

DIARY FOR 1996

January	12-14	Scottish Winter Meet	Newtonmore
January	mid	Cascade Ice Climbing	La Grave (Ecrin)
February	2-4	Northern Dinner Meet	Patterdale
March	1-3	Scottish Winter Meet	Glencoe
	29-31	Scottish Winter Meet	Loch Rannoch
April	19-20	ABMSAC Hut Maintenance Meet	Patterdale
	26-28	Scottish Spring Meet	Glen Etive
May	4-6	Yorkshire Dales Meet	Masham
	10-12	Scottish Trek Meet	Cairngorm
	25-1 June	Skye Meet	Skye
June	7-9	Snowdonia Meet	Rhyd-ddu
	14-16	Scottish Meet	Roy Bridge
July	5-7	Lake District Meet - George Starkey Hut	Patterdale
	20-10 Aug	Joint ABMSAC/AC/CC Alpine Meet	Argentierre
August		See July for Alpine Meets	
	2-18	Lake District Family Meet - George Starkey Hut	Patterdale
	17-31	High Mountain Walk	Austria
October	4-5	TCC Hut Maintenance Meet	Patterdale
	11-12	Northern Buffet Party	Patterdale
November	1-2	Alpine Meet Reunion	Patterdale

THE ASSOCIATION
OF BRITISH MEMBERS
OF THE SWISS ALPINE CLUB

JOURNAL 1996

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ZERMATT – FOR THE LAST TIME?

Marjorie and I were married in August in Calcutta fifty years ago and we couldn't afford to go back. So we thought we might return to Zermatt where in pre ABMSAC days we spent a succession of holidays always different but always enjoyable. We could go back to the DOM Hotel – indeed *get our "same" room but with elbow-crutches and a walking-aid* would it be viable? Would it be worthwhile? We enlisted the support of our daughter Liz and it proved to be worthwhile indeed, though a lot more expensive than Calcutta!

Zermatt is especially remembered because it was here that we were recruited by an ABMSAC passer-by who became our good friend Rudolph Loewy. We passed each other on the path to Furi and Rudolph spotted my SAC badge and assumed we were members. We'd never heard of it but accepted an invitation to dinner with the group who were then on a Zermatt Meet, and later made an application to join. Our acceptance materially altered our lifestyle considerably for the better. Zermatt had become for us a Swiss addiction – but with new friends came new horizons. "Approach" marches with Paul and Virginia French, John Coates, David Riddell, Harold and Lawrie Flook and occasionally with Walter MacWilliam from America, provided opportunities to explore other parts of Switzerland that would never have been possible before. A succession of Meets and Peaks (mostly minor in my case) now combine to provide comforting nostalgia in old age!

But what about Zermatt now? It has changed. At first sight it seemed disastrously so with shops with more trinkets displaying as many signs in Japanese as in English, and a very much smaller herd of goats thrusting along the main street, now shepherded by two children instead of the little man in the little black bowler hat. And they don't clear up the droppings!

Herd of day trippers too and, in consequence, even greater pressures and longer waits for the various lifts to the upper viewpoints. But the attendants coped admirably with our somewhat timid requests for assistance and so we travelled upwards in style surrounded by camera-clicking Japanese and robust summer skiers. The weather stayed sunny throughout and we discovered what we'd hoped for the unchanging majesty of the peaks and the unrivalled grandeur of the Alpine landscape. We didn't feel regretful finding enjoyment in remembrances which were kindled by the vistas before us. The Zermatt that matters is unaltered.

Bad moments? One, when Liz and I were in the lift taking us on the last stage of our pilgrimage to the Kleine Matterhorn and it stopped in total darkness. No illuminated emergency switch seemed available and time did seem to hang. But some tourists at the top needed to come down and the system re-activated itself.

We suddenly acknowledged that we, too, were tourists now!

Ben Howe

10TH ANNIVERSARY BED!

My first tour in the Italian mountains was in 1985 and began with a bivouac, my usual style of operation in those days. The second night a short rain shower at the appropriate moment persuaded me to try one of the former DOAV huts. On a Saturday night the Rifugio Genova was fairly full. I was as yet unfamiliar with the procedure and on entering asked for accommodation.

"Ein Bett?" said the warden.

"Bitte" said I, not immediately realising the significance of the word Bett.

I was handed a large key and sought the corresponding door still unaware of the significance of a key. Opening the door revealed a white painted room containing a single feather bed with dazzling sheets and a wash stand complete with a jug of water. I could scarcely believe it!

When, after beer and a good meal I retired to my feather bed, I found that in an open area some less fortunate people were having to pass the night on the floor in rather squalid conditions. I was certainly very glad to have my cosy bed. I might as well add here that the next night was spent at the Regensburger Hutte where I also had a room to myself, this time with hot and cold running water!

These experiences converted me immediately to the use of huts and in the following ten years I have spent around 100 nights in some 60 different huts: a very worthwhile decade. Normally, I never use beds but sleep in the dormitories where one sleeps well enough after a long day. Beds are common in these huts but I suspect single rooms are probably rare. A change over the past ten years is the introduction of sheet sleeping bags for use in the dormitories; a great improvement in comfort: I would not wish to be without one.

My tours are never planned in detail beforehand. Only a vague idea of the general course of the route exists. Further, my practice is never to book a place in a hut in advance with the advantage that the tour can be modified at any instant due to weather, whim, or frequently as the result of a better idea. Naturally, this choice has its risks and I have on one occasion spent a night in a front line position dating from the first world war. Uncertainty is a feature of these tours, increasing their interest through the tendency to reach unexpected destinations. If it ever became essential to book hut places I believe I would give up the tours or rather, look for some less crowded region.

This year, ten years after my first hut trip, I returned to make a tour travelling eastwards linking areas I had previously visited. The first night was spent at the out-of-the-way Raschotz Hutte which was not likely to be full even on a Saturday night. From here there is a splendid view of the Wolkenstein.

The project for the next day was to ascend the Sass Rigais and then stop at the Regensburger Hutte. Next morning some snow was visible on the summit, and when after an hour or so cloud began to build up quickly I decided not to attempt the ascent. Without this climb the Regensburger Hutte does not make a sufficient days walk and so I decided instead to head for the Rifugio Genova via the Forcella Pana and the Wasserscharte. A return to this hut would mark the tenth anniversary of my first hut and I briefly considered whether I should celebrate with a night in a bed. I dismissed this idea however, the dormitory is quite good enough. I would rather spend money on food.

After an excellent days walk I approached the hut around 5 pm as it was becoming misty and quite cool. The sight of a fair number of people outside the hut in such conditions was

not encouraging. Inside, a queue turned out to be for the telephone. One must however always remain optimistic, and I asked for a place in the dormitory.

"Nix" said the warden spreading his hands wide.

"Gar nix?" said I.

"Nur auf dem Boden!" he replied.

It was an instant decision to accept a place on the floor: better than a bivouac outside or *having to go elsewhere, even though I well remembered the unfortunates of my previous visit. I would be found a place at 9 pm.*

I ordered a very welcome beer and also a portion of Apfelstrudel. In full huts, it can be quite difficult to find somewhere to sit. However, I was in luck: the place at the head of the first table next to the bar was free: the very best position! By an extraordinary coincidence all six of us at the table had spent the previous night at Raschotz: almost old friends. The other two parties had followed a different route. During the next hour or so several more people arrived without reservations and were turned away. Later, after a good meal, I mentioned my predicament and was given two long lectures on the correct way to plan a hut tour and book places for all nights in advance.

Promptly at 9 pm the warden signalled me to follow. While I gathered my sack from the entrance area, the warden counted the other sacks, some 15 or so, presumably fellow unfortunates destined for a hard night. The owners were not in sight, and I was led, alone, upstairs. The warden opened door 19 and I was shown into a white painted room containing a single feather bed with dazzling sheets and a wash stand complete with jug of water. I could scarcely believe it! I would celebrate my 10th anniversary visit in style after all. After unpacking, I returned downstairs with a huge grin to rejoin my table companions and celebrate with some red wine.

