

people, and three beautiful days, it was a weekend well worthwhile. In the past 12 years the roads have much improved, the bends on the A74 have been smoothed where it is now motorway (thanks to Bill Mitton and his Italian Legion), so Scotland is ever nearer. Go to it!.

Opinion

'I will turn mine eyes to the hills from whence comes my strength.'

It matters not what I do in the hills; walk, scramble or climb, just to be among them brings peace.

To sit and wonder at the texture of a rock, or the symmetry of a plant, and above all to listen.

These are holy places, and for man to bring his aggressive, competitive spirit among them is a desecration.

Travelling Light.

Mike Lomas.

We are lying in the tent, listening to part of the string section. The double bass on the right, the cello on the left, both snoring like men possessed. Probably they tuned up on an evening of wine and beer.....or both.

Bleep, bleep, etc. I must have nodded off for what seemed like a couple of minutes, because that's the alarm. Out of sack, stove on, muesli, and a quick brew. Just on 4.45am. Last night's forecast was for a warm day, lots of sun and no cloud. We packed yesterday evening, keeping weight to a minimum, so packs on, and a quick stroll in the gloom to the telepherique station.

It's 5.30am as Jean and I join the throng. The first hint of our problems comes when the illuminated display informs all and sundry the first cabin won't go at 6.30am, 'cos there's a delay due to "fog"! We eventually departed in the seventh cabin. That means a long crocodile to get onto the snow.

In the tunnel leading from the top station to the outside world we fit crampons, rope up, and anoint ourselves with lip salve and sun repellent. Sun glasses and goggles on, axes in hand plus coils of rope, and off we go.

Patrick had lent us Rebuffat's book to copy some routes he thought we could manage. Today it was the Midi-Plan traverse. 3 - 4 hours said Gaston. We think a bit longer.

The snow is soft, in fact delicate to touch. This accounts for the leisurely pace of the crocodile as we descend the narrow ridge from the Midi towards the first col. The lack of significant forward movement provides ample opportunity to wonder at the views - truly magnificent. The famous Aiguilles here, there and everywhere, with clear blue skies, and intensely white snow. There is also ample opportunity for the sun to render the snow even softer. Below, on the wide expanse of the Col du Midi, ant-sized dots are on pilgrimage to Mont Blanc du Tacul. It's amazing how much you notice whilst you're waiting for the queue to shuffle and slither a bit further.

Eventually we reach the parting of the ways, and thankfully the majority do a right turn, in all probability heading for Tacul, as we had done a few days earlier (in company with Derek, Paul, Chris and others).

Our path lies straight ahead, upwards towards a rocky ridge. As we get closer we are able to identify the correct line from the various parties dotted about the place. Tasteful, up-to-the-minute, designer attire and gear make them stand out, pink, purple, emerald, etc,.....very fetching. All we are short of is Selina Scott and the Clothes Show theme music.

Conscious that British parties are notorious for being slow

movers, we decide not to waste time removing crampons as we crunch and scratch our way towards a grotty gully. Our spikes grating on the rock we move steadily upwards, suddenly freezing as the sound of falling boulders reached us. In the gully some of the route was coming to meet the party next but one in front of us. Fortunately, the danger hurtled past (about 12 feet to their left), and we reach the crest without any mishap. Just over there is our objective, the Aiguille du Plan. No problem.

Due to a distinct lack of snow it proves necessary to start climbing down at the other side of the ridge. Those who know say in good years the snow cover is so extensive there is very little rock to climb, 'cos it's all covered up. This is not one of those years. Imitation being a good idea we copy a French guide with a complement of clients. We stop climbing down and begin to abseil.

Alas, another minor problem. To save weight we eliminated the harnesses and figures of eight. Not to worry, a couple of tape slings and karabiners, with the rope over the shoulder and off we go, in "classic" style. We couldn't copy the guide exactly as he was using a light line of greater length than our own 45 metres. Result, a lot of shortish drops, but at last we are back on the white stuff.....and now it's really soft and pliable. It doesn't have a crisp crunch, more a soft squelch.

But, we can see the summit and a few parties on the obvious route. We traverse towards the col and a few rope lengths later, with sweat running down our noses and other parts, we arrive at the Col du Plan Superior. It is now 2 pm and we have been moving over 6 hours. Whilst having a quick drink we review the situation.....and decide it has taken too long. We regretfully accept it will take up to 2 hours to go to the summit and back, and we give it a miss. The speed of the parties we have seen on it suggest snow conditions are not unrelated to weak porridge, and are only going to get worse.

The descent from the col is fairly steep, but there is a well defined groove in the snow. The route swings in shallow zig-zags towards the glacier below. Eventually, as the slope eases, we can move together, speeding up for the first time. Speed is, of course, a relative term.

What's that ahead? Ah! Our first crevasse. It's only partly exposed but causes no delay as we stride across. They crop up with increasing frequency, causing the route to meander in order to find the best crossing points. We express our gratitude to those who blaze the trail. A pity they did not think to consolidate the snow, which balls up under our crampons.

A French couple overtake us with the usual friendly 'Bonjour', as we suck some boiled sweets. Shortly, we see bare rock ahead. The French couple are removing crampons as we reach the last stretch of ultra-soft snow. They are amused as we cover the last thirty feet on our bums in a flurry of snow and laughter.

Crampons off we descend a rock step via a fixed rope and chain. Then at a good pace we stride out onto the glacier, secure in the

knowledge that the Requin hut is not far away. Soon the rough abrasive surface of the glacier is behind us as we move on to the lateral moraine, and then, with the Dent du Requin above us, we catch sight of the refuge. Perched high above the Mer de Glace it is surrounded by recumbent bodies soaking up coke and sun.

We sit admiring the views and enjoying a couple of nectarines - our first food of the day. Of course really it is an excuse - we just need a rest. So, refreshed, we trot down to the refuge. It is 5.50 pm and by a stroke of luck we coincide with soup being ready. Two bowls of soup and two cans of coke make a tremendous difference. We are no longer knackered, and it is not far to Montenvers, so off we go again. (No rest for the wicked).

This time Jean is in trainers, the plastic boots being carried. I stay in boots; my trainers are in the tent. The descent to the glacier is via a way-marked track, with occasional ladders, handrails and metal steps. This lulls us into a false sense of security.

The glacier itself is large and impressive, though that is not what we thought later. Our advice was to keep to the left side. Like the snow level, things obviously change and that well-meant advice is to cost us valuable time.

We are now more conscious of the time, or rather the lack of it. In our weight saving economies we had dispensed with head torches. So we have to get to Montenvers before darkness falls. And then to encourage us, there it is. We can see the hotel clearly ahead of us. If only it was that easy. There is still a fair way to go.

The crevasses get bigger, wider, and more intimidating. We are wandering hither and thither trying to locate the correct route, or indeed, any route which goes vaguely towards our goal. Occasionally we find splashes of paint on boulders, or metal tripods with coloured tape attached. However, connecting these in any logical way is beyond us. As the ubiquitous Irishman is so fond of saying, "if I was you I wouldn't start from there".

A brief conference. Jean puts her boots back on. We both put crampons on. If you are going to jump the bigger crevasses it helps not to slip. We decide however to manage without a rope. The crampons help us feel more secure and we speed up. A false trail leads to the left, but it is another dead-end amid gigantic sculpures and forbidding icy depths. It is now we discuss briefly that we did bring a large bivvy bag. The sun has gone, and the temperature is noticeably falling. The thought of a night pretending to be two frozen peas is not appealing.

But, Jean finds the elusive key and we finally emerge on to the lateral moraines, and soon her night vision locates the succession of fixed iron ladders leading up to Montenvers railway and hotel. Sadly the last train has long gone. But, ever mindful of tourist welfare, a coin-operated drinks machine is working, and we top up our depleted fluid levels.

By now it is 10.00pm and very dark....a big mistake not

bringing head torches. No possibility of finding a path down through the woods, which we had walked up a week earlier in company of Wilf, on a lovely sunny day.

Not to be bested, even the slow English can walk on a railway line, despite the notice which says it is forbidden. We set off slowly in single file, a two-person crocodile. Our conversation mentions, and eventually concentrates on THE TUNNEL.

In due course we reach the tunnel entrance. We had seen the little red trains a few days earlier from the other side of the vally, and could remember the rough plan of the line. The tunnel goes round a hair-pin bend of nearly 180 degrees. If we thought it dark outside, inside was total blackness. We hold hands and shuffle forward. A few backward glances see the dim outside fade and disappear. My right foot slides along the rail and we make slow progress..... It's there, a vague lightening of the stygian gloom. We emerge into the world again. It is a bit of light relief when we see the huge double doors at the tunnel end. If they had been shut.....

