. There were many Munros, but we couldn't see them through the rain.

Finally, with time running out, and by now desperate to conquer just one Munro, we informed the staff at the Inn ('Are you sure? In this weather?') that we were going to climb Creag a' Mhaim (3107ft), which we assumed was where our OS map said it would be. We certainly couldn't see it. So we set off, following the old road for about 6km, then finding the track up the ridge leading to the summit. The views would undoubtedly have been spectacular, but unfortunately, we didn't see much of them through the swirling cloud and mist which got progressively thicker as we ascended. At least the track was well defined!

Not much farther...or so we kept telling ourselves as the weather got wetter and colder and the wind ever stronger. Not much farther... Suddenly, looming out of the mist, there were two young men, faces concealed by balaclavas, looking as if they'd just arrived from Antarctica. 'Not much farther,' they said, 'but don't try and go beyond the summit, terrible weather up there, and the track is difficult to follow'.

We assured them we just wanted to reach the summit and had no intention of proceeding farther – did they think we were mad? Well, perhaps we were, anyway we pushed on and eventually reached the cairn, where we took the obligatory photographs – exciting studies of a pile of rocks against a white background. We retraced our steps as rapidly as possible, sleet blowing in our faces and the rain penetrating every seam and gap it could find, finally arriving back at Cluanie – wet, cold and bedraggled, but triumphant! We had bagged a Munro. One Munro...only 283 to go. The next morning, the sky was clear, and all the mountains surrounding Cluanie Inn were covered in snow. Was this summer? Why hasn't everyone in Scotland migrated to Australia? – *Margaret and Keith Smith.*

## A Bird, four Bells, a Fish, no Tree: some thoughts on 2000 Munroists.

By Dave Hewitt

IT WOULD have been neat had the 2000th Munroist arrived during the millennial year, but it didn't work out that way. People, as they say, got ahead of themselves. Only a decade ago, the thought of so many folk having climbed so many Munros by the late 1990s would have seemed absurd, yet number 2000 approached as relentlessly as dusk on an autumn day. There was ultimately never any real question of when, merely of whom.

That, though, remains unclear, even now. Turn elsewhere in this Journal and you'll see that the 2000th Munroist slot was allocated, late in 1998, to the splendidly named Rati Chiba. But a rival claimant lurks just two notches farther on, at Munroist 2002: Charles Kennedy. Why? Because the SMC listing has for years included a couple of statistical Thearlaich-Dubh Gaps within its number line. First came the so-called Unknown Munroist, introduced in 1983 as a supposed stand-in for all non-registering refusniks. This I've never really understood (just as I don't understand the archaic use of 'compleat' for complete, as though the Club had swallowed Izaak Walton book, line and sinker). With each subsequent revision to the actual Tables, the Unknown Munroist has shuffled forward, from 276 to 277 and now to 284, in awkward and unfortunate fashion. The Unknown Munroist doesn't quite spin in the grave, but certainly shifts uneasily from time to time.

So no matter the number of the beast (oops – more of that in a moment), there has long been a silent, awkward gap on the parade ground roll call. Which would appear to shift Munroist 2001, Gordon Morrison, into the prime spot for claiming the kudos. Not so fast. There's need to consider the SMC's odd disinclination to allocate 666 as an official number, as though Eileen Drewery had been taken on as a Munro's Tables consultant. This is simply bizarre, not least because nothing similar has happened to other evil-eye numbers such as 13, or 87 (the Australian bogey), or 111. Banning 666 on spurious religious grounds is irrational; the Club might as well have refused the 178th registration, from D. A. Shanks, on golfing grounds, or demanded that Fergus Macbeth, the 819th Munroist, only be allowed in under the guise of The Scottish Munroist.

So the first 2000 Munroist numbers represent only 1998 people. So Charles Kennedy is really the 2000th person due to receive a tie and a crest or whatever it is they get. Or is he? It is possible that several folk have managed to slip into the list twice. I'm assured by official sources that there's been no repetition of the Brian Gardiner cloning incident, when the 971st and 990th Munroists were deemed one and the same person. (The 971 slot was 'reclaimed', in a way that no-one quite understands, by a person named H. H. Mills who had been dead for some time.) Strange goings-on, these, but who's to say what other sleepers lurk in the list? There are, for instance, two Allan Banticks, at 1006 and 1598. There can't be many Allan Banticks in Western Europe, let alone in the Munroist list, so is there duplication here? Similarly Sue Jardine, who turns up at 214 and again at 1597. And Kenneth Brown (657 and 1202). And Ian Dickson (1136 and 1556). And Graeme Morrison (485 and 1533). And W. A. Simpson (631 and 989). And that's without even starting to consider near misses such as James S. Bell (479) and James G. Bell (676), or maiden-name sneak ins, or simple mis-spellings. (You want to see a good typo? Look in *Munro's Tables* at Munroist 1112, allegedly Denis A. Oidgeon – the kind

of misprint to make you coo.) Then there are the sex-changes: the self-same *Munro's Tables* awards the 1511 berth to Mary Copping, yet only a few months later, in the 1998 Journal, 1511 belongs to Fred Siddaway. Maybe Mary/Fred should call in a film crew and make a before/after documentary on hormonally challenged hillgoing.

And what about completely false claimants? Who can say what merry pranks have been inflicted on the list over the years, from both within and without the Club? The name A. Kinghorn (619) looks suspiciously like Hamish Brown in disguise, especially given the Fifer's predilection for 'outing' fellow Munroists whether they like it or not. The appearance of a Burt Burntisland would clinch the verdict.

Then there's the Braveheart Tendency. Five Wallaces and three Bruces is reasonable enough, but the Claymore and the two Swords look like extras in a flag-waving wind up. There's also something uncannily apt in the Munros having been ascended by Erik Bigland (1464) and, R. Hillcoat (219). And then there's the debate over whether 'Derek Bearhop' really exists. I've received several letters from him over the years, but we've never actually met. Is he the Max Headroom of the Munro world?

In truth, no-one will ever know the ID of the 2000th Munroist. It has taken over from Fermat's Last Theorem as the greatest unsolved numerical mystery, and before I die I must ensure my papers include a note reading 'Discovered a truly marvellous proof of the 2000th Munroist's identity, which this margin is too narrow to contain.'

But enough of Mr or Ms 2000. What of the body of the kirk, the bulk of the legwork, the great egalitarian mass of the Munro-climbing lumpen proletariat? 2000 is a lot of people, a crowd with which most lower division football teams would be entirely pleased, and not far short of the average summer Saturday attendance on Ben Nevis.

2000 names, all having kicked at least 276 cairns. This means a minimum of 552,000 Munros climbed, up nearer 600,000 after adjustment for list-revisions. And that's without starting to include subsidiary Tops, or repeat rounds, or indeed those such as myself who have happily trudged up hundreds of Munros without approaching a full round. Nor does it include 'spare' Munros climbed by actual Munroists; when I met Richard Wood in May 1998, he had only one full round (number 88), but more than 6000 spare Munros in his bag. Overall, several million Munro ascents must have been made by now. In stark foot-pounding terms, the Norwegian football commentator can be aptly paraphrased: 'We gave your hills one hell of a beating.'

Various themes and theories can be teased from the list. In examining the first 2002 slots (the first 2000 named Munroists), the male/female split is around 85%/15%. Yet this isn't immediately obvious, due to many Munroists hiding behind semi-anonymous initials. Close on 300 folk display this old-fashioned and predominantly male trait (is there a sociologist in the house?); certainly far more people now give – or are allowed to give – a full name. Of the first 100, 95 are 'initialised'. Hamish Brown (62) was the first man with a first name, Barbara Tulloch (85) the first woman. By contrast, Munroists 401-500 include only three initialised folk (although no subsequent 100 has dipped any lower).

The name-breakdown is thesis-worthy in itself. Unsurprisingly, the most common surname is Smith (26 in the first 2002), before a big gap to Brown and

Robertson (16 each). It's good to see the first Munroist and the most famous both having encouraged their kin to follow their footsteps. Next come Taylor (15), Grant and Stewart (both 13), Wilson (12), Gray, Murray, and Simpson (all 11), then Clark (10, plus seven Clarkes), Fraser and Scott (10 each). Wylie and Wyllie combined give 10, as do Thompson and Thomson. The most common initial letter is M (277 including 119 Macs/Mcs); there are 209 Bs, 205 Ss, 164 Cs. Only one Q, though (Quine, 757), and no Xs or Zs.

119 out of 2002, or 5.9%, seems a relatively low proportion of Mac/Mc names given that this is a Highland-context list. Is there an Edinburgh bias over and against Glasgow? Perhaps: that vastly more Macs inhabit the Glasgow phone book merely highlights how the Highland diaspora drifted into Govan rather than Gorgie. This skewing also crops up in the nation's sports teams. The Scottish football eleven, deep rootedly urban and with a West of Scotland slant, routinely includes several Macs. Conversely, the rugby fifteen, drawn largely from the Borders and the genteel parts of Edinburgh, frequently has no Macs at all. Is there a similar trend among Munroists? Possibly.

The gentility argument receives backing when forenames are studied: there's a whiff of Billy Connolly's old routine on how certain strata of Scottish society give their sons surnames as forenames. Hence Munroists christened Bryce and Campbell, Findlay and Fraser, Gilmour and Murray. Just how many different forenames appear is hard to assess, even ignoring initials-only folk. But lumping standard diminutives in with their longer forms (Jim with James, Val with Valerie) leaves 163 male forenames, and 118 female. This relatively greater spread of female names is interesting but not unique: genuine theses have been written on male/female naming patterns. Nor is it any surprise that whereas 57 male forenames reappear as surnames, only one – May – doubles up on the female side.

The most common male forename is John. I counted 125, and this, remember, excludes initials-only John Rooke Corbett, John Dow etc. David/Dave/Davie appears 105 times, Ian/Iain 68, James/Jim/Jamie 63, William/Willie/Bill 49, Peter 45 (including just one Pete), Alan/Allan/Alun 44, Andrew/Andy 43, and so on. The Ian:Iain ratio, 43:25, is instructive, suggesting a high overall proportion of Scots.

For the women, Margaret/Maggie leads out with 16, closely followed by Ann/Anne at 15, then 12 of Elizabeth and her diminutives. Various male names are unexpectedly rare: only three instances of Philip/Phil, two of Joseph/Joe, and just one lonely Grant (Sneddon, 1959). Female forenames don't yet include Kylie or Ginger, but the past few years have seen an Edna, an Ethel, and a Flora. Who says hill-climbing is a young person's game? Note however, that sexing names is a minefield: what of the various Pats, or the Chrises? And returning to the Copping/Siddaway dilemma, who's to say that some Melinda or Morag isn't betesticted, some Donald or Malcolm befrocked?

The most common full name comes with the four David Smiths: 522, 659, 1275, 1336. Robert Robertson occurs three times: 999, 1147, 1895 (although the last is listed as Bob), and David/Dave Jones also features thrice: 809, 1835, 1961. The shortest surname will stick at three letters until Ng follows Tsai as an Asiatic Munroist, while the shortest full names are Pat Hay and Tom Rix. Longest surname? Linklater-Shirras, but that's cheating, as is Hill-Cottingham. Hollingsworth (1847) has a more legitimate claim, followed by the 12-letter trio of Brocklehurst, Hetherington and MacGillivray.

There are no overall palindromes, merely a Hannah, nor any self-anagrams of the

Eric Rice variety, but some odd patterns do occur. The first Munroist, Archibald Eneas Robertson, famously appears as A. E. Robertson, yet less well known is his covey of copycats: A. E. Robinson at number 48, A. E. Lawson (126), and A. E. Law (143). No wonder there's a village near Dumfries named Ae: they all went there for their holidays. And who would expect the first 100 names to include three folk answering to G. G. – Elliot (7), Macphee (20, grandfather to Matthew Shaw, 661), and Shand (83)?

Then there's Proud and Humble, Bird and Fish, Wolf and Lamb, Mason and Lodge, Gold, Rich, and Fortune. But while there's Emerson and Palmer, there's no Lake (and quite right too – it would have had to have been Loch). There's Price and Purchase, Lincoln and Durham, France and Holland, Butcher and Baker (but no Candlestick-Maker). There's Morning and Town, but no Ride.

At risk of sounding like the New Years Honours announcer, the world of entertainment is represented by Peter Sellers, James Brown, James Taylor, and John Peel, while David Niven just misses out (he's Munroist 2036). Sportsmen include David Steele (remember him?) and two George Grahams – but then he did play in a double-winning side. There are two Crams but no Coe, which seems wrong, somehow.

And since this survey started with a politician, Charles Kennedy, it should end with his peers. There are 12 Wilsons, two Heaths, a Callaghan, a Thatcher, and two Blairs, but no Major. Chris Smith (719) is touted as the only MP to have completed the Munros, but what of Gordon Brown (1800), George Galloway (1390), and Bruce Malcolm (1634 and a DemLib)? Then there's Cyril Smith, number 579. Crikey, imagine dear old Cyril on the In Pinn; they'd need a crane.

## TOPPING TIMES

By Peter Warburton

AMATEUR historians, particularly perhaps those of mature years but with minds, in their own view, still more or less intact enjoy having their attention diverted to agreeably time-consuming research projects. Such a line of inquiry was prompted by the realisation that three of the nine tops added in the 1997 edition of the Tables had been listed for periods in the past and that of the 15 newly-deleted tops, five had joined the company as recently as 1981. The nagging need to know focused on the question of how many different locations have been classified as tops over the period 1891-1997. Pushing back the frontiers of knowledge in a useless direction? Of course, and why not.

A preliminary requirement is a definition of what constitutes a separate location. Those examples where improved mapping has produced a different grid reference for the spot the selectors always had in mind are excluded from the count. On the other hand, the category of resited summit qualifies for inclusion. Typically, these changes are described in compass point terms, e.g. the N Top is found to be higher than the S Top. The old and the new can be quite far apart; it is a mile-and-a-half walk from An Socach (Glen Ey) E to W Top.

Every Munro summit is by definition also a top. For practical reasons of presentation, chiefly to keep tables to manageable proportions, it is convenient to consider the two categories separately, taking first the Munro summits. In 1891 there were 283 and in 1997 284 listed Munros, but the closeness of the totals

conceals a significant turnover in numbers. In addition to those currently accepted, there have, adopting the criteria suggested above, been 32 temporary Munros, giving a total of 316 Munro sites. Table 1 analyses the current crop by historical seniority and Table 2 lists the 32 that were, but are no more. It will be seen that all but five of the casualties remain in the 1997 edition as tops. The thorough-going Munroist is likely to have visited three of them *en route* to something tickable and may well also have crossed Meall a' Chaorainn, the original Munro on the moorland plateau to the east of the Pass of Drumochter that few revisit. The fifth, Beinn an Lochain, is now a Corbett.

The purpose of the inquiry was not to reason why, a direction that quickly leads to contentious ground. However, Tables 1 and 2 do suggest that the majority of the changes have been dictated or strongly influenced by map corrections or clarifications, leaving less scope for the exercise of whimsical judgment than hostile critics would have us believe. Of the 30 net post-1891 Munros, five (Refs 275, 276, 280, 282, 284) owe their inclusion to map changes giving new heights of 3000ft+, three were probably only omitted from the original list because the inadequate mapping of Skye in those days left their height in some doubt and a further 10 can reasonably be attributed to minor OS changes having enhanced their status relative to neighbouring hills.

Similar comments apply to the former Munros. Although only Beinn an Lochain has lost its place on absolute height grounds, 10 more are direct counterparts of those referred to above, one was a clerical error (An Garbhanach, included by mistake for An Gearanach in 1921 and corrected in 1933) and two – Creag Toll a' Choin and Sgor an Iubhair – have been subject to third thoughts, as Munros, of the out:in: out variety. Another case of third thoughts – Sgor an Lochan Uaine (Cairn Toul) is the sole in:out:in example and so is not itemised in either Table, since it was listed in both 1891 and 1997.

'What constitutes a Top?' inquired Mr Inglis in 1933. Subsequent editors have not taken up his suggestions on the subject so that the only answer remains: 'That is a Top if the editor of the day so determines.' So far as this paper is concerned, tops are simply the listed points that are not Munro summits. There were 255 in the first list, rising to a maximum of 268 in 1953 and thereafter declining to the present figure of 227. The first net reduction came in 1974 but the main years of execution have been 1981 and 1997. In the context of the stated aim of this study – to arrive at a net total of distinct top locations – the most teasing complication proved to be the need to eliminate double counting. At times when cross-checking revealed mysterious discrepancies or when some unconsidered permutation came to light among the demoted Munros, promoted tops, the vagaries of the in and out brigade, the drastic name changes etc; at such times Mr Ling's peroration to the *Introduction* to his *Northern Highlands Guide* (1932) has come to mind – 'On with the Work'.

The nature and quality of that work are well illustrated by the case history of Slioch where the original Munro was located some 300yds ESE of the present site and given a height of 3260ft. The supporting evidence was an OS 3250ft contour and a note in the Kinlochewe Hotel visitors' book by a Captain Kirkwood RE suggesting 3260ft. The Captain was immortalised in footnotes to editions of the Tables for more than 60 years, long after the disappearance of the visitors' book. From the early days SMC members expressed doubt; the nearby OS spot height of

3217ft seeming to many to be the higher point. The contour interval at heights over 1000ft was then 250ft, so that maps were less helpful than now in establishing altitudes. Members' aneroids were accordingly much to the fore.

At Easter 1934-5(?) Mr Parker's painstaking survey concluded that the true summit was indeed the 3217ft point (NNW in Parker's report, known now as the North Top) which he estimated to be up to 5ft higher than the recognised SSE point. The OS admitted error and deleted the false 3250ft contour in time for the 1947 One-Inch map. Early metric sheets gave the two points equal heights of 980m and ratification of the North Top's solo summit status (981m) only came in the 1997 edition, fully vindicating Parker's findings at last.

Table 3, like Table 1 something of a by-product, illustrates the extent of the turnover in tops and the degree of mobility between categories. Only 169 of the original 255 tops remained, as tops, in the 1997 list. The balance of 86 comprises 21 Munros (marked in Table 1) two others (Sgor an Iubhair and An Garbhanach) that also became Munros but reverted to the status quo ante and, having been original 1891 tops are included in Table 2 not 4, which leaves 63 unlisted (see Table 4). Of 58 surviving post-1891 tops 25 were once Munros. Amid all this change there are inevitably a small number of surprise judgments. It is easy to imagine the adjudicators caught in the cloud on one of those days when:

*Molehills seem mountains and the ant  
Appears a monstrous elephant*

as perhaps in Glen Tilt where Carn a' Chlamain N established some sort of record by unexpectedly appearing in the 1981 edition, only to be buried, without a word of obituary, three years later. The admission to the list of a stretched image of Knight's Peak is a notable recent flight of fancy.

Table 4, a list of former tops, is the nub of the matter. It chronicles the gradual weeding out of the less likely of the original choice, including some found lacking in feet. This process may not be complete. On the other hand one of the 1997 comeback tops – Stuc a' Choire Dhuibh Bhig (Liathach) – is a founder member, deleted in 1974 for want of inches but restored as a consequence of further map revision. This Table also shows the attention given by past editors to the elimination of perceived anomalies such as the over-representation of particular hills or ranges. Reforming editors of the future will perhaps be tempted farther along this road.

The Compleat Fanatick will already have done the arithmetic. For others the answer, E & OE, is that there have been 593 separate listed locations, as Munro summit or Top, over the period 1891-1997.

Gross		Net	
Munros (1997)	284	Munros (1997)	284
		Former Munros not in	
Former Munros	32	1997 listed as tops.	5
Tops (1997)	227	Tops (1997).	227
		Former tops not in 1997	
Former Tops	97	listed as Munros.	77
	<u>640</u>		<u>593</u>

TABLE 1

## CURRENT MUNROS BY YEAR OF FIRST LISTING

1997 Tables nomenclature and references. Former Tops:

1891		<b>254</b>	
1921	*Meall Glas	2-3	199
	*Sgiath Chuil	2-5	270
	*Na Gruagaichean	4-11	74
	*A' Bhuidheanach Bheag	5-5	240
	*Carn Bhac	6-14	221
	*Stob Poite Coire Ardair	9-10	76
	*Meall na Teanga	10-1	275
	Mullach na Dheiragain	11-32	167
	Sgurr Mhic Choinnich	17-8	217
	Sgurr a' Mhaddaidh	17-15	277
	*Am Basteir	<b>11</b> 17-18	242
1974	*An Socach (Glen Ey)	6-16	227
	Beinn a' Chaorainn (Laggan)	9-2	80
	Ruadh Stac Mhor (Fisherfield)	14-4	276
	Beinn Tarsuinn (earlier unnumbered)	14-5	238
	Beinn a' Chlaidheimh	<b>5</b> 14-10	280
1981	*Creise	3-22	50
	*Garbh Chioch Mhor	10-8	116
	Sgurr nan Ceannaichean	12-17	284
	*Mullach an Rathain (Liathach)	13-6	108
	*Sgurr Fiona (An Teallach)	14-25	73
1984	Beinn Teallach	<b>5</b> 19-1	282
1997	*An Stuc	<b>1</b> 2-29	34
	*Stob Coire Sgreamhach	3-36	65
	*Stob Coire Raineach	3-40	263
	*Stob na Broige	3-41	207
	*Sgurr na Carnach	11-3	134
	*Tom na Gruagaich	13-4	268
	*Spidean Coire nan Clach (Beinn Eighe)	13-13	150
	*Slioch North Top	<b>8</b> 14-1	170
		<b>284</b>	



## TABLE 2

## FORMER MUNROS

1997 Tables references. Direct replacements in parentheses

1891-1921	Beinn Cheathaich (Meall Glas)	2-4	413
	Meall a' Churain (Sgiath Chuil)	2-6	486
	Beann a' Chuirn	2-18	466
	Sgor Choinnich	4-50	437
	Glas Mheall Mor	5-6	443
	Beinn Iutharn Bheag	6-13	362
	Carn Bhac SW (Carn Bhac)	6-15	478
	Carn Binnein	6-19	497
	Creag an Leth-choin	8-24	121
	Carn Eas	8-48	84
	Creag an Dail Mhor	8-49	304
	Mullach Sithidh (Mullach nan Dheiragain)	1-34	301
	Sgurr na Lapaich	11-40	153
	Creag Dubh	12-8	386
	Bidean an Eoin Deirg	12-14	136
	Stob Poite Coire Ardair E (Stob PCA)		
	Meall a' Chaorainn (A'Bhuidheanach Bheag)	17	
1891-1974	An Socach E (An Socach)	6-17	409
	Beinn a' Chaorainn S (Beinn a' Chaorainn)	2	9-3 128
1891-1981	Clach Learhad (Creise)	3-23	77
	Meall Dubhag	8-3	230
	Carn Ban Mor	8-4	123
	Geal Charn	8-7	481
	Carn Cloich-mhuillin	8-9	395
	A'Choinneach	8-35	184
	Carn Ban	9-18	394
	Carn Ballach	9-19	477
	Beinn an Lochain	9	
191-1997	Slioch Trig Point (Slioch North Top)	1	
1921-1933	An Garbhanach (An Gearanach)	1	4-10 292
1921-1981	Creag Toll a' Choin (Maoile Lunndaidh)	1	
1981-1997	Sgor an Iubhair	1	4-5 218

TABLE 3

## CURRENT NON-MUNRO TOPS BY YEAR OF FIRST LISTING

1997 Tables nomenclature and references. Former Munros.\*

1891	<b>169</b>				
1921		Stob Coire Dhomhnuill	38	Beinn Fhada	367
		*Carn Eas	84	*Creag Dubh	386
		*Creag an Leth-choin	121	Sgurr na Banachdich C	397
		Eagle's Rock	125	*Beinn Cheathaich	413
		*Bidean an Eoin Deirg	136	Sgurr a' Fionn Choire	421
		*Sgurr na Lapaich	153	*Sgor Choinnich	437
		Stacan Dubha	186	*Glas Mheall Mor	443
		Sgurr an Lochan Uaine	266	Sgurr Thormaid	459
		*Mullach Sithidh	301	*Beinn a Chuirn	466
		*Creag an Dail Mhor	304	*Carn Bhac SW	478
		Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh S	306	*Meall a' Churain	486
		Sail Liath	360	*Carn Bhinnein	497
1974	<b>26</b>	*Beinn Iutharn Bheag	362	Bhasteir Tooth	503
	<b>3</b>	Beinn a' Chaorainn S	128	*An Socach E	409
1981				Sgurr nan Saighead	438
		*Clach Leathad	77	Carn na Con Dhu	314
		An Riabhachan SW	86	Creag Leacach SW	393
		*Carn Ban Mor	123	*Carn Ban	394
		*A'Choinneach	184	*Carn Cloich-mhuillin	395
		Beinn na Socaich	200	Meail Buidhe SE	396
		Sron a Choire	220	Sgurr na Sgine NW	398
		*Meall Dubhag	230	Luinne Bheinn E	416
		Stob Choire a' Mhaill	252	Tom a' Choinich	422
		Stob a' Choire Liath Mhor	267	*Carn Ballach	477
		Mullach Choire Mhic		*Geal-Charn	481
		Fhearchair E	272	Sgurr Dubh	491
1997	<b>23</b>	Byack Beg	305	Creag na Caillich	504
		Druim Shionnach W	411	Stuc Faoch Choire	493
		Meall nan Tarmachan SE	468	Stob Coire na Cloiche	509
	<b>6</b>	Stob an Duine Ruaidh	492	Knight's Peak	511
	<b>227</b>				

**FORMER NON-MUNRO TOPS****The 77 deleted Tops not later reinstated or elevated to Munro****1891-1921 (13)**

An Socach (Wyvis)  
 Sron dha Murchdi (Lawers)  
 Creag a' Bhraig (Stob Binnein)  
 Leachd Riach (Monadh Liath)  
 Carn Ballach SW (Monadh Liath)  
 Big Brae (Ben Avon)  
 Beinn na Socaich (Stob Coire Easain)  
 Druim nan Bo (Mullach Clach a' Bhlaire)  
 Creag Meagaidh E  
 Sron a' Ghaothair (Meagaidh)  
 Cruach Ardrain NE (3376ft, 6" map)  
 Cruach Ardrain (NN413217)  
 Beinn a' Chreathain (NN377448)

**1891-1974 (4)**

Faochag (Sgurr na Sgine)  
 Sgurr na Creige (The Saddle)  
 Am Bathaidh (Sgurr a' Mhaoraich)  
 Glas Leathad Beg W (Wyvis)

**1891-1981 (37)**

Meall Luaidhe (Carn Mairg)  
 Meall Buidhe SE (Glen Lyon)  
 Stob a' Fhìr Bhoga (Heasgarnich)  
 Mam Coire Easain (Clach Leathad)  
 Carn Beag Dearg (Carn Mor Dearg)  
 Stob Coire an Fhìr Dhuibh (Aonach Mor)  
 Sron Garbh (Geal-Charn Erich)  
 A' Bhuidheanach (Carn Liath)  
 Snechdach Slinnean (Carn Liath)  
 Sail Chaoruinn (NH141148)  
 Creag nan Clachan Geala (Ceathreamhnan)  
 Ben Avon SW  
 Mullach Fraoch-choire NE  
 Stob Coire Coulavie (Sodhail)  
 Ciste Dubh (Sodhail)  
 Braigh a' Choire Bhig (Mullardoch)  
 Creag a' Choire Aird E (Affric)  
 Rudha na Spreidhe (Mullardoch)  
 Creag a' Chaorainn (Mullardoch)  
 Creag Dhubh (Beinn Eighe)  
 Fiachlach (Wyvis)  
 Stob Bac an Fhurain (Ben Avon)  
 Mullach Lochan nan Gobhar (Ben Avon)  
 Stuc Garbh Mhor (Ben Avon)

**1891-1981 (continued)**

Stob Dubh an Eas Bhig (Ben Avon)  
 Sron a' Cha-no (Cairngorm)  
 Creag an Leth-choin N (Cairngorm)  
 Fiacaill a' Choire Chais (Cairngorm)  
 Fiacaill Coire an t-Sneachda (Cairngorm)  
 Stob Coire Sputan Dearg (Macdui)  
 Stob Coire an Lochan (Braeriach)  
 Diollaid Coire Eidart (Feshie)  
 Druim Sgarsoch (An Sgarsoch)  
 Beinn Garbh (Atholl)  
 Carn nan Sac (Carn a' Gheoidh)  
 Creag Leachdach (Cairn Bannoch)  
 Creag Mhor (Meagaidh)

**1891-1997 (9)**

Sron nan Giubhais (Stob Ghabhar)  
 Aonach Eagach (Stob Ghabhar)  
 Cac Carn Mor (Lochnagar)  
 Ben Macdui N  
 Beinn Mheadhoin SW  
 Stob Poite Coire Affric E  
 Stob Coire nan Dearcag (Ceathreamhnan)  
 The Saddle W  
 Sgurr Dearg (Cuillin)

**1921-1974 (1)**

Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan E

**1921-1981 (5)**

Beinn an Eachan E (Tarmachans)  
 Stob Choire Claurigh N  
 Fiacaill na Leth-choin (Cairngorm)  
 A'Chioch (Beinn a' Bhuid)  
 Little Cairngorm (Derry Cairngorm)

**1921-1997 (1)**

Cotrag Bhuidhe Buttress (Teallach)

**1953-1974 (1)**

Carn a' Bhutha (Carn Bhac)

**1981-1984 (1)**

Carn a' Chlamain N (Tilt)

**1981-1997 (5)**

Ben Lui NW  
 The Saddle E  
 The Saddle Trig Point  
 An Riabhachan NE  
 Slioch Trig Point

## SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS 1998

### 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
Northern Highlands	13 (3)	– –	– –	13 (3)	13	1	3	1	9	1	28	–	–
Western Highlands	11 (3)	1 –	3 (2)	15 (5)	15	–	1	–	2	–	18	–	–
Ben Nevis	15 (4)	1 –	4 –	20 (4)	19	4	–	1	2	–	26	–	–
Glen Coe (Inc Buachaille)	15 (2)	1 –	2 –	18 (2)	18	6	–	–	3	2	29	–	–
Other Central Highlands	17 (6)	3 –	2 –	22 (6)	16	3	4	–	2	2	27	–	1
Cairngorms	25 (2)	8 –	5 (2)	38 (4)	34	6	3	6	17	4	70	–	3
Southern Highlands	25 (2)	3 –	1 (1)	29 (3)	27	3	2	1	11	2	46	3	18
Skye	13 –	– –	– –	13 –	13	4	–	3	3	3	26	–	–
Islands (other than Skye)	6 –	1 –	1 –	8 –	8	–	2	–	6	–	16	–	–
Southern Uplands	1 –	1 –	– –	2 –	2	2	–	2	3	–	9	–	13
All Regions 1998	141 (22)	19 –	18 (5)	178 (27)	165	29	15	14	58	14	295	3	35
Previous year 1997	189 (17)	24 (1)	25 (11)	238 (29)	212	11	11	12	44	13	305 + 2n/k	3	36

## MOUNTAIN RESCUE COMMITTEE OF SCOTLAND

### SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS 1998

**Compiled by John Hinde**

Police have not been mentioned in every incident as they are involved in all.

#### NORTHERN HIGHLANDS

- JANUARY 11 – Girl (5) ran off into woods at Rearaig, Ardanaskan, Lochcarron. HMCG helicopter. Found safe. 8.
- JANUARY 17-18 – Slip caused recurring knee injury for soldier (40) on military exercise in Fannichs. One of four went for help while other three sheltered in ponchos and bivvy bags in snow on hill path. Recovered by Dundonnell MRT using Argocat. Reference given was only 1.5km from shelter in Lochivraon Bothy. 54.
- JANUARY 27 – Two men (46, 30) used a quad vehicle to get 8km north from A838 to Whiten Head for whelk collecting. Quad bike broke down on return so they had to walk. Wearing wellies and lacking navigation gear they got benighted at Cnoc nan Gobhar, Loch Eriboll. Coastguard Auxiliary, Police and HMCG helicopter searched. They were found by a light seen by searchers checking a route out to Freisgill Bothy. 88.
- MARCH 1 – Two male climbers (34, 27) overdue from first ascent of Spindryer Buttress on West Face, Cona Mheall, Coire Ghra of Beinn Dearg, walked out safe, unaided, prior to search. They had been delayed by deep snow and extreme weather. Dundonnell MRT had been notified.
- MARCH 21-22 – Descending Sgurr nan Each, Fannichs, (m41) got separated from his three friends. After a search they went off to get help. He got down to Amhainn Cuilleig (river) but was lost without map or compass at night so he bedded down. Found by Dundonnell MRT searching likely routes and walked out with them. 69.
- APRIL 13-14 – Two male hillwalkers (28, 22) overdue from An Teallach in snowy conditions walked out at Dundonnell after midnight. Dundonnell MRT. 4.
- APRIL 13 – Man (36) slipped on snow on west bank of Coire Mhic Nobuil, Torridon, when only 80m north of road. He fell 18m into river. Alarm raised by one of his companions. Taken from river by Torridon MRT and treated for minor cuts and bruises. 4.
- APRIL 21-22 – Walking at east end of Loch Garbhaig, Letterewe, man (28) damaged his knee. Spent night in boathouse at west end of loch, but still unable to continue so companion went for help. Stretched out by Torridon MRT. 45.
- APRIL 24 – Having walked pass from Achnashellach to Torridon, four walkers attempted return route. Three went ahead leaving a novice (42) behind. She could not be found by one of the others who back-tracked to look for her. Torridon MRT callout was initiated. Novice had walked back to Torridon hitched to Dingwall, phoning youth hostel at 22.50. 16.

