

Lunch at Broadford

Isle of Skye.

After a night at Armadale Hostel, the road led north past Isle Ornsay, with the peaks of Knoydart over to the east. The inland stretch of road over to Broadford was good for views of the Cuillins, but ongoing roadworks may mean the road will become wider and faster in the near future. After lunch on Broadford "prom" it was along the coast road, hugging the sea all the way to Sconser.

Raasay.

Taking the Raasaay ferry, we decided to stay at the hostel for two nights, and so replenished supplies at the only shop and P.O. at Inverarish. The hostel is up a stiff climb out of Inverarish.

The following day a rideable track round to Hallaig was explored, this was great for views out to the mainland around Loch Carron. A mystery rendezvous between a boat and a submarine out to sea had us intrigued.

In the afternoon, the ancient volcanic plug of Dun Caon, which is the most prominent landmark, was climbed. Raasay is an important site for geology students, many of whom use the hostel as a base.



Youth Hostel at Raasay

Just a note for intending visitors, there is no chance of a drink on Sunday unless you eat in the pub if it's open. Also on a Sunday there are no ferries.

Isle of Skye.

Returning to Sconser next morning we called on John Foster who kindly brewed up for us, telling us the sad tale about Ray Baptiste taking a tumble in Glen Sligachan, and finishing up in Broadford hospital. Hope you are O.K. now Ray. It was good to see John fit and well now too.

After an open air lunch in Portree. Pete and I took the coast road past the Storr, stopping to watch eagles soaring around the crags, and to admire the views east to Applecross and Torridon.

Going north to Staffin, we took the climb over the Quirang and down to Uig Bay. The hostel was up a stiff climb (again) where we met up with John and Kath. Splendid views of the harbour, and the views across to Lewis, made the lounge a great place to watch sunsets from.

The Outer Islands.

Harris.

Crossing to Torbert from Uig (1 3/4 hours) is a pleasant trip with a good chance of seeing dolphins, porpoises and many types of sea birds.

Cycling down the east coast of Harris, the landscape is entirely different, being a complex, undulating network of rocky knolls and small lochans with very little human habitation. Otters can be spotted if you are lucky, we spotted one as it ran across the road right in front of the bikes.

Stockinish Y.H.A. is an old school house, but has no stove, we were lucky, as the mobile shop pulled up outside.

Next day, the Leverburgh to North Uist ferry was our objective, with the road passing through Rodel, where the ancient Church of St. Clements is well worth a stop.

North Uist.

A breezy crossing of the Sound of Harris passed an hour or so, and just as we berthed the wind seemed to increase and the subsequent head wind slowed our progress. After a while battling the wind, an abandoned farm provided shelter for a brew as we set up the stoves for a belated lunch, (nothing on the ferry). Battling on to Lochmaddy, a small town with a good pub, shop, P.O. and a YHA, we booked in for two nights.

Calmer conditions next day enabled us to ride a circuit on the island, visiting celtic stone circles, peat cutting areas, the beach at Valley Strand and eventually a tea room. At this oasis we chatted to a couple who had flown in with their bikes, into the airfield on Benbecula.

Benbecula.

Again with only light winds, we rode south over causeways, bridges, through a landscape resembling the moon with water, and, passing the airport access roads, we eventually passed onto South Uist.

South Uist.

Another causeway leads on to South Uist, which has an interesting hostel at Howmore. A converted croft, with other old buildings as dormitories, it is run by the Gatliff trust. Here we brewed up, and looked round the nearby ruins of an ancient church and monastery. Duller weather and increasing wind seemed to be heralding a change as we rode south to Lochboisdale. Here, to our surprise, our next port of call, Barra, was reported as being 'full'. A wedding next day ensured all accommodation was booked up!

So, adjoining to the cafe and then the pub we enjoyed a good meal and a couple of pints with about four hours to spend before the ferry for Barra and Oban left at 8.00pm.

Barra.

The Oban ferry calls in at Castlebay on Barra on its way to the mainland, so a brief visit was possible, if only for a pint in the pub above the harbour. It's possible to fly to Barra, the landing strip being on the beach (B.A. flights from Glasgow), but we had to settle for a night trip and a bleary-eyed 5.00am arrival in Oban.

Pete, John and Kath collected their car at Oban church, whilst I took the West Highland line to Glasgow, and home via Carlisle and Oxendale.

John and Pete climbed Ben Lomond on their way home to round off the trip.

Looking back, it was remarkable to note that there had been no rain for almost two weeks whilst we had been on the islands.

OF MEN, MOUNTAINS AND MISSIONARIES.

Rev J.P. Marmion.

It was an old Tea Planters hotel, the Windamere in Darjeeling, and next to it was Loreto Convent school. The Sisters were delighted to see a visiting English priest, even if he was enroute into the mountains, and Mass followed in India style (seated throughout for one thing). Loreto had just been celebrating one hundred and fifty years in Darjeeling, which meant that the Sisters had got through the Bengall jungle before there was either road or rail. In fact the 'toy' railway did not climb the steep hills until 1881, and it must be among the narrowest gauge passenger tracks in the world - hence the affectionate title 'toy' railway. It is so narrow that it shares the road with all other traffic. In Darjeeling the Loreto Sisters have a primary school, and large secondary school for girls (about 1300 of them), and their old convent school they now run for a socialist government as a University college. Education is flourishing mightily. As the mountains were calling there was no time to visit St. Joseph's college, which is the contribution of the Canadian Jesuits, but there were good reports of their work, and soon there was to be a notable example of it.

The Simgalia Ridge for a week provided a grandstand view across Nepal to the Everest complex. At one stage it must have been only thirty miles away, and cameras paid their reverence and respect. But even more impressive, because it was a better view was Kanchenjunga (which also gets spelt Kangchenjunga); and not only is it the third highest in the world, but it was next week's target. After a long days bus ride we reached Pemayangtse, the oldest Buddhist monastery in Sikkim, bedecked with prayer flags outside and images within. Back at the hotel I was told there was a visitor looking for me. It turned out to be a monk who spoke English so well. A member of the trekking party had told him they had their own 'holy man' with them, and he came to apologise for not recognising a priest in climbing gear. Yapo S Yongda had joined the monastery at the early age of five, and by nine had passed all three exams to be a monk. As these are normally taken by late teenagers and early twenties, this may be an all time record. Exams passed, the next step is to use the musical instruments. Yapo was far too small to be able to do this. So what was he to do while he grew up?

The answer was found in St. Joseph's college, Darjeeling, with the Canadian Jesuits. It was there that he gained his mastery of English, and a wide and thorough education. Back in the monastery as a young monk his life took another turn when he was appointed with one of the oldest monks as chaplain to the King of Sikkim. The old monk was responsible for the state liturgies; Yapo had a double role; to pray daily with the King, and to be his bodyguard. The King was finally deposed in a bloodless revolution, and retired to America. Yapo returned to his monastery. He was deeply concerned about the plight of the many orphan children, and eventually founded the Dejong Pedma Choeling Academy (DPCA!) as a boarding college for 250 of them. This in 1980 was a totally new venture, which perhaps expressed some of the values he himself had found in St. Joseph's college. It was now backed by the Muiyal Liand Trust, which got the National Award in 1989 from the President of India for outstanding work done in the field of child welfare.