The tunnel was the crux. After that we soon find a forest track and amble slowly into Chamonix. We get to the campsite at 11.45pm. It has been a long day.

We had thought our friends would be worried about us. They assumed we would decide to stay at the Requin hut. You live and learn.

Despite our weight-saving economies we got off lightly. Tragically, that evening a French teenager was killed crossing the road above the campsite.

The Eagle Rope

Tom Broderick.

Up to the middle of the nineteenth century, eagles were fairly common in the central fells, and this is supported by the number of Eagle Crags found in almost every valley. Rightly or wrongly, they were considered a bane to the shepherd, so a long, strong rope, known as the 'eagle rope' was purchased, which could be hired through a yearly subscription and this was made available to the valleys of Buttermere, Eskdale, Langdale and, of course, Borrowdale, where the rope was stored.

Every year, young men were lowered down the crag faces to the eyries and the eaglets taken away, to be sold later for high prices. Eventually, demand exceeded supply and eagles disappeared from the Lakeland fells, not to re-appear for nearly a hundred years.

Then in the 1960's, there were rumours of eagles seen at Whitbarrow Crag near Grange-over-Sand and I remember one Voluntary Warden getting red in the face as he tried to convince us of what he'd seen but he was adamant and reliable and his description too detailed and soon other witnesses were adding their accounts to his, so the word was quietly passed around the National Park Wardens to keep a check on the area. The sightings were soon confirmed but the locality must have been too crowded for comfort and after a season there, the eagle moved off to more desirable premises in the remoter valleys in the east of the region. The latest reports, 30 years later, seem to indicate that although chicks have been reared in the Lakes, the population still seems to be restricted to one breeding pair, as if the whole area of the Lakes these days will only support one pair. They are the only breeding pair in England and their range is enormous as I have seen them high above the Howgills (and Kirkby Lonsdale) and they have been reported over the Yorkshire Dales. A falconry near Settle lost their Bald-Headed Eagle the other month and it is variously reported over Hull as well as the Rossendale Valley. Evidently a low-life character!

Langdale was known as a resort of eagles and ravens in the early part of the nineteenth century and in 1846, Ralph Douglas of Keswick, who as a lad of fifteen in 1783 lived in Thornthwaite, Bassenthwaite, said in his young days, eagles were frequently seen in the area. The last recorded sighting were; Little Langdale, 1859; Newlands, 1963; Uldale, 1864.

The eagle isn't the only bird making a come-back - the osprey has been trying to establish itself for the last twenty-five years but with mixed results - the pair at Loch Garten are carefully watched over and given all the publicity, plus the high-tech surveillance systems (a Blackburn firm, incidentally) but there are others, also carefully watched but not given any publicity and these appear to be thriving quietly - and in some very surprising localities too! The red kite, re-imported from Scandinavia, is also doing very nicely in Wales, although some

land-owners with game birds argue that they're doing a little too nicely!

Another once-common specimen was the wild cat. They were reported as 'numerous' in certain wooded parts and it was recorded that in about 1793, one Joseph Pearson of Ullock (near Cockermouth) with the help of his two mastiffs, killed a wild cat in Watern Woods, Loweswater, after a long chase and a fierce fight to the death. The cat weighed 17 lbs. They became extinct in Lakeland in the middle of last century. Pine-martens have been re-introduced into the area with mixed results. Two new additions to the local fauna are mink and, believe it or not - wallaby!

Little Bits of Langdale

Tom Broderick.

Did you know that.... the works at Elterwater (now the time-share complex) in the 19th century turned out between 4000 - 6000 pounds weight of gunpowder weekly?...each batch had to be tested for quality... at the Kirkstone Greenslate works at Skelwith Bridge you can see the types of small cannon or mortar which were used to 'proof' the powder...if a cannon ball was thrown a certain distance for a given weight of powder, then it was 'good enough!'.the gunpowder company erected in 1824, at its own expense, a school in Langdale, the forerunner of the present one...that Stickle Barn was built solely to provide a good water supply for the powder works...that the horses which drew the wagons of powder would be shod with copper shoes.

In 1829, Joseph Grigg (or Gregg) resided at Side House - and Christopher Grigg (or Gregg) at Millbeck. The Griggs were responsible for the draining and clearing a great deal of land in Langdale and Mickleden... the cottage, Rossett, past the New Hotel, was once a sweet shop, but without glass in windows or doors...near the the corner of Elterwater Common by the Pillar Estate was the old Drill Hall...and at the other corner, where the side road goes down into the village just after you come over the cattle grid, is a triangular stone with the directions for Langdale and Elterwater painted upon it...this is the 'Neddy Boggle' stone and is haunted by a great, black dog on moonless nights...it is also thought by some historians that it is the Roman milestone which marks the point where the Roman road turns sharply on its way to Little Langdale and Hardnott Fort, and that 'Neddy Boggle' is a corruption of Mediobogdum, the Roman name for Hardnott Fort. .pa

Kangchenjunga Trek - November 1996.

Dot Wood.

The most exiting event of the trip was probably almost the last thing, no double meaning intended. The small S.T.O.L. airstrip at Suketar (Taplejung) was clouded in when we arrived so that when the small twin-engined Otter appeared it spent half-an-hour circling, waiting for a clearing in the mist and cloud so that the pilot could see the airstrip to make a landing. Suketar is on a ridge at 2100 metres, the day we arrived the weather had been perfect with beautiful views in every direction, even so far as Kangchenjunga itself, but this morning was the total opposite. There was an official waiting with a radio telephone talking to the pilot telling him when the cloud was clearing, the little plane would come over to have a look and another roll of mist would trundle over the runway, one time in a clearish patch there was a group of people crossing the end of the runway as the plane rose up out of the mist and flew away again. It did land eventually to a great cheer from the bunch of trekkers who were hoping to go back to Kathmandu that day, myself and Terry included. I was just glad I hadn't been on the plane when it landed and it was a group of white-faced people who made a hurried descent from the plane when it had finally taxied to a halt.

The baggage was loaded and the fourteen passengers boarded, eleven male mountaineers, Terry and myself and the Police Commissioner for the area. Because of baggage restrictions for the hold, 15Kg per person, the eleven blokes had all their heavy climbing gear as hand luggage so they probably weighed twice as much as your average Nepali. The little plane went to the very top of the runway, which was grass and bumpy and revved the engine to screaming point before releasing the brakes and hurtling down the runway. All the mad mountaineers were cheering and whistling and shouting giddi-yup, I swear that the plane used every inch of runway and just went off the end, but Terry was seated behind the pilot and said that we actually lifted off about ten yards before the end. It was then an uneventful flight to Biratnagar to await the connecting flight to Kathmandu. You do get wonderful views of the Himalayan chain from these aircraft including Mount Everest and you also see the contrast between the heavily wooded areas in the foothills to the denuded and terraced hills of the lower altitudes. You can also spot the great scars left by landslides. We had to walk across some of these areas on our way back to Suketar, large areas of devastation where whole hillsides had moved but the paths just go across them because it's the shortest way I suppose. They tend to happen in the rainy season so we were fairly safe. Some of the scree slopes we crossed in the higher altitude regions have no such restrictions and we had to keep a good lookout for stone which were released when the sun melted the frost.

I did find the trip exhausting just because I'm no longer doing the amount of walking in this country that I used to do, it was also very hot for the first three or four days. These first days were spent going across the 'grain' of the country so we were

either going uphill or downhill until we reached the Simba Khola where we then followed the valley up to a place called Ramje. From here we were able to walk to a viewpoint to view the south face of Kanchenjunga. Ramje was a beautiful place to camp. A wide valley alongside a lateral moraine of the Yalung Glacier with stunning mountain scenery all around. The camp was at 4500 metres so pretty cold at night but hot and sunny during the day. We stayed there for two nights having sent the porters back to the last habitation for a rest day whilst we walked up to the viewpoint.

From Ramje we walked over a pass at about 4800 metres into the next valley to a village called Gunsa. The people here were Sherpa's were as up till now the villagers had been of the Rai or Limbu tribes. It was at Gunsa that we sacked one of our porters. He was doing a bit of fiddling with the cash, which we knew, but he was also adamant that we couldn't go to the North Base Camp because it was too high and too cold. The other porter, Mons-Rasrai had complained about Pasu Rain saying he wasn't a good Nepali so it was time to do something about it. Anyway we paid him off and hired the Sherpa Perma to come with us for five days up to the North Base Camp at Pang Pemba which was at 5100 metres. We met a number of other trekking groups at Gunsa who were amazed at the way we were travelling as they had been told it was not possible to go to this area without a full support group, i.e. sirdar, cook, cook boy, porters, food, tents and toilet tent. We just had a porter each. We did have a small tent each and some food but we ate and slept locally whenever we could.