- MAY 3 – Whistles heard from south side Spidean Coire nan Clach, Beinn Eighe at about 400m. Walker (49) had been hit by rock dislodged by a member of the party of eight, suffering leg and suspected spinal damage with mild hypothermia. Rescuers guided to him by torch flashes. Airlift By RAF Sea King. Leuchars and Torridon MRTs. 53.
- MAY 14-15 – Solo walking in Fannichs, man (40) failed to rendezvous with friend at 17.00. Searches by Assynt, Dundonnell, Kinloss and Torridon MRTs, SARDA and RAF Sea King. His body was found 1km NNW of Sgur Mor by sweep search next afternoon and was stretchered off the hill. He had apparently fallen about 150m. 641.
- MAY 16 – Party (f37,34, m26,26) attempting Cioch Nose of Sgurr a'Chaorachain was delayed by two novices. Reported overdue from youth hostel they were found uninjured at foot of climb by two SARDA dogs before midnight. 4.
- MAY 17 – On path, 1.4km east of Flowerdale Mains, Gairloch, teacher with his party of six heard six whistle blasts from NE. He got no acknowledgement after twice replying with three blasts. Dundonnell MRT member checked it all out and climbed An Groban. Nothing found. 2.
- MAY 24-26 – Walking between Kinlochewe and Shenavall Bothy, man (48) twisted his knee on 24th. Could not walk out on 26th and showed some cold symptoms, so companion went on to Dundonnell. Search by Dundonnell MRT. Airlift by Inverness Air Ambulance. 22.
- MAY 31 – Descending wet, rough south slopes of Ben Klibreck, just above Loch a'Bhealaich, man (39) fell awkwardly, dislocating ankle and fracturing lower leg. Companion went for help. Winched by RAF Sea King. 12.
- JUNE 8 – Walking on wet hillside above Lochan Coire Mhic Fhearchair, Beinn Eighe a woman (63) slipped, breaking two bones of a leg. Two of the party of seven ran off the hill for aid. Casualty airlifted by HMCG helicopter to Broadford Hospital. Later transferred to Raigmore. 30.
- JUNE 17 – Woman (70) walking with her husband to see a monument at 210m above Berriedale, about 4km inland from the east coast of Caithness. She slipped on heather and fractured an ankle. Evacuated by gamekeeper in Argocat and local rescuers. 18.
- JULY 22 – Woman (26) injured her ankle near Shenavall Bothy. Aided by Dundonnell MRT to end of track. 10.
- JULY 25 – In a party of four descending SE Slopes of Stac Pollaidh in rain and mist, a woman (53) was killed by a fall of 75m. She had slipped from a mossy, rock ledge. Dundonnell MRT in HMCG helicopter. 27.
- AUGUST 23-24 – Lost on the path to the high waterfall, Eas a Chual Aluinn, woman (67) and man (63) tried to walk out westwards along Loch Glencoul. They were benighted at a uncrossable river (probably Unapool Burn). Daylight revealed bridge and road within easy walking distance. Assynt MRT assembled. HMCG helicopter standby. 9.
- SEPTEMBER 2-3 – Trainee gamekeeper (17) taking quad bike to a shot stag got lost in mist and rain on Knockfin Heights (438m) on Caithness boundary 5km east of A897 at Kinbrace. He had only a few weeks' experience. He lost his jacket and just had a T-shirt. Next day he was searched for by Assynt and Kinloss MRTs, RAF and HMCG helicopters. He was found at 16.30, 8km farther east by a stalker on his way to check Gobernuisgeach Bothy. He walked out. 324.

- SEPTEMBER 19-20 – Overdue, but having left a route plan, experienced solo woman walker (63) was with dog on rugged west slopes of South Ridge of Ben More Assynt, NE of head of Dubh Loch More. Her body was found by RAF Sea King. She had fallen 10m in good weather from rocks to stream/rocks. There have been several accidents in this area over the last few years. Assynt and Kinloss MRTs. 318.
- SEPTEMBER 20-21 – Underestimating time needed for ascent of Cioch Nose, Sgurr a' Chaorachain, two men (40), (26) got benighted near top. They flashed torches to raise alarm. Reached by Torridon and Kintail MRTs at first light Transferred to HMCG helicopter. 85.
- SEPTEMBER 30-NOVEMBER 1 – Four guest spectators (m26, f26, f25, f23) viewing a deer stalk on Creag Ruadh in Kildermorie Forest, 23km NW of Evanton, got lost in mist and spent the night on the hill at 650m. Next day they followed a stream to their vehicles. Rescue helicopters alerted.
- OCTOBER 10-11 – Two men (m35, f28) got lost in bad weather and dark on Sgurr Fiona. They bivvied and were found descending Corrie Hallie path by Dundonnell MRT and SARDA who had also bivvied due to weather. RAF Sea King search called off due to weather. 122.
- OCTOBER 24-25 – Four cavers trapped in Clayonite Cave, Inchnadamph by rising storm water. Found safe and fed by divers assembled for SCRO annual dinner in village. Walked out when water level dropped. Assynt MRT helped communications. 40.
- NOVEMBER 6-7 – Group of four separated descending Stac Pollaidh. Two women (39, 26) got lost and benighted in heavy rain and gusty wind. Found OK by Dundonnell MRT and SARDA and aided off. 104.
- DECEMBER 5-6 – Casualty (32) walked off Liathach after splitting up with friend. Descending south between two eastern tops he stepped into a small hole twisting his knee. When his head torch battery failed he used camera flash to raise alarm. Torridon MRT dropped by HMCG helicopter carried him back to top of ridge, where he was airlifted. 55.

## WESTERN HIGHLANDS

- APRIL 25-26 – Woman (49) and man (39) got separated from a group of six on Bidein a'Choire Sheasgaich. Poor navigation caused benightment. Found and airlifted from near head of Loch Monar on SE Ridge Beinn Tharsuinn by HMCG helicopter. Kinloss and Torridon MRTs. 76.
- MAY 9 – Male hillwalker (37) died of heart attack on Forcan Ridge, the Saddle, Glen Shiel. RAF Sea King. 22.
- MAY 16-21 – On May 21 the body of a walker (78) was found on craggy north slopes of Sguman Coinntich, Killilan. Solo, he had probably slipped and fallen on May 16. He was reported missing on May 19. His car was found in Killilan. Searches were carried out by Glenelg, Kinloss and Kintail MRTs with up to 12 SARDA dogs. No route plan had been left but fresh information lead to concentration on Beinn Killilan and Sguman Coinntich. Casualty was spotted by HMCG helicopter when going to refuel after dropping teams. 890.
- MAY 17 – Student (23) in good weather slipped on steep, wet, rock slab on summit of Beinn Tharsuinn sustaining head and leg injuries. His two companions got him down to Bhearnais Bothy whence he was lifted by RN Sea King. 13.
- JULY 4 – On July 18 body of a walker (23) was found by a fisherman downstream

from Loch Eiragoraidh and 3.7km ESE from Mallaig Pierhead. He seemed to have climbed 9m on rock and fallen, sustaining fatal head injuries. HMCg helicopter transported witness, Police, CID etc. Recovery on stretcher to A830 by Lochaber MRT. It is likely that the accident occurred on July 4, 1998 as casualty travelled from Ayr to Mallaig on July 3. 67.

JULY 4 – Descending An Riabhachan by Coire a' Mhaim to Loch Mullardoch, a solo walker (49) slipped on wet grass, going over on his ankle and fracturing a fibula. Whistle blasts alerted four Leuchars MRT on exercise. Airlift by RAF Sea King. 20.

JULY 8-9 – Schoolboy (15) on an outdoor course suffered asthma when hillwalking at the head of the track up Glen Mallie (Loch Arkaig). Two from group of 10 went for help. Lochaber MRT attended with an estate worker on a quad bike. Casualty taken to Belford Hospital. 14.

JULY 18 – Taking a short cut off South Cluanie Ridge by Sgurr a'Chuilinn, then descending NE Ridge, man (43) slipped on wet rock and grass and was killed by a fall of 30m. Companion raised alarm. Kintail MRT, RAF Sea King. 53m

JULY 21 – Lochaber MRT and helicopter alerted when two boys (13,12), wearing trainers, unequipped and without a plan, went walking in rain and mist on to rugged An t-Sleubhaich south of A830, Glenfinnan. A half-hour jaunt stretched to four hours but they turned up OK. 14.

JULY 26 – Student (17) suffered only bruising after a spectacular small hours fall of 15m into River Moriston, just below A82 bridge. After being swept downstream he managed to swim to the foot of the bankside crag, grab something and eventually pull himself on to a ledge at water level. More than four hours later he was stretcher hoisted on ropes despite overhanging rock and vegetation. Dundonnell MRT, Police, Ambulance Service. 113.

AUGUST 1-2 – With damaged ankle ligaments, caused by jumping over a peat hag descending vegetation on North Ridge Ciste Dhubh, a schoolgirl (17) was helped to tent by seven companions. The aggravated old injury had not improved by next morning when she was evacuated by Kintail MRT, on stretcher supported on quad bike over easier bits. 46.

AUGUST 7 – At a campfire at Plockton Monument in the small hours a barefoot female (25) stood up, slipped on wet grass skidding down a slight incline, over a sea cliff. She fell 10m, stopping on a ledge sustaining cuts to her head and a knee injury. Kintail MRT needed for stretcher evacuation. 26.

AUGUST 22 – One of 12 TA recruits descending Sgurr Fhuaran by NE Ridge into Gleann Lichd, a man (25) suffered exhaustion with collapse and disorientation. Party put him in survival shelter and raised alarm. Kintail MRT supervised stretcher carry. 7.

AUGUST 27 – With a companion descending north slopes of Sgurr na Sgine above Bealach Coire Mhalagain, a walker (32) slipped on rock, fell 10m gashing his knee. Used mobile phone. Winched by RAF Sea King to Raigmore. 21.

SEPTEMBER 7-8 – Birdwatcher on Carn Bad a'Chreamha (634m) 4.5km ENE of Eilean Donnan Castle, lost track of time. When it got dark he stayed put then walked off in daylight. Kintail MRT. 17.

SEPTEMBER 20 – Man (45) stumbled near Bearnais Bothy, Achnashellach, injuring his back. Companion raised alarm. Evacuated by Raigmore Air Ambulance. 12.

SEPTEMBER 28 – Woman (69) fractured ankle by going over on a grass tuft Smirisary, Glenuig. Stretchered By Lochaber MRT. 15.

NOVEMBER 6 – Man (46) suffered fatal heart attack after descent to glen from summit of Sgurr Choinnich of Sgurr a'Chaorachain, Achnashellach. Stretchered by Torridon MRT. 45.



## BEN NEVIS

**JANUARY 14** – Two men (24, 22) flashed torches International Distress. After ascent of No. 2 Gully they lost 282° bearing for West Flank and got cragfast in Five Finger Gully. Airlift at 22.00 by RAF Sea King. 22.

**JANUARY 17-18** – Three men (29, 23, 23) benighted on Tower Ridge Eastern Traverse due to poor snow. Lochaber MRT lowered to them, escorted them up to plateau and down to Halfway Lochan for RN Sea King airlift. Lomond and RAF MRTs. 399.

**JANUARY 25-29** – On January 23, Fort William Police received a Fax with a plan for a fell runner (60) to complete all 4000ft peaks and finish on Ben Nevis on January 25. On January 25 he phoned from Dalwhinnie that he had gone slightly off course, was running late and would arrive in Fort William on 26th. It was known he was well equipped and experienced with good local knowledge. On 29th Kinloss and Lochaber started search, also nine SARDA dogs and two RAF Sea Kings. About noon his body was found in Five Finger Gully by R137 helicopter. A single set of footprints in snow could clearly be seen leading to the edge of a 12m ice cliff down which he had fallen, then slid 60m before stopping on a small level snow patch. He had sustained head injuries, cuts and bruises. Wearing fell running trainers he carried crampons but no helmet. 345.

**FEBRUARY 2** – Two men (both 19) soloing Tower Gully were a metre from the top when the cornice collapsed. The avalanche went over the head of one, uninjured, who went up to plateau then walked off. The other suffered abrasions when he was swept 200m to 15m below the foot of Tower Scoop landing in soft snow. He went to CIC Hut and was escorted down. Lochaber MRT. 17.

**MARCH 7-8** – On Eastern Traverse, Tower Ridge, student (21) slipped and fell 15m to near a cave, suffering slight head cuts and bruised ribs. His uninjured female companion abseiled to join him. Casualty shouted to climber ahead to raise alarm. He was stretchered and airlifted by RAF to Belford for overnight observation. Companion also lifted. Lochaber MRT. 194.

**MARCH 21-22** – Losing time climbing Tower Ridge, two men (41, 25) got benighted at Eastern Traverse then failed to progress next day. Passers-by alerted by whistles. Mobile phones also used. Lochaber MRT assisted them to climb to the top, then walked them uninjured to RAF Sea King airlift. 100.

**APRIL 4-5** – Last seen at 11.00 on 4th, climbing Slingsby's Chimney roped, two men (28, 27) were found by Lochaber MRT dead, still roped together on NE Buttress. One body was recovered on 5th but poor weather delayed second recovery till April 6. RAF Sea King 15 flying hours. It is not known what the primary cause was. 549.

**APRIL 29** – Descending Nevis Track, (f50) slipped just above Red Burn breaking her wrist. Mobile phone used. Airlift by RAF Sea King. Lochaber MRT. 30.

**MAY 2** – At the first zig-zag above Red Burn (m45) collapsed with kidney pains of which he had a history. His companion used mobile phone for help. Airlift by RAF. Lochaber MRT. 12.

**MAY 24-25** – Female (24) descending Upper Coire Eoghainn, Ben Nevis slipped and twisted her knee at 15.00. She decided to rest overnight then continue descent next day. She failed to rest due to injury and used mobile phone to call help next day. Evacuated by Lochaber MRT and RAF Sea King. 45.

**MAY 29** – Female (21) in party of nine involved in Three Peaks Challenge had repeated asthma attacks on plateau 1km from Nevis summit. Evacuated by RN helicopter. 10.

**MAY 30** – Male (34) fell on loose rock on Nevis summit with slight injuries to head







- and hip. Passer-by used mobile phone. Rescued by RAF Sea King. Lochaber MRT. 23.
- JUNE 12 – No ropes were carried for a midday climb up Castle Ridge by four men during excellent weather. 75m up the climb the deceased (47) who was last in line of ascent, slipped and fatally somersaulted several times to the bottom. He had worn adequate boots but rock was wet in places. His helmet was damaged in the fall. Companion called for help on mobile phone. Stretched by Lochaber MRT. All winched by RAF Sea King. 62.
- JUNE 13 – Involved in Three Peaks Challenge, (f37) suffered exhaustion descending Nevis Track in a party of four. She was just below the Red Burn crossing. Flown to Belford by RN Sea King. 17.
- JUNE 13 – Descending Nevis Track in Three Peaks Challenge, (m29) got sore knees when he got down to the lowest aluminium bridge. Companions contacted Police from youth hostel. Airlift by RN Sea King in the area. 9.
- JULY 4 – Attempting to climb Tower Ridge four men (33, 22, 20, 20) got as far as Little Tower and decided to descend. Mist came down and they got cragfast. Used mobile phone to alert Lochaber MRT. Four of the team helped to lower them off. RN helicopter involved. 52.
- JULY 8 – Man (74) who took 8.5 hours to climb Ben Track was reported overdue. Leader of Lochaber MRT went up alone, met him at Red Burn where he was found to be OK, and escorted him down to Achintee. 9.
- JULY 18 – Leader (28) of a rope of four on Long Climb fell when 90m up climb in good weather. Fall caused by loose rock. Fall arrested by belay but he sustained a fractured skull and elbow. Mobile phone used for alert. Winched off face by Lochaber MRT and RAF Sea King to Belford Hospital. (later Glasgow Southern General). 87.
- AUGUST 1 – Sufferer from muscular dystrophy (29) experienced an epileptic fit during an ascent of the Ben Track at the third zig-zag above Red Burn. Her companion also had a form of physical impairment. A passer-by alerted rescuers using a mobile phone. Both were taken to Belford Hospital by RN Sea King. 16.
- AUGUST 26 – Female (40) repeatedly twisted ankle descending Nevis Track despite wearing adequate boots. At YH track junction she could walk no farther. She was splinted and entonoxed by Lochaber MRT and stretched off. 22.
- SEPTEMBER 9 – Outdoor centre student (16) stumbled down scree for 6m, sustaining cuts and bruises when descending Number 4 Gully in a party of 13. He also suffered cold trauma. Mobile phone alerted Lochaber MRT and he was stretched to below cloudbase, then airlifted by RAF Sea King. 103.
- OCTOBER 10 – Descending Nevis Track in calm weather with mist and rain, four men (23,22,21,21) got benighted and lost at Halfway Lochan. They had inadequate clothing and no navigation gear. They made contact by mobile phone and were escorted down by Lochaber MRT. 8.
- OCTOBER 30 – Solo walker (46) descending Nevis Track had knee cartilage problems. Aided down by Lochaber MRT. He declined medical help. 21.
- OCTOBER 31 – Charity walker (29) with 200 others descending Nevis Track when she took an epileptic fit near Halfway Lochan. Airlifted to Belford Hospital by RN Sea King on training exercise. 5.
- DECEMBER 5 – Carrying, but not wearing, crampons, (m46) slipped on icy path 500m below CIC Hut, breaking his ankle. Airlift by RAF Sea King. Lochaber MRT. 16.
- DECEMBER 12-13 – Couple (f40, m37) climbing Nevis by Carn Mor Dearg Arête got trapped by weather and nightfall and spent night in summit shelter. Found when descending by RAF Sea King. Lochaber MRT. 40.

*Keith Milne on Pitch 15 of the Lotus Flower headwall, Lotus Flower Tower, Cirque of the Unclimbables, N.W. Territories, Canada.*

*Keith Milne belaying on the South East Buttress of Mount St. James O'Brian. Photos: Steve Helmore.*

## GLENCOE

- JANUARY 17-18 – Traversing Aonach Eagach E to W alone, (m52) slipped on snow at the Pinnacles at 13.30 and fell 120m down south side. Other climbers communicated and found he had injured his back, but alarm not raised till 22.15. Found by Glencoe and Leuchars MRTs at 04.00. Lifted by RAF Sea King at 09.00 to Belford Hospital. Detained for bruising to back and swollen knees. 268.
- JANUARY 25 – Nearing the top of Summit Gully, Stob Coire nam Beith, unroped male (26) fell 25m fracturing wrist and opposite ankle. He was stopped when he fell into a snow bank. Companion went for help. Airlift by RAF Sea King to Belford. Later transferred to Raigmore Hospital. Glencoe MRT. 56.
- JANUARY 31 – Two men (27, 27) got cragfast trying to descend Clachaig Gully West after traverse of Aonach Eagach E to W. Distress signals by torches brought rescuers who escorted them down uninjured. Glencoe MRT. 29.
- JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 1 – Pair (m27, f25) completed E to W traverse of Aonach Eagach but benighted on Sgorr nam Fiannaidh. Descended into Coire an Lochan where they overnighted, then walked off next morning. Glencoe MRT. 17.
- FEBRUARY 1 – Returning overdue from climbing on Stob Coire nan Lochan two men (28, 24) benighted in Coire nam Beith with failed head torches and failed spare batteries. RAF Sea King spotted a very dim light. They were joined by two members of Glencoe MRT with new torches who aided them down. 29.
- FEBRUARY 22-23 – Wet and slippery rock delayed three men (34, 33, 32) climbing Agag's Groove, Buachaille Etive Mor, so they were benighted at the top of the climb. Darkness prevented their intended descent of Curved Ridge so they waited till morning. Glencoe MRT found them abseiling Agag's Groove. No further assistance required. 14.
- MARCH 21 – Cragfast in good weather on a ledge above scree on Gleann Fhaolain slopes of Bidean nam Bian, two men were aided down by passing climbers and not traced. Glencoe MRT and RAF Sea King stood down. 6.
- MARCH 22 – False alarm. Cries reported heard on Beinn Fhada slightly above Lost Valley path. Glencoe MRT. RAF Sea King in area. Nothing found. 26.
- MAY 30 – On E to W traverse of Aonach Eagach in good weather, walker (45) climbed 2m rock at the Pinnacles to pass elderly walkers going east. He fell 3m with face lacerations and bruising, stopping at the lip of another drop. Glencoe MRT and RAF Sea King in the area. 13.
- MAY 31 – When second and third were still at the foot of the climb, lead climber's belay slipped on Bunny's Route, Gearr Aonach, causing him to fall on top of second man (44) dislocating his shoulder. Leader and third raised alarm. Glencoe MRT member in area aided second off the hill. Good weather and dry rock. 2.
- JUNE 11 – Female (55) slipped from path, rolled 6m with cuts and abrasions to her body. With companion she was descending south side of Sgorr nam Fiannaidh. Passer-by alerted Glencoe MRT and RN Sea King. 33.
- JUNE 17 – Male (33) traversing Aonach Eagach from east, reached Stob Coire Leith then slipped, fell 3m and injured his ankle. Passers-by alerted Glencoe MRT and he was winched by RN Sea King. 22.
- JUNE 20 – At 03.30 (m37) and companion were at 300m climbing Sgor nam Fiannaidh to view sunrise when he fell 9m causing head injury and bruises. Stretchered by Glencoe MRT. 19.
- JUNE 20 – (See July 4 similar incident nearby) Ascending main ridge of Bidean nam Bian from Lost Valley with a companion, woman (53) was struck by a falling rock which caused a fractured collar bone. She self-rescued. Glencoe MRT attended alerted by passer-by. 21.



- JUNE 20 – (f25) descending Coire nan Lochan path in good weather was within 0.5km of Pipers' Layby when she slipped sustaining spiral fractures of tibia and fibula. Stretchered to A82 by Glencoe MRT. 13.
- JULY 4 – (See June 20 similar incident nearby) Three were descending scree from Bidean Ridge NE into Lost Valley when rockfall occurred. Female (57) was struck on calf by a stone, causing serious tissue damage. She was given entonox by Glencoe MRT and stretchered down to suitable RN Sea King winch point. 59.
- JULY 10 – Three ascending Sgorr nam Fiannaidh reached 600m and found they were not on correct Clachaig Gully path. Leader, a police officer (32), paused to get his bearings. Another route-finder went up and beckoned the others to come on. Policeman slipped on broken slab and gravel, and fell 3m on to his head. Fatal. Winch by RN Sea King. GMRT. 26.
- JULY 19 – Solo climber (42) climbing Curved Ridge, Buachaille Etive Mor slipped on wet rock and fell 23m sustaining head, pelvic and kidney trauma. Treated with oxygen, stretchered by Glencoe MRT to below cloudbase then winched by RAF Sea King. 73.
- JULY 21 – Woman (38) descending Lost Valley path with companion slipped on rock falling 6m, suffering skull fracture and cuts. Glencoe MRT did manual transfer to RN Sea King. 18.
- AUGUST 20 – Heart attack sufferer (m45) airlifted from Lost Valley to Belford Hospital by RN Sea King. Glencoe MRT. 56.
- AUGUST 22 – Walkers reported three climbers in difficulty on East Face of Aonach Dubh. Glencoe MRT ascertained by shouts that they were OK. 14.
- SEPTEMBER 5 – Pair completed Shackle Route on North Buttress, Buachaille Etive Mor. Boyfriend left to retrieve rucksack, returning to find girl (27) missing. She had no torch. She was found and guided down by Glencoe MRT. 19.
- SEPTEMBER 13-14 – After traversing Aonach Eagach, walker (35) went down east of Clachaig Gully in failing light, instead of usual route down west of gully. He got cragfast and alerted rescuers with torch flashes. Glencoe MRT assisted him through a gully system. 48.
- OCTOBER 3 – Having climbed Curved Ridge and suffered migraine and epilepsy, walker (50) tried to get off Buachaille Etive Mor by Coire na Tulaich but he could go no farther. Airlift by RAF Sea King. Glencoe MRT. 16.
- OCTOBER 8 – Having completed most of Aonach Eagach, walker (m23) collapsed from exhaustion on Stob Coire Leith. Friend went for help. RAF Sea King spotted casualty flashing a cigarette lighter. Glencoe MRT. 53.
- OCTOBER 10 – In good weather, instead of taking easier ground to west, a walker (26) went up Summit Gully of Stob Coire nam Beith where he got cragfast. His friend went for help. Glencoe MRT lowered him into coire whence he was lifted by RAF Sea King. 82.
- NOVEMBER 5 – Central Gully, Bidean nam Bian. Unroped climber (49) within 30m of completing route when loose windslab gave way. He fell 45m fracturing ankle. Stretchered by Glencoe MRT to below cloudbase then airlifted by HMS Gannet RN Sea King. 77.
- NOVEMBER 29-30 – Three men (45, 37, 32) took more than 24 hours to traverse Aonach Eagach in mist and later darkness, reporting progress on mobile phone till battery died. They had belayed and abseiled the entire length of the ridge. Met by Glencoe MRT when descending Sgorr nam Fiannaidh. RN Sea King. 22.
- DECEMBER 13-16 – Thought to have walked Aonach Eagach on December 13, searches took place for a man (34) on December 15 and 16. His body was found by RN Sea King at the foot of a vertical cliff on south side of Stob Coire Leith. Glencoe and Kinloss MRTs, SARDA, RAF Sea King. 411.

## OTHER CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

- JANUARY 8** – Client (51) in a guided party became ill, losing balance and vomiting, on east slopes of Aonach an Nidd going to climbs on Coire an Lochain of Aonach Mor. Recovered to Belford by Nevis Range tracked vehicle as Lochaber MRT en route. 39.
- JANUARY 25** – Man abseiling West Gully, Beinn Udlaidh suffered back and leg injuries when his belay failed. Airlift to Southern General by RN Sea King. Strathclyde Police and Arrochar MRTs. 15.
- JANUARY 25** – Strathclyde Police and Arrochar MRTs went on to Beinn Udlaidh to escort the companion of the above casualty. 24.
- JANUARY 30** – Descending An Gearanach, man (43) got separated from three friends who thought he had gone a different way due to tiredness. Lost on path he got to top of Steall Falls then retraced. Benighted without a torch he was descending slowly when found by Leuchars and Lochaber MRTs and RAF Sea King. 28.
- FEBRUARY** – Man (33) suffered broken fibula and facial lacerations. He slipped climbing Centre Post, Creag Meagaidh due to a crampon balling up with snow. He then fell 35m colliding with a colleague belayed below. Their combined fall was then broken by the first ice screw of the pitch. His two uninjured companions lowered him off. Winched by RAF Sea King. Leuchars and Lochaber MRTs. 141.
- MARCH 1-2** – After finding white-out on The Guardian, Aonach Mor, two men (both 21) overnighted in a ski-run storage hut and walked down next morning. Spotted by Nevis Range staff. Lochaber MRT and RAF Sea King. 55.
- MARCH 9** – Man (29) stumbled in snow-covered heather at Bealach Cumhann, Ben Alder and strained knee ligaments. One of two companions went for help. Airlift by RAF Sea King. 10.
- APRIL 14** – Walkers above Steall Bothy reported cries for help during snowstorm. Nothing found. Lochaber MRT. 33.
- APRIL 25** – Sponsored walker (27) lost faint track after separation from group of 100. She walked out to Kinlochleven from Luibeilt. Glencoe MRT. 20.
- APRIL 25** Ascending Sgurr a'Mhaim man (31) told two friends he would take more difficult route up a rocky outcrop and meet them above it, but he headed down towards Steall Hut. They searched for him then alerted Lochaber MRT and RAF Sea King. Meantime, he went to Stob Coire a'Chairn hoping to meet them as the original plan was anti-clockwise Ring of Steall. Self recovery. 35.
- MAY 16** – Morning descent of west slopes of Sgurr a'Mhaim by a party of four was complicated by mist. They strayed off the path on to steep ground. Man (22) fell 4m with head injury. One went for help thinking injury serious, but casualty came round. He was helped down by the others. Discharged from Belford after treatment for bruises, abrasions and seven-stitch scalp laceration. Lochaber MRT and RN Sea King. 28.
- MAY 29** – Guide on Carn Mor Dearg heard dog barks and whimpering from West Face Aonach Mor. Searches by Lochaber MRT and RN Sea King found nothing. 19.
- MAY 30** – Walker (71) slipped and sprained his ankle at Allt a'Chaorainn, Newtonmore. Airlift by RN Sea King. No medical treatment required. Cairngorm MRT. 10.
- JUNE 6** – Woman (23) got separated from her party of seven on Geal Charn, Drumochter. Reported lost she was found by passers-by and escorted off. Cairngorm MRT on standby. 15.

- JUNE 13 – With three companions at Loch na Lap, Corrour, woman (50) stumbled, fell a few feet and badly fractured her shin. Friend went for help. Airlift by RN Sea King, in the area for rescues on Ben Nevis, to Belford. Later transferred to Raigmore. 7.
- JULY 20 – (See August 30) Swinging on a rope swing near Steall Cottage, Glen Nevis, woman (20) fell and hurt her back. Stretchered to Belford by Lochaber MRT on a full body vacuum mat. 46.
- JULY 21 – Walking Ring of Steall from Glen Nevis, two men (26, 26) got lost on west slopes of Sgor an Iubhair and spent the night out. Self recovery before Lochaber MRT and RN Sea King search got underway in wind and rain. 34.
- JULY 30 – Member of outdoor education group (19) slipped when crossing river (Amhainn Rath) at Luibeilt Bothy, Loch Treig, injuring her ankle. Airlift by RAF Sea King. Glencoe MRT. 29.
- AUGUST 28 - Man (61) ascending Devil's Staircase from A82 above Glencoe suffered minor stroke. He recovered sufficiently to walk back to road with help. Later discharged from hospital. Glencoe MRT. 13.
- AUGUST 30 – (See July 20) Swinging on a rope swing near Steall Cottage, Glen Nevis, boy (14) lost grip and fell on his hands, breaking both wrists. Father alerted passer-by. Stretchered out by Lochaber MRT. 14.
- SEPTEMBER 20 - Roped pair of males had completed Swastika on Trilleachan Slabs in sunny weather. Second (37) moved 30m above leader on final belay up less steep ground without placing runners. He slipped on wet rock or gravel, falling back over cliff, landing on slab 30m below. Died instantly from head injuries (not wearing helmet). Lowered by Glencoe MRT to base of slabs and lifted by RN Sea King. 63.
- SEPTEMBER 26 - Descending from Carn Mor Dearg along arête towards Ben Nevis, walker (50) slipped on dry rock and pulled his knee. Alarm raised by passers by with mobile phone. Lochaber MRT lifted to area by RAF Sea King then stretchered casualty off hill. 89.
- SEPTEMBER 29 – Glencoe MRT traced walker (67) where he had gone to sleep after benightment on Glas Bheinn Mhor. 35.
- OCTOBER 20-21 – Spotted climbing Sgurr Eilde Mor from Coire an Lochain, a lone walker (68) got lost on summit, went down wrong side and failed to cross spate rivers. He was forced north during snowfall and darkness and was found south of Luibeilt. Taken to road by Kinloss team. Glencoe and Lochaber MRTs, RAF Sea King. 135.
- DECEMBER 28-29 – On Aonach an Nid Face of Aonach Mor, mountain guide demonstrating ice-axe arrest to six students triggered avalanche. After being buried for 14 hours three survivors (m45, f25, m24) were found and rescued by Lochaber MRT. They suffered minor injuries and hypothermia. Four others buried nearby and evacuated (m30, f29, m28, m28) died from asphyxia. Leuchars, Lochaber and Tweed Valley MRTs, SARDA, RAF Sea King. 472.
- DECEMBER 31 – Party of four at col east of Sgorr Dhearg, Beinn a' Bheithir. One glissaded and knocked off a man (26) who fell down north slopes into Coire Guibhsachain, sustaining bruises. Mobile phone alarm. Glencoe MRT prepared him for evacuation by RAF Sea King. 72.
- DECEMBER 3 - JANUARY 1 – After walking from Stob Ban to Sgurr a' Mhaim summit, descending a ridge of rock, snow and ice towards Glen Nevis with two companions, a man (38) had crampon problems. He removed them and continued along the ridge on all fours. He slipped and failed to self arrest with his ice-axe, falling 450m into the main gully of the north face of Sgurr a' Mhaim. Fatal. Found by Lochaber MRT. RAF Sea King. 161.



## CAIRNGORMS

**1997 late reports:** JULY 12-15 – After camping on Tom Dubh summit, carrying a heavy rucksack, student (20) descending into Glen Geusachan over boulders and heather slipped and broke her ankle. Two companions carried all rucksacks 4km to Corrou Bothy then went back for her. She had crawled some way downhill. They all bivvied and she was helped to Corrou next day for a third overnight. It was not known the injury was so serious. She was the most experienced and the effective leader. Next day swelling and discolouration increased and one went for help. Evacuated by all terrain vehicles. Braemar MRT. 15.

JULY 28 – Descending from Lochnagar by Glas Allt, (f49) was 150m from track at Loch Muick, when she slipped on tree roots on a steep part of the path breaking a tibia and fibula. Braemar MRT. 19.

SEPTEMBER – 9-11 Grampian Police MRT and RAF Sea King searched rim of An Garbh Choire, west of Angel's Peak when a rucksack was found and reported. A camper had left it there and gone off to another top. When he could not find the sack he went home. He phoned in when his wife heard of the incident on the radio. 92.

