

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW  
14 JUL 1973  
LIBRARY



*Dedicated to  
Brian and Patrick*



30114015036729

## Glasgow University Mountaineering Club

### Committee 1991/92

President.....	Mark Sanderson
Vice President.....	Fiona Watson
Secretary.....	Brian Doogan
Treasurer.....	Dave Robertson (he sounds handsome)
Assistant Treasurer.....	Susannah Miles
Transport.....	Thomas Krauss
Equipment.....	John Kavenagh
Hut Custodian.....	Brian Dougan
Ordinary Members.....	Heidi Fraser, Simon Boa



*Such a manly president?*

## Editorial

### Pauline Hadow

Well here we are, another year later another incredibly exciting journal! but me as ed - come back Mark all is forgiven.

So it's time to look back over the past year. As usual the club has been very active on and especially off the hill.

The 50th Anniversary meet last year was very successful and it was good to see that past members don't change - still enjoy a damn good party even



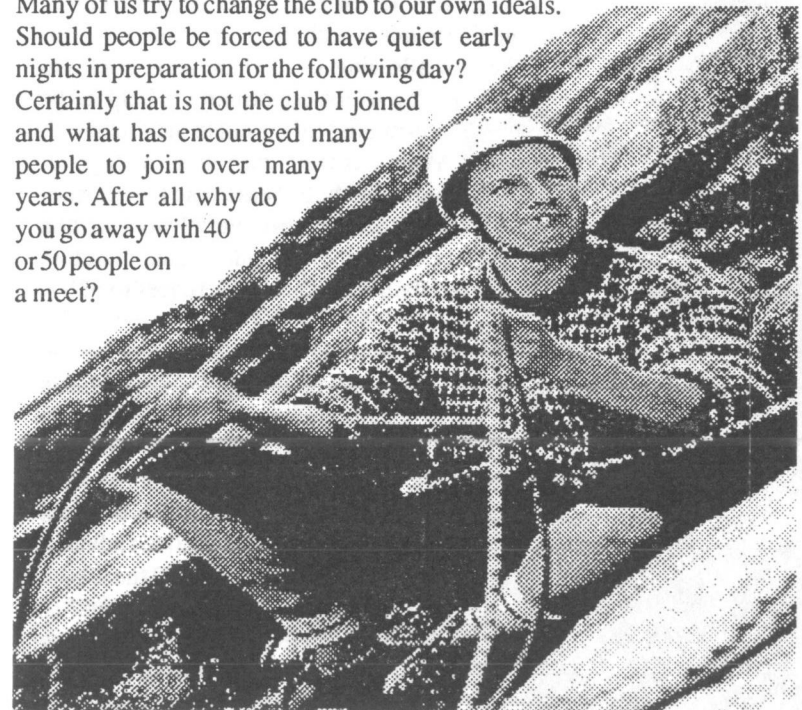
*Think's he's Mr Cool - well Sanya?*

if mountaineering has had to be curtailed. Well that will be us sooner or later - some unkind people will say sooner for me!

This year boasts an especially huge membership. Hopefully many off our newer members will stay and become part off the old core that keeps the club going. But what kind of club is this? Do we have to live up to the best climbers to be part of the club? Well obviously not or I wouldn't have lasted long!! However looking at these posers - climbing doesn't look too stressful. Even Mark Bulpit doesn't seem to have a problem **going up!**

We have a pretty unique club in that we are not recognised for our skills - no medals, no glory - but who needs them! We have a damned good time without them - which by the way is well recognised although probably not praised! We can escape from the formalities of society into the freed of the hills. But are we escaping from reality or going into reality?

Many of us try to change the club to our own ideals. Should people be forced to have quiet early nights in preparation for the following day? Certainly that is not the club I joined and what has encouraged many people to join over many years. After all why do you go away with 40 or 50 people on a meet?



*Life's hard on the rope!*



which made the ground shake and us thinking "fuck, we've had it!". But Patrick was keener than most of us there, Neil and he stuck it out and grabbed an ascent of the Chère Couloir while the rest of us had slunk off to Verdon for some easy hedonism.

Then there were the meets in Scotland, hand-on-heart, the best times in my life and I think in Patrick's too. The fresher's meet to Ballachulish - Patrick's home. "Drunk as a Lord" and as offensive as hell, the egg and spoon race in the village hall, Patrick's devastating aim with an egg as I tried to leg it from the room. Waking up next day in the minibus and feeling guilty at the mess and the paraffin blowing and then tidying the place up. Jason, Neil, Patrick and I played croquet and shinty on Patrick's lawn that day and picked magic mushrooms then we all went for a beach walk at Cuil Bay.

There's a photo of Patrick and Neil on the ferry to Arran last May, both hugely hungover, sleeping on the seats on the upper deck and all the 'normal' people giving them a wide berth - the 'pond life' as Patrick loved to call them. Doing South Ridge Direct that day and all three of us camera trigger happy and so inspired by the beauty of the place. Then there's the other side of it. Patrick and Neil arriving at the bottom of Pumpkin on Creag Meagaidh, Patrick maintained that conditions were perfect, but Neil didn't want to do the route - boy was Patrick pissed off about that one!

Where does it all go?

The 50th anniversary meet at the Kingie. Murray, Duncan, Patrick and Neil did Hammer on the Etive Slabs. Jason and Patrick and I made a curry that night - the main ingredient was peach melba yogurt - but it was too cold outside to eat it so we just went and got pissed instead. Neil won some whisky, Patrick and I drunk it then we had a beer and curry fight in the Lounge Bar - and Jason and he burnt my straw hat.

There was the humour and the wonder and the excitement of it all - always laughing, always yearning for the next absurd experience. Getting stoned on magic-mushroom tea and going to the Aragon afterwards - wide eyed and giggling like complete imbeciles. Patrick as tactless as always - "Stut, you've got a big nose" - then more uncontrollable laughter. Murray, Patrick's landlord, gleefully disposing of Patrick's home brew because it tasted disgusting. Playing 'Chuckies' in Lawrence street at midnight, normal people thinking "What planet are those guys from?"

There was New Year at Ballachulish house - a complete riot. Patrick ruled the dancing with a rod of iron - "Get up and dance you BASTARDS" and there was Brian also - him and Stuart scoffing a whole chicken and then most of the carcass as well.

Standing at Patrick's graveside is the hardest thing we've ever had to do. That writhing oh-so-tangible empathy with so many people. But there is so much good comes out of a moment like that and we have all become much closer for it and Patrick's family are a part of the GUM club now. That night we had a brilliant party at Ballachulish house, everyone telling their most depraved jokes and stories and always laughing and getting pissed with Patrick's family.

There's one final tragic irony in all this: Patrick always used to say "It's about time the GUM club had a death!" - fucking hell we got two at once - Patrick and Brian. But it was a joke, and that is how we'll remember Patrick - the impish little joker with the bemused shrug that epitomised his happy-go-lucky attitude to life, the universe and everything.

And he had the last laugh, you know? Lorraine, Suzann, Susannah, Jason, Neil, Patrick and I had dinner parties every Tuesday night (Patrick's condensed milk soup with added carrot!). The day he died, it was his turn to cook and he'd prepared the food the night before. After we got the news, we decided we'd still eat it. There was the soup which Susannah heated up. It looked kinda funny - like dishwater - and tasted of... garlic? chicken? who knows? Anyway it turns out that he didn't complete the soup and had only done the stock - he'll be laughing about that one now.

An obituary is a very hard thing to write, forgive my stream of consciousness style and the swear words, but that is how Patrick lived. On behalf of the GUM club and John, Patrick's dad, Liz his Mum, Claire his sister and Seamus and Ian his brothers we'd just like to say one thing...

**Slainté Mhath, Patrick.**

## The Ascent of Clachaig Slabs.

Stuart Wilson

I met Brian for the first time in the Research Club bar late one Friday night in November 1984. Although this meeting marked the start of a great friendship it left both of us with only the dimmest of memories; it was through the GUM club that Brian and I really got to know each other and, on the club's Arctic Norway trip, Brian, myself and an individual by the name of Borre Johann Kitellson, made the first ascent of that classic route Clachaig Slabs.

Johann hailed from Bergen and visiting the North of Norway on a family holiday. He walked into our camp one night to tell us how, for several weeks, he had been eyeing up a tongue of ice which hung down from the Frostisen Ice cap. He then went on to explain how he was a mountaineer of considerable experience with ascents of Killimanjaro, Mount Kenya and Tirich Mere and an attempt on Everest to his credit; that he had grown tired of the quiet domesticity offered by his wife and children; that a quick ascent of this hitherto unclimbed icefall was just what he needed to recharge his batteries and were we interested in coming along to second the route? "It will be easy" he said, "climb the rocks to the glacier and then climb the ice". Johann looked the part – sun bleached hair, a bronzed firm body, well muscled limbs. Many a GUU rugger bugger has found to his cost that GUM club girls have high standards, but Andrea, Rhona and Susan were positively wilting at the sight of Johann – what else could we do but agree to go along!!