The N.B.C. at Pang Pemba was almost as beautiful as the one at Ramje. It was colder and the scenery was more grand but more rugged than the south side. We only stayed one night there but I would have liked to have stayed a bit longer. We walked up a small hill behind the campsite and spotted a group of Ibex, a flock of pigeons seemed to have made it their home as did sparrows and robins (I think they have different names but that is what they look like). The sunset was magnificent as was the dawn. The stars give out the most brilliant light at altitude but it is difficult to find the constellations because you see so many more stars than at home.

The porters came back for us in the morning and we made our way back to Gunsa. Kangchenjunga had a huge cloud on it and the wind became very strong. It stayed fine but bitterly cold for the first couple of hours. I had to cover my face up, leaving just a slit for my eyes as there was a serious risk of frost-bite. I felt a bit sorry for the porters and trekkers who we passed on their way up to camp at Pang Pemba. It was a relief to come down 500 metres and below the wind. From Gunsa it took us four days to reach Taplejung. These were long days but through some interesting country, sometimes high above the river and often alongside it. This river becomes the Tamur eventually and it is pretty big by the time it reaches India. We stayed in a variety of residences. The most comfortable being the most disruptable which we share with hens and calves as well as half a dozen porters and an elderly Nepalese man, about 4 ft 8" tall with a Ghirka knife almost as big as himself and an umbrella. He talked

non-stop for hours. Taplejung is quite a big town by Nepali standards. It didn't have a motor road, though they are working on it. It does have electricity, like one light per house, some places had piped water and toilets and they have telephones, hundreds of shops it seemed and a ticket office for the airlines. It was like stepping into a Dicken's Victorian town but with no wheeled traffic at all. The airport, Suketar, was on the ridge 2000 ft above the town, and an hour and half walking for us. Leaving at 5.30am it was the earliest we had set off from anywhere, but Lakpa Sherpa's wife's sister lived next to the airport and miraculously found some eggs and cooked breakfast for us when we arrived at 7.00 am.

When we arrived in Kathmandu at the start of the holiday we had been met at the airport by Lakpa, his wife and his daughter, Sonam was at school but we saw him the following day. Lakpa couldn't come with us on our trek as he had to go to the Khumbu area with a group but he did help us to get the permits and air tickets for our trip to the Kangchenjunga area.

We walked for 21 days, camped 8 nights and used local accommodation for 13 nights. This was variously priced, the cheapest being 5 rupees, the dearest 100 rupees each. The food ranged from poor to adequate with not much choice: Dhal Bhat, lots of rice, some lentil soup if you were lucky and curried veg, either potato or cabbage, packet of noodles, a chives import that just needs the addition of boiling water and makes up into soup, biscuits, glucose, coconut or cream biscuits. We did occasionally manage to buy eggs. Above 4000 metres we were offered boiled potatoes, on those occasions we had chappatis either dry or with jam. We didn't manage to buy any fruit until the day before we arrived in Taplejung.

We had taken tinned fish and meat with us and smash for the nights when no food was available or we were camping. Also muesli, biscuits, noodles, coffee, milk, sugar and chocolate. We had expected to be able to buy eggs and fruit.

Our diet was poor but then so is the local diet especially above all the rice growing areas.

All in all a good trip and I did come back half a stone lighter and £1000 poorer but it was worth it.

The Mountaineering Hut in Glen Brittle

John Foster - Chairman of the Hut Management Committee.

Glen Brittle Memorial Hut 1939 - 1945. This hut is built in memory of those who found strength in the hills to sustain them even unto death.

B.M.C.

A.S.C.C.

Every year it seems there is an anniversary of this or that, and for most older people 1945 was significant in that we commemorated the end of the war in Europe and also the war in the Pacific. There was another anniversary last year which hardly anyone took notice of which was linked to the two big events. The 5th of June was the 30th anniversary of the formal opening of the Glen Brittle Mountaineering Memorial Hut by Dame Fiona MacLeod of MacLeod. A memorial to what? Many who have passed the white painted building are aware it is a mountaineering hut, but few will know that it is a war memorial.

It was in 1944 as the war with Germany was beginning its last phase that a noted mountaineer, Sir Geoffrey Winthrop Young (who lost a leg in the first world war) persuaded the main mountaineering clubs to come together to form the British Mountaineering Council to be the governing body of the sport. The B.M.C. has had many achievements, but what is of most concern to this story is that the idea originated in the late forties among members that there should be some memorial to climbing mates who did not survive the war. With food still rationed, power cuts and shortages of all fuels, the restrictions of all those years delayed the formation of a committee to administer the funds for a memorial until 1952, but nearly £900 had already been donated.

Various suggestions as to the form of a memorial were considered, but it was quickly established that the fund should be used to provide huts or bivouac shelters in mountain areas where accommodation was sparse. Initially it was intended to give grants to individual clubs to do this, but in 1955 it was decided it would be better to establish a national mountaineering hut for use by all the constituent clubs, and a proposal by the Scottish mountaineering Club that it should be in Glen Brittle was accepted.

The MacLeod Estate was approached and reacted favourably as long as the location and extent of the site were agreed with the late Hugh MacRae, the tenant farming the glen. The size and structure of the hut began to be considered, and it became apparent that more money would be needed, so a fresh appeal was decided on, involving also the national press. This was necessary because it was hoped that donations would come not just from individuals and clubs who had lost friends and members, but from families of climbers, civilian or servicemen, who had died in the war

An architect, who was a climber, had made the offer of his services without payment of fee or expenses, which was accepted. Also, the area engineer for Inverness C.C. resident in Portree, another climber, had offered to keep an eye on building operations for the committee.

The design of the building was agreed, and local builders invited to tender. The job was awarded to Duncan McKenzie of Balmacara, who had taken into partnership Danny MacLeod of Carbost. A fortunate coincidence was that Hydroelectric extended their line into Glen Brittle about the time construction was under way which made possible an all electric hut instead of reliance on bottled gas for cooking and lighting. Good fortune also prevailed over the water supply from the Bannachdich Burn in that another climber who was the water engineer for Ross-shire took this in hand, and a member of the committee persuaded his employer (I.C.I.) to donate all the plastic piping, copper tube and couplings, and gutters and downspouts. Another manufacture donated a stainless steel sink unit, and much of the internal woodwork (bunks, work surfaces, etc.) and all the painting was carried out by voluntary labour.

Early in 1965 the fitting out was sufficiently complete to allow the hut to be brought into use on 1st April, but the formal opening was planned for 5th June, no doubt with the hope of good weather in mind. It was most fitting that Dame Flora was able to open the hut, as it was her decision to donate the land, showing her sympathy with the idea of the hut being a war memorial, no doubt her own family's war record in mind.

The previous evening was wet and miserable, but in the morning the sun had returned and the Cuillin stood out clearly against a blue sky. More and more people arrived until by the appointed time 150 were gathered to witness the event. The proceedings were organised by the President of the Association of Scottish Climbing Clubs, and among the speeches a prayer was offered for the safety of those who use the hut, followed by the unveiling of a plaque by the main door.

A committee was formed to manage the hut, and a trust deed was drawn up to regulate its relationship with the trustees. From this three names illustrate the significance of the hut being a war memorial. The then Sir John Hunt was president of the B.M.C., known to most people as leader of the 1953 expedition which put Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tensing on the top of Everest. But in 1943 he was Brigadier John Hunt, given the task in Italy of forming the 11th Brigade of the 4th Indian Division, which had been over run at the fall of Tobruk in 1942.

Harry Spilsbury without whose energy and drive the hut would never have been built, was the chairman of the Management Committee. In 1918, serving in the Royal Artillery, he was taken prisoner in France. George Roger of Bridge of Allen had been treasurer of the funding committee in Scotland, but in the war served as a navigator in Coastal Command Liberators.

To these men their efforts in establishing and running the hut were a fitting way of commemorating British climbers killed in

the war, but personally I like to think of the hut as a memorial also to all those mountaineers, French and Italian, German and Austrian, who failed to return to the mountains they loved. All were victims of forces beyond their control.

