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

JOURNAL 1978

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DIARY FOR 1978

- January 10th Lecture, John Whyte, 'One Man's Mountains'.
- February 3rd to 5th Northern dinner meet at Patterdale. Leader W. Brooke Midgley, Speaker Tony Husbands, Book through leader.
- February 8th Lecture, Prof. Edward Williams, 'Exertion and Altitude'.
- March 3rd to 5th Working Party, George Starkey hut. Book through J. Cohen.
- March 8th Lecture, Frank Schweitzer, 'The Nanda Devi Sanctuary'.
- March 23rd to 28th Easter meet with T.C.C., George Starkey hut. Leader Richard Coatsworth. Book through leader.
- April 5th Lecture, Frank Solari, 'Ao Tea Roa'.
- April 7th to 9th Informal meet, George Starkey hut. Book through J. Cohen.
- April 28th to 30th Cwm Glas Cottage, North Wales. Leader Eddie Tuck. Objective, the Welsh 3000s. Book through leader.
- May 3rd Buffet Party.
- May 5th to 7th Informal meet, George Starkey hut. Book through J. Cohen.
- May 26th to June 4th Spring Bank Holiday. Informal meet, George Starkey hut. All beds reserved for members and their guests. Book through J. Cohen.
- May 26th to June 4th Scottish meet. Camping at Kintail on the Scottish National Trust site at Morvich grid reference 960 210 sheet 33. Leader Mike Scarr. Book through leader.
- June 7th Film Evening.
- June 16th to 18th Details in circular.
- June 30th to July 2nd Informal meet at George Starkey hut. All beds reserved for members and guests. Book through J. Cohen.
- July 14th to 16th Yorkshire Dales. Camping at Ingleton, Beezley's Farm grid reference 706749. Leader Bob Casselton. Objective, The Three Peaks. Dinner at Hill Inn. Book through leader.
- August 25th to 29th Informal meet, George Starkey hut. All beds reserved for members and guests. Book through J. Cohen.

- September 8th to 10th Informal meet as above.
- September 20th Lecture, to be arranged.
- September 22nd to 24th North Wales. Pinnacle Club hut. Nant Gwynant grid reference 653541 sheet 107. Leader Tony Strawther. 12 places reserved. Book through leader.
- October 6th to 8th Informal meet at George Starkey hut. Book through J. Cohen.
- October 18th Members' slides, Alpine Season.
- October 27th to 28th George Starkey hut, joint meet with Alpine Club. Organised by J. Cohen. Book through organiser.
- November 3rd to 5th Informal meet at George Starkey hut. Book through J. Cohen.
- November 29th Annual Dinner.
- December 22nd to January 1st, 1979 George Starkey hut reserved for members and guests. Book through John Cohen.

All meetings (except January 10th) are held on a Wednesday at 7.00 p.m. at the Alpine Club, 74 South Audley Street, London. They are followed by an informal dinner at the Park Coffee House, Britannia Hotel, Grosvenor Square.

Bookings, by the preceding Saturday to: P. S. Boulter, Esq., c/o Medical Centre, St. Luke's Hospital, Guildford, Surrey.

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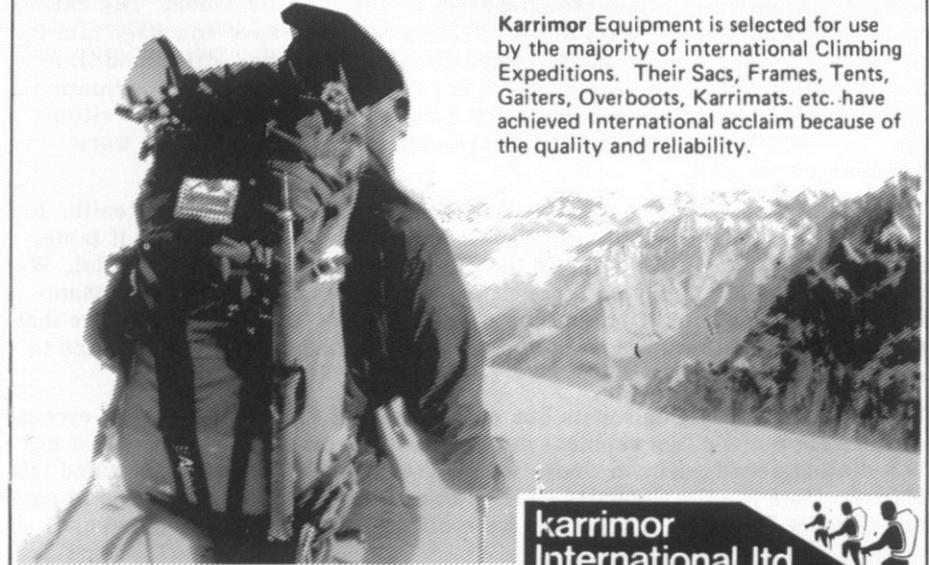
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LONG LIVE THE PRESIDENT

Maurice Bennett has completed his term of office as President. His career up to 1974 was touched upon in the 1975 Journal. We have now seen him for three years as an exceptionally active President who has still found time to serve as Honorary Solicitor during a period complicated by the formation of ABMSAC Ltd. He has also corrected the editor's writings and written his own contributions in matters where experience and sympathy were particularly needed.

Maurice has done a great deal for the Club and its members by stealth. No one person knows the whole of it, and Maurice would blush to find it fame, so let it rest there. His place in the annals of the Club has no parallel. We cannot wish him a happy retirement from Club work, as that is a consummation which he would find neither practicable nor desirable. We hope that he and Gladys will enjoy giving us their help and advice for many years to come.

We welcome Paddy Boulter as our new President. Modesty or other circumstances have made biographical details hard to come by. We know that he is a distinguished surgeon whose work takes him all over the globe, and that he finds time to climb equally widely, as can be seen from a reading of past and present Journals. Those who have climbed with him understand and



appreciate his qualities. He has been Vice President since 1974. To most members, however, he is best known as Social Secretary since 1971. In particular, he and Mary have made the Buffet Party into a uniquely popular and successful annual social occasion. We wish him happy presiding and happy climbing throughout his forthcoming term of office.



NEW STYLE A.B.M.S.A.C. TIES

Association ties (red and silver badge on blue background), in a more modern broader style may be purchased from the address below. A few of the older narrower ties remain available and will be supplied against early orders unless the new style is specifically requested.

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EDITORIAL

The theme for this year is the health of this Club as a going concern to gather together people interested in climbing in Switzerland. This subject cannot now be separated entirely from activity at home, and a backward look at the history of the Club may be a help to understanding.

Organised Alpine meets have been a feature of Club life as long as the editor can remember, and it was indeed such events that first drew him into the Club. There have not always been such meets, and presumably it was sufficient at one time to have a body in existence which helped gentlemen to get together to coordinate their plans for their Alpine seasons. Eventually meets were arranged, and it is only within the last decade or two that these have become annual events. This development appears to owe more to Maurice Bennett than to anyone else; at least he was for a long time the one who did the work necessary to sustain the activity.

The editor should properly declare his interest as a bona fide card carrying supporter of official Alpine meets, as he and his wife have attended every one since he first joined the Club. These events, along with the indoor meets in London, have been the life blood of the Club. Nevertheless there must be many members who climb regularly in the Alps without attending official meets, and their needs are important. Furthermore, many of us spend more time in British mountains than in the Alps. These circumstances call for thought about the purpose of the Club. Such thoughts as now follow represent the prejudiced and partisan views of the editor.

Official Alpine meets are usually attended by about 30 people. On occasions, the total count, including guests of both sexes and all ages, has risen above 50, but it is doubtful whether more than 30 members have ever been present. It is entirely practicable for these 30 men to discuss together the form which next year's meet should take, or to look further into the future, but it is not easy to discover the wishes of those who are not present. It would therefore be possible to perpetuate, in all good faith, a form of meet which was not to the taste of the majority. Efforts to ascertain the general wish, by inviting answers to questionnaires, have met with a disappointing response; please take note. Even the best intentioned government cannot easily do the will of the people if it does not know what that will is.

Hotel based meets were for many years a source of great pleasure to those attending. A few additional camping meets were arranged for those who had more regard for economy or who preferred a less sybaritic holiday. Eventually the straitened condition of sterling ruled out hotels, and the last three meets have been based on chalets. Those who attended the first two will be aware of how much they owed to Harry Archer and his family. Last year we were fortunate to be equally well looked after in a commercially run establishment. Next year's plans are not clear at the time of writing, but no doubt they will be by the time this Journal is issued.

The change in style of the meets has led to some changes of clientele. A few old friends come every year regardless of changes; God bless them.

Some former familiar faces are lacking, to our regret, but what a pleasure it has been to see new ones!

If we assume that A.B.M. members remain in the S.A.C. in order to climb in the Alps, and that a substantial proportion succeed in doing so, those who prefer to make their own arrangements most considerably outnumber those who attend meets. The concern of the government of the Club should be to help these independent people, to keep in touch with them if possible (ideally to the point of persuading them to write for the Journal!). This editorial has touched in the past upon such possibilities as facilitating contacts with the Swiss Sections, but no response has been noticed. Correspondence between members and Committee is perhaps not very vigorous, and a little more written argument might be healthy. There is no obvious reason why the Journal should not include a controversial correspondence section; try writing to the editor.

Few of our members will average more than a fortnight a year in the Alps, and at the current rate of exchange we are hardly likely to make a profit on our subscriptions in the form of reduced hut fees. Membership of the S.A.C. is retained for reasons more of the heart than of the head, and there has been a decline in numbers. This has led us to strengthen home activities by building the George Starkey hut and by forming a new class of membership. There has been some division of opinion about these developments. Some highly respected purists believe that the Club exists, by definition, for the Alps and nothing but the Alps, and distractions should be shunned. Others, without going so far, look closely at any change in our rules or practices which might weaken our ties with Switzerland or even imply discourtesy or ingratitude towards bodies which have helped us so generously as related later. The reasons for forming a class of Affiliate Member were set out briefly in last year's Journal. Expanding this, our situation may be likened to that of an industrial country which needs to export. It is widely agreed that a strong home market is a very helpful base for such an effort. In the same way a vigorous and self-supporting home Club life may sustain our Swiss activities through times of difficulty. It is becoming ever more usual for the leading British Alpinists to have graduated via gritstone rock climbing and then home mountaineering. Some of us, even of the most modest attainment, have followed the same course, and would probably never have climbed in the Alps otherwise. This seems to the editor to be a clinching argument for the view that we can best encourage Alpine climbing by encouraging aspirants who are not yet ready for reasons of time, money or experience.

The nature and extent of the services rendered to us by Swiss bodies are known broadly by some, but others may be less well informed. We enjoy the most cordial relations with the S.A.C., and visits of their Presidents and other officials to dinners and other functions have given great pleasure. They gave outstandingly generous financial support to the George Starkey hut. We are continuously trying to devise some form of attachment to the S.A.C. which would mitigate the financial disadvantage of paying full Section subscriptions for limited use, and have met with sympathy, though the prac-

tical difficulties, particularly the autonomy of Sections, have not yet been overcome. The Swiss National Tourist Office keep our list of addresses, post communications such as this Journal, and conduct business concerning the remittance of subscriptions to the S.A.C. But for these services, rendered so willingly by Mr. Imoberdorf and his colleagues, the cost of running the A.B.M. would be a great deal higher than it is. Lastly the help given by the Swiss Embassy may be least known to members. Their representative M. Jacques Rial sits on our committee. They supplied a splendid film, projector, projectionist and all for our Buffet Party in May. They are actively seeking opportunities for us to use Army accommodation as meet centres, and in an unobtrusive way they use their good offices on our behalf in areas where their influence is uniquely effective.

The home activity of the Club has grown greatly within the period covered by the editor's memory. At first there was little but the hotel based Easter meet. Then Peter Ledeboer introduced hut based meets. A glance at the Diary will show how these events have multiplied. Some, such as the Northern Dinner meet and the October meet, are constantly over subscribed, but there is usually room to spare at other meets, and Tony Strawher would no doubt welcome more support. The centre of the Club's home activity is now the George Starkey hut. This is by common consent a fine place, and furthermore it is a vital centre for communication between those who live respectively north and south of Watford. It is also a precious link with the Tuesday Climbing Club, active climbers all, who have done so much to support and maintain the hut and make it a success.

The concept of a Club hut had many fathers, their names now confused and lost, but the hard work of making it a reality fell inevitably on the shoulders of Peter Ledeboer and his companions on the hut committee. For a while the paramount need was to make it pay, which may have entailed letting it to outside bodies more often than some members would have wished. The needs of such members, the editor included, are simple and unexact. All we ask is that the hut should be available for our use (with guests) whenever we happen to want it and at however short notice. The practical implementation of means for achieving these simple needs presents certain problems, and spirited exchanges of views have taken place, at ordinary committee meetings, at an extraordinary meeting at Patterdale, and wherever two or three are gathered together. Members can be assured that the editor, for instance, has not allowed considerations of delicacy of manners to stand in the way of his offering advice in speech or writing at the most unwelcome moments.