SEPTEMBER 25 – Almost a year after a successful hip replacement, and after seven months of progressive walking, a man (64) contoured Loch Muick and went up Glas Allt to above the waterfall. Descending Land-Rover track to Allt na Giubhsaich his hip socket fractured. Aid by Air Ambulance and airlift by RAF Sea King to hospital for eight weeks of traction hopefully without further surgery. 4.

SEPTEMBER 26 – Two drunken men climbed Craig Coinnich (538m) a rocky height at Braemar. One fell off and suffered bruised ribs. The other went for help but could not describe casualty location. Braemar MRT found and stretchered him out. 38.

NOVEMBER 30-December 1 Two men (both 54) were overdue returning to their car at Linn o' Dee from Beinn a' Chaorainn having been disorientated in Yellow Moss area. Self recovery but Braemar and Aberdeen MRTs and RAF Sea King called out. 318.

DECEMBER 30-31 – With no definite plans, three men (24, 23, 23) got lost in rain and mist SW of Loch Muick. At 10.30 next day they found the ponyman's hut at Broad Cairn/Sandy Hillock bealach. One suffered mild hypothermia so he was left at the hut while the others headed for Glen Muick. Passers-by found the cold one and attracted an RAF Sea King on search. All three airlifted. Aberdeen and Braemar MRTs. 222.

**1998:** JANUARY 1 – Descending icy path from Lochnagar near Meikle Pap col walker (31) slipped and pulled hip ligaments she had previously torn. Helped by companions to shelter and warmth at Allt-na-Giubhsaich. One of party tried to break lock of gate to drive up to house. Police rescued her and reported damage to Balmoral Estates. 2.

JANUARY 1-2 – A party of seven (males 52, 37, 23, 18 and females 27, 21, 5) did a local walk from Tomintoul expecting to reach Lynachork, Glen Avon 156189. Lost at dusk without a map they sheltered at Crag Loisgte Bothy, Glen Brown 124167. Rescuers found them at 03.00. Aberdeen and Braemar MRTs. 119.

JANUARY 2 – Male and female student pair overdue from climbing Milky Way, Coire an Lochain. Turned up at 20.40 as Cairngorm MRT began search. 4.

JANUARY 6-7 – Walker (26) strayed 50m from seven companions on Macdui Plateau and got lost without a compass. Survived 19 hours in shallow snowhole and group shelter unharmed till found 100m NW of Macdui summit by rescuers who

- walked him to Hutchison Hut. Braemar, Cairngorm and Kinloss MRTs, SARDA. Airlift by RAF Sea King. 312.
- JANUARY 10 – Tayside MRTs were just starting search for two local men (25, 23) with limited equipment (no map and compass) when they got down to Clova Hotel before midnight. They had been lost in mist for some time around Loch Brandy and Loch Wharal. 34.
- JANUARY 13 – Party of five on headwall of Coire Cas. (f26) without crampons/ice axe fell 100m on ice. Reached by Kasborer, but airlifted with double clavicle fracture and abrasions to face, back and hip areas by RAF Sea King. 20.
- JANUARY 16 – In a party of five climbing Hidden Chimney, Coire an-t' Sneachda, casualty (25) was belaying for others when he was struck on the back by a falling boulder. Glenmore Lodge MRT assisted him to the road suffering arm and facial injuries. 9.
- JANUARY 18 – Two snowboarders (m34, m33) last seen at foot of Coire na Ciste main tow turned up at 17.45, two hours late. Cairngorm MRT took no action.
- JANUARY 20-21 – After a climb in Coire an-t' Sneachda, male (32) walking in front of companion trying to find their way off the plateau in gale and snowfall, went through a cornice near Aladdin's Buttress. He fell 220m, landing in 2m deep soft snow sustaining severe bruising. Passer-by went for help. Stretched out by 05.30 by Cairngorm MRT. Meantime, companion helped off plateau by passer-by as she had been left without a map. 360.
- JANUARY 28-29 – False alarm. Lights reported from Hell's Lum. Nothing found. Cairngorm MRT. 18.
- JANUARY 29 – Party of 12 learning winter skills on Glas Maol and Creag Leacach were overdue because of late start, spending too long on skills and one twisted knee. GPol MRT. 2.
- JANUARY 31 – Female (20) twisted her ankle in Parallel Gully A, Lochnagar. She fell 2m but her crampon caught. Helped down to tent by three companions then stretched to Gelder Shiel by Aberdeen and Braemar MRTs. 180.
- JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 1 – Male (21) leading top pitch of The Corridor, Creagan a'Choire Etchachan, fell 5m, injuring an ankle. He allowed his partner to complete the route then he got up with assistance from the rope. After a night at Hutchison Hut he was helped to Derry Burn footbridge. Aberdeen MRT stretched him out. 56.
- FEBRUARY 1 – Two male climbers (34, 32) finishing The Escalator, Hell's Lum Crag reached easy slopes above the main climb and moved together still roped. Slope avalanched and they were swept 200m to the bottom. One had damage to L1 and 2 lumbar processes and fracture to top of hip. Other had L3 process fracture. Both had severe bruising but fortunately they had stayed on the surface of the avalanche debris. Cairngorm, Glenmore Lodge and Kinloss MRTs. Airlift by RAF Sea King.
- FEBRUARY 1 – Initial reports said that four people had been avalanched out of The Escalator. What really happened was that two climbers on Kiwi Gully fell out of the gully at the same time as the avalanche (12.45) and landed in the same locality as the avalanche casualties. Not badly injured they stayed around till 16.50 then quietly disappeared and remain unidentified.
- FEBRUARY 28 – Pair, climbing Route Major, Carn Etchachan, in thin conditions, were overdue but turned up at 23.35. Cairngorm MRT.
- MARCH 6-7 – Together climbing Aladdin route of Coire an-t' Sneachda, three men (51, 46, 35) got separated by weather and benightment on the plateau. As a pair and a single they dug in for the night and walked off next morning, Cairngorm, Kinloss and Leuchars MRTs and SARDA. 140.

- MARCH 6-7 – Climbing Savage Slit, Coire an Lochain, two men (29, 24) got benighted in the area in atrocious weather, dug in for the night and walked off next morning. Cairngorm, Kinloss and Leuchars MRTs and SARDA. 140.
- MARCH 8-9 - Two students (m25) attempted Broad Cairn, Lochnagar circuit in deep, soft snow, underestimated timing. At 15.00 one turned back, but other (no torch) did not get back to Clova till midnight. Both Tayside teams, SARDA, RAF Sea King. 56.
- MARCH 24-25 – Experienced walker (67) separated from his two companions and was overdue at Kilbo Path rendezvous. Slowed by old knee injury and loss of contact lens from one good eye. Found by RAF Sea King by torch signal from top of Craig Maud, Glen Doll. Both Tayside teams involved. 110.
- MARCH 28 - Descending rough part of Jock's Road near Creag Lungard, Glen Doll, schoolboy (14) in party of five tripped and damaged knee ligaments. Stretchered by Tayside MRT. 18.
- APRIL 14 – Trio (m 56, 25, f55) crossing Lairig Ghru from Linn o' Dee got delayed by heavy snowfall north of the top of the pass. Walked out unaided. Cairngorm MRT. 14.
- APRIL 23 – Housewife (35) walked into hills suffering depression. Found sitting on open ground by RAF Sea King near Craigs of Succoth, Glass, Huntly. Braemar and Kinloss MRTs. 33.
- MAY 1 – Leader of party of nine used mobile phone to alert Police Land-Rover which evacuated expedition member (18) from 4km north of Derry Lodge. He was detained for a day in hospital suffering abdominal pains. 5.
- MAY 2-4 – Male (55) overdue at Coylumbridge doing Munros in area of Lairig Ghru. Searches by Cairngorm and Kinloss MRTs and SARDA. Found by RAF Sea King on third morning suffering mild hypothermia near Coylumbridge. Leuchars stood down *en route*. 532.
- MAY 17 – Man (36) separated from party and got cragfast on sea cliffs to escape tide at Cullykhan Bay, Pennan, Banffshire. Lowered by HM Coastguard for airlift by RAF Sea King.
- MAY 24 - A poor belay contributed to a fall on Craig a' Barns, Dunkeld. Roped climber (m29) sustained chest and arm injuries. Stretchered by Taypol SRU. 4.
- MAY 24-25 – A rope of 2 students (m26, f26) went off route on Mousetrapp, Creag an Dubh Loch, got benighted, then extricated themselves unharmed. Braemar MRT and RAF Sea King. 71.
- JUNE 7 – RAF Sea King airlifted cragfast woman (17) from sea cliffs at Tarlair, Macduff. RNLI inshore lifeboat also involved.
- JUNE 16 – Walker (64) overdue from Lochnagar despite being in regular contact with a ranger by mobile phone. He took unintended track to Glas Allt Falls, then retraced to Allt-na-Giubhsaich track. Search by Grampian Police vehicle. 3.
- JUNE 20 – Fording Derry Burn at Derry Lodge, (f33) slipped on a stone tearing groin muscles in both legs. She continued a little way (sponsored Lairig Ghru walk) but was airlifted by RAF Sea King to Raigmore. 5.
- JUNE 21 – Student (21) twisted her ankle at 750m descending Sron Riach Ridge from Ben Macdui, but managed to continue to Luibeg track. Grampian Police 4WD. 2.
- JUNE 23 – Male (23) injured his spine abseiling late at night at Craig a' Barns, Dunkeld. Poor belay. Cliff lower and stretcher carry by Taypol SRU. 10.
- JUNE 27 – Family group of four males (73, 53, 16, 11) exhausted at Derry Lodge after walking Lairig Ghru from Coylumbridge. Another incident at Linn o' Dee caused confused messages, so Braemar MRT was called out. 8.

- JULY 2 – Roped climber (26) in party of four on Warfarin, Craig a' Barns, Dunkeld, injured his leg. stretcher carry by Taypol SRU and Ambulance Service.
- JULY 6-7 – On an award hike, pupil (17) slipped at Pools of Dee causing sprained ankle aggravating a previous injury. She was able to walk to camp near Corrour Bothy and was evacuated by Braemar MRT next day. 12.
- JULY 6-7 – Another pupil (17) in the same award hike group (see previous incident) also slipped at Pools of Dee very shortly afterwards. She also got to camp near Corrour and was evacuated by Braemar MRT with an ankle sprain. 12.
- JULY 6-7 – Exhausted man (76) rescued from near The Saddle (Loch Avon) by RAF Sea King. Cairngorm MRT. Callout at 09.00. 9.
- JULY 9 – HM Coastguard auxiliary teams helped in recovery of cragfast boy (9) from sea cliffs at Newtonhill, south of Aberdeen.
- JULY 13 – Doctor (38) reported more than three hours overdue from round of four Cairngorm 4000ft peaks turned up having taken almost 16 hours, a reasonable time. Cngm. MRT.
- JULY 17 – Walker (28) sprained or fractured ankle crossing River Feshie. Cairngorm MRT found him with companion on road near Achlean. RAF Sea King had been called because of wrong MF. placing casualty on hill. 10.
- JULY 25-26 – Having crossed Ben Avon and Beinn a' Bhuidr in cloud, two females (47, 46) got lost descending South Top and were benighted in Glen Quoich. Found uninjured by RAF Sea King before 06.00. Braemar MRT. 33.
- JULY 30 – All members of a group of 30 walking Jock's Road from Clova to Callater were allowed to walk at their own pace, checking in at RVs. A man (45) with no navigation gear was missing at Crow Craigies, but he managed to find his own way back to Braedownie, Glen Clova. Braemar MRT. 15.
- JULY 31 – Doing a round of Derry Lodge and White Bridge from Inverey, (m46) fell. This caused an ankle twist but he carried on. A second fall near Luibeg Bridge fractured the ankle. Both he and his wife stayed there and got very cold, although helped by a passer-by who gave both of them bivvy bags and food. Braemar MRT reached them seven hours after the fracture. Stretchered out. 22.
- AUGUST 4 – RAF Sea King airlifted man (53) cragfast at Tronach Head, between Findochty and Portknockie. HM Coastguard units and Buckie RNLI lifeboat.
- AUGUST 18 – HM Coastguard units rescued cragfast male (16) from cliffs at Lunan Bay, Montrose.
- AUGUST 19 – Schoolboy (15) had been on campsite for three weeks, borrowed waterproofs, map, compass and whistle, then set off for Macdui at 10.30. Reported missing by gear lender. Cairngorm MRT and SARDA assembled, but despite mist he turned up at 22.45. 13.
- AUGUST 22 – Man (43) killed by fall from gravel path 25cm wide with sheer sea cliffs of 45m either side at Bullers of Buchan, Aberdeenshire. He had heard there was a stranded sheep. His wife stopped when path got narrow. He carried on till he could go no farther and was returning at his wife's call when he slipped. HM coastguard, Peterhead lifeboat.
- AUGUST 28-29 – Cairngorm MRT alerted for party of three overdue at Cairngorm Carpark from Carn a' Mhaim. Turned up just after midnight.
- SEPTEMBER 6 – Man (68) died of a stroke when with a party of 20 on Glas Tulaichean. Stretcher carry by Tayside teams. 252.
- SEPTEMBER 10-11 – Two overdue from Lairig Ghru arrived safe next morning. Cairngorm MRT. 2.
- SEPTEMBER 12 – Descending Lochnagar path in snow and mist a woman (30) stumbled near Foxes Wells below Meikle Pap, twisting a hip. Companion used

- mobile phone. Directed by Grampian Police to walk to Land-Rover track unaided, then lifted to car. 2.
- SEPTEMBER 13-14 – After a suicide note was found in a car at forest walks near Banchory, searches were made by Aberdeen and Braemar MRTs, SARDA and RAF Sea King. Man (55) was found on Hill of Tillylair, 1.5 km into woods, by search dog and taken to hospital suffering suspected overdose. 392.
- SEPTEMBER 20 – After climbing all day helmeted and roped, student (18) scrambled, unroped with no helmet, up slopes of Red Craig, Glen Clova, to watch others of his party of 30 rock climbing. He slipped and fell. Evacuation by Tayside teams and RAF Sea King but he died in hospital. 54.
- SEPTEMBER 20 – Ascending Coire Raibeirt after a night at Loch Avon, father and son (9) took up the rear of a party of eight. Person at front dislodged a rock which struck the son on the back of his head, cutting it. Members of party climbed to plateau to obtain good communications using a mobile phone. Airlift by RAF Sea King. 8.
- OCTOBER 18 – Patient (34) suffering depression went missing in dense woodland near Crathie. She was found by a SARDA dog half submerged in a drainage ditch suffering disorientation and hypothermia. Airlift by RAF Sea King. Braemar MRT. 45.
- OCTOBER 19 – Walking with his wife in wind and sleet up the path to Loch Callater, Braemar, man (74) died instantly. Well equipped for the weather they had walked 1km up a gentle incline. He had a heart by-pass 10 years ago. Grampian Police. 2.
- OCTOBER 25-26 – Three young men were in trouble in bad weather near Shelter Stone, Loch Avon. The youngest (17) was soaking and hypothermic. He was succoured by two hillwalkers, with hot food, dry clothing, sleeping bag and tent space. He was left with his two companions in the hillwalkers' tent. They then undertook a night walk via Strath Nethy to Glenmore Lodge to alert rescuers. RAF Sea King airlifted him, dropping casualty and three Cairngorm MRT at Glenmore Lodge by 03.30 hours. 24.
- OCTOBER 26-27 – Using only a guidebook diagram, father (42) and son (12) with three dogs got lost on north side of Lairig Ghru. Although intending to stay on Glenmore side of range they walked through to Carn a' Mhaim shoulder and were found in bad weather by SARDA and Braemar MRT, Cairngorm MRT. 387.
- NOVEMBER 1 – With no torches and poor clothing, woman (64) and man (59) attempted a waymarked low-level walk of 12km from Mar Lodge to Invercauld Bridge, Braemar. Overdue, eight hours later, they were found by Grampian Police MRT still 4.5km west of their objective. Although they had a photocopied map and good weather, the delay was caused by inability to navigate. 3.
- NOVEMBER 8-9 – Near Clachnaben, Glen Dye, Banchory, a couple (36, 35) were lost between Charr Bothy and Creaganducy Hill throughout a windy night. RAF Sea King, Braemar MRT.
- NOVEMBER 8-9 – Party of two reported at 09.00 on 9th in trouble in Fiacaill Couloir of Cairn Lochan. Cragfast on route from previous day. Cairngorm MRT.
- NOVEMBER 18 – Three men, not all equipped with torches, were benighted returning to Linn o' Dee carpark from Macdui area, not having planned for short daylight. Got themselves down before midnight. Grampian Police MRT. 4.
- NOVEMBER 18-19 – Delayed by others ahead of them, a roped pair (m34, f30) ice climbing Jacob's Ladder, Coire an t-Sneachda were cragfast overnight. Too weakened by cold to climb next day, alarm was raised by another climber. Winched by RAF Sea King during a weather window. Cairngorm MRT. 31.

NOVEMBER 24-27 – A man (23) equipped with tent, sleeping bag, spare clothing, ice axe, rope, harness etc. camped near Shelter Stone one night, then north of Macdui next night. On third day, trying to get to Macdui summit his map blew away. He had a compass and GPS but without a map did not know which direction to go off the mountain in cloud. He dialled 999 twice on his mobile phone and was connected with Grampian Police, then Tayside Police. However, he could not be contacted with directions because he turned off the phone to conserve battery. His phone was pay-as-you-talk which had not been paid. Phone company gave him two-day credit but there was still no reply. After being buffeted in his bivvy bag by strong winds for four hours he went down to Loch Etchachan but he slipped on rocks and fell in the loch. He got out, went to north of loch, changed into some dry clothes, pitched his tent and camped a third night. On 27th he walked north towards Loch Avon and was found by RAF Sea King. Overnight there had been a full-scale search involving helicopter and SARDA, Aberdeen, Braemar, Cairngorm and Grampian Police MRTs. 987.

DECEMBER 5 – Walker damaged knee tendons but carried on for two hours till unable. Evacuated from Glen Einich by Cairngorm MRT using fwd vehicle. 10.

DECEMBER 5 – Solo walker (22) avalanched in Coire Raibeirt, Cairngorm, fell 125m with facial cuts and limb bruises. Three passers-by heard his shouts and tented him. One went for help. Cairngorm MRT and RAF Sea King. 76.

DECEMBER 20-21 – Three men (53, 20, 19) overdue on Macdhuì got down to police vehicle at Derry Lodge at 01.10 hours but did not know which route they had descended from summit. 10.

DECEMBER 26-27 – Tayside MRT deployed after car reported in Glen Clova in atrocious weather. Couple had intended to do two Munros but had trouble with car and found bed in closed youth hostel. False alarm. 35.

DECEMBER 28 – ‘Abandoned’ tent reported on plateau between Cairn Lochan and Lurchers. Checked out by local climbers/rescuers. Owner claimed it next day.

DECEMBER 29 – At 18.15 hours a pair of inexperienced walkers reported two people in distress on Cairngorm Plateau. They turned up OK an hour later. Cairngorm MRT.

## SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

JANUARY 10 – Rescuer (29) on exercise was descending into a burn 1.4km north of Ben More summit, Crianlarich when a rock gave way. He fell 1.5m striking his head on rocky opposite side of burn bed. He sustained six-stitch scalp wound, slight compression to C spine and bruised knee. Winched by RN Sea King. Leuchars MRT (on scene). 14.

JANUARY 15 – False alarm. HM Coastguard searched Beinn Ghuilean, Kintyre, on report of white light flashing on summit. Nothing found. 39.

JANUARY 16-17 – Solo walker (50) with limited mountain experience and suffering a heart defect changed his plans. Teams searched Ben Oss, but distress whistles and shouts were reported on Ben Lui where he was found cold, but uninjured, cragfast on ENE Ridge. Lowered down crag then escorted down to airlift by HMS Gannet helicopter. Killin, Leuchars, SARDA. Rewarming aids used. 660.

JANUARY 17-18 – Three men (47, 47, 41) left Inverarnan at 11.30 to climb Beinn Chabhair. Due to wet weather turned back before summit, but were very slow and got benighted. Attempting river crossing in dark one got swept downstream but gained bank. Reached hotel 22.30 but informed no-one till 09.30. Police

searched hill and main roads after the three were reported missing at 05.45. Killin MRT on standby.

JANUARY 21-22 – In a party of one man and three dogs, Spikey a Jack Russell terrier bitch (12) occupation – ratter, failed to jump across a rock fissure on A'Chrois, and was lost by her shepherd-owner during gathering. Arrochar MRT descended 39m vainly because fissure continued too small for men. Shepherd returned and heard barking so second team mobilised and eventually retrieved Spikey, alive but in shock having fallen 42m.

JANUARY 25 – Woman (32) in party of 11 on SE Ridge, Creag Mhor, Glen Lochay slipped on ice and snow and fractured her left ankle. Airlift by RAF Sea King. Killin MRT. 8.

JANUARY 25 – Two climbers attempting West Gully, Beinn Udlaidh in calm freezing conditions retreated from 6m up it at 14.15. Abseil piton held for first descender, but failed for the second who got probable spinal injuries. Airlifted about 17.00 by RN Sea King. Arrochar MRT. 44.

JANUARY 25 – Male (26) in party of three descending gully between Beinn an Dothaid and Beinn Achaladair at night (20.53 hours) slipped and got leg injury. Winched by RAF Sea King. Strathclyde Police MRT.

FEBRUARY 15 – Woman (62) in a party of at least six, slipped on the Law, Ochil Hills fracturing tibia and fibula in three places. Stretcher carry by Ochils MRT. 29.

FEBRUARY 20 – Walker (28) with three others searching wet forest at night to find Glen Loin caves, slipped and damaged his knee. Stretchered out by Arrochar MRT. 30.

MARCH 7 – Two men (56, 55) separated from six others walking on Ben Oss, Beinn Dubhchraig. When others returned to tents, pair were missing. They turned up later, overdue from poor navigation. Killin MRT. 3.

MARCH 15 – Killin and Leuchars teams were on night exercise using searchlight at Loch Dochart. Hoaxer went up Ben More and flashed a light to try to get rescuers to go up to find him. MRTs did not respond. 9.

MARCH 24 – Descending S. Ridge, Cobbler, walker (56) slipped injuring her leg. Helped down part way by partner who then went for help. Stretchered by Arrochar MRT. 42.

APRIL 10 – Man (25) descending NW Ridge, Beinn Dubhchraig, using walking poles, stumbled and fell to ground fracturing his lower leg. With two companions during snow and strong wind. Killin MRT, RN Sea King. 18.

APRIL 21 – SARDA searched dense woods at Todholes Farm for two boys (11, 10) who had run off, tired, wet and hungry, after climbing Meikle Bin (570m), Carron Valley Reservoir, Fintry. They walked out OK. 20.

APRIL 26 – Man, in party of two, fell from S. Peak, Cobbler. Alarm raised by mobile phone. RAF Sea King on exercise with Glencoe MRT aboard diverted and airlifted casualty who sustained head, pelvic and abdominal injuries. Arrochar and Strathclyde Pol MRTs. 8.

MAY 4 – Walker (57) descending south side An Caisteal fell sustaining open femur fracture and serious head injury. Airlift by RAF Sea King and Killin MRT but he died shortly after admission to hospital. 104.

MAY 16 – Paraglider (38) on tuition holiday lost control taking off from Ochil Hills, near Myreton Hill. He injured a leg and was stretchered to a 4WD vehicle by Ochils MRT. 34.

MAY 17 – Unroped climber (46) fell from The Gendarme on the Whangie, Kilpatrick Hills, when setting up a top rope for his partner. Severe injuries were

- saved from being worse because he was wearing a helmet. Ochils MRT (on site) 6.
- MAY 19 – Man (66) collapsed near summit of Beinn Dorain. Airlift by RN Sea King to Vale of Leven Hospital, but he had died from a heart attack. Strathclyde Police MRT. 17.
- JUNE 3 – Two cragfast persons rescued from sea cliff at Elie, Fife. HM Coastguard.
- JUNE 7 – Taypol SRU stretchered fallen walker (f32) from Schiehallion in bad weather, suffering leg injuries. Carried to winching point by RN Sea King. 28.
- JUNE 13 – RAF Sea King winched fallen walker (54) from NE Ridge, An Stuc, Ben Lawers. He had head, chest leg injuries. 8.
- JUNE 14 – Female in Duke of Edinburgh group slipped on path in good weather in Glen Donich, fracturing her ankle. Stretchered out by staff of Scout Activity Centre.
- JUNE 21 – Four scouts on challenge hike in Ochils area missing after last checkpoint. Found on road by Ochils MRT about seven hours overdue. 13.
- JUNE 29 – Lost looking for alpine flowers in Coire Heasgairnich of Beinn Heasgairnich, man (68) followed burn down into Glen Lochay, then track back to his start point. Killin MRT. 2.
- JUNE 30 – Six girls (c18) on award hike, last seen at Glashoile, Loch Katrine, went too high above Bealach nam Bo, struggling round steep slopes on Ben Venue. Walked into camp at 23.00. Killin MRT. 11.
- JULY 8-9 – Killin MRT stretchered pupil (12) down from remote scout camp west of Tarmachan Range, Glen Lochay. He had suspected cold trauma but was discharged after hospital check. 46.
- JULY 18 – Mountain biker (52) injured his head and chest on a track near the head of Loch Turret Reservoir, Crieff. Airlift by RAF Sea King. 8.
- AUGUST 6-7 – Search by Arrochar MRT for dog, Fudge, lost during wet weather in thick forest and crags of Glen Goil. Dog was passed but had not barked. Found by owner on crag next day. 15.
- AUGUST 9 – Minnie, a Jack Russell terrier, walking with her owner, slipped down a slope to the river in Dollar Glen. Lifted out in a rucksack by Ochils MRT. 6.
- AUGUST 11-12 – Killin MRT, five SARDA dogs and RN Sea King searched NE slopes of Ben More, Crianlarich for four inexperienced men (35, 34, 33, 16) lost overnight in mist and rain. The men spotted a dog upwind of them above the treeline. They followed him and alerted his handler. Airlifted, cold, wet but uninjured. 98.
- AUGUST 22-23 – Separated from two companions, woman (51) hurt ankle descending An Caisteal and got benighted. Found next morning by Killin MRT search on north slopes Stob Glas and airlifted by RN Sea King. No hospital treatment required. Lomond MRT and SARDA stood by. 236.
- AUGUST 23 – Attempting to reach Cruach Ardtrain by a very muddy forest path from Crianlarich, man (24) tripped and fell, breaking a wrist. Killin MRT did first aid and friends escorted him to hospital. 1.
- SEPTEMBER 17-18 – Biker (57) attempting circuit of Loch Katrine was unequipped for cliffs at water's edge. At dark he stopped for the night. Killin MRT got him out by boat at 01.00. 8.
- SEPTEMBER 26-27 – Having lost a compass, pair (m73, f48) were delayed in mist on the plateau of Meall Glas, Glen Dochart, and were reported adrift by a companion who had turned back. They turned up OK at 05.10. Overnight searches by 21 of Killin MRT. 158.



SEPTEMBER 26-27 – Lost in rain, wind, mist and darkness on Beinn Dorain, a couple (m61, f27) were found by Strathclyde Police MRT and escorted to Bridge of Orchy overnight. 68.

OCTOBER 1 – Cragfast person rescued from sea cliff at Kirkcaldy, Fife. HM Coastguard.

OCTOBER 10-11 – A car parked below Ben Ledi caused police inquiries which could not rule out an accident. Killin MRT and SARDA searched in sleet, rain and strong wind finding a couple (f30, m27) who said they planned to stay out overnight but left no route card. 44.

OCTOBER 13 – Ochils MRT searched for two schoolboys (16, 13) camping overnight in rain and gale in Alva Glen. They turned up OK but it was thought they had been at Balquharn Dam, 2km distant. 5.

OCTOBER 16 – Male shepherd returning from tending his sheep was crossing a small bridge which was carried away due to heavy rain. Wind was ESE near gale and visibility poor. Doctor pronounced him dead on bank of burn 5km inland from Southend, Kintyre as Southend Coastguards arrived. Airlift to Machrihanish. 15.

OCTOBER 21 – Three men (31, 24, 17) canyoning down a fast river through Devil's Pulpit (Carnock Burn at Finnich Glen) were impeded by a fallen tree. Stuck down the steep 20m gorge they were rescued by Lomond MRT abseilers who attached harnesses and hoisted them. Suffering abrasions they were cleared by ambulance men. RN Sea King stood by in case of hypothermia. Central Police Underwater Team. 40.

OCTOBER 26-27 – Solo walker (55) with inadequate torch and waterproofs got benighted in deteriorating weather on forested hills to north of Inversnaid. He had not allowed for clocks going back previous night. He got down to West Highland Way at Loch Lomond and stayed put. Found by teams in small hours. Killin and Lomond. 35.

NOVEMBER 16-17 – Wife carried on walking and got lost when husband stopped to put on knee brace to descend from Ben Venue summit. She wandered down north side and got stuck on steep ground with no equipment. Husband returned down Ledard path, the route they had ascended. Unsuccessful night search in freezing but good weather by Killin and Lomond MRTs and SARDA. RN and RAF Sea Kings. She would have been found if she had a torch. Found uninjured next day by crag search. MRT spotted her red hat using binoculars. 290.

NOVEMBER 16-17 – Starting from Callander, man (59) underestimated time to walk up Ben Vorlich (L. Earn). He found shelter till daylight then was found very cold by helicopter. The aircraft was able to search above cloud due to a temperature inversion. Killin and Tayside MRTs, SARDA. 29.

NOVEMBER 17 – Walker (52) descending Ben Ledi path alone slipped on icy rocks breaking her ankle. RN Sea King dropped first-aiders but could not evacuate casualty. Stretchered by Killin MRT. 30.

DECEMBER 28-29 – After traversing Ben Oss and Beinn Dhubhraig, man without crampons (34) and dog, were both slipping on ice descending. Several routes were attempted vainly, then they sheltered and set off down at first light. Spotted by Killin MRT and RN Sea King. Man and dog walked off. RAF Leuchars MRT. 160.

DECEMBER 29 – Descending the North Ridge path of Ben Vorlich (L. Earn) in snow and ice, a man (51) without crampons slipped and lost his axe as he fell 150m. Sustaining head and chest injuries, he was stretchered by Killin MRT then winched by RAF Sea King. Both Tayside teams involved. 214.

## SKYE

- APRIL 4-5 – Party of seven descended Inaccessible Pinnacle then took a wrong bearing. Two went down leaving five cragfast overnight on icy rock on Coruisk side of the pinnacle. Winched by RAF Sea King. Skye MRT. 295.
- APRIL 2 – Men (34, 32) and a woman (32) underestimated time required and severity of a roped rock climb (VD) in Harta Corrie. No route plan was left, resulting in an extensive search by Skye MRT. Airlift HMCG helicopter. 159.
- MAY 15 – Experienced member (43) left his party on Dubhs Ridge to find alternative route, but could not find way back to other seven. They descended, reported him missing, but he got down OK. Skye MRT. 1.
- MAY 29 – Walker (57) slipped on sand and gravel path, falling awkwardly and breaking her leg. Found by passer-by near the Old Man of Storr. Skye MRT and Ambulance Service. Winched by HMCG helicopter. 11.
- JUNE 1-2 – One of a pair (f39, m38) got cragfast and was freed by the other, probably in the upper part of Eastern Gully, Sron na Ciche. Then physically and mentally fatigued they were unable to complete route, using whistle and orange bag to raise alarm. Skye MRT and airlift by RAF Sea King. 29.
- JUNE 1-2 – Two pairs climbed Fiaclan Dearg on west of Marsco. Unroped pair took route on south side and were delayed. Pair who had climbed farther north route and descended thought the others were cragfast and raised alarm. RAF Rescue 137 Sea King found them benighted on Marso summit and winched them off. 23.
- JUNE 2-3 – One of seven in Eastern Gully, Sron na Ciche, on Left Edge Route upper Cioch Buttress, roped male (25) fell 10m on to feet when 70m up route, injuring both legs. HMCG helicopter and Skye MRT. Winched by RAF Sea King. 159.
- JUNE 4 – Doing the Ridge and traversing An Stac with three companions, a man (41) was struck by a rock dislodged by another. He fell 6m which caused broken wrist and ribs. Stretcher lowered by Skye MRT to airlift by HMCG. 68.
- JUNE 16 – Man (33) climbed gully thinking it would get him to the Quiraing Table. He got cragfast. Passer-by contacted Police on mobile phone. He was talked down by Skye MRT. 19.
- JUNE 20 – Man (50) left behind by 13 companions on Am Basteir in good weather. Seen OK well off route on steep loose ground. Found by passer-by with head, chest and arm injuries, abrasions and bruising. Flown by RN Sea King to Glasgow Southern General Hospital. Skye MRT. 18.
- JUNE 26 – Walking in party of four near col of Sgurr nan Each/Clach Glas. Rocks gave way under man (32) who fell 18m with facial lacerations and ankle fracture. Winched by RAF Sea King. Kintail and Skye teams assembled. 32
- JULY 1 – Descending through forestry below the Storr, woman (33) slipped, landed heavily and broke her ankle. Winched by HMCG helicopter for treatment at Broadford. Skye MRT. 16.
- JULY 7 – Descending in good weather through forestry below the Storr, woman slipped and broke her ankle on rocky path. Airlifted by HMCG helicopter to Broadford. 11.
- JULY 28 – Using tourist guide as a map five lads (all 17) thought they had climbed Inaccessible Pinnacle, but mistakenly descended from the Main Ridge on the Coruisk side in mist, rain and wind. Three stronger ones walked round. Other two winched from Coruisk area by HMCG helicopter. Skye MRT. 67.
- AUGUST 8 – Woman (55) in a party of 24 descending path from Old Man of Storr, went over her ankle, breaking it. Skye MRT and HMCG helicopter. 25.
- AUGUST 12 – False alarm. Climber reported whistle blasts from Sgurr a' Bhasteir. Skye MRT thought it would be single piping of a golden plover, but search was made to ensure no person in trouble. 21.