The last hut of this tour was the Drei Schuster Hutte, which is fairly low and only half an hours walk from the road head. I approached with a climb over the Birken Scharte from the Lago di Dobbiaco. Some way above the hut I sat for an hour in the sun, watching people passing in the valley below. All seemed well since they were all going past the hut. There should be no problem. I eventually arrived around 5 pm and asked for a place in the dormitory.

"Ausgebucht!", said the warden, "Die nexte Hutte ist drei Stunden weiter".

I was stunned, and could only reply, "Drei Stunden ist sehr weit!" I was certainly not keen to walk for a further three hours.

A seemingly long pause followed. Then I was told to remove my boots: something would be found for me. Five minutes later I was led up to a place in the dormitory. Was it just the wardens joke at the expense of fools who arrive without a reservation? In spite of these experiences I am not sure that I have yet learnt my lesson.

J M Scarr

REPORTS OF CLUB ACTIVITIES

SCOTTISH MEETS 1995

Newtonmore 13 to 15 January 1995

This meet was attended by 20 members and friends and was centred on Craigellachie bunkhouse. Several parties set out for Cairngorm or Glen Feshie but as the weather was unkind not a lot was achieved. Those who went westwards were rewarded with reasonable snow conditions and sunshine. It was, however, very windy and extremely cold. John Dempster and Roger James, Michael van den Burg and Peter Goodwin climbed Beinn Teallach and Beinn a'Chaoruinn. Alasdair Andrews, Geoff Bone and Mike Scarr climbed Carn an Fhreicheadain via Beinn Bhreac. On the Sunday the weather deteriorated. Alasdair and Mike explored the forest tracks around Loch an Eilean. A strong party comprising Jim and Margaret Strachan, John Dempster, Roger James and Michael van den Burg headed off into the mirk from Achlean at the head of Glen Feshie. Roger got his top, Michael his Munro (returning in the late afternoon like a survivor from "Scott of the Antarctic"); the others sensibly turned back at 2500 feet. Other parties explored Glen Banchor.

Fearnan 24 to 26 February 1995

Fifteen members and friends attended this meet which was based at the usual comfortable cottage in the hamlet of Fearnan near the eastern end of Loch Tay. Saturday was a glorious, sunny morning so parties were quick to set out for the hill. John Dempster, Roger James and Jim Strachan climbed Ben Oss and Beinn Dubhcriag; John Chapman, Nigel Cooper and Mike Scarr climbed Beinn Ghlas and Ben Lawers returning over Beinn Ghlas; Peter Farrington, Cherry Norris and Steve Paulin climbed Ben Lawers from the east; Morag McDonald climbed Meall Greigh; Colin Armstrong accompanied part way by Alf Lock climbed Beinn Bhreac on the south side of Loch Tay; John and Marge Foster climbed Meall Ghlas from Glen Lochay. The conditions were good but the snow crust was variable below 2000 feet. After a very cold night not much was attempted on the Sunday apart from John Dempster and Mike Scarr who climbed Stuchd an Lochain to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the occasion when John inadvertently walked through the summit cornice in a white out, slipped several hundred feet arriving at the foot of the climb in good time, unhurt apart from friction burns to his posterior. It is alleged that his companions came down the hill in a distressed state wondering whether to call out the Mountain Rescue Team or the local Undertaker and were delighted to find John waiting for them at the car.

Appin 17 to 19 March 1995

The Saturday was cold with cloud on the tops but with hazy sunshine for much of the day. Deep unconsolidated snow made for hard going. Steve Bowes and Roger James went to Ben Nevis; Peter Farrington did a solo ascent of Beinn Fhionnlaidh; John Dempster and Mike Scarr traversed Beinn a'Bheithir; Steve Paulin and Cherry Norris were also on Beinn a'Bheithir but retreated; Terry McManus and Peter Goodwin climbed Hourglass Gully Buttress on Bidean nam Bian; Colin Armstrong, Bert Bowes and Alf Lock explored upper Glen Nevis. Sunday was clear in the morning but with heavy snow showers after lunch. Bert and Stephen went to Aonach Mor, Roger, Terry and Peter Goodwin went to Glencoe, John, Mike and Peter Farrington climbed Beinn Sgulaird descending in a snow storm. Twelve members and friends attended this meet.

So ended the 1994/95 winter season. My thanks to Alf and Jim who acted as Meet Organisers when I was unable to be present. Thanks are also due to Colin Armstrong, Phil Hands and John Dempster who supplied much of the detail for the above reports.

Inveraray 21 to 23 April 1995

The meet was based on a large residential caravan on a site to the south of Inveraray. Saturday began sunny and warm and Colin Armstrong and I were soon down to our shirt sleeves as we puffed our way up to the saddle between The Brack and Ben Donich. The view from the former was superb; the latter hill is just a slog. Meanwhile Narnain and Ben Ime were traversed in good order by John and Marge Foster, Phil Hands, Mike Scarr and Jim Strachan; Morag McDonald solo'd Beinn Bhuidhe. After a stormy night most opted for an easy day exploring the Cowal peninsula apart from Phil and Mike who traversed the tops of The Cobbler. The meet was attended by eight members.

Lairig Walk 12 to 14 May 1995

Seven of us met at the bunkhouse at Newtonmore on the Friday, Chris Wright opted to stay in Aviemore whilst Mike Scarr chose a night under the stars in Rothiemurchus forest. Saturday was bright but cold and snow was forecast. The "A" Team – Roger James and Phil Hands set off for Dee-side via Braeriach and Carn Toul-Roger had a top to tick-off; the "B" Team. Chris, Jim and Margaret Strachan opted for a conventional north/south crossing of the Lairig Ghru expecting to meet Mike on the way. The back-up team of Alasdair Andrews, Bert Bowes and Morag McDonald enjoyed a swift ascent of Meall a' Bhuaichaille – on the summit it was bitterly cold and the weather was gradually deteriorating. We descended and drove round to Braemar via Tomintoul stopping for tea and scones at Bridge of Brown, Rucsacs were dropped off at our B and B, more tea consumed then it was time to drive to Linn of Dee which was the agreed meeting place. By this time the weather was nasty with continuous heavy rain turning to sleet. Over a period of about one hour Chris, Mike, Jim and Margaret drifted in. Mike had attempted to a high level route but had turned back at the top of Sron an Lairig and descended to the Lairig Ghru. Mike and the others had done well considering that the central section of the Lairig was deep in snow. In the meantime the "A" team struggled over the summit plateau in worsening conditions bagging every Munro and Top eventually arriving at Linn of Dee in the late evening. We awoke on the Sunday to a Christmas Card scene-snow down to road level. The "B" team now joined by Morag were ferried to Linn of Dee and traversed the Lairig an Laoigh in good order, Mike diverting to climb Bynack More. The "A" team exhausted from their efforts of the previous day travelled with Bert and Alasdair to Cock Bridge where Carn Ealasaid was climbed in a snowstorm. After a couple of "watering" stops we drove back to Glen More to meet the others emerging triumphantly from the crossing. An excellent weekend – what shall we attempt next year – Glen Tilt, Glen Feshie, Corrieyairick, Kingshouse to Rannoch Station?

Spean Bridge 2 to 4 June 1995

Mike Scarr and I climbed Beinn Bhan above Gairloch in thick mist on the Saturday and Mam na Gualainn on the Sunday. This latter hill is very easily ascended by a good path at its western end. From the summit there are excellent views of Beinn a' Bheithir and the other Glencoe hills. No reports are to hand of what the others climbed but most of us had an excellent meal in the Corriegour Hotel on the Saturday. Apart from Mike and myself the other members and guests present were John and Marge Foster, Roger James and his son Gavin, Shirley Mackay and the McManus clan.

A I Andrews

Members began arriving in Glenridding and Patterdale on the Wednesday prior to the meet and there was a large party who stayed on after the weekend until Wednesday (30+ stayed at the hotel on the Sunday night).