Please Note. As the A.R.C.C. is affiliated to the B.M.C. all members have the right to use the Glen Brittle and Alex MacIntyre Memorial Huts.

The booking secretaries are:

For Glen Brittle - Mrs. S. Winter
Gillean
Dall
Rannoch
By Pitlochry PH17 2QQ
0188 2632240

For Alex MacIntyre - Brent Eggo
8 Broomage Park
Larbert
Stirlingshire FK5 3LE
01324 554452

The Ulster Way

Lucia Hayhurst.

Sunday 30th June Alan and I drove to Cairnryan, parked the car and sailed across to Larne. It only took one hour before we were walking on Irish soil. It was a smooth crossing and the weather was perfect; a good start to walking the "Ulster Way". For me it opened up a box of childhood memories and I was to share these with a friend.

After spending two days with relatives, and having had a wonderful time we eventually picked up our trail on Tuesday 2nd July starting at Ballyboley Forest. We walked over moorland on cliff tops, with the Irish sea being our visible companion for most of the way. Sixteen miles further on we arrived at Carnlough, a pretty little seaside town, which once proclaimed to be a seafaring port, but now displayed its sea vessels, long since used, on the quay side for a tourist attraction. B & B was easy to find, of a high standard, and reasonable, as it was with most of our walk. We had a pleasant evening in the local pub, experiencing warmth and friendliness everywhere.

Next day we set off early for Cushendall, the heart of the East Antrim coast. Again it was mostly moorland and very isolated with not a house, hut or even a tree to rest the eye; but we were rewarded by seeing the golden plover at very close range and listened to its sweet call. What a pleasure! Cushendall lay 15 miles ahead, we walked through a shower of rain, but soon it gave way to a blue sky. It is very picturesque and is dominated by its very own hill, Lurigethan. We stopped in Cushendall for two nights and had great entertainment at a 300 year old pub, which provided traditional live Irish music. It was a quaint little pub and I got chatting to one of the locals. This friendly old man, with his well worn face, had a wealth of tales to tell. He caused me to smile when, during our conversation he said, "Now would you be one of us". I thought "What am I supposed to say, he knows I'm Irish". My initiative told me to say yes, only because I was a coward to say no! It could have led to a lynching (well perhaps not quite), but could have caused trouble. Sometime later as the knot in our friendship was tied by my admission, "To be one of us", I realised he wanted to know if I was a Catholic, to allow him to speak more freely knowing I was on his side.

It was "the wee small hours" before we arrived at our B & B and next day we tackled Lurigethan, it was a short very sharp climb to the top opening out to a plateau. We walked for about twelve miles, and I became an expert at climbing over barbed-wire fences, either these folk haven't heard of stiles or my leader has strayed from the path (impossible).

Friday we parted company with Cushendall and took a short journey over fields and meadows to come upon Cushendun. It would suggest to be more of a hamlet than a village but still very pretty. On enquiring about accommodation we learnt that it was

scarce as there was a wedding and the guests had secured most of what was available, anyway we managed to find a mobile home. So off we went walking for another one and a half miles to a house on a hill so steep we were almost vertical. On our way we passed a large green box and Alan said "That will be our accommodation" I giggled at the thought of this ridiculous idea. The lady of the house greeted us warmly, reached us the keys and said "That's the mobile home" I looked to where she was pointing, (yes you've guessed), I shuddered, she was pointing at the green box. I could see Alan dying to laugh. "Never mind", I thought, "It's only on night (roll on tomorrow morning)! Surprisingly enough the exterior did not reflect the carefully well equipped neat and clean interior suitable for four or five people. Also from the green box we had a magnificent view, and could watch the gannets dropping like a stone into the sea to gain their catch.

Next day was Saturday 6th July we set off in drizzle, but soon it was to be the hottest day of the walk. Our destination was Ballycastle famous for its local delicacy, dulce and yellow man. We passed the vanishing lake, which took us across moorland, and on to the wooded slopes at Murlough Bay, giving way to sheer cliffs and boulders sloping into the sea. Rathlin Island was prominently in view as we walked round the headland. It was mid-afternoon the heat was overpowering at times, and my rucksack seemed to weigh a ton. Alan refused to help, so on I trudged. Later when I had showered and rested I was as good as new. I'd spent a lot of school holidays in Ballycastle but on returning, I saw that childhood memories get grossly magnified in absent adult memory, still it held something special for me.

One of the examples of how these lovely people are exceedingly warm and friendly, was on returning to our B & B, on a very warm humid evening, I was getting into bed and on throwing back a very thick duvet, I couldn't believe my eyes for there was (no not a spider) a hot water bottle. I thought "how sweet! but how hot!". I placed as far away as possible i.e., in the sink. Next morning the dear little lady enquired if I had been warm enough and if the hot water bottle was okay. I said it was wonderful and hoped St. Peter wouldn't bar me from the pearly gates for a white lie.

Tuesday we moved on heading for Ballintoy which was about 10 miles away. There wasn't much to see en route as it was mostly on metal road and the weather showered us with mist and drizzle. Soon we arrived at our accommodation and we were given freshly baked scones with hot buttered pancakes, delicious! It was now 3 O'clock so we had ample time to see the famous Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge. By now the drizzle had ceased, but the mist hung stubbornly around the cliff tops. We made our way and found people queuing as only one person was allowed on the bridge at any one time. It consisted of a thick plank of wood approximately forty feet long, and extended from this was strong rope to grip on to. I wasn't happy about this. I could see the waves below charging against the rocks ferociously, it personified the devil waiting for a poor soul to fall despite my white lie. I made my way across, head down watching were my feet where being placed, blotting everything else out, my legs were like jelly. I made it, and Alan exclaimed "Well done". I didn't think it was rightly deserved, especially when it was his turn he

stopped half way to look down at the 'devil'. "How courageous", I said but I didn't really mean it 'cause I thought "clever dick".

The cliffs were a haven of sea-birds, guillemots and razor-bills were sweeping in and out of the ledges. It was very breezy and the birds were enjoying playing about on the wind's breath. The evening was pleasantly spent in the village pub, and entertainment provided by the locals exercising their vocal chords on Irish laments and ballads.

One of the most exquisite scenes was that of Ballintoy Harbour and our journey next morning directed us that way. A few brightly painted little boats bobbed up and down on the sea, the sky was a vivid blue reflecting it's colour on the water and the sun shone brilliant. No one was around. Birds sang their song, peace and tranquility compelled itself to reside. The next stage of the walk took us along deserted beaches, we watched the sea ripple into the golden sands before clambering over a few boulders and came upon the Hamlet of Portbraddon, where we entered into the smallest church in Ireland, St. Gobhans. It was a, non-denominational non-sectarian church, dedicated to peace. It was extremely well preserved, painted white and a bell hung at arms length above the door. Inside there was an altar, no pews, just a clergy seat and a few religious pictures adorning the walls. It would have probably held about twelve people standing. It was immaculately clean, everything gleamed even the floor tiles I stood on. A pang of guilt went through me as I stood on Holy ground with my muddy boots (I'll never get through those pearly gates). The route took us to the famous hexagonal columns of The Giants Causeway, it was a lot smaller than I remember in fact, slightly disappointing, but perhaps the mystery behind it's origin is more exciting than that of it's physical structure. Anyway we had a race up and down it's stepping stones and moved on.

The next day took us to Port Ballintrae. I always think it has a romantic air about its name, but on the contrary we were to find that most of the residents were aged around the seventies with their romantic days behind them. It was very quiet and what we found extraordinary was that there wasn't a shop in the village which spread out a fair size, but being by the sea and no industry around, it was ideal for retirement.

Our holiday was nearing an end now and our last call was Portrush. This to me resembled a small version of Morecambe Bay, so in some respects it was an ideal finish. As I didn't want to spend too long in this fun-fair town, we went back to Larne and had a good night there. Next morning Saturday 13th we sailed home with my companion looking a bit pale after his efforts of trying to keep up with Irish drinking habits.

So over all it was a wonderful holiday. Not tough in any way, flat walking was what it consisted of. We covered one hundred and ten miles on our walk, with a mere three hundred and ninety more to complete the "Ulster Way".

Joe Garbarino.

Our acceptance dropped through the letter box. This time we were lucky - we were in! 'We' being myself and Eric a friend from work. In 1995 I was injured. In 1994 we did not get an entry. We took part in the 1993 Drumalnrig Castle Karrimor and so we were ready to 'have a go' once again. That was the good news, the bad news was that it was once again in the Galloway area! Having been there for a previous Karrimor, a marathon road race and the 'not too far away' Drumalnrig Karrimor, I would have appreciated a different area.