- AUGUST 20 – Housewife (58) slipped on wet grass on Quiraing Tourist Path injuring an ankle. Helped by passers-by then taken to hospital by husband. Skye MRT. 11.
- AUGUST 30 – Poor navigation in good weather led to five novices finding themselves in very difficult ground between Sgurr Alasdair and Sgurr Sgumain. Man (28) fell 25m with head, back, arm and punctured lung injuries. Winched by RAF Sea King. Skye MRT. 56.
- AUGUST 30 – Woman (23) got cragfast on Sron Mhor, Talisker Bay. Companion went for help. Two coastguards walked her to the summit after nightfall and she was airlifted by HMCG helicopter. 42.
- SEPTEMBER 24-25 – Extensive search by Skye MRT and RAF Sea King when distress shouts from a male person were reported from Meall Odhar of Sgurr a' Bhasteir. Nothing found and no-one overdue. 80.
- OCTOBER 4 – Walker (26) in riding boots, inadequately clad and unequipped, underestimated time and difficulty of walk from Loch na Dal to Kylerhea. In rain and wind she had river-crossing problems and got lost and exhausted trying to descend woodland in darkness. Used mobile phone repeatedly. She was eventually found by Skye MRT less than 2km from start point at Kinloch Lodge. 34.
- OCTOBER 7-8 – Crofters answered a flashing light signal from near the Prison, Quiraing. They got a response to their reply and searched. Their later shouts were not answered so Skye MRT were involved. A US national was found bivouacking in a cave. He was left there because he did not wish to be rescued. 66.
- OCTOBER 8 – Wife (45) slipped on loose ground on Quiraing Tourist Path and fell 9m into a gorge sustaining head injuries. HMCG helicopter airlift. 8.
- OCTOBER 8 – Husband (45) went to the rescue of his wife after the previous incident. He slid down the slope but also fell into the gorge with minor injuries. Passer-by called Police and Ambulance Service. Winched by HMCG helicopter. 8.
- OCTOBER 27 – Walker (39) slid on Old Man of Storr path, breaking her ankle in freezing hail and rain during a gale. Aided by others she descended till pain became excessive. Then she was stretchered by Skye MRT. 16.

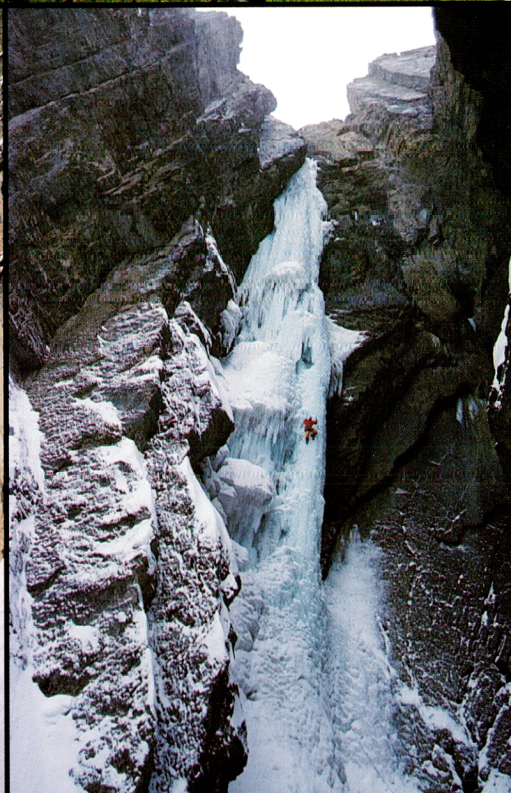
### ISLANDS OTHER THAN SKYE

- FEBRUARY 9 – Missing female at Back, Lewis. HMCG helicopter.
- APRIL 10 – Missing person on South Harris. HMCG helicopter.
- APRIL 16 – Schoolboy (16) cragfast and suffering hypothermia on A'Chir Ridge, Arran in conditions of icy rock. Arran MRT. Winched by RN Sea King. 28.
- APRIL 29 – HM Coastguard searched for angler (68) overdue from Loch Gorm, Islay. He got back late but OK. 4.
- APRIL 26 – Climbers returning from Cir Mhor, Arran, jumped into Rosa Burn to cool off. Student (20) did not realise shallowness and broke his ankle. Stretchered by Arran MRT. 13.
- MAY 5 – While wife visited Cathedral Cave, Eigg, spouse (53) climbed rocks near it. Foothold gave way and he fell 4m shattering teeth and fracturing pelvis. Mobile phone used for HMCG helicopter airlift to Belford Hospital. 13.
- MAY 29 – Missing person at Ness, Lewis. HMCG helicopter.
- JUNE 8 – Hermaness Nature Reserve, Unst, Shetland. Walker broke ankle 3km from nearest road. HMCG helicopter.
- JUNE 20-21 – Walker (f33) on Ronas Hill, Shetland was reported overdue by another walker worried about mist, but the west side of the hill where she had been was mist free and she wanted to see midsummer sunset. Walked out unhurt. Northern Constabulary, HMCG Auxiliaries. 54.
- JUNE 26 – Angler with broken leg at Loch Langahat, Lewis. HMCG helicopter.
- JULY 26 – Missing person at Scaliscro Estate, North Harris. HMCG helicopter.

*Lofoten: View from below the ridge from the Budalstinden to summit of Vagakallen. Photo: Derek Fabian.*  
*(Left): Canadian ice fall climbing. Alan Kerr on 'Kemosabe' (Canadian Grade III,4), Naiparous Creek in the Ghost Valley area north of Calgary. Photo: Peter Stewart.*

*Whiteman Falls (Canadian Grade IV,6), Opal Creek, Kananaskis, Canmore.. Photo: David Ritchie.*

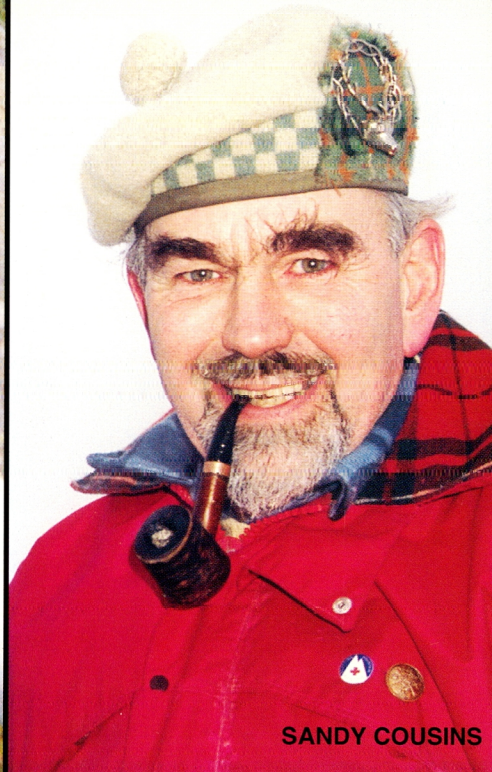








TREVOR RANSLEY



SANDY COUSINS



JIM DONALDSON



ROSS HIGGINS

- AUGUST 7 – Reported missing after separation from companion in mist on Stacach Ridge, Goat Fell, (m57) was found at ferry terminal. Arran MRT. 12.
- AUGUST 12 – Injured angler airlifted by HMCG at Loch Langavat, Lewis.
- AUGUST 15 – Person over cliffs airlifted by HMCG at Aird Uig, Lewis.
- SEPTEMBER 13 – HM Coastguard assembled in Jura to search for two hillwalkers overdue. They were spotted descending. 13.
- SEPTEMBER 14 – Male (43) and female (42) waymarking and painting a new tourist route from Bosta to Tobson, Great Bernera, Lewis were overdue. They walked out uninjured. HMCG helicopter.

## SOUTHERN UPLANDS

- MARCH 28-29 – All four S. Uplands MRTs and SARDA searched forests of Ewesdown Fell, Megget Water for lost deerstalker (29). He was found exhausted next day and evacuated by RAF helicopter. No compass, spare clothing or food. 272.
- MAY 31 – Borders SARU, Tweed Valley MRT and SARDA searched Pentland Hills for five lost children from a group of 10 on Duke of Edinburgh gold award hike. They had waited in tents for rescue. Found by RAF Sea King. 25.
- JUNE 20 – Walker (52) descending Craiglee, Glen Trool, found the going too difficult. Her husband went for help. Meantime, passers-by strapped up knee and ankle and helped her to their car. Galloway MRT. 6.
- JULY 1 – Two men (25, 23) ahead of schedule on 234km boundary charity walk in Galloway Hills heard on local radio that they were missing – so they phoned in. Galloway MRT on standby.
- AUGUST 15 – Cragfast person rescued from sea cliff at Peace Bay, Berwickshire. HM Coastguard.
- AUGUST 17 – Cragfast person rescued from sea cliff at Eyemouth, Berwickshire. HM Coastguard.
- AUGUST 22-23 – Competitor (45) in 32km Rings of Fire event in Galloway Hills got tired. He failed to check in at the Sluice of Loch Enoch and was found in Newton Stewart. Galloway MRT and SARDA. 63.
- SEPTEMBER 26 – Fell runner found well off route, cold but uninjured by Moffat MRT providing safety cover for hill race. 40.
- OCTOBER 20-21 – Walking Southern Upland Way alone in storm conditions a man (75) was unable to ford a spate burn in the dark. He survived the night in a bivvy bag in a wood at Loch of the Lowes (near Tibbie Shiels Inn) and walked out next day. His luggage (containing heart medication) had gone ahead by bus so he only carried a day bag. Tweed Valley and Borders MRTs, Moffat MRU and SARDA, RAF Sea King. 347.

## NON MOUNTAINEERING

- Late report:** JULY 18-21, 1997 – Grampian Police, Braemar and Aberdeen MRTs searched Bedford/Powis area of Aberdeen for body of a murdered child (9). A man was arrested and the body of the child was recovered by police after the arrest. 973.
- Late report: (1997 incident).** JANUARY 4-5, 1998 – Searches of Aberfoyle woods by four SARDA dogs, Strathclyde, Central Scotland police and police helicopter for couple (both 38) missing since December 18, 1997. Subsequent find in a grave in Ayrshire led to murder inquiry. 67.
- JANUARY 7-September 4, 1998 – Searches by Ochils MRT and SARDA on January 8-9 for prison officer (38) missing near Alloa. He had been receiving treatment

- for depression. His body was found hanging in overgrown woods near Stirling Castle on September 4, 1998.
- JANUARY 16 – Search of woodlands on edge of Sheriff Muir, Dunblane, for woman (69) missing from retirement home. She was found OK but cold. Police and RN helicopter and SARDA. Rewarming aids used. 56
- JANUARY 20 – Positive find by SARDA. Two dogs were used in search for two men (90, 74) missing from nursing home in Croftamie. Police helicopter. Lomond MRT. Both men had been stuck in a gully; one having slipped and fallen, the other having slithered to help him. 22.
- JANUARY 21-22 – Arrochar and Strathclyde Police MRTs, SARDA and RN Sea King searched North Kintyre for rescue beacon picked up by satellite. It moved at each satellite pass. Teams stood down when told beacon could be anywhere in 25km radius. Eventually, a detector traced beacon to a yacht in Tarbert Harbour. 241.
- FEBRUARY 2 – Search by Tweed Valley MRT and SARDA of hospital grounds for two people (m80, f78) suffering dementia, ill-clad for weather. Found in locked-off part of building more than four hours after last seen. Staff heard noises and they were seen on security video. Checks by staff and doctor. 45.
- FEBRUARY 16 – Tweed Valley MRT searched woodland, river and housing for depressed woman (29) with tablets. She returned OK, but wet and cold. 33.
- FEBRUARY 19 – Successful SARDA two-dog search for diabetic youth (18) who had drunk alcohol. He was found semi-conscious and hypothermic by dog in dense woodland in Falkirk. 17.
- FEBRUARY 24 – SARDA *en route* to search woods for girl (13) missing near Bannockburn when she was found safe. 6.
- FEBRUARY 25-26 – Braemar and Grampian Police MRTs searched near Ballater Golf Course and found man (66) face down in River Dee, who had apparently committed suicide. 13.
- MARCH 16 – SARDA searched river banks for man (31) missing from home at Dumgoyne. Police dogs searched West Highland Way. He returned home well. Lomond MRT. 37.
- MARCH 28-29 – Two boys (17, 16) in borrowed boat capsized in Loch Lomond. One managed to swim 1km to shore using Inversnaid Hotel lights. RN helicopter and Luss rescue boat found upturned boat. Lomond MRT searched W and E shores. Divers have continued search but no body has been found yet. 150.
- APRIL 25-28 – RAF Leuchars MRT helped Fife Police search open ground and banks of River Leven, Methil, for man last seen April 25 who failed to reach home on far side of river. Nothing found. 93.
- APRIL 30 – Strathclyde Police MRT called out to remove body of suicide victim (m74) from sea cliffs at Culzean Castle, Ayrshire. 4.
- MAY 9 – SARDA searched Gartmorn Dam, Alloa for man (23). Later traced by Police. 8.
- MAY 23-24 – SARDA, Tweed Valley MRT, Borders SRU and Underwater Search Team searched woods and heavy undergrowth for man (51) missing from hospital. He suffered depression. Further search next day found his body hanging from a tree. 187.
- JUNE 11 – Extensive search of banks of swollen River Esk by Moffat MRT for missing fisherman. Body later found in Solway Firth. 184.
- JUNE 13 – SARDA searched Dollarbeg for occupants of a crashed car, who may have been injured and wandered off. One woman (16) found with arm and leg injuries. 1.

- JULY 4 – Body of a male suicide victim recovered from Loch Tulla by Strathclyde Police MRT. He had been located by police helicopter. 38.
- JULY 7 - SARDA searched woods of Callendar Estate, Falkirk for missing woman who returned home safe and well after an emergency visit to Glasgow.
- AUGUST 1-2 – Two ground teams, boat team, two helicopter passes, two dog searches, failed to find body of a man (67) trapped in debris in River Tweed at Waterburn. After drinking he walked his dog at 23.30 but dog went home alone. Found by Tweed Valley MRT search at 14.00 as river level dropped. Find was dependent on clarity and level of water. RAF Sea King, SARDA. 146.
- AUGUST 4-5 – Tweed Valley MRT on standby to search at Jedburgh for missing woman who was found safe at home.
- AUGUST 22 – Moffat MRT request SARDA search for person fallen in a river at Selkirk.
- AUGUST 24 – Abandoned vehicle reported at edge of woods near Larbert. Police searched woods and quarry. Body (m51) found hanging from tree by police dog. Ochils MRT recovered body from deep undergrowth. 23.
- SEPTEMBER 8 – Tweed Valley MRT and SARDA found man (63) suffering depression, hiding in woodland on Selkirk Common. He had to be removed by police.
- SEPTEMBER 16 Two SARDA dogs *en route* to search for boy (10) missing in woods at Bannockburn, when he was found safe by police. 2.
- SEPTEMBER 19 – SARDA requested but stood down. Depressed woman involved in minor road accident and made off. Car found at Logie Kirk at foot of Ochil Hills. Traced in a distraught state by police sweep search.
- OCTOBER 6 – SARDA (S) declined police request to search woods at Balfron for a prolific criminal who had gone to ground.
- OCTOBER 8-13 – Body of missing man (41) found on 13th hanging near his home in Tullibody by SARDA dog. Three SARDA dogs used. Evacuation by Ochils MRT. 94.
- OCTOBER 15-16 – Walking 8km from Bucksburn to Clinterty, drunk student (16) got separated from group helping a friend who had fallen into a culvert. Due to poor weather and intoxication, Braemar and Grampian Police MRTs assembled to search, but he turned up, still drunk, after sleeping in a field. 78.
- OCTOBER 22 – Braemar and Grampian Police MRTs, search dogs and volunteer estate workers searched the grounds of Drum Castle, near Peterculter, Aberdeenshire. Body of missing male (68) suspected suicide victim found by forestry worker in heavy woodland. 22.
- NOVEMBER 1-2 – Moffat MRT, six SARDA dogs and police helicopter searched overnight in mist and sub-zero temperatures for missing elderly lady with dementia. Found at Kelloholm suffering mild hypothermia. 220.
- DECEMBER 2-3 – Retired woman (65) shopping in village new to her (Greenlaw) slipped on grassy path after getting lost. She hugged her dog all night for heat. Found mildly hypothermic by SARDA dog on second day of search. Borders SAR and Tweed Valley MRT with five SARDA dogs. 21.
- DECEMBER 16 – Moffat MRT assembled at Thornhill to search for missing elderly lady, whose body was found in River Nith by HMS Gannet helicopter. 28.
- DECEMBER 17-18 – Tweed Valley MRT searched hospital grounds for woman (27) thought to be suicidal. Police located her OK elsewhere. 52.
- DECEMBER 26-27 – Woman (18) in lightweight clothing probably took wrong turning 6km west of Perth when walking home from a party, dying from hypothermia. Found by RAF Sea King. Both Tayside teams, SARDA, divers and Strathclyde helicopter involved. 2000.



## IN MEMORIAM

### JAMES C. DONALDSON j. 1950

JIM DONALDSON was a lad o' pairts who during his long life served his fellow human beings and his Country to a remarkable degree. Born on January 18, 1913 in Falkland where his father was a bank manager who was killed while serving as an officer in the Black Watch in France in 1917. The family moved to Dundee, and subsequently, to Edinburgh in 1930. He was educated at Sedbergh School and Edinburgh University at which both establishments he excelled as a cross-country runner.

On leaving school he joined the Bank of Scotland where he spent his entire working life. Always a meticulous record keeper, the log of his mountain expeditions starts in April 1933 with the lone ascent of Sgurr Alaisdair and Thearlach. His last rock climb was also in Skye, Eastern Buttress Direct, which he climbed at the age of 73 with Bill Wallace. In the interval, and for a few years thereafter, he enjoyed expeditions, often alone, of considerable length which were prodigious by any standard, as well as making many rock and snow-ice climbs.

There is a gap from 1939 to 1946 in his log with the exception of Mount Hermon, in Jordan, in October 1942. In 1939 he joined the Black Watch along with his brother, George, and as 1940 closed they set off for Crete to join the 2nd Battalion. The invasion of Crete was the first major engagement against the German Army since Dunkirk and details of the enemy plan to land an Airborne Division at the airfield at Heraklion were known because the German code system Enigma had by this time been cracked.

To mask this knowledge for future operations the defences were laid out in an orthodox manner with the Black Watch at Heraklion. By accident or design the Battalion had been issued with Bren machine gun tripods which enabled the weapon to fire skywards effectively and very heavy casualties were inflicted on the descending paratroops before they reached the ground. Even so, bitter fighting continued for 10 days with great ferocity. During a battle on the airfield Jim drove a motor cycle across the field under fire to aid the crews of two British planes and was injured crashing into a bomb crater and was recommended for the Military Cross. Things did not go so well at the other end of the island and the British and New Zealand Garrison was evacuated by the Royal Navy in the teeth of terrific enemy bombing with heavy loss of ships and life. More than 200 of the Black Watch were killed on the voyage to Egypt.

In October 1941 the Battalion members were taken by destroyers at night into Tobruk to relieve the 9th Australian Division and on November 21 were ordered to break out to join the Eighth Army advancing from Sollum. Within an hour it lost 25 officers and 300 men killed and wounded, among whom were Jim and George. Jim was wounded in the knee and waited patiently in a shell hole for 28 hours reading Tennyson waiting to be picked up. In hospital the brothers found that their cousin, Maisie, was one of their nurses and they had a high old time of it escorting her and her friends round the sights of Cairo, on the Nile and to the Pyramids.

After Tobruk the Battalion went to Syria, and in February 1942 embarked for

Rangoon. The Japanese had entered the war in December 1941 and so swift was their advance through Malaya and Burma that the convoy was diverted to Bombay and the unit was soon engaged in training in jungle warfare. In 1942 in West Bengal Jim was awarded his MBE, an almost unique honour for an infantry subaltern, for his attempt to extricate a ration party which had been cut off during a severe cyclone and tidal inundation in which 14 of his Platoon were drowned. An extract from the citation reads: 'Lieutenant Donaldson's gallantry and devotion to his Platoon's welfare, and his complete disregard of his own safety, saved many lives, and will remain an inspiring example of leadership and endurance.'

On his return home in early 1945, having reached the rank of Major, he was appointed Commandant of a Prisoner of War Camp at Monymusk, surely one of the most kind and gentle men ever to hold such a command. On demobilisation he returned to the bank, first in Edinburgh and then in Glasgow. On a climbing holiday in Skye he met Sheila and they were married in May 1949.

Among his climbing companions in the Glasgow JMCS and SMC, which he joined in 1950, were some well known members, including George Roger, Trevor Ransley, Hamish Hamilton, Ross Higgins, Russell Marshall and Bertie MacFarlane.

Jim was Treasurer of the Club from 1961 to 1976 during which period the Club's finances increased beyond recognition and he became President in 1976 and Honorary President in 1981. He was Editor of Munro's Tables for many years.

The Donaldsons moved to Braemar in 1958 and their daughter, Fiona, was born in 1961. Fiona, now Mrs Barry Watt, gave birth to a daughter, Catriona, a few days after Jim's passing.

Jim, typically, threw himself into the life of Braemar. He inherited from a long line of bank managers the Weather Recording Station which had been founded in the 1850s by the Prince Consort. He was a founder member and President of the Braemar Mountain Rescue Team and was Treasurer, and later Secretary and Honorary Vice-President of the Braemar Royal Highland Society and played a leading part in organising the Annual Games. For many years he was Session Clerk and Treasurer of Braemar Parish Kirk as well as being Treasurer of the Community Council and the Golf Club. Indeed there seemed to be little in the whole area of which Jim was not Treasurer or Secretary.

The Donaldson's house had a large attic and a caravan in their garden and these became a home from home for many a weary wanderer who enjoyed the marvellous hospitality which they lavished on their countless guests. Among his lovable eccentricities were swimming in summer in his favourite pools and gathering and sawing logs – many tons of which found their way into the homes of elderly folk. He took up cross-country skiing and acquired a mountain bike at an age when most men have put their feet up.

After Sheila's death he bought a bungalow at the Inchmarlo Complex at Banchory before moving into the nursing home there for the last two years of his life. From there he made short expeditions with his Zimmer, for which the contraption had never been designed, to various spots from which he could sit, smilingly looking up at the hills. A visit to him, even when he became very frail, was an inspiration. To the end he was totally unselfish, modest and contented.

W. M. S. Myles.

### SANDY COUSINS j. 1964

MY FIRST encounter with Sandy was in the late 1960s, when he gave me and a friend a lift to a Glasgow JMCS meet on Nevis. Still breaking in my own first proud pair of proper steel-shanked climbing boots, I was appalled to hear him describe with relish how he had recently dismembered and re-assembled a pair of expensive French boots (at that time renowned equally for elegance and for discomfort) to improve their fit and water-resistance. With hindsight, I recognise that that was typical of Sandy's whole-hearted, practical, 'can-do' approach: to life, work, climbing, and mountain conservation.

Another example was the famous Cousins Heatin (SMCJ, 1986 xxxiii, 354). Sandy was an inveterate engineer, tinkerer, modifier, creator. He had unlimited enthusiasm for emblems of affiliation: badges, logos, letterheads, and ties. When none existed, he would design them himself. Even without knowing its registration number, Sandy's estate car could be picked out in any Highland lay-by by the tidy row of official and unofficial badges across the rear windscreen. The Presidential gavel of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, neatly shaped from an antler and with Sandy's own design for the Council logo lacquered into the butt, is one of his tangible legacies to the climbing community.

Sandy's mountaineering was marked by the same sense of conviction and whole-heartedness: he enjoyed the hills with a huge and comprehensive gusto. His solo walk from Cape Wrath to Glasgow in 1971 (SMCJ, 1972 xxx, 37-47) was a classic excursion. In its impeccable topographical logic, relaxed style, and sense of intense quiet enjoyment, it cast a stark light on the dour hard-driven ego-promoting expeditions of some other Big Walkers.

But above all, Sandy was foremost among those few who translate the SMC's sometimes rather abstract concern for the mountain environment into sustained practical action. He was one of the founding fathers of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, and its first Honorary Secretary from 1970 to 1978. He was fired into action by the appalling fiasco of the building of the Coruisk track and bridges in 1968, ostensibly for mountain rescue (the fullest account of that saga, based on a report compiled by Sandy, can be found in the Journal, (xxix, 1969, 111-120). Sandy threw himself into the fray, badgering every relevant agency and organisation in strenuous efforts to prevent the work being done, and then to discourage attempts to make it good. The failure of mountaineering and conservation interests, including the ineffective Association of Scottish Climbing Clubs and the nascent Countryside Commission for Scotland, to defend that wild land sanctuary against intrusion drove Sandy and others first into direct action against the bridge at Scavaig ('The fairies at Coruisk' was how Sandy described it) and then into setting up the MCS in 1969-70. It also led him to propose that mountaineers should buy the Black Cuillin. At the time many scoffed, but with hindsight and the experience of the success of the John Muir Trust, we can see that in this, as in other matters, Sandy had more vision than most of us.

With characteristic acuity, Sandy saw at once that MCS would need an executive secretary of drive and energy, and accepted that he would have to supply those qualities himself if the organisation was to achieve the objectives for which he had

helped create it. As Secretary he was hugely industrious and efficient. In those pre-word processing days he did much of the necessary writing in his own instantly recognisable sprawling longhand. His approach may at times have been characterised more by dash than by finesse, but it got results. He wheedled a succession of the Grand Old Men of the SMC into serving as Chairmen of MCS to give it credibility, not least with the doubters of the Club. He belaboured the Scottish Sports Council into accepting – and grant-aiding – MCS as the governing body of mountaineering in Scotland, a feat that involved beating the recalcitrantly square peg of mountaineering values into the adamant round hole of the SSC's wondrously bureaucratic criteria. The SSC could not comprehend (and for long would not recognise) a body that was not interested in actively enlarging participation in its 'sport'.

He stretched the tolerance of his employers to breaking point by taking time off to attend a host of meetings: on access to the hills, outdoor education, mountain rescue, skills training for club members, mountain conservation, and much else. More or less single-handedly and in the face of the anarchist scepticism of many fellow climbers, he laid the foundations of the modern MCS, which now consumes all the effort and dedication of a small team of paid staff and a series of hard-working executive Presidents. Once he had demitted office, Sandy did not conceal his view that he had done as much work and achieved as much impact as his professionalised successors; but ironically it was his own industry and wide-ranging initiative that forged MCS's credibility and led to its workload expanding exponentially.

While he could be a terrier in defence of climbing interests, Sandy always believed that friendly discussion on site could resolve many problems of access or amenity, without recourse to formal procedures or public controversy. He may well have been right in his own terms, but few of us could match his apparently unsinkable self-confidence and social ease – or his extraordinary network of contacts: Sandy seemed to know everyone concerned with the Scottish hills, and certainly everyone seemed to know Sandy. As well as MCS itself, at different times he was also active, either through the Council or independently, on the Scottish Mountain Leadership Training Board, the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland, the Mountain Bothies Association, the Friends of Loch Lomond, and the Scottish Countryside Activities Council – among other groups. And for Sandy, 'active' meant actively engaged; he never attended a meeting just to show his face or to make up the numbers.

In particular, Sandy was a forceful champion of wild land at a time when only a handful of people fully appreciated that quality of our Scottish upland landscape, or recognised the threats that faced it. An active member of the informal ginger group that evolved into the Scottish Wild Land Group in 1982, he served on the SWLG Steering Team for its first three years. In 1982 he promoted in the *Journal* (xxxii, 1982, 270-2) a set of guidelines for wild land management which anticipates many of the principles now applied by the JMT and by the National Trust for Scotland at Mar Lodge. He even encouraged his daughter, Eilid, as part of her geography degree, to undertake a useful small-scale research project into perceptions of wilderness in Knoydart.

Organisations like the former Countryside Commission for Scotland quickly learned to take the MCS seriously when Sandy was its mouthpiece. W. B. Prior, Secretary of the Commission, used to talk (sometimes humorously, sometimes with exasperation) of 'the Hairy Knees Brigade' and its forceful assertion of the mountaineering interest. Sandy was the man he usually had in mind. As a quintessential 'man of independent mind', Sandy would probably not have thanked the Establishment had it seen fit to offer him one of its outdated imperialist baubles for the services he rendered to Scottish mountaineering, but I suspect he might have appreciated a token of acknowledgement from the MCS, or even from the SMC. Honorary memberships have been awarded for much lesser, and less altruistic, contributions.

The early AGMs of the MCS in the 1970s were held in the big common room at the Glencoe Ski Club's Lodge at Bridge of Orchy. It was not the least of Sandy's achievements that these meetings were imbued with a pervasive and positive sense of the community of Scottish mountaineering, which I have never felt so powerfully since. Club representatives, members, and guests gathered from across the country to squeeze up on the lodge's unyielding benches for an evening of debate and exchange of information. Many came fresh off the hill in patched breeks and darned sweaters, lending the atmosphere a fragrance now almost lost to us with the shift from organic materials in much hill clothing. The smell of food was in there too, for fine weather or stern rocks always delayed some parties, so that the meeting overlapped with the serious business of refreshing the inner man or woman. Some were still cooking or wolfing down their dinner. Big teapots circulated, as well as stronger refreshments. Outside the westering sun fired the wide gully-seamed slopes of Beinn Dorain (for memory says those were always some of the best days of May). Inside, discussion surged from plateaux of carefully-considered judgment to peaks of humour, insult, and authentic passion. The Creagh Dhu or the ubiquitous R. N. Campbell could be relied upon for a judicious injection of anarchy. Sandy, genial as host and ringmaster, fostered an informal, but powerful, collective purpose, and the intrinsic sense that the meetings were enjoyable as well as useful and educative.

It is at the centre of that scene that I remember Sandy best – usually in his kilt and home-made leather waistcoat, with his pipe, his goatee, and his grin. He was an engaging, energetic, invariably stimulating and occasionally maddening mixture of the practical man and the idealist, who put his heart and soul into conserving the wild mountain country that he loved. We all owe him a huge debt of gratitude.

R. Aitken.

**Douglas Niven continues:** DIFFICULT to forget the laird-like figure striding over the hill with Kilmarnock bunnet, cromach, home-made gear and gaiters and sometimes a home-made axe, and the awful pipe with its all-pervasive smoke. Sandy always had a dog with him; it was always a big dog, which filled a car with unrestrained enthusiasm – a beast which regularly went for your piece and not his on the hill. Then there was the embarrassment of coming down the hill, eyeing with some apprehension an aggrieved farmer or shepherd in the middle distance as the dog

careered among sheep or cattle – under control he said – the locals clearly thought otherwise. Pointless arguments inevitably followed without resolution, as so often happens when Greek meets Greek. Our hill days together were mainly confined to day trips from Glasgow and always, it seemed, in indifferent weather. I suppose we argued about everything imaginable on those walks; I never convinced him on anything of any consequence!

Can any of us forget those pithy and sometimes bizarre comments on the doings of the Club at the AGM? Unkind members may have muttered audibly when he rose to his feet, but regardless of our views and in spite of ourselves, we all waited for Sandy's opinion just the same.

We should also remember his contribution to the expedition scene: his epic solo walk from Cape Wrath to Glasgow over countless Munros was both physically and mentally taxing and demanded good organisational and topographical skills. This imaginative ploy underlined his abilities as an all-round and competent mountaineer on the Scottish hills.

Sandy's contribution to Scottish mountaineering and mountainous countryside in Scotland was and is both substantial and enduring: he was one of the founding members of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, and became the first Honorary Secretary in 1970; he devoted considerable time and energy to establishing its credibility, not only with the Scottish Sports Council, but also with a largely sceptical mountaineering public. At one time or another, Sandy seemed to be involved in every possible aspect of mountaineering activity in Scotland. He was a member of the Mountain Rescue Committee – one of my recurring nightmares was the prospect of being rescued by a grinning Cousins on some dark Highland hillside. He gave time and skill to the Mountain Bothies Association and was, of course, Convenor of the Huts Sub-committee from 1967 to 1972, before handing over the dubious privilege to Bill Young. He was also involved with the Scottish Countryside Activities Council, Friends of Loch Lomond, and helped to form the Scottish Wild Land Group. A bewildering number of badges on the back window of his car testified to a wide range of interests in the hills.

Of his career outwith mountaineering, I knew surprisingly little; he served as a marine engineer at sea for many years and then as design engineer in the offices of Yarrows Shipbuilders. Latterly, he was with Denholm Shipping and finally Alfa-Laval until the long arm of redundancy finally caught up with him. Little deterred by this setback, he turned his hobby of model-making into a late and profitable career. He was a superb model-maker of ships and boats of all kinds; his sheer dexterity, application and attention to detail was exceptional, and was frequently noted in model journals.