The weather wasn't totally awful and Saturday was delightful – sunny and warm. There was plenty of snow above Red Tarn on Helvelyn and Catstye Cam gully was full from top to bottom. The meet leader did his route on Friday. Others enjoyed the more hospitable weather on Saturday. Sunday was damp in patches, but many members braved it whilst others went home and missed another good party.

We had a good turnout for the dinner with 109 members and guests. Some travelled far – Lucy and Paul Irvén from Brussels.

Our guests at the dinner on Saturday evening were Mr & Mrs Luke Hughes (AC) and Mr & Mrs Derrick Hanson (PCC) Luke Hughes gave a talk after dinner which was both informative (he'd raided the AC library) and humorous. He disclosed that his great grandfather Lord Schuster, had given an after dinner address to ABMSAC on 9 March 1938. Lord Schuster was President of the AC (1938-40) and never missed an alpine season between 1886 and 1914. There were many other family connections with the AC and Ski Club of Great Britain from 1894 to the present.

During his research Luke had found an early version of the ABMSAC Constitution which contained the following objects:

- a) to encourage British Alpinists to support the Swiss Alpine Club in all its work
- b) to collect funds and present to the SAC a club hut
- c) to form a body able to present a collective opinion to the SAC on any question of Alpine interest
- d) to promote among British members the sociability which is so conspicuous a feature of the Swiss sections but from which we are necessarily debarred by living at a distance from the headquarters of our sections. This is done by informal Dinners, Lectures, Smoking 'At Homes' and showing Alpine slides on the Lantern.

He thought the second paragraph would be engraved on our hearts! Luke's talk was well received and appreciated.

This format of the dinner, with a speech and no slide show, gives more time for socialising and is appreciated by many, but by no means all. It will be necessary to have speakers and slide shows in future years to try to spread the pleasure.

Brooke Midgley

CASCADES DE GLACE, LA GRAVE 4 TO 11 MARCH 1995

The meet was attended by four members, Mike Goodyer, Jeff Harris, Mike Pinney and Terry Trundley and guest Chris Raves. Four of us drove, using the newly opened Channel Tunnel and Mike Pinney took a ski flight and completed the journey to La Grave by bus.

The meet was based at the apartments in the Hotel Edelweiss, and we had the dinner menu at the Hotel each evening. Although there was plenty of ice on the majority of the icefalls heavy snow falls three days before we arrived meant the approaches to the routes were difficult and the ice at the top of the pitches covered by snow. Several of the classic icefalls, south facing, were melting or not formed. However there was still plenty of steep blue ice to be had. In addition, the skiing both on and off piste was excellent.

The first ice route tackled was "La Nuit Seva Fraiche" just 30 minutes walk from La Grave. This route gave 3 pitches of steep ice and one pitch of neve. Mike, Mike and Terry had an enjoyable day chopping up the icefalls. The abseils down from the trees concentrated the mind. Jeff and Chris attempted the Pic de la Grave on skis. The top part of the route was particularly hazardous so they did not reach the summit but they enjoyed the excursion.

One of the classic routes of the area is "Le Pylône", which is a 70 m vertical sheet of ice. After a struggle through deep snow to reach the foot of the icefall we all climbed the route. This was Jeffs and Chris's first time on vertical ice. The ice was good and thick apart from at the main belay, where Mike Goodyer took a 10 metre fall when clipping the belay bolt. The running belay ice screw held, but bent quite dramatically. Undeterred the climb was completed and the bolt was clipped. Several beers were required later in the day to calm the nerves of both climber and spectators!

We next all enjoyed a days downhill skiing at Les Deux Alpes. Jeff and Chris also completed a few off piste runs. The next day we decided to travel to Alpe d'Heuz to ski or climb. Mike Pinney, Jeff and Terry set off on ski and on foot to climb "Symphonie" which was about 2 km from the middle cable car station. On the way to the climb the weather closed in and a snow storm began. When the route was finally reached snow falls were tumbling down the ice. No climbing was attempted. Meanwhile Mike and Chris went downhill skiing and enjoyed an alpine lunch and beer in the comfort of a mountain restaurant during the storm.

We next spent an abortive day struggling up a snowblocked road to reach some icefalls, only to find the routes unapproachable. Four of us had walked, stumbled and staggered through the snow and Jeff used his skis. The highlight of the day for the walkers was when the snow plough cut through the road and made our return easy - but Jeff was not amused with his skis on.

Our last day saw Jeff and Chris off piste skiing in the La Grave area - which was memorable. The Mikes and Terry went to climb the vertical "Le Chandlier" - a free standing icicle. Deep snow slowed the approach and the brittle ice deterred us, so we settled for a more sedate but achievable route up a short coulior.

We had a varied week of activities with all of us trying something new. The fresh snow had hampered our climbing a little, but the Saturday saw five satisfied climbers returning home.

Mike Goodyer

MAY BANK HOLIDAY MEET - YORKSHIRE DALES

Maybe it was beginners luck, but there seemed to be sunshine in abundance for this new meet, which took place at Fearby, near Masham in the Yorkshire Dales. There was a modest turnout of people for this camping meet, in the grounds of the Black Swan pub, but a good time was had by all. The site was well equipped with showers, as well as the pub serving bar meals, and not forgetting the local Black Sheep beer.

On the Saturday, the more adventurous went on a pleasant ramble through the local farmland into Masham, and back out again by a riverside walk. The mellow tranquil setting was just right for an al fresco evening barbeque, which was made even better by the local butchers speciality spiced sausages.

On Sunday, we started the day at Brunham rocks, which gave the children a chance to climb their first guidebook routes. Faith and friction on the slabs was working well, but the gritstone handjar will have to wait for another year. After returning to the campsite in the afternoon, we then had a foray up to Slipstones, which is a delightful gritstone crag, higher up the valley. Although the crag is generally only around 25 ft high, it contains a lot of quality routes, and the friction is superb. We soloed easier routes and climbed the more difficult, up to hard severe.

On the Monday morning we went to Hackfall Wood, which is managed by the Woodland trust, and overlooks the river Ure. The wood was full of bluebell carpets, and old follies added even more to the enjoyment. At dinner time, we joined in the VE day celebrations at one of the local village pubs, complete with (another) barbeque, before winding a slow way home.

Next year, support permitting, there will be another camping meet centred at the Black Swan.

Ed Bramley

THE SNOWDONIA MEET - RHYD-DDU JUNE 1994

Eighteen members and guests enjoyed a weekend at Tan-yr-Wyddfa, the Dread MC's Hut at Rhyd-ddu. The majority of people arrived on the Friday night in time to sample the beers at the local pub.

The overnight rain followed by thick mist and drizzle on the Saturday morning disrupted Wendells' marathon walk plan and a "long" walk was substituted. Other parties scrambled on Tryfan or in the Pass or traversed the Nantle Ridge. Everybody was rewarded for their efforts by the rain stopping mid morning and some sunshine appearing. Afternoon tea was taken at James Bogles cottage.

In the evening a committee meeting at the hut split the evening meal and the late night drinks at the pub. Some committee members were heard discussing items long after the meeting had finished.

The Sunday gave us all good weather. Parties went to climb in the Pass and others climbed and scrambled on Cym Silyn - a memorable day for everyone.

Mike Goodyer

The meet was based at Vicosoprano in the Bregaglia from 22 July to 11 August. The campsite was comparatively uncrowded and a few minutes walk from the village and its ancient buildings. Over the span of the meet there were 67 in attendance (members of the 3 clubs and their guests with 3 under the age of 12 months!) although at no point was everybody on the campsite. Compared with the UK the weather was unsettled although on every day during the first 2 weeks, members were either going up to huts or tackling their climb. The third week was less forgiving although Piz Bernina and Piz Badile were both ascended.

