

February 1974Bulletin 51

Dear Member,

February is with us and I am sure that like myself you are looking towards some decent trips out amongst snow and ice. I must say though that up to now it hasn't been very promising - just a light scattering on the higher peaks. However, there is still time yet, but for those of you who are unable to get to mountain areas I hope that the Bulletin, and some of the adventures of fellow members included in this issue, will serve to entertain you and remind you of the 'Meets' still to be held this year. Application forms for the 'Tyn Twr' and 'Three Counties Tops' Meets are at the back of the Bulletin. Could I make an appeal for articles for the next Bulletin, it is always interesting to read accounts of the many and various trips that many of you make throughout the year. - the next issue is going to be pretty thin otherwise.

PRIEST FOR SKYE

Fr EA. Murphy who celebrates Mass once a month for about twelve Catholics on Skye, finds great difficulty finding a Priest to celebrate Mass during holiday periods (April to September - especially Easter). At these times there is Mass every Sunday and Holyday of Obligation in the Church at Portree - if a Priest is available. If there are any Priests who would like to spend their holiday on Skye and celebrate Mass at Portree would they either contact John Foster, 29, Braeside Cres., Billinge, Nr WIGAN, or Fr Murphy, Inverie, Knoydart, Mallaig, Invernesshire. Fr Murphy cannot afford to pay for the supply, but accommodation will be free.

BISHOP'S SCALE

It seems more and more that some members are under the impression that cleaners are employed at Bishop's Scale to keep the Hut clean and tidy - THEY ARE NOT!

Bishop's Scale has the distinction of being the largest climbing hut in the U.K. it is also the Club Headquarters and as such should be a showpiece. Yet some members are more than content to allow it to remain untidy by not cleaning up after themselves. Moreover, it is the duty of every member to do the general cleaning, tidying, washing up, cutting firewood or cleaning out the boiler.

My advice to anyone who is not prepared to do his/her share in the running of the hut is to stay away. Anyone who does not comply will be reported to the Central Committee.

However, if anyone does have any suggestions, complaints or ideas which will save work or lead to the hut being run more easily I would be delighted to hear from them. Write to;

Matt Bennett,  
349, Haslingden Road,  
BLACKBURN, Lancs.

M. Bennett (Hut Warden)



A FREE RIDE UP THE MIDIAngela Faller

If one goes to the Alps often enough, sooner or later one must have a good season. '72 was my year and I climbed several routes that I had always wanted to do. By the middle of August the Green Card and the climbing insurance had run out but the weather was fine for once and R.B.J. needed a partner for the Frende Spur. It would have been a wicked shame to go home. (R.B.J. - Roger Baxter Jones - ex Leeds Univ; now works at Centresport in Leeds. (not A.R.C.C.))

The Frende Spur is a mixed route up the North Face of the Aiguille du Midi, over 1000m long. It can be seen from almost anywhere in the Chamonix Valley, from Snell's famous field, from the swimming pool, and in detail from the Midi telepherique. With its slender ice arete capped by a rock buttress it looks steep, significant, and incredibly beautiful. Sometimes one sees tiny figures crawling up it in the heat of the day.

So that this would not happen to us, we planned to bivouac on the Spur and climb the ice at first light. Leaving Plan d'Aiguille at 4pm. we stormed up the moraine and crossed the Pelerins Glacier as quickly as possible wearing crampons and running at times. One avalanche came down from the Col du Plan but it stopped well short of us and we reached the relative safety of the Spur which is protected by its final rognon of rock.

Two friendly lads from Marseilles, Guy and Jacques, were also starting the route and we found ourselves chatting to them in French. We began to solo the preliminary rocks but there was new snow on them and the pitches of III were alarmingly slippery; I was glad when Roger uncoiled the rope and threw an end down to me. It was definitely demoralising to climb with someone who had just 'done' the Walker, although it did remove my anxiety about the crux of our route, which is usually the rognon at the top. I wished I could move faster because Roger was obviously coasting ... I was like a Mini trying to keep up with an E-type.

There was just time to climb the chimney of IV before darkness fell. I found the holds by feeling for them and joined Roger on an excellent bivvy site. As we cleared snow from the platform and secured all our gear we could hear the French team doing the same a pitch higher. We managed to get organised without knocking anything off (good job Cynth wasn't there) but one of the French dropped his axe which bounced, in a shower of sparks, down the glacier.