Sandy and Moira had recently retired to North Connel to be closer to their daughter, Eilid, and her family. I always imagined him as a future Laird of Connel and possibly even as a recipient of a telegram from the Queen – but, unfortunately, this was not to be. In the spring of 1998 he was cruelly taken from his family and friends in an incredibly short space of time by a rapid and debilitating illness. I often pass Sandy's old house at Kirklee in Glasgow and somehow expect, quite illogically, to see him with a fistful of spanners and a car engine in bits in front of his close. I suppose I'll be doing that for a while yet, only more so now.

## ROSS HIGGINS j. 1946

ROSS HIGGINS (Robert Ross Stewart Higgins) was born in 1914, and died peacefully after a stroke last December. As a leading Glasgow bookseller (with John Smith & Son) who ran Wylie's bookshop in Sauchiehall Street, the climber's then literary Mecca, he always had the books in stock or supplied them by return. Tall, dark-suited, he knew everyone – authors, publishers, customers – relevant to any subject you mentioned; and daily, with effortless understanding, he would usher fools, fogies or fanatics out of the door, their bookshelves and self-importance happily augmented. A true artist. In like manner, he ran the SMC for a decade.

He first appeared in the pre-war Journal as an active JMCS climber and versifier. Then war service took him abroad, later as Liaison Officer with the 2nd Polish Corps, a post which surely suited his imposing presence, unarguable efficiency and often overwhelming tact and flair. Such qualities made him – only three years after joining the Club – one of our really outstanding Honorary Secretaries. So great an efficiency, that we can offer you two obituaries of him by incorporating here the Obituary (*SMCJ* xxvii, 77, 1960) of his Secretaryship:

'So Ross has gone! That persuasive voice, that velvet glove, that discreet and innocent astonishment, that expert polishing of spectacles and Agenda – gone! Resigned and smiling from Vice-Presidential altitude. He was, as many have perceived, a far better Secretary than we deserved... Aloof from circling and ephemeral Committees, he became almost a Permanent Staff to lean upon. Any query from anyone, imperious, faltering or tetchy, and back by return came that postcard or that letter impeccably typed in red and blue beneath the Club's calm monogram, soothing and informative; incredible, but it happened, time after time. How anyone so unbearably efficient as Ross Higgins escaped early death by stonefall we do not know.

The selfless work he put in has been enormous. No-one else could have done this with so little fuss, have weathered so many storms so adroitly, have contended with and pacified so many thrawn and warring factions; and all without being driven to cynicism or the Arctic. The strain must have been great! But there he is, our new ex-Secretary, as courteously invaluable as ever, still dispensing impeccable information, and still as sincerely and practically dedicated to the Club's welfare as any man has ever been. Let, therefore, the Club's gratitude for Ross Higgins' most splendid services – so well voiced at the AGM – be recorded again here.'

These gifts also served him well later as the Club's representative to the NTS. That former faultless gliding, to everyone's approval, among displaced Polish gentry enabled him to propound there, without offence, the unfamiliarly Radical mountaineering viewpoint: he pushed to the limit whatever poise, charm and solicitude could achieve in those rarefied circles. So his maybe less gifted successors had to pursue a different, but equally effective, approach.

Ross, despite this social suavity, held firm opinions. When outraged, head far above the mob, his nose, jaw and lips set themselves exactly as in the portrait of his claimed ancestor Admiral Sir John Ross of the North West Passage, uncle of James Clerk Ross of the Magnetic North Pole and the Antarctic Ice Shelf – predecessors of stern resolve. He could pace his own quarter-deck: on our first acquaintance I

was driving him to my house and happened to drop a remark he considered derogatory to Her Gracious Majesty (Elizabeth, not Victoria); he remained purply silent for some minutes until his powerful courtesy restored speech and complexion. I never noticed this, but: 'Do you know,' he said years later, 'I had half a mind to get out of the car...' Fortunately, he did not, for it was moving quite fast, and on a deserted hill road in Perthshire.

Until progressive lameness claimed him (he spent his last 15 years – lively as ever – in a wheelchair) he regularly climbed the hills, and remained devoted to mountains and the Club; he particularly welcomed to it characters as idiosyncratic and apparently antithetical as Robin Smith. For Ross loved style, in himself and others (after his cremation, all, by his decree were regaled with champagne and smoked salmon). Therefore, finally, as he has had two obituaries, let us – to the certain pleasure of his shade – quote, from his earlier departure 'Sage remarks, which many have desired to see in print' (*SMCJ* xxvii, 89, 1960): 'It would be wise to pause and consider whether we were tending to lose the Club atmosphere, so notably preserved during the past 70 years... There was a tendency to stick rigidly to high climbing standards, regardless of personal knowledge of the candidate. This was no proposal for lowering entry standards, but rather for a reversion to the older idea of considering character as well as climbing ability... We should not become just another Association which one joined for the advantages it offered, and cease to be a Club in the true sense of the word.'

With all of which Smith (yes, Smith) would have agreed.

G. J. F. Dutton.

### **TREVOR J. RANSLEY j. 1950**

TREVOR qualified in civil engineering at Nottingham University and initially worked at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough. Walking the Lakeland fells and classic Welsh rock climbing set him firmly on the mountain ladder. From 1947, he worked on the Loch Sloy project, based at Inverarnan – that cradle of Scottish mountaineering. Joining the JMCS, he climbed regularly around Arrochar, Glencoe and elsewhere. His companions and mentors were many, including Bill Murray, Tom Mackinnon, Jim Donaldson, Bill Mackenzie, Ross Higgins and Ian McNicol to name a few.

Trevor's next move in 1950 took him to Fort William to join British Aluminium, with its extensive hydro power resources. Here for my first job, surrounded by Lochaber's mountains and a new circle of climbing friends, I was the proverbial small boy let loose in the sweetie shop. Now it was Trevor's turn to pass on some of his accumulated mountain lore and perhaps temper some of my more impetuous intentions. I soon found him to be a meticulous organiser; every outing was planned in detail. Happy memories of these times include icy battles in the Nevis gullies, carefree Cuillin days and ski ascents of Beinn na Lap and Meall a' Bhuridh, before the advent of mechanical uplift.

He climbed in the Alps in 1949 with Alan Johnson JMCS centred on Saas Fee and again in 1951 with George Roger, George Freeman, Archie MacAlpine and Dan Mckellar. In 1950, he was with the British West Greenland expedition led by



Harold Drever, along with Norman Tennent and Malcolm Slessor. Trevor's report of the ascent of several virgin peaks on Upnervik Island appeared in the Journal.

While at Fort William, Trevor met Pat, his greatest love, and soon to be his lifelong companion. Together they completed the Munros in 1980 and 1984 respectively. Retirement gave the opportunity to continue walking the Scottish hills, enjoy active holidays in the Austrian Alps and expand his many interests. Valuable contributions followed to the Corbetts guidebook.

Trevor was an expert gardener with a wide knowledge of plants, alpinists being special favourites. Hill expeditions were often planned to coincide with the flowering of a particular species.

Numbers and mathematics were always a fascination. Thus the granddaughters' homework problems and the *Scotsman* mind games were all grist to the mill. A practical application appeared in the 1971 Journal article *Naismith Reviewed*. His ability at chess and mastery of bridge and other games of memory were outstanding. A deep love of music from early childhood is shared by Pat. They both were founder members of the Wagner Society of Scotland.

Aged 74, Trevor died on July 27, 1997 in St. Colomba's Hospice after a courageous fight. The large gathering at his funeral reflected his wide interests. We are all the poorer for having lost him but enriched by his valued friendship. To Pat and their family we extend our deepest sympathy.

Miles Hutchinson.

*This notice was sent in time for publication in last year's issue, but was somehow lost en route. We apologise for any distress this may have caused. (Hon. Ed.).*

### DAVID EASSON j. 1947

DAVID EASSON died in Stobhill Hospital on February 16, 1998 having been a member of the Club for more than half a century.

He was very much a technical climber being a member of one of the most active groups of his day comprising Humble, Nimblin and Murray. Indeed Humble endorsed his application by describing him as 'a very good leader on rock and snow'. Visits to Arrochar, Skye, Glen Coe and the Lake District were frequent in his early years and on his first meet of the Club at Easter 1948 he climbed Recess Route on the Cobbler on 'a very wet day'.

He clearly succumbed to the Arrochar disease of 'howffing' and it is recorded that on the 1949 New Year meet to Lagangarbh, he gave up the comforts of the hut for a howff in Coire Gabhail in the company of Humble and Nimlin.

Humble also credits him with having done much work on the first Arrochar climbing guide, having been out with all route-checking parties in the summer of 1946.

He was also a keen photographer and his family has been kind enough to offer his extensive slide collection to the Club.

J. R. R. Fowler.

### ADAM STEWART j. 1960

ADAM STEWART left it late to join the Club not being elected to membership until the age of 50. However, his mountaineering career commenced some 10 years earlier, and while he never achieved high standards on rock or ice, he accumulated well over 100 Munros ascended at all times of year.

He was an active member of the Edinburgh Section of the JMCS, attending many of their meets and his frequent companions on these outings were James Russell and Robert MacLennan.

J. R. R. Fowler.

### JOHN HUNT

THERE HAVE been, quite rightly, many eulogies to John Hunt, who died on November 7, 1998 at the age of 88. But little has been said of his involvement with the Scots and the SMC or of the 1963 Pamirs expedition. I know that he found us bewildering.

As a mountaineer he is chiefly remembered for his very effective leadership of the 1953 Everest Expedition, for which he was knighted. Both by temperament and military background he was the ideal man to direct a logistic exercise like the ascent of the world's highest mountain. I recall vividly listening to John and Ed Hillary being interviewed on the BBC short wave service while I was simultaneously driving my caterpillar track vehicle through a maze of crevasses off the east edge of the Greenland ice-cap. It was wonderful juxtaposition of emotion and situation.

He was president of the Alpine Club in 1957. His army career was a huge success, finishing up as Assistant Commissioner at the Military Staff College at Camberley. The Duke of Edinburgh then asked him to manage his Award scheme. In 1960 he conceived a youth leader expedition to the Staunings Alps in East Greenland. I received a letter asking for information from someone whose signature was illegible, so I cut out the signature and pasted it onto the reply envelope. He was enormously amused by this, and invited me, Tom Weir, Iain Smart and Roddy Cameron to join as group leaders.

We met again in 1962. Kenny Bryan and I had sought permission to climb Peak Stalin (renamed Peak of Communism and no doubt something else now), the highest peak in the Soviet Union situated in the Pamirs. The Soviets put the cat among the pigeons by insisting the Alpine Club application and ours be melded into one team. Negotiations between us were protracted and the SMC ended up with four members and the AC with eight. During the expedition Wilfred Noyce and Robin Smith slipped to their deaths on Peak Garmo. John was the only one to witness the fall, and to his dying day he refused to say whose slip pulled the other off. Noyce was one of his dearest friends, and John felt unable to continue climbing and left the field to me and others to finish the expedition.

When he finally retired from the Award, he was elevated to the Lords, and became chairman of the parole board in England and Wales, a duty I am sure he carried out with scrupulous care and kindness. I am left with the memory of a complete gentleman, very firm, very quiet, and always generous in spirit, and one who deeply loved the hills.

Malcolm Slessor.

---

**Notice has also reached us of the death of Charles Warren.**

---

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

### New members

The following were admitted and welcomed to the Club in 1998-1999.

Stuart D. Campbell, (30), Teacher, Dunfermline.

Douglas I. Cooper, (28), Mountaineering Instructor, Aviemore.

Quintin T. Crichton, (65), Chartered Accountant, Dundee.

David C. Gardner, (49), Architectural Draughtsman, Milngavie.

John Mitchell, (60), Artist, Lower Largo, Fife.

Colin A. Moody, (41), Fish Farmer, Aros, Mull.

Roger S. D. Smith, (52), Teacher, Malvern, Worcs.

### The One-Hundreth-and-Eighth AGM, Reception and Dinner

Too small, too hot, too convenient. Lack of suitable alternatives to the Alexandra found us once again back in Fort William where the Dinner Secretary faced the usual problems of seats not equalling diners, last-minute seat-swapping, and some miserable wretches snaffling a Vice-President's wine. It was ever so, but first to the business.

The hall of the primary school was at its uncomfortable best as the President convened his final meeting and members were eager to hear about the revised plans for the hut on the hill. Some were to be disappointed. The proposal for toilet developments had been shelved but the wind turbine was to go ahead on the basis that it would provide a power source for servicing the building and reduce the dependence on gas. Many were not convinced that this was the way to go and felt that such a structure would reduce the credibility of the Club as an organisation committed to environmental protection. On the other hand, the hut men could legitimately claim that they had consulted through Press and the Internet on their proposals and adverse response had been minimal. This time the proposal was accepted by the Meeting, although with perhaps some unease as to public reaction.

The Journal, or rather the cost of producing the Journal, caused not a little excitement as the accountants had their say. It was clear even to the re-design enthusiasts that the losses were unsustainable and members solved the problem in the traditional way by forming a committee who will report this year.

And so back to the Hotel for the usual scrum around the wine table and a fair meal. The President congratulated the Club's Greenland members who had shown us their trannies in the afternoon and Curly Ross was in good form with Club song. Doug Lang had a go at the guests but was careful to spare Andrew Thin representing the John Muir Trust who had volunteered at pretty short notice to reply. Our other guests were the JMCS, the Cairngorm Club, the Fell & Rock, the Alpine Club and also Donald Orr as the first winner of the W. H. Murray Literary Award.

At the close of the evening Bryan Fleming was inaugurated as President, accepting Raeburn's axe and other junk as symbols of office, but sagely offered the war-wound excuse over participating in the outgoing President's walk to the CIC Hut where it was proposed to show those interested what all the fuss is about.

The Dinner continues as one of the great institutions of the Club but let's go somewhere different in 1999.

J. R. R. Fowler.

## JMCS REPORT

**Lochaber Section:**— The membership remained healthy and active throughout 1998 with the number of paid-up members on the increase, a trend possibly due to the introduction of an Aberdonian Treasurer. The section meets informally in the Nevis Bank Hotel, Fort William, every Thursday evening and formally with outdoor meets throughout the year.

In April it was the turn of the Section to host the Whole Club AGM. The meeting was held in the Cairndow Inn, Loch Fyne, and was attended by just over a dozen members with all sections, bar the London section, being represented. The meeting was very informal and an enjoyable evening was had afterwards.

In May, a big gathering of members, past and present, and also friends, joined Harry Campbell on the summit of Ladhar Bheinn to help him celebrate the completion of his Munros. A great weekend was had with a lot of sore heads leaving Knoydart on the Sunday.

In June, two members, Donald Watt and George Bruce completed their round of the Corbetts, finishing with The Merrick in Dumfries and Galloway. Both have already completed the Munros.

Several members made trips to the Alps during the summer with the Chamonix area being the preferred base. Already this year, interest is being expressed by several members for a trip to Slovenia.

The Section's Annual Dinner was held in November at the Aultguish Inn, near Garve. More than 30 members and guests enjoyed an excellent meal and likewise the hospitality and the crack.

Also in November, Bert Bissell, an Honorary Member passed away. Bert had been associated with Lochaber for many years and up until recent years he regularly ascended Ben Nevis during his visits to Fort William. Several members attended the funeral service.

Officials elected were: *Hon. President*, W. Munro; *Hon. Member*, S. Scott. *President*, I. Walker; *Vice-President*, D. Ford; *Treasurer*, G. Bruce; *Secretary*, K. Fogg, 4 Parkan Dubh, Inverlochy, Fort William. *Hut Custodian*, J. Mathieson, 43 Drumfada Terrace, Corpach, Fort William, PH33 6NH, (01397 772599). *Meets Secretary*, B. Macpherson. *Committee*, J. Conlon, D. Leslie, and B. Campbell.

**Perth, Glasgow, Edinburgh and London JMCS were asked for reports but failed to respond. (Hon. Ed.)**

## SMC AND JMCS ABROAD

### Europe

JOHN STEELE reports:— Last September I visited the Austrian Alps with Barbara Gibbons.

Several weeks were spent touring in Austria. In the first week a traverse of the Zillertal was accomplished in the company of the Munich Mens' Drinking Club. The second week saw us in the Glockner region in the company of the Austrian Boys' Army.

Peaks and peaklets taken in along the way included, Kraxenberg, Silafhorn, Grosse Moseler, Johannisberg and a wintry retreat from the Gross Glockner. Refuge was found in the hamlet of Helingotblat, 2500m below Austria's highest peak, where thanks were given in the tiny Gothic church, which has acted as a staging post over the centuries for those contemplating crossing the Alps from the south.

ADAM KASSYK reports:— In June 1998, with Matthew Priestman from London we walked an 80km stretch of the GR5, from Landry to Modane across the Vanoise massif. At this time of the season we had the mountains (and the refuges) mostly to ourselves. While at the Col de la Vanoise we made an ascent of the Grand Gliere (3392m) by the SW Face (PD), descending by the East Ridge (F). We then moved on to Ailefroide, and made an ascent of the Barre des Ecrins (4101m) by the Couloir Nord and a traverse of the summit ridge (AD).

The weather here was more reminiscent of Scotland – mist, rain and very poor snow conditions with the freezing level nowhere near the summits – day or night. Finally, we traversed Mont Pelvoux (3943m) by the Coolidge Couloir and the Violetres Glacier (PD), again very testing due to bad snow conditions.

A few weeks later I had a day in the Aiguilles Rouges at Chamonix with my brother, Andy. Having no maps or guidebooks on this occasion, and lacking time to seek information, we walked up the path from Tre-le-champs and climbed a line on the first attractive-looking peak we found. This turned out to be the Aiguille de la Remua (2860m) and our 17-pitch direct line on the SE Face (TD with a pitch of 6/5b) appears to be a new route, subject to further confirmation from the CAF.

### Norway

DAVID RITCHIE reports:— Last summer I joined Neil MacGougan in his trimaran yacht, *Sophie*, for a sailing and climbing trip to Norway. We sailed from Oban via Stornoway to the Faroe Islands where we spent several days sailing throughout the islands and climbing some of the local hills. The weather was no better than that which Scotland was receiving, although we did have one fine day walking on Vagar. From there we sailed to Lerwick where we met up with John Morrison who introduced us to some quality sea cliff climbing in the locality. Colwyn Jones joined us here and together we sailed to Bergen in Norway where we were joined by Anne MacDonald.

The four of us then travelled by ferry to the Johenheim mountains, where we climbed Galhopigen and traversed Store Urdadalstrinder. We then visited the Hardanger hills to the south and made a wintry ascent of the beautiful Stove Skagastrolstind. Returning to Bergen Neil and I then sailed south via Stavanger to Lorstiansund, exploring crags at Store Island, Uskedal, and Mandal *en route* and enjoying quality rock when the weather allowed. Steve Kennedy and Mark Shaw joined us from Scotland and we visited the Setesdal Valley where we climbed several established routes on the most accessible valley crags well documented in recent guidebooks.

We then explored several fine granite mountain crags in the higher hinterland to the west. This area has seen a handful of new routes during the past two or three summers and the area has huge potential. Several new routes were climbed mostly in the lower grades due to the incessant wet weather experiences although one or two dry days produced some harder offerings. We then spent a couple of weeks waiting for favourable weather for our return sail and explored some marvellous crags on the south-west coast of Norway between Egersund and Jossingfjord. We eventually departed for Scotland but broke a hull halfway across the North Sea forcing an exciting return to Norway. Despite this unfortunate end to our sailing and a very wet summer we still had enjoyed some fine sailing and excellent varied mountaineering.

### A Long Way by Sea to Climb a Mountain: The Talisker Islands

DEREK FABIAN reports: It could be the Skye ridge, I thought, But no, this is gneiss – not gabbro! Or is it granite? And the sea below (some 2000ft? – never could think in those newfangled metres)...a more intense blue than from the Dubh ridge last year on the yacht meet. Jagged saw-tooth ridges of granite and gneiss stretched endlessly into a blue haze of sea and sky, in almost every direction. Plus, here and there, the glistening streak of a peeping glacier. Only to the east was there an arc of empty blue ocean, though with another magnificent backdrop of mountains and glacier beyond.

If only, say, Noel was here! He would know granite from gneiss. But it's not gabbro; at least that I do know. And, with Noel we would just scamper along this ridge to the summit. I tore my eyes from the mesmerising view for a moment to watch Brian. But, then Noel doesn't enjoy boats at sea; and if it wasn't for Brian we wouldn't be here in this mountain wonderland! Yes, Palaeozoic rocks, someone had said; and a long time ago (some 500 million years or so) this coastline would have been joined to what is now the mountain escarpment of East Greenland. Perhaps somewhere near Scoresby Sound, I was thinking, just about due west from here, some 2000 miles? And the same rocks there presumably as those around here; must check that out when we get back.

I urged Brian below to try the final rock gully to the ridge. He was looking down, and clutching himself closely into the narrow recess, where it became more a tight chimney. Brian doesn't enjoy rock, and certainly not exposure; nor does he profess to. My eyes strayed again; some 20 miles NE stood the highest, the superb snow-capped Higravtinden. I took the camera from my pack to record the view. Then, with Brian protesting that I should make the close-by summit of the Budalstinden alone, I descended to join him and we continued down to the enchanting fresh water lake nestling in the high valley floor. Without Brian I would not have got as far as Cape Wrath let alone Orkney; and certainly not Shetland where we had added John to our crew.

We had been four at the start – in Loch Moidart. But inside two days we had lost half our crew; one in Moidart to a minor illness, and another at Kyle of Lochalsh to someone else's illness. Bemusedly, Brian and I had taken stock; noting among other things that the stowing of our two months' stores had been done by Ewa and Clem, the lost crew! For the next few weeks we had been second guessing where to find longed for food items as our appetites trebled. We were not short of single malt at least; for by way of apt consolation during delays in our departure from Moidart, while the wind had blown unfavourably from the north, the United Distillers plc had presented us with a case of its Talisker (it being the 30-year anniversary of the Canadian Government's adoption of the name Mt. Talisker for one of the then unnamed BC/Alaska border peaks climbed by a distant SMC-JMCS expedition led by the *Mistress Malin* skipper in 1965). Brian had promptly christened Norway's Lofoten the Talisker Islands. And these, we had decided in Kyle of Lochalsh, would remain our expedition goal.

Nor were we short of oatcakes, for us an important staple. Indeed for some 48 hours out from Lerwick, a plentiful supply of oatcakes with sweet lemon tea and occasional hot soup, had been our diet, oil drilling-rigs and production platforms our blazoning friendly giants at night, and three to four metre waves our adversaries. John, who'd had little or no time to gain his sea legs, had stood his watches

manfully; and by evening of that second day we'd had the Ytterøyane ('outerly') Light abeam as the mist rolled back from the softly-lit hills at the entrance to the small (by Norway's standard) Skorpjford. For the night we had anchored in a delightful tiny fishing harbour facing the strangely cleft mountain, Kinnlekova, on the island of Kinn; famous also for its 11th century stone and wooden church. On the hillsides surrounding this church, we learned next morning, thousands of people would congregate in the following few days to watch performances of a religious/historical Viking pageant.

After a few days of rain (and starter motor malady) we had headed north as the clouds lifted to give a superb display of light and colour on the snow covered Jøstedalbreen Mountains, inland to the east. Past Måløy and the Hornelen Rock, the mist rolling ever upwards to reveal the whole of this impressive cliff face rising 2870ft sheer from the sea. Then out to open sea from the narrow Ulvesund (Wolf Sound) to cross the invisible line where the North Sea becomes the Norwegian Sea; but more visibly to round the notorious Statlandet Peninsula, the first of many areas of sea we had traversed along the coastline marked on the Admiralty charts with 'Dangerous Waves' and 'Strong Current' warnings. The 'Stad', as this mountain peninsula is known locally, has a perilous reputation from Saga times; and for centuries fishermen have preferred, in bad weather, to haul their boats across the one mile isthmus joining it to the mainland rather than risk rounding the Stad in stormy seas.

For us it had been calm and blue. For the next week we had covered 70-80 miles a day, alternating between open sea and the Indreleia (Inside passage) among spectacular mountain and island scenery, past such towns as Ålesund and Kristiansund and through carefully charted sounds like Buholm Rasa (race) and Brønnøysund where one of the many stunning bridges under which we had sailed along this coast joins a sparsely populated island to the Helgen mountain range of Nordland. With a sense of occasion and raised glasses of Talisker we had crossed the Arctic Circle (2300h, June 29), toasting first the Polarsirkelmerke, a huge symbolic 'wire' globe mounted on a tiny island of rock, and then Hestmannen (the Horseman), a shapely island summit through which the notional Circle line runs.

For an hour in undisguised excitement we had sailed due north awaiting local midnight and the sun, right on the bow in a blazon of colour, to touch and just to kiss the sea horizon amid a crimson and gold silhouette of mountain and island shapes. Then, sailing some 20 miles eastwards into the Nordland mainland to reach the Holandsfjord, we had anchored at the foot of the Engabreen glacier, one arm of the huge Svartisen (Black ice) glacier; to where we had scrambled at 3am with the sun already throwing friendly tentacles of gold around the tops and along the immense rivers of glistening silver. The scenery and lighting there had been about the finest of the voyage, and only surpassed by those here in Lofoten. And out to the west, across thousands of skerries and islands, we had seen the largest group Traena, where archaeological evidence has been found for nearly 5000 years of human habitation, from the stone age and iron age through to the 14th century; such has been the effect of the Gulf Stream on Man's settlement of this Arctic coast. Then back aboard, pausing for only a few hours' sleep, we had been under way for Bodø, gateway to the Vestfjord and Lofoten; and so to Svolvær, capital of Lofoten, to where Ewa and John's wife, Barbara, had flown from Glasgow. We had found a remote berth below the Svolværgaitea pinnacle (the Goat), a magnet to visiting rock climbers.

The climb to the higher horn of the Svolværgeita is around V. Diff. The airy jump from there to the lower horn is the challenge; perhaps it was the beckoning cemetery 900ft below that had daunted us? The scenery everywhere in and from Svolvær could be described in one word: Breathtaking! Knife-edge rock ridges and summits, gleaming glaciers and corries, surround the harbour; enormous cod-drying racks fill every spot flat enough for their erection. Cormorants perch everywhere; white tailed sea eagles soar in the air. In Bodø we had met the elderly Norwegian who has helped introduce these supreme birds to our island of Rum! And to a chorus of kittiwakes we had set sail from there dreamily – for midday temperatures could be 28°C – to circumnavigate Austvågøya (Easterly island of bays); roughly the shape of Skye in mirror image and, although only half its size in land area, all of it as sharply mountainous as the Black Cuillin, mantled with significant glaciers. It had been midnight when – just as dreamily for the word 'night' is entirely symbolic at Lat. 68°N – we had sought out the hidden entrance to Henningsvær; one of Lofoten's largest fishing villages and its rock-climbing centre.

From below the jagged ridge to Vågakallen, where Brian and I stood now, we had an aerial view of Henningsvær. Known also as the Venice of Lofoten, its harbour is formed by a string of bridges and causeways between a horseshoe of islands. During the winter months, when the spawning Arctic cod return from the North Cape, the harbour is packed full of fishing vessels; in summer it is empty but for visiting boats, and the fishermen's shacks ashore become convenient mountain huts for climbers.

After a welcome bathe in the lake (warmer I noted than any in the Hebrides) we retraced the Geriatric gully, as Brian had named it, regaining the track back to Henningsvær's Climbing Club bar; where the three remaining crew, nursing four KPs (knee problems) between them, were studying – between half litres of cool dark Sköl – the three wall clocks; set respectively, to our surprise and for no immediately apparent reason, to the local times at Ben Nevis, Mt. Vågakallen, and Mt. Kahperusvära in Finland.

Time regrettably was pressing (although I'm not sure why we had a deadline) and to explore the Higravtinden at closer range, we set sail from below one of the harbour bridges, taking the narrow sound separating Austvagøya from Vestvagøya (Easterly island of bays) and below yet another elegant bridge joining the two, to an anchorage of questionable shelter on their north-facing Atlantic shores. From here we could penetrate the Sløverfjorden to where the 3800ft Higrav western face drops almost sheer to the sea; but the expedition highlight came in Trollfjord, whose astonishingly narrow entrance in the east we reached by taking the long narrow Raftsundet separating Lofoten from its neighbouring, and equally magnificent and mountainous, Vesterålen Islands.

The Higravtinden has two glaciers, one above the Higrav face; another flowing five miles east along the (frozen-in-winter) lake-filled valley, Trollfjordvatnet, from where it spills out onto an amazing rock shelf above the mystical Trollfjord! Entranced, we explored and pondered; a month we could spend here alone, I thought, with time, and a climbing partner, I'll return one day to explore more. So too, on his first visit to Lofoten, had thought Norman Collie (of Tower Ridge and Skye exploration fame in the 1890s). With H. Woolley, in 1901, Collie made the first recorded ascent of the Higravtinden. He was also, in himself, a mystical man; as we can tell from his poetry in *A Reverie*, SMCJ 1898, and his account of hidden



secrets of ennobled mountains, *On the divine Mysteries of the Oromaniacal Quest*, based on his SMCIJ writings.

Meanwhile, time pressed. We had some 600 miles of southing to make; three of the crew had a ferry to catch, 10 days from now in Bergen. Mostly the weather remained blissful. Though re-crossing the Arctic Circle, in an enchanting anchorage off the island of Renga, the engine starter motor committed suicide. Blessed with a favourable wind we made Brønnøysund and there, in this town of just 3000 population, we found a specialist who had an 'off the shelf' replacement! A week later we were two once more, Brian and myself, to make the crossing to Orkney. The weather broke! And aborting our first attempt, in a strong westerly, we sought shelter in Fedje, the most western island of Norway. Here, in 1994, Robin, Donald, Drew and myself had also holed up, after sailing some 140 miles east along the Sognefjord for a brief expedition into the Jøtenheim Mountains (the Ringstinden and the Dyrhaugstinden were bagged; and we had caught 60 herring in an hour on a mackerel line). Brian and I fished, without luck; but in the night the wind fell calm and we then enjoyed the finest 36-hour sail of the whole expedition – to Shetland where luck returned, for Allan (of SMC Western District fame) had his flight to Kirkwall diverted by fog to Lerwick, and was on the pier there to meet us as we made it to harbour, and reached for the Talisker!

Brian could now make up time by P&O ferry to Aberdeen and eventually to his home in Nova Scotia. While for Allan and myself the hills of Fair Isle, and of Hoy in Orkney, awaited; the former hid their tops shyly in mist, the latter defended themselves with gale-force winds from the west. In the shelter of Stromness we sat out the storm and then, biding time for a slack-water escape from the notorious Hoy Sound, we headed out on the last of the ebb into the awful tidal roil caused by the westerly swell piling up there. For nearly an hour then we corkscrewed horrendously, the bow of *Mistress Malin* digging itself deeply into each oncoming four-metre wave and emerging like a submarine to throw off the massive cascade of water in proud disdain. We cowered in the cockpit making sure with the helm that she took those waves head on. I'm not sure if we were frightened; she seemed reassuringly to have the measure of those seas. But never she told us firmly, try this other than at slack water! And 12 hours later she brought us safely, if drenched, round Cape Wrath, to shelter in Kinlochbervie.

In the blissful blue seas that then prevailed, Scotland's West Coast too – a rugged sandy and rocky foreshore with rounded saw tooth line of mountain munros beyond – is magnificent, in a different and contrasting way to Norway's. We explored leisurely, and eventually in perfect clear skies, returned to Loch Moidart; 10 weeks, 2510 nautical miles logged, and with the SMC pennant aloft throughout!

For *Mistress Malin* however, Moidart and its Castle Tioram, with Eigg and Rum as nearby mountain haunts, remains her favourite wanderland. Perhaps in time, her crew will write their account of the expedition, as did Iain Smart – retrospectively 'from the wilderness of time' – of his 1986 expedition to Petermann Peak of East Greenland. I quote Iain from a 'remote corner' of the SMCIJ of 1995: 'Madeira wine improves in flavour when carried around in the hold of a ship. So is the memory of a good expedition if allowed to rock around for a few years in the bottom of your mind. The original experiences grow or diminish in relative importance and achieve a balance unsuspected at the time when they were being harvested from the ambient universe.' Which says it all! Mystical memories abound for ever when we ponder past moments in the mountains!

### Greenland

STEPHEN REID and Colwyn Jones report:—The SMC Staunings Alps, East Greenland Expedition 1998. Colwyn Jones (Joint Leader), Stephen Reid (Joint Leader), John Bickerdike, Brian Shackleton, Jonathan Preston, Colin Read, John Peden and Chris Ravey.

*On a Polar expedition begin with a clear idea of which Pole you are aiming at, and try to start facing the right way. Choose your companions carefully—you may have to eat them.*

W. C. Sellar.

The expedition landed by ski-equipped Twin Otter on the Sefstroms Glacier (1210m) in the Western Staunings Alps on May 6, 1998. The landing was two days later than planned owing to bad weather.

Next day, Jones, Bickerdike, Reid and Preston attempted the most northerly of two unclimbed peaks, circa 2700m (mentioned on p83 of Donald Bennet's guide, *Staunings Alps*, West Col, 1972, and probably the highest unclimbed peak in the Staunings) situated between Attilaborgen and Trinity. The route took the left hand of two obvious couloirs on the East flank of the mountain. The couloir gave unrelenting Grade II snow for about 600m until the ridge joining this peak to Attilaborgen was gained. Here a short rock step led to steep snow below a steep rock wall, possibly four or five pitches high and still a long way from the summit. As an alternative to the rock wall, a steep basin to the south gleamed with hard, blue water ice. Jones and Bickerdike made an attempt on the wall which was found to be very loose and, after pulling off several large blocks, quickly followed Preston and Reid who were already descending.