It was an easy journey via the Maloja pass into the Bernina and emphasis ranged from the more local low level rock routes to the higher altitude mixed routes. Thus, first routes included outings using an early cable car to the Albigna reservoir typically to climb on the Spazzacaldeira with its Flamma and Dente overlooking the campsite, besides the more conventional approach of a night in a hut followed by a summit attempt the following morning. The Forno Hut was utilised for attempts on Cima de Rosso/Monte Sissone and Cima di Castello/Cima dal Cantun.

Piz Badile was high on the agenda. Although the North ridge is equipped for abseil this proved slow and the descent to the Gianetti Hut returning via the Passo Porcellizzo and the Passo della Trubinasca was more satisfying. (The descent from the Trubinasca is now equipped with chains and there is a marked path to the Sasc Fura Hut which was being rebuilt).

Other routes in Bregaglia included Pizzi Gemelli (Flat Iron ridge); Punta Trubinasca NW ridge; the Ago di Sciora South Face; Puntadal'Albigna Mueli Route/NW ridge and Steiger route; Torre Innominata WR; Balzet SR and Casnil ER.

In the Bernina routes included Piz Morteratsch, La Sella traverse and Piz Bernina via the Biancogrät descending via the Marco e Rosa Hut. Several parties stayed the night to permit a traverse of Piz Palu or Argient, Zupo and Belavista. Piz Palu was also ascended via the North Spur of East Peak. A number of parties also went round to the south to climb Monte Disgrazia from the Italian side.

Mike Pinney

SLOVENIA – The Sunny Side of the Alps

In July 1995 sixteen members and friends met in Kranjska Gora, the "Zermatt of the Julian Alps" for two weeks mountaineering and walking.

Positioned close to the Italian and Austrian borders Kranjska Gora is a spotlessly clean resort, Austrian in ambience, even down to the onion-domed church, although its modest hotels are not comparable to the Austrian Gasthofs and its chalets are more severe than their Tyrolean equivalent. The setting in a flat-bottomed valley at the foot of wooded, craggy mountains which are similar to the Cuillin is very pretty. The resort contains all the usual facilities found in the Alpine resorts of the Central and Western Alps.

During the meet we were blessed with fine weather and parties were on the hills most days. Although the Julians are abundantly supplied with Alpine Huts their use is not necessarily required as there is a tarmac road leading up to the Vrsic Pass, which at 1,600 m offers an excellent gateway to the higher hills. Most members managed to climb at least one major peak, led by Don Hardie who lived up to his name by climbing everything in sight, including Triglav solo. Major peaks ascended included Mojstrovka, Spik, Prisojnik, Razor, Jalovec and Triglav. On rest days and for those whose interests were closer to sea level there were excellent walks around Kranjska Gora and Bled. The capital Ljubljana is a magnificent baroque city and well worth a visit. The Julian Alps may lack height but are in no way inferior to the better known ranges to the west.

Finally for those for whom frugality is important Slovenia is considerably cheaper than other Alpine countries – where else can you get a two week, half-board hotel package, flying from the UK, in high season for less than £400?

The meet was attended by Alasdair and Senga Andrews, Sheila Coates, Don Hardie, Wendell and Jenny Jones, Peter Ledebøer, Alf and Shirely Lock, Herbert and Lottie Norton, Elizabeth Parry, Alan Partridge, Mike Taylor, John and Joan Whyte.

Alasdair Andrews

POTTERING IN THE PYRENEES – 1995 MEET

A hotel lay at the foot of the descending path.

“About one chance in three that it’s ours”.

“Not that sort of day; only Murphy’s Law” – if it can go wrong it will – “applies today”.

No the hotel was not the Montaigne, nor did either of the pair a little way down the road bear that name. Bill and I accosted a passer-by. “You are in St Sauveur; your hotel is in the twin village – Luz, two kms from here”.

Jaws dropped. It was already 7.05 pm, on a day when we had been booked to arrive at 6.00 pm; a day when two guide books, the 25,000 and 50,000 maps and the rock flashes had all disagreed; a day when the GR10 and the main road to Gavarnie coincided to our peril; a day where the high route produced a lengthy detour into a side-valley; a day with a kick in the tail in the form of an unending 200 m ascent through the forests, before the final track down into Luz St Sauveur; a day of heavy loads, dust and sweat. Truly Murphy had won.

We switched into autopilot and trudged on, ignoring a sudden shower.... Came the hotel, most of whose guests had come to sample the waters and staggered round seemingly in the last stages of senility. Entering into the spirit of things, we staggered too!

Winning the toss, I slid blissfully into the bath; the phone rang, the other three, who should have been ahead but weren’t, had arrived. They were uncertain of the hotel’s name but had remembered a bad joke about Montagues and Capulets; there was no hotel Capulet, so Murphy, who had clearly contributed to the temporary separation, had relented.

The idea of a Walking Meet first crossed my mind in Switzerland; too often a longish trek up into the passes brought a vista of unexplored peaks, frustratingly accompanied by the more prosaic need to get back in time for supper. On a Walking Meet there would be no need to turn round; the reverse of this coin was that everything would have to be carried. I recollected that my previous long carry had been in ’59; it was not only the years that were reversed.

The GR10 winding its way through the French Pyrenees seemed an ideal choice; 700 km of beautiful scenery and mountains and passes, which whilst lower than the Alps, were distinctly high by British standards, would provide country new to most. The Ariège section sounded delightfully remote but 100 hours of walking time, huts that could sleep three, and shops that reoccurred at weekly intervals seemed to be over-yolking that particular egg.

The Hautes Pyrenees section between Cauterets and Bagnères de Luchon seemed a better choice; taking in the three day variation via Gavarnie, it would give nine days walking, leaving something for packless peak-bagging opportunities, rest days and bad weather.

Problems of accommodation, and the need for a cohesive party, had originally suggested 4–8 as the ideal size; in the event we were five, most of whom, Antonia Barlen, Belinda Baldwin, Peter Bull and I had climbed together or were known to each other; to Bill Peebles our beaming Scot I had only spoken on the phone. We soon noticed that he didn’t stop beaming even when his knees were hurting and we proved to be a very happy party.

We set out from Cauterets, a pleasant little town squeezed into a narrow gash in the mountains, through which dives one of the many tributaries of the Garonne, on the

morning of the 2 September. Loads were viewed with mutual trepidation and it seemed fortunate that the first stage up to Pont d’Espagne lay through woods and past waterfalls and in the shade. It was warmer above the cafe and a lunch stop by the beautiful Lac de Gaube proved most welcome. The Refuge des Oulettes de Gaube was attained by 4.30 pm – the expedition was under way.

The next ten days left one with many enduring memories; the pleasant but easy ascent to the Petit Vignemale with its fine views of the North face of the main Vignemale peak; the airy misty scramble up the side of the Gavarnie Cirque to the Breche de Roland; the great griffon vultures, nearly 10 feet across, wheeling above the passes; the whistling of the marmots; the shimmering blue lakes of the pass de Madamète and the Néouvielle massif and the horrors of the path down to Vielle-Aure. Humorous ones too – the search for the bathroom at our Luchon hotel (through the window!), the vertical ladder from the Baysellance Refuge dormitory (to discourage night wanderers?), conversational gambits at Gavarnie after Peter shared his whisky round, the story of Jacques le Snoreur.

The 90 odd miles from Cauterets to Luchon were accomplished without the aid of transport, save for the final section through the Espingo refuge, where we diverged from Germ to the road leading over the col de Peyresoude, down which we plodded for a final 10 miles. In the process we passed and puzzled John Mercer and his party who stuck more rigidly to the GR10. This final bypass seemed justified by a combination of damaged knees and poor weather – snow down to 2,000 m, and mist lower still.

Although the original brochure spoke of spending one night in three in small hotels, in practice only three were spent in huts; this improvement in the comfort factor came about through a slight rearrangement of stages to take full advantage of the many valleys that had to be crossed; no one complained! Accommodation was not a problem, although some hotels were showing fin de saison signs and the huts shut as early as 15 September.