Out came the meths stove and the goodies. Throughout the night we had soup, bacon butties, chocolate, fruit, brews - and duvet sock. Other parties were bivouacking on the surrounding Aiguilles, some apparently benighted in the Peigne couloir. There had been many bivouacs this summer. We were both quite used to it.

As usual in the morning I was cold and stiff and the first pitch seemed very awkward. We passed the French pair, not ready quite so soon, and when the early 'frique and the sun swung over we were ready with crampons on to tackle the ice. At first we moved together using old steps on the crest. Roger steamed ahead like a big red engine but at frequent



intervals the rope would tighten and remind him to wait for me. The ice arete was longer than it looked. About 100m below the rognon it steepened; front pointing became necessary and security desirable so I belayed to ice-screws while Roger ran out the rope.

The French pair, just behind, had no ice screws (we never understood why) so we shared ours with them. Fortunately whoever had lost his axe still had an ice-hammer. At that early hour the ice was very good. It was thrilling to climb <sup>between</sup> up the shimmering curtains that swept away on either side. Roger brought me up to him and set off again, dislodging big chips of ice as he drove in his axe and the pick of his hammer.

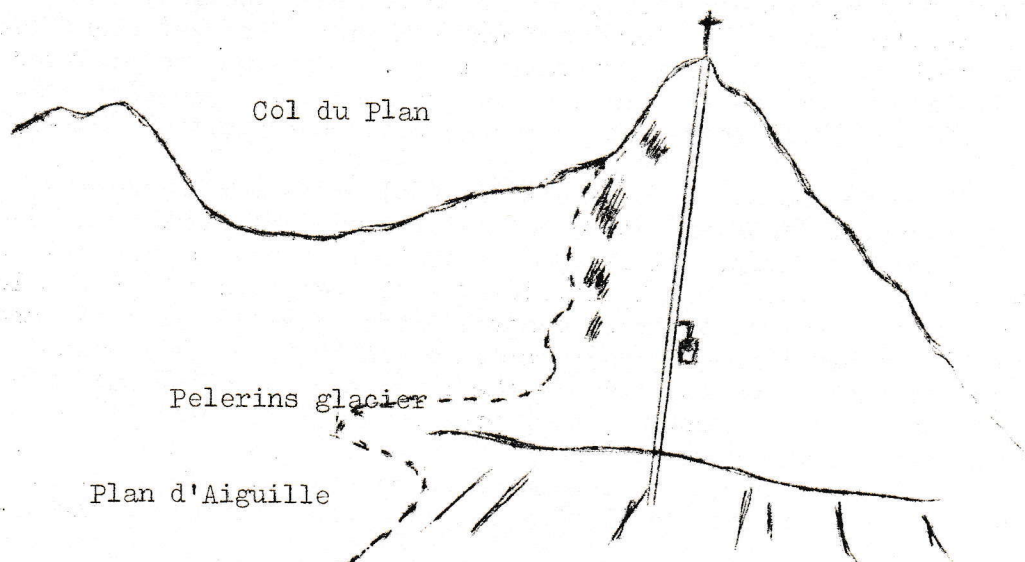
We kept our crampons on for a short section where rocky slabs emerged from the ice. It was very hot by this time and we were glad to pause and drain our water bottles. The four of us shared our remaining food (to fortify ourselves for the crux) which meant that we won some powerful saucisson and donated some Bournville chocolate. Then we put away axes and crampons and took out slings and krabs.

The rognon was not icy, after all, nor was it very long. There were pegs all the way up the Grade V pitches - in those conditions I could probably have led it myself, given enough time and karabiners - it made a pleasant change instead of a desperate crux. A few feet of dodgy snow brought us to the top of the Midi. Disregarding the hours spent on the bivouac ledge we had climbed the route nicely within guide-book time.

In spite of the satisfaction and euphoria, one of us was pretty tired - no prizes for guessing who. It was still morning, and we could have descended via the Vallee Blanche and the Mer de Glace. But the snow was soft, the sun was hot and new climbing boots don't like long walks. Having followed a Good Alpinist all the way up a Superb Route I felt I'd had a free ride up the Midi. It wasn't at all painful to pay for a ride down!

ANGELA FALLER.

Aiguille du Midi (3842m)



intervals the rope would tighten and remind him to wait for me. The ice arete was longer than it looked. About 100m below the rognon it steepened; front pointing became necessary and security desirable so I belayed to ice-screws while Roger ran out the rope.