A friend of mine was at the very first Galloway Karrimor and had to retire after day one. He still talks of the foul weather he endured. I took part in the 1986 Galloway Karrimor and the weather was once again desperate with rivers in spate and the wind wild. There were reports of people, on Merrick, blown off their feet. So, was Galloway 1996 going to be the third time lucky for the weather?

I know a good B & B in Newton Stewart that I've used before but despite phoning almost immediately, they were fully booked for the Friday night of the Karrimor weekend, as were most others in the town. I was told that several bookings for the Friday had been made as far back as July! How do these people know the competition area so early?

Friday evening was registration and a fish and chip supper in Newton Stewart. Rain fell continuously all evening and even Pete Bland's van seemed to have stopped trying to sell anything. After settling in our accommodation, checking kit and preparing our bags for the morning, it was down to the hotel bar for a guinness before bed.

The event centre was at Caldrons Forestry Park Camping and Caravan site just west of Loch Trool. On Saturday morning it was raining steadily all the way up to the start near Bruce's Stone on the north side of Glen Trool. On the way to the first checkpoint the path was very slippery and strewn with rocks. I slipped three times, collecting a bumped head, a bruised chest and a bleeding hand. A good start! With continuous rain we passed places with such names as, Rig of Jarkness, the Dungeon Hills, Range of the Awful Hand and the Super Spear of Merrick, before reaching campsite at Culsharg Bothy. The ground everywhere was waterlogged. We seemed to be 'plodding' ankle deep in all low land areas through a carpet of water.

Mercifully there was a dry spell when we reached campsite, this allowed us to pitch tent and cook a meal in unexpected comfort before the rain returned later in the evening and continued throughout the night. The wind increased dramatically and several tents were nearly airborne while many couldn't keep out the driving rain.

Since overnight camp was in a forest park area, only urinal trenches were allowed to be dug, so we were provided with portable toilet cabins and very comfortable they were too, this was the first time I had seen them on the Karrimor. At about 1.30am, Eric and I decided that a toilet trip would be a good idea since sleep was out of the question. Despite having to face the wind and rain again, it was worth the effort. We had the toilet to ourselves at that time of the night, whereas daylight saw queues of about twenty standing outside each cubicle in the rain with time running out. It was just as well there were toilet cubicles since the tent walls for the urinals were blown down during the night!

More rain, wind and low cloud made day two quite interesting for navigation. Several times we found ourselves quite alone. Route choice became more of a team decision than a 'follow the leader' situation which can happen on the second day. Another experience that was a Karrimor 'first' for me, was the rope the officials had across a swollen river at the start of day two, to help steady competitors should they need it.

Such was the nature of the area used, it was well into day two before we saw a firm track we could use. Our routes consisted mostly of open rough countryside. I had chosen to use Walsh boots rather than fellshoes for ankle support, but they were not always reliable in the conditions. Traversing along greasy scree-covered slopes or grassy hillsides proved quite a problem at times since the ripple soles of the boots were inclined to slip and slide, hindering progress. Eric was better off in his fellshoes.

Whenever a team of young, fitter competitors did pass us, I remained quite philosophical about it and instead of feeling despondant, I just kept saying 'never mind, our time allowance will overtake you'. With combined ages of over one hundred years we were due a fairly useful time allowance which was nice.

People have asked me how did 1996 Galloway compare with last time in 1986. Well I remember having to do some wading in '86 but there were rivers you could rockhop across. In '96 even small streams as well as rivers were so full that wading across was unavoidable. Eric and I waded through about four each day. I didn't know whether to admire or consider unwise, those who competed in shorts. My answer to the comparison would be that I think 1986 windier, but 1996 was the wetter of the two. Despite the foul weather and underfoot conditions it was a challenge which many did not complete and to finish successfully gave one a good feeling of satisfaction. An indication of the weather's effect was reflected in the results. Elite 18 teams retired; 'A' class 34 retired; 'B' class 52 retired; 'C' class 79 retired; Score classes 65 retired.

I look forward to another Karrimor in the future - but not in Galloway please!

Joyce Kent.

It was a long flight. Avianca, Columbian Airways, Paris to Bogota with no food or drink offered for eleven hours! We changed planes and flew on in the dark, just an occasional light showing in the rainforest below, then Quito, Ecuador and eventually Lima on the Pacific coast.

We gazed up at the statue of Pizarro, leader of the Conquistadores, and wondered why it was there? The Gold Museum gave us a potted history of the Incas; how they had covered everything in beaten gold, worn capes made from millions of humming bird feathers, and we saw mummified bodies grimacing, they had previously been perched high above the snow line or on the desert floor. They were gruesome. We escaped the earthquake and flew to Juliaca at 12,500 feet on the high altiplano at the othside of the Andes, and saw the first of many herds of llamas, pronounced yamas, and their prettier relatives the alpacas. There was no chance at all for gradual acclimatisation and we drank the local brew, mate de coca tea to help the altitude sickness. But there was no buzz for me, they might as well have been privet leaves.

We spent a day on Lake Titicaca, sailed on a reed boat, landed at the soggy, floating reed Uros Islands and the variety of birds was incredible; flamingoes, black Andean gulls, coots and many ducks, geese and waders. The burning morning sun gave way to a late afternoon thunderstorm and soon the three-quarters of an inch diameter hailstones were nine inches deep and melting, and the torrent washed away the market goods, brightly coloured plastic buckets and bowls bobbing along in the water with the women bare-footed and full-skirted, bowler hats and glossy pigtailed flying, splashing after them still carrying there knitting under their arms. Knitting is a way of life.

We were at the station early, ready for the twelve hour train journey to Cuzco, centre of the Inca civilization. We had a train, but no engine, we were entertained by groups of musicians, knitters, trinket sellers and more musicians and the five hours passed quickly. The scenery was superb, I stood outside on the wildly swaying carriage platform, clinging to the rail trying to take photographs and expecting any minute to see Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. At every stop we were besieged by the Comprane, buy from me people, snacks, drinks, jumpers all hard to resist. It went dark hours before Cuzco just as the high Andes were coming into view, and the switchback zig-zag down the steep descent seemed to take forever. Another sightseeing acclimatisation day. The ruins at Sacsathuaman with the famous tiered, block walls and its magnificent view over the city, Viva el Peru carved out of the vegetation on the opposite mountainside, by far the best. Walking round the city, up and down the steep streets, in and out of Churches and Cathedrals all with beaten silver altars and gold and silver statues were amazing, we had to dodge the beggars and the buskers and the pick-pockets and the immaculate, pastel-coloured Volkswagon

Beetles taking up the width of the street. I ran out of film, still more walls, the famous thirty-two cornered stone, the handicraft sellers perched on the kerbs, I was exhausted.

Foolishly, I filled my water-bottle from the free purified water at the hotel and did not sterilize it afterwards. Pizarro's revenge struck hard, but packed and ready I had to leave, away across the red-brown sierra ringed by the Cordillera Vilcabamba, the air crystal clear, twenty mountains over 20,000ft, many unclimbed with spiky tops and glaciers, and the sun burning.

We descended to the Rio Uramamba and followed the dirt track to Chilca and met up with our guides and the Campesino (Indian) porters wearing short, brightly coloured ponchos and grey, felt hats with ribbons on them, their skin a beautiful dark, coppery colour. We followed the side of the river through forests of tall, blooming cacti, their flowers hallucinogenic, and the prickly pears were in flower too. After five hours walking we camped below the Inca ruins at Wayabamba village, two or three scattered adobe houses with grass roofs and nothing, the Indians just scratching a living. I wonder how long before there are Tea-houses Nepali-style. We toiled up Dead Womans Pass, the mountain flowers like none I'd seen, whilst the buttresses on the mountains and the swirling mists reminded me of Applecross. It was cold and a long way down the other side, and I hadn't realised that the Inca Highway would be all stone blocks and I wished I hadn't worn boots. It was all up and down, never level, but the cloud forest was beautiful with four hundred different orchids; three different, common humming birds beautifully coloured, bromeliads, pot plants at home, on the tree branches and the hanging mosses revitalised with the damp; huge tree ferns and birds of prey, but sadly I never saw a condor. Every so far were ruined Inca forts and the next camp was high and cold.