One advantage of climbing in the Arctic is that, at least in the summer, it never gets dark. The weather was good so Johann suggested an immediate start. One of his friends ran us across the fjord in his dingy and at just before one in the morning we landed at the ruins of a long deserted farm and set off up an incredibly steep slope of loose, moss-covered scree. Johann's rather more obvious eccentricities started to come to light at this point – he decided that the walk in would be more comfortable in his rock boots and so stuffed his plastic boots into his rucksac. As we set off he asked if we had come via Newcastle – he had apparently been there when he represented Norway in the 10,000 m at Gateshead stadium! This seemed quite plausible if the rate at which he shot off up the scree slope was anything to go by. He paused only

once to pick up a handfull of dung which he thrust under my nose – "Raindeer shit" he excalimed with obvious delight!!

The ground soon steepened into compact rock slabs and it was time to gear up. It was at this point that it became patently obvious that Johann was not quite the man we first thought he was. We patiently explained to him that he need not don his fur-lined double Gallibriers and foot fangs just yet, helped him into his harness, and showed him how to tie a figure of eight: 'climbing on a double rope' does not entail tying the two strands together into a single length. Once these slight difficulties had been overcome we set off up the slabs. The first few hundred feet were very pleasant climbing at about Diff standard on very compact slabby rock. Johann had lost his earlier enthusiasm for leading and was now happy to follow every pitch. At one point the climbing steepened to give a pitch of about severe – Norway's answer to Chris Bonnington was not happy but eventually won through. Strangely enough he was as enthusiastic as ever to tackle his icefall. This



*Brian showing his excellent crampon strap technique.*

convinced us that the man's contact with reality was rather tenuous – the approach to the icefall's snout would have entailed climbing for several hundred feet up steepening, glacier polished slabs under a continual bombardment of rocks and water. We proposed a line slightly to the right which took us out into the sun up a line of slabs and he grudgingly agreed.

By now it was mid morning and the insect life was out in force. I have never seen flying insects which can inflict such a painful bite as Norwegian clegs (Tabanids for the Zoologists amongst you) which can bite through wooly socks and draw blood. Once you add in the highland midges and swarms of mosquitoes climbing delicate slabs becomes quite an undertaking!! Our route followed a series of loose, vegetated, wet slabs interspersed with sections of vertical vegetation for several pitches – no protection and absolutely useless belays all the way. The best approach turned out to be simply to follow one of the streams which fell down the route; at one point Brian was obliged to belay in a waterfall!! Eventually we emerged below a beautiful dry white slab which provided one of the hardest pitches of the route. Climbed without rucksacs it went at about 4b in a straight, protectionless runout which still didn't *quite* reach a stance!! Johann had clearly never been on such hard ground in his life and nearly had a seizure; he arrived at the stance and clipped into the belay with almost indecent haste. I then started to haul the sacks up but Johann, clearly worn out by the terrors of the last pitch produced a tobacco pouch, rolled himself a Gauloise and lay back to enjoy the sun.

The next few pitches consisted of rotten vegetated rock but the ground soon steepened into a solid, blocky wall which we followed on fantastic holds to the top. Getting back to our campsite involved traversing the Frostisen Glacier to enable us to descend into another valley which would lead back to the head of the fjord. Brian patiently explained to Johann that now was the time for the double Gallibriers and foot fangs and that no – we shouldn't put the rope away just yet. His boots were then dug out of his rucksac and put on with the minimum of delay – “at least he can tie his laces” said Brian under his breath. We then set off across the glacier in the traditional chain gang style. Our progress was interrupted after about 15 minutes as Johann's feet were too hot. He solved this problem by removing his boots and socks, sitting with his feet on the ice for a few minutes, putting a few lumps of snow into his boots and then putting them back on over his bare feet. Once we set off again Johann disappeared up to his armpits in a crevasse – this unnerved him slightly and from then on he kept the rope so tight that Brian was under

the impression that he was towing him along.

We eventually left the ice and set off down; Johann's earlier fitness and enthusiasm returned and he shot off like a scalded cat. Brian and I limped into the campsite at about nine that evening after about twenty hours on the hoof. Johann had taken up residence, helped himself to Brian's whisky and was giving his account of our epic to his assembled admirers. If nothing else Johann was an incredible egotist and, the next day, he returned in the company of two journalists who wanted to take our photographs for the local paper!!! The following day the entire story appeared in *Fremover*. One of the photographs included a dotted line ascending the icefall of Johann's dreams by the most direct route!!

It is only in the last few weeks that the text of this article has been translated from Norwegian – it quite clearly states that Brian and I had were experienced mountaineers who had climbed Mount Everest together!!!

## A MAN MUST CLIMB

By Showell Styles

A man must climb his mountain-side of years  
And from each conquered height of age and fame  
Look down above the precipice of fears,  
The bogs of doubt, and see the way he came.  
How every venturous mile was rich with gifts,  
Streams where he thirsted, scented turf for rest,  
And so press on into the mountain rifts,  
No wanderer, but along expected guest,  
Until he feels full in his face and free  
The summit wind of high eternity.

## An Amiable Severe

David Ramsay

“Any fool can climb on good rock, but it takes craft and cunning to get up vegetative schist and granite” - J.H.B.Bell.

On a Sunday morning, late last summer, three GUM club members converged on Glencoe. There was Paul, newly graduated, there was Mark, our illustrious president and there was me. Our object that day was to scale Clachaig Gully.

Anyone who has visited Glencoe must have been aware of this giant cleft, which starts a few hundred feet above the hotel and continues, almost to the top of Sgurr nam Fiannaidh. I don't know who first attempted to climb the gully; Nomman Collie tried in 1894 but was forced to retreat by traversing to the right. The first successful attempt was made by W.H.Murray and party in 1938. Since then the route has become a classic of its kind.

I should say at this point, that a Scottish gully climb is a very different animal from, say, a delicate toe-traverse across sun-warmed granite, or a dynamic lay-back crack. A gully has, of course, a burn. That, after all, is its *raison d'être*. The waterfalls and plunge-pools formed by its progress downhill from the basis of the gully-climber's route. Naturally, anywhere that one gets large quantities of water in a confined space, one also gets vegetation, usually luxuriant in the extreme. Holds are covered in damp moss, potential gear placements are full of ferns, belay ledges contain stunted trees. In addition to all this, gullies often follow natural lines of weakness in the mountainside and so the rock therein tends to be fractured and unsound. Gully climbing is not technical mountaineering; you do it for your character, to instil moral fibre.

It was the Victorians who started it, of course. The likes of Collie, Raeburn and Naismith seemed to delight in scaling the most overgrown routes they could find. I'm not mocking this; they, and similar plucky chaps laid the basis of mountaineering in this country, but their choice of route does seem to typify the turn-of-the-century world in which they lived. One feels that Scott of the Antarctic would have enjoyed gully climbing.





In favour of this particular route, it must be said that it has a very short walk-in; within a few minutes we had passed a fan of debris and reached the foot of the gully. Initially, nothing could be easier, as we splashed upstream (we wore big boots, as per tradition). Then, gradually, the boulders in the stream bed became too big to step over or walk around and we found ourselves climbing. I must admit I felt uneasy on the first little waterfall which we ascended. It felt awkward and, frankly, too hard for something which Paul had just soloed with ease. Then I realised my mistake. I was trying to stay dry. This is against the rules of gully climbing. Once I stopped attempting to hold myself out of the water, the holds felt much more natural and I was able to scale this difficulty with ease.

After more pleasant scrambling, we reached a waterfall which looked to be best avoided by a wall on its right. I was pushed to the front and, after roping up, led up this, using a small tree half way up as protection. It was easier than it looked, and soon all three of us stood at the top. We were deep inside the gully now and its sides rose high above us on either side. Looking back, we could see the Clachaig Inn framed by two edges of rock. The vegetation was indeed luxuriant, with honeysuckle and rowan scrambling for the light; Mark found some wild raspberries, which were delicious.