It has been suggested that certain beds should be reserved for the exclusive use of A.B.M. members or that some should be available without prior booking, or that the hut should never be let entirely to an outside body. At the same time it is desirable not to lose money, and it has been found to be particularly important to guard the keys and protect the hut from unauthorised users. The hut committee must find itself in a veritable thicket of thorns, and no doubt there are times when John Cohen has to make a quick decision without the benefit of advice. It is, however, of the greatest im-

portance that the best compromise arrangement be found, and the hut committee have indeed made interim proposals. If one accepts the general thesis of this editorial, that a strongly based home Club is important to the health of the A.B.M., it is essential that the hut be used fully and to the best advantage of members. The northerners get there without too much difficulty, and the editor has derived much pleasure from the opportunity to meet some of these relative strangers. It is not always easy for Londoners who cannot leave until after work on a Friday to travel to Patterdale for a short weekend, and those more fortunately placed are asked to extend their sympathy and understanding to the others. When all is said, home meets were started and the hut was built to advance activity in Britain and to strengthen contacts between outlying members and the central government. The George Starkey hut provides the ideal ground on which such contacts can flourish.



The Girola 13,002 from Purta Sousset across Trajo Glacier
by Gordon Gadsby

LAND OF THE IBEX

Gordon Gadsby

After a stormy but uneventful journey across France, we crossed into Switzerland, drove through Martigny in glorious sunshine and started the climb up the Great St. Bernard Pass. For years I had wondered what would happen if anyone was unfortunate enough to get a puncture on a hairpin bend of an alpine pass. Now I know—you just get on with it! The traffic just squeezes past you, buses, juggernauts the lot. One English car did stop to offer help, but by then it was *too late*. The camber on the bend was so steep that the car was in grave danger of tipping over as I jacked it up and struggled to get the wheel off. Ricky, my son, thought it was all great fun!

Later that afternoon we entered Italy and the Gran Paradiso range driving up the winding road to Cogne, a fine old alpine village. Stuart and Kath Bramwell were already camped here at the site we had picked out of the climbing guide. Without even putting up our tent we decided it wasn't the place for a three week holiday. It was cramped with a 1 in 4 sand road, poor facilities and the only view was of a scree covered hillside where the locals were making a new road. We moved two kilometres down the valley to the village of Epinel with a delightful open site, excellent facilities, children's playground, bar, shop, great views etc. and it was cheaper!

The next morning the cars were white with frost at 8 a.m. By 8.30 a.m. the frost had gone and the sun was scorching down from a cloudless sky. This was it! the reason why some people in July and August prefer the Alps to Scotland. We had breakfast *outside* (what bliss), dried out the sodden Tinker we had used on the journey, had an early lunch, opened the Cinzano Bianco, and made plans for an afternoon walk in the pine forests. We decided to go up to the Vittorio Sella Hut next day. It was great to be back in the Alps!

The walk up to the Sella, carrying heavy sacs in the afternoon sun, brought us back to reality. Maybe there was something to be said for Scotland in July. Then Stuart reminded me of the midges and I immediately felt much better. As we left the tree line Ricky saw a lizard on the stony path and then Stuart spotted several Ibex on some crags just right of the track. They were magnificent animals and fought and pushed each other for possession of the highest point.

Further up Margaret saw a chamois and then where the tracks began to level off Stuart spotted a herd of over 70 Ibex crossing the river towards Lago Lauson—a wildlife photographer's dream.

We booked into the hut and ordered soup—this was a bit of a shock as my order for 3 bowls cost nearly £2. Later on Stuart and I did a recce of the approach to the Gran Serra, the highest independent mountain between the

Grivola and the Herbetet and our target for tomorrow. Kath was also coming with us. We retired to our quarters in the old stables and then met two German climbers who spoke excellent English. They had been to Skye and after reminiscing about the Cuillins we went to sleep.

A few hours later we thought we were on Skye as the rain was coming down in torrents. At 9 a.m. we retreated from the hut in dismay, the clouds were boiling and the rain was unabated. For 48 hours the rain continued almost without stopping. On Saturday we dodged in and out of doorways in the old part of Aosta, a fascinating place.

Monday was a lovely day and the five of us walked to the very beautiful Lago di Loye with its magnificent views of Mont Blanc and one of the finest waterfalls we have ever seen.

That evening Stuart and I decided that if the weather held we would have an early start and climb the very impressive rock peak above the campsite, Punta Pousset 3046 m, a climb of over 5000 ft from the tents.

The very friendly Italians camping all around us watched as we pointed upwards and heard us say the peak's name. Five minutes later we were surrounded by jabbering Italians, including two who were climbers and claiming to be amigos of Bonatti. After much hand waving and with the help of an Italian girl called Sylvia, acting as interpreter, they explained that the climb would be desperate as the upper slabs were overhanging. I produced the English Guidebook and showed them our proposed route which was not up the face but up a ridge that could not be seen from the campsite and was in fact a mere scramble. They all seemed happy at this and left us to finish our dinner.

The two of us were away at 6 a.m. walking first up river to Cretaz village and then steeply up through the pine forests to the Pousset Cwm. It was another great alpine morning with wild flowers in great profusion and the sun warm on our backs. Above the treeline we came upon a herd of chamoix (about 15) crossing a large snowfield. They were in high spirits jumping around and tossing the snow into the air like children playing. Suddenly the nearest one saw us, all heads turned, a moments hesitation and they were off, racing across the icy slopes in a single file. In seconds the last one had disappeared over the ridge towards Monte Erban. We continued our steady ascent, our minds filled with the wonders of these mountains.

Soon we in turn reached the edge of the snowfield above the Upper Pousset Cwm. Looking back it was an idyllic spot with lush meadows, bubbling streams and an extensive view towards Monte Emilius 3559 m. Sheltered as it was with impregnable looking crags above and below, it was indeed a mountain haven. No wonder the shepherds centuries past had built half a dozen stone chalets there. Today they were still almost intact and would make a great bivy spot.

Ahead of us there were no traces of track on the snow so we headed in the direction of the Col di Pousset for 50 m and then left the snow to turn sharp right beneath towering cliffs. We soon found a narrow track threading its

way through the rock barriers and leading directly towards the South West ridge of the mountain. The route was quite difficult in several places where small avalanches of new snow had fallen from the crags above and were either blocking the path completely or melting in the hot sun so making the steep track into a muddy slipway. Another half an hour and we had reached the ridge proper, two ten foot chimneys and an easy, if icy, scramble and we were on the top.

The view surprised us, as in the English Guidebook it said 'good local views'. Local—they couldn't have seen what now lay before us. We were almost completely ringed by magnificent peaks dazzling with new snow. In the North West the Mont Blanc massif looked breathtaking and surprisingly near, the Geant, Grandes Jorasses and Grand Combin hardly less so. Further away the Weisshorn and Matterhorn were clearly visible and not a cloud to mar the view. The peaks of Monte Rosa were hidden by the nearer Monte Emilius group, but continuing the rightward swing, we could see, beyond Punta Tersiva, range after range of snow mountains into the infinite distance, then the Punta Patri, Gran San Pietro, Roccia Viva, Becca di Gay and some of the peaks of the Gran Paradiso completed the view south. But best of all was that magnificent mountain the Grivola 3969 m looking tantalisingly near across the Trajo glacier. Our climb had taken nearly six hours but we were well satisfied. To add to this we found a clump of that most cherished of all alpins—Eritrichium Nanum 'King of the Alps' growing in a crevice on the summit rocks, the tiny azure blue flowers amazing us as they seemed to be winning a desperate fight for survival on that exposed rocky crest. Reversing our route of ascent we were down in time for tea and a welcome rest.

The hot weather continued and on Wednesday we visited the market at Courmayeur—I've never seen so many climbing boots on display. Then on the high road up Val Veny the avalanches were thundering down the Brenva Face and the Grand Jorasses was plastered.

Next day Stuart and I made an abortive attempt on a rock spire called L'Ouille 2521 m from the campsite as we were defeated forty feet from the top by rotten rock. We turned in the opposite direction and walked up a great hulk of a mountain called Monte Erban 3004 m. Deep snow almost covered the summit but the bronze Madonna was clear and views of the Gran Paradiso peaks were the best yet. On the descent we saw groups of chamoix performing rock gymnastics on the cliffs of Cresta Della Forcia that would have been beyond any human climber. No wonder the Swiss Alpine Club adopted this incredible animal for its club badge. We also saw an eagle splendidly highlighted by the evening sun as he swooped very close to us and then, surprised, soared far far away over the valley of Valnontey. To walkers really interested in seeing the wild life of this region the untracked wastes of Monte Erban are a must. The mountain can easily be ascended by leaving one of the high level traverse paths from the Rifugio Sella 2584 m and picking a way up the boulder-strewn ridge starting at L'Ouille. The walk can be extended by continuing along the spectacular but easy ridge to Testa Tsa Plan 3013 m and the Col Vermianaz 2900 m,

then on a very steep path back to the Sella Hut. To climb the peak direct from the valley allow at least five hours in ascent.

A few days later the five of us again walked up to the Sella Hut from Valnontey. The young guardian put us in the stables once more, this time with a large party of French mountaineers whose brand new ice axes, crampons, rope, sacs, etc. had never been used before. Our old British nylon rope was the cause of much chatter that evening. Also the herds of Ibex that gathered at dusk around the environs of the hut.

Next morning Stuart and I were first away having eaten our breakfast by torchlight on the end of our bunks. The Gran Serra 3552 m proved a delectable if easy mountain with a fifty metre rock climb up rough granite slabs to finish. The summit itself was an unusual rock table where you could set out a meal for six people beside a small steel cross and no danger of spilling the wine. The view was also unusual—below us a huge granite monolith jutted out like a giant cannon, beyond that were great glaciers and a sea of swelling clouds through which the Matterhorn occasionally appeared. Behind us the 4000 m Gran Paradiso, which we had climbed together 10 years before, was stark and clear against an azure sky. An hour later on the glacier we met ropes of French and Italian climbers toiling upwards in the hot sun. We exchanged Bon Giournos as we passed and then turned to look back at the summit rocks. It was 10.15 a.m. and the gently rolling clouds were closing in fast, so they would have to hurry if they were to see anything.

We continued our descent down the deep soft snow, down to our waiting families, down to the hut and the incomparable Ibex, down to the valley and home. Climbing the high peaks in that delightful land of the Ibex was over for yet another season.

The British Climbing Guide *Graians East* by Robin Collomb available from West Col covers the Gran Paradiso area and San Pietro mountains and this is essential for the climber and useful to the walker. Fine walks and climbs abound in the area with something to suit everyone—the Gran Paradiso being one of the easiest 4000 m peaks in the Alps, and the magnificent Grivola 3969 m presents a challenge for any climber.

The best map is No. 3 Il Parco Nazionale Del Gran Paradiso. Valgrisanche—Val Di Rhemes—Valsavaranche—Val di Cogne—Val Soana. Scale 1:50,000 Istituto Geografico Centrale—Torino Via Prati 2. This map is readily available in every small store in Cogne and in August 1977 cost 1,800 lira (£1.20). Walking routes are marked in red and narrow exposed tracks marked in red dots. Only two huts offer restaurant facilities—the Rifugio Sella and Vittorio Emanuele 2732 m and they tend to be expensive (an alpine card will cut costs by at least a third).

For the wild flower enthusiasts there is also a well laid out alpine garden at Valnontey, admission free (although you can see them all on the hills). And of course the Ibex and the Chamois. To see them, all you have to do is walk beyond the tree line.

ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, London, WC2, on Wednesday, 23rd November, 1977 at 6.30 p.m.

About 20 members were present. The President, Mr. M. Bennett, was in the Chair.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 1976, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the President.

2. Election of Officers and Committee for 1978

- a. On the proposal of Mr. M. Bennett, seconded by Mr. F. E. Smith the following officers and committee members were elected:

President	Mr. P. S. Boulter
Vice President	Mr. J. P. Ledeboer
Hon. Hut Secretary	Mr. D. R. Hodge
Hon. New Members Secretary	Mr. A. N. Sperryn
Hon. Social Secretary	Mr. P. V. Andrews
Committee Members	Mr. J. S. Whyte
	Mr. D. Bose
	Mr. A. G. Partridge

- b. On the proposal of Mr. N. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Boulter, all other Officers and Committee being eligible were re-elected.

3. The Annual Accounts

The President asked Mr. Wendell Jones to present the Accounts for the year ended 30th September 1977.

Mr. Jones reported that he presented two sets of Accounts for review by the Meeting. That of the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club was for approval by the members if thought fit, but those of the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club Ltd. would be presented to a Meeting of the Company at a later date. Mr. Jones drew members' attention to the reduction in the number of members, but the income for the year had increased because the majority of the subscriptions were remitted to Switzerland at rates of exchange above those allowed for when fixing the subscription. The Swiss section rates had also proved lower than anticipated. Investment income had increased due to higher building society interest on deposits. The expenditure of the Association was roughly com-

parable with last years'. An excess of income over expenditure for 1977 of £623 was taken to reserve. The President invited questions from the Meeting. Mr. Solari, seconded by Mr. Richards, asked whether it was possible to show on the income and expenditure account the exact nature of the transactions with Switzerland, so that Association members could readily assess the position of their Association independent of the parent Club, as requested the previous year. It was noted that this was already shown in the notes to the Accounts, and the Honorary Treasurer explained how he had expanded the notes following the previous request, but stated that the presentation was standard accounting practice. A proposal that the Accounts be received and adopted was proposed by the President and seconded by Dr. Riddell and was approved.