I had begun to feel acclimatised and wanted to be away from the others to see and hear more. So I went ahead, and rested by a clearing, watching the birds and the mists dividing and separating. The guide came, "Madam," he said, "There are jaguars in this forest!" We camped on a spectacular ridge, the best thing about trekking on the edge of the rainy season is we never saw any other groups, only the occasional campesino. The worst thing was the cloud but it was cloud forest, and the thunderstorm that night. In the ruins just below there were wild guinea pigs and chinchillas running about in the early morning sun, and then it was down, down, down, five hours of stone steps then it levelled out and I walked alone.

The trail was narrow and paved with sentry box passing places and a big drop to the right, very steep 5000ft down to the brown river. A group of men passed me carrying bundles in the bright blankets on their backs and talking to me and gesticulating with their guns. It wasn't Spanish but Quechuan the local Indian dialect, so I smiled and walked on, looking warily over my shoulder, Shining Path terrorists crossed my mind and I walked faster and faster and could not see any Europeans at all. Another man walking towards me waved his knife about and now I was definitely scared, a slight push and I would be over the

edge. It was uphill again now, I was lathered with sweat and fit to drop, rushing along as fast as I could go.....Suddenly, the Sun Gate at the top of the ridge, a shaft of sunlight piercing through the mist right onto Macchu Piccu a long way below. I stopped dead gasping for breath and gazed at the view, it was stunning, mind blowing. Eventually, we walked down together and rested, drinking in the atmosphere, a most amazing place.

We were wet tired and dirty and eager to get to the hot springs in the valley where we soaked our aches away. Early morning and back up the hill, by bus this time to see the rising sun shine through the Sun Gate and onto the Inner Sanctuary of Macchu Piccu. We had three hours before the crowds came and we were able to wander at will, watch new excavations taking place, the sun temple, the condor temple, the fountains, everything, a magic place, before we rattled back to Cuzco on the train. But at the station the kids were selling the beautiful but dead butterflies we had seen in the forest, and worse, dead and alive tarantula spiders. I've had treatment for arachnophobia, but I screamed when one was held near my face.

On the last day, two of us walked across the high sierra to see Inca, experimental, agricultural microclimate ruin. We'd been given a hand drawn map, it was rubbish, we were lost several times, but we did get close to the Indians ploughing with their single wooden ploughs, casting seeds by hand in the old-fashioned way, and saw the musicians marching and playing around the field edges to encourage fertility in the soil. We found the place we were looking for, it was good, but had to push on because of the time we'd wasted being lost. We cast around for the right path and found it, following donkey footprints along the ridge and down to the Rio Urabamba and the road to where we would be met, fingers crossed, it was all a bit uncertain. The road was on the other side of the river, a raging torrent they use for white water rafting, our hearts sank, how could we cross? Then we saw it, a basket on a wire, it was good, a school girl took us across one at a time, and at the other side was a very large crucifix, we needed it. On the way back the jacaranda trees were in full bloom and the sun was setting reflecting on the glaciers, the alpenglow was lovely.

Well I'd done everything else, drunk the Pisco Sour, walked the Camino Royale and so I ordered the National dish reserved for celebrations, Roast Cuy. With a deafening pan-pipe band playing two feet from my ear it came, lying on its back with its legs in the air, little hands curled over, there it was, roasted guinea pig, it was disgusting. No wonder they searched me twice for drugs on the way home.

The Rescue.

This was found in some old papers, must have been tucked away since the 'sixties'.

Based on a true incident on Brown Slab.

Tune: Waltzing Matilda - (B flat, of course)
(Nihil Obstat - Fr. Seth Whalley; Imprimatur - Fr. Leo Pyle)

Once a crowd of clerics, pottering in Borrowdale
Under the shade of a bleaberry tree.
Spied three pretty maidens, dangling from the Buttresses
(Who'll come a-climbing in Langdale with me?)

Chorus:

Climbing in Langdale, climbing in Langdale
Who'll come a-climbing in Langdale with me
And they sang as they swung with their fingers all a-trembling,
Who'll come a-climbing in langdale with me?

Up sprang Seth Whalley, eyes alight and glittering
Couldn't get up fast enough (Sir Lancelot was he).
And he sang as he zoomed to rescue those geologists
"Don't go away, for I'll soon set you free".

Chorus:

Out sprang Jane from her situation (desperate)
Clutched at that outstretched hand with glee.
And she cried (as he tied her firmly to his belay rope)
"This is the end of the journey for me!"

Climbing in Langdale, climbing in Langdale,
Who'll come a-climbing in Langdale with me?
And she cried with glee to her friends aghast on crags below
"Here are four fine specimens for me!"

Bill Mitton.

Following a series of entries in the Karrimor when each of us had good and bad days which did not coincide, and a lot of "could of been if onlys", Pete Dowker and I decided to enter the 'B' Class of the Lowe Mountain Marathon.

Friday. It was to be held in the Lochaber Region of Scotland over the weekend of 17th/18th August 1996, and so we drove up to Fort William from Pete's house in Kendal on a pleasant summer Friday afternoon. After shopping for food and a brew, we arrived at the Registration Centre at Nevis Range at 9.30pm to be greeted by hordes of midgies. The campsite was situated on the ski slopes, and after registration we had to pack our camping gear in the ski lift to go up to a height of 2000ft. We were told that, due to a last minute hitch, we would have to bring our overnight gear back down to the car the next morning. It looked like a bad start, however, we pitched the tent on the ski slope and had a good nights sleep with the lights of Fort William below us.

Day One, Saturday, 17th August. We packed, took our gear back down the ski lift and then came back up again for our 9.03 start. The morning was overcast, with some low mist, but dry.

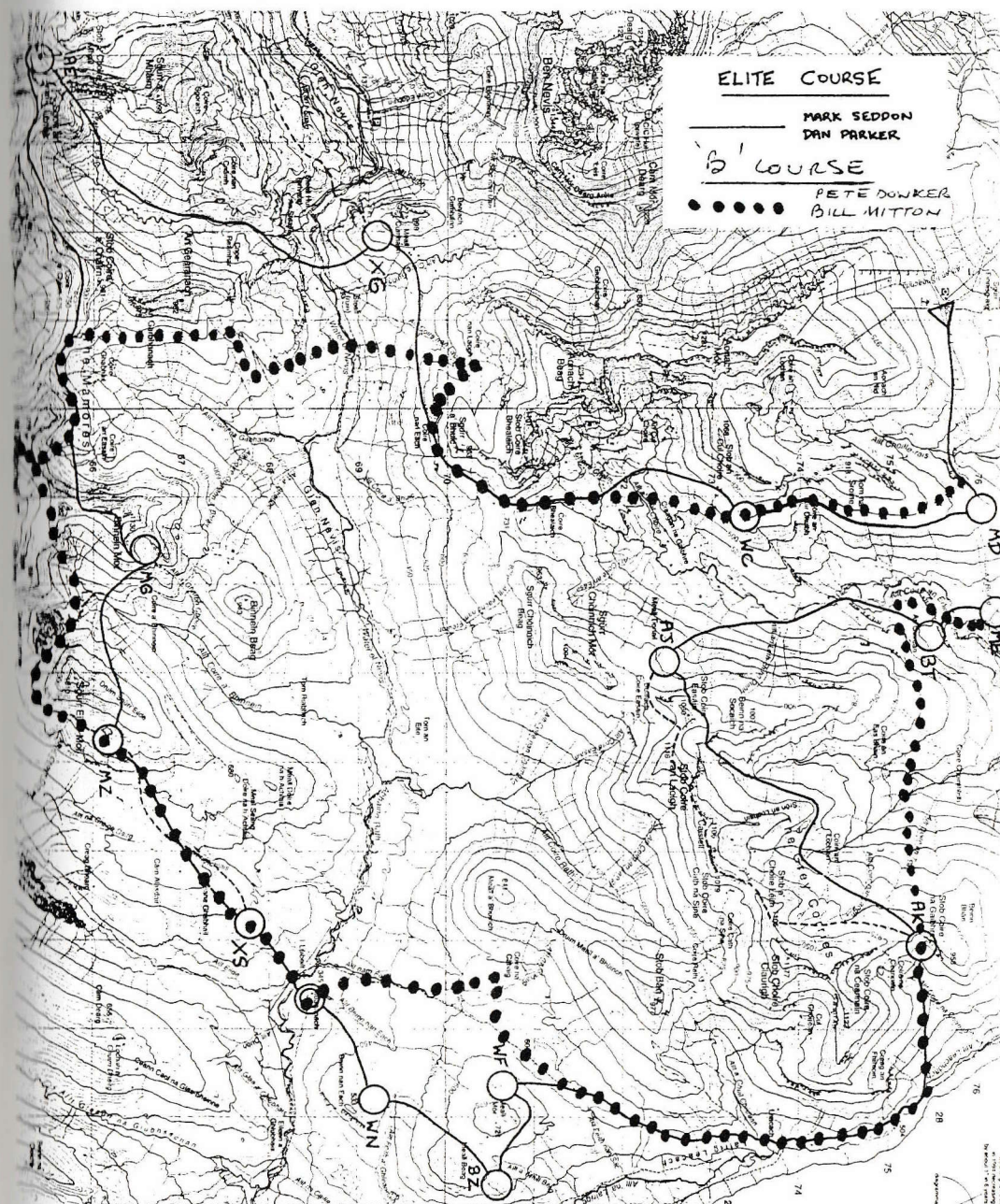
After plotting our route for day one, we saw that we would be traversing the Mamores to an event campsite at the eastern end of Glen Nevis.