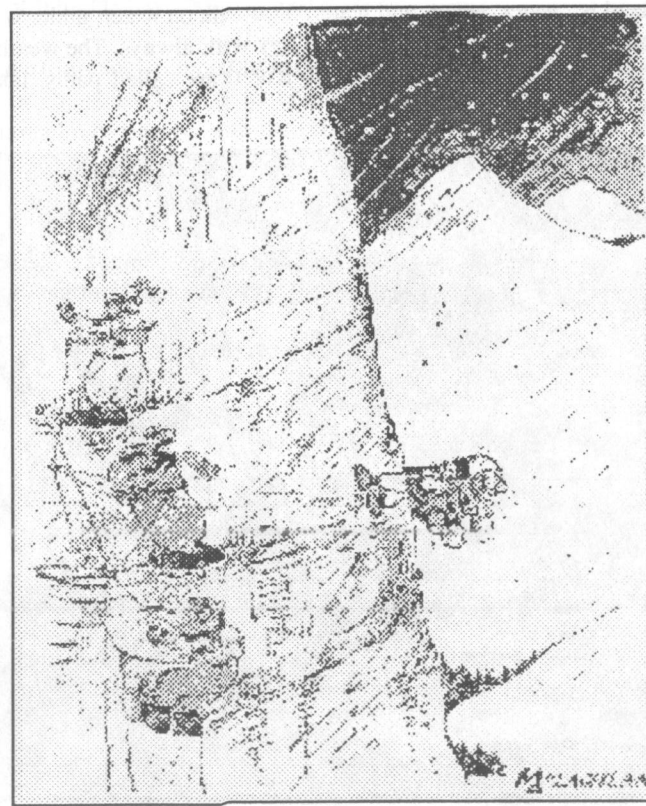
Duly refreshed, we splashed on. The next difficulty was another waterfall with an alternative route on its right consisting of a broken set of slabs. We tried these first. They were damp, slimy and full of loose rock and soil, as each of us in turn proved (the largest rock dislodged was about two feet across). Then Paul attempted the waterfall. We were all fairly wet at this point, but Paul now achieved almost total immersion as he thruted his way up the wet rock. He managed to see over the fall to the pool beyond, but could find no way of pulling himself up against the rush of water. I am sorry to say that this was the highest point we reached in Clachaig Gully. I think we were just below the Great Cave Pitch. We flapped about for a while, trying variants to our previous routes, but to no avail. Then one of us voiced the unspoken thoughts of the other two and we began to descend, vowing to return on a drier day.

We descended easily for a small distance, with myself bringing up the rear. When down-climbing one section the others were startled by a strangled cry from me. Thinking I had broken a leg at least, they turned, to discover that my outburst was caused by icy water flowing into my underpants (it was a hot day and I had almost dried out from my previous dowsing).

Escape was not trivial; we could not descend all the way by the gully itself, as some stretches were too steep to down-climb. After some exploration, we found an ill-defined ledge and made our way out onto the open hillside with the help of an uprooted tree which moved downwards slightly as each of us stood on it. We retired to the Clachaig, to console ourselves with alcohol, pool and an open fire.

In retrospect, we probably got as far as Dr Collie, and possibly utilised the same escape route. I can't say that I found the route either amiable or a severe( terms used by Murray to describe one of the later pitches ), but it was an enjoyable adventure.

Anyone fancy the Chasm next summer?



*"I wish the blasted sherpas would learn to climb properly!"*

## Basks in the Highlands

**Inigo, Alex, Patxi.**

A lot of thoughts about the highlands have changed since we arrived to Glasgow 3 months ago. We just knew from a magazine about the famous ice climbing routes in the Ben Nevis.

We imagined the highlands much more rocky - not the smooth bold pass slopes. Just in the arriving someone told us that mountain here would be difficult due to the weather.

Scotland is.. water, water, and water. You walk on water, under water.... and scottish mountaineers are mad! **They walk always.** The weather, the conditions... who gives THE SHIT. Rivers are called paths, lakes are fields....



*Basks watering the highlands!*

Inspite of all these references Inigo brought his rock climbing gear. He didn't know that all he was going to climb was a table in a hut. That was great fun and we are sure THAT SPORT is going to be very famous in the Pyrennes next summer. Inigo is going to PRACTICE this Christmas holidays TO GET IT next term. The highlands are not a joke and very good equipment is necessary. Umbrellas, summer trekking boots, cotton trousers and non waterproof jackets have to be suprised(???) from Basks equipment next term.

But a lot off positive experience have been lived with the GUM this term. We have seen a lot of wonderful places ( although sometimes the weather was very cloudy.....). We have meet a lot of warm and nice people ( everyone knows if we are talking about him or not ) and very good, funny and warm nights have been spent this term.

We have to apologise about our English - sometimes in the talks we are like posts or chairs BUT THIS IS GOING TO IMPROVE because we are learning a lot of English with the GUM. Next year the slogan of the club could be "Learn quickly and Easily English with the GUM".

The last thing we want to mention is that although we know some of the others club's people in the GU, the people in the GUM is the most friendly nice and warm. Thanks for care.

### **The Bask gang**

ed note : Although asked to edit, I thought revenge was in order-  
YOU DID LAUGH AT MY SPANISH!

---

### **'Scape1 : Victoria Bridge, Inveroran**

To the west, ninety years of growth are sudden on relentless moor. A pine tree is an exclamation mark to punctuate the tired interrogatives of distance, height; in the evening it puckers twilight to cool kiss, fit for departures.

*Andrew Ogilvie*

# The Tale of Team Top

Mark Sanderson

"When the weather is foul and the rain is coming down in sheets, there is only one thing to do."

"Get back to bed.", I murmured

"The only thing to do", he sternly continued, "is to climb the hardest route on the mountain."

"Why ?", I asked briskly.

"Go to a hard climb and you forget the weather - all your interest goes to the rock."

from Mountaineering in Scotland by W. H. Murray.

It was very wet and very windy. The waves were crashing on the shore, god I hate sea level starts. The bus was parked outside a croft called 'Graceland'.

"Huh, Elvis is alive and well and living in Arnisdale", said someone as we got into our bad weather gear.

It was a good pace, no point in mucking about, the only fresher who came got burned off after 20 minutes. Reached 500 metres in about half an hour, another guy turned back, no waterproof trousers. Wind started to get strong, rain turned to snow, ice axes out, crawled to the ridge. The wind went mental on that ridge, caused us to stand more firm than the fence posts on its crest. Somehow we managed to reach the first peak and stopped for food.

Hang on let me turn that down for a second. I think it is getting a tiny bit self indulgent. You see the problem is that I got hassled by the editor, Pauline (I suspect I will be controlled by Paulines all my life) to write an article.

"Why not one about that Sunday at Kintail", she suggested helpfully, "you know, Team Top and all that stuff."

"Yeah, great idea, no problem !", I thought.

But like all mountaineering stories, you really had to be there. Don't get me wrong it was probably some of the worst conditions I've ever walked in and considering we got to the top 10 minutes faster than the recommended time it was pretty impressive stuff. But being the pessimistic bastard I can sometimes be, I can't help wondering if it was wise to be up there. While we were on the ridge getting blown off our feet another bunch of 'GUMers' were sitting in the Cluanie being told that the last time it was this bad round here people died. They do say that people who partake in 'dangerous sports' are likely to dismiss an accident that happens to someone as a mistake made by the person rather than to accept that the sport is actually dangerous. If Bill Murray had fallen off that day he would've been called a fucking lunatic, but he didn't fall so he had an epic instead. Most people who read this will've criticised someone's judgment after an accident but then again most will've had their own personnel epic too. The trouble is you never know how close an epic gets to being a disaster till its too late. Anyway enough of this maudlin talk, I'm as guilty as the next man, I'll just turn the volume back up...

As we entered the hall we slowly realised that we were the only ones to have reached the summit cairn that day, all others had given in. My sister turned back because she's sensible, Rogardt, despite wearing a plastic bag on his head, got soaked and had to retreat, the crowd walking the glen towards the falls of Glomach gave up because it was boring and even Thomas and Heidi turned back as well, but that was because they were wimps.