The President proposed a sincere vote of thanks to the Honorary Treasurer for his customary clear accounts, noting that two sets of Accounts had to be produced again this year and that this involved the Honorary Treasurer in a great deal of extra work. The Vote of Thanks was carried with enthusiasm and was coupled with thanks to the honorary auditor.

4. Subscriptions

It was proposed by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Dr. Riddell, that the Association subscription be fixed at £4 per member for 1978 and the Town and Country membership categories be removed. The necessary two thirds majority was achieved for the proposal.

It was proposed by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Solari, that the charge for life membership be raised to £50 and the necessary two thirds majority was achieved for the motion.

5. Any Other Business

The President proposed Votes of Thanks to the Swiss National Tourist Office for all their help during the year, mentioning particularly Mr. Imoberdorf, and to all the Officers and committee. Mr. Solari proposed a Vote of Thanks to the retiring President. This was seconded by Mr. Boulter, who also mentioned Mr. Bennett's earlier work when Vice President. These Votes of Thanks were carried with acclaim.

There being no further business the Annual General Meeting closed at 7.00 p.m.

ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS 1976-1977 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

for the year ended 30th September, 1977

	1977	1976
<i>Income from Members</i>		
Subscriptions (Note 1)	1,761	1,441
Entrance Fees	11	37
Life Membership Credit	47	46
Profit on Sale of Ties	—	8
Insurance Commissions	—	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,819	1,533
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>		
Hire of Rooms	175	100
Journal (Note 2)	611	639
Printing, Postage etc. SNT0	291	223
Printing, Postage etc. Association	129	120
Insurance	11	8
Entertainment	91	129
BMC Subscription	78	65
Lecture Expenses	11	11
Sundries	16	28
Depreciation, New Projector	—	32
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,412	1,355
	407	178
<i>Add: Investment Income:-</i>		
Association Investments	165	130
Building Society Interest	118	44
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	283	174
<i>Less: Taxation (Note 3)</i>	67	52
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	216	122
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Excess of Income over Expenditure	£623	£300
	<hr/>	<hr/>

BALANCE SHEET

30th September 1977

<i>FIXED ASSETS</i> (Note 4)	1977	1976
Projector (N.S. Finzi Bequest)	1	1
Equipment at Swiss Tourist Office	1	1
<i>INVESTMENTS</i> at cost (Note 5)	1,872	1,872
<i>CURRENT ASSETS</i>		
Stock of Ties at cost	66	5
Debtors	180	124
Cash on Deposit—Building Society	2,258	1,098
Cash at Bank	74	7
	<u>2,578</u>	<u>1,234</u>
<i>DEDUCT: CURRENT LIABILITIES</i>		
Current Account—ABMSAC Ltd.	1,112	291
Creditors	32	107
Subscriptions in Advance	184	234
	<u>1,328</u>	<u>632</u>
<i>NET CURRENT ASSETS</i>	1,250	602
	<u>£3,124</u>	<u>£2,476</u>
<i>SOURCES OF FINANCE</i>		
<i>Life Membership Account</i>	897	872
<i>Accumulated Revenue Account</i>		
Balance at 30th September, 1976	1,504	1,204
Add: Excess of Income over Expenditure	623	300
	<u>2,127</u>	<u>1,504</u>
<i>N.S. Finzi Bequest</i>	100	100
	<u>£3,124</u>	<u>£2,476</u>

M. BENNETT *President*
R. WENDELL JONES *Hon. Treasurer*

I have examined the books and vouchers of the Association and report that the attached accounts together with the notes are in accordance therewith.

J.LLYWELYN JONES

Hon. Auditor

17th November, 1977

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. <i>Subscriptions</i>	1977	1976
Income from this source is made up as follows:-		
Subscriptions — <i>Affiliate Members</i> —		
Year to 31/12/77 7 @ £5	35	—
Town members —		
Year to 31/12/77 87 @ £3	261	330
Country Members —		
Year to 31/12/77 219 @ £2	438	604
	<u>734</u>	<u>934</u>
Add/(Less) adjustments for subs in advance	50	(84)
	<u>784</u>	<u>850</u>
Credit re over estimated Swiss Subscription rates	420	584
Surplus on Exchange	552	
Subscriptions for earlier years	5	7
	<u>£1,761</u>	<u>£1,441</u>
2. <i>Journal</i>		
Cost of the journal is made up as follows:-	1977	1976
Printing	583	551
Despatch cost and other expenses	123	128
	<u>706</u>	<u>679</u>
Less: Advertising Revenue	95	40
	<u>£ 611</u>	<u>£ 639</u>
3. <i>Taxation</i>		
The Association is liable to Corporation Tax on its income from outside sources.		
4. <i>Fixed Assets</i>	Cost	Depreciation to date
New Projector (N.S. Finzi Bequest)	166	165
Equipment at Swiss National Tourist Office	80	79
5. <i>Investments</i>		
These are as follows:-		
£1,000 4½% Agricultural Mortgage Corporation Deb. Stock 1977/82		
£1,080 Brunner Investment Trust Limited Ordinary Shares of 25p.		
£1,043 United States Deb. Corporation Ordinary Shares of 25p.		

Cost of these holdings was £1,872. Aggregate market value at 30th September, 1977 was £2,792 (1976 £1,823).

The Association's holding in London Scottish American Trust was exchanged into United States Denbenture Corporation following a merger of the two companies.

THE ANNUAL DINNER 23RD NOVEMBER 1977

This was again held at the Connaught Rooms.

The official guests were M. and Madame Rial representing the Swiss Embassy, Mr. Peter Lloyd and Mrs. Lloyd from the Alpine Club, Lord and Lady Sandford from the Anglo-Swiss Society, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Kirstein from the Alpine Ski Club, Mr. and Mrs. George Hall from the Tuesday Climbing Club and Mr. and Mrs. Imoberdorf from the Swiss National Tourist Office.

The Royal Toast was proposed by the President.

The toast to the Swiss Confederation was proposed by Mr. R. Wendell Jones, and M. Rial responded.

The President proposed the health of the Association.

The Guests and Kindred Clubs were proposed by Mr. Frank Solari, and Mr. Peter Lloyd responded on behalf of the Alpine Club.

THE OUTDOOR MEETS

THE ALPINE MEET

Rudolf Loewy

The club had a successful two-week meet at Kandersteg during which a succession of parties—as well as members going solo—had many enjoyable climbs, and walks over the passes and into the neighbouring valleys. Many people contributed to the success of the meet: first the President, who in a bar in Kandersteg chanced to hear of Chalet Belvedere; then Alistair Andrews, who organised things at the chalet and made the complementary arrangements regarding the self-catering chalet and camping and did the lengthy and unrewarding chore of corresponding with all those planning to come; finally the cheerful and ever-willing Mortimer family who ran the chalet. They not only most excellently fed, watered and quartered most of the party but generously allowed all the free use of the chalet's facilities and beautiful surroundings. Its sunny terrace and its pleasant old-Swiss dining room/lounge were the scene of many happy returns from the day, with copious supplies of tea provided, and of endless evening discussions of plans and of relating the day's doings.

There was a young lady at the Swiss Weather Centre (telephone number 162!) who did her best to dampen our enthusiasm. However this did not stop parties going out and up—even if, scenically, they were sometimes rewarded only with 'Unblicks',* (and for those who had not been in the district before

* For derivation see Mike Scarr, who on those occasions took delight in taking 'Unblicks' with his camera.

there were always the picture postcards to show them what they should have seen !)

The meet proper was preceded, as usual, by Paul French's walking-in party, six strong (sic, in truth), who did a strenuous march over four passes, from Grindewald, in four days, sometimes in blistering heat, and finally in pouring rain. Some other members arrived a day or two early and did their own acclimatisation with walks from Kandersteg up to huts and passes.

A mysterious ailment beset a whole succession of members in turn, but cleared generally in 36 hours. Paul French holds firmly that the source was the infected and never properly boiled wiping up cloth at the Blumlisalp hut. If so, cumulatively it had a lot to answer for, but so far as each smitten member was concerned, the incident was of passing moment and in no way detracted from the pleasure of the meet.

The following members attended: Alistair Andrews and his wife, the Archers (Harry, Matthew and Margaret), Colin Armstrong, the Baldwins (James, Belinda, Sophie, Paul and Joanna), Geoff Bone and his wife, John Coales, David Cutforth and his family, John Dempster, Harold Flook, Maurice and Betty Freeman, Paul and Virginia French, Roger James, Rudolf Loewy, Peter Mines, Eric Radcliff, David Riddell, Mike Scarr and David Woolley.

A blow-for-blow account is perhaps not called for, but the following activities will give an indication of what was accomplished and enjoyed.

Among the pleasant walks (? training and recuperating) there was first a large party (10) making a round of passes to the East; then another large party over the Golitschen Pass to Frutigen; two 'family' ascents of the Gellihorn, firstly the Freemans and the Baldwins, and towards the end of the meet, the Mortimer family with Colin Armstrong as guide—a thoughtful gesture by Colin, much appreciated by the Mortimers and all the party. Further 'family' days were on the Hohenweg and Blausee, and up the Gornigel. The Schwarenbach by various routes was also a popular goal, with always, despite all the bustle of the place, the beaming welcome of 'Dorlli' Stoller and all the establishment.

On 12th August three parties set off from Schwarenbach: D. Woolley and P. Mines to climb the Balmhorn (fast!); A. Andrews and G. Bone the Rinderhorn (standard); and a large party with Otto Stoller and another guide to traverse the Rinderhorn (slow—12 hours! Suggested category for the descent of the west ridge 'facile et sérieux'!)

On 16th August two parties were on the Wildstrubel in rather poor weather; A. Andrews, J. Dempster and R. James did the whole traverse from the Lammern hut (this was a training climb for the latter two who had just joined the meet!) and a large party with Otto and his friend made it to the Middle peak—with a little assistance from Otto's Jeep and trailer! Another party, J. Coales, D. Woolley and P. Mines climbed the Blumlisalp with Rudi Oggi as guide.

On 18th August, D. Woolley and P. Mines climbed the Jungfrau and on 19th

a disappointed party had to return from the Frundenhorn hut as the guide failed to turn up.

Mike Scarr did some fine solo tours—the Sattelhorn, Giesengrat and on to Frutigen, over the Hohturli and down to Kiental to Frutigen again, and an exploration of the Gantrich region which greatly delighted him (Edenbach, Stockhorn, Hoh-Halmadspitz). The fine Lotschenpass—Goppenstein tour, planned by several parties but always frustrated by weather or other circumstances, was finally done by Colin Armstrong and Mike Scarr in record time.

Other events connected with the meet are the following. A short visit by the President and his lady and son, and later also by Walter and Bertha Kirstein.

A virtual take-over of morning service at Kandersteg church on Sunday 14th with Harold Flook at the organ and Alistair Andrews the necessary anchor-man keeping everyone in tune during the hymn singing. The preponderance of ABMSAC members in the congregation also enabled the English chaplain to use his 'A' sermon,—he always has a 'B' sermon ready also in case the scouts from the International Scout Centre form the bulk of the congregation!

A buffet supper on Friday 19th, to which all the 'out-living' members of the meet came, and which, remarkably enough, proved to be David Riddell's birthday! It ran on happily into the small hours.

A 'reunion' meet at Patterdale was much talked of, and it is hoped that it will be regarded by many as an integral part of this Alpine Meet and a precursor to an equally successful one in 1978.

NORTHERN DINNER FEBRUARY, 1977

Brooke Midgeley

This year the Northern Dinner Meet was again held in Patterdale and the dinner at the Glenridding Hotel. Numbers were down from last year and forty-eight members and guests attended.

The Hut was reasonably full but it would have been possible and pleasing to have squeezed a few more in.

Saturday was a reasonable day, heavy showers in the early morning abated and left very wet snow and plenty of it, high winds on the tops made walking less pleasant than it might have been. If anyone went climbing they didn't publicise their attack of masochism.

A splendid dinner, a bar extension and Alan Hankinson ensured a memorable evening. Alan Hankinson's illustrated talk on the early climbers using transparencies of their originals, mainly those of the Abraham's, was both interesting and amusing, the high quality of the slides was amazing.

Sunday started brilliantly clear and it is probable that those who went on

the Helvelyn range had better weather than those who ventured towards High Street. This year we had plenty of snow but no frost, the meet leader has obviously lost his touch.

EASTER MEET AT BETWS-Y-COED

Maurice Bennett

The attendance at the Meet was very disappointing and may well indicate that as in the Alps, hotel-based Meets are no longer a viable proposition in these inflationary times.