One good thing leads to another. Close to the monastery gates he founded the International Heritage Meditation Centre, which provides facilities for anyone to meditate in the peaceful vicinity of the monastery. It is a masterpiece of Sikkimese architecture, and guests are left to make any offerings they can.

Anything beyond what is needed to maintain the centre goes to the support of the pupils at the DPCA. Thomas Aquinas said *omne trinum est perfectum*, as an introduction to his study of the Blessed Trinity; he suggests a special blessing in triplets. Yapo's next venture was for the subsistence farmers of Pemayangtse; it is sixty miles north of Darjeeling on the top of a mountain, and farming is very poor. They grow mainly vegetables, cauliflowers, spinach, some grain, but very little that is a real cash crop, and they live from hand to mouth. So Yapo returned to Darjeeling and ran checks on temperature, hours of sunshine, soil texture, rainfall; all the details to answer the question as to what conditions are required to grow tea. The same checks were made around the monastery, and tea bushes were introduced into the garden. To support and to enhance the prospects of the small farmers Yapo is working to form a cooperative of about 300 of them, so that they will have a good cash crop as well as

vegetables. A Jesuit education and the Buddhist virtues of respect, tolerance and meditation are clearly bringing many blessings to this land.

Gocha La is a col high on the shoulder of Kangchenjunga, and so much surrounded by mountains that the summit of K3 is out of sight. It was to be the top point of our trekking, and we camped at Samity lake as a final base camp for our long approach to the col. It included an early breakfast, at about 3am, and a departure in the dark over rocks and streams by the light of head torches. It was long after day break that we reached the col at about 16,500ft, with its Buddhist prayer flags, glaciers, and nothing but mountains, glaciers and probably more prayer flags all the way to Tibet. A small Indian party left one of their group on the penultimate ridge, and in spite of 10 degrees of frost she refused to come down with any of our trekkers. We returned to base late afternoon, and they came in at dusk as I was wondering if we need to mount a search and rescue operation. The thoughts, as it turned out, was a day premature.

Bryan, with whom I was sharing a tent, apologised for (he thought) keeping me awake. "I must have coughed all night" It was 'bed tea' at 6am. By the time we were ready to start working our way down the mountain two hours later, it was clear that he had cerebral oedema, which is responsible for most deaths on Everest. Fiona, the professional leader, produced some medicine, but the best available could only be given if the patient could be got to a doctor within twenty four hours. No Chance. A retreat towards sea level was called for. With two of the sherpas to help, and another looking in vain in the top village (at over ten thousand feet) for a horse, Fiona and I accompanied Bryan all day down as fast as possible. We must have lost about eight thousand feet by six in the evening, and it seemed unsafe to try to go further even with head torches. The sherpas then went back up a few thousand feet to the main party, and returned later with sleeping bags, tents and food. Meanwhile I had said Mass in thanksgiving and Bryan, though a devout member of the Church of England, had received Communion; members of 'sister Churches' may be given Holy Communion in cases of necessity when one of their own ministers is not available. The next day the main party overtook us as we limped into base camp. And the reports a few weeks later indicated that Bryan had suffered no lasting harm. Fiona was concerned remembering a trekker who died of cerebral oedema at a mere six thousand feet.

The Himalayan in Kalimpong was another tea planters hotel full of history. It is described by James Cameron, the travel writer, as "a collector piece among hotels". I asked at reception did they have any Sisters in town? "Of course we have the Sisters, about an hours walk away." The first sign said,; Novitiate of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny; next came the convent and schools. They have a primary school, a school for the deaf, a secondary school of 1400 for girls and a clinic. When they first came to Kalimpong some of their first converts were Buddhists, and other Buddhists gave them their first site for a church. They decided that they would recognise this generosity by building their church in the style of a Buddhist images. It is now in the guide book to Kalimpong as one of the places to visit. Also in town again were the Canadians Jesuits with another great college. The nuns, a community of thirty, were mostly Indian sisters, and likewise the young priests in the neighbourhood, though they mostly seem to have come from south India. The one surviving missionary was from Switzerland, a Father Jexter of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine; he was 77 and had been in India 47 years, and had every hope of finishing his life there. The picture shows this veteran and his driver en route to say Mass for a Nepalese family. Clearly *His star is rising in the East*. The sight of the missionaries and these young churches putting down roots so well is one of the great memories of trekking in Sikkim in the shadow of Kangchenjunga.

BIKE RIDE FROM LANDS END TO JOHN O'GROATS. 24TH JULY - 5TH AUGUST, 1997

Tony McNamee.

The ride was organised around Youth Hostels - I had booked a family room in Hostels from end to end so that the family could come too. Kathleen and the two girls would be tourists while I cycled - we met up each evening at the Youth Hostels. The daily mileage and actual route were, therefore, largely determined by the location of Hostels which had family rooms.

My riding preference was for 'B' roads, minor roads and, when necessary, 'A' roads. Often, to cover the required miles, especially in the South, some busy 'A's' were necessary - minor roads often have the habit of taking you everywhere but where you want to go.

The Lands End Hostel is at St. Just and on the first day I had to cycle 5 miles into the wind, in pouring rain and thick mist (full waterproofs and lights on) to actually start the ride - Great! However, I kept thinking how good it would be when I turned round at Lands End and got a tail wind.

In fact, the decision to go South to North proved the correct one for two reasons. a) to get the South out of the way first, and b) every day bar one I had either calm or some kind of tail wind. Mind, I've been told by those in the know that I'd have had a tail wind which ever way I'd gone. The first day was a long one - 115 miles, and at times I could hardly see because of the rain and the spray, but, to my surprise, I really didn't mind - I think I was just like a bairn with a new toy - I was setting off on my big adventure.

On day two I got myself onto one of those roads! I don't think anyone has driven on it this century. It got steeper, narrower more overgrown and slippery, the trees became denser and closer - I started to look for gnomes and trolls - I was quite relieved to reach civilisation again.

Day three saw lashing rain for five solid hours and this was the day I got my only puncture - I will remember Bristol! Despite the rain the ride up the Wye valley was lovely.

The further North I got, the better the cycling got - I could look forward to the hills, the mountains and the open spaces.

The warden at Gradbach Y.H.A. suggested a route skirting Manchester for my next stop at Ingleton - I had intended going to the Halifax side. I'm glad I took his advice 'cos it went perfectly. The worst section of the whole journey, however, was on this route and I thought I was in for a right day. The nine miles on the A624 from Chapel En le Frith to Glossop was sheer hell! The road was quite narrow and there were thousands of lorries thundering past (mostly quarry type lorries). The so and so's weren't giving an inch either! This was also the first day on which I saw the family - near Burnley, what a welcome cup of tea even though I had not long since had my 'bate' at Todmorden.