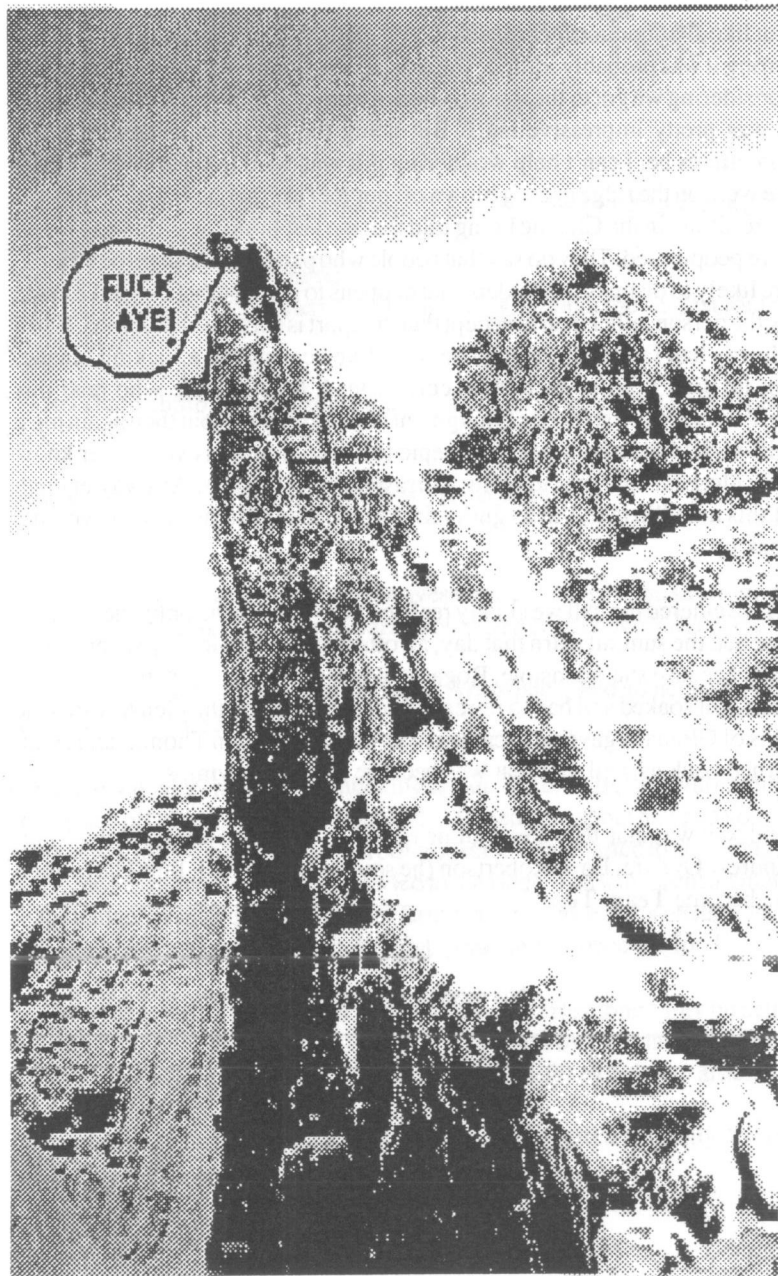
And so it was that that day Pauline Haddow, Andrew Holmes, John King, Andrew Ogilvie, Dave Robertson (he sounds handsome), Iain Thayne and me became **Team Top**:

No mountain too high,

No wind too strong

and

No Germans !



## Problem Page

### Jason Cummings

Dear Agony Uncle,

I'd like to draw your attention to those members of the GUM Club who persist in making noise into the early hours of the morning on all the meets which I have attended.

I feel that it is about time somebody rooted out this rowdy element and made it clear to them that the majority of the club feel that their childish antics cannot continue !!

The club is there for those who wish to walk, and enjoy the countryside and the peace, not for children who wish to play childish drinking games.

A Concerned Wifey.

Dear Wifey,

The club is there to enable hill walkers and climbers of varying degrees to enjoy the social aspects of our particular pastime.

I do agree that sometimes, members do go a little overboard, but if you are not able to accept this from time to time, then maybe you are in the wrong club.

People cannot mind read (atleast, most can't), so if you have a problem, tell the people concerned, at the time it is happening, what's the point in crying after it's happened.

Considerate Me.

Dear Irish Bastard,

It has come to my attention that persons are bringing tents on meets. This is both anti-social, and deeply selfish, it must stop !!

Anonimous.

Dear A.,

If you wish to listen to these people making noises, then you can always walk outside you know.

Everyone take note, 'A little effort can bring much enjoyment'.

J.C.

Dear Mr. Problem Man,

I have a deeply distressing secret, my willy seems to shrink whilst on the meets. I have no idea why this occurs, but I have noticed the lack of free women.

Mr.S.M. Allcock.

Dear Mr. Allcock,

Although I must agree with you on the 'Horn Bag' front (El Pres. coined that phrase in Dundonnall), I do not think that this is the root of your problem.

There are two possibilities, one, the cold shrinks it ( mine shrinks to 12 inches on a very cold day), or two, you have a small willy.

If number one is the case, then consider it an advantage in the days after the meet, you must lay aside considerable time to warm it up again !! You might even get a friend to help !

P.M.

Dear Sir,

It's my first year in the club, and I don't seem to have the necessary fitness to become a good walker, can you help.

Distressed Fresher.

Dear Fresher Bastard,

Try Learning to drink instead. Mountaineers like their alcohol, and if you can drink fuck loads, then you'll fit right in ( unless you're a complete knobber ).

Karing Kid.

Dear Jason,

I've got this weird name, could you think of one that is easier to remember,

Rogardt.

Dear Yogurt,

Just a few suggestions, " Stuttgart " springs to mind, as does "Mr Norway", but apart from that, sorry, I can't help.

Mr. Ireland.

## Steall - Nov 22-24th

### Craig Weldon

It was dark the night we arrived at Steall. Darkness cast her enchanted spell over us and the walk in to the bothy was magic. A silent ghostly procession, bobbing head torches trailing into the distance, a brotherhood of miners in a cocoon of darkness. Then the cloud parted and torches were switched off, to enjoy the secretive approach under the ethereal light of a silvery moon-enchanting. But the spell was broken with the dawning of the next day, as familiar low cloud and rain swept the glen.

It is rumoured that Occasionally the cloud does lift at Steall and photographs have been published to support the rumour. But how do we know that they are not clever fakes, knocked up on a SMC darkroom in order to encourage people to walk these hills rather than park their arses in Nevisport? After all, how many people would not bother tramping the soggy braes if they knew for sure that the cloud they optimistically hoped will lift by 1 o'clock is Permanent? It is time this great cover up was exposed, and remember - YOU READ IT FIRST IN THE GUMC JOURNAL!

Before we knew it our fit, hardy group (and me) were in cloud and a massive wind threatened to remind us of the baked beans planned for tea. The top of Sgurr Chonnich Beag was attained. A 250m descent and reascent to Sgurr Chonnich Mor, legs knackered, feet wet brought to mind the worlds most common hillwalkers thought. Why do we do it? Why Do we do it?! It is at times like these that Munro baggers are the only sane people on the hills - at least they have a purpose!

The descent was steep and slippery. There is a saying in Scotland, if it is not steep it is boggy. In Glen Nevis you get both at once - just right for a bumslide! What fun! What a discovery! What a sore bum as I hit a rock!

Life was bliss back at the dry bothy. Time passed and darkness fell, till only Rogardt and his merry band were missing. It was an atmosphere of jesting jug, with 30 wet steaming bodies and buckets of tea crammed into one small room that they returned.

The fording of three freezing, torrential rivers was behind them and they had been battling through a howling cold wind and driving rain for the past two hours. Finally, mercifully, the white shape of the bothy materialised out of the dim. Not far to go now....

Roghart pushed open the door and steeped from the cold hell outside into a completely different world. It was dry, dark and warm, with atmospheric gas lighting sparkling in friendly eyes, a capsule of warmth and humanity in a vast savage night. 30 faces turned to greet him, 30 genuine smiles drew him into a warm circle of friends, as his entrance was welcomed with the finest of words :-

**“ Shut the bloody door Rogardt, it’s freezing in here!”**

A mass trivial pursuit challenge followed dinner, where Mark assured us all he DIDN'T cheat. After all his team only won 4-1..... A risky comment to Fiona resulted in a very hard cup being thrown at his head .



*Huu Huu Huu!!!!*

Yes - you guessed it - time for table traverse . Heroes for the night were Alastair, Thomas and Jason - oh my balls! These guys have obviously been practising strange positions for an obscene amount of time. The crowd was slated, but there was still one entertainment left - the **handicap bridge crossing!**

Andrew bet 5 pints that no one would cross hand overhand on one cable. Thomas was off and had it done before Jason could even get outside - typical German anything for a free pint.

Soon after beer ran out and sleeping bags were entered (though not dream land as the snoring duet by Neil and Rogardt kept some off us awake).



*Wishful Thinking!*

There were big cheers on Sunday for most risers but not for me as I was up too early - sniff! Only 2 Mad Bastards Spanish Munro Baggers kind of thought that they might, well, possibly, perhaps they would maybe go out onto the hills, but the grey light of day soon persuaded them.

The story of my life in Glen Nevis. One day I shall return there, when the heather glows purple in the sunlight and the air will be full of the sound of insects humming:- and the rock of Craig Royston like icicles melt....

nb. obscure reference to song of Clan McGregor.

## Peoples Person Pauline Falls Flat on Face

Jason Cummings

Picture the scene, heather, hills, herds of deer, rivers racing to sultry streams and in the middle of it all one group, five persons and an uncrossable river.