In the end the party numbered nine, consisting of David Riddell, the President and Gladys and David Bennett and the five members of the Hine family (Bennett relatives). It proved to be a very happy party even though changeable weather somewhat restricted activities. One evening we received a visit from the hut-based meet which numbered only four—Tony and Suzanne Strawther, Bob Casselton and Tony Sperryn. Perhaps it wasn't only hotel charges which kept people out of Wales!

There was still plenty of snow high up on the hills at the start of the Meet and this was added to at intervals during our stay. On Good Friday a projected walk up Moel Siabod was abandoned when it started to snow heavily. A substitute walk up the Miner's track to Llyn Llydaw was blessed with sunshine in the afternoon so we continued up to Llyn Glaslyn and came back on the pig track—an enjoyable walk in spite of sloppy snow in places.

On two other days the summits of Cader Idris and Snowdon were visited. It was a glorious day on Cader but as an experiment we went *up* the screes on Fox's path. Never again! The walk up Snowdon on Easter Monday was in cloud via the Snowdon Ranger path and there was plenty of snow on the upper part of the mountain. The summit station was half buried and the odd blow with the ice-axe was useful on the slope up to the summit cairn.

As on previous occasions, we were made very welcome at the Glan Aber Hotel by David and John Turner and our thanks are due to them.

EASTER AT PATTERDALE

The Editor

The alternative meet was well attended, especially by T.C.C. members. They accounted for most of the week end activity, summarised as follows (courtesy of John Murray).

Friday. Rock Climbing on Eagle Crag. Walks: High Street from Hartsop; Deepdale, Hart Crag, Fairfield, St. Sunday.

Saturday. Rock Climbing on Castle Rock and on Shepherd's Crag. Long walk over back o'Skiddaw and return via Skiddaw.

Sunday. Rock Climbing in Langdale. Walk: Glaramara, Allen Crag, Napes Traverse, Great Gable, Green Gable, Sour Milk Ghyll.

The meet continued through the week, a sufficient stream of visitors keeping ed. and wife in situ until the following week-end, for an engagement with another Club in the same place.

TORRIDON MEET, 4-11 JUNE, 1977

Alasdair Andrews

The Spring Bank Holiday meet was based on the SMC cottage, Ling Hut in Glen Torridon. Prior to the meet a heat wave had dried up burns all over Scotland. Sample entries in the hut log book read, 'too hot to stay in, too hot to go out, too hot to climb, too hot to sunbathe.' We arrived during a downpour and thereafter it rained, sleeted or snowed every day. The weather was so atrocious that we only braved a visit to the pub on the first evening and later in the week our brave party of hardy intrepid alpinists spent a day huddled round a wee calor gas fire, brewing countless cups of tea.

However, spurred on by the thought of how much it had cost to get to Torridon, we were out on the hills most days. Mountains climbed included Beinn Alligan, Liathach, Beinn Eighe and Meall Chinn Dearg (this must be one of the steepest of the lesser known hills in the Highlands and the scree is as sharp as coral, as Ernst Sondheimer can testify after completing an involuntary somersault on the descent). Other minor lumps were climbed and Mike Scarr ticked off 'n' Munro's on his approach march before the meet.

Highlights of the meet were the traverse of the Beinn Eighe ridge and a wine and more wine party (no cheese) in Alf Lock's caravan. Our thanks are due to the Scottish Mountaineering Club for the use of their excellent hut.

Those attending the meet were: Alasdair Andrews, Colin Armstrong, Debu Bose, Tony Husbands, Alf & Shirley Lock, Marion Porteous, Mike Scarr, Ernst Sondheimer and Tony and Suzanne Strawther.

GLAN DENA, JULY

The Editor

The numbers (eleven plus one day visitor) were disappointing and we lost a little money. That did not detract from the pleasure of a meeting of old friends together. Good weather saw the ed's. party on the Cannetts side one day and on the Glyders side the other day, so who could ask more?

Tony Strawther

Tom said it was quite a walk up to the hut, and that half the fun was finding it. He was right. We set off into the night with a strong wind and hill mist driving, and a light drizzle for good measure. It took us about an hour to get there, with one false trail to the wrong cottage. With all the odd kit bags and bottles we looked like Napoleon's retreat. However, we all thought the hut was great and soon had a brew going. Next day we had rain and mist; some people braved a day on the hills, others sought out a softer option. We softies came back to a hut full of wet clothes. Sunday was a much better day, with a strong wind and clear views. The main party had a good day's walk, making a circuit of the cwm, others had an enjoyable day's climbing on Craig-yr-Ysfa. All agreed that we must visit this fine hut again. All thanks to the R.L.M.C.

JOINT MEET WITH ALPINE CLUB, OCTOBER

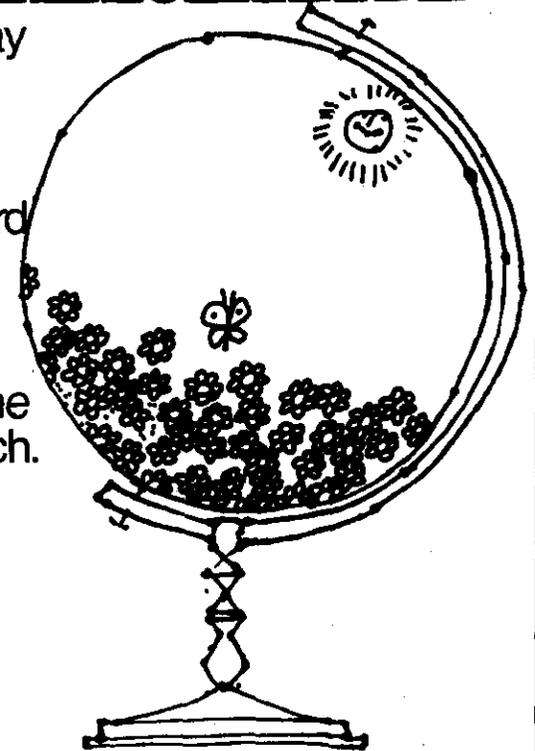
The Editor

On this occasion the A.B.M. considerably outnumbered the others for the October meet. Indoors we had all the world to the dinner, a great event. Amongst a star-studded assembly it may be permitted to name some who, we hope, will not mind being referred to as representative of the seniors, including Rusty Westmorland, A. B. Hargreaves, and Charles Warren, not to mention our regular octogenarian and other old friends. Nor did the indoor fun stop there; we laid on the first out-of-town committee meeting. Presumably everything in sight was climbed or walked over, in unusually good weather for this meet. The ed. had the good fortune to take a walk one day with a hitherto unfamiliar companion (St. Sunday, Fairfield in good visibility, a real rarity, Hart Crag, Dove Crag and a descent made more adventurous by well timed bad navigation, for which the ed. claims full credit).

SWITZERLAND

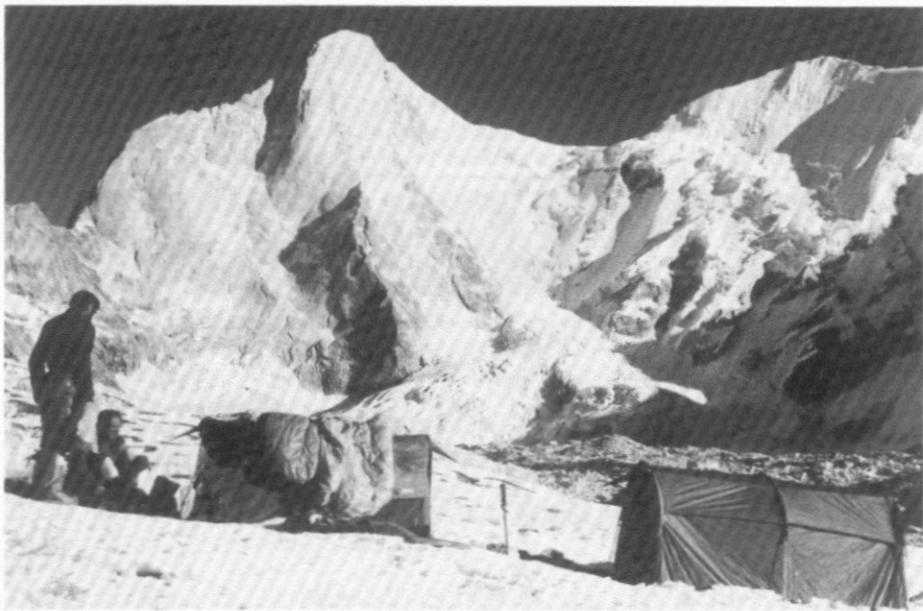
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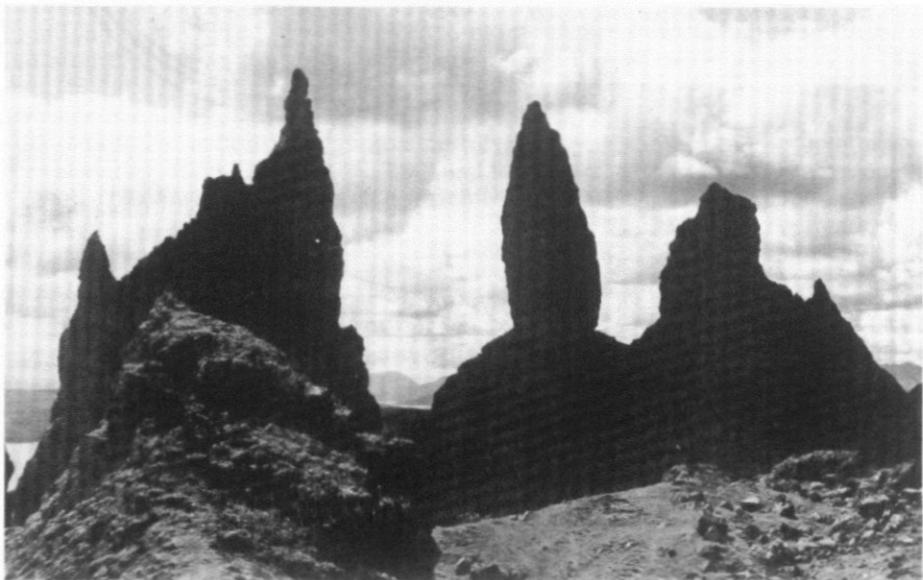


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Changabang and Kalanka from the Changabang Glacier
by Hamish M. Brown



The Old Man of Storr
by Hamish M. Brown

MEMBERS' CLIMBS AND EXCURSIONS

Hamish Brown

Passes and peaks in the Himalayas looked a good plan for 1977 and India gave the marvellous all-round experience one expects in that land of contrasts and contradictions. A gang of seven of us teamed-up, or split-up, for a variety of ploys: a monsoon wander into and out of the Valley of the Flowers and then several weeks in the Nanda Devi Sanctuary, surely one of the most dramatic 'treks' in the world and leading to a genuine remoteness and a skyline of famous mountains. We made the most of our time and would be happy to pass on any details of anyone else interested in this area which only opened up a few years ago and is already proving popular. We went in after the monsoon which gave cold but excellent weather; and we came out with the winter snowfalls sniffing at our heels. The Taj Mahal, Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, bathing in the Ganges—we made excellent tourists after the hill days.

Scotland actually had the deepest snows for a decade over this last winter and many weeks were spent in the north climbing, trekking and ski touring. Then a 'Jubilee Jaunt' led from coast to coast (Skye to Montrose) in an unforgettable heatwave that knocked out half the party. On day twelve it raised blisters on my legs at five in the evening! It then deteriorated into a monsoon for the summer, so I'm told; by then we had gone out for the Indian variety.

Morocco looks like becoming an annual event now as I may well be doing 'Treks' there for a month each year—and would add odd personal schemes before and after. So, on foot or ski, or even donkey, if you want to do something with that dream of the High Atlas, I'm always glad to involve others. Quite a few A.B.M. friends know it already. Its a great area now the Alps are so expensive.

And a commercial! For those who tick off Munros when they come up to the Scottish Meets, my book about doing all the Munros is published in March 1978 by Gollancz; *Hamish's Mountain Walk* its an awful title—but the cover picture of Liathach looks nice! It has 50 pictures, 16 maps, and appendix on mountaineering Gaelic, a bibliography and so on as I have tried to cover many aspects of this oddest of 'games climbers play'.

Jane and Ken Baldry

Both holidays this year were spent in the Pennine Alps and Maurice insists on a blow-by-blow account so here goes. At the end of January we went to Zermatt for a fortnight's skiing. As we found with Obergurgl, the local geography has a markedly different significance in the different seasons. We had never visited Patrullarve before, nor done more than walk straight through Blauherd. The snow was pretty good and the skiing is quite magnificent. We thought Kitzbuhel was good until Zermatt. All grades are well

represented but two of the super-black runs were shut for avalanche danger. The run over to Breuil in Italy is a fun day out.