Size of loads proved a steady source of conversation; these varied from 20 to 33 lbs and contributed to a one third loss in ascent speed, as well as two damaged knees and one groggy hip. We walked 125 miles in the fortnight (90 with full packs), ascended 34,000 feet and descended 35,000. Shorter days involved 4–5 hours of walking; the longer ones 8, which allowing for stops meant 10 hours out. Two long days in succession prompted a demand for a rest day; a two night stop in Gavarnie provided a packless ascent of the Echelle de Sarradets, the closest we got to a rock-climb on the one day when we had no rope!

Cost excluding travel came to about £40 per day, the main factor being accommodation, usually around 300 francs per room, which made sharing of importance; food was good and cheap, breakfast and dinner usually costing only about 100–120 francs. Huts were cheaper than hotels but not wildly so. The Mercer team used gites rather than small hotels and undoubtedly saved money.

And “Did the ladies keep up?” You may ask. Wrong question! “Did we keep up with them?” Well, not always, but we tried.

Wendell Jones

NEPTREK 95 – LANGTANG, NAYA GANGA AND GANJA LA

Eventually ten of us, including five members set off to trek into the Langtang, climb Naya Ganga and cross the Ganja La, and ten of us came back fit and well not even having experienced an attack of the Kathmandu Quick-Step between us! Sitting here on a dank prematurely dark early December 'day' the brilliantly clear days and wide open views of only three weeks ago seem impossibly remote. But that is a problem I always have looking back on my time in Nepal – was it really real? We didn't climb the mountain, but we got to the high camp at 17,000 ft on schedule after meeting up with our climbing guide, and the track to the summit was well made. Was I unduly cautious? A couple of trekkers and a couple of porters had symptoms that could indicate more or less serious acute mountain sickness (AMS). Owing to a tight timescale we'd gained height rather quicker than I would have liked. Although the weather had been settled it was showing signs of breaking – not serious at the moment, but we had crossed a bad and extensive boulder field to get where we were which would be horrendous under several inches, let alone several feet of fresh snow. This time last year it had snowed at Kangchen Gumpa, 5000 ft below us.

As it happened the weather did not finally break until the day after we got back to Kathmandu. Six feet of snow were dumped in the hills over thirty-six hours. The consequences were tragic – fifty three reported dead, so far, in avalanches and mud slides, and hundreds of animals, a peculiarly tragic loss to the local people.

But we did complete the trek, including crossing the Ganja La with its interesting little traverse at the end – nonchalantly negotiated by all our porters, of course – and leading to the reflection that the guide books seldom adequately prepare one for the difficulties which one actually experiences. For another example, the descent to the south was a doddle unlike what we had been led to expect; under snow, especially fresh snow, I guess it would have been a very different matter. One can't be too critical, though, if mountaineering lost all its unpredictability it would lose most of its charm.

As a trek this must be one of the best. We bussed to Dunche, thankfully being obliged to go on foot while the driver negotiated the 'road' round the bad landslide of two years ago six miles short of the town. A night there and another at Sybru got us in the mood for the hike up the splendid gorge with its roaring river to Lama Hotel (don't let this name conjure up images of hot baths, french cuisine and gin slings as the sun goes down!), Langtang village in the ablation valley and finally Kangchen Gumpa at 12,300 ft (3,750 m) in a wide valley almost surrounded by snow-capped peaks. As part of the acclimatisation process nearly all the party attempted Tserko (16,300 ft) – scottish ben in character other than its height, with glorious views of the surrounding snow-capped peaks. The prayer flags on its summit can be seen straining in the breeze from Kangchen Gumpa so it's easy not to realise that it rises 4,000 feet above the village.

The day saved by not climbing the mountain, together with an unused spare day, allowed us to extend the trek to include the Thare ridge though the Bhanjyangs and Chisopani to Sundarijal with its splendid views from Everest to the east, if only we could recognise it amongst the great jumble of peaks, to Daulagiri in the west and mixing it much of the time with a travelling festival of happy locals in their Sunday best escorting two whirling and turning medicine men of boundless energy dressed in white with peacock feather headdresses.

Then, of course, we topped and tailed in the Kathmandu valley, visiting Bhaktapur, Boudhanath, Pashupatinath, Syambunath and Lalitpur and wandering through the squares and bazaars of Kathmandu; eating 'native' in the sybaritic Thamil House

restaurant or in the Crystal Hotel roof-garden, and attending a performance of nepali dancing, followed by enormous steaks and beer in the Thamel Steak House.

Was it really only three weeks Heathrow to Heathrow?

The Party

Members

Penny Austen, Sue Stock, Mike Austen, David Edwards, John Chapman (Leader).

Friends

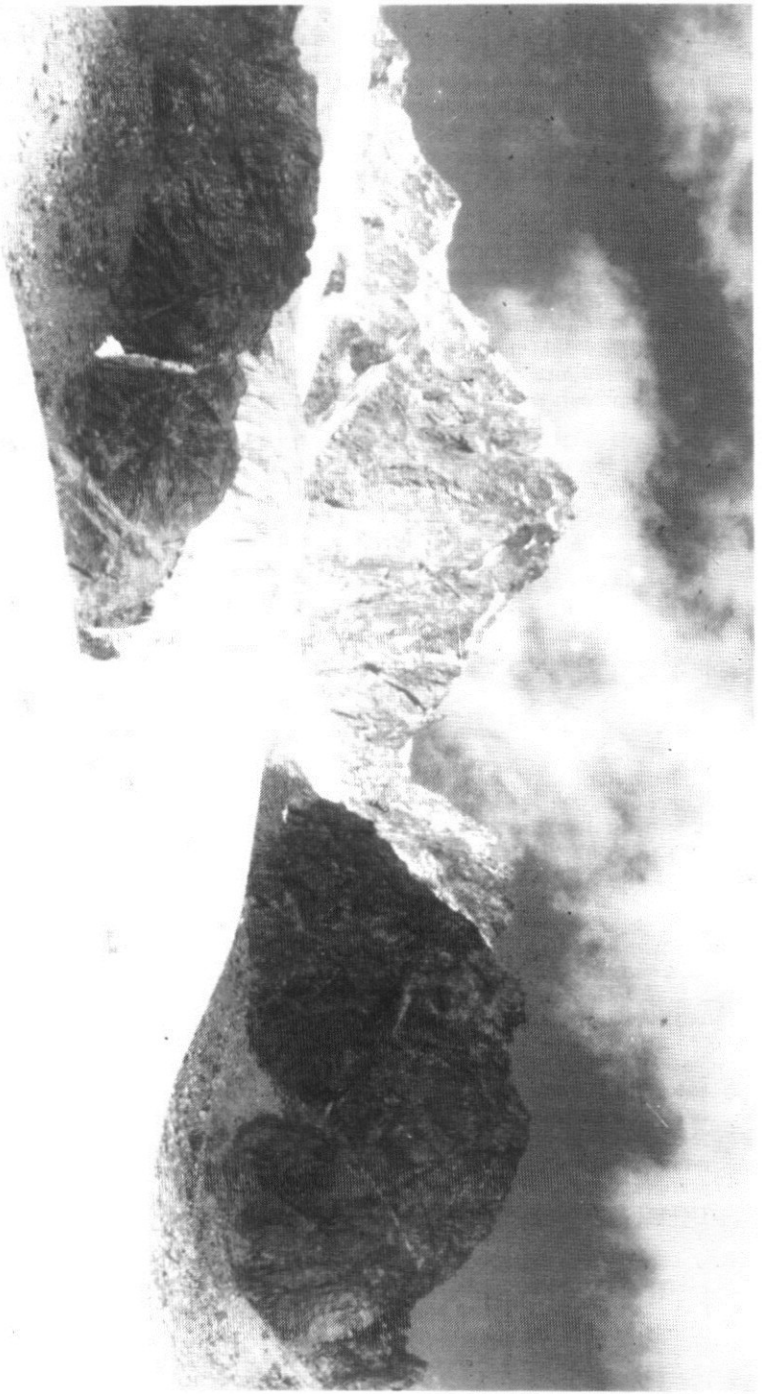
Sheila Benton, Jean Griffiths, Judy Merryfield, Brian Benton, Neil Churchill.