The French pair, just behind, had no ice screws (we never understood why) so we shared ours with them. Fortunately whoever had lost his axe still had an ice-hammer. At that early hour the ice was very good. It was thrilling to climb <sup>between</sup> up the shimmering curtains that swept away on either side. Roger brought me up to him and set off again, dislodging big chips of ice as he drove in his axe and the pick of his hammer.

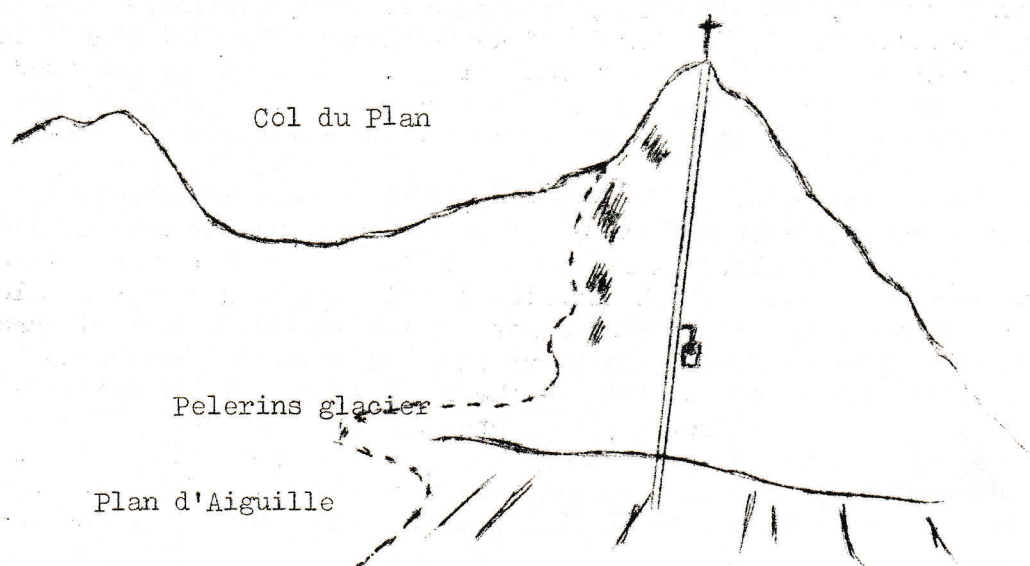
We kept our crampons on for a short section where rocky slabs emerged from the ice. It was very hot by this time and we were glad to pause and drain our water bottles. The four of us shared our remaining food (to fortify ourselves for the crux) which meant that we won some powerful saucisson and donated some Bournville chocolate. Then we put away axes and crampons and took out slings and krabs.

The rognon was not icy, after all, nor was it very long. There were pegs all the way up the Grade V pitches - in those conditions I could probably have led it myself, given enough time and karabiners - it made a pleasant change instead of a desperate crux. A few feet of dodgy snow brought us to the top of the Midi. Disregarding the hours spent on the bivouac ledge we had climbed the route nicely within guide-book time.

In spite of the satisfaction and euphoria, one of us was pretty tired - no prizes for guessing who. It was still morning, and we could have descended via the Vallee Blanche and the Mer de Glace. But the snow was soft, the sun was hot and new climbing boots don't like long walks. Having followed a Good Alpinist all the way up a Superb Route I felt I'd had a free ride up the Midi. It wasn't at all painful to pay for a ride down!

ANGELA FALLER.

Aiguille du Midi (3842m)





MOUNT OLYMPUSMartin Whitaker

It was to be a holiday of lazing from beach to beach round Greece for six weeks (ensured by going with a non-climbing friend), but my climbing boots were inevitably packed. After all, no self-respecting mountaineer would go to Greece without making an attempt on Mount Olympus, Throne of the Gods!

I acquired an Hellenic Alpine Club leaflet on the mountain, and a sociable evening with three English girls found me with an offer of a lift in their Land Rover from Plaka campsite near Litochoron, up a dirt track to Stavros, 3,000ft up the mountain - this proved a decisive factor, saving 2½hrs walking.

The sun was just raising its fiery head from the sea as we left the campsite next morning. By 6.30am. I was on my own, dropping gently down to Priori, the source of the Enipeus river which drains the East flank of Olympus. It was a beautiful morning. The scent of juniper and pine was heavy in the air and there was much animal life to be seen - several species of woodpecker; black squirrels with white fronts, looking like businessmen late home from a dinner conference; and many varieties of flitting butterflies. At Priori I was at 2,500ft - this was the last supply of water, and ahead was a long toil for 7,000ft up steep wooded slopes and across a succession of dry river beds.