One heroic jump, coupled with much leg movement in the air and one member of the group stands proud on the shore. After much chest beating - guess who? - and stamping of the heather, a second arrives on the other side. The two catchers are installed. The third member of the group gives up his glasses for glory and leaps into the arms of the awaiting catchers. He arrives safe if a little damp from a slight dip in the stream. Fourth, came a plastic bootied, blind boy (two blindies in the group, not bad eh!). After a swift rescue operation, he too stands on the far side.

One left, just another one of the lads, Pauline (our dear editor). With the six foot drop to the river on her side, and four hulking (if slightly wet) men on the other, where would you go? Maybe she didn't fancy any of us but she wasn't keen to coming over for the party "oh shit! I'll never jump that!"

With a scream that didn't sound at all manly, Pauline launched herself into the abyss. Her body hung in the air, as if held up by strings, it wasn't travelling in the direction it should. The two catchers tensed forwards over the rushing water.....

The toes of the bleached boots touched the grass at the catchers' feet, good news.....no! The touch although fleeting did provide an opportunity for one of the catchers to get a hold. The upstream catcher didn't fully utilise the situation, or maybe he did - he didn't catch hold.

As Pauline slipped into the blackness, her face contorted into an expression of fear and disbelief. Had we both missed her? Was she to become fish food, a toy of the river, a wet wifey in a raging river? No a firm grip on her left arm and a strong male with a firm foothold snatched her from the jaws of death.

She was saved. And what did she say? Did she shower me with kisses, did she hug me to death and sing my praises? Not at all, she uttered many expletives, clenched her bum cheeks and pounded the ground with her oversized boots. Once finished with hyperventilation, she proceeded to describe in graphic detail what she would have done to me if I had missed her. There's gratitude for you!!!!

And the moral of the story :- alliteration stinks, so don't use it when you write a story, and Pauline smells, but she's definitely a lad (sorry Ed)!

p.s remember titles don't necessarily have to have anything to do with the story.

"Jason's handy tips"



yuuuggghhhh !!!!

## Another Eventful Weekend in the Lakes

Iain Thayne

The decision had been put off all week. Was it Wales or the Lakes? Personally, I didn't care, as long as I got the endorphine fix which, for the last three months, I had difficulty living without. Stuart wanted to go to Wales, partly because it had been dry all week and so the high routes at Llanberis would be doable without sub-aqua gear, and partly because our last jaunt to Borrowdale resulted in his Quasar developing legs. Thomas wanted to go to the Lakes partly because he had just bought the guidebook, and partly because he was going to Wales next weekend anyway. Nobody else seemed to care too much where we went.

After protracted and sometimes heated discussion between two of the most outrageous pairs of climbing trousers and T-shirts known to personkind, Thomas spotted a chink in Stuart's armour and the death blow was struck. Wasdale is was, and with Stuart's bottom lip trailing the ground, we were off.

The journey was less eventful than usual for two reasons, i) Heidi sat upright most of the way, and ii) Thomas had not yet started reading "The Advanced Guide to Overtaking Big Lorries on A82 Right Angled Bends", an epistle he has yet to finish methinks. I passed the time by flicking sheepishly through the relevant tomes of Stuart's travelling library - could I find a route I could get up? Rhys confidently predicted his ability to climb anything at hard severe, so that made the choice easier. The final decision was deferred 'til the morning.

Saturday was warm and sunny, and Stuart's lip was definitely returning to the vicinity of his mouth. He and Andy were off early to avoid the queues on Central Buttress. Rhys and I left soon after, and the painful memory of winter jogs in the mountains came flooding back. After what seemed an eternity of uphill scree running, Scafell Crag loomed into view - why wasn't it nearer the road like in the Peaks? Standing in the cold shadow of the crag, we picked out Andy and Stuart already high up. The silence was eerie, broken only once by Andy's classic and oh so poetic description of the crux at the top of the Great Flake.\* We found Jones Route on Scafell Pinnacle, which for me was a considerable achievement.

I had the dubious distinction of leading the first pitch and with wooden fingers stumbled upwards. Having spent the previous weekend on grit, I was trying to bring cracks into focus, but there were none on the wall above me. Oh well, at least the friction. I slid ignominiously back down the wall. This time, I tried looking for those famous "long reaches for monster jugs" for which the Lakes are so justifiably famous.

We were at the top 2 hours later, basking in the brilliant sunshine for the first time and studying the guidebook to find something more hairy-chested for the afternoon. Descending, Rhys attempted to cull some of the excessive number of walkers frequenting the Lake District by letting loose an enormous block on the way down Lord Rakes. Unfortunately, they were too fast, but we did have the pleasure of watching them scurrying to the side of the ghyll and then proceeding nervously past us, whereupon the role of aggressor and victim was reversed! Lunch was swift, but it soon became apparent that Rhys's curry paste butties were reacting violently with his stomach contents.

The crux of Moss Ghyll Grooves is a traverse using a hold like a "damson stone" - which I think Jon and Henri took with them after doing the route in the morning. I certainly couldn't see anything of damson proportions. Rhys reached the top of the second pitch in some distress. He was anxious to jettison the more solid products of the workings of his insides, the question was, how fast could he get out of his harness. Suitably relieved and stopping only to procure the unused gear from me, Rhys flew up the next slab. I soon realised why! For once gladly leaving the sanctuary of a small belay stance, I contemplated the fate of the poor unfortunate who next mantleshelfed to safety at the top of the second pitch.

The rest of the route was uneventful, although the climbing was cosmic. Coiling the rope for the last time, we enjoyed the softening evening light and lengthening shadows over the hills to Sellafeld nestling tranquilly by the coast in the distance.

I remembered Stuart muttering something about the descent of Broad Stand but I couldn't recall what it was he had mumbled through his bottom lip the night before on the bus.

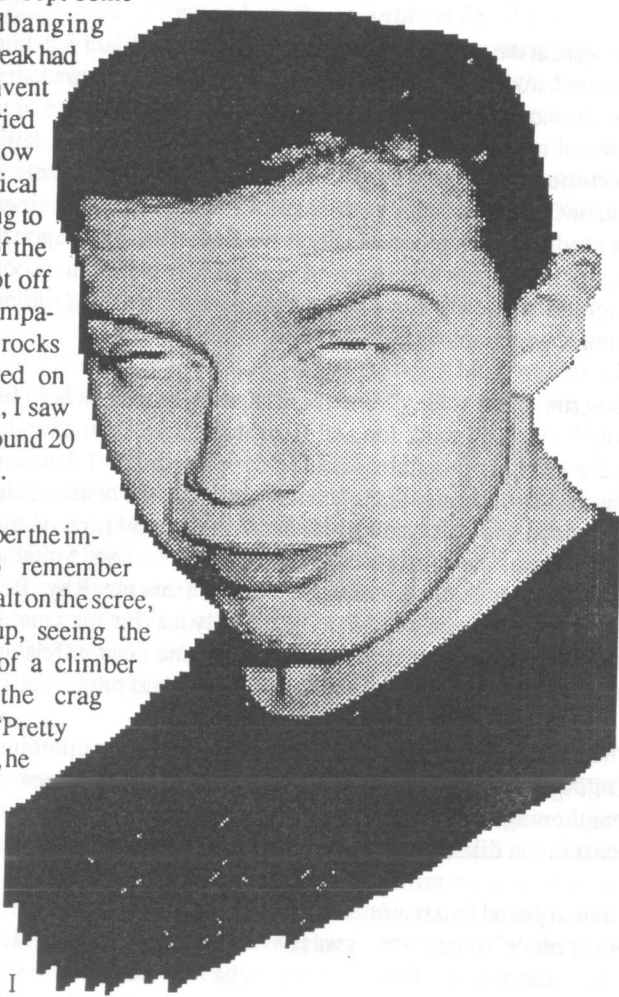
\* Ed - Andy is reputed to have expounded "That was more painful than being buggered sideways with a wire brush.



After having considered and rejected the idea of abseiling off, I trotted after Rhys and saw him disappearing down a step onto the slab below. I followed by a slightly different route and jumping the last couple of feet down onto the slab, found myself on my back accelerating swiftly down the rock. I quickly discovered I was unable to arrest the fall, and ruing the fact that nobody except some

wild headbanging heavy metal freak had bothered to invent a rock axe, tried to work out how far the vertical drop was going to be at the end of the slab. As I shot off the end, accompanied by small rocks I had displaced on the way down, I saw the ground around 20 feet below me.