Cost

For those considering something of the same the cost per person was about £1450 all in – flight, insurance, trekking costs, tips and costs incurred in and around Kathmandu, but excluding beer.

John Chapman

NAYA GANGA - From The South, (Its normally climbed from the east - along the ridge.)



Tilman's "Fluted Peak" From Tserko.

MEMBERS ACTIVITIES 1995

Ken Baldry

We went ski-ing in Ischgl in January and had the best snow for years. Avis did everything right at last and, as she was 60 in August, has decided to retire from ski-ing.

At last, I finished my Cross-Swiss walk in June. Starting from Gstaad, I picked up the trail in Gsteig. The first pass, the Blatti, was the hardest but gives the best view in the Bernese Oberland, all the way to the Wetterhorn. The north side was snowbound down to 1550 metres after the late and deep winter, so it took 10 hours to get to Col des Mosses. The planned last pass, to the Rhone Valley, was aborted by the outbreak of war. Mortars and machine guns sounded off as the Swiss played at soldiers. I had to take the parallel Col de Chaud, first a big drop and then much higher, down to Villeneuve on Lac Lemán. So much for my easier day. Fortunately, a kind Swiss couple replenished my water supplies on the way down. Fortunately, a kind Swiss couple replenished my water supplies on the way down. *The next morning, I walked round to St Gingolph on the French frontier. OK, so it's a small achievement but a solid one.*

Then, I thumbed lifts to Sion for the Pennine Alps. I should have known better. One day's walking to the Dixence showed that the rest of this year's trip was Off, the snow being ludicrously dangerous, so I thumbed back to Lausanne and caught a train home.

Peter Farrington

As well as some good winter days on the Islay and Jura hills, I attended Association meets at Fearnan and Appin, enjoying outings on Ben Lawers, Stuch an Lochain, Sgurr Fionnlaidh and Beinn Sgulaird. Also a snowy flounder in the Corryhully area.

I completed my sixth Bens of Jura Fell Race in May, this time in rain, mist and gale force winds. The conditions hadn't improved much a week later for a visit to the Cuillin with Mynnydd C.C. friend Dennis Brown. We settled for a traverse of Sgur an Bhasteir, Am Bhasteir and Sgurr nan Gilleán before seeking better weather elsewhere. Eventually we found some Sun on Streap after rather miserable days out on An Teallach and the Ring of Steall Mamores.

I warmed up properly during a family holiday near Parga (Epirus) with some solo hill walking and a delightful aquatic ascent of the Acheron Gorge. I returned to Greece in September with Tony Perrons for a six day walk around the Lefka Ori of Crete. We ascended Gingilos and Volakias before going up to the rather expensive Kallergi Hut. We traversed Melindaou, 2,133 m to a bivouac at Katsiveli springs then continued over the highest point, Pachnes, 2,453 m before heading down to Chora Skafion by the sea. We had lodgings in Anopoli and a fine coastal walk with bivouacs at Sweetwater Bay and Agia Roumeli before an ascent of the Samaria Gorge to finish back near Omalos. It was a most enjoyable tour through a lunar landscape. To be recommended to those who like light travel and warm bivouacs and certainly the best way to avoid the crowds in the Samaria.

Mike Goodyer

My move down to Wiltshire has meant a revision in my climbing activities, but I have managed to get out once a month. In January I travelled to Fort William, via Harrogate to pick up Terry Trundle, for what turned out to be an epic drive. Thirteen hours after leaving sunny Wiltshire I arrived at a frozen Achintee bunk house. We dogged continued along the Rannoch Moor road slipping and sliding in the fresh snow. We were rewarded with an excellent days skiing on the Nevis range. The road conditions were so severe that hardly any weekend travellers had made it and the pistes were all but empty until early afternoon. The next day saw us in Glencoe attempting the Screen – but the thaw had beaten us.

I travelled to the Lakes in February with Mike Pinney for the Northern Dinner Meet. Once again an excellent weekend. Mike Pinney, Peter Goodwin and I walked up Ruthwaite Còve and climbed Tongue Gully on poor sugary snow, returning via Hellvellyn, Raise and Greenside Mines. The after dinner walk on the Sunday took us into the cloud on Place Fell.

In March I realised a longtime ambition and climbed on the icefalls in France (see elsewhere for details). We had a good week of climbing and skiing.

At Easter I managed to get my family to go skiing at Haute Nendax, near Verbier. We shared an apartment with Andy Burton and his family. My son learnt to ski and was tackling blue runs by the end of the week. My son has already booked his holiday with me for next year.

In May the family attended the Club meet in Yorkshire at Fearnby. It was the first time we had camped as a family. Another good time away.

In June I attended the Club Snowdonia meet. Terry Trundle and I had a good training run over Nantle Ridge in the mist. We climbed Sabre Cut in the Pass on the Sunday.

A couple of weeks later in early July Terry and I went racing in the Saunders Mountain Marathon at Coniston. We had a bad time, making a stupid error in perfect visibility on the first day. Not a good race.

Terry and I joined forces once again for the summer climbing in the Alps. We attended Mike Pinneys *Vicosoprano meet for two weeks. We started off the holiday visiting Tony's relatives in Basel – and were made very welcome again. We arrived at the campsite on the Sunday afternoon and set up camp. Two climbers from Notts CC set up camp next to us – John Bradley and Bob Brown – and we quickly made friends and climbed together on several occasions. The highlights of the holiday included a glacial tour on the ascent of La Sella from the Coaz Hut along with the Mike Pinney Alpine Tour team. Terry and I had a glorious day on Mount Disgrazia where even the never ending switchback road walking could not diminish. Surely the evening meal in the Ponti Hut was the gastronomic experience of the holiday. An unforgettable day on Piz Pali, climbing the North Ridge should have been the icing on the cake. One pull on a loose rock ensured that I will never forget the day but it was not the experience I was looking for.*

In September I was up in Scotland on the Isle of Mull. The weather was superb-blue sky, sun and no wind. I was with a friend, teaming up again as Terry was not available, competing in the Lowe Alpine Mountain Marathon. Two days of exciting ridge running and scary scree runs left us exhausted for the long drive home.

In October I was back in Torver in the Lakes for my old climbing club's Annual Dinner. It seems that there are more ex-members at these gatherings than current members. Ed Bramley and I went for a final training run for the Karrimor Mountain Marathon in November. Unfortunately we are not competing as a team, our respective partners opting

to stay at home 'resting'. Well we started at Ambleside and took in a variation on the Fairfield and Hellvellyn horseshoes returning to Ambleside. After a steady evening in the Church House Inn, Ed and I climbed at Wallowbarrow. It was my first rock climb since my accident in the Alps. After a leg shaking first pitch the second pitch passed by and I actually enjoyed the third pitch.

So into November and the end of the season. Terry and I joined up again for the Karrimor Mountain Marathon in the Brecon Beacons. We recovered from our summertime blues and did well in the Long Score, gaining more points than last year. Another great advantage was that the drive home was only two hours. It was good to finish the years activities on a good positive note.

Wendell Jones

Helvellyn was climbed on the Northern Dinner Meet – again; somewhat unusually we started with a party of seven which shortly increased to nine; however, by the time the summit was reached we were down to two, and I descended alone from Sticks Pass. I don't know what that proves!

April in the Black Mountains was rather less successful; the walk organised by the Brecon Beacons Mountain Rescue Team started 380 strong; of whom only 30 completed the 26 mile round – not I, it is to be feared. The cause of this debacle was rather more obvious, a late April blizzard.

British weather being British weather, the sun was blazing down a couple of weeks later when I stood on Pen-y-Fan – no one said that VE Day was to be televised on the same spot two days later. Immortality missed again! The weather was less user-friendly when I tried to transfer the Lakes Marathon to Wales.