We went back to more or less the same area in the Summer, with the intention of doing more climbing and less gawping than usual. The walk up from St. Niklaus to Grachen boded ill, being in the rain but we had a dry, if cloudy training walk up the Platthorn (3247 m) the next day. Heinz Nussberger of Sektion Weissenstein came with us as his partners had let him down. He intended to come up to the Bordier Hut with us the next day but the rain really cut loose so we scrubbed it. He went home and we got the bus to Saas Almagell to hole up in the pub we have used before. We attempted to walk up to Spielboden but were washed off there. The prognosis was not good.

Next day, things looked a bit better so we loaded up in Saas Grund and walked up to the Weissmies Hut on the first of eleven days of quite good weather. Heinz had told us that there had been no more than two good days together the whole summer but the September good spell arrived as usual. Our objective was the Lagginhorn (4010 m) and was achieved in cloud and over some particularly nasty snow. The lying guide book talks about 400 m of rock to finish up. In fact, it is snow on ice. Later, Peter Lommatter of Saas Fee confirmed that it is always like that. It took us eleven hours to do the six hour trip and we got sunburnt through the cloud so we scratched the Weissmies traverse the next day and walked back to Saas Almagell for a breather.

This time, we did get to Spielboden and filmed the marmots gormandising on carrots. There is a new cable car being built to the Langfluh and the rather horrid collection of buildings at Spielboden is being replaced by something more in keeping with the surroundings. This would have been a nice day but for the helicopter coming in to collect the remains of a woman who had fallen off the path. Accidents can happen in the most unlikely places and, as we did not find out what had happened until later, we have some film in bad taste.

When we did our Monte Rosa Rundtour in 1975, the section from Saas Almagell to Macugnaga was in cloud and rain, so we walked up the Monte Moro Pass to see what it was really like. It looked as if a new glacier was forming in the Talliboden as the snow beds, which were not there two years ago, had crevasses in them. Just two bad summers can do that. We saw a bit of the famous Monte Rosa view but not much. Our hearty 'Gruss Gott' to a German party paid off on the way back as they were the Hof YMCA and gave us a lift from Mattmark to Almagell, very welcome as it was late.

Fully restored to fitness, we essayed the 'noted slog' up to the Mischabel Hut. This was made worse by huge snow banks which hid the final zigzags completely but we were entertained by a very skilled glissader coming down and a photogenic avalanche from the Hohberg Glacier. The new hut is very clean and would be comfortable if there was a water supply. The cleanliness is a tribute to the very military-minded guardian. We met Peter Lommatter, who skied down the Drieselwand last winter!

I am not too keen on climbing in a crowd but the Nadelhorn is 4327 m so the view is worth it. Another YMCA party overtook us on one of our frequent meal breaks, twelve on a rope and looking like an accident waiting to happen. They were a picture climbing through the cornice, which is the best bit of the climb as the whole of the Berner Oberland suddenly appears before you. The Nadelhorn is a highly recommendable easy day for a lady, unlike our next trip.

We returned to the hut and the next day set out for the Windjoch again. This time, we turned east in solitude and walked up the Ulrichshorn (3925 m) not a climb, just keep off the cornice! Then, down the other side to the Ried Pass and up the South Balfrinhorn, about 3800 m. This is the beginning of the ridge which runs down to Stalden and we went along it over the North Balfrinhorn as far as the Gross Bigerhorn (3650 m). This is lowish by Pennine standards but as high as the Blumlisalp so, what with being able to see round the ends of the neighbouring ridges to the Jura and the Tirol, it is a very good viewpoint above the Bordier Hut, to which we now descended for a late lunch. (The hut has since burnt down, unfortunately.) Being gluttons for punishment, we carried on down the Ried Glacier to Grachen, where the holiday had started. That made a sixteen hour day, door to door, again highly recommended but it is more realistic to break the trip at the Bordier Hut, when it is re-built.

It was time to have a holiday. We went down to Zermatt and walked around the Sunnegga area with new eyes after our ski holiday. Then we actually guided an American tourist to the Schonbiel Hut. He was rather terrified of the moraine path and suitably impressed by the avalanches from the Matterhorn. That completed what has been our best year so far in the Alps.

P. S. Boulter

1977 started sourly. Rains and high winds did nothing to help the Hogmanay hangover and Peter Ledeboer, Margaret Darvall and I only with great deliberation managed the blowy wastes of Conway Mountain. However, the next day was perfect for a family walk in snow from Moel Eilio along the tops to the bottom of Cloggy and back. Fortunately a short spell of examining in Edinburgh got us back to the Border Hills—very bleak and snowy and good training for the first couple of weeks in February when the ski-ing Expedition to Lenzerheide happened. Easter was splendid and we were back in Wales again—the next expedition being the North to South crossing of the Carneddau in snow.

Our main holiday of the year had to be taken in the first part of June—we called in to our cottage on the way North and had a great family expedition up Tal y Fan. Mary and I, both daughters and their husbands and all four grandchildren made the summit with varying amounts of pushing, pulling and carrying. Then we went North to the Borders and on a lovely day Mary and I did the Lochcraig Head—White Coomb round. I know that I have en-

thused before about the Border Hills, but if one prizes solitude then there is a guarantee of it on the hills between Annan and Tweed.

The next port of call was our pet camp site on the top of the Lairg an Lochan between Killin and Glen Lyon. It is a great starting point for the rounds of the Tarmachans and Ben Lawers. June is a great time to go because this is the best part of Scotland (probably of all Britain) for mountain flowers. Campions, Avens, Saxifrages and creeping azalea were in profusion.

The next part of the journey was North and West with mixed motives—we wanted to climb the hills of South Uist and Harris and we also wanted to get some fishing. In the end it was a great success on both counts. We sailed from Oban to Lochboisdale, stayed in the delightful hotel there and climbed most of the local hills, including Beinn Mhor of South Uist—a lovely rocky ridge with fantastic views east to the mountains of Skye and West to St. Kilda. We also did all 408ft of Rueval, the monarch of Benbecula—it is worth the walk for the view of the myriad of little lochs which someone has said make Benbecula look like a well-pitted crumpet. The Jubilee Beacon on Hecla blazed triumphantly before the mist overcame it. Then North to Harris, an old favourite and the main tops were revisited—the Clisham is always good value and so too is the lower Chaipaval at the South end of the Island—again with a fine view of St. Kilda and Conachair. *On the way back home* we had a good walk in the Fannichs when again there were absolute carpets of moss campion.

Odd weekends happened in the Summer and early Autumn before work took us to Australia and India. We had some good hill walks in Queensland and the Blue Mountains before we left for India. Here we had far too short a stay in Kashmir and walked above Gulmarg, but did not get above 12,000 ft because of masses of new snow.

Altogether a good and enjoyable year but, sadly no summer Alpine season. Better luck next year!

M. D. Clayton and Miss A. K. Clayton

My climbing year began with an alpine start. No, not from some snowbound refuge high in the Valaisian alps but from a country cottage 10 miles north of Leicester.

Good Friday evening and, being unable to get away for the whole weekend, we had decided on a day in the Peak District for the morrow. But as I stood outside sniffing the calm frosty air and admiring a sky full of un-winking stars I felt the urge to do something a little more adventurous.

When the alarm went off at 04.00 some of the urge had evaporated but we still managed to get away by 05.00 and 3½ hours of exhilarating driving later I was forking out my 10p at the Pen-y-Pass car park.

In sixteen years of occasional walking in Wales I had never seen Snowdon

under both snow and sun at one and the same time, so this was a day to savour. Perhaps there was not quite as much snow on the Crib-Goch ridge as there ought to have been, but it was good quality and with the air clearer and sweeter, the sky bluer and the sun brighter than I have known on many a summer's day in Wales, any snow was a welcome bonus. Returning by the 'voie normale' we narrowly escaped being knocked off the zig-zags by swarms of tourists clad in a variety of unsuitable gear, but this was the only 'gripping' moment of an otherwise marvellous day.

By 20.30 we were back home and enjoying what I always regard as one of Switzerland's greatest contributions to mountaineering, a 'Käserschnitte mit schinken unt ei'.

For Spring Bank Holiday weekend I camped alone in Cwm Idwal, officially trying out my new tent. My old and faithful Good Companions Minor having been pilfered last year I had invested in a roomier G.C. Standard and I can now state that the Standard performs slightly less well in a force 8 than the Minor. Dashing out during lulls in the tempest I managed to visit Y Garn, Elidir Fawr, the big Glyder and Tryfan. By Monday afternoon I was alone in the Cwm, the pegs were beginning to bend and the guys to fray so I cut short the trip and returned home just in time to see our local Jubilee beacon lit.

Our alpine holiday was taken in September as usual and after suffering from early winters for the past 4 or 5 years we were happy to have some reasonable weather for a change.

The 11th to 14th we spent in a chalet at Vex in the Val d'Herens having 'discovered' this charming valley in 1976 when we made a two day trip before the storms set in, making the usual traverse of the Pigne from Vignettes to Dix.

Our first proper climb was to have been to the Bertol and from there a stroll to the Tete Blanche with, hopefully, a return via the col du M. Brute and Gl. d'Arolla.

In fact we only reached the middle of the Gl. de Bertol. At that point we had a marvellous view of cloud banks rolling in from the west, so we perched uncomfortably on a few rocks and waited to see what would happen. During the next half hour our bottoms got very cold and, one by one, the surrounding peaks disappeared from view.

With memories of epic descents from snowbound huts still fresh in our minds from previous years we decided to retire. Of course, by the time we regained Vex the sky was cloudless.

Feeling a bit sheepish after this we thought to regain honour by setting out again next day but in deference to our, as yet, unfit bodies, opted for the less strenuous ascent to the Col de Dix from Arolla via the Par de Chevres. What a splendid day's walk that is but does anyone know why the S.A.C. marked path favours the higher cal de Riedmatten to the north?

The hut is certainly quite attractive after its agrandishment, but as it is

already something of a tourist stop, won't the provision of electric light, three course meals and a helicopter service, only ensure that the 'motorway affect' will make another extension necessary in a couple of years?

We had envisaged a traverse of the Cheilon but a sleepless night and the cold grey light of dawn dampened our ambition. Still the v.n. by the N.W. ridge provided a most enjoyable day and we returned the same night to Vex feeling happy and remarkably fit.

On the 15th we left Vex, drove round to the Mattertal, fixed up an apartment in St. Niklaus and, at 16.00 the same day, were ensconced in the Britannia hut looking forward to a day on the Strahlhorn. It must be admitted that the Felskin cable car played some part in making this possible.

At 05.00 next day there were solid cloud layers 200 ft above and 300 ft below the hut with a patch of seven-eights between. Despite this unpromising outlook two or three parties set off Oates-like into the swirling mists leaving the more timid, or wiser alpinists to await developments.

By 07.00 the top cloud layer had dispersed leaving a grey carpet at 9000 ft and a bright blue ceiling above. Obviously too late for the Strahlhorn but not for a return visit to our old friend the Allalinhorn but this time by a route which appears in Valiner Alpen but not 'Selected Climbs'. Back to Felskin, on to the Feegletscher then across and up a small cwm east of 3081.0 and finally joining the Langfluh route circa 3300.0. This route would seem a very acceptable alternative to that from Langfluh and certainly provided us with an interesting day.

Some 100 ft above the Feejoch clouds swept up from the south, soon reducing visibility to arms length proportions and, as we had visited the summit on a previous occasion, we decided on an immediate descent. We returned down the normal route and thence directly to the fleshpots of Saas and although the cloud was never lower than 10,000 ft we were hurried on our way by occasional snow flurries.

Two days of bad weather followed and on the 19th a projected traverse of the Balfrin was aborted some 1000 ft below the Border hut when we found the Reid glacier and the peaks above covered in a foot of new snow and the clouds once more drifting up from the south.

Nor did the weather improve for our final two days, though we managed to enjoy ourselves on a walk from Riffelalp to Rotboden in snow, returning via the Gorner gorge to Zermatt, chiefly because we had the mountains to ourselves.

Finally, an old favourite, the high level from Täsch to Tuftern-Sunnegga-Findeln and Zermatt.

I suppose we might have made more out of this holiday but perhaps the evil weather of the past 4 years had blurred our edge a little. Well, the mountains will still be waiting next year and we will be there too if Mr. Page stops giving our money away.

Peter Farrington

An interesting solo climb on the Paps of Jura in December after an unusually heavy snowfall. Climbed the Righthand Gully of Beinn an Oir, about 800 ft, Grade I. There are many good looking lines on the Paps but unfortunately true winter conditions seldom occur.

In February I had a most enjoyable reunion with Obfr. Eddie Tuck and Ged Briggs after not seeing each other for seven years. Climbed N.C. Gully on Stob Coire nan Lochan, Ledge Route, Carn Dearg and Aonach Eagach Traverse. Fine weather and conditions throughout.

First visit to the George Starkey Hut in August with my brother Steve.

Walked and climbed on Helvellyn, Napes and Deepdale in oppressively hot weather.

Back to cooler climbs in September! Tower Ridge, Ben Nevis with Tom Shaw and Richard Gatehouse on a dull windy day with the ridge to ourselves.

Various climbs and walks on Islay throughout the year.