I don't remember the impact, but do remember grinding to a halt on the scree, and looking up, seeing the amazed face of a climber perched on the crag above me. "Pretty smart descent", he shouted in broad Liverpoolian, "but you've done your ankle." How could he tell I wondered, as I felt no pain in my legs and was almost



Do I have to share a flat with Thomas

convinced I had got away with it - head OK, arms OK, left leg OK - when my gaze fell on my right foot. Ah. It was pointing towards my left foot yet my legs were straight out in front of me - that's how he could tell. For the few German speakers amongst you, Ich habe mir den Knockel gebrochen, maybe..?

Doing a more than passable impersonation of a mother hen, Rhys summoned the others who came running with their usual laconic fervour. Soon however, there were survival bags everywhere - never used except for bumsliding. Henri held my hand, it was almost worth the hassle of falling off a crag. I was soon on a stretcher and, as Jon had just lowered the Mickledore to Wasdale Head record to 45 minutes, had just got comfortable and was listening to Stuarts latest bad joke when, fortunately, the helicopter arrived. As the winch brought the wire taut, I just heard Stuart's voice above the thrashing of the helicopter blades, "Should have gone to Wales....". Hmmm.

7 pins, 1 plate and three months of intensive physiotherapy later, I had the most traumatic climbing experience of my life on Etive Slabs; I couldn't get Stuarts No.1 Friend out of a crack on Hammer...who needs enemies.

---

## 'Scape2 : Ben Alder Estate

Night is full of stags and frosts and Beatle's songs in clouds of steam misheard through Balaclavas, muddied pathways, moonlit snow, place names that follow like an incantation: Ben Alder, Sgor Iutharn, Carn Dearg, Culra. But I don't believe in magic.

I don't believe in magic, who return whole from the broken hills, or the resurrection of the dead, who have lived to witness hollow shirts pulled from the sea. No, I don't believe in magic, who inherited a preacher's name for a charm, or the resurrection of the dead, who watch the indigo dawn on Loch Erich, and the silver morning behind Drumochter, portentous of returnings.

*Andrew Ogilvie*

# Olivia Neutron Bomb.

## Brian Doogan

It was Hogmanay of 1991, tomorrow it would be a new year. The scene was 12 of us huddled around a paraffin heater. We were begging for a heat which was less than that of a lit match. It was snowing outside and it was fffreeeezzzinnnggg. Then someone thought of a bright idea, "Why don't we light the gas rings and the mantles?" And there we survived that cold winter.

Another refrigerated new year could not be tolerated, so what could we do? Luckily, many of our ancient predecessors of the club gave generously at the 50th anniversary. A sum of £250 was given to Glencoe MRT and a further £450 was left to the Clashgour Hut.

Olivia (the new stove) was purchased at a bargain price of £150, but led to a long tangled saga to find piping to go with it.

I went into one shop to buy this piping and some other gear but unfortunately, they didn't have the piping. By the time I left the shop however, I'm sure they thought I was a murder suspect :- My first purchase was a 2 foot long bow saw; next, a large wood axe; then a cook's knife, and by this time they refused to sell me anything else!

"But it's for Clashgour — Honestly!"

The sales lady replied:-

"If there's ony murders ower christmas then I'll grass ye aff tae Mr Taggart!"

Even after all this, I still hadn't got the pipe. At Amanda's and David's combined 48th birthday party, there was many suggestions as to what to do about this pipe. One rather crude suggestion was to stick my head out the roof with the pipe up my arse.

After a frantic run through the streets of Glasgow on 23rd of December, and arriving at the shop half an hour after it was meant to close, we finally got the pipe for £60.

On 28th of December, we went up to the hut to fit the damn thing. We got to the hut before lunch time. We had now about 4 hours to get the job done. Every minute was used up and we had only one tea break. My brother, being a joiner, certainly knew what he was doing and he left me and my pal looking like a pair of council workers. Getting the hole in the roof was difficult enough, the rivetting job was even more difficult, because the ladders were not really long enough. But we managed to get the pipe and the flashing fitted before dark. My pal carried out the ceremonial lighting of the stove with his snotty HANDKERCHIEF. Olivia emitted a black smoke which blew up to Stob Ghabhar.

It was a really cosy new year up there in the hut. But Olivia took a bit of getting used to. I was appointed as the chief fire stoker. I was given dirty comments such as "Go on Brian, give her a poke, don't poke her too much though, or she'll get too hot." David Ramsay almost succeeded in melting down the hut at about 2 hours into 1992. He filled the stove with coal, and the storms outside combined to make her go red hot for about an hour. There was no way of reversing this mishap. Other mishaps include one morning when we created our own mini black cloud inversion which blew from the hut and collected bellow Beinn Toaig.

The title of this article speaks for itself:

**A neutron bomb will gas anything that lives but will do no structural damage.**

---

## 'Scape3 : At Arnasdale

Where the road ends Loch Hourm adopts direction (mother of transports) and Knoydart rolls from this tongue of sea, convoluted and wonderful, like a line from Dylan Thomas.

It is not before the towering dead I write on these spindrift pages, but for the footsteps in the bog - myrtle I followed on Ben Sgritheall. For the scent of the crushed leaves, infused in the November snow, carried on the stripping wind, like the sweetness of companionship.

Andrew Ogilvie

## Dr. Allcock Replies.

### Dave Robertson

Dr. Paul Allcock M.chB.Bd.HVS.5c solves your strange medical problems (after telling his friends about them down the pub!)

**Dear Doctor Allcock,**

I have an embarrassing problem. Every time I drink ten or eleven pints of L.A., I'm forced to go to the loo atleast six times in the night.

**Dr Allcock replies,**

Go on a GUM Club meet. Having to extract yourself from a warm sleeping bag into sub-zero conditions and having to step over sixty or seventy sleeping bodies without standing on their lower abdomens should put paid to your night time wanderings.

**Dear Dr. Allcock,**

I have a strong unpleasant body odour. How can I minimise my misfortune ?

**Dr Allcock replies,**

Go on a GUM Club meet (especially Steal) - No one will notice !!!!

**Dear Dr Allcock ,**

I find I cannot get out of my bed in the mornings, I feel very tired and have a headache until mid-afternoon (especially after downing a dozen malt whiskeys). What should I do ?

**Dr Allcock replies, See Above !!**

**Dear Dr Allcock,**

I have this tremendous urge to walk up to over 3000 feet above sea level. I cannot stop myself. Help me !!

**Dr Allcock replies,**

How strange, come into my surgery and I'll amputate both your legs.

**Dear Dr Allcock,**

I have completed all the Munro's and now my life is completely empty. I'm so depressed, what do you recommend?

**Dr Allcock replies,**

I prescribe a brand new drug, "FOINAVEN 3000". It can only be taken once, so make sure you have a real craving.

**NEXT TIME :** Heidi Fraser shows us how to administer an enema.

---

## Hello!

### A Dutch Girl

As one of the many new foreign members I feel very honoured to write something in the journal!

When I saw all those beautiful slides at the first meeting. I was immediately attracted. But: was I able to do something like that myself? I live in the Netherlands and as you maybe know, it's quite flat there.... I never saw a mountain in my life! But after Rogardt's "Just go for it!", I took the decision to do it and I'm glad I did it (counts for the others as well).

Scotland is really impressive, it's great. I liked especially the Kintail trip a lot. With a small group we did the 3 brothers (+ another one), just climbing there in the snow, the beautiful view. I was learned how to use an ice-axe and: the bumsliding. There was one little problem with the bumsliding : I was wearing raintrousers so I went down really fast, faster than expected. The others from the group, who had already gone down, didn't expect this speed either.....

The club gives us a good cheap chance to see the beautiful places here and:  
**we like the teamspirit very much as well!**

It remains also a dangerous sport. I hope something like this will never happen again.

Good luck with everything in the future!

# The Cuillin Ridge Traverse: Rhys Getting Shit Scared on a V.Diff.

## Rhys Jagger

It rained all the way from Glasgow to Loch Lomond. Torrential cloudbursts were with us until Inverarnan. When we reached the Fort for chips, Ross, sanctimoniously cynical as ever, surveyed us with Ross-like humour as we told him of our plans for Skye. [He went to Glen Affric and got pissed on (and -off, probably, come to think of it!)] At Cluanie it was no better, but just as we reached Loch Shiel, the tempest seemed to abate and by the Kyle, it had stopped raining and a few clear patches of sky were appearing. By the time we reached Glen Brittle and pitched tents (about 11.30), Thomas, Paul and I were definitely on for the ridge on the morrow. A departure was agreed for 4am and the two loudest alarm clocks in Scotland (both purchased for under a tenner in Boots) were set for 3.30 to facilitate the cooking of the farting material.