During the day, exploration and observation was made of the glacier features giving access to this face. They named several of these features. The main glacier was called the Essemmecebrae while the northerly branch was called the McKenzie Glacier. A view was obtained into the intriguing Inner Sanctum, a glacier basin between Trinity and the Helmspids, flanked by rock pillars and guarded by vast crevasses that extended completely across the entrance. A possible route was observed up the northern flank of the most southerly peak, starting from a point near the entrance to the Inner Sanctum. This would be a long and complex climb, but seemed relatively free from objective danger once the face had been gained.

Meanwhile, Shackleton, Reid, Peden and Ravey attempted a fine unclimbed snow peak, one of two unclimbed mountains, the other a superb rock spire, lying in the area between Sussex, Magog and Cantabrigia on the Cantabrae. Access was via a couloir left of a hanging glacier on the NW Face. This led to a snow ridge where Shackleton and Reid, having exhausted themselves by kicking steps in soft snow for several hundred metres, turned back. Ravey and Peden following them carried on and, in the early hours of the morning, reached the summit via a short, but difficult, rock slab (V). This peak has been named Hecla (2400m) and graded PD. The team also named the spur glaciers flowing into the Cantabrae from the region of this peak the Great Cumbrae and the Little Cumbrae.

On the May 9, Reid, Preston, Bickerdike and Jones climbed the highest of four unclimbed peaks on the dividing ridge between the Upper Sefstroms and Grantabrae glaciers (the northerly of the two marked on Bennet's map). The ascent was by

linking a series of couloirs and ice fields with occasional mixed climbing on the SW Face. Starting up a broad, left-slanting couloir, the first major rightward branch was taken, and a long rising traverse made into a ragged gully leading straight up under the summit tower. Shortly before the top this gully was abandoned on the left through a short section of steep mixed ground which gained a steep ice-field whereby the summit tower was outflanked on the left. This led to a short, easy rock section and a spectacular summit block – the latter could be easily seen from Base Camp. This peak was called Tillyrie (2415m) and the route graded AD. From the summit, it looked as though a considerably easier approach could be made of both this peak and its neighbours via a branch of the Lang Glacier which abutted the mountain on the east. The party descended by the same route.

Meanwhile, Peden, Ravey, Shackleton and Reid made the first ascent of the unclimbed rock spire south of Emmanuel (pictured in Bennet guide, illustration 5). This peak is particularly spectacular when viewed from the Upper Sefstroms where it is seen to have a large hole or 'window' directly through the summit. The spire was gained via a long couloir on the SW Face, between it and Emmanuel, and the seven pitches of rock (up to IV) led to the top. The peak was named Tupilaq (2450m) and the route graded TD.

This team summited at 1am and during the descent, Brian Shackleton sustained a facial injury when loose rock was dislodged by an abseil rope. As they had been away for more than 30 hours the others set off from Base Camp on the morning of May 10 and met the Tupilaq team skiing back to base. The facial lacerations were later treated by the team medic, Colwyn Jones, on return to base camp.

Later, on the 10th, Bickerdike and Reid made the first ascent of a small, but prominent, unclimbed southerly outlier of Kapelle. This peak has an extraordinarily rotund and Christmas pudding like appearance and overlooked Base Camp. The route was via an easy couloir and snow fields to its east and the peak was called Rabsontinde (1640m – F).

On May 11, Preston, Reid, Bickerdike and Jones climbed the second highest of the four unclimbed peaks on the dividing ridge between the Upper Sefstroms and Grantabrae glaciers (the southerly of the two marked on Bennet's map). This has a double rock spire summit reminiscent of a lobster claw when viewed from the Sefstroms. It was climbed via a broad couloir (which they named the Coltart Couloir) lying between the mountain and the headwall of the Sefstroms Glacier which led to a snow ridge. A short rock pitch (V) led to the summit. The peak was named Coltart (2395m) and graded PD+. Descent was by reversing the route of ascent.

On May 12 it snowed heavily for 24 hours but on the 13th it dawned clearer and, while Bickerdike, Jones, Preston and Reid, rested and planned a renewed attempt on the first peak they had tried, Peden and Ravey tackled an unclimbed snow peak south-east of Coltart. This was climbed via the Coltart Couloir and a snow ridge. The slightly higher rickety rock spire to the west was not attempted. Descent was via the South Ridge and the Sefstroms Glacier Headwall. This peak of 2350m has been named Seanearbheinn. It was graded PD+.

At the same time, Reid and Shackleton attempted a group of three rock spires lying to the north-west of Tillyrie, via a couloir on the SW Face. Intense cold and ice-glazed rock forced a retreat just short of the summit.

Next day 36cm of snow put paid to further climbing and on May 15 they began

the journey back to Mesters Vig via the Kirkbrae, Col de Pulkes, Lang Gletscher, Trumpington Col, Schuchert Gletscher, Skel Pass, Skeldal and then pack ice to Mesters Vig air strip which was reached at 1.30am on the morning of the 21st. A considerable number of unclimbed peaks were observed in the area of the Upper Lang Glacier. None of the passes crossed was especially difficult, though all involved carrying loads, and there was no more than the standard level of objective danger to be expected in such terrain.

During the journey, there were further falls of snow which made the towing of pulks very strenuous and tiring. On lower passes, such as the Skel, conditions were abysmal with the party wading through chest high snow. One member of the team fell into a bergschrund but was fortunately saved by his rucksack which wedged on the upper lip. He was quickly rescued.

The party were flown from Mesters Vig at midday on the 21st and were swimming in the Blue Lagoon later the same day – their first bath for three weeks!

The team would like to express their appreciation to the following bodies who supported the expedition with grants: The Mount Everest Foundation, The British Mountaineering Council and The Gino Watkins Trust.

### **Himalayas**

GRAHAM LITTLE reports:– I spent seven weeks in Tibet as a member of the 1998 British Sepu Kangri Expedition led by Sir Chris Bonington. Our major sponsor was National Express, although many other companies and funding bodies gave us their support.

Sepu Kangri (White Sky God), an unclimbed 7000m peak, is by far the highest peak in the eastern sector of a great range of mountains called Nyainqentanghla Shan (lying to the north-east of the main Himalayan chain). This sacred mountain towers above a sacred lake fed by calving glaciers and is surrounded by many splendid unclimbed 6000m-plus peaks.

Our journey to Base Camp, at 4750m, was hampered by recent storms that had washed away many bridges and by the difficulties of hiring yaks at the height of the barley harvest. Transporting all our kit the 50 km to Base Camp had its fair share of drama including the crossing of single yak hide ropes strung across raging rivers and fending off the attentions of savage dogs.

Despite the good wishes of a hermit called Zamteng, who lives all year round at an altitude of 5000m below the mountain, poor weather and atrocious snow conditions frustrated two attempts on Sepu Kangri although Victor Saunders and Scott Muir got to within 200m of the summit on the second attempt. Graham Little and Scott Muir attempted Chomo Mangyal, 6236m, turning back 300m below the summit due to dangerous snow. The same pair made the first ascent of the relatively easy, but enjoyable, Thaga Ri, 5930m. Graham Little rounded off the trip with a solo ascent (of the final section) of Seamo Uylmitok, the Turquoise Flower, 6650m.

This expedition (and the one in 1997) will be the subject of a book (Bonington/Clarke) and a television series (Channel 4) in the spring of 1999.

All in all, the expedition proved a wonderful blend of travel, exploration, culture, technology (laptops, satellite communications, WEB site, video etc.), religion, politics, tourism, mountaineering, bridge (to an altitude of 6530m) and pumpky ice cragging on the overhanging flanks of the glacier – a unique and unforgettable trip.

### Two Short Trips to India

Geoff Cohen writes:— In July 1997 Hamish Irvine and I took a three-week holiday in Lahul, India. Returning to Manali after a 14-year absence I was unpleasantly surprised by the phenomenal growth in tourism. Scooter rickshaws and professional beggars have made their way up from the Indian plains, and the numbers of hotels must have increased four-fold. Compensations are a greater variety of good restaurants, especially Tibetan ones, and, if you are so inclined, opportunities to go rafting, parapenting, abseiling (!), motorbiking on the high mountain roads, and of course, trekking with every kind of support. Quite a change from the sleepy little village that I first visited 25 years ago, and even more so from the Manali of the 1950s when a Royal Air Force Mountaineering Association (RAFMA) team, including the young Donald Bennet, had a successful expedition here. It was only quite late in my researches for the trip that I realised that the Kulti glacier, which lies directly opposite the Rohtang Pass, had first been explored by Donald and his companions. Since that time there had been a few Indian and Japanese expeditions, but considering the ease of access it did not seem very popular. With so many higher and more spectacular peaks to choose from, in Kullu, Lahul and Spiti, perhaps this isn't so surprising, especially as many would prefer a more remote location over an easily accessible one — as we ourselves would have done had we had slightly more time.

For our first foray we went to Darcha and did a three-and-a-half-day trek back to Khoksar over the Tempo La (4930m). This is a little-used pass — the locals said it could be done in a day, but we saw very little sign of any passage, just a few shepherds lower down below 4000m. The approach to the north side of the pass is a long trudge up moraines enlivened by excellent views back towards the Koa Rong peaks. From the pass itself, a lonely spot adorned with a single small cairn, our gaze was drawn enticingly towards the central Lahul peaks. On the south side we had a very easy descent at first and then a slightly trickier negotiation of a dry glacier, that would have been quite straight-forward to ascend but presented a few route-finding problems and some worrying moments in descent, given our inadequate trekking footwear. Lower down the nala narrows and has big crags on the west side, before debouching into the main Chandra valley.

After restocking in Manali we took one porter and returned over the Rohtang for a six-hour walk up to a base camp in the Kulti nala. Climbing above this through a short rocky barrier we found ourselves in a large glacier basin, almost entirely moraines at this time of year. Compared with Donald Bennet's pictures the icefalls looked smaller and more difficult, and the glaciers less attractive (the RAFMA team's visit was earlier in the season, in June). Wet and grey weather, lack of fitness, lack of time, unpleasant moraines — all combined to put us off venturing towards the higher peaks surrounding the basin, although Akela Kila, first climbed by Bennet and Stewart looked a fine objective. The unclimbed north-east ridge of Ashagiri also looked accessible and would make a very attractive snow and ice climb. Lowering our sights we climbed instead a shapely rocky pyramid, marked as P. 17, 291ft on the RAFMA map, which provided a very pleasant scramble on reasonably sound rock, with no necessity for rope, axes or crampons. From our summit we saw immediately to our south an easy glacier leading south-east with some moderately straight-forward peaks at its head.

After a descent to base camp and some prospecting up the hillsides opposite we

decided to explore this 'East Kulti' glacier, as no record apparently exists of anyone visiting it. But before doing so we had an appointment to fulfil at the 'Muni Hotel' ... Hamish's apt description of the boulder camp next to our tent where a couple of Gaddi shepherds were installed with their flocks. Under a splendid Himalayan night sky a bottle of 'raksi' (local spirits) was quickly despatched, followed by a fiery noodle dish and the inevitable rice and dall. Conversation was limited unfortunately, but without words there was a friendly atmosphere and Hamish entered the lean to kitchen to record an impressive arrangement of pressure cookers that saw the shepherds through the summer.

Next morning after an icy paddle across the river we climbed steadily up to the East Kulti glacier, managing to avoid all difficulties, and the following day succeeded in reaching the highest peak at its head (about 19,500ft). The glacier was very easy, and as we climbed gave us increasingly fine views of the peaks of Central Lahul. About 800ft below the summit a fluted snow face led directly upwards, but owing to my tortoise like progress earlier the sun was up and the snow already softening. Hamish bravely led up a narrow avalanche runnel, but after a few hundred feet we moved to the break between the snow and a rocky face to the right for some interesting pitches, and finally traversed right onto the rocks for an exciting final pitch. As I reached the crest I was rewarded with a wonderful Brocken Spectre and views to the Kullu peaks, including the fine Mukar Beh which Donald had made the first ascent of so many years ago. The ridge was now very Alpine and gave us a short, but tiring, traverse on bad snow to the summit. The daytime cloud was beginning to swirl in but we had time to glimpse the mysteries of peaks above the Kukti and Chhatru nalas to the east which do not appear to have been visited. The descent was also Alpine – i.e. I felt light-headed and sleepy, the rock was bad and the abseils required patience. But we got down quite early in good order and next day reached base in terrific rain, which proved that the monsoon does indeed sometimes reach into Lahul!

Having enjoyed this successful trip I decided to attempt a similar venture with Mungo Ross in 1998. This time we wanted to go rather earlier, in May/early June, and consequently, had to choose an area some hundreds of miles south-east of Kullu. I had always wanted to go to the Gori Ganga, which was partly traversed by the intrepid 1950 Scottish Himalayan Expedition of Murray, Scott, Weir and McKinnon. Earlier in the century it was used by Longstaff to explore the eastern approaches to Nanda Devi, and before that it was known to the surveyors of the British Raj as the home of the most famous 'pundits' who explored the farther reaches of the Himalaya in disguise. The valley has only recently been re-opened to foreigners and was the base for the successful Panch Chuli expedition a few years ago (see SM CJ 1993).

Having suffered severe pre-monsoon heat in Delhi and a hellish bus ride to Haldwani we were greatly relieved to reach the roadhead at Munsiri on May 18. Though known to tourists, both Indian and foreign, this village is at a very different stage of development from Manali. It is still a quiet place, with little of interest in the bazaar and no-one trying a hard sell. The position of the village is very fine, several thousand feet above the Gori Ganga with thick forest above and a spectacular view across the valley to the Panch Chuli range.

We engaged three young porters and set off up the valley. The old path by the river had been swept away in a landslide and is currently being rebuilt, so on the second day we had to climb 3000ft to a little col and descend again through

wonderful chestnut forests. The Gori Ganga is an old trade route to Tibet and also used for annual movements of shepherds with huge flocks of sheep and goats. But we were a little earlier than the main animal migrations, so our company on the track was largely pony trains supplying the army posts that guard the upper reaches of the valley against the possibility of Chinese incursion. The scenery in the narrowest part of the gorge was stupendously beautiful – huge vegetated rock walls, a mighty torrent pounding enormous boulders and an ancient paved track, sometimes virtually in the river (and only preserved by gabions), and sometimes clinging to steps carved out of crags high above it.

Farther up the valley opened out and on the third day we reached the village of Martoli on a wonderful alp high above the junction of the Gori Ganga with the Lwan Gad which flows from Nanda Devi East. I had read so often about this village both in Tilman's book (he and Houston traversed out of the sanctuary this way after the successful 1936 ascent of Nanda Devi), and in Bill Murray's account of the 1950 Scottish expedition. Now we found, on a beautiful sunny afternoon with unbelievably bright grass shining in the fields, a silent deserted ruin. I was almost in tears as I wandered about the substantial village of several hundred houses nearly all completely ramshackle, with their gardens and interiors full of waist high nettles and weeds. It was as bad as any deserted Highland clachan, perhaps worse because more recent. The story is that after the Indo Chinese war of 1962 the trade with Tibet was completely stopped and these higher villages, which had once been quite wealthy and had sent their men trading hundreds of miles into Tibet in the summer and down to the Indian plains for the great fairs in the autumn, lost their *raison d'être*. To anyone who has seen a living Himalayan village, its alleyways full of grubby smiling children and animals, and the surrounding fields a hive of activity, it was painfully poignant to see this dead remnant.

Yet it wasn't totally dead. A voice called from one house and invited us in. Our host Natho Singh had arrived that day from down the valley. He had already set up his water pipe and little garden (including rare medicinal herbs taken from high on the glaciers). The rooms of his house were clean and well ordered, he had a good stock of food and the wisdom and skills of generations of hill men. It was a great pleasure and privilege to stay a few days with him.

Our first foray was up a nala on the east side of the Gori Ganga to look at the unexplored west face of Burphu Dhura. The path was poor, and as far as we got the prospects didn't look too good. The lower peaks were still smothered in soft snow and the way to the higher peaks would have required a long, hot and exhausting glacier tundra. Returning to Martoli we decided to go up the Shalang Gad, which runs south-west from there. It offered an easy approach and we were unlikely to be troubled by the company of other parties. The alternative was to take the Lwan Gad to Nanda Devi East base camp. This was a more interesting and difficult walk but it seemed that the base camp was quite popular with trekking parties. As it turned out we were so early in the season that no one would have bothered us and it would perhaps have been a more rewarding place to go – the base camp of Narspan Patti must have a fabulous situation under the huge face of Nanda Devi East, and with open views to Nanda Kot, shown attractively in Longstaff's 1905 photo.

Next day, accompanied for the first few miles by Natho Singh, and Nitya, a plucky American solo traveller who had turned up the previous evening, our little party set off for the Shalang. The freshness and clarity of the air early in the morning, and early in the season, were incredible: from a shoulder before we turned

into our valley we sat and gazed at the beautiful mixed south-east ridge of Nanda Devi East, with the true goddess only partially visible behind. Our Shalang Gad gave us lovely warm grass for a few hours, but higher up we got into soft snow, still covering most of the shepherds' summer campsites. We encouraged the porters on, but next morning they walked less than an hour before leaving us at the last place where fresh water was running, still some way from the glacier. We prospected up a pretty curving moraine ridge with the huge but rather loose and unattractive south-east face of Nanda Kot towering above us.

We had already realised that with only a week at our disposal and everything covered in deep soft snow we could only attempt the nearest peaks. Our choices were Shalang Dhura (5678m), a very easy snow peak on the south side of the glacier, and Nandakhani (6029m), a shapely little peak dwarfed by the bulk of Nanda Kot on its right. We chose Nandakhani and over the next few days gradually moved ourselves up its east ridge to a camp on a flat section at about 5300m. Pre-dawn we had very easy walking on the lower glacier, and lovely cramponing up the initial slopes of the ridge, but from 7am onwards the heat and the snow made upwards progress unappealing. The result was a good deal of festering, unhelpt by terrible problems with our primus stove. After a couple of nights at this top camp we were lucky to get a slightly cloudier day, and on May 29 had an easy, but interesting, climb to the summit. Although we carried rope and gear we had no need of it as the snow was in quite good condition, though not well frozen. We got views of most of the surrounding peaks including back across the Gori Ganga to the excellent Kalabaland mountains. Nanda Kot loomed over us to the north, obscuring Nanda Devi and the other peaks of the sanctuary.

It was good to get down next day off the snow to grass and water, and then to return to Martoli and Natho Singh's 'home cooking'. It had been a little strange being up there before all the shepherds, and indeed before most of the spring flowers. Only a few weeks later all those upper alps would be alive with men and their flocks, but we had had the valley to ourselves.

We spent a day visiting Milam, the highest village in the Gori Ganga, formerly home to many famous pundits and climbers, and vividly described by Bill Murray in his book of the 1950 expedition. It was a thoroughly depressing experience. An ill-cared for army post staffed by bored recruits guarded entry to another largely ruined, roofless and insanitary village with only a few unhealthy looking families lurking here and there. Perhaps it was the fact that I myself was feeling unwell, but even sight of the splendid 7000m peaks Tirsuli and Hardeol at the head of the Milam glacier failed to lift the spirits. I felt a lot happier when we descended and sampled again the beauties of the lower gorge where more and more flocks jostled up the old trail, and on the untracked opposite bank troops of monkeys watched us curiously from the jungle. All in all, we felt happy to have seen another wonderful area of the Himalaya with, as ever, untold potential for further climbing of every level of difficulty.

RONNIE ROBB writes of his expedition last year to the Kanchenjunga region of East Nepal. The small team of three included Dave Robb (his brother) and Bruce Bricknell. They had permits to attempt the unclimbed Dhromo (6900m) and Tengkongma (6210m) which has had three previous ascents. They were part of a larger group 'Medical Expeditions', which had permits for the North ridge of Kanchenjunga (8586m) and Ramtang (6700m). Aside from the mountaineering,



Medex's' objectives were to carry out research into high altitude illnesses which they very successfully achieved after basing themselves at the common base camp for the area, Pangpengma for more than two months.

The first disappointing aspect of the trip came when Ronnie and his group met Doug Scott and Roger Mears during the 16-day walk-in where they proudly announced the first ascent of Dhromo! Along with this disappointing news came information about a difficult route with poor protection and one which required good weather, acclimatisation and hence a lot more time than was available.

The Kanchenchenjunga team had abandoned their attempt at the castle (7400m), 43 days after arriving at BC in the face of terrible weather and depleting resources. Ronnie and his team therefore turned their attention to Tengkongma after a brief acclimatisation period.

They left base camp on October 20, and established a high camp at 5500m. The following day the three climbed an initial ice cliff and crossed 2km of glacier to a high col. At this point the weather deteriorated and the visibility reduced to 30m. A broken rock buttress led onto an exposed ridge with huge cornices overhanging the Broken Glacier 1000m somewhere below. More worrying than the weather was the snow conditions. The team was moving up on wind slab slope interspersed with small seracs and crevasses and it was now 2pm.

Eventually, they decided that the risks were too great and descended approximately 150m from the summit. They returned to base camp the day after and commenced the return journey over the Mirgin La and back to Suketar, 12 days later via the Omje Kohla.

The area is very remote with superb views of Kambachen, Cross Peak, Wedge Peak and Jannu. During the trip they also attempted to follow in the footsteps of Dr. Sandy Kellas, a fellow Aberdonian explorer who came this way in 1912. They were beaten to this as well by Lindsay Griffin who made an ascent to the Longridge Pass in the pre-monsoon period of 1998.

Finally, after all the near misses on the hill, Ronnie come closest to death when he was stung by a flying insect and discovered that he suffers from Anaphyloxis, a severe and potentially fatal allergy to insect venom. If ever there was a time to be surrounded by doctors and sufficient supplies of adrenaline it was now and he made a complete recovery. Who needs to go climbing to be an adrenaline junkie?

### **Australasia**

DAVE BROADHEAD reports:— One of my long-standing ambitions as a schoolteacher had been to do a year's job exchange in either Canada or New Zealand, close to some interesting hills, but as is oft the way with the best laid plans, it did not work out quite like that. Arriving in Brisbane, Australia in January 1997 I was as excited as the rest of the family at the prospect of sunshine, ocean and rainforest, but rather hazy about the climbing prospects in south-east Queensland, if any.

A few weeks before, at the Annual Dinner in Strathpeffer, Tom Weir had reminded me of A. L. Cram's extensive antipodean adventures, faithfully reported in various *SMCJs* which I hastily perused as I transferred my precious volumes to the loft, out of the way of the incoming Aussies who were to live in our house. Hamish Irvine agreed to look after Ling Hut and lent me a guidebook to Frog Buttress just outside Brisbane where he had climbed on his travels some years before. Willie Jeffrey supplied a list of names and addresses of possible climbing partners and Steve Chadwick knew Brisbane well enough to extol the virtues

cragging at Kangaroo Point beside the river near the city centre where the City Council kindly floodlight the cliffs to allow climbing in the cool of the evening. Another convenience for the Brisbane-based climber is that most of the half-dozen gear shops are located next door to each other in Fortitude Valley, along with an indoor climbing wall and most of the city's Chinese businesses.

With so many other things to do my rock shoes and the Frog Buttress guide did not get as much use as hoped, but we did discover the pleasures of bushwalking. The *Bushpeoples Guide to Bushwalking in South-East Queensland* published by Bushpeople Publications provides an extensive introduction on skills (no surprises here), some superb colour photos and lots of useful sketch maps, suggested walks and route details. Peak-bagging has never really taken off in Queensland, presumably because many of the most notable peaks are featureless and covered in forest, including Mt. Superbus, at 1375m the highest peak in the area. However, there are enough interesting hills to provide a number of enjoyable outings.

A short drive to the north and close to the Bruce Highway, the Glasshouse Mountains rise abruptly from the fiat coastal plain. The remains of volcanic plugs, they were named by Captain Cook and present dramatic profiles, low enough that all or most of the eight peaks can be climbed in an energetic weekend. Second highest and most spectacular, Mt. Coonowrin (Crookneck (377m) has one exposed traverse (known as Salmon's Leap after an early pioneer bushwalker Bert Salmon) which keeps away all but the most intrepid. Mt. Beerwah (556m) and Mt. Tibrogargan (364 m) are popular slabby scrambles with extensive views across fields of pineapple and exotic conifer plantations out to the coast and there are legends to go with their beautiful Aboriginal names.

South of Brisbane, enormous volcanic activity about 22 million years ago centered on Mt. Warning (1157m) which is now a distinctive landmark and a fine viewpoint of the remains of the surrounding caldera. Leading into the northern New South Wales interior, the Cunningham Highway crosses the Scenic Rim through Cunningham's Gap – a handy starting point for half-days on Mt. Cordeaux (1135m) and Mt. Mitchell (1168m) despite the rumble of trucks spoiling the sounds of the rainforest. On nearby Mt. Barney (1351m) our views were limited by the haze of late winter (dry season) bushfires. One of the most popular local hills with a choice of routes to the top, the well trodden South (Peasants) Ridge is highly recommended. My wife, Moira, climbed the South East Ridge with a party from the Brisbane Bushwalking Club (led by an expat. Scot) which involved considerable bushwacking.

Farther afield, on the way to Canberra we spent a few days in the Warrumbungle National Park, where a half-day around the Grand High Tops (Pineham) Trail gives splendid views of an impressive jumble of spires, dykes and domes, the remains of another volcano, with some good rock climbing possibilities. Deep in outback Queensland, beyond Roma though still east of the Great Dividing Range, Carnarvon Gorge National Park has miles of spectacular sandstone cliffs cut with narrow side canyons. On the Queensland coast, Fraser Island, the world's largest sand island has no mountaineering interest whatever, but what a wonderful place to spend a few days wandering among magnificent forests and freshwater lakes. Moreton Island boasts the world's highest sand dune and the chance to try sand tobogganing. So if you ever get the chance to visit south-east Queensland, remember to take your boots (and a compass).

## REVIEWS

**A Dream of White Horses - Recollections of a Life on the Rocks:-** Edwin Drummond, (Baton Wicks. 1997. £8.99, 224 pp, illustrations, paperback. ISBN 1-898573-220).

This is the second edition of a book which first appeared in 1987. It was reviewed in the 1988 Journal by Geoff Dutton, who should be consulted for a more analytical opinion. This is a justly famous book and many of you will already have the first edition.

For those who do not, I can say that this is probably the pinnacle of the solipsist school of mountaineering writing and will either fascinate or repel. Drummond is a poet, a writer, a political activist and a mountaineer. He is other things besides. This book is heady stuff – mainly Ed's head. The reader is taken on a detailed topographic tour of his emotional states with occasional bits of rock sticking through. In 1968 he wrote to Royal Robbins asking him to act as reporter for his, Drummond's, project to make a solo ascent of North American Wall. He is honest enough to quote from Royal's magisterial reply: 'It sounds more like hubris than love of the warm rock beneath your hand...I want nothing to do with it.' This book can be read as the history of the Gods' protracted and convoluted revenge.

It is a vividly written mixture of autobiography, accounts of highly-uncomfortable ascents of big walls and poetry. It also includes the famous essay on Jim Perrin's biography of Menlove Edwards. This stands apart from the rest of the book and reveals an analytical and intellectual individual (albeit over-keen to remind us that he too had a University education). This is worth the purchase price alone.

Some readers may be put off by the continuous emphasis on Drummond's thoughts and emotions and suspect that the mountain is treated more as a stage than as an object of desire; but few writers can convey such a sense of tension and uncertainty in perilous situations. His ascents range from Romsdal to Yosemite by way of St. John's Head. Epics are described here, or rather the emotions of experiencing epics. Anyone wishing to repeat his routes will have to look elsewhere for topographical guidance. In those days big wall climbing was not a weekend excursion, several weeks would be spent on a suitable piece of vertical rock proving Drummond's Law of Face Climbing. This states that the time taken for a route is an exponential function of the number of haul bags. His capacity for suffering in the cause of his art is thoroughly documented and at times one wonders if he is undergoing penance (a slowly ascending Simon Stylites) rather than fulfilling mountaineering ambitions.

His emotional experiences on the horizontal also take up much of the book. He appears to have crunched his way to the cliffs over a scree of women. Few mountaineering books are as honest about the conflicting demands of domesticity and real living.

In summary, this is a terrifically written piece of mountaineering autobiography with some good (if not always totally successful) poems and an interesting essay thrown in to spice the dish. Best taken in small doses, each preferably followed by a cooling chapter of *Hamish's Mountain Walk* or some such native product.

Bob Richardson.

**The Munros CD-Rom:**—Edited by Donald Bennet and Ken Crocket. (The Scottish Mountaineering Club, 1998, multi-media CD, £40, ISBN 0-907521-56-8).

With a 16-year-old son whose main hobbies are mountains and computers, what better present, I thought to myself last Christmas, could I buy than the new CD-ROM —*The Munros* produced by the SMC. What better way to study and learn about the hills and mountains of Scotland except by being out on the hill himself?

It has taken us (I now use it continually as well) several months of extensive use to examine everything this CD ROM has to offer — there is so much!

Once the CD is loaded, you are presented with the main menu of icons (small pictures) representing the different sections of the disc. The largest area is undoubtedly the Munros area itself. On choosing this you are presented with a map of Scotland split into 17 areas e.g. the Cairngorms, Glen Affric and Kintail, and Skye and Mull, to name but three. Clicking the mouse in an area takes you to a description of that area and a more detailed map showing each Munro along with major roads, rivers and lochs.

You can now click on a Munro and after being given a Gaelic pronunciation, you get a description of the ascent route which can be printed out if need be. You are also presented with more icons which allow you to record your ascent in a log book; view an animated route map, and receive a commentary on the route. You don't get someone talking to you from a book!

There is also a series of photographs of each mountain; some have virtual flights of the mountain and surrounding area.

At all times a help icon is available if you are unsure of what you are doing. You can search for particular mountains you want to appear next, and move backwards and forwards through those which you have viewed. Many of the mountains have a Harvey's map icon showing, indicating that such a map is available for that Munro.

The next section of the main menu is the Logbook, which not only brings together the individual logs found with each Munro, but allows you to add extra details of the ascent — who your companions were etc.

The Gallery section gives 280 stunning full-screen photographs of the Scottish mountains. The clarity and depth of the photography loses nothing from being presented in this digital form and these photographs truly show the mountains of Scotland in their full glory.

The Web icon gives a wide variety of e-mail addresses and internet sites which may be of interest to both hillwalkers and climbers. These range from weather information to manufacturers such as Berghaus to the Mountain Bothies Association. All these links are 'live' which means that if you have an internet connection open while you are viewing the CD-ROM, you can go to any of these sites to view the information provided there.

It is the next section — Backpack, which shows the real advantages of providing information in an electronic form. This section is divided into seven sub-sections:

*History* — first hill-walkers, Sir Hugh Munro, how Munros were defined, etc. *Flora and fauna* — the wildlife and vegetation of the Scottish hills. *Clothing and equipment, avalanche awareness and navigation* — the three sections which clearly

show why this CD-ROM is so much better than a book. The information given is in many cases expanded on by the use of video clips on, e.g., new outdoor fabrics, use of general and winter equipment, how to test the snow for avalanche danger, how to use a map and compass and so on. There is a tourist information section which gives e-mail and internet addresses of Scottish tourist organisations and finally a *Glossary* explaining a whole range of terms from abseil to wind-chill.

The Trivia and Quiz section is an interesting little section which gives you really important information such as the record for Munro ascents was, until recently, 6278 while the highest number of completed rounds is 9! The quiz involves reaching the top of a mountain by answering correctly a series of easy/moderate/severe questions on Munros. If you fail to reach the top and descend before nightfall you are gobbled up by a wolf.

Do I have any criticisms? Yes, but only one or two and they are minor. I would have liked to see a comprehensive list of summits with their tops and their heights. Also, the music played at intervals throughout the sections can get a bit irritating at times, but I suppose that's because I linger too long at certain places.

All in all I would thoroughly recommend this CD-ROM. It may be slightly overpriced at £40, but considering the lists of contributors at the end, you are receiving only the very best information and advice. The whole package is highly informative, educational, easy to follow and most importantly, it is fun.

David Mackie.

**The Ordinary Route:**—Harold Drasdo (Ernest Press 1998, 258 pp., £12.50, ISBN 0-94815-346-6)

I have to admit that this book presented me with a dilemma. As a reader I wanted to go slowly, to savour passages, to reflect on what the author is saying. As a reviewer I needed to finish it quickly so I could put pen to paper (or rather fingers to keyboard). Drasdo, after a lifetime of experience, not just of climbing, but of teaching, travelling and observing, has something to say, and a reflective style to help him say it. So much climbing literature is either written by, or about, elite climbers and their achievements – something for the reader to admire but not to identify with. Drasdo sets out deliberately to follow the Ordinary Route, and to use it as a symbol for the more commonplace, yet often extraordinary personal experiences that climbing provides.

The format of the book is essentially a series of recollections and reflections on a lifetime of climbing. It starts (and ends) with a somewhat autobiographical tone, which somehow seemed a little out of place. Perhaps this material could have been worked into some of the other chapters to better effect. He considers some of the essential by-products of the climbing lifestyle – ethics, getting lost, nights out, falling ('it was only the cliff that flashed before me, never my life'), death – and he reflects on the value of these experiences, how we deal with them and what we learn from them. There are lengthy deliberations on access, conservation and climbing as an art form. An historical section on the development of the West Yorkshire climbing scene in the 1950s and the Wall End Barn era in Langdale provides some well-observed characters, and shows that despite changing times there is still much to connect experience then and now. Some climbs are described, but always in the

context of place, companions, motivations and other incidentals that are often central to the plot.