John Kemsley

The snowiest February for some years gave me two good cross-country days on ski in the Cairngorms and Monadhliaths, although I did not altogether appreciate an unexpected invitation to present my skis to an establishment at Aviemore for display as a museum piece. On the grounds that neither equipment nor owner had outlived their usefulness I declined the invitation and continue to display them, when not in use, on their usual rack in my garage.

At Easter in Crete Freda and I relied mainly on buses to move us around the island to various points of archaeological interest, but we also enjoyed some good days on foot over the rough hills where roads have not yet penetrated. In our minds there remain memories of the many flowers seen on the way in sun and rain, and of warm welcomes in remote villages at the end of the days' marches. After climbing to the snowline to see the Cretan crocus, we found the descent of the famed Samaria Gorge a fascinating expedition, as was the next day's walk along the coastline of the Libyan Sea. Further east we saw the snows of Mount Ida from all sides, but as our time was running out we could only put the mountain on our list of good reasons for returning to this lovely island.

At the end of August we went once more to the Italian side of Monte Rosa with the hope of tasting the joys of its unique high-level routes. The Rifugio del Gabiet above Gressoney-La Trinité gave us comfortable quarters for three nights at the start, and from there we took our first step towards acclimatisation by traversing the Corno Rosso in mist and rain. As we went up the north ridge from the Col d'Olen we were struck by the fact that the green colour of the rocks bore no resemblance to the name of the peak and pondered the reason. The south-east ridge provided a possible,

if perhaps fanciful explanation, as it carried vast cushions of purple saxifrage that gave off a rosy glow to cheer us in the encircling gloom. This whole area was in fact a botanist's delight and abounded in nigrifolia, that lovely little dark vanilla-scented orchid. Here, too, for the first time we found the paradise lily.

Next day the rain continued to pour down and, as there seemed no point in moving up to the Rifugio Gnifetti to examine the metre of new snow that was reported to be lying there, we decided to get ourselves round to the Val de St. Barthélemy with the help of buses and so fill in another blank in our Alpine map. Here the Hotel de Lusenez provided good accommodation and a convenient base for a leg-stretcher, again in pouring rain, up to the lonely Oratorio di Cuney which is claimed to be the highest church in Europe and must certainly be one of the most adorned within.

As we hung up our dripping garments on our return for dinner we had little expectation, after these five days of endless rain, of much activity other than low-level walking for the remainder of the holiday, and it was with great delight that we opened the curtains next morning on a perfect Alpine day. Hurriedly packing our rucksacks we pushed on foot right up the valley, over the Colle Livournea and down to Prarayé at the head of the Valpelline. It was a long day of changing levels and patterns and of continuing interest, but it was one that ended after some twelve hours in a fashion very different from the plan based on my aging map and guide-book, for we found that the paths down to the valley had been submerged and altered by the waters of a huge new reservoir. When in the gathering darkness we finally reached the remains of the almost vanished village, we were dismayed to discover that the hotel, still standing on a high knoll above water-level, had been closed for twenty years and that the nearest one was some miles down the valley. Our dismay, however, turned to relief at the nearest cheesemaker's hut where draughts of warm buttermilk from friendly hands and the cheerful log blaze beneath a massive cauldron of simmering milk revived our flagging spirits. Guided then by torchlight between the steaming byres we were given the key of a nearby unoccupied house that had just escaped the grasping floodwaters and here, utterly content, we found warm and welcome comfort in a bed of a standard acceptable only to the bedless and weary. We learned next day that we had in fact been sleeping in the original tiny hotel of Prarayé, built three centuries previously and used as a hospice for travellers (including Achille Ratti, afterwards Pope Pius XI) till replaced at the beginning of this century by the now defunct modern one.

Another day of rain gave us an opportunity to recover some energy and was followed by twelve hours of sunshine in which we crossed to Breuil by the Colle di Valcornera. This col is described in one well-known guide as a walker's pass but it was certainly anything but that on the east side, where six inches of unconsolidated new snow on top of hard packed névé made the descent rather more precarious than a walker would have enjoyed.

From now on the September Italian weather gave us its unstinted cooperation and we made another memorable crossing from the Rifugio Teodulo over the Breithorn Pass to the Rifugio Q. Sella, traversing Castor en route

and enjoying its sharp summit ridge in complete contrast to the enormous lump we had slogged up from the Zwillingenjoch. Next day in the same dazzling conditions we went on over the Passo del Naso and up to the Capanna Margherita, hoping to round off the expedition by climbing the Dufourspitze. The highest peak, however, was out of condition with much new snow on the rocks, and we had to be content with a laze in the sun on the Zumsteinspitze and an hour's peak-spotting round the brilliant horizon before making the long hot glacier trek down to the cable-car and the welcome we knew would await us at the Albergo Monte Rosa in Riva Valdobbia.

After the final thrill on our flight home of gazing down from cloudless skies on the whole chain of the Western Alps, I returned to my office where on the wall is mounted a magnificent panorama taken from the very summit of Monte Rosa. It is a daily reminder that the Dufourspitze still awaits us.

Walter Kirstein

The year 1977 started with a drive from Santa Monica in California to Mammoth about 9,000 ft up in the Sierra Nevada. On that 1st of January morning everybody seemed to be in bed after New Year's Eve celebrations as the roads were comparatively empty and my grandson was able to drive fast to the Sierra Nevada.

There had been no snow in the mountains before Christmas or during the Christmas holidays, but now in Mammoth on those first few days in January there were raging snow blizzards, so bad that all the ski-lifts were stopped and we soon had to give up our attempts of fighting the snow storms, being unable to see where we were going. The remainder of the week, however, was beautiful—bright sunshine and powder snow with very few skiers around. The gentle swishing of this ideal light smooth snow was the only sound heard as we skied through the woods.

At the end of the week my wife was returning to Los Angeles from New Zealand. I had not joined her on the trip because of the long 21 hour flight from Los Angeles on top of the 11 hour flight from London to California. In order to be back in Los Angeles in time I booked a seat on a little 9-seater plane. The sun was shining, the mountains were snow covered and a beautiful blue sky above, I thought what a good idea to take this little plane from Mammoth. I did not know that in such a plane Frank Sinatra's mother had been killed only the day before during severe gales in Southern California. Within 20 minutes we were amongst the storms too and the plane seemed to be powerless to deal with them. After being badly buffeted about we landed safely at Los Angeles airport, but I do not think I shall ever forget that one hour flight from Mammoth to Los Angeles.

A further shock awaited me. After waiting for another hour because of the New Zealand plane's late arrival, Bertha appeared being pushed in a wheelchair and before disappearing into the Customs hall, where I could not follow, murmured something about blisters on her feet. Bertha did not



Powder Snow up to the shoulder
by W. Kirstein

appear again for what seemed an interminable period and I began to disbelieve the blister story and imagined all sorts of more serious injuries. Eventually she reappeared and explained that severe sunburn on feet and ankles was the trouble and the long flight from New Zealand had aggravated the burning. A wheelchair was procured for the next few days and with the medical treatment of my son-in-law a rapid recovery was soon made. So much so that 3 days later Bertha was able to beat me at table tennis.

In contrast to the Californian Sierra Nevada, the Alps in March had more snow than in the previous year. In fact so much that avalanche warnings were on all the time, which stopped most of our ski-touring. However, we still could do our off piste running, for which there are ample opportunities in the Engadine. Of course one had to be careful. I go so far as to say that even when the piste is officially opened under dangerous snow conditions one has still to be on guard. I do not want to minimise the efforts of the brave men who are risking their lives to protect the lives of skiers. I am thinking of an accident on the Corvatsch run a few years ago, between Fuorcla Surlej and the middle station of the cable car, when about half-a-dozen men tried to shoot down an avalanche coming from the direction of the Corvatsch glacier. The first shot was unsuccessful, nothing moved. The men had a heavy piste machine as protection and thought they were safe. They shot again, this time with a much stronger charge. A huge avalanche was the result, so powerful that in spite of the heavy machine, two of the SOS men were killed.

I hesitated to mention this danger but I think one cannot take enough care as far as avalanche danger is concerned. The photo shows an avalanche coming down from the steep slope of the Bellavista. I was standing at the Diavolezza (summer 1977) nearly a mile away from the steep slope. Fortunately nobody was near it at the time. The other photo shows a skier, or rather the head and one arm of a skier, in that soft, light powder snow which lets the first class skier 'wedel' down even very steep slopes. We had many of these ideal skiing days in the winter (1977) and a bit of touring for about a week after the snow had stopped.

I met Stuart Ferguson again in August in Pontresina, and being fully acclimatised he came with me as a very welcome friend on my training walks. On the walk to the Segantini Hut there is a very beautiful, though sometimes exposed path from Alp Languard and marked 'only for experienced mountaineers'. It is, however, quite a comfortable path. The following day we walked up Piz Languard and found some snow near the summit, but the red signal arrows on the rocks were not covered. We had a very rewarding view from the top. We also did the walk from the top Corvatsch station to the summit of the Piz Murtel. Later I heard that a guide was at the Coaz Hut and with Stuart Ferguson decided to climb the Piz Gluschaint (3,600 m) the highest peak of the lower range at the end of the Roseg Valley. We had to climb without crampons on account of 3 feet of new snow on the old snow. On the way down a slow wet snow avalanche did us the favour of stopping about 50 ft above us—quite a frightening experience.



Avalanche on Bellavista
by W. Kirstein

Before returning home we spent a few rainy but enjoyable days in Kandersteg with the A.B.M. Meet there, and ended our holiday at Neill Hogg's hotel near Lucerne. A pleasant sojourn was spent there swimming and boating on the lake, quite a contrast to previous days spent in the mountains.

The year ended with the wonderful October ABMSAC Meet in Patterdale. Perfect weather and I was lucky to have two climbs, one with Robin Day on Brown Slabs at Shepherds Crag and the second on Sunday morning in warm sunshine at Little Chamonix with Les Swindin who proved to be an excellent guide.

A. B. Knox

Most of my activity was as usual in Wales, but I went to Cornwall for the Jubilee holiday long weekend. Did some walking, some climbing, mainly at Chair Ladder, and spent an afternoon at Hay Tor on Dartmoor on the way back.

In the summer visited the Picos de Europa in Northern Spain. With a friend, Colin Powell, climbed the Corre de Santa Maria de Enol (2,478 m). The last 100 metres is a nice tower as the name would suggest. Having no route information we scrambled around its foot for a bit before deciding to go for a chimney on the south face. This was not more than about V.Diff. in standard except for a ten-foot section that was more like V.S. Due to the recent bad weather, all the holds had four inches of soft wet snow on them, which didn't exactly help. Fortunately it was Colin's lead and by making full use of his extra few inches of reach he got up it at the third go. Later we ascended Torre Blanca, (2,617 m) in the central massif, but this turned out to be only a scramble.

Brian Melville

I went to the Alps this year with Alan Stuart, a fellow member of the Wayfarer's Club. Eight of our fourteen days gave reasonable enough weather to do the following climbs:-

- (i) Aiguille d'Argentiere—by the ordinary Glacier du Milieu route.
- (ii) Traverse of the Tour Noir—up the North Ridge and down the S.E. Flank to the Col d'Argentiere. The North Ridge is well snowed-up—condition gives a pleasant and interesting climb.
- (iii) Traverse of the Domes de Miage from the Col Infranchissable to the Aiguille de la Bérangère—an easy, but beautiful excursion in perfect weather.
- (iv) The classical 1879 route up the North-West Face of the Aiguille du Midi—never difficult, but never easy, the route gives about 3,000 ft of mixed terrain—snow conditions were excellent, but cracks and chimneys in the rock sections were rather icy.

John Milburn

To continue from last years activities, as listed in the 1977 Journal, I am listing two outings done in 1976.

This year, 1977, has proved a much more successful and energetic year, with a taste of the long distance walks, and next year it is hoped that there will be an increase in the number of events I hope to take part in. But let's wait to see what 1978 will bring.

1976

- Dec. 5th Braithwaite: Coledale. Eel Crag. Crag Hill. Causey Pike.
Dec. 19th Greenup Gill. High Raise. With my son, Michael. Conditions were very bad, and quite often we were fighting our way through snow above our knees. Very cold. Near Stonethwaite, we collected some berried holly.