What a cracking little section from Clitheroe on the B6478 to Ingleton!

I had a rest day here at Ingleton and we had a look at the caves, Hawes and Hardraw Force. What a smashing little place Dent looked to be - must go back there and tour round a bit.

On day seven I had the excellent company of Dave Hugill (Dave and I did the Bob Graham Round together). It was such a different day to normal and the time and miles flew by - thanks, Dave!

Day eight dawned wet - as usual, but it did not stop me appreciating a beautiful section from Greenhead to Moffat. It rained nice and steady to Langholm and from there on it 'hoyed' it down and it was cold too, so it was a full body cover job. This was actually the hardest day - 103 miles, headwind, lashing rain. So much of the day was good - there's a lovely long descent on the A701 down into Broughton, but by the time I got to New Lanark I was well jacked off, especially with the headwind.

I got past Glasgow fine, in fact I was very surprised how easily I got past the three cities I thought would pose problems - Bristol, Manchester and Glasgow. Next stop Criarlach. Another great section on the B822 from Lennoxton to Callander. Met the family again just before Criarlach (they had been home since Ingleton) and another most welcome cup of tea.

Day ten was the highlight of the trip. I've driven over Rannoch Moor and through Glen Coe numerous times and in all sorts of weather, but riding the bike through was something special. It was raining but that didn't matter - I'd been looking forward to this and it lived right up to my hopes. We stopped at Loch Ness for two nights having my second of two rest days.

Day 12 saw some more beautiful scenery - this time along the A833 from Drumnadrochit to Beaully, and the weather was fantastic too! The section from Alness to Ardgay along the B9176 was really beautiful especially looking down from Strui Hill over the Dornoch Firth and the Kyle of Sutherland. What a great ride down. We stopped the night in the very impressive Carbisdale Castle - now a Scottish Youth hostel.

Back to Ardgay and a lovely ride past Loch Buidhe on a minor road to the A9 - never seen so many rabbits or so few cars (none). Much to my surprise the A9 as far as Latheron was really good and enjoyable with a particularly fine section just North of Helmsdale. After Latheron and more so Wick, the road flattened out - I much prefer the hills - they are more exciting, more of a challenge and they give your bum a rest.

Anyway John O' Groats was duly reached and obligatory photographs taken but the story doesn't end there. The Youth Hostel is three miles from John O' Groats and my loving wife insisted that I do things properly and ride the bike there! Funnily enough though, I didn't mind - perhaps it was the euphoria.

First Aid: Vaseline - could not have made it without regular and liberal coatings.

New Invention: For the follically challenged - a cut-down beach hat to form a skull cap (aspirations of Popedom) to stop the sunburn through the slits of the helmet, and stop the flies and wasps tickling and stinging the head.

Weather: I got wet, no, soaked, on most days but equally the sun came out on most days. The best weather by far was in Scotland.

Idiots: Only two close encounters. The first on Dartmoor when flying down a particularly fine hill doing about 40mph, a kamikaze sheep decided to say hello. I actually felt its wool on my leg - the sheep must not have liked the feel for it, thankfully veering off before destroying me. The second incident was about halfway up the climb out of Lochearnhead when some "f" of a coach driver gave my right leg a crew cut - I called him a lot of naughty names - in fact I'm still calling him.

Cars to beware of: In 5th place - The small BMW's

In 4th place - Old Nova's

In 3rd place - Old Fiestas

In 2nd place - Old Astra's

And in glorious 1st position - Any vehicle driven by a young male.

DETAILS			
Date	Hostel	Milage	Acc Mileage
23rd July	Lands End	115	115
24th	Believerf	91	206
25th	Cheddar	86	292
26th	Ludlow	93	385
27th	Gradbach Mill	97	482
28th	Ingleton	97	482
29th	Ingleton	0	571
30th	Greenhead	89	674
1st August	New Lanark	103	766
2nd	Criarlach	92	862
3rd	Loch Ness	96	862
4th	Loch Ness	0	926
5th	Carbisdale Castle	74	926
5th	John-O-Groats	97	1023

Average mileage - 93 per day.

Time on the road - on average about 9-10 hours per day.



In summary it was an excellent trip - road signs were generally very good, traffic was generally well behaved (even in the South), the Hostels were excellent, I got soaked on more days than not but even these days were brightened up at some stage, Scotland was terrific. There are many places to which I must return and cycle from a local base.

England, and more so Scotland were full of Germans and Australians who both reckoned that it was twice as expensive here as in their own country.

Would I do it again? Given the spare time - certainly!

The Bob Graham has been run, Mont Blanc has been climbed, Lands End to John O'Groats has been cycled - so what's next?

Well, cycling through all those beautiful Scottish mountains might just have relit the walking fires with the Munros tantalisingly beckoning.

THE LONG WALK - TYN TWR - 1997

Fred Bagley.

George Partidge and Marie Bagley busied themselves at some unearthly hour in the kitchen, preparing vast quantities of toast and cups of tea. Meanwhile Anne Wallace bombarded us with eggs, either fried or boiled. They also did a good job persuading the dedicated band of walkers and runners to emerge from the warmth of their beds at around 2.30am.

Eventually the few really early risers set off in the minibus with Derek Price driving. We arrived at Pen-y-Pas at 4.00am and were astonished to find two large coach loads of determined looking walkers, many with head lights, preparing to set off up Snowdon. Apparently they were at the start (sponsored walk perhaps?) of the Three National Peaks Walk (Snowdon, Scafell and Ben Nevis).

There were six of us in the first batch: Dot Wood, Helen Russell, Neil Hodgkinson, Ray Baptiste, Sheila and myself. After 100 yards Ray announced he had decided to do a low level walk round the Glyders and turned back. Next Dot proposed that we should all stay together and not bother with Crib Goch and Cib-y-Ddysgl as it was too dark to negotiate the snow safely. Remember this was May 10th and the previous week we had been sunbathing. Anyway having advised us all to stay together, Dot promptly dropped back as Neil and Helen disappeared into the gloom, with Sheila and I struggling to maintain contact. We did not see Dot again until we were on our way down from Snowdon.

So we continued along the Pig track and then up the steep zig zags to the railway; the last bit above Glaslyn being particularly difficult with a great deal of packed wet snow. A small cornice was surmounted to gain the railway line, which was then followed to the summit where Sheila and I caught up with Neil and Helen. Helen by this time was complaining of nausea, probably a combination of the very early start, difficult conditions and Neil's fierce pace.

As we returned down from the summit we were met by Dave Armstrong and Melanie on their way up and then Dot Wood and finally the first of the "Three Peaksters". The railway line being buried in snow made the most direct route to Clogwyn Station where we descended into the small cwm running NE from there, arriving at the feeding station at the Park & Ride car park in Nant Peris. We swiftly consumed large quantities of bacon butties before leaving about 7.30 heading for Elidir Fawr. Sheila retired here so our little group was down to three.