As I plodded on, clouds filled the valley below me. I seemed to have been going for ages, and decided that I must be near Refuge 'A', 'Spilos Agapitos' (2,100m) when I reached a sign denoting a further 1½hrs to the hut - very dispiriting! Disbelief is the best stimulant in such a case!

The warden of the hut, Costas Zolotas, is also the official guide to Mount Olympus. He speaks good English, and seemed friendly. His guiding fees were comparatively inexpensive, but being British I did not require his services! except to serve me a beer. I think he thought I was a little crazy doing the whole climb in one day - so did I!

Above the hut the scenery changes, the forest is left below and the rock becomes more apparent. Perhaps I should explain that Olympus is a massif, the highest point being a peak called Mytikas (2,918m - 9,573ft). There are many summits over 2,500m - Stefani, or Throne of Zeus, Skolios, Skala, Agios Antonias, Profitis Ilias, Kalogeros and Kakavrakis. The east flanks about 2,000m are rocky and steep, but generally loose. Erosion has produced ranks of ant-hill-like towers on the crags below the summits. The West Face forms a superb cliff, on which there must be great scope for visiting rock-climbers.

The toil up to the summit of Skala (2,866m) presented no technical difficulty, except that of adjusting to the altitude, having been at sea-level only five hours previously. I stopped on the summit to force some lunch down me. The view was superb though restricted - the Aegean was hidden below a bank of cloud, but westwards across central Greece glimpses of plain and mountain could be had through gaps in a sea of cumulus. Mytikas was a jagged molar of rock along the ridge - the final ascent to the summit was obviously going to be interesting, so I pressed on. Hitherto I had been following a track well marked with paint dabs - as in Austria - but now the path disappeared, and only the paint dabs continued. They descended steeply down the east flank, on sloping ledges covered with loose rock -



MOUNT OLYMPUSMartin Whitaker

It was to be a holiday of lazing from beach to beach round Greece for six weeks (ensured by going with a non-climbing friend), but my climbing boots were inevitably packed. After all, no self-respecting mountaineer would go to Greece without making an attempt on Mount Olympus, Throne of the Gods!

I acquired an Hellenic Alpine Club leaflet on the mountain, and a sociable evening with three English girls found me with an offer of a lift in their Land Rover from Plaka campsite near Litchoron, up a dirt track to Stavros, 3,000ft up the mountain - this proved a decisive factor, saving 2½hrs walking.

The sun was just raising its fiery head from the sea as we left the campsite next morning. By 6.30am. I was on my own, dropping gently down to Priori, the source of the Enipeus river which drains the East flank of Olympus. It was a beautiful morning. The scent of juniper and pine was heavy in the air and there was much animal life to be seen - several species of woodpecker; black squirrels with white fronts, looking like businessmen late home from a dinner conference; and many varieties of flitting butterflies. At Priori I was at 2,500ft - this was the last supply of water, and ahead was a long toil for 7,000ft up steep wooded slopes and across a succession of dry river beds.

As I plodded on, clouds filled the valley below me. I seemed to have been going for ages, and decided that I must be near Refuge 'A', 'Spilos Agapitos' (2,100m) when I reached a sign denoting a further 1½hrs to the hut - very dispiriting! Disbelief is the best stimulant in such a case!

The warden of the hut, Costas Zolotas, is also the official guide to Mount Olympus. He speaks good English, and seemed friendly. His guiding fees were comparatively inexpensive, but being British I did not require his services! except to serve me a beer. I think he thought I was a little crazy doing the whole climb in one day - so did I!

Above the hut the scenery changes, the forest is left below and the rock becomes more apparent. Perhaps I should explain that Olympus is a massif, the highest point being a peak called Mytikas (2,918m - 9,573ft). There are many summits over 2,500m - Stefani, or Throne of Zeus, Skolios, Skala, Agios Antonias, Profitis Ilias, Kalogeros and Kakavrakis. The east flanks about 2,000m are rocky and steep, but generally loose. Erosion has produced ranks of ant-hill-like towers on the crags below the summits. The West Face forms a superb cliff, on which there must be great scope for visiting rock-climbers.