1977

- Jan. 2nd Fairfield Horseshoe. Workington Rambling Club.
Jan. 16th St. John's in the Vale: Tewit Tarn to High Rigg. Raven Crag. Bleaberry Fell. Walla Crag. W.R.C. Meet.
Jan. 22nd Uldale: Brae Fell. Little Sca Fell. Lowthwaite Fell. Longlands Fell. With my sons Michael and Bryan.
Jan. 29th Seathwaite: Gable Girdle. Green Gable. Base Brown. With my son Michael.
Jan. 30th Cass Beck Bridge: Back O'Skiddaw. Skiddaw House. Carrock Mines. Great Lingy Hill. Caldbeck. W.R.C. Meet.
Feb. 6th Attended Northern Dinner with my wife. On the Sunday we walked to the summit of Place Fell.
Feb. 12th Whinlatter from the top of Whinlatter Pass. Scawgill Bridge: Graystones. Broom Fell. Lords Seat. Barf.
Feb. 19th Wythop Mill: Sale Fell and Ling Fell.
Feb. 26th Whinlatter Pass: Grisedale Pike via northeast ridge. Grasmoor via Dove Crag. Return to Grisedale Pike and descend to Whinlatter Pass via north ridge. The Dove Crag route is the very steep grassy arete to the right of Dove Crag.
Mar. 4th A.B.M.S.A.C. Meet. Brothers Water: Hartsop Dodd.
Mar. 5th Patterdale: St. Sunday Crag to Deepdale Hause, returning via Deepdale. In the company of Brian Marrable. Back at the hut, a few odd jobs done with the working party.
Mar. 6th Wasdale: Middle Fell. Seatallan. Haycock. Scoat Fell. Red Pike. Dore Head. W.R.C. Meet.
Mar. 19th Circular tour around Low Fell and Fellbarrow with Michael.

- Mar. 26th Seathwaite to O.D.G. Langdale. Strolled over to the O.D.G. Langdale with Michael. Had a couple of pints, and returned by the same way.
Mar. 27th Low Lorton: Loweswater. Crummock Water. Buttermere. High Lorton. W.R.C. Meet. Our way led us over the old Whin Fell road to Mosser, then onto the old road to Loweswater. A walk through Holme Wood into Loweswater village, and from there to join the path alongside Crummock Water, taking us into Buttermere Village. From here we made our way to High Lorton, and a Tatle Pot Supper at the Horse Shoe.
Apr. 8th Yorkshire's Three Peaks Walk. Penyghent. Whernside. Ingleborough. In the company of my son Michael.
Apr. 23rd Circular tour of Derwentwater.
Apr. 24th Stonethwaite: Eagle Crag. Sergeant Crag. High Raise. Sergeant Man. Harrison Stickle. Return via Langstrath. W.R.C. Meet.
May 6/7th A.B.M.S.A.C. Meet—Patterdale. With Michael. Leaving the car at Stanah, we decided to walk over Sticks Pass to the hut. In addition to our normal load for the week-end stay at the hut, we were also carrying a fair amount of Melamine dishes etc. This took us three hours and we arrived at the hut nine-thirty in the evening, only to find that no one had turned up. After some two hours, and having tried to get the key from the holder in Patterdale without success, we decided to do a 'bivvy' in the log bunker, where we tried to settle down for the night in a rather cramped situation, but failed to get any sleep. Six-thirty in the morning, and still no one had arrived to open up so we decided to make our way back over Sticks again. Our intention was to do the Helvellyn ridge, but bad weather conditions on the tops made us decide otherwise. The weather remained dull with intervals of rain throughout the time. We put it all down to experience.
May 8th Gatesgarth: Shamrock Traverse. Pillar. Scoat. Haycock. Caw Fell. Iron Crag. Crag Fell. Ennerdale. W.R.C. Meet.
May 21st Shepherd's Crag—Borrowdale. With Michael. Climbed Brown Slabs Arete and Little Chamonix. Still very much off form.
May 22nd Blencathra via Sharp Edge. Mungrisedale Common. Skiddaw House. Dash Falls. Bassenthwaite Village. W.R.C. Meet.
Jun. 4/6th Glencoe with eleven other members of the Workington Rambling Club.
Jun. 9th Huck's Bridge: Traverse of the Whinell Ridge. Ashstead Fell. Mabbin Crag. Castle Fell. Whinell Beacon. Grayrigg Common. Return via Borrowdale. This ridge of hills rise on the east side of the A6 and about eight miles north of Kendal.

- Jun. 12th Coniston: The Old Man of Coniston to Great Carrs. Return for Wetherlam. Coniston. W.R.C. Meet.
- Jun. 18th 13th Annual Lakes Four Three-Thousand Peaks Marathon Walk. Retired at Seathwaite feeling un-well. Hope to try again next year (1978).
- Jun. 25th Lyke Wake Walk. Osmotherley to Ravenscar. Distance: 40 miles. Time completed: 13½ hrs. With members of the Workington Rambling Club.
- Jul. 1/3rd A.B.M.S.A.C. Meet—Patterdale. Took Michael. Arrived Friday evening. On Saturday, a walk along the lake path to Howtown, and a return trip by steamer. In the company of other members and families.
- Jul. 17th Stonethwaite: Dock Tarn. Grange Fell.
- Aug. 14th Arnside Marathon. (Long Distance Walkers Assoc.) Circular Walk. Distance: 27 miles. Time allowed: 9 hrs. Time completed: 8¾ hrs.
- Aug. 21st Dunmail Raise: Raise Beck. Dollywaggon Pike. Nethermost Pike. Helvellyn. Raise. Sticks Pass. Stybarrow Dod. Watson's Dod. Great Dod. Calfhow Pike. Clough Head. Old Coach road. Threlkeld. W.R.C. Meet.
- Aug. 29th A training walk for Michael. Keswick to Grange and return. Eight miles. Two hours.
- Sep. 3rd Another training walk for Michael. In the Bassenthwaite area. Eleven miles. Three hours.
- Sep. 4th Greendale Road End: Wasdale Head. Sty Head Pass. Seathwaite. Keswick. W.R.C. Meet.
- Sep. 11th Circular tour around Low Fell and Fellbarrow. Another training walk for Michael. Approx., eleven miles. Two and a quarter hours.
- Sep. 17th Teesdale Marathon. (L.D.W.A.) Distance: 24 miles. Time allowed: 12 hrs. Time completed: 7½ hrs.
- Sep. 24th Grasmoor via Gasgale Gill. Return via Lad Hows. With Pat, my wife, and Michael.
- Sep. 25th Langdale: New Dungeon Ghyll. Stake Pass. Angle Tarn. Grains Ghyll. Seatoller. W.R.C. Meet.
- Oct. 2nd Kentmere Horseshoe. Limefitt Park: Garburn Road. Yoke. Ill Bell. Froswick. Thornthwaite Crag. Mardale Ill Bell. Garburn Pass. W.R.C. Meet.
- Oct. 9th Braithwaite: Grisedale Pike. Whiteside. Eel Crag. Causey Pike.
- Oct. 15th A.B.M.S.A.C. Meet—Patterdale. Plans to join the meet during

Friday evening had to be cancelled due to work on the Saturday morning. Spent two to three hours in the Angle Tarn area Saturday afternoon. Attended dinner in the evening.

- Oct. 16th Wasdale: Greendale Road End. Brown Tongue. Lord's Rake. Deep Gill. Scafell. W.R.C. Meet.
- Nov. 13th Gatesgarth. Dubs Quarries. Green Gable. Great Gable. Kirk Fell. Hay Stacks. Fleetwith. With my son Michael, I attended the Remembrance Day Service on Great Gable.
- Nov. 27th Mosedale Road End. Carrock Fell. High Pike. Great Sca Fell. Meal Fell. Bassenthwaite. W.R.C. Meet.

Alan Partridge

A quiet time compared with previous years, but spent most of my spare weekends walking in the Chiltern Hills and the Cotswolds.

In June I flew to Reykjavik and after visiting the Whale Station near Akranes went on a camping holiday travel by mountain bus north between the glaciers. Every day we had a walk up various hills including a fifteen mile walk up on to the Langjobull. We then went along the coast to Akureyri turning south to volcanos Herdubreid and Askja.

We then turned south to the Tungnahell where we did more walking. In a few more days we arrived back in Reykjavik.

I then flew to Greenland and stayed at the old air base at Narsarsuag. I visited the old village of Igaliks where there are the ruins of an old Viking church. I had a very enjoyable day scrambling up to the Ice Cap and round the surrounding hills. The ending of this holiday was the flight over the icecap to Iceland.

Barrie Pennett (Grindelwald Section)

My year began on 2nd January with a short ramble in the Otley Chevin area of Yorkshire. On 3rd January my wife Valerie, myself and our son David (7) visited Buckden where we walked to the top of Buckden Pike (2302 ft). The Pike was covered in thick snow and there was skiing on the top. On 8th January we went on a ramble on Ilkley Moor and in February we had a delightful walk on Burnsall Fell.

We paid our first visit of the year to the Lake District on 8th April where we enjoyed a short walk up Silver How by Dow Bank. On our way home we visited Orrest Head above Windermere. It only takes about ten minutes to reach the Head but the view is magnificent. On 13th April we walked in the Burnsall and Grassington area. We had a most enjoyable walk on 15th April from Kettlewell to Great Whernside (2245 ft) via Cam Head. On 16th April we took David up Pen-Y-Ghent (2277 ft) in Ribblesdale.

The highlight of our year was our two week holiday in Scotland where we

had very hot weather for the first week but mixed weather for the second. During our journey to Gruinard Bay we climbed Cairn Gorm (4,084 ft) the easy way, using the chairlift due to shortage of time. We then trudged through snow to the top where the views were excellent. At Gruinard Bay we did a number of walks on the Gruinard Estate. On 1st June we travelled beyond Ullapool to climb Stack Polly (2002 ft). It was a glorious day with clear blue skies. After a week at Gruinard, where we had taken a cottage, we moved on to the Torridon area. We stayed at Inveralligin and did a delightful walk via Alligin Shuas, Araid to Diabaig by the coast route and hills and returned by mountain road (10 miles).

6th June saw us on Beinn Alligin where in snowy conditions we reach Tom Na Gragach (3,021 ft) and Meal An Laoigh (2904 ft). Because of the poor weather on the tops we decided not to go onto the main top and the Horns of Alligin, although they looked tempting. We moved onto Skye but two days of bad weather spoiled any hopes of walking on the island. However, we did meet up with two Swiss girls who had been camping. We shall no doubt return to Elgol where we hope to do some walking. We moved down to Fort William where we took David up Ben Nevis (4406 ft), Meall An Suidhe (2322 ft) and Carn Dearg (3961 ft). As we neared the top snow fell heavily and the last 45 minutes of the walk was a trudge through thick snow.

The informal Meet at the George Starkey Hut proved to be a memorable one. Here we met Paddy Boulter (Monte Rosa), Eddie Tuck (Monte Rosa) and John Milburn (Grindelwald). On the Saturday (2nd July) Valerie, David and I completed a 12 mile walk which took in six fells Angletarn Pikes (1857 ft), Rest Dodd (2278 ft), The Knott (2423 ft), Rampsgill Head (2581 ft), Kidsty Pike (2560 ft), High Raise (2634 ft). It was a glorious day and the weather was perfect throughout. However, on Sunday, when the Meet came to a close, the weather changed. We decided to do Place Fell (2154 ft) before returning home but as we reached the top the weather changed to drizzle and mist.

Later in the month we again visited Kettlewell where we set off to do Great Whernside again with some friends. As we reached Cam Head the heavens opened and low cloud came down. Whernside was completely covered in low cloud and as there did not seem to be any prospect of the heavy rain ceasing we decided to make a hasty retreat to Kettlewell which was quite busy with ramblers who had also hurried from the hills. It was a disappointing day because the walking and views in this part of the Yorkshire Dales are superb.

We visited the hut in Patterdale in August and spent a most enjoyable three days. On 24th August the weather was so hot that we set off on our walk up to Grizedale Tarn in shirt sleeves. However, as we approached the tarn, high winds developed and made the ascent of Dollywaggon Pike (2810 ft) a somewhat difficult task. The wind was driving down the fell and warmer clothing was needed. We continued to High Cragg, Nethermost Pike (2920 ft) to Helvellyn (3118 ft). It was our intention to go back to Patterdale by Striding Edge but because of heavy winds and gusts and the fact that we had our seven year old son, David, with us, we decided to return over Nethermost

Pike to Grizedale Tarn and Patterdale in the pouring rain, which spoiled the second half of an otherwise delightful walk. The mists were down on the morning of 25th August so we took the opportunity to visit Keswick to do some shopping. In mid-afternoon the sun came out so we had a gentle stroll on Latrigg (1203 ft). On 26th August we walked along a delightful path at the side of Ullswater and then climbed the little fell of Hallin (1271 ft). A short walk to Howtown led us to the boat and back to Glenridding.

From 1st October to the 8th we were again in the Lake District—this time at the farm in Borrowdale. We had plans for a hectic week but the weather was poor and really high walking was restricted. However, we did a delightful short walk on Grange Fell (1363 ft) to King's How (1050 ft) and Brund Fell (1363 ft). We also managed Grisedale Pike (2593 ft), Hobcarton Crag (2525 ft) and Hopegill Head (2525 ft). Another day saw us up Mell-break (1676 ft), a delightful fell and Walla Crag (1234 ft). Although we did not do any of the walks we had planned (Scafell Pike for David), it did afford an opportunity to visit fells which one often passes by.

David Riddell

February With Harold Flook at the G.S. Hut, when we attended the Northern Dinner at the Glenridding Hotel with Arthur Ingham and his wife as guests. Arthur was with me on the 1973 Everest Trek and greatly enjoyed the 'Tale of Old Times' put on by the Club. This was after Harold and I had been over Striding Edge in snow. The other day we had in the hills was over Boardale Hause to Angle Tarn to the bottom of Hayeswater and back by Beckstones. Boggy going. The track is used by the Pony-trekking school and is badly cut up. This path used to be the 'main road' from Hartsop to Patterdale, and it has not improved in the centuries.