Shortly after leaving the road our little group was caught up by Dave Armstrong and his daughter Melanie. The steep grass on the first stretch after the stile was very mind stopping and before long Helen retired and went back down to Nant Peris. By now Dave and Neil were striding ahead and Melanie had taken me under her wing. Melanie also complained about the steep grass but kept going and eventually we caught Dave and Neil at the summit of Elidir Fawr where they were sheltering from the freezing wind and rain. The track down the head of Cwm Marchlyn was particularly exposed with the southerly gale threatening to blow us into the pumped storage reservoir - presumably they have grills on the turbine intakes to protect them from airborne debris!

The next peak Y Garn proved to be the last as, by then, Bert had caught us up and we were thoroughly chilled, wet and near to exhaustion. So we decided to take the Devil's Kitchen path to Ogwen where we were met by the very welcome sight of Derek Price and the bus.

Honour was satisfied, as all the remaining walkers and runners packed in at Ogwen. Apparently this was the first time no one had finished the Long Walk. On reflection in spite of the hardship mainly caused by the unseasonal weather, it was still a very enjoyable day and I must say a very big thankyou to all the volunteer helpers who did their very best in very difficult conditions. A special thanks to Anne and the cooks who not only fed us extremely well but entertained with their rather exuberant Kareoke (?) singing.

SCOTTISH WINTER MEET - 1997.

Gordon Whitehead.

It's 9pm on a Saturday night and Malcolm Mills and I have stopped in Dumbarton for fish and chips on our way to the winter meet at Crianlarich. It's raining with the intensity normally seen in Hollywood movies and I'm glad that Malcolm, as passenger, feels obliged to go and get the food. We would like to think that the rain is falling as snow on the high ground, but it's mild, as it has been throughout January and February. Our low expectations are backed up by the chip shop assistant. She's a skier and according to her there is very little snow.

It was in this frame of mind that we arrived at the hut to meet the rest of the party - David Mercer, John and David Ogden, Ben Carter, Ken Jackson and Andrew Morrison. Perhaps it was the anticipation of poor snow conditions that led to the absence of several "regulars".

The hut is excellent. It's been refurbished and extended. Most of it is attractively clad in pine, it's well heated with shower facilities and has an excellent kitchen. Its one deficiency is that when the wind gusts from the wrong quarter the lounge fire smokes and the room becomes uninhabitable.

After rain such as that on Saturday its water rather than snow that provides Sundays spectacle. Overnight the river has burst its banks and the hut now stands on the edge of a lake. Further down the valley the Falls of Dochart, in full spate, are a magnificent sight. At Loch Tay the waves are sending spray high over the road. Such conditions don't of course last long and by the end of the day the river has retreated to its familiar bounds. Our day hasn't been particularly exciting. The squally conditions restricted us to a forest walk, but in the distance the handsome shape of Schiehallion had caught Ben's attention. If conditions permit it would be our destination on Monday.

The only other event of that first day was the dinner - chile con carni - cooked by Andrew, and which was, in Andrew's opinion.....unsurpassable.

Monday is fine and so to Schiehallion. The mountain is famous for its shape, its scientific history (its regular shape led to its use in experiments on the Earth's gravity) and also perhaps because its majestic name is kind to English tongues which have struggled with Scotland's Benins, Sgurs and Mhies.

The weather is good and the views spectacular, but most importantly there's snow. Despite the mild weather the height of these peaks means that we are not to be disappointed.

Back at the hut Malcolm volunteers to provide a meal. He has the unusual and highly skilled hobby of building 'O' gauge electric engines, despite having no formal engineering experience he makes the moulds himself and builds complicated models....but he can't cook! Volunteering to do his meal so early in the week is his bold strategy to get the worst over quickly. Andrew's verdict on pork chops and veg, followed by apple strudel....absolutely average.

It should be noted here that Andrew has actually already finished his walking holiday; Sundays bold ascent of the forest path was to prove his final victory. Today he and John had gone skiing at Glencoe. Unfortunately the mountain had tripped him up and it was in a bruised and slightly battered condition that he returned. No doubt had we been staying in a tent on the Antarctic ice cap he would have gone outside so as not to hold the rest of us up. Here his sacrifice will extend to staying behind and reading the paper.

On Tuesday conditions once again are good and Ken 'Bonington' Jackson thinks we should go for the 'big one'. Now I'm sure that Ken has no wish to be compared to anyone, not even the famous Chris, but the truth is that he's the most organised chap amongst us and he's read up that Ben Lui is THE MOUNTAIN of these parts. He's right! There are bigger mountains but Ben Lui with its great corries holding the snow is surely the most impressive.

David Mercer and Dave Ogden are the chaps who volunteer to ruin their cars driving us to the starting point. Its the sort of road that would be declared unfit for a forest stage in the Tour of Britain. At least it slows Dave Ogden down from his usual 80 mph.

How could we have ever worried about snow conditions? Our crampons are soon necessary on deep hard snow. At one point we have a long retreat when the steepening slope and exposure risk forced us to choose an alternative route, it's all part of the learning process. By the time we reach the summit the weather is perfect. A deep blue sky, and a panorama of snow clad peaks, most of them probably deserted. There's years of walking still to do.

Back at the hut the day is completed by Ken's Tuna Bake. In fact if Ken doesn't wish to be known as Bonington he might well be known as Tuna Bake Jackson instead. Gin and tonic for Apertifs, wine with the meal and we can talk lucidly about anything and everything - the EMU, Blind Date and the Sun's contribution to civilisation.

The following day is a rest day, and this year even Dave Ogden and myself feel like a day off. Andrew, having sacrificially tidied the hut and strolled around Crianlarich on Tuesday pulls together his last reserves of strength and takes the train to Mallaig. In Malcolm he has the perfect companion his love affair with the railways means that he knows vital statistic of the whole three and a half hour journey. Gordon, Dave and John visit Oban, Ken and Ben Fort William and fish and chips for tea - superb.

Thursday - and my suggestion of Ben Lawer is accepted. As we start off the upper slopes are obscured by mist and cloud, but they retreat as we ascend, and when we reach the top we have perfect visibility. We hardly see a soul all day, indeed throughout the week we've had the mountains to ourselves.

At the hut the cuisine reaches dizzy heights - soup starter, steak Dijon and stuffed baked apples.

Friday is a miserable day. Most of us have to depart early and the bad weather persuades the remainder that there's no point in staying around.

I suppose I have to be careful in my conclusions. If I tell you that the holiday was brilliant, with a good hut, good weather, excellent snow and scenery, and the usual first class company, there might be too many people wanting to come next year. So I'll lie through my back teeth and say that the mild weather ruined it and it wasn't a patch on previous years.

NOVO ENGINEERIO IN AFRICA.

Jim Cooper.