In this book it is the scenes and experiences that go with the climbing, rather than the actual climbs themselves, that combine to give so much interest to the content. The moves, the difficulties, the details of the pitches, are rarely described fully, and you don't miss them. It is the world through which the climber moves, and which is observed so accurately and intelligently, that is the substance of this book. The climber's predilection for challenge, for looking round the next, unlikely corner, for coping with uncertainty and persevering against resistance, does not just find its expression on climbs, but in an outlook on life and a persistent curiosity. Interestingly, the author's 'finest hour', at least in terms of British rock climbing, was the first ascent of North Crag Eliminate; yet in the reading of the book it comes across merely as an averagely exciting day out. By comparison scenes and experiences described elsewhere – sometimes not even climbs – are described far more vividly and intensely, as true Ordinary Routes.

Drasdo's writing brings his observation to life. It is rich in analogy and metaphor – maps as poems without beginning or end, first ascents as scientific discoveries (the common thirst for knowledge, exploration and personal recognition); hitch-hiking as the original inspiration for *Waiting for Godot*. A quasi biblical ascent of Mount Sinai, resonant with thousands of years of human experience of the wilderness; the lone echoing trumpeter at Montserrat; the limestone mountains surrounding Athens warmed by the Mediterranean light – these scenes are evoked with finely-crafted prose, often understated, to sometimes dazzling effect.

The metaphor of the Ordinary Route (as the most logical, elegant and simplest solution to a particular challenge) can be applied not just to rock faces, or mountain climbs, but to all manner of human endeavours, and even to one's passage along the journey of life itself. This is, to me, what Drasdo seems to be getting at. On the strength of this book, the Ordinary Route is certainly an ascent worth aspiring to.

Adam Kassyk.

**Scotland's Mountains before the Mountaineers:**– Ian Mitchell. (Luath Press, 1998. £9.99, ISBN 0-946-487-39-1).

Mountaineering activities in Scotland have been recorded in detail for little more than a century, but obviously, there was much mountain involvement by people for many different reasons and throughout a long period. This must extend back to prehistoric times when settlers first moved into the Highlands. This book is not about the mountains themselves and does not seek to describe them, nor does it try to deal with the movement through and among the mountains which must have existed since earliest times, except by occasional reference. As Ian Mitchell says in his introduction it is about the 'explorations, ascents, travels, social relations in the mountains before mountaineering became an organised sport from the middle of the last century'. He includes the 2000-year span since the hill forts were built although there is little specific material on which he can draw until about 1070 AD when King Malcolm Canmore awarded a prize to the victor of a hill race up Creag Choinnich at Braemar. The traditional Gaelic names which still exist for so many detailed features of the hills are evidence of abundant activity in the mountains from

early times. However, it is not until the 16th century that ascents of particular mountains can be identified. Most of the material in this book inevitably relates to the next 400 years when there are written records.

Anyone who knows the substantial paper by D. B. Horn, *The Origins of Mountaineering in Scotland* from the 1966 Journal (Vol. 28) will recognise that this book contains much that is referred to in that article. Of course that in turn drew on a series of five shorter articles by different authors, *The Rise and Progress of Mountaineering in Scotland*, in the 1894 Journal (Vol. 3). Campbell Steven's *The Story of Scotland's Hills* (Robert Hale, 1975) is another of Mitchell's sources. However, much research has gone into the writing of this book and the useful bibliography lists no fewer than 163 references from 140 different sources. The text does not use footnotes; where direct quotations are used they are always clearly identified and a good many other direct references are bracketed. The bibliography must be consulted to track other sources. This departure from more conventional academic style is more fluid and easily read, while maintaining opportunities for pursuing further information.

Ian Mitchell divides the Highlands into four parts, relating to the familiar SMC divisions as follows: Central: Southern Highlands and Central Highlands excluding the Monadhliath. Cairngorms: Cairngorms District with the addition of the Monadhliath. West: Western and Northern Highlands combined. Islands: Islands including Skye. He takes each area in turn, giving the descriptions and recorded ascents of the principal mountains from the earliest travellers to the more interesting 19th century visitors. Inevitably, the reader will encounter the names of the more peripatetic several times but their full pictures will only be drawn once. If any confusion is felt it may be resolved by reference to a chronological list of events in the Appendix.

At times I felt that the attempts to identify the first recorded ascents of hills was overdone and pretty meaningless anyway, but it was interesting to read the evidence suggesting that the first Munro to have a recorded ascent was Beinn Fhionnlaidh in the 1580s (by Black Findlay of the Deer). I was surprised to find no reference to the first recorded avalanche accident (at Gaick in 1800), nor to the 1834 description by 'Frederick Fag' of Cairngorm as 'a dreary mountain where stones, gathered in the Andes and purchased in London for twopence a piece, are sold to the silly southern Sassenachs as real Cairngorms for five shillings each'. However, there was plenty of interesting information new to me. This is a user friendly book and useful to have on the shelf as it is well endowed with the means to check on individuals or events by means of the index, the chronology or the bibliography. For me it also added character to some individuals who may have only been names vaguely remembered – why was Lugless Willie Lithgow (Goatfell, 1628) lugless? – why was Taylor who was on Mount Keen in 1618 called the Water Poet? – what did the confiscated estates Commissioner James Robertson (1771) actually climb when he was touring about the Highlands? – and the energetic minister George Skene Keith (1811)? – the remarkably indefatigable Thomas Colby and his team of the early Ordnance Surveyors (1819) – and J. D. Forbes the pioneer of glacial geology and first ascender of Sgurr nan Gilleann (1836) – and so on.

Bill Brooker.

**The Munroist's Companion:**— Compiled and Edited by Robin N. Campbell, viii+328pp, published 1999 by the Scottish Mountaineering Trust, ISBN 0-907521-50-9, £16.

This is a retro Munro anthology. Its eight chapters divide loosely into three sections of roughly 100 pages each. The first examines *The Pioneers*: writings by and about Hugh Munro and the early completers of his list. Then comes the most innovative section, statistical Table talk by Bonsall, Purchase and others along with a complex *Variorum Table* of Munro changes that readers will either pore over or skip completely. Finally, a rag-bag of essays on *Technical Advice* (altimeter measurements, axe technique, navigation), followed by *Predicaments* (SMCers getting lost), and *The Modern Munroist*.

This review has neither space nor intention to analyse individual essays, most of which have appeared before. Suffice it to say there is much interesting (if often stodgy) material here, although the procession of well-heeled white males wears a little by the end. The early accounts are notable for their other era feel, their exploration of unknown territories, their tales of crazy glissading and pipe-smoking, quaint talk of housemaids, trains to Callander and pony trap 'machines'.

Anthologies such as this must be reviewed for overall approach, with attention focused on contents, introduction and footnotes rather than on the essays themselves. On this basis Campbell starts well, his short, but clear, preface promising much opinionated annotation ahead. But he then backs off, intervening far less than might be wished. Sure, he chips in with footnotes and cross references plus occasional introductions to chapters, but he prefers to let unabridged texts speak for themselves rather than taking a hands-on approach. This has two consequences: the reader is denied Campbell's informed opinions on matters about which he is an acknowledged expert, and the book itself carries much ballast, essays appearing in full when some canny cut-and-paste editing might have seen less become more.

The image of Campbell as cautious editor should not, however, imply a lack of care. That this is a labour of love, born of much rummaging through archives, is seen most clearly in its marvellous photographs. These in themselves justify the book, and the publishers are to be congratulated for allocating full pages to superb portraits of Ronald Burn and Rooke Corbett. There is also an on-hill picture of James Gall Inglis where, with his van der Graaff frizz of hair, he looks like some Caucasian Don King. Textually, Campbell does well in rejecting 'compleat' and noting that 'Sir Hugh' is inappropriate in respect of the 1891 list since Munro was not knighted until 1913. He is very good on the background to the revisions, seeing off those who harp on about the infallible merit of the original version. There is detail on those quirk Tops initially given precedence over main summits, and a perceptive observation that the first revision, in 1921, was far more substantial than any since.

Campbell's approach to footnotes does, however, seem oddly erratic, as with the absence of any translation of Munro's obituary notice from a French newspaper. Douglas and Raeburn then offer navigational advice based on 18° magnetic variation, when surely the modern figure should be appended lest some casual reader stow the old version for on-hill use. And there is mention of Colin Campbell of Glenure shortly after a (footnoted) account of the antics of Colin Campbell of Meggernie. This cries out for comment on whether these men were related, yet receives none – and this from a Campbell!



This is nibbling at the edges, however. The book's main disappointment is its failure to represent the great mass of Munroists, who rarely encroach beyond the endpapers. Post-Second World War is woefully under-represented (primarily by a mere 30 pages at the end including the book's best piece, by Sandy Cousins), while female Munroists are almost completely absent. With regard to the modern era, Campbell would presumably point to his preface, where he writes: 'Although there is a section containing accounts written by modern Munroists, I have excluded the writings of the swift, the multiply-completing [sic], the 277-in-one-gulpers, etc – for these are not typical Munroists.'

This is flawed thinking. It is unclear what Campbell regards as 'swift', since while he chastises Paddy Heron for 'bolting down the Munros in a few feverish years', he devotes considerable space to John Dow, who rattled round within six years. Dow technically started with Ben Lomond in May 1895, but completed a round, including Lomond again, between the Ardlui Vorlich on 9/8/27 and Beinn na Lap on 4/6/33. And gimmick completions surely started with Parker, who began with the southernmost on 19/7/1883 and ended with the northernmost on 19/7/27.

Perhaps 'swift' refers to single-expedition 'gulpers' like Brown, Murgatroyd, Keeping, Caldwell, Lincoln and Allum, but Campbell is unfair to also exclude their moderately swift colleagues. Although he claims (p288) to side with 'the Ordinary Munroist', he merely ends up looking prejudiced against the vast bulk of completions from unattached hillgoers or members of non-SMC clubs. Many ordinary Munroists will feel this book is no particular companion to them.

As to women, they are completely companionless. This is an overwhelmingly male book, with no articles by women nor indeed many women meriting mention. Campbell observes that Munroing is 'for Everyman (and, of course, Everywoman)', but so ignores his own point that it comes as a shock when Anne Macintyre pops up in David Broadhead's *Monadh Liath* piece near the end. Again the absence might be defended by the book having been built chiefly around Victorian and Edwardian journals of exclusively male clubs, but Campbell willingly draws in articles from elsewhere. Female narratives are available, and their absence is gaping, especially with the first two female 'Slammers' still alive. Anne Littlejohn and Lorna Anderson (née Ticehurst) deserve coverage in a book such as this, and their presence would have added greatly to its liveliness and credibility. Anderson particularly has had a remarkable, thrilling life, yet she doesn't merit even a footnote here. Similarly, the first female Munroist remains 'Mrs J. Hirst'. John Hirst's wife might indeed have answered to this, but as Docharty names her Annie Wells there is evidence that she was considerably more free-spirited. Campbell has, ironically, done some good work in tidying the Munroists' list – removing the redundant numbering, introducing James Gall Inglis in 1938, commenting that Edred Corner should probably be in, and returning Alfred Slack to his correct 1950 position (although where is Chris Andrews, obituarised in the 1954 *Journal* as having completed the Munros?)

Campbell appears more interested in altimeters than in women. Aneroids feature heavily in the *Technical Advice* section, with accounts of hill-measuring by Collie, James Gall Inglis, Parker and Corbett. Campbell's zeal for subjective measurement is touching, but somewhat misguided. He comments that 'most of the heights "determined" by the pioneers using these methods turned out to be more correct

than the mapped heights obtained by triangulation and levelling'. This, unqualified, is nonsense. Even 100 years ago the majority of map heights were reasonably reliable, and certainly to be trusted more than on-hill measurements made in uncertain conditions. The aneroid-carriers themselves undermine Campbell's statement, continually scurrying to known spot heights to check their hand-held readings. Not for nothing does Corbett speak of his 'pocket liar'.

Aneroids also feature in the book's most marked silence, its lack of comment on the promotion of Knight's Peak to Top status. Lacking any cartographic evidence, this was easily the most controversial element of the 1997 revision. The OS has published no 914m figure, while Harveys suggest 911.5m plus-or-minus a metre. There is suspicion that promotion arose through lobbying by Campbell himself (his article in the 1992 Journal, not reproduced here, says: 'If there is room to doubt the OS heights [...] Knight's Peak should be given the benefit of that doubt and included as a new Top'). Given this strength of opinion he is oddly quiet (apart from a picture caption) when Collie specifically discusses the Pinnacle Ridge. Then there is the entry in the *Variorum Table*. Campbell specifically codifies any 'approximate height measured by climbers', the implication being that all other heights are formal mappings. Hence the 1921 hand-held height of Carn a'Mhaim is marked, likewise for the now-deleted Faochag. But Knight's Peak receives a straight figure, with no mention of aneroid measurement. Is Campbell being coy? This reviewer found himself not quite trusting the *Variorum Table* because of this.

So, an interesting and worthwhile book, but a flawed one. Neither a flowing, hard-to-put-down history of Munro-climbing nor a truly entertaining dip into this vast and complex subject. The book lacks the lightness and variability in tone of miscellanies such as Chernev's *The Chess Companion*, or Ross's *The Cricketer's Companion*. Somehow, somewhere, it falls between a straight-forward celebration of its subject and a treatise arguing for a certain approach. Maybe Campbell is simply too deferential to the great hillgoers of the past, but more of his opinions would have made this a more relevant book for the modern generation.

This links with the question of the book's title, which feels slightly misjudged. An indefinite article would have helped, plus some time-frame context given the extent that Campbell majors on early Munroists. *The Munros – An Early History*, perhaps. Although *The Munroist's Companion* implies something for Munroists rather than about them, it is odd that Arran makes several appearances and that the cover paintings show people-free scenes from way before Munro, while many of Campbell's writers are not listed Munroists. Backhouse, Cohen, Collie, Dutton, Goggs, Lawson, Naismith, Raeburn, plus of course Munro and Campbell themselves; many humble but genuinely complete Munroists could be excused feeling a little cheated. And what of the 'First Munroist' himself, the Rev. Robertson? When Campbell quotes AER's notorious Wyvis statement ('near the top [...] I turned'), he doubts whether 'this matters greatly'. Such generosity is touching, but there does seem clear evidence that Robertson knowingly failed on Wyvis, didn't bother returning, and yet still claimed completion. Since Campbell has passed up his chance to be genuinely innovative here, this review ends by formally suggesting that Ronald Burn should be henceforth regarded as the first of the breed.

Dave Hewitt.

**Valais Alps West, Selected Climbs:-** Lindsay Griffin (Alpine Club Guidebooks 1998, 448 pp. plus 97 photo/diagrams, eight colour plates, £19.50, ISBN 0-900523-61-1).

The photograph of the Matterhorn on the cover of this new guide boldly announces that this is a rather different publication from the previous edition, the Robin Collomb *Pennine Alps West*, which was a slimmer volume covering a more limited area. The new AC series covers the Pennine Alps in two volumes; this guide extends from the Grand Combin massif in the west, to the Matterhorn and Dent Blanche in the east. The slightly arbitrary eastern boundary was presumably defined to create two volumes of equal size. In practice, it makes for a more interesting volume with a wider selection of different types of climbing than the earlier edition, including four of the increasingly popular 'vier-tausender'. The downside is that if you are intending to base your climbing trip in the Zermatt Valley you will probably have to buy both volumes.

This new edition is long overdue. Much has changed in this area, and plenty of new lines have been climbed. There are many references to the recession of glaciers and ice faces, and the consequent exposure of large areas of fractured rock. For this reason the guide often recommends climbs to be undertaken outside the peak summer season – not a bad idea if it popularises climbing at other times of the year.

The introductory notes are very comprehensive, and include sources for weather forecasts and information on valley rock climbs. Another useful feature is a list of climbs by valley base. More than 400 routes are on offer, including 17 different possibilities on the Matterhorn and a choice of 12 different lines on the north side of the Dent Blanche, for those so inclined. New rock climbs have been added to the lower peaks in recent years, and despite the reputation of Valais rock, they sound very fine. However, despite the famous north faces, this is still primarily an area for the lower to middle grade climber, bagging classic snow peaks and doing fine rock scrambles. There are still many routes where you would be unlikely to meet anyone else, and plenty of scope for long traverses and extended adventures.

I noticed that several of the established easier routes have been upgraded, and the text includes many usefully informative comments, particularly for that first alpine trip. The note that 'several parties have actually failed on the walk to the Col de Tsarmine – a strenuous and daunting undertaking for the unfit' evoked a wry smile. That was my first alpine day out – if only we'd known! A worthwhile investment, even at the (rather steep) price, whether just for your bookshelf or for that next trip.

Adam Kassyk.

**Shouting Wind and Shining Cloud – The Bens of Jura:-** Jonathan Macarthur Crow (The Celtic House, Bowmore, Islay, 1998, 52 pp., £4.95, paperback. No ISBN.)

This is the kind of slim book you might see displayed in a hotel foyer or on the counter of a coffee shop. The author has clearly been struck by the hills of southern Jura and has compiled a mixture of description, commentary, folk-lore (of even more dubiety than usual) and verse. There are illustrations and sketches. The book is true to its title and focuses entirely in its physical descriptions on the Paps and the hills to the south and ignores completely the bulk of this fascinating island.

This is not a book for the mountaineer or climber but it does have a certain charm while the author's diligence in bringing together historical references to Jura and the Paps is commendable.

Bob Richardson.

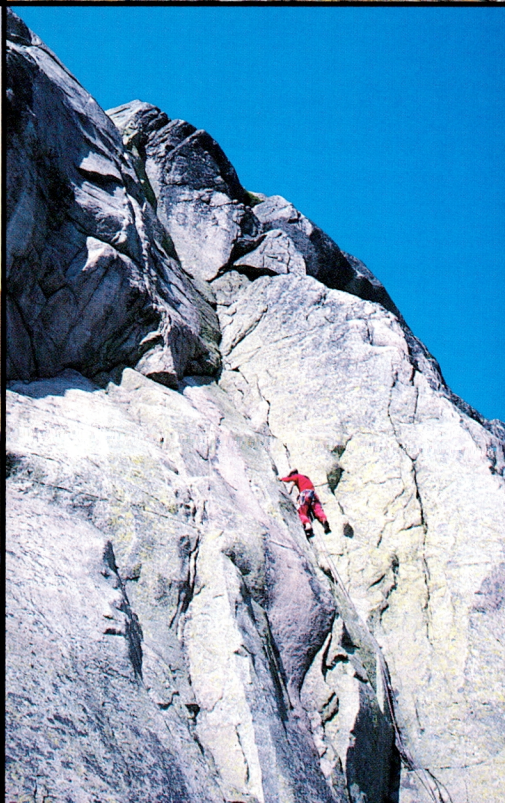
*South Ridge of the Salbitschijen, Switzerland. Photo: Alastair Matthewson.*

*Family Holidays in the Arctic. Leif Anderson (8) is 'Just checkin' for them bears', Juno Sound, East Greenland. Photo: Douglas Anderson.*









### Also received

**Ticks, A Lay Guide to a Human Hazard:-** George Hendry and Darrel Ho-Yen. (1998, Mercat Press, Edinburgh. 96pp, illus., £4.99. ISBN 1-873644-80-9.)

Flushed with the success of his earlier book on the dreaded midge, the author has bashed on to do this one on the slightly-less dreaded tick. I'm afraid though, that as a practical guide for walkers and tourists I regard the book as 95 pages of wasted paper. The only really useful bit is encapsulated in a text box on page 74, where it tells you, if you need to know, how to remove a tick (gently, with tweezers and no twisting.) There, I've given you the whole story in six words and saved you £4.99. I suppose I could gild the lily and advise sweaty gaiters in summer with strong DEET sprayed on. Biologically, given the statistically low incidence of Lyme disease, I'm more worried by *Giardia*.

**The Kurt Diemberger Omnibus:- Spirits of The Air, Summits and Secrets, and The Endless Knot.** (Bâton Wicks/The Mountaineers, 1999, £16.99, 235mm x 150mm h/back, 864 pages, 24pp of photo (8 in colour), ISBN-898573-26-3).

Yet again, Ken Wilson has done us a great service by making more accessible some mountain classics. I'm even going to give you his e-mail address, so that you can tell him how happy it makes you. [kwilson@batonwicks.demon.co.uk](mailto:kwilson@batonwicks.demon.co.uk)

**The Grahams and the New Donalds. Second Edition.** Compiled by Alan Dawson and also including Grahamist and Donaldist data by Dave Hewitt. (TACit Tables, 1999. £2.80. ISBN 0 9534376 0 4).

As the *Introduction* to this second edition states, there have been no new hills and no deletions since the first edition. There are, however, revisions and additions to the notes, including revised drop figures for many hills and a set of line drawings.

**Nanga Parbat Pilgrimage – The Lonely Challenge.** Hermann Buhl. (Bâton Wicks/The Mountaineers, 1998, £10.99, p/back, illus. ISBN 1-898573-27-1).

Originally published in the UK in 1956 and later in the US as *The Lonely Challenge* (hence the subtitle above), this book was one of my seminal pieces as a young climber, as no doubt it was for an entire generation. It is still required reading for any climber with belly fire and bicep strength, and Wilson has continued his useful reprint series here with another classic.

**Valais Alps East – Selected climbs.** Les Swindin and Peter Fleming. (1999, Alpine Club, £18.50, ISBN-0-900523-62-x). The companion volume to Valais Alps West. (Reviewed by A. Kassyk elsewhere.)

Other books not sent in for review, but read by the Hon. Editor for enjoyment and continuing sanity as the *SMCJ* was being produced included: **The Essential Haiku – versions of Basho, Buson, and Issa.** (Edited by Robert Hass, The Ecco Press, 1994, \$15, ISBN 0-88001-351-6). **Cold Mountain**, Charles Frazier (1997, Sceptre, £6.99, ISBN 0-340-68059-8). **The Blind Watchmaker**, Richard Dawkins (1991, Penguin Books, £8.99, ISBN 0-14-014481-1).

K. V. Crocket.

*Clockwise from left: Nanda Khani (6029m) in the Kumaon Himalaya, India. Photo: Mungo Ross.*

*Wedge Peak (6750m) towering above Kangchenjunga base camp. Photo: Ronnie Robb.*

*Steve Kennedy on the first ascent of 'The Party's Over' (E2 5b), Setesdal, Norway. Photo: David Ritchie.*  
*'Emmanuel' from Tupilag during first ascent. SMC Staunings Alps Expedition 1998. Photo: John Peden.*

### Journals of Kindred Clubs

*The American Alpine Journal*, Vol. 40, 1998. Editor Christian Beckwith.

As usual, this superb publication repays both those who are seeking out new corners of this world, (particularly in North America) and those who are interested in a thrilling read. Areas covered include the expected ones, although the Antarctic is clearly becoming more crowded.

For the second year in succession, the most gripping article is about a Slovene team – this time on Nuptse. As a member who gets most of his current information by flicking through magazines in New Heights (and by the way aren't these new plastic covers annoying to have to open?), how refreshing it is to get the original drama from the author of the climb. Tomaz Humar's account of his ascent with Janez Jeglic of the West Face of Nuptse takes the reader to climbing ground and recesses of the mind ventured by very few. Coping with the loss of his companion at the summit and descending a difficult face unroped and exhausted after five days on the climb, Tomaz's ordeal is one that most of us would happily forego.

There are other fine accounts of activities which are, frankly, nothing less than heroic. These occur both among small and large team efforts, (such as the Russian success on the West Face of Makalu and the Korean struggles on the West Face of Gasherbrum IV). While this reviewer is, like many, out of sympathy with the big team approach, the difficulty of these walls is such that these are none the less extremely brave efforts. As a member of one of the lighter teams, Fowler reminds us, light-heartedly as always, of the spectre that stalks close on every one of these long, high altitude routes. As he accelerates down the north face of Changabang, odds on a happy outcome similar to those of Scotland winning the World Cup, he despairingly recalls his last conversation with his wife.

'Be careful,' Nicki had said when left.

'I will,' I'd replied cheerfully.'

The remainder of the account is compelling with its description of tragedy, teamwork and fortitude.

North American interest differs only in lacking extreme altitude. The remoteness and seriousness of the routes climbed seems little different; certainly there is no shortage of new ground.

Away from attempts on mighty peaks, I thought one of the most fascinating articles was of two German explorers' lonely seven-week, 1000 kilometre crossing of the Tschang-Tang plateau in Tibet. The attempt was far from risk free, demonstrating that our world still offers remarkable dry land challenges for the explorer.

Environmental issues continue to take up more room in the pages of the journal. After 1500 nights of camping and bivouacking in Yosemite, John Middendorf decides to experience a hotel experience in the National Park and finds it lacking. A policy to increase Park revenues is driving an upgrade of hotel accommodation and a loss of camping and low-cost cabin space. Yosemite has a special place in the history of National Parks and developments here may be exported to other parts of the world. As well as being directly concerned, we in Scotland should monitor the situation in our own interests. Times change elsewhere. Photos of a 'porter training seminar' near Askole in Pakistan arouse curiosity and a little admiration



in this reviewer's mind. However, mountaineers have created an environmental problem in the Indian sub-continent and attempts at solutions are to be applauded.

As one who (secretly) considers that he might just be approaching middle age, it is thought provoking to read of 58-year-old Galen Rowell's one day ascent of the Nose; Tom Frost at 60 making his second ascent of North America Wall (as well as three other routes on El Cap, and Fred Beckey in his 70s putting up a 5.6 in the Wind River Range. Rowell also rejoices in soloing a 2000ft new route on Mount Darwin in the Sierra which has sections of 5.8 (circa HVS). Such opportunities! Still, the SMC can hold its own in its home environment. Would these clean-cut gentlemen have fared as well as one of our own 87-year-old members who recently had to ford a raging river or two after a damp bothy weekend and who lived to tell the tale? I say not!

Des Rubens.

*The Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club Journal* 1998, No. 7. Edited by Anne B. Murray.

For a club which has been on the go for so long (since 1908), seven numbers in 90 years might not appear to be prolific. But we are talking of the female gender, who have a very different way of approaching things. Men enjoy collecting, women collectively enjoy perhaps. The editorial starts with a disclaimer, blaming the committee for any harassment as the editor did not volunteer for the task. In the end, the members were forced to overcome the normal female modesty and show that they do indeed travel and climb widely.

There is only one article looking back, with a visit to Black Rock Cottage in 1949. I would have expected a bit more in the historical vein, but activity in the current vein there is no shortage of. Expect to bump into LSCC members in China, Tibet, Alaska, the Karakorum, the top of the Old Man of Hoy and of course all over the Alps of Europe. Several poems and photographs to complement the articles round off another issue the members should be very pleased with.

*Fell and Rock Journal* XXVI (2) No. (76) 1998.

This now has two editors and is a bi-annual publication. The *SMCJ* Editor noted with grim amusement the 'profound deference' the current editors had for their predecessors '...particularly the lonely individuals producing annual volumes.' I can only guess that the workload and cost became too much to bear. The *FRCCJ* is also 'Typeset from the editors' disk by the Ernest Press' and 'Printed in China through Colorcraft Ltd.'

It is mean to compare two journals, though very tempting, so perhaps one or two salient points could be raised. Their cover is just as boring as ours. They have shiny paper inside and only a few more photographs. One article, on their club website, was interesting. If I read the figures correctly, the SMC website is getting about nine times the number of visitors, but then we are covering a country while the *FRCC* covers the Lakes in essence. I can vouch for the point that many visitors are from abroad, and that the Internet is very much the communication vehicle of the future, if not now.

K. V. Crocket.

**OFFICE BEARERS 1998-99****Honorary President:** W. D. Brooker**Honorary Vice-Presidents:** Douglas Scott**President:** T. Bryan Fleming**Vice-Presidents:** D. Noel Williams, Roger Everett

**Honorary Secretary:** John R. R. Fowler, 4 Doune Terrace, Edinburgh, EH3 6DY **Honorary Treasurer:** Drew Sommerville, 11 Beechwood Court, Bearsden, Glasgow G61 2RY. **Honorary Editor:** K. V. Crocket, Glenisla, Long Row, Menstrie, Clackmannanshire FK11 7EA. **Assistant Editor:** I. H. M. Smart, Auchenleish, Bridge of Cally, by Blairgowrie, Perthshire. **Convener of the Publications Sub-Committee:** D. C. Anderson, Hillfoot House, Hillfoot, Dollar, FK14 7PL. **Honorary Librarian:** Ian Angell, The Old Manse, 3 New Street, Largs, Ayrshire KA30 9LL. **Honorary Custodian of Slides:** G. N. Hunter, Netheraird, Woodlands Road, Rosemount, Blairgowrie, Perthshire, PH10 6JX. **Convener of the Huts Sub-Committee:** W. H. Duncan, Kirkcoun, East End, Lochwinnoch, Renfrewshire PA12 4ER. **Custodian of the CIC Hut:** Robin Clothier, 35 Broompark Drive, Newton Mearns, Glasgow, G77 5DZ. **Custodian of Lagangarbh Hut:** Bernard M. Swan, Top Flat, 8G Swallow Road, Fairley, Clydebank, Dunbartonshire, G81 5BW. **Custodian of the Ling Hut:** Hamish C. Irvine, Feoran, Craig na Gower Avenue, Aviemore, Inverness-shire, PH22 1RW. **Custodian of the Raeburn Hut:** William H. Duncan, Kirkcoun, East End, Lochwinnoch, Renfrewshire, PA12 4ER. **Custodian of the Naismith Hut:** William S. McKerron, Scotsburn House, Drummond Road, Inverness, IV2 4NA. **Committee:** Chris Cartwright; John S. Peden; Oliver Turnbull; Alex Keith; Brian R. Shackleton; Andrew Hume; Wilson Moir; R. Allan Smith. SMC Internet Address – <http://www.smc.org.uk>

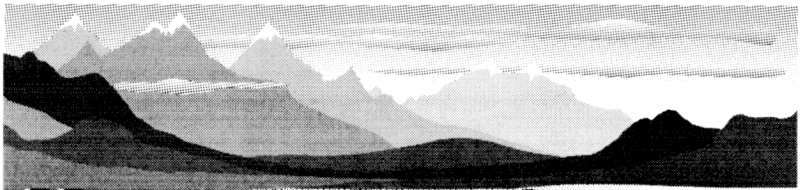
**Journal Information**

**Editor:** K. V. Crocket, Glenisla, Long Row, Menstrie, Clacks. FK11 7EA (e-mail: [kvc@dial.pipex.com](mailto:kvc@dial.pipex.com)).  
**New Routes Editor:** A. D. Nisbet, 20 Craigie Ave., Boat of Garten, Inverness-shire PH24 3BL. (e-mail: [anisbe@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:anisbe@globalnet.co.uk)).  
**Editor of Photographs:** Niall Ritchie, 37 Lawsondale Terrace, Westhill, Skene, Aberdeen AB32 6SE.  
**Advertisements:** D. G. Pyper, 3 Keir Circle, Westhill, Skene, Aberdeen AB32 6RE. (e-mail: [d.pyper@leopardmag.co.uk](mailto:d.pyper@leopardmag.co.uk)).  
**Distribution:** D. F. Lang, Hillfoot Hey, 580 Perth Road, Dundee DD2 1PZ.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CONTRIBUTORS**

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

Copyright. Textual matter appearing in the Miscellaneous section of the Journal, including New Climbs, is copyright of the publishers. Copyright of articles in the main section of the Journal is retained by individual authors.