At 3.30 I woke with a jump to 100 decibels of alarm (the tick itself is about 20- if people at Ballachulish are to be believed). About 5 minutes later a similar noise from across the way, followed by 'Oh gawd!' from Thomas in yet a different direction. Breakfasts downed, we set off in the early dawn across the bog of the Garsbheinn track. Packs weighed in at about 251bs due to uncertain weather, climbing gear and ropes. About 5am we were treated to the rays of the rising sun over Rhum. At times such as those it is really worthwhile being alive. Then soon after, the first psychological test: the start of the horrible scree slope up to the ridge proper. Chossy loose stuff: not really the thing for a metabolism screaming about lack of sleep. After 20 minutes though, resigned to the future, it seemed to become easier and in time we reached the ridge, meeting James and Bruce, already returned from Garsbheinn. The beans were already working overtime inside Thomas and unfortunately, he was the fastest at that point. (The lunch containing coleslaw didn't help later either!)

On for a couple of hours to the TD gap: the mist was down and as we got to the bottom, the rain came just to welcome us. The route looked greasy and horrible. Paul was given the lead, he wisely left his sack at the bottom and

put in every piece of gear he had. My first misgivings arrived with a 'That's quite hard!' from the El leader. James then had the great idea of me taking up his sack so he could bring Paul's up. I now had 501bs on my back.

Into the gap and up to the chimney's crux: no progress so I called for a tight rope in a slightly apprehensive bass voice. Paul was as good as his word: next slip a rising soprano yelled 'Not that tight!!' Many grunts and groans later I rose over the 'crux'. Hands were totally numb, the next bit was just as bad. I finally made it, tottered up to Thomas and the levels of adrenalin were almost putting me into clinical shock. 'Diabolical in the wet' the guide book says: dead right, sir.

On we went over Sgurr Alasdair, down-climbing off Sgurr Thormaid and round Collie's ledge. Up to Mhiccoinich, then up An Stac and on to the In Pinn. The other four soloed the long side: my confidence not yet returned, I decided to top-rope the short side. Confidence went even further downhill when I couldn't find a route up and abbed off, feeling seriously like throwing the whole caboodle in.

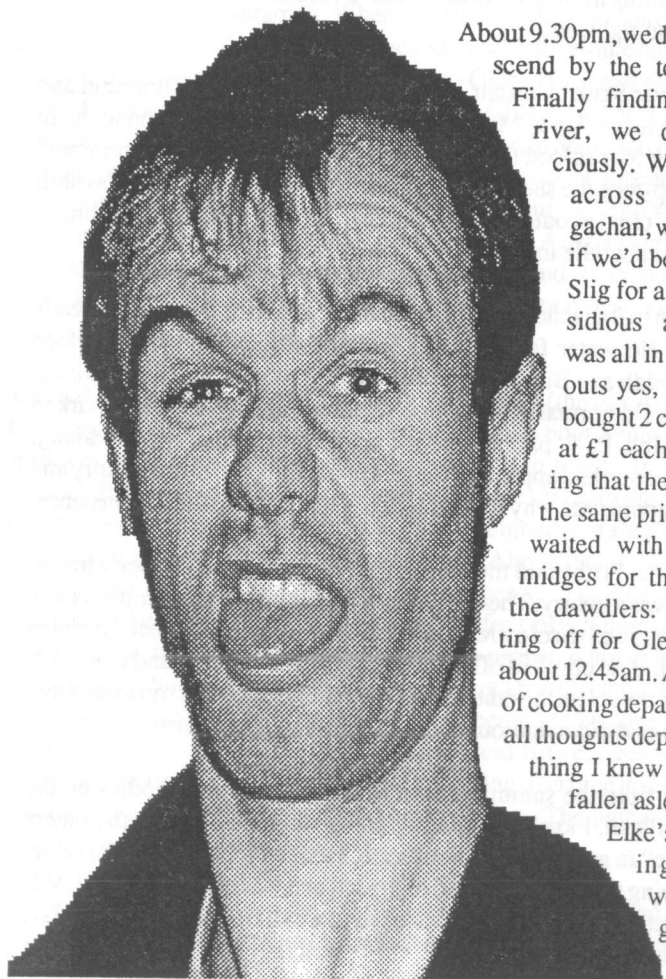
After lunch, on to Banachdich and Greadhaidh: water supplies were already running low. No water for ages yet. Downclimbing and soloing Mods around Mhadaidh and Bidein, the collywobbles were still there: irrational fear on things I'd normally waltz over. Thomas getting seriously narked with the whining, Paul, patient as ever, helping the bumbling fool along. Meanwhile, the sun had appeared, Coruisk looked superb in all its glory and we started to appreciate why we wanted to do the ridge in the first instance.

On to Bruach na Frithe and then to the Tooth: all completely dehydrated. Eating snow was a luxury. There were people climbing on Naismith's route so the consensus was to solo a Mod on the side. After about 20 feet, I decided this was no Mod, so climbed off to go round under the Tooth and reach Am Bhasteir from the col on the other side. [The others found this truth out about 150 feet later and did a dubious traverse round to get off again..

On returning from the summit of Am Bhasteir, I saw four bodies on the summit of Gillean. I knew I was slow going round, but surely the others hadn't left me? In my semi-delerious state, I looked for a way up the ridge: I ended up going to the right instead of the left and was confronted with VS-like slabs. I returned to the Col, responded to a call from above ('Come on Rhys!) to the effect that I couldn't \*\*\*\*\* well find the route (heard from

Sligachan to Glen Brittle) and sat at the Col, pondering the descent from there.

Suddenly, Thomas appeared round the bottom of Am Bhasteir, my spirits rose and eventually, all five of us finally made the ascent to Gillean. There on top were Mark, Amanda, Elke, Brian, Dave, Pauline, Billy and David to meet us, they having taken about 10 hours on the ascent of Pinnacle Ridge. Water bottles were savaged, hands shaken, a glorious sunset on the Red Cuillin enjoyed.



About 9.30pm, we decided to descend by the tourist route.

Finally finding a proper river, we drank voraciously. Walking back across Glen Sligachan, we wondered if we'd be back at the Slig for a pint: the insidious acceleration was all in vain: carry-outs yes, sit-ins no. I bought 2 cans of Fanta at £1 each, not realising that the beers were the same price. We then waited with the rising midges for the return of the dawdlers: finally setting off for Glen Brittle at about 12.45am. All thoughts of cooking departed, indeed all thoughts departed. Next thing I knew I found I'd fallen asleep all over Elke's legs, having been woken up to get out of the bus.

The next two days were superb weather: for the indefatigable climbers(Thomas, Paul, James and Bruce) it was Cioch Direct/West, Integrity and the Prow on Bla Bheinn; for more sensible souls it was paddling and swimming at Camasunary and eating ice creams at Elgol.

Back in Glasgow, it all seemed to have been a fine way to spend £10 (petrol, ferry and camp-site fees). Guiding fees in the form of a new edition of Mrs Beeton's cookbook and a pint of Burtons respectively were paid to the bearded soul and the unshaven Kerl who accompanied the author along that Gabbro incline. (This was considered to be an ugly precedent by Stuart, but who gives a damn?)

So that was how I got shit-scared on a V Diff. in Skye in 1991. For the next instalment, namely how I broke all abseiling records due to being scared-of shitting on a V. Diff. in Yorkshire, read the next edition of Mountain Viz...

---

## Glencoe

### Heidi Fraser

On Saturday, my future husband and I went to climb the hammer on Etive Slabs. Unfortunately, I forgot my boots (Honest, I forgot !!), so I ended up walking back down Glen Etive, it's a long way for an English girl you know! Strangely enough, a pub seemed to appear from the mist, with a landlord beckoning me in, with the promise of cheep beer and a truly exciting rugby match. Unfortunately, there was no T.V., so I had to console myself with alcohol.

Anyway, Thomas (my beloved husband to be), Stuart, Ian and Andy managed the climb. They insisted in telling me what a wonderful time they had, much to my annoyance!



*Prick of the year award!*

## Fersit

### Wee Pete

In recent years one of the most popular GUMC meets has been the one to Nancy Smyth's hostel at Fersit near Roy Briage. Options for outings vary from the hills around Lough Treig, the Grey Corries; perhaps an early rise on Saturday morning to head for a route on the Ben or more usually, Creag Meagaidh. The most memorable part of the weekend however is usually Fersit itself.

From the main Spean Bridge-Newtonmore road you drive along two and a half miles of twisting road, up and down, crossing and recrossing the West Highland Line, through the gate and up a steep hill and you're there. Well almost. The short walk down the last steep bit of track is to avoid the van being snowed in - though even that wouldn't have helped in 1984.....

Accommodation varies from small bunkrooms, caravans or the 'Wendy House'. The combination of 20-30 sweaty bodies and the wood burning stove in the common room puts the temperature well into the eighties. Water is from a small hand pump in the kitchen, though that is a recent innovation. In a cold spell, you still have to take the bucket out through the gate to a stream.