In June 1997 I was recruited by RedR (Register of Engineers for Disaster Relief) for a short term assignment (3.5 months) with Christian Outreach (I hadn't heard of them either) in Mozambique as Project Leader and Engineer on road rehabilitation and well construction. The location is a remote rural area of northern Mozambique, near to Malawi, which has suffered greatly in their recent civil war. This was part of a refugee re-patriation programme where about one third of the population are ex-refugees. There is severe poverty and much of the population is at risk if there is any threat to their subsistence farming. On my arrival the area was still only accessible by 4x4s. Before I had left the first saloon car had visited and their were rumours of a bus service. Development of this area since the Portuguese left in 1974 has been non existent. There are no doctors and teachers are difficult to recruit and of limited education themselves. Government Officials had not been paid for three months. Water is often only available from muddy holes. Despite this and much more the people are innately cheerful and independent (and at times infuriating).

The following are some extracts from letters I sent to my family.

Here I am in Africa. Blue sky, my own little mud hut and a lot of peace (at the moment). It is quite civilised considering I share it with !0,000 termites (ants eating the house), a few lizards and a variety of other wild life. The floor is concrete (the termites undermine this to break it up) and the inside is painted white. The roof is thatched with a reed like grass and lined with black plastic. I am in bed by 9.30pm and up at 6am. Toilets are pit latrines (detailed descriptions on request but very sanitary). Washing is by bucket in a bamboo/grass shelter. If you are observant the chicken for the evening's meal can be seen being killed in the morning.

As a white person I am a Macuna (literally white person or Novo Engineerio - New Engineer). Communication is sometimes (usually) difficult as few speak any English, Portuguese is the language of the educated.

The insects are both a nuisance and sometimes very pretty. At the moment a large iridescent blue/yellow 'thing' is crawling over my arm - now shirt, it seems harmless! The mosquitoes make the Scots midge seem like beginners!

The people are poor and I mean seriously poor even compared to India and Nepal. This is largely the result of 30 years of civil war. There is plenty of land and many things grow well but money and things to spend money on just do not exist for the most part. All villages appear to have a school (often just four walls, no roof! let alone books and chairs) but there is a great shortage of teachers, particularly the ones who have themselves been to school! A whole generation and more has missed out on schooling and illiteracy is the norm. Serious malnutrition appears absent (unless the rains fail as they do) but I am told dietary problem from eating maize and little else are not uncommon. The people are happy, friendly and love having their photo's taken!! There are a few problems with security/crime - seems much safer than Britain, though some roads still have mines from the war.

This place is much prettier than I had been led to believe. Generally with volcanic rock hills projecting up sometimes randomly; sometimes in groups for a few hundred perhaps a thousand or so feet. There is clearly climbing potential though the bush grass (8 feet high) can make walking difficult.

A lovely day (8am), it is likely to get hot later when it clouds over. The weather has been unseasonably and even windy with the occasion light shower. It's supposed to be the dry season and indeed the ground is very dry. The warm evenings have been bringing the mosquito's out with a vengeance, I am told that Dec/Jan time they really multiply!

I get up at about 5.45am(!!) with the light just breaking, to open the office for the stores man having had a wash etc. (bucket of water). Then fending off workers coming to ask questions. I go to our dining room and wait - and wait - for Raphael (the kitchen boy) to boil a kettle so that I can have a coffee. Breakfast is Wheatabix or Granola (muesli without the nutty bits) or if we are lucky fresh bread rolls from a bakery nearby, delicious provided they don't use maize flour and you don't mind the odd piece of grit. The other (expats) drift in up to 7.30am when we morning Bible readings and prayers!!

We have six 4-wheel drive Landrover/Toyota's which are **seriously** wrecked. We rarely have more than three on the road at a time. Also we have seven trucks but are often down to three, seven tractors (a good day means four working) and various other plant. Three motor bikes (but only one works sometimes!) and things seem better than they were!!

The compound has chickens, ducks, pigeons and rabbits - we eat them!! It also has mice and snakes though I haven't seen a snake in the compound yet (others have). There is a river nearby (just swampy pools at this time of year) leading to a large lake. Earlier this year a crocodile ate someone and tried to eat two more people (they wash etc. in the river). They (the locals) managed to shoot the croc. which was three metres long, and hung it from a tree in the town and had a party (I have seen the photos).

Visiting the surrounding villages (I am involved with wells as the Expert Engineer - I have never even seen a well before!!) is interesting, the people are very formal. You have to visit the Chefe (Village Chief) before doing anything. You then have to shake hands with all the adults (and the bolder children). This can take some time so visiting six wells can take all day. The villagers are often dressed in the filthiest and most ragged clothes imaginable. 2nd hand clothes merchants are the nouveau riche here. So far nobody has offered to go up the local hills with me, going by oneself is distinctly discouraged.

It's 5am (yes morning!) and I am writing this by candlelight. The reason is too complicated but involves the 4th breakdown in the bush yesterday. I am told the cars (4x4's) were new when they arrived. I am going back to bed when someone collects the keys which I am waiting to hand out.

The job is both much as expected and very different to expected!! Much of the time is management and planning of roadwork's. Now I remember why I stopped being manager six years ago!! Illiterate Mozambicans (?) and cussed Lancastrians cause broadly the same silly awkwardness' and quarrels and now I have 400+ of them to annoy me! A lot of the problem is never being quite sure that I understand the problem - almost no-one except me speaks English.

Now I find that I can't go back to bed as Charles - who has now collected the keys needs to radio back at 6am!

The job - we are re-making about 120+km of earth roads which have fallen into disrepair. The main road into Mozambique is closed due to landmines though some people still use it. So until things improve the district is almost cut off from the rest of the country. The well digging worries me. The geology of the ground makes it (for me) hit and miss whether we strike water! The social survey's carried out show that in many villages 10km a day carrying water (on the head) is average. In consequence dirty water is often used and they save on washing. Hygiene suffers and so disease (particularly diarrhoea which hits the young and old) is rampant. Also we have been asked by the local Bishop (RC)(who said he couldn't speak English then spoke English for 40 minutes without drawing breath) to provide maize mills. He says that the time spent by women either grinding by hand or walking 10's of km's to a mill means that they have not the time to grow a good diet so dietary deficiencies result. Notice the men don't come into question. The locals regard it as cruel to have animals to carry and anyway your wife can do the carrying.

THE ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB IN IRELAND

Tyn Twr Hut

The ARCC group: Allan Brighton, Austin Guilfoyle, Peter McHale, Tony McHale, Derek Price and Simon Price.

Destination: The small village of Leenane on the borders of Galway and Mayo.

Activities planned: Fishing, Mountain Biking and Walking.

Saturday, 24th May.

The party gathered at Tyn Twr - Allan from Tarporley (in rural Cheshire), Austin from Widnes, Peter and Tony from Leeds, Derek from Preston and Simon from Manchester.

Arrangements had been made through Stenna Lines and included: crossing for two cars and a trailer, six passengers, insurance, seven nights bed and breakfast, and all at £220 per person.