We set off along the line of the ski lift for checkpoint one, which was situated in an area of low cloud, but we had no real problems in locating it. We then began a long contour route along very rough terrain below and to the east of Aonach Mar and Aonach Beag, to cross Ben Nevis on to the Mamores. Here again, the terrain was very rough, allowing very little running. However, we made steady trudging progress, around the south side of Binnein Mor and along the side of Coire an Lochan to the campsite at the Lubeilt Bothy in Glen Nevis.

Overnight Camp. After pitching the tent and getting the stove going, we spent a very enjoyable warm summer evening eating and relaxing and enjoying the company. Apart from the minor irritation of the midgies, here was one of the main differences between the Lowe and the Karrimor. The time of year made the overnight camp a real pleasure, rather than a hardship.

Day Two, Sunday, 18th August. We had breakfast after a good nights sleep, packed and assembled for the mass start at 0800, on a bright, dry morning. The second day was to take us across the Grey Corries. A long, slow climb to the first checkpoint was followed by a runnable section along a track for about 4.5 Kilometres. This was followed by a hard climb up to the second checkpoint on the ridge between Stob coire na Gaibhre and Stob Coire na Ceannain. A long, straight contour route along the northern flank of the Grey Corries brought us to the third and

fourth checkpoints, which were followed by a long run in along a disused railway track to the finish at Nevis Range. The weather was now sunny and very hot as we sat and ate our lunch.



Summary. We had made better progress on day two, finishing at midday. Our times were:-

Day 1. 8 hours 3 mins 6 secs
Day 2. 3 hours 59 mins 48 secs
Overall. 12 hours 2 mins 54 secs

The total straight line distance was 40 Km, with a height of ascent and descent of approximately 2500 metres.

Our final position was 34th out of 63 teams. Comparing the Lowe to the Karrimor, the Lowe has several advantages - less competitors - 300 teams against 1200 in the Karrimor, rougher, more mountainous terrain, a single campsite for all competitors, warmer weather and more daylight.

The organisation was, apart from the problem at the start, very good, and the Lowe Mountain Marathon is definitely worth doing as a change from the Karrimor.



The second day mass start

General Information

ARCC Meets Card 1997

<u>Date</u>		<u>Contact</u>
February 15th	Working Weekend - Dunmail	David Ogden 01253-398252
March 1st-8th	Winter Meet-Scotland	Ben Carter 01706-841978
March 15th	Working Weekend-Beckstones	Joyce Kent 01253-697948
May 10th	Long Walk-Tyn Twr	Anne Wallace 01744-811864
June 14th	Non-climbers, Climbing Meet (Further details in Newsletter)	Bryony White 0131-661-7566
June 28th	Old County Tops Race	Alan Kenny 01524-414615
July 12th	Junior Meet -Tyn Twr	Faz Faraday 0131-661-7566
July 12th - 19th	Beckstones closed	
August 16th	Climbing Meet-Beckstones	Jim Cooper 015242-42185
September 6th	CAFOD Grisedale Horseshoe Race	Colin Jones 01204-690013
October 4th	Bishop's Walk	Derek Price 01772-768174
October 11th	Langdale Horseshoe Race	Leo Pollard 01204-694657
November 8th	Working weekend/Bonfire Tyn Twr	Anne Wallace 01744-811864
November 15th	AGM Chapelstile & Annual Dinner	Alan Kenny 01524-414615
November 21st	Working Weekend-Dunmail	David Ogden 01253-398252

Please Note: Details of meets not yet arranged will be given in the Newsletters.

Fell Running Championship 1997
(All events are mens and ladies)

February 16th.	Silver Howe, Loughrigg	9 miles/3000ft. Medium A
February 23rd.	Ilkley Moor	5 miles/1000ft. Short A
March 9th.	Black Combe (no late entries)	9 miles/3800ft. Medium A
April 5th.	Pendle	4.5 miles/1500ft. Short A
April 19th.	Anniversary Walk (no late entries)	11.25 miles/3600ft. Medium A
May 31st.	Duddon	20 miles/6000ft. Long A
July 19th.	Kinniside	9 miles/3000ft. Medium A
August 2nd.	Moel Hebog	5.5 miles/2560ft. Short A
August 17th.	Langdale County Fair	3 miles/2100ft. Short A
August 30th.	Pendleton	5 miles/1500ft. Short A
September 6th.	CAFOD Grisedale Horseshoe	10 miles/4400ft. Medium A
September 20th.	Three Shires	13 miles/4000ft. Long A
September 21st.	Club Fell Race	3.5 miles/1000ft. Short A
October 11th.	Langdale Horseshoe (no late entries)	14 miles/4000ft. Long A
November 8th.	Dunnerdale	5 miles/1800ft. Short A

Results of New Years Day race:

1. Robert Green	- 30 minutes 25 seconds
2. John Hope	- 34 " 45 "
3. Brian Kenny	- 37 " 15 "
4. Arthur Daniels	- 40 " 28 "
5. Bill Mitton	- 40 " 28 and a bit
6. Leo Pollard	- 46 " 00 "
7. Austin Guilfoyle	- 52 " 50 "

Sports Max. As mentioned in the Spring Newsletter, this organisation will give 15% discount on their sports goods, unless it is a sale price - then you can barter! They have now stores in Bolton, Coventry, Crewe, Lemington Spa, Manchester, Skemersdale and Southport. With a Sport Max card, (simple asked for at the information desk) you get money vouchers on the points awarded with purchases, i.e., 5p for every £1 spent. For example, I have spent £135 since last January, less 15% discount is £114.75, and because I have spent over £100 I have earned a £5.00 money voucher which I can put towards the purchase of any item (after deducting the discount!).

Sports Max do not specialise in climbing equipment but are pretty well set up for walking gear, sacs, boots, trainers, etc. and most other sports. And whilst perhaps some of their prices are a little higher than in the Lakes for certain items, the large discount makes it more convenient to shop locally.

Remember, if you do wish to shop at a Sport Max, your membership card, with photo, will be required for you to receive a discount.

DWP.

Long Walk - 1997. The Welsh 14 (Or 15?) from Tyn Twr.

Full details of the walk will only be going out in April. Will members interested in taking part please contact Anne Wallace on 01744 811864 to provisionally book a place. Helpers to man the food stations will also be required.

1997 ARCC Winter Meet, 1st to 8th March.

Ochils Mountaineering Club Cottage - Crianlarich

Location: Approximately east of pub 'Rod and Reel', north side of road, 392251, Landranger 50, Glen Orchy.

Accommodation: Fully equipped kitchen, male and female showers and toilets, alpine sleeping for 10 - 12 people. Ovweflow for a few more. Mattresses are not provided at this hut.

Meet Fees: £4.50 per person per night. One guest per member on average. Camping may be possible by arrangement. A deposit of £9.00 per person to be sent to:

Ben Carter
214 Rochdale Road
Shaw
Oldham
OL2 7JA (01706 841978)

The Grand Tour of Monte Rosa

In 1990 a small group of members met in Chamonix and embarked on the Tour of Mont Blanc, and after completing the circular walk went on to go to the summit at 4807m. A really good walk followed by fairly serious mountaineering. It was a great holiday.

Since the early days of the club groups have regularly been on a wide range of "trips". These have ranged from a family, or some friends, to the most 'organised' group, though the extent of organisation tends towards the informal (or even disorganised).

ARCC by virtue of its name is linked to the exploits of Achille Ratti, who achieved major ascents on Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa towards the end of the 19th century, hence... Ad Altiora.

Partly for this reason it is suggested ARCC should organise some sort of 'trip' aimed at the Tour of Monte Rosa. We are helped by the publication of a two-volume guide book outlining this circuit of the Pennine Alps. It needs 423 pages to do it justice!