Early July was spent in Slovenia, a week at beautiful Bled, and a second at Kranjska Gora under Alasdair Andrews' leadership. Great limestone peaks, lots of fixed ropes, rivers of dry white boulders, Prisank, the mountain with a hole, and not a Serb in sight. Noise there was from the disco in the basement, and conflict too when a distinguished Past President hurled a bucket of water at one of the inebriated revellers who was disturbing his slumbers. On a more serious note, it was sad to see the damage done to the tourist industry of a small country by a war beyond its borders; perhaps we should be grateful that Slovenia obtained independence at the cost of a 10 day skirmish in 1991.

September brought the Pyrenean Walk, as detailed elsewhere; my grateful thanks to all who took part in this venture.

Barrie Pennett

My year began with a few days in the Howgills where we made our headquarters at Sedbergh. It was frosty throughout the short holiday and there was snow on the fells. On a bitterly cold New Year's Day with my wife Valerie, and Susie, our eight year-old cocker spaniel and two friends, we decided to shake off the over-indulgence of the previous night by doing a short walk above Sedbergh. Our route took us to the top of Winder (1,551 ft). It was bitterly cold on the summit and the wind was so strong we had to stand behind the OS column in order to stay on our feet. We did not linger for long and after taking in the glorious view we continued our way into the Howgills. It was a glorious afternoon and after spending quite some time in the hills we returned to civilisation.

Wainwright in his book: "Walks on the Howgill Fells" writes: "It might create a wrong impression to say that Winder is to Sedbergh what the Matterhorn is to Zermatt, but the relationship is the same. The hill and the town are very closely linked."

I know what he is getting at having spent some memorable holidays in Zermatt. Winder dominates Sedbergh and its valley.

Another day we did a walk from Sedbergh to the Frostow Fells and Millthrop. It is superb and can be thoroughly recommended. Our third day took us on a walk found Crook Fell before returning home.

During the year we have walked in Wharfedale, Nidderdale, Bowland in Lancashire, the Pendle area of Lancashire, Lake District and on the moors of Wharfedale.

In April we visited Hawes for the day and walked to Lovely Seat, Pike Hill Beacons and Hardraw Force. It was a warm and sunny day and drinks at the Green Dragon at Hardraw were more than welcome. At the end of April along with a group of friends I walked the Bronte Way.

In May we spent a few days at Hawes. On a cold and sunny day we climbed Yorburch and Wether Fell (2,015 ft). On another day we did an eight-mile walk from Worton round Addlebrough and actually climbed to its summit (1,564 ft) which can be somewhat difficult due to barbed wire fences obstructing the route. I got the impression we should not really have been on Addlebrough. After a brief stay on the summit we continued our walk to Thornton Rust and back to Worton. On a cold, sunny day (May 12) we were pelted with hailstones as we walked in the Appersett, Mossdale and Cotterdale area during our stay at Hawes. The last day of our holiday in Hawes we drove to Askrigg where we did a seven-mile walk to Nappe Hall and Askrigg's Falls. Later that month we returned to Wensleydale and did a walk in the Bainbridge area.

My wife and two female friends visited Ireland in June where they did the Dingle Way, a walk of more than 100 miles. While she was away I did a walk in Wharfedale, with spaniel Susie, taking in Beamsley Beacon.

On a warm but dull July day we parked the car at Stainforth and walked to Smearsett and Feizor (nine miles). During a walk on the Baildon and Hawksworth Moors in August my wife badly sprained her ankle, and at first it seemed we might have to call off our plans to walk the Pendle Way, a delightful walk in Lancashire. We made our headquarters at the Alma Inn, Laneshaw Bridge near Colne. This walk though delightful country takes in Pendle Hill (1,828 ft). We have visited Pendle Hill on a number of occasions in icy conditions and on one occasion when a Witches celebration was taking place but on this time the views from the summit were truly marvellous.

In October we spent a couple of days at Sawrey in the Lake District. We took the opportunity to do two walks from Wainwright's Outlying Fells. We spent one afternoon on Latterbarrow and Claife Heights. The following day the heavens opened and it rained and rained. There was little point in going for a walk because there would be no pleasure gained so we looked round Ambleside and visited a garden centre. As we were making our way home the rain stopped and the sky brightened. We decided to park our car at Staveley and walk up Reston Scar, a tiny fell, which is often overlooked by those heading for the higher fells.

Early in December we visited Keswick, not intending to do a walk but when we arrived at Keswick it seemed a shame to waste a glorious afternoon so we walked up little Latrigg. It was worthwhile for the views were superb. On Boxing Day we drove into Nidderdale where we walked round Grimwith Reservoir and our snack of pheasant and turkey washed down by coffee laced with rum went down a treat.

Earlier in the year we walked the Leeds Country Way. I would not recommend it to anyone who loves the hills. Apart from odd areas it is a filthy walk, littered with rubbish and the streams are in a filthy condition.

OBITUARIES

Joan Whyte

Her many friends heard with shock and great sadness of Joan's death on December 30th.



Joan, with her husband John, was a member of the SAC for many years and was a faithful member of the ABMSAC. John and Joan attended many club meets in Switzerland and whilst Joan was not keen on the high technical climbing she was a devoted hill walker and scrambler and indeed was a companion to many members of the club on day outings in the Swiss mountains which she loved. Her knowledge of the flora around her added to other peoples' enjoyment.

Joan could always be relied upon to see that new members were included in the expeditions and social life of the holidays at their own level of mountain skills. This even included looking after small children so that their parents could have a "day off".

When John was elected as President of the Association, Joan gave him all her support for his three years in office, but during the late 70's and 80's Joan was a leader amongst the group of wives who undertook to provide food and drink for the London meetings. This greatly enlivened the evenings and encouraged what had been dwindling audiences. Undoubtedly this helped to keep the club viable when visits to Switzerland had become expensive and less frequent. Joan responded to every request for help and was always one of the last to leave the premises when the clearing up was done!

In her home life Joan was an efficient and talented hostess, both in their own home and with John at official City or business dinners. She was a devoted and caring mother and grandmother and was very proud of her two children and grandchildren. The pretty garden at Wild Hatch is a tribute to her love of flowers and skill with them.

Joan will be sadly missed by us all. We shall remember her gentle and affectionate nature, her warmth and friendliness. We extend our sincere sympathy to John and his family and we share their grief.

Mary Boulter

Maurice Freeman

Maurice Freeman was born in Coventry in 1912. His father died when he was 3, and Maurice was brought up by his widowed mother. Despite not starting school until he was eight he won a scholarship to Bablake School and went on to graduate in Physics at Birmingham University. After university he worked in the Shirley Institute at Didsbury doing research into rheology. Unable to join the services during the war partly due to his occupation and partly due to poor eyesight, he used his leisure time to take an external London degree in mathematics whilst continuing his work at the institute. He moved to London in 1948 and joined the Mars company at Slough as a food technologist and stayed with the company until his retirement. It was during his spell in Manchester that he became interested in mountaineering and was recruited into the Rucksack Club by Alex Ferguson in 1945.



Maurice joined the Swiss Alpine Club and the ABMSAC in 1963, and it was with the latter that he did much of his mountaineering, being a frequent participant in their Swiss meets with his wife Betty as well as attending many meets in the Lakes and Scotland. A

by-product of his employment at Mars which was much appreciated by his fellow members of the ABMSAC was the large box of sample Mars products which came with him to outdoor meets, usually new products being tested before being launched on the market. There was always a good supply of willing testers.

A small group of local enthusiasts formed the Slough Mountaineering Club with Maurice as their founder President in the 1960's and it was with them that he had many rock climbing weekends in North Wales. At the same time he was an instructor for his local T.A. unit during their mountaineering trips to North Wales. Maurice felt the loss of his wife Betty in 1980 very deeply but managed to stay on in his Maidenhead home until a year ago, tending his cherished garden and producing large quantities of wine from his own fruit. He spent the last few months in sheltered accommodation near his daughter in Devon. Those who knew him will remember him as a man with a keenly logical mind, a devoted family man and one with great modesty about his many talents.