# Mountain Man Supplies

133 South Street, Perth PH2 8PA

Telephone: (01738) 632368

## ***Tent Showroom & Indoor Bouldering Wall***

***Over 35 tents on display***

41 South William Street, Perth PH2 8PA

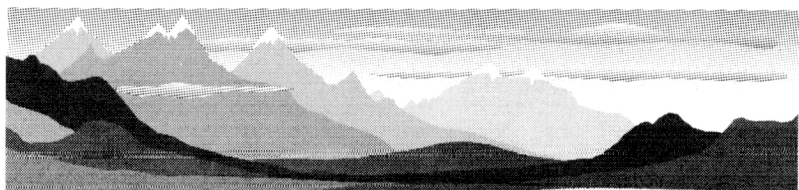
Telephone: (01738) 451710

***Specialists in***  
***MOUNTAINEERING***  
***HILLWALKING***  
***BACKPACKING***  
***CAMPING***

***Major stockist of***  
***Paramo, The North Face, Marmot***  
***Remember***

***Special discount for SMC members***

***Why not visit our Web Site***  
***www.mountainman.co.uk***



# **Mountain Man Supplies**

West Argyle Street, Ullapool IV26 2TY

Telephone: (01854) 613383

***Coffee Shop &  
Bookshop upstairs***

***Breakfast, Lunches, Home baking***

***Specialists in***

***MOUNTAINEERING  
HILLWALKING  
BACKPACKING  
CAMPING***

***Major stockist of  
Paramo, The North Face, Marmot***

***Remember***

***Special discount for SMC members***

***Why not visit our Web Site***

***[www.mountainman.co.uk](http://www.mountainman.co.uk)***

# SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

## SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING TRUST

### DISTRICT GUIDES

Southern Uplands	£16.95
Southern Highlands	£16.95
Central Highlands	£17.95
The Cairngorms	£17.95
Islands of Scotland (including Skye)	£19.95
North-west Highlands	£17.95

### SCRAMBLERS GUIDE

Skye Scrambles (to be published summer 1999)	£12.00
--	--------

### CLIMBERS GUIDES (Rock and Ice Guides)

Scottish Winter Climbs	£16.95
Ben Nevis	£14.95
Northern Highlands Vol. 1	£13.95
Northern Highlands Vol. 2	£14.95
Glen Coe (including Glen Etive and Ardgour)	£13.95
The Cairngorms Vol. 1	£11.95
The Cairngorms Vol. 2	£11.95
Skye and the Hebrides Vols. 1 and 2	£19.95
Arran, Arrochar and Southern Highlands	£14.95

### OUTCROP GUIDES

North-east Outcrops	£13.95
Lowland Outcrops	£14.95
Highland Outcrops	£14.95

### OTHER PUBLICATIONS

The Munros	£16.95
Munro's Tables	£15.95
The Munroist's Companion	£16.00
The Munros CD-ROM	£40.00
The Corbetts and Other Scottish Hills	£16.95
A Chance in a Million – Scottish Avalanches (Out of print)	
A Century of Scottish Mountaineering	£15.95
Ski Mountaineering in Scotland	£12.95
Ben Nevis – Britain's Highest Mountain	£14.95
Scotland's Mountains	£17.95
The Cairngorms Scene – And Unseen	£6.95
Heading for the Scottish Hills (1996 Edition)	£6.95
Scottish Hill and Mountain Names	£9.95

### MAPS

Black Cuillin of Skye (double-sided)	£3.95
Glen Coe	£2.95

### Distributed by:

**Cordee, 3a De Montfort Street, Leicester LE1 7HD**  
**Telephone: Leicester 0116 254 3579 Fax: 0116 247 1176**

*These books and maps are available from many bookshops and mountain equipment suppliers*

# DRY WALKER SHOP

SOLE STOCKIST OF DRY WALKER PRODUCTS

River crossing gaiter



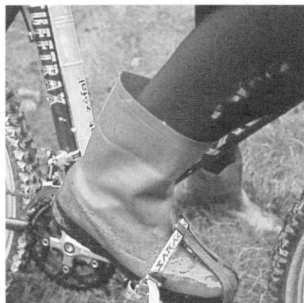
Fords of Avon

£15.95 inc P&P (SMC £14.35)

"I found DRY WALKERS invaluable, safe, quick and easy to use. They were up to the many river crossings encountered during our bothy maintenance trip in Iceland. They were the envy of the group."

Chic Lamb, M.B.A., Keith, Banffshire.

Bothy boots



Cycle "Over Boot" Application

£7.95 inc P&P (SMC £7.15)

"BOTHY BOOTS were a great success during a ski mountaineering trip to Spitsbergen – Glacier camping in deep snow Bothy Boots were used directly over socks eliminating changing in and out of ski boots."

Ian Davis, Hinckley, Leics.

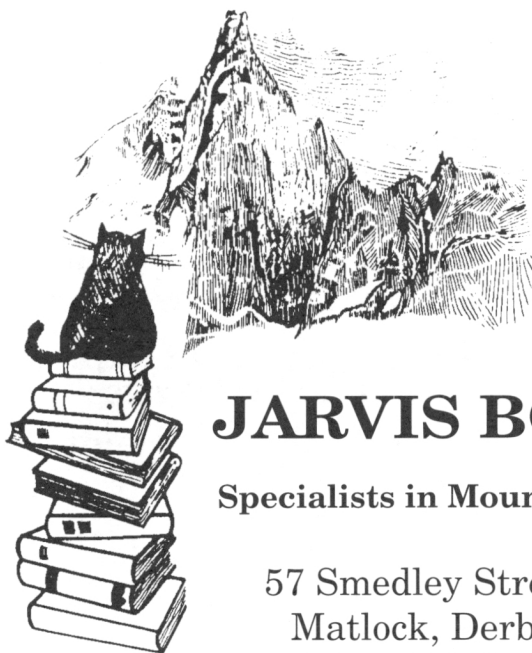
"BOTHY BOOTS were excellent for wet campsites as well as Bothies during Munros + Tops walk." Chris Townsend T.G.O.

**BROCHURE AVAILABLE – MAIL ORDER – VISA/ACCESS/SWITCH**

**EXTENSIVE RANGE OF CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT  
MINIMUM 10% DISCOUNT TO S.M.C.  
AND J.M.C.S. MEMBERS**

*Discount does not apply to goods already discounted or on special offer*

**42 RODNEY STREET, CANONMILLS,  
EDINBURGH, EH7 4DX  
PHONE/FAX 0131 4777222**



# JARVIS BOOKS

**Specialists in Mountaineering**

57 Smedley Street East  
Matlock, Derbyshire  
DE4 3FQ England  
Tel./Fax. (01629) 55322

e-mail [s@mountainbooks.co.uk](mailto:s@mountainbooks.co.uk)  
[www.mountainbooks.co.uk](http://www.mountainbooks.co.uk)

**SECOND-HAND & NEW MOUNTAINEERING BOOKS**

**CLIMBING & WALKING GUIDES WORLDWIDE**

**VERY LARGE STOCKS. FREE CATALOGUE ISSUED**

**BOOKS – JOURNALS – LIBRARIES  
PURCHASED**

**SHOP OPEN MONDAY – SATURDAY 9.30–5.30**





***Specialists in Mountain Sports Equipment  
and Adventure Discovery Holidays***

134 Lothian Road, Edinburgh. EH3 9BG  
Tel: 0131 221 1413 Fax: 0131 229 2233

200 Great Western Road, Glasgow. G4 9AG  
Tel: 0141 332 5533. Fax: 0141 332 0559

23 Glebe Street, Falkirk. FK1 1HX  
Tel/Fax: 01324 637343

16 Friars Street, Stirling. FK8 1HA  
Tel/Fax: 01786 450809

We also offer a mail order service and accept Access/Visa/Switch



**SCOTLAND'S LEADING STOCKIST  
OF MACPAC EQUIPMENT**

**DID YOU KNOW?** All SMC and JMCS  
members receive the following discounts:-

**10% OFF** CLOTHING + EQUIPMENT  
MOUNTAIN BIKES + ACCESSORIES  
TRAVEL + MOUNTAINEERING INSURANCE

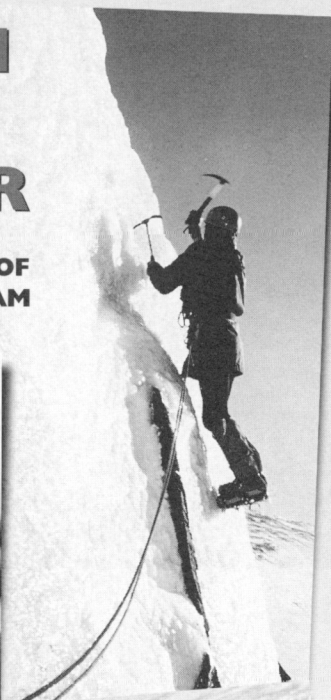
**15% OFF TENTS**

**25% OFF BIKE SERVICING**

Discount does not apply to goods already discounted or on special offer.  
Members must produce membership cards at time of purchase to receive  
discount.

# **CREAGH DHU CLIMBER**

**THE LIFE & TIMES OF  
JOHN CUNNINGHAM**



**JEFF CONNOR**

252 pp; hard-back; 40 colour & 41 b & w illustrations, many previously unpublished and of first ascents. Available from:  
The Ernest Press, 17 Carleton Drive, Glasgow G46 6AQ  
Tel/fax 0141 637 5492: e-mail – [ernpress@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:ernpress@globalnet.co.uk)  
£14.50 inc. p+p

WHATEVER WHENEVER

you climb

We publish for you

**PUBLISHERS OF**  
**High, On The Edge, BMC**  
**Summit & Outdoor Review**  
**GREENSHIRES**  
PUBLISHING

**BOOKS · VIDEOS · POSTERS · BACK ISSUES · T-SHIRTS**  
**GreenShires Publishing**  
**Telephone: 01536 382500 Fax: 01536 382501**

## GREY CORRIE LODGE AND ROYBRIDGE INN HOSTEL FOR THE HIGHLANDS



Two Independent hostels located on the A86, in the village of Roy Bridge. Fort William 12 miles to the west. Private rooms for 2, 3, 4 and 8 persons. Complete self-catering, Heating, Showers, Toilets, Drying rooms and All bedding provided. All inclusive price. Bar on site, live music some Saturdays.

Tel: Spean Bridge 01397 712236 Fax 712241  
 Roybridge, Inverness-shire, PH31 4AN

# DRY LONG-LIFE CLIMBING ROPES

MADE ONLY FOR JO ROYLE BY EDELRID

UIAA	UIAA	9.0mm	x 45m	£57.90	DRY LONG-LIFE
			x 50m	£65.90	HALF
			x 55m	£69.90	ROPE
		11.0mm	x 45m	£69.90	DRY LONG-LIFE
			x 50m	£78.90	FULL
			x 55m	£86.90	ROPE



## Jo Royle



6 Market Place  
Buxton, Derbyshire  
SK17 6EB

BY MAIL  
**FREE** P&P

OTHER LENGTHS  
& ROPES AVAILABLE  
SEND FOR OUR  
CATALOGUE

# ROPES

## DRY LONG-LIFE

# £57.90

## NETHY HOUSE

Nethy Bridge  
Inverness-shire  
PH25 3EB



### We are unique, check us out!

Excellent value group accommodation in the Spey Valley, near Aviemore. This large, centrally heated house, with bunk bedrooms sleeping 6 or less allows complete flexibility; whether you are a club, friends or group of families who enjoy being together as a group. We have a resident's bar, games room, drying room; TV; video player and lecture facilities.

All local activities including; hill-walking, climbing, skiing, riding, watersports, and environmental studies. Catered or self-catered 15-64.

**Phone/Fax: 01479 821 370**

# FOR SALE



## LEACANTUIM FARM BUNKHOUSE

**Outdoor Centre in Glen Coe. Sleeps up to 36 in 3 units.**

**Beautiful location in the heart of the glen,  
surrounded by spectacular scenery.**

**Use of Pier.**

**For full details, Principles only, contact: Hugh Macoll,  
Tel: 01855 811256**



## Isle of Skye Croft Bunkhouse & Bothies

Four adjacent independent hostels on a 12-acre croft on the west coast of Skye, 20 minutes from Glenbrittle & Sligachan. All fully equipped with kitchens, drying rooms and free hot showers.

**Pub 500 yards • Bike hire • Camping allowed**

**• Bunkhouse – sleeps 14**

**• Bothy – sleeps 6**

**• Bothy Beag – sleeps 4**

**• Cabin – sleeps 2**

**£6.50 per person per night (group discounts)**

**Pete Thomas, 7 Portnalong, Skye IV47 8SL**

**Tel/fax 01478 640254 • Grid ref. NG 348353**

**web site: [www.mtn.co.uk/acc/skyehostel](http://www.mtn.co.uk/acc/skyehostel)**

# BADRALLACH

## BOTHY, COTTAGE AND CAMP SITE DUNDONNELL



Open all year for holidays only — weekend breaks, seasonal festivities, etc. Badrallach Township is located 7 miles along a single track road off the A832, 1 mile east of Dundonnell — on the shore of Little Loch Broom.

**The Bothy** is a basic but cosy and clean "Stone tent", with a peat stove, gas lights, gallery and raised sleeping platforms. A sink, showers and WC's, with plenty of hot water, are available in an adjacent purpose built building. Sleeps 9-12 persons, groups & individuals welcome. £3.00 /person/night.

**The Cottage** is a beautifully restored croft cottage luxuriously appointed overlooking An Teallach, with peat stove, crisp linen sheets and gas lighting. Sleeps 4-5 persons. S.T.B. grading 4 star self catering. £120-£250/week.

**The Campsite** is a small peaceful family run loch shore site with only 12 tent pitches (and 3 caravans by prior booking only). Plenty of hot water and magnificent views. £3 per person per night.

*A clinker built Shetland model is available for hire.*



Contact Mr & Mrs Stott, Croft 9, Badrallach, Dundonnell, by Garve,  
Ross-shire, IV23 2QP SCOTLAND. Tel: 01854 633281



*Venture into*  
**Nepal**  
*Tibet India*



- \* Climbing \* Trekking \* Walking
- \* Culture \* Mountain Biking
- \* Whitewater Rafting
- \* Jungle Safaris
- \* Standard Treks/Holidays
- \* Tailor-made Treks/Holidays
- \* 35 years expertise



*Call for free colour brochure (24 hrs)*

**Specialist Trekking, Chapel House, Low Cotehill, Carlisle CA4 0EL**  
**Tel: 01228 562358 Fax: 01288 562368 e-mail: trekstc@aol.com**

## PINNACLE BOOKS

Mountaineering, (all areas – all authors) & Scottish Topography,  
Skiing, Polar Exploration.

*Books sold and bought –*

everything from single items to complete libraries.

13 Westgarth Avenue, Edinburgh EH13 0BB

Tel / Fax 0131 441 3870

e-mail: [thorburn@pinnaclebooks.demon.co.uk](mailto:thorburn@pinnaclebooks.demon.co.uk)

## CLUB MEMBERS

are asked to support the Advertisers in the  
Journal and to mention the Journal in any  
communications with

## ADVERTISERS

## SMC WEB SITE

The SMC has a Virtual side that you may wish to explore! Two years ago we launched our web site at [www.smc.org.uk](http://www.smc.org.uk), and since its modest beginnings it has grown to become one of the most respected mountaineering internet sites. Here you will find all our publications (and buy them if you wish), huts, book news, a complete (complete!) list of Munroists, hillwalking pages, interactive bulletin board, continually updated links, MCofS Newsletter, the new W. H. Murray Literary Prize page (with winning article on-line) and much more. What is more, we usually know how to spell correctly and we don't push tacky images in your face! This is the only advert you'll see connected to the SMC web site at [www.smc.org.uk](http://www.smc.org.uk)



## **Self Catering Accommodation**

### ***Fort William***

Excellent drying rooms – Close to town – One night or longer

**On the spot advice from local mountain guide**

***Bag a bed!! Contact: Alan or Sue Kimber***

**01397 700451**

Email: [mountain@guide.u-net.com](mailto:mountain@guide.u-net.com)

Web site: <http://www.guide.u-net.com>

**‘Calluna’, Heathercroft, Fort William, PH33 6RE.**

### ***Central for Ben Nevis, Glen Coe and the Mamores***

### **Inchree Centre, Onich, Fort Wiliam.**

### **Four Seasons Bistro & Bar**

**Tel. 01855 821 393 Fax. 01855 821 287**

We are open throughout the year offering self-catering, bunkhouse, and hostel accommodation from £6.50/person/night.

Bistro & Bar open from February & also available for Club Dinners and Group bookings. Brochures & Sample Menus available on request.

**Good Food      Real Ales      Selected Malts      Log Fire**

## **Alltonside Guest House**

Situated on the A82 approach to Fort William on the shores of Loch Linnhe overlooking the hills beyond. It is 1½ miles from the town centre of Fort William which nestles at the foot of Ben Nevis.

Great countryside for outdoor enthusiasts with skiing at nearby Nevis Range and Glencoe, as well as walking and climbing opportunities. The accommodation consists of En-suite facilities, tea and coffee making facilities, colour television and central heating in all rooms. A drying room is available for guests use. Full breakfast is included in the price which ranges from £15-£25 per person with 'special rates' on 'Winter breaks.'

**For reservations or more information Please telephone or fax Mrs Allton on  
01397 703542**

**Alltonside, Achintore Road, Fort William, Highland, PH33 6RW**

### **ORCHY VILLA GUEST HOUSE**

**Alma Road, Fort William,  
PH33 6HA Tel: (01397) 702445**

Mrs Murphy

Comfortable guest house,  
en suite facilities, private parking.  
Close: Town, Rail/Bus Stations.  
Washing and Drying facilities.  
Competitive rates.

### **AN TEALLACH**

Stay at

Sail Mhor Croft Hostel

Ideally situated below

An Teallach, easy access for  
Fannichs & Beinn Deargs.

**Tel: (01854) 633224**

**Dave Neville, Dundonnell,  
Ross-shire IV23 2QT**

## **Blackwater Hostel** **near Glen Coe, Fort William**

40 bedded bunkhouse, 4 twin, 8x4 person rooms. All en-suite.  
30 pitch campsite with toilet block, showers,  
covered cooking area and drying room.  
Open All Year Around.

**Blackwater Hostel, Kinlochleven Tel: 01855 831253/402**

## **Station Lodge Tulloch**

*West Highland Station Building*

**SLEEPING TWENTY FOUR PEOPLE, GROUPS OF INDIVIDUALS**

*Log fires, Showers, Self-catering or Home Cooking*

CREAG MEAGAI DH, LOCH TREIG, GREY CORRIES, MONADHLIATH RANGE, LOCH LAGGAN,  
BEN NEVIS, GLEN COE

**(CLIMBERS AND WALKERS WELCOME)**

**TULLOCH, ROY BRIDGE, INVERNESS-SHIRE PH31 4AR**

**Write, Tel/Fax: 01397 732333**

**Email: stationlodge@renwscot.demon.co.uk**

## **Torren S. C. Cottages, Glencoe**

*Within walking distance of Clachaig Inn.*

3 warm comfortable self-contained cottages catering for  
climbers and walkers all year round. Each cottage sleeps 6-8.

Prices from £150 for the hire of a cottage for a weekend.

**Contact: Mrs. Sutherland, Torren, Glencoe, Argyll PA39 4HX**

**Tel/Fax: 01855 811207**

**e-mail: sutherland@torrencottages.freeservice.co.uk**

### **LOCH DUICH HOTEL**

*Talisker Award 1996*



*Ardelve, by Kyle of Lochalsh*

The Cuillin's of Skye, the mountains and glens of  
Torridon and Kintail — We enjoy a unique location  
in their midst and overlook Eilean Donan Castle,  
setting of 'Highlander' movie.

En suite rooms, superb food with distinctive Scottish  
flavour and a lively pub featuring weekend Celtic  
music, we welcome parties and individuals wishing  
to walk or climb in our spectacular surroundings —  
Interested?



**Call Iain or Karin Fraser 01599 555213**

**Fax 01599 555214**





# Red Squirrel Campsite

**Leacantium Farm,  
Glen Coe, Argyll.**

**Natural Camping Area.**

**Casual, easy-going 20-acre campsite.**

**Toilets, Hot water and Showers.**

**Village 1.5mls – Hotel bar, Restruants.**

**Nightly £4.00 per adult ? 50p for children.**

**Open All Year.**

**Grid Ref: N.N.116577. TEL: 01855 811256.**

## ***Cuillin Guides***

Courses in all aspects of mountaineering: Ridge Walking & Scrambling (Skye Munros); Basic Rock Climbing; Classic Routes; Cuillin Ridge Traverse; Alpine Courses; Wild Country Back Packing; Winter Mountain Craft; Snow & Ice Climbing; Private Guiding by arrangement (throughout the U.K.).

*send stamp for brochure to:*

**Gerry Akroyd, Stac Lee, Glenbrittle,  
Isle of Skye, Invernesshire.  
Telephone: (01478) 640289  
<http://www.w-o-w.com/clients/cuillin>**

## **Stronlossit Hotel**

***Roybridge, by Fort William  
Inverness-shire, PH31 4AG.***

**Tel: (01397) 712253**

**Fax: 712641**

En-suite accommodation.

Everyone welcome.

Real Ales. Bar Meals.

Open All Day.

## **LOCHNAGAR**




*Leisure*

**Quality Outdoor Clothing & Equipment**

**Open 7 days**

**Station Square, Ballater, Royal Deeside, AB35 5QB**

**Telephone 013397 56008 Fax: 013397 56329**



# THE MOUNTAIN AND WATER SPORT EQUIPMENT SHOP



# WEST COAST

---

## OUTDOOR LEISURE

---



102 High Street  
West End Fort William  
Tel: 01397 705777

# **craigdon**

## **Mountain Sports**

**Compasses**

**Maps**

**Trousers**

**Boots**

**Rucksacks**

**Socks**

**Jackets**

**Fleece**

**Tents**

**Stoves**

**Skis**

**Snowboards**

**Gloves**

**Goggles**

**Etc..**



**OPEN  
7  
DAYS**

**10% Club Discount**

**5 St Andrews Street  
Aberdeen  
Tel 01224 624333**

**High Street  
Inverurie  
Tel 01467 625855**

## SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL BACK NUMBERS

166	– 1975	– £8
167	– 1976	– £8
168	– 1977	– £8
169	– 1978	– £8
171	– 1980	– £8
176	– 1985	– £10
177	– 1986	– £10
178	– 1987	– £6
180	– 1989	– £6
181	– 1990	– £6
182	– 1991	– £6
184	– 1993	– £6
185	– 1994	– £6
186	– 1995	– £6
187	– 1996	– £6
188	– 1997	– £7
189	– 1998	– £9

Indices for Volumes 28, 29, 30, 32, 33 are available at £1 each and the cumulated Index for Volumes 21-30 at £2. Postage is extra. They may be obtained from Derek Pyper, 3 Keir Circle, Westhill, Skene, Aberdeenshire, AB32 6RE.



## MARTIN MORAN MOUNTAINEERING

CLIMBING COURSES AND HOLIDAYS Torridon-Skye-Swiss Alps.

ACCOMMODATION Luxury house for groups up to 9 in Lochcarron.

EXPEDITIONS AND TREKS Indian Himalays Banderpunch (6387m) - Roopkund Trek Sept/Oct 1999, Nilkanth (6596m) - Panpatia Pioneer May/June 2000.

Backed by 12 years experience and expert staff

For full details contact us now:

Park Cottage • Achintee • Strathcarron • Ross-shire IV54 8YX Tel/fax: (01520) 722361

E-mail: martin.moran@btinternet.com <http://www.w-o-w.com/clients/moran-mtrng>



## SCOTPACKERS

### ULLAPOOL TOURIST HOSTEL WEST HOUSE

Great facilities, friendly staff, no curfew

Open all year

Accommodation from £9.50 per person per night

*All linen supplied No hidden costs*

West House, West Argyle Street, Ullapool,  
Ross-shire IV26 2TY Fax/Tel: 01854 613126



## SCOTPACKERS SPEYSIDE BACKPACKERS

The Stopover, Grantown on Spey

Great Location for • Running • Skiing • Climbing • Walking  
Mountain biking • Canoeing • Fishing • Bird watching

Hostel Facilities • Full central heating • Open fire in lounge • Free hot showers • Private double and twin rooms available • Free sleep sheets • Fully equipped kitchen • Fully equipped laundry

Price • Accommodation from £8.50 per person per night

For further information & bookings, please contact:

The Stopover, 16 The Square, Grantown on Spey, Morayshire PH26 3HQ  
Tel: (01479) 873514 Check out our website on [www.scotpackers-hostels.co.uk](http://www.scotpackers-hostels.co.uk)

Open all year round,  
groups welcome,  
no curfew

COME CLIMBING WITH



BMG UIAGM

\*\* Rock/Snow and Ice Climbing - Great Classics/Hidden Gems/SPSA

\*\* Alpine Ambitions? Introductory Courses/Big Peaks/North Walls

\*\* Greater Ranges - Himalaya/South America/Africa and more

\*\* Club/Slide Lectures - many exciting stories

DON'T TALK ABOUT IT - GET IT DONE

Write, Call or Fax us NOW

Outdoor Odyssey, Strone Cottages,

Dores, Inverness-shire IV1 2TR

Tel/Fax: 01463 751230



See and do Scotland with . . .

## C-N-Do scotland

Specialists in Walking Holidays and

Outdoor Activities since 1984.

- Small groups (10 max) & friendly, qualified leaders
- All grades of holiday to suit complete novice to expert
- Choice of accommodation on most trips
- Trips all over mainland Scotland as well as many of the islands

For your FREE 1999 brochure,

Phone: 01786 445703 (24hrs)

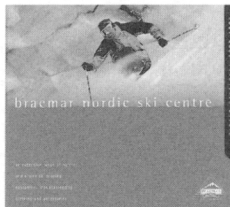
C-N-Do Scotland Ltd., Unit 32,

Step, Stirling, FK7 7RP

Email: [cndo.scotland@btinternet.com](mailto:cndo.scotland@btinternet.com)

Website: [www.btinternet.com/~cndo.scotland](http://www.btinternet.com/~cndo.scotland)





"THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE **FREE** GUIDE TO SKI MOUNTAINEERING  
AND TELEMARQ EQUIPMENT EVER PRODUCED . . ."

*call now for this invaluable mountain of information*



INVERCAULD ROAD  
BRAEMAR AB35 5YP

TEL: 013397 41242

FAX: 013397 41496

E-MAIL: nordic@pslink.co.uk

WEB: <http://www.braemar.nordic.co.uk/catalogue/>



## **SERVICE SPORTS KINGUSSIE**

*A great deal for the outdoors*

*We can supply everything for the outdoor enthusiast  
from boots and bivis to mountain bikes . . .*

**TENT HIRE • CLIMBING GEAR**

**MOUNTAIN BIKE HIRE • SALES • SPARES • REPAIRS**

**SKI HIRE & INSTRUCTION • SALES • SERVICE & REPAIR • SKI WEAR**

**26 HIGH STREET, KINGUSSIE • TEL/FAX 01540 661228**

**[www.servicesports.co.uk](http://www.servicesports.co.uk)**



## **Leopard**

*The magazine for North East Scotland*

Reflecting the news, culture, arts and history of the North East of Scotland

For a subscription of 12 monthly issues £28 (Overseas £38), and further details of advertising rates, and our Stationery Printing and Book Publishing Services please contact us at Dyce.

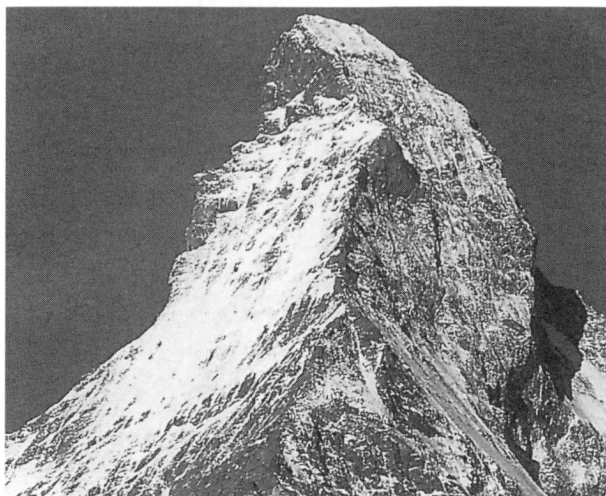
### **Leopard Magazine**

Waverley Unit, Wellheads Place, Dyce, Aberdeen AB21 7GB

Tel. (01224) 770101 Fax. (01224) 722166 e-mail: [d.pyper@leopardmag.co.uk](mailto:d.pyper@leopardmag.co.uk)



**Aberdeen's Oldest Established Outdoor Specialist**



- Personal Attention and Advice from experienced and enthusiastic staff.
  - Top Quality Clothing and Equipment at the most competitive prices.
  - Full Range of Maps, Guides and Compasses.
- Mountain Resue Teams Supplied



**DISCOUNT FOR ALL  
SMC MEMBERS  
(PLEASE ASK)**



**186 George Street, Aberdeen AB25 1BS  
Tel: 01224 636952**





## The Tailrace Inn KINLOCHLEVEN



**The ideal stop over for those walking the  
West Highland Way.**

- Climbing, canoeing and skiing all within 30 mins drive.
- Fishing permits for hill lochs and River Leven arranged.
  - Comfortable, en-suite accommodation.
- Lounge Bar open daily. Food served in bar & dining room.

## Lynwood Apartments

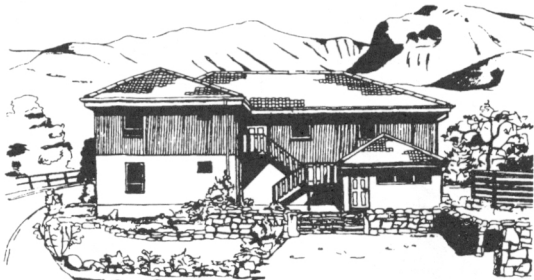
*Quiet location with lovely views of the spectacular Mamore Mountains.*

Each apartment sleeps 2, in double or twin bedroom. Linen & towels supplied. Fully equipped kitchen/dining/lounge. Drying cupboard and parking facilities available. Well behaved pets welcome.



**Tailrace Inn, Riverside Road, Kinlochleven,  
Inverness-shire. PA40 4QH  
Tel: 01855 831777 Fax: 01855 831291  
e-mail: [tailrace@btconnect.com](mailto:tailrace@btconnect.com)**

# THE SMIDDY BUNKHOUSE



## **BEN NEVIS — GLENCOE — ARDGOUR — CREAG MEAGAI DH**

Excellent standard of self-catering accommodation to sleep 12 or 16.

Situated in convenient village location 3 miles from Fort William on A830 to Mallaig. Local Shops, bus, train, 2 minutes walk. Warm, comfortably furnished, fully equipped for self-catering, HOT showers. Laundry/drying room.

**An excellent situation for independent outdoor Activity holidays —  
Walking, Climbing, Canoeing, Sailing — or just relaxing!!**

***The Old Smiddy, Station Road, Corpach, Fort William.***

***Tel/Fax 01397 772467 Day or Evening.***



## **SNOWGOOSE MOUNTAIN CENTRE**



Introduction to Rock Climbing • Rock, Ridge & Scramble • Classic Mountain Rock • Summer/  
Autumn Hillwalking • Mountain Navigation • Winter Skills & Walking • Winter Mountaineering  
Early Winter "Warmer" Courses BMC Approved Courses

**•OPEN ALL YEAR•**

LEARN NEW SKILLS — UPGRADE OLD ONES

Instruction — Advice — Guiding Arranged

**COURSES/HOLIDAYS FOR INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS & COMPANIES**

2 day week-end plus 3-5 day Midweek Courses.

Contact: John or Tina Cuthbertson, Snowgoose Mountain Centre, The Old Smiddy, Station  
Road, Corpach, Fort William, PH33 7JH. Tel/Fax: 01397 772467



## **THE OUTDOOR PEOPLE WITH A DIFFERENCE**

We offer quality products from leading manufacturers:

MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT, NORTH CAPE, LAFUMA, VAU DE.

MACPAC of New Zealand, RAB DOWN, KEELA, and many more.

Our range includes: Clothing, Footwear, Tents, Rucksacks, Leisurewear,  
Camping Equipment.

Discounts offered to SMC members

**Open Mon-Sat, 10am — 6pm**

**34 Gibson Street, Glasgow, G12 8NX Tel/Fax: 0141 337 6737**

# FOR FUNCTION FLAIR AND VALUE COME TO HILLTREK

MADE TO MEASURE SERVICE

Top quality fabric  
sourced from UK,  
Italy, Germany  
and Switzerland



Mountain jackets,  
waterproofs, windshirts,  
fleece and ski wear

Our commitment is to  
provide a quality service,  
unbiased advice and  
value for money

Stockists of:  
Paramo, Trango,  
Helly Hansen,  
North Cape,  
Tinga-Tinga, Thorlo.

Open Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-5.30 p.m.

Thermals, Boots and Accessories

**BALLATER ROAD, ABOYNE, ABERDEENSHIRE, AB34 5HT**  
**Tel./Fax 013398 86062.**

## Specialist Outdoor Footwear Repairs

**feet  
first**

*Britain's Premier Rock Climbing  
and Walking Boot repair service*

**SHOP** – 728 Chesterfield Road, Woodseats, Sheffield S8 0SE

Tel: (0114) 258 9529.

**FACTORY** – Units 4-5 Foundry Street Ind. Estate, Whittington Moor,  
Chesterfield S41 9AU. Tel: (01246) 260795.

Web site. [www.resoles.co.uk](http://www.resoles.co.uk)  
E-mail. [feetfirst@resoles.co.uk](mailto:feetfirst@resoles.co.uk)

**CALLERS WELCOME**

For full details of our services send now for our **FREE** full colour brochure!

Please Quote Ref: SMC

# nevisport



*Chile, South America. Chillian Supercrags, with Mt. Tronador in background.*

## THE OUTDOOR, MOUNTAIN & SNOWSPORT SPECIALIST

s Fort William  
s Glasgow  
s Edinburgh  
s Newcastle

s Middlesbrough  
s York  
s Harrogate  
s Leeds

s Altrincham  
s Chesterfield  
s Nottingham  
s Aonach Mor



**SPEND 10 MINUTES WITH SOMEONE  
WHO'S WORN IT AT 10° BELOW.**



**Bryan Sheddon**  
Manager, Tiso - Glasgow.

**EXPERIENCE - THE DIFFERENCE AT TISO**

**The North Face Mountain Jacket. £269.** This Gore-Tex jacket has a full mountain hood and reinforced shoulders. Available in yellow or blue, sizes small, medium, large and extra-large. Designed for climbing and ski-ing, this is one of a wide range of waterproof jackets with prices starting at £17.00.



THE GREAT OUTDOOR SPECIALIST



**ABERDEEN. 26 NETHERKIRK GATE. 01224 634 934**

Edinburgh. Rose Street Precinct. 0131 225 9486 Glasgow. 129 Buchanan Street. 0141 248 4877 Belfast. 12-14 Cornmarket. 01232 231 230  
Leith. 41 Commercial Street. 0131 554 0804 Inverness. 41 High Street. 01463 716 617 Dundee. 22-24 Whitehall Street. 01382 221 153  
Ayr. 228 High Street. 01292 288 885 Stirling. The Thistle Centre. 01786 464 737 East Kilbride (North Face store). 53 The Plaza. 01355 238 383

ISBN 0-907521-65-7



9 780907 521655