This guide describes the route "in fourteen sections, each relating to the principal valley systems and coincidentally, a section for each day of a two-week tour". The guide also points out there are some 80 passes which could be crossed, but includes only some 50 route/pass options to give a number of combinations to the circuit.

It is recommended to go in an anti-clockwise direction, and the guide uses Le Chable as the starting point, assuming Martigny as the 'arrival' town travelling from the UK. Other start points are possible, with related travel arrangements.

The guide assumes accommodation will be in refuges, huts, dortoirs, hotels etc. Another assumption is that the time to go will be July/August.

The idea of a two week tour does not allow for actually travelling to/from Switzerland or Italy, nor is there any provision for rest days, or 'excursions'. There is similarly no inclusion of an ascent of Monte Rosa itself, which would be probably a three-day excursion, from either Zermatt, Macugnaga or Alagna. It would be necessary to get to one of these bases having completed some or all of the tour, and to have made some prior arrangement about alpine mountaineering clothing and equipment, since it would not be practical to carry this during the tour.

There are lots of possibilities...the whole tour, a partial tour, the big tops, a purely mountaineering trip, or some other version, or different versions for different groups of members.

To see what may be practical it would be helpful if anyone interested in any form of trip to the Monte Rosa area could let

Mike Lomas know of their intentions, ideas and aspirations. At some time early in 1997 the aim is to firm-up plans for a trip, based on what is felt to be achievable within a period of 14/21 days.

The guidebook referred to is published by Cicerone, written by C.J.White, and costs £14.99 for each of the two volumes.

Mike's address: 21 Broad Lane, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire, HD7 1LS. Telephone: 01484 687030

SUMMARY

SECTION	DISTANCE Km	HEIGHT M	TIME
1. Martigny and the Val de Bagnes			
1. Le Chable to the Chanrion Hut	26	+1641	7.15
2. Val de Bagnes to Valpelline			
2.1 Chanrion Hut to Ollomont	17	+ 335 -1441	6.15
2.2 Ollomont to Close	10	+1136 -1035	5.15
3. Valpelline to Valtournanche			
3.1 Bionaz to Paquier	25	+1528 -1603	9.45
Prarayer to Paquier	14	+1129 -1603	7.15
3.2 Prarayer to Fenetre di Tzan	10	+1448 -719	6.15
3.3 Bionaz to Fenetre di Tzan	14	+1863 -753	7.30
3.4 Oyace to Lignan	17.5	+1722 -1466	7.25
3.5 Fenetre di Tzan to Paquier	12.5	+ 454 -1588	5.40
3.6 Lignan to Mongnod/Torgnon	10	+ 600 - 826	3.30
4. Valtournanche to Valle d'Ayas			
4.1 The Matterhorn			
4.2 The Theodule Pass			
4.3 Cervinia to St Jacques	13.5	+ 976 -1293	7.25
4.4 Paquier to St Jacques	14.2	+1368 -1207	7.10
4.5 Paquier to St Jacques	14.7	+1298 -1137	6.10
4.6 Paquier to St Jacques	12.3	+1327 -1166	7.15
4.7 Antey St Andre to Champoluc	16.5	+1527 -1033	7.45
(via Promiod)	18.5	+1661 -1167	8.15
5. Valle d'Ayas to Val di Gressoney			
5.1 St Jacques to Gressoney-la-Trinite	12	+1033 -1098	5.00
5.2 St Jacques to Gressoney-la-Trinite	12.9	+1351 -1166	5.30
Champoluc to Gressoney-la-Trinite	12.2	+1472 -1166	5.30
5.3 Champoluc to Gressoney-la-Trinite	11.8	+1209 -1131	6.45
6. Valle di Gressoney to Valle della Sesia			
6.3 Gressoney-la Trinite to Alagna	13.0	+1257 -1691	6.55
6.4 Gressoney -St Jean to Riva	15.2	+1122 -1400	5.45

7.5 Rima to Macugnaga (Staffa)	14.7	+1297 -1401	8.00
7.6 Rima to Macugnaga (Staffa)	14.7	+1303 -1407	8.45
7.7 Rima to Carcoforo	6.0	+ 940 -1047	4.45
7.8 Carcoforo to Staffa	12.2	+1448 -1245	7.15
7.9 Carcoforo to Pontegrande	15.2	+ 935 -1713	5.45

8. Valle Anzasca to Saastal

8.1 Staffa to Saas Fee	22.0	+1697 -1195	9.15
8.2 Pestarena to Saas Fee	23.8	+2070 -1273	9.45

9. Saastal to Mattertal

9.1 Saas Fee to St Niklaus (Grachen)	23.0	+1298 -1900	8.00
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10. Mattertal to Turtmantal

10.1 St Niklaus to Gruben	15.2	+1863 -1168	8.00
10.2 St Niklaus to Gruben	14.4	+1767 -1072	7.30

11. Turtmantal to Val d'Annivers

11.1 Gruben to Zinal	14.7	+1052 -1199	6.50
11.2 Gruben to Vissoie	13.7	+ 968 -1586	7.00
Gruben to St Luc	12.2	+968 -1135	6.00

12. Val d'Annivers to Val d'Herens

12.1 Zinal to Lac du Moiry	8.0	+1221 -647	4.30
12.2 Lac du Moiry to Les Hauderes	11.8	+ 519 -1416	5.45
12.3 Lac du Moiry to Evolene	12.4	+ 670 -1548	4.20

13. Val d'Herens to Val d'Heremence

13.1 Arolla to Pralong	20.3	+ 867 -1247	7.30
13.2 Evolene to Pralong	12.1	+1361 -1094	5.45

14. Val d'Heremence to Val de Bagnes

14.1 Le Chargeur to Le Chable	19.5	+1266 -2568	9.30
14.2 Le Chargeur to Le Chable	25.7	+1629 -1274	13.20
14.3 Cab Mont Fort to Martigny	27.4	+ 800 -2811	8.00

Bob Graham attempt by Mike Seed on 21st June, 1997. Mike has support in the way of carriers but would like assistance from navigators with a good knowledge of the course.

The CAFOD Race was another success but the sponsorship was down on previous years. Whilst it is an excellent course and highly thought of in fellrunning circles, the main aim is to raise money for CAFOD, so for the 1997 race we intend to encourage all runners to find sponsors. Last years competitors will each be sent sponsorship forms and hopefully we will get a positive response.

The Bishop's Walk raised £2,525 and was another successful event with perfect weather conditions on the day. Most walkers appeared to have completed the course plus the extensions, i.e., up to Grisedale Tarn.

Millennium Celebrations. The management committee is looking at the possibility of some form of event or events to celebrate the year 2000. A working party has been proposed and interested members are asked to contact the secretary if they wish to be a part of it.

Safety Policy for Junior Meets. This is now almost complete and will be displayed on hut notice boards for the benefit of members.

Water Filtration has been installed in Bishop's Scale. The water will now taste like wine!

REMINDERS.

It is not uncommon for some members to 'forget' Club Rules or interpret them the way that they wish. They are very clear and precise and should not be abused. It is appreciated that there are a lot of Bye-Laws and it is difficult to remember them all. So I have printed a few that appear to cause most offence to members.

Dogs. Dogs are not allowed in the huts. Consideration must be given to members suffering from asthma or who may have a breathing problem. Neither should they be allowed to wander around the outside of the huts.

Hut Sleeping Facilities. All our huts provide separate accommodation for men and women. Please do not abuse the system or embarrass other members or occupants.

Rule 5.4 Junior Members. No children except those who are Junior Members may stay at any of the Huts without special written permission of the Hut Warden. Permission will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Hut Cleanliness. Members are expected to 'do a job' before they leave the huts, no matter what time of the day it is.

Working Weekends. This is not a bye-law but members, especially regular hut users, are asked to give a little back by assisting on working weekends. Bishop's Scale, our most regularly used hut, attracted only nine people to the last working weekend. If you wish us to bring in professional cleaners we can do so but your hut fees and annual subscriptions will increase. So come and enjoy the fun of a working weekend, it is a free weekend and most of the work is usually completed on the Saturday.

Club Records. Most of the hut log books have appeared again and are in the club library in Preston. We prefer these not to be taken out of the library since some are in a rather delicate condition. However they can be viewed but remember to have your Club I.D card with you. *Will the person who removed, borrowed, took, the book titled "Life in Langdale" by Tom Fletcher Buntin, please return it. It is a limited edition print and on the inside cover it says, DO NOT REMOVE FROM THIS ROOM!*

Ad Altiora.