John Whyte

Virginia French writes

Maurice will be remembered as a strong man in his love of the hills. He would celebrate at the summit with a sip of his own vintage. He was always a good companion in the hills with his dry sense of humour and passion for upland paths.

His official work for the club was threefold, serving as vice-president 1980-89, as secretary 1983-84 and as editor for eleven years from 1975.

Dr Pat Hurley

Pat Hurley passed away after a brief illness on 21 July 1995. An enthusiastic climber and walker he joined the ABMSAC in the 60's after attending some of the old MA Alpine courses in Arolla and Zermatt where he climbed a number of peaks including the Zinal Rothorn. In Chamonix he did the Forbes Arete of Chardonnet and other climbs. He attended many of the early UK meets of the Association in Wales and Lakes. Though not a hard climber he enjoyed routes such as Jones' Direct on Scafell and Aurora at Stoney Middleton.

In 1975 Pat did the Everest Base Camp trek and followed this with other long distance walks in succeeding years including the TMB and the South West Way. His great ambition, however, was to do the pilgrimage to Compostella, the Way of St James. He managed this in 1992, taking three months to walk the 975 miles between Le Puy in France and Compostella and – because he arrived a little early for the Feast of St James – he added a few more miles to the coast and back at Cap Finisterre. On one occasion, at the end of a long hot day, he got a lift into a village, but conscientiously went back next day and walked the distance.

Pat was born in Hexham in 1926, the son of a local GP. He was a devoted Geordie – he qualified as a doctor at Newcastle after the war and was for many years a GP in Felling, a district of Gateshead. He lived in the area rescuing a semi-derelect Georgian house from the demolition men and converting it into a splendid home with his wife Sue. Outside the hills his two passions were books and wine. He was in many ways a Renaissance man.

In early June he and I went walking amongst the gentle hills of the Jura, but he was obviously not his usual genial self and on his return home he was found to have cancer. His decline was rapid and he died within a few weeks. He was 68. He leaves behind his widow Sue and a wide circle of grieving friends.

Rev F.L. Jenkins

Fred Jenkins was an extremely pleasant fellow: these are not my words but those of George Starkey in 1954, forty years before Fred's death, when proposing him for membership of the Alpine Club. I would now, as would everyone else who knew Fred, associate myself with them. He remained an extremely pleasant fellow to the end. We all saw him at the various mountaineering clubs to which he belonged, having a quiet chuckle about something or other, and always, in perhaps his most generally remembered role, saying a subtle grace if there was a dinner.

But back in 1954 his climbing record was impressive: he seemed to have no opportunity to climb anything available in the Alps, Cyprus, Corsica and the Pyrenees, always guideless and frequently alone. And this carried on for the rest of his life, except for the last year or two when a hip replacement left him still on sticks, as he was the last time I chatted to him. But to the pure mountaineering he added, for a large slice of his life, the ski-mountaineering in which he took such great delight.

Harry Sales

Otto Stoller

Otto Stoller was a great friend to the ABMSAC. He was prepared to take large parties, often expeditions of considerable difficulty, and was both patient and stern with us amateurs. Without Otto's skills and Paul French's organisation, the Meets of the 60's and 70's would have been nothing like as satisfying and enjoyable as they were and Schwarenbach would not have the same place in our affections. It was a great privilege to have climbed with Otto and those long past times will be remembered with both pleasure and sadness. Many thanks Otto.

Harry Archer

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Association held at the Rembrandt Hotel, South Kensington, London Saturday 28th October 1995.

The President was in the chair with 16 members present.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mr M. Pinney, Mr B L Richards and Mr J S Byam-Grounds.
2. The Minutes of the 1994 AGM as published in the Journal were accepted. There were no matters arising.
3. Election of Officers and Committee.
Hon. Members Secretary: Dr Eddowes agreed to combine this office with that of Hon. Registrar.
Proposed: Mr D R Hodge. *Seconded:* Mrs N M Hall. Passed unanimously.

Honorary Solicitor: Miss D Midgley.

Proposed: The President. *Seconded:* Mrs M Baldwin.

Committee Members: Mr R N James and Dr D C Watts retired as Committee members. The Committee's recommendations for their replacement were put before the meeting.

Mr E A Bramley.

Proposed: Ms M E Parry. *Seconded:* Mr J Baldwin. Passed unanimously.

Mr K Dillon.

Proposed: Mr D R Hodge. *Seconded:* Mr J Baldwin. Passed unanimously.

All other Officers and Committee Members offered themselves for re-election and were returned unopposed.

4. Accounts.

The Hon. Treasurer having offered his apologies for absence, the Hon. Secretary presented the *unaudited accounts* from the last Committee meeting.

Membership was down, especially Affiliates but subscription income remained steady. Newsletter expenses were higher as an extra issue was included in this year's accounts.

Investment income was slightly down due to interest rates. No disposals or acquisitions had been made during the year.

An excess of income over expenditure of £361 resulted.

The adoption of the accounts, subject to satisfactory audit, was proposed by Dr M J Eddowes, seconded by Mr N.E.D. Walker, and passed unanimously.

5. Subscription rates for 1996.

The Committee proposed that the subscriptions to the ABMSAC should be unaltered for 1996

The rates would therefore remain at:

Single membership:	£15.00
Joint membership:	£23.00
Junior membership:	£6.50

Proposed: Mr A E Cameron. *Seconded:* Mr D R Hodge. Passed unanimously.

The SAC rates for 1996, which are fixed by the Committee, will be based on each member's Section charge in 1995 converted at a rate of SF1.90 to the pound. The new member's joining fee and first year's subscription will remain at £65, including the ABMSAC membership.

6. President's Report.

Despite the small drop in the number of members of the Association – we have 345 in total in 1995 – there have been meets in the mountains and the hills both at home and abroad which have been attended by many of the Association's members.

Venues have included:

Scottish meets in the Isle of Skye, at Spean Bridge and in the Cairngorms. A family camping meet in the Yorkshire Dales. Snowdonia, and of course the Lake District.

Further afield ABMSAC meets have taken place at the village of La Grave, used as a base for ice-climbing; in the Julian Alps in Slovenia; camping and climbing in the Bregaglia based in the village of Vicosoprano; and a walking tour in the Pyrenees. A trek in Nepal is taking place at this moment. Thank you to all the meet leaders.

My thanks also go to Peter Lebeboer who has arranged an interesting programme of evening meetings for this last year. They included a talk by Sidney Nowill about Indonesia, wanderings, temples and volcanoes – Steve Venables took us through his trip to South Georgia in the South Atlantic. We joined Anthony Snodgrass for a talk about the *part alpine passes* have played in the history of the Alps. This latter event also included the annual buffet party organised by Edwina Turpin. Thank you Edwina.

The Northern buffet party was held in the George Starkey hut successfully arranged by Kathy McManus, our thanks to you. The last event of the year will be the Alpine Reunion, to be held in the G.S. Hut next weekend, organised by Mike Pinney.

I am aware of six members who have passed away since the last AGM:

Tony Husbands

Tom Miller

Dr H D Juler

Rev Fred Jenkins

Maurice Freeman

Otto Stoller

October 4th and the 20th anniversary of the official opening of the George Starkey Hut in Patterdale. It plays a significant role in the calendar of the Association and that of the Tuesday Climbing Club, our partners in the venture. Fresh approaches have been made to the Patterdale Parish Council with a view to securing the future of the hut, but as one can expect in matters of this nature it is a complicated business.

Lastly my thanks must go to our outgoing officers of the Association who have worked hard for the benefit of all the club's members:

Stuart Beare the Hon. Solicitor

Ben Howe and the New Members Secretary

Ben Suter the Newsletter Editor

8. Any Other Business.

Peter Lebeboer reported on the SAC Annual Assembly which he had attended on the Association's behalf:

The SAC structure is to be simplified.

The budget for rebuilding the Britannia hut has been approved.

Don Hodge reported that a new fridge had been installed in the George Starkey Hut, and requested that any suggestions for improvements should be addressed to him.

There being no further business, the President declared the meeting closed at 6.47 pm.