Most of Saturday p.m. was spent loading the gear into the cars and bikes onto the trailer, then a short walk into the quarries, which ended up as a two and half hour route-march. A drink in the Victoria and an early night (well reasonably early) in preparation for a six a.m. rise.

Sunday, 25th May.

We all arose without difficulty, breakfasted, packed our remaining gear and set off for Holyhead for the 9.00 a.m. High Speed Stenna ferry. This huge ferry has no outside decks and the parking area is like a large aluminium warehouse. Each parking bay is colour coded which makes it easy to find your way back to the vehicle when the ship has docked. The passenger deck is plush and comfortable, has the usual Duty Free and, as the crossing only takes 100 minutes, much time can be spent watching the progress from the viewing area at the front of the ship.

The crossing was very smooth and we were clear of the dock and Dun Laoghaire shortly after 11.00 a.m.

In our initial planning we had agreed to break our journey to Leenane and visit Clonmacnoise Monastery, below Athlone. Clonmacnoise is at the cross roads of the River Shannon and the main track across Ireland (which follows a natural gravel ridge from East to West). The original church was built in the mid sixth century and was the seat of Christianity in Ireland. Over the years several monasteries were built on the site within yards of the River Shannon, as attacks from other Celts, Vikings and Cromwell necessitated constant rebuilding. The view down the meandering Shannon from the monastery is breathtaking. Close by Clonmacnoise is a power station fueled by peat from the nearby peat bogs. The whole area is steeped in history and was well worth the visit.

It was late afternoon when we re-started our journey to Leenane and on our way passed through Maam Cross where there is a cottage (now a museum) that was used in the film, "The Quiet Man".

We arrived in Leenane in the early evening and found our accommodation for the next week, Killary House, without difficulty. One of the obvious advantages of staying in the same spot for several days is the familiarity which naturally develops between the hosts and the clients, and ours was no different. We soon felt at home and by the end of the week felt part of the family.

After unpacking we strolled down to the village centre, 400 metres away. This consisted of one shop, two restaurants, two craft centres and two pubs (next door to each other). The first pub was called Hamilton's and the other Gaynor's, which has been in the same family for over two hundred years. The film, 'The Field' starring Richard Harris had been made in the area, in fact the fight that took place in the film was actually inside the Gaynor bar. Anyway that night we introduced ourselves to the Gaynor family and also to the locals. It helped our contacts with the locals when the two daughters from Killary House joined us.

Monday, 26th May.

Having breakfasted we were to drive to Clew Bay, climb Croagh Patrick, 2510ft and then to visit Westport where some of the group would exchange pounds for Irish punts.

Croagh Patrick has been a sacred mountain for almost 5000 years. As far back as 3000 B.C. our megalithic ancestors worshipped there. Before the birth of Christ the festival of the God Lugh was held on its slopes. Lugh is the god whose name gives us the Irish Lughnasa for August, and it would seem that there is a connection between the pagan worship which took place at the end of the summer and the date fixed for the present day Christian pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick, i.e. the last Sunday in July which is called Reek Sunday or Garland Sunday.

Croagh Patrick is Ireland's holy mountain where St. Patrick (Ireland's patron saint) spent 40 days and nights praying and fasting in 441 A.D.

Three weddings have taken place in the church on the summit of Croagh Patrick. The former President of Ireland Eamonn de Valera climbed Croagh Patrick in 1932. Princess Grace and Prince Rainier of Monaco visited in 1961, and in May 1997 six members of the ARCC made the ascent.

Our visit to Westport, a beautiful little town on the Aille river, started on the outskirts of the town when we came across McHale's Bar. With two McHale's in the party we couldn't resist the temptation to have a drink. The Guinness was excellent, the landlord miserable. We met an old Irishman there, probably in his seventies, who claimed to be a practising alcoholic. He had a very battered face and when asked if he had once been a street fighter, replied very strongly that he still was.

The variety of colours to the shop and bar fronts seem to fit in, even the gaudy ones looked right. They reminded me that on our last visit to Ireland in 1996 we met a couple from Sweden, and the wife, who appeared to be knowledgeable on the history of Ireland, informed us that the colourful false fronts of the old western towns of the 1800's in America were created by the Irish immigrants who had escaped the potato famine.

That evening we had a BBQ on the beach having bought the necessary food in Westport and later visited Gaynor's Bar.

Tuesday, 27th May.

Today we had planned the ascent of the Tonalee Horseshoe. Four tops with the highest just around 2100ft. There are no tracks on these mountains and the approaches, all from sea level, are quite steep. The tops had been covered in mist but cleared as we approached the first summit. The views were magnificent and as we looked down Killary Sound towards the Atlantic Ocean we could see the Mweelrea Mountains, a magnificent ridged horseshoe with the highest of the several tops rising above 2700ft.



McHale's Bar in Westport.

Our descent down Tonalee was without incident apart from Allan leaving his sweater near the summit and Peter having to go back for it. Later we went for a bike ride.

We dined at the Village Grill in Leenane and later visited Gaynor's. Hillary Gaynor, the landlord, had arranged for us to go sea fishing out of Ballynakill Harbour near Letterfrack. The organisation was called Ocean Alive and provided all the necessary equipment. Austin and Peter decided to give this a miss and would go mountain biking instead.

Wednesday, 28th May.

Our fishing trip was not due to start until 2 p.m. So after breakfast we took the opportunity of driving down the side of Killary Sound with the aim of visiting the YHA at Rosloe near the mouth of the Sound. The map indicated that we could get most of the way by car. It was a rough gravel road and after a couple of miles or so we came across a farmer stacking turf(peat) at the side of the road. He touched his hat and said good morning, and we responded. About half a mile later we came to a gate with a notice that said 'No cars beyond this point'. We turned back and as we arrived at the farmer, Tony said, "We went the wrong way". He nodded his head and said "I know". He then went on to direct us the right way.

When we arrived at Rosloe, which is a tiny little harbour. We were more than surprised at the size of the almost brand new YHA.

A later investigation would show facilities for twenty to thirty persons. Further down the harbour was a salmon farm. On the harbour wall was a currach or currach, the longer version of the coracle. The only person who builds them lives in Rosloe and he is retiring next year when he is ninety!

We drove from Rosloe to Letterfrack and then on to Renvyle. Here we came across a number a new thatched cottages which appear to have been built for renting out. We got the details from the local grocer.

It was time to go fishing so we made our way to Ocean Alive and were directed to the quay below Tully Mountain in Ballynakill Harbour.

We introduced ourselves to John, the owner and skipper. Besides the four of us there were three American girls, (late teens, early twenties) who were staying at one of the girls grandmothers, (we passed their house high up on the cliffs) and two brothers from England who stay at their fathers house in the area and were obviously close friends of John. I couldn't decide whether they were there to fish or assist us - in any case they were pleasant people.