The toil up to the summit of Skala (2,866m) presented no technical difficulty, except that of adjusting to the altitude, having been at sea-level only five hours previously. I stopped on the summit to force some lunch down me. The view was superb though restricted - the Aegean was hidden below a bank of cloud, but westwards across central Greece glimpses of plain and mountain could be had through gaps in a sea of cumulus. Mytikas was a jagged molar of rock along the ridge - the final ascent to the summit was obviously going to be interesting, so I pressed on. Hitherto I had been following a track well marked with paint dabs - as in Austria - but now the path disappeared, and only the paint dabs continued. They descended steeply down the east flank, on sloping ledges covered with loose rock -



because he had to hang about in cold conditions for quite a time - by now quite a big gap had opened up between leaders and tail-enders. The tail-enders were even more delayed because the course sweepers, Frank Rogerson and Eddie Kelly, who were supposed to know the route blindfold, couldn't find the way to Broad Stand from Scafell summit because of the cloud. At Mickledore Val Cann retired to Wasdale Head. For the rest the summit of Scafell Pike provided some comfort in that we had now completed half the 10,000ft of climbing on the course.

The route off the next top, Great End down the Band - not easy to find at the best of times - was particularly tricky in the cloud. However, at this point everybody was eagerly anticipating the delights promised at the first feeding station at Sty Head. Nor were we disappointed - hot brews, hot soup and bacon butties - never was food more gratefully appreciated and enjoyed. The station was manned by Dave Ogden, Mick Crawford, Mo Elder and Joan Kierans whose fine efforts sent everyone off on the second half of the walk with renewed vigour.

The early arrivals at Sty Head didn't realise how near they were to disappointment, it was only after the tents and other gear had been set up by Dave Ogden and Co that it was discovered that the paraffin for the stoves had been left behind. It was at this moment that Mick Crawford earned his place in the Club roll of honour by running down to Wasdale Head and back up to Sty Head with the precious liquid. Bravo, John Michael (Alladin) Crawford!

It seemed odd climbing Great Gable after having already walked 10 miles and climbed 5,000ft, but having reached the top there was no time for self satisfaction before we were plunging down to Beck Head and on to the switch-back of Kirk Fell. Here Terry Hickey was in trouble with cramp - probably due to the diet he had been on. At the col between Kirk Fell and Pillar, he wisely gave up and by now we had also seen Jim Kelly and Mr & Mrs Fox retreat to Wasdale Head. It's an odd thing about all the retirements mentioned. They all came after contact had been made with the course sweepers. There must be a moral there somewhere.

After Kirk Fell came Pillar, which I think everybody realised was the one remaining major obstacle, and provided it could be overcome, completion of the course was fairly certain. Unfortunately it proved too much for K. Hickman, K. Thompson and R. Shinwell and they retired.

Dropping off Scoat Fell spirits revived again at the sight of the tent at the second feeding station, manned by Leo Brown and Tony Fisher. Here, hot brews were eagerly drunk and there was cake and fruit available for those who still had appetites. Gratitude is due to Leo and Tony for their efforts in getting all the gear up this long high carry and for hanging on so long waiting for the tail-enders who were now several hours behind the leaders. Two members might not have felt all that grateful when Leo kicked them out of the tent into the pouring rain when he thought they had been there long enough!



Seatoller followed Haycock and although it was a miserable plod up a dull fell side the last top was drawing nearer with every step. - Once on top it was virtually all over. A long drop off Seatoller - now with a spring in our step - a few feet of climb up to Buckbarrow Crag, a final joyous drop down Buckbarrow Screes and it was over. 21 miles of distance covered and 10,000ft of climbing.

A total of eleven members managed to get round the full course - amongst them two girls, Helen Reddy and Dot Woods - repeating her achievement in last year's walk. Ben Carter and Wilf Charnley also made it two years in succession. The others who completed the course were Paul Charnock, Pete Kirkbright, Roy Philips, Jerry Slavin plus father and son Frank and John Rogerson.

Eddie Kelly.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

After the last Bulletin was sent off the Post Office returned six copies back to me since they were unable to deliver them. Life Members, who do not re-new an annual subscription, are particularly hard to trace if they do not notify the Secretary or myself of any change of address.

If anyone has news of the following members I would be grateful if they could be contacted and then I can send them Bulletins.

R. Reilly, last heard of in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.  
AC. Fasnacht, last known at Groeslon, Caernarvenshire.  
P. Vickers - for whom I have no address at all.