March The Cambridge University M.C. dinner at Sidney Sussex. Had the pleasure of taking the Rev. Herbert Bell, many years Vicar of Ambleside, an A.C. member since 1922. Herbert Bell's son was with us at Saas Fee, and is a member of the S.A.C. Some of us met him at Hannig. Eric Radcliffe and I were guests of our fellow member, Prof. John Coales and he gave an account of the early days of the C.U.M.C. that was a masterpiece of research. A most nostalgic evening, with N. E. Odell and the president of the A.C. being two only of the climbers there.

April Easter Meet at the Glan Aber at Betws-y-Coed. Maurice Bennett is in charge of that Meet. It was 30 years ago that I climbed Cader Idris from the S.E. the Lyn Cau route, all in a day from Baldock. This time it was the N.E. by the Foxes Path. A dangerous route, if people are above you on the path. Magnificent views, fine weather. Snowdon by the Ranger route was new to me but was unforgettable in that when we were near the railway line in thick cloud and snow we were asked by a young man what was the way down to the 'Youth Hostel'. But he did not know which Y.H., or where he had started out from!

- August Kandersteg Meet, reported elsewhere. Enjoyable as always. Only climb was the Wildstrubel from the Gemmi. But at the Chalet Belvedere, under the Mortimers it was, in the words of Bibendum 'Confort et Accueil exceptionnelle'. The birthday party on the 19th went on to the small hours, long after the celebrant had gone to bed. Colin Armstrong provided a fantastic rendering of German singing. I believe there was also dancing.
- October Lakes. G.S. Hut Meet. Horseshoe of Striding Edge Helvellyn Catsycam, in fine weather. Next day I went on a popular trip at this Meet, of Angle Tarn, Kidsty Pike, High Street to Hartsop. Met Peter Howard and his wife on Kidsty Pike. He is an S.A.C. Member and a Lake District Warden. He also had a car at Hartsop! Splendid dinner at the Brotherswater Hotel, graced by the presence of 'Rusty' Westmoreland, in his 90th year.

Oliver St. John and sons

As a convenient valley base, our house in the Aosta valley is at last fully converted and in regular use throughout most of the year by family and friends. So, after a period of semi-retirement from the mountains, we were able to start again and explore the vicinity.

The weather in July 1977 was uncertain, with plenty of fresh snow, so we first visited La Thuille and the Ruitor valley. This is an area characterised by fine waterfalls and a minor summit, Becca Bianca, gave outstanding views of the whole Mont Blanc range.

An hour's drive away lies Gressoney la Trinité, but it's a lot longer up to the Gnifetti Hut on Monte Rosa where we met a group from the Midland Association of Mountaineers. The weather was perfect, but deep fresh snow, and we contented ourselves with the Zumsteinspitze and the Signalkuppe. This was our first visit: it was a clear day and it was a shock to be looking down at the Matterhorn so close by. On our way back to the hut we diverted over the Parrotspitze and the Ludwigshohe, getting down for a refreshing dip in the river at Gressoney for lunch.

Some friends followed us over from England to take over the house for a fortnight. We arranged a two-day overlap and made a joint ascent of the Gran Paradiso. The weather had been bad with deep new snow again, but we set off in faith at 3.30 a.m. from the hut which did not serve breakfast until 5 a.m., so we were rewarded with a peaceful climb over trackless slopes before the crowds arrived. Once again a wonderful view from the summit encompassing the Alps from Mont Blanc to the Bernina.

Feeling quite fit on our return, we tackled the Welsh three-thousanders after a gap of 17 years. A good day in a wet week and I left Pen-y-pass at 4 a.m. to start from Snowdon at 6 a.m. At least I got to Ogwen in a quicker time than last attempt, 6 hours, but then things went awry. My two sons, aiming to go faster, were refused a single ticket on the train up Snowdon so

they ran up to the top and then completed the course in 7 hours 10 minutes. As I write, I have just walked the length of the Malvern Hills with my wife on a crisp November day: low hills but still an inspiration for the future.

Ernst Sondheimer

January Lake District in snow, rain and mist—solo winter ascent of Old Man of Conistone, followed by hot bath and dinner provided by kind friends who own the Old Vicarage at Ulpha in the Duddon Valley.

April Family walks in Swaledale (more snow).

May North Wales with Westfield Mountain Club.

June ABMSAC Torridon meet. The three big traverses of Beinn Alligin, Beinn Eithe and Liathach were accomplished, together with some lesser heights. The weather was foul to middling; we descended into Coire Mhic Fhearchair and decided that it must be impressive when you can actually see it. Delectable country though, and an excellent hut.

August/September A Swiss rendezvous in the Uri Alps. Urirotstock from Ruggubel hut in fierce wind, mist and drizzle—a long day. At the end of the week the weather cleared for the Gross Spannort, and we had brilliant sunshine with clouds filling all the valleys. This is an easy and entertaining mountain: recommended for the middle-aged. I now fancied myself (mistakenly) fit for something bigger and went off towards Zermatt. The Matterhorn had just been declared back in condition, though still covered in snow. Resisting the temptation to join the queues, and finding the Nadelgrat ruled out (again!), I managed to bag a Täsch guide (Ludwig Imboden) for the Alphubel via the Rotgrat. This proved to be work enough. The crux pitch is a gloomy exposed corner: it was glazed with ice and looked—to put it mildly—uninviting. The guide stepped past it in approved fashion by jamming his ice-axe in a crack and standing on it. As it was my job to bring the axe, I never found out what I was supposed to stand on! Further details are left to the reader's imagination. Anyway, we got to the top in the end—long after the crowds had departed—and enjoyed a fantastic view. Back home a week in Cornwall, swimming in the sea and eating lobster, nicely rounded off the season and made me quite unfit for work again.

Les Swindin

A visit to North Wales in December 1976 started what was to be quite a good winter for me. With John Oaks I climbed Great Gully on Crag Yr Ysfa in very fine winter conditions after being on my list for many a year.



View south from Gross Spannort
by Ernst Sondheimer

Liathaeh Ridge
by Ernst Sondheimer



The following day provided another excellent climb of the apparently little known Little Gully on Snowdon; it is the vague gully line somewhat left of Left Hand Trinity.

Over the Christmas period I had to travel out to Spain to collect a relation's car and with Barbara took the opportunity to visit friends and ski in the French Pyrenean resort of La Mongie. Superb weather and skiing conditions were only marred by Barbara having an unfortunate argument with a mogul, which she lost. Back in Britain I did more climbing, the most impressive climb being that of Steep Ghyll. The following day the weather was less kind. Heavy rain and sleet were falling as I left Buttermere for the North side of Grassmoor with a friend. As we gained height the sleet turned to snow and so we were able to enjoy an excellent climb although visibility was poor. After completing all the difficulties we continued towards the summit plateau still roped together alpine style, but not without mishap. We entered what appeared to be a bowl offering an easy way to the top avoiding a number of rocky outcrops thereabouts. We had traversed and then climbed maybe 50 ft up and were one behind the other when the whole slope ahead of us started to shift. My own first reaction was to plunge my axe deep into the snow, but this was insufficient to prevent myself being swept down by the avalanche. I then adapted an ice-axe braking position as I was carried down the slope which was probably about 30° angle. It was impossible to judge how fast I was moving, but my hope was that the brake would work or my friend would manage to stop and then stop me on the rope. As it turned out we both apparently stopped together after sliding maybe 50 ft. Not the sort of experience one expects on Grassmoor. On inspection we found a perfect snow wall left by a slab avalanche about one foot deep.

For Easter I had planned a ski-mountaineering trip to the Bernese Oberland, which was spoiled by the weather. With Barbara and three friends we started in the Western Oberland from Sion. The first white-out and heavy snowfall we encountered was on the Plaine Morte Glacier. We were unable to find the col leading to the Wildstrubel hut and so late in the day skied down the piste back to Crans after everything had closed down for the day. Our next objective was the Konkordia hut from Fiesch. Local enquiries indicated the best way to approach the hut was from Kuhboden, where we stayed in an excellent youth hostel in the telepherique terminal, via a drag lift to the foot of the Eggishorn, below which we contoured to a slight col overlooking the Marjelensee. From there it is an easy matter to ski down and onto the Aletsch glacier. The trip from the point at which we joined the glacier up to Konkordia was accomplished in our second white-out. Most of the next few days was spent playing a board game cut from the back of a Weetabix packet as the storms blew outside. Odd sorties were made out to the Ewigschneefeld (twice) and the Grünhornlücke during short breaks in the weather, whilst on the one fine day we made an ascent of the Lauitor. We found the going in the deep snow too much to press on to the Lauihorn which had been our main objective. A dash to Hollandia followed by even more severe weather led to our eventual return to the valley in the third white-out via the Lötschental. Six hours from the hut to Blatten in a

journey of epic proportions with all seventeen hut occupants getting out whilst they could.

The Jubilee week in Scotland was wet and the Alps later were wet. In the Alps I traversed the Blümlisalphorn from the Weisse Frau, did the North ridge of the Weissmies and the South ridge of the Lagginhorn in difficult conditions of fresh snow and finally the North East face of the Lenzspitze in perfect conditions, these all in the company of John Oaks, and Barbara, except the Lenzspitze.

In the Autumn I entered the Karrimor marathon, again with John, finishing well down the field in the A standard. I also attended the joint meet with the Alpine Club and had the great pleasure of rock climbing with Walter Kirstein, who has been someone I have admired ever since joining the club.

N. E. D. Walker

Three lovely days in the Karwendels. With Wilhelm Winneberger, climbed to Brunnstein hut, normal way; and Simmetsberg, from the south-west ridge; all in fine weather. With a party of Germans climbed to Hochland hut, and went on to the Worner Grat, in lovely weather.

OBITUARIES

Mrs. Valda Archer

Valda was not a great climber, but in other ways she was unique. Some of us had met her at odd meets over the years, but she became widely known when she ran the chalet-based meets at Saas-Fee and Fischbiel. Hotel based Alpine meets had become prohibitively expensive, and we were in danger of losing this vital annual event. Harry Archer conceived the idea of hiring a chalet and looking after ourselves. This meant that Harry and Valda obtained the chalet, provisioned it and, with the aid of their children and their friends, fed us and looked after our every last need. There were a great many of us, and we were treated more sympathetically than we have ever been treated in an hotel. Valda was unfailingly cheerful and encouraging, and yet was plainly in charge.

Not many realised that there was a great cloud hanging over her head even in 1975 and 1976, and that she often carried out her duties in a state of health that would have deterred most others. She passed away in January 1978. We offer our deepest sympathy to Harry and the children and we shall all miss her sadly.

S. M. F.

Phyllis Peskett

The sudden and unexpected death early in 1977 of Phyllis Peskett came as a great shock to her many friends in the Association.

Over the years membership of the Association has been confined to members of the S.A.C. which made it an 'all male' Club. It has, however, long been traditional that wives of members and guests of both sexes have been welcome at the functions and climbing meets of the Association and Phyllis, with her husband Noel, was a regular supporter of the Association for many years. Before they moved to Hampshire on their retirement, Noel and Phyllis rarely missed one of the monthly lectures and they also came on many Alpine and Easter Meets. Phyllis was a member of the Ladies Alpine Club and on its merger with the Alpine Club joined Noel as a member of the latter Club.

Phyllis was one of those unassuming people who accomplished competently and without fuss whatever she set out to do. She knew exactly what she was capable of on a mountain and was a steady and safe companion on a rope. She was utterly dependable and her friendly and equable nature never changed, whether at sea level or high up on a peak. Phyllis will be remembered with respect and affection.

M. B.

Mr. M. N. Clarke

With the death on 6th October 1977 of Marshal Clarke, the Association lost one of its most loyal and long-serving members. He joined the Association

in 1925 and became an Hon. Secretary in 1929, an office he held until 1948. He edited the Journal during those years and after he ceased to an Hon. Secretary he continued as Hon. Editor for another fourteen years. To have been an officer of the Association for thirty-four consecutive years is a record which is most unlikely ever to be equalled.

Even after relinquishing office as Hon. Editor, Clarke continued as a member of the Committee and was a regular attender at meetings almost up to his death. He was made an Honorary Member of the Association in recognition of his outstanding services.

Marshal Clarke was elected to the Alpine Club in 1928 and he also regularly attended meetings of that Club.

Snow and ice climbing was more to Clarke's taste than rock but in addition to his many climbs in the Alps he walked regularly in the British hills and indulged in the odd rock climb from time to time.

Marshal Clarke's passing deprives the Association of one of the last of its 'characters' from a bygone age. He had a sturdy independence of spirit and was certainly not one to change his views on basic principles in order to accord with changing fashion. His fifty-two years of devoted membership of the Association did much to ensure its continuity and but for his efforts in keeping it running, it might not have survived the Second World War. M. B.