Our booking was from 2 to 5 p.m. On the way out of the harbour John took us close to the cliffs and we could see the gulls and guillemots nesting. We also saw seals from a distance.

Then came the time for fishing. We were not using bait, simply dropping the line to the bottom, then lifting it up and down. Within a couple of minutes we were pulling mackerel out. There was obviously a shoal going past and everyone seemed to be successful. After a while the fish stopped biting so we moved to another area. This time John put bait on one of the three hooks and hoped that we might pull-in some cod or pollock. No-one landed a cod but the pollock got larger and larger. The biggest being caught by one of the Americans. When the time ran out my arms and shoulders were aching with reeling the fish in.

On the way back to shore Tony and Allan filleted as many fish as we needed for a BBQ tomorrow. When the Americans took their share there still seemed to be plenty left. So we took two large pollock and a mackerel for Hillary. Presumably John would have the rest.

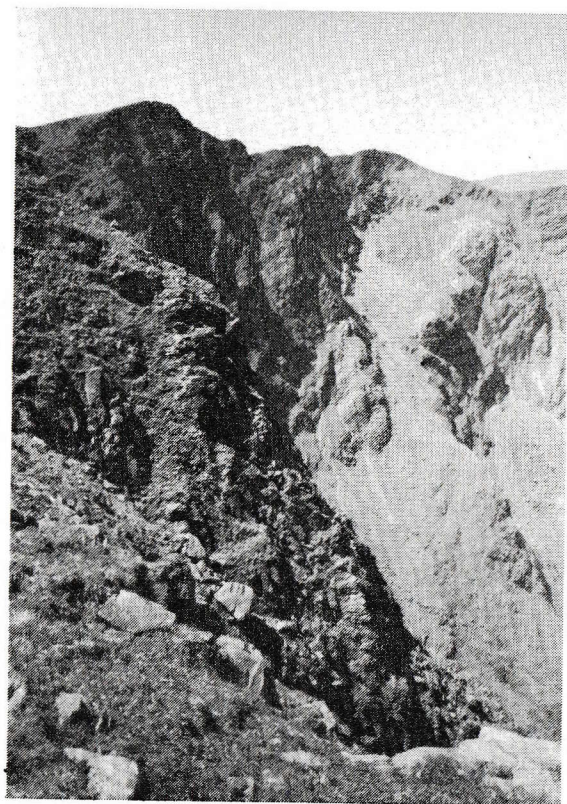
Rather than going straight back to Leenane we decided to go into Clifden for a meal. This we did then home via the monument to Alcock and Brown who landed just outside Clifden after their flight from America.

It was late evening when we arrived in Leenane, so after a shower and a change we went to Gaynor's with Hillary's fish. John must have told him what we were bringing him, because he was stood at the door waiting for us. After another pleasant night we retired to rest before the Mweelrea Horseshoe tomorrow.

Thursday, 29th May.

This morning we breakfasted and quickly prepared for the days exploits. The sky was cloudless and we realised that we were in for a hard day with the Mweelrea range rising straight out of the sea and having to walk in blistering heat. We wasted no time and left Leenane before 10 a.m. stopping for a few minutes at the Aasleagh Falls on the way out of Leenane. This is were the fight took place between John Wayne And Victor McLaughlin in the film, 'The Quiet Man', the female star was Maureen O'Hara. Certainly Leenane seems to be popular for filming and fighting.

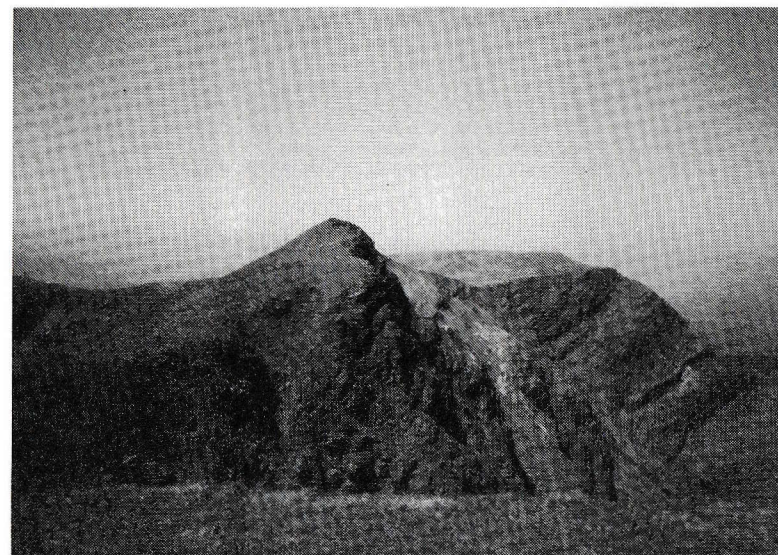
We left the cars outside the Outdoor Pursuits Centre at Delphi and began our walk. We had to make our own way up the trackless hill aiming for a ridge at about 1500ft. At first the ground was boggy then as the hillside became steeper it was deep grass and we tried to follow sheep trods were we could. On reaching the ridge the ground was more rocky and easier to cross. This ridge would lead us to the first top but not before the ground became even more steeper. As we moved on the ridge the right hand side was a vertical drop down sheer rock faces, I would guess in the region of 1000ft or more. The left hand side was very steep loose ground, so we were really confined to the ridge.



The north side of Ben Bury or Oughty Craggy, 2640ft, in the Mweelrea Mountains.

There were three of these ridges, the first at approximately 2400ft the second at 2500ft and the third, Ben Bury or Oughty Craggy, at around 2600ft. We then descended to 2100ft and then had the final pull up to Mweelrea at 2700ft. The views over the Atlantic Ocean were amazing, the islands of Govern, Frehill, Crump, Cather, Inishturk and Inishbofin were all visible as well as some smaller islands with round towers in the mouth of Killary Sound. It was worth the effort just for the views.

Our descent started down a very steep grass ridge, I imagine that it would be extremely dangerous in wet weather. In fact one Irishman we spoke to that night said that although he hadn't been up it he believed that to descend you had to sit on the ridge with legs hanging over both sides. Rather an exaggeration but it did make the point.



Mweelrea Cnoc Maol Reidh - 2700ft.

We continued our descent off the horseshoe but then had a four mile walk over very rough ground down the valley back to Delphi. There was no lingering here, it was BBQ night and Peter had invited half the village, we only had five fishes and none of us capable of performing miracles!

Anticipating problems, Simon and Allan had asked Dorothy Gaynor to buy some extras, like steak and salads, salad dressings, etc. Tony's worry was if everyone arrived at the same time, he only had a little BBQ stove to cook on, though we had plenty of wine and beer to distract attention until everything was ready. However, the problem was solved by the six of us eating before anyone else arrived, allowing plenty of time and space for the chef. About ten or twelve others arrived and enjoyed a good meal and good company.

We later visited Gaynor's for a nightcap!

Friday, 30th May.