In order to save on postage - which is a considerable expense - I would also be grateful if members who share the same address could also share the same Bulletin. In future I will send one copy of the Bulletin to members who are resident in the many Colleges and Seminaries on my address list. I hope this will not be too much of an inconvenience.

THE WEATHER - UNOFFICIAL FORECASTS

The official weather forecast given out for the various parts of the British Isles is as often wrong as it is right, when applied to the mountains. Even when you find a friendly native and enquire about the weather prospects the advice might well take the following form, "Rain, sir? Why I tell you it's not going to rain till the ground be wet; then we shall have plenty of it!" For all 'do it yourself' weather experts here are a few old proverbs which might make a day in the hills a bit more predictable:

'When the grass is dry at morning light,  
Look for rain before the night'

'Clear moon,  
Frost soon.'

'When the dew is on the grass,  
Rain will never come to pass.'

'Long foretold, long past  
Short notice, soon past.'

'Trace in the sky the painter's brush:  
The winds around you soon will rush.'

'A coming storm our shooting corns  
  presage,  
Our aches will throb, our hollow tooth  
  will rage.

Editor.



DINORWIC PUMPED STORAGE SCHEME

Parliament gave approval for the above hydro-electric scheme last December. As a result of objections, there have been modifications to reduce the impact on this part of the National Park of such a large project (1500 MW). The height of the dams at Llyn Peris and Marchlyn Mawr - opposite side of Penrhyn Quarry from Tyn Twr - have been reduced somewhat.

The purpose of this scheme is to enable a more economic utilisation of the Nuclear stations at Wylfa Head and Trawsfynydd. (Sheep farmers are not noted for using electricity at night). The generators in the Dinorwic Station will be reversed at night to pump water from Llyn Peris 1650ft to Marchlyn Mawr, using cheap electrical energy from the nuclear stations. During the day the water will flow back through the generators to Llyn Peris, feeding 1500 MW into the 400 KV grid for about 10 hrs. Those who know the Cwm Dyli hydro station (oldest in Britain, 1906) can think of its 5 MW max capacity for comparison.

All pipelines will be underground, as will the station itself in a vast cavern under the old Dinorwic slate quarry. Capital authorisation has still to be obtained, but the cost has already risen from the £75 million in my article a year ago, to £80 million by the time it is completed in about seven years time.

John Foster.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting will take place on Saturday 4th May 1974. Further details will be published in the next Bulletin.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members are reminded that the annual subscription shortly becomes due and that at the last A.G.M. it was raised to £3. (See Bulletin 49 Treasurer's Report)

Send to: N. Haig,  
752, Devonshire Rd.,  
Norbreck,  
BLACKPOOL.

Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope. Members who pay by Standing Order are reminded to inform their bank of the change.

NEWS

To Geoff and Sheila Barry a daughter, Carolyn Lesley - many congratulations!

The Club Chairman Terry Hickey is now recovering well from a major operation - hope to see you soon at Club functions Terry!

Since commencing to get the Bulletin together two weeks ago I have managed to get up to Bishop's Scale for a very wet weekend. It looks like the snow is just not going to happen this year - ah well!

Fr Murphy mentioned in the 'Priest for Skye' article has now moved on. Any Priest interested should now write to Fr O'Neill at the same address or John Foster.

Many thanks to John Foster, Angela Faller, Martin Whitaker and Eddie Kelly for the entertaining news and articles - keep them rolling in PLEASE!

best wishes,

TE. Southworth (Editor)  
15, St Francis Road,  
BLACKBURN, Lancs.  
BB2 2TZ.

D. Price, (Sec)  
615, Blackpool Road,  
Ashton,  
PRESTON.

Ted Southworth.



TYN TWR MEET

March 16th & 17th

BOOKING FORM

I will be attending the above meeting at Tyn Twr on March 16th  
and 17th 1974.

Name . . . . .

Address . . . . .  
.  
.

Tel No: . . . . .

Return the Form as soon as possible to:

John Foster,  
29, Braeside Crescent,  
Billinge,  
Nr WIGAN,  
Lancs.

\*\*\*\*\*

THREE COUNTIES TOPS    May 11th and 12th

BOOKING FORM

I will be attending the 'Three Counties Tops' Meet at Langdale  
on May 11th & 12th 1974.

Name . . . . .

Address . . . . .  
.  
.

Tel No: . . . . .

Return to : M. Bennett,  
349, Haslingden Road,  
BLACKBURN. Lancs.

\*\*\*\*\*