Simon was flying from Connaught Airport to Manchester on his way to Newcastle for a stag party. The rest of us were going to Achill Island for the day and would drop Simon off in Westport. This we did, he was going by taxi to Connaught, so we carried on to Achill.

When I was on Achill last year with Margaret I was struck by the number of new cottages, literally hundreds of them, but there appeared to be little work. A number would hold fishermen and farmers, though for the latter there was very little arable land, so what everyone else did is a mystery.

Even before we reached Achill we came across the tourist route called Atlantic Drive. This gave a very picturesque view of the coastal scenery and was well worth the diversion. We eventually arrived at Keel which is about as far as the metal road goes, then stopped for a bite to eat. I found the rest of the prints by John Dickson that I had been looking for (we bought one last year when I visited with Margaret and we wanted to complete the set). After a snack we drove up to the abandoned village above Keel. The village, which contains at a guess about thirty to forty ruined cottages all without chimneys, seems to have two stories for its history. The first is that the village was built by a religious cult, apparently Christian, who farmed the area but were also accepted by the local Catholics. The second story is that it was built by farmers who grazed their cattle on the hillside in the summer months and who lived in the cottages. Both stories come from good sources, the first had been read about in an information book, the second was related to a group of children by their teacher whilst we were within hearing. So maybe it is a little of both.

On our way back to Leenane we stopped for a meal in Westport. Then we visited Gaynor's.

Saturday, 31st May.

Our plan for today was to bike right down the side of Killary Sound to the YHA and salmon farm. However, there was an Annual Curragh Race in the afternoon in the harbour of Leenane so we wanted to back by 3.00pm.

It was another beautiful day as we set off. Allan's bike was on the blink so he was using Simon's. On our way down the rough road we met up with Paddy, the Irishman who had guided us the other day and who we had a drink with in Gaynor's. After passing the time of day and a chat about his turf digging we carried on down the Sound. Soon the roughly metalled road ran out and we followed a grass track on the cliffs above the water. After a while it became very rough and we were continuously dismounting and pushing or carrying the bikes. We saw a herd of goats high up on the cliffs, whether they were wild or not we never found out.

We eventually arrived at Rosloe and the YHA. We did hope to go to the salmon farm but were informed by a local man (who turned out to be the 89 year old curragh maker) that there was no-one to show us around and we couldn't visit the farm. We had a quick look around the YHA, very plush and modern, and as mentioned before very large, for such an isolated place.

Our next destination was Glassillaun which had a lovely inviting beach. Allan, Derek and Tony had a dip in the Atlantic Ocean, Austin and Peter had more sense. It was icy cold and no-one stayed in for more than a few minutes - but at least we had swum in the Atlantic. We had bought scones and a drink at the local post office, so we downed these and set off back to Leenane, unfortunately against a strong headwind.



Curragh racing on Killary Sound.

We were back in time for the curragh racing which started about 4.00pm. The curraghs were specially made for racing, all the same size and each carried a crew of three. There were four curraghs racing with teams from Gaynor's, Hamilton's, O'Donnells and the Salmon Farm.

The start was erratic to say the least with the starter and his assistants treating it seriously, whilst the oarsmen were out for a bit of fun. The starter used a twelve-bore rifle to start the race and the recoil nearly threw him out of his boat. One or two of the curraghs had difficulty in keeping a straight course, in fact the Hamilton's seemed to be going in circles. The race was won by the Salmon Farm team, which was expected, with Gaynor's in second place.

After a meal in the Village Grill we all went to Mass at 7.30. Then it was back to change and for the first time we had a drink in Hamilton's - which is next door to Gaynor's. The bar was busy. Even though it was warm outside the midges were driving everyone in. We changed pubs about 10.15 and spent the rest of the night in Gaynor's.

Sunday. 1st June.

We were sailing from Dun Laoghaire at 4 p.m. so we didn't waste time in the morning. We had packed the trailer on Saturday and it was just a case of saying our farewells to the King family at Killary House and then calling at Gaynor's to say goodbye to Hillary and Dorothy.

It had been a splendid week and we had been blessed with magnificent weather, friendly natives and good food and drink. Is this going to be the first of many?

WELSH JUNIOR MEET 1997.

Ciaran Limmer.

Juniors involved:

The Merediths - David, Joe, Libby and Alex.

The Wilsons - Andrew, Mike and Becky.

The Greens - Joel, Debbie and Robert.

Chris Daniels, Jake and Oliver.

Ciaran and Tris Limmer.

Liliya Nourislamova

Carl?

Adults: John Meredith, Terry Wilson, Wyn Wilson, Arthur Daniels, Margaret Conroy, Robert and Dianne Green.

Faz, Dot, Ray and Anne Wallace.

Saturday, 12th July.

A good crowd of juniors attended the Meet, including a visitor from Moscow!

Liliya was staying with my family to improve her English. She'd never done any climbing before but she said she'd have a go!

The weather on Saturday was great, Faz and Ray set up two climbs for the older kids in the morning and the younger kids came later. Dot set up another small climb for them and brought more ropes for us. Altogether we had five climbs going at once.

When we got back we were all forced to eat cherries by Terry! All the kids had a monster game of Cheat with about 17 players.

Sunday began with Faz's massive breakfast of shredded wheat. Liliya couldn't believe people really ate it! It was another brilliant hot day so we all set off to the beach on Anglesey. During the day most of the junior members were buried in the sand but we never managed an adult!

Everyone had a great time so thanks to Faz, Dot and Ray and everyone who helped out.

Around the Huts

Beckstones.

Hut Warden - Joyce Foster.

Joyce is concerned that the NT wardens have moved out of the end cottage and also the Acorn group (NT volunteers) are not now using the hut as a base for their summer activities. Has the NT something planned and are not telling us? Apart from this the hut continues to be used by many members and is a popular area of the Lake District.

Bishop's Scale.

Hut Warden - Arthur Daniels.

The Management Committee has appointed Arthur Daniels as the new hut warden. Arthur replaces Alan Kenny who is now Vice-Chairman of the Club.

Arthur will be taking stock and intends to continue the improvements already put into action by Alan, the immediate one being the extension to the women's dormitory.

Dunmail.

Hut Warden - David Ogden.

Improvements continue to be made in the hut and the usage is increasing, especially at weekends. The aim is now to try and attract school parties and others for mid-week bookings. David is tireless in his efforts to keep the hut running smoothly, because unlike our other properties, it is not used by members so he has to rely on his own small committee to help to maintain the hut.

Many of the bookings are made by mountaineering clubs and a female member of a party staying just before Christmas rang Joan Ogden for some information. (All the instructions for visitors are clear and precise. Where all the relevant switches are, information re cookers, coal, the generator, etc.) This person wanted to know which was the best way round the hut to get to the generator house. She was phoning from Grasmere to Blackpool!

Tyn Twr.

Hut Warden - Anne Wallace.

The hut continues to fulfil our expectations and Anne keeps it well furnished with all the necessities that are required. I am surprised at the number of members who have not yet stayed there. They don't know what they are missing!