After a few brews or/and drams, nature calls. Where to go? Well it's out of the door, left, left and it's the door on the right marked 'Passing Place'! People have even been known to go up the hill on Sunday to avoid having to empty the chemical toilet. You can always try on one of Nancy's hand knitted jumpers, or one of the eponymous 'Nancy Hats'. Her store cupboard is there for the odd bit of grub that you've forgotten - just put the money in the cash box. Nobody would take advantage of her trust by pinching some food or a jumper worth £40+ (Fort Bill prices) - though her grandson has admitted to borrowing the odd bit of food!

The GUMC were luck enough to be at Fersit the weekend of the Great Blizzard of 21 January 1984, described by Martin Moran as "unmatched in severity in modern times". Banks of snow, which in the morning were to the side of a Land-Rover track, had become drifts which covered the whole road by early afternoon. Those coming back from Meagaidh had to abandon the minibus 3/4 miles from the main road. The road proved hard to find and it became a 'Whitford of the Antarctic' epic (or was that Scott?) to find the way back to Fersit in the drifts and the darkness.

Nancy's store cupboard never had it so busy as we settled in for an enforced extra nights stay. The country was at a standstill - 3000 skiers were trapped in Glenshee (shame) and Bridge of Orchy was to be cut off for the best part of a week. Meanwhile back at Fersit the most popular book was 'Alive - the story of the Andean plane crash'. We knew we couldn't run out of food, the questions were - who was the best cook?, and who would cook?

On the Monday with the aid of tractors, snow ploughs and shovels we 'escaped' (to some people's dismay) and drove round the Appin road to Oban as the 'Coe road and others were still blocked. We just made the 6 o'clock train, abandoned the minibus and crawled back to Glasgow passing 14ft drifts outside Tyndrum. We jumped out at Garelochhead for a snowball fight with the local kids and had a brew on the train - the absence of lights hid the stoves.

Happy days!

On a Guinness black, pouring wet winter's night, several cars and minibuses were gathered in the car park at Fort Bill for the ritual lining of the stomach, care of the Ben Fort. We were on our way to Knoydart... until then. The prospect of a midnight tramp out to Barrisdale had lost its appeal so we all decided to head for the safe haven of Fersit. All of us that is, except one car load who went to Knoydart none-the-less, travelling lite, as their rucksacks were Fersit-bound in a minibus. Punk, being an old hand, luckily had his emergency rations with him in a bottle named after a well known Scottish moorland bird.

And so to Fersit.....

Stuart Wilson (with Pete and Rhona): "Hullo Nancy."

Nancy: "Well hullo there. It's yourselves. Come in, there's hot water for a brew."

SW: "Do you have any free beds?"

Nancy: "Well I've three in from XXXXX, and two in from XXXX Club." (looks at the three of us.) "I'm sure we can fit you in..how many of you are about?"

SW: "Twenty three!"

Nancy: (Slight look of puzzlement as she takes this in.)  
"That's a bit unexpected but I'll fit you all in somewhere...."

We spent the night at Fersit. Then on the Saturday most headed for the bothy at Invermallie, but that's another story. Happy days.

Nancy's experiences 'on the hill' provided those lucky enough to hear, with tales from all over the world - completing a two-day walk in the Canadian Rockies in one day because of a fear of bears (not her's it must be said); or telling two macho Munro-baggers (both named Pete) who were rained of on Skye, of her soloing up and down the East ridge of the Inn. Pinn. 30+ years ago, ie before they were born!

Happy days.

Sadly Nancy passed away the week before Xmas 1991. It is hoped that her son Ewan and his family will keep 'Fersit' going, though inevitably there will be some changes. Nancy's zest for life and the hills, her faith in human nature and the whole 'Fersit Experience' leave us with many memories - but perhaps more importantly an example and inspiration for the future.

Happy days, Nancy.

# HALLOWEEN 1991

## Fiona Watson

If you go down to the GUU.....  
.....you're in for a big surprise.....

Ten days before the party, a small, handpicked team assembled at my flat. Pauline got there first, having a spare hour before pushing onto her next engagement. Susannah then arrived, accompanied by a gentleman of indeterminate origin, who was soon despatched to the pub. Steve, unsure, but not unhappy, about this efficient feminine presence in his house, remained in the kitchen doing the washing up.

After half an hours discussion of the finer points of the anthropological implications of current GUMC socio-economic groupings, Pauline left for her next rendezvous. Susannah and I then devoted the next ten minutes to drawing up lists before she also left for the pub.

A week later the scene was re-enacted in Wilton Drive. Susannah arrived accompanied by pumpkins of indeterminate origins. Pauline was, sadly, otherwise engaged, but her place was admirably filled by Thomas, who made short work of the afore mentioned pumpkins. One of the most important tasks of the evening was to construct a floor covering out of bin bags: we had reason to believe that the GUU smoke room should not be give the same treatment as the Ballachulish village hall, although we were going to take the precautions of removing all fire extinguishers and searching the party-goers for eggs and flour. Mark then arrived having heard there was food on the go. Steve, having bravely ventured out of the kitchen, was happily engaged in the construction of a dance tape while Susannah and I made lists. Heidi, in fetching her nurses uniform, completed "Team Halloween".

The great day may well have drawn bright and clear. However, it was clearly dark when Steve and I tried to persuade the porters to let us into the GUU without a matriculation card. Despite hot competition from the Geog. Soc downstairs, we had collected a Dracula, a Ghostbuster, a bug, a skeleton, Wee Willie Winkie, a firework and a Steve (big effort there!) by 9.30. By ten the true creative talents of the GUMC were laid before us in

glorious technicolour. While it is certainly unfair to single out anyone in particular, I personally was most impressed by we Brians Jock and any man dressed in womans clothing (which, now I think of it included Wee Brian).

There were a few hairy moments. The bin bag floor covering almost hospitalised a good number of the participants ducking for apples. Large quantities of water also do nothing for the quality of an amplifier. Things took a desperate turn when the tattie scones, which had been carefully threaded on string to be suspended from two men with a stick, disintegrated

slowly but surely into sad piles of treacle on the floor. However no-one seemed adverse to eating them off the bin bags, least of all our president, whose mouth displayed degrees of flexibility normally associated with Donald Duck.

The evening finished with a damn fine bop, marred only by Brian's absence in Japan. At 12 o'clock the Cindarella's and Ugly Sisters [see above: men dressed in womens clothing] had to be persuaded to leave for their beauty sleep; the pumpkins were still lounging around the bar. After vociferous requests to "hang the D.J.", the party broke up once it was pointed out that Neil only lives 20 feet from the GUU. Despite the various noxious substances that had been sprayed about the floor, the room was apparently left in a far better state than usual. We'll just have to try harder next time.....





# The GUM Glossary of Terms

Iain Ramsay

On first arriving at the GUM club you are immediately aware that you are not in the company of a normal group of people. These folk think and behave in an individual, to say nothing of downright eccentric, manner. They also use a different language. To help the novice GUM climber, and also perhaps to clear up some confusions amongst older members, the following are a selection of the more common phrases in use in this strange organisation. Additions, exceptions, errors and other forms of abuse will be gratefully received, and then put where they belong.

- “Boring”** Safe.
- “Interesting”** Dangerous.
- “Very Interesting”** Very Dangerous.
- “The Leader”** A faint dot on the horizon.
- “Bothy”** A cold, damp hovel perched precariously on the side of a hill which is inhabited, apparently with great relish, by the members of GUM club. In such places you are required to sleep very close to a pair of smelly socks and their owner, whose proximity can be estimated by the loudness of the snore.  
(Mr. President please note.)
- “Path”** A figment of a somewhat deranged imagination. Alternatively see under “stream”.
- “Stream”** A lot of water reacting to a lot of gravity whose route downhill most mountaineers seem to want to follow uphill.

- “River”** A raging torrent that usually has to be crossed which can turn a “boring” walk into an “interesting” one.
- “Almost There”** 4 miles to go.
- “Nearly There”** 2 miles to go.
- “There”** (Maybe). A pile of stones on a huge, misty, windswept, cold, largely uninhabited mountain.
- “Partick Tavern”** A meeting place of mountaineers for the express purposes of:  
1. Convincing yourself that you really did enjoy last weekend.  
2. Telling wildly exaggerated stories about your exploits.  
3. Consuming vast quantities of liquid.
- “Sheep”** White rocks which suddenly move as you approach. Peculiarly stupid animals who, seemingly devoid of a sense of cold, spend their lives up mountains instead of making tracks to a warm valley. It is often said that they are the stupidest of mammals. However people who go up into the mountains from the warm valleys and often repeat this activity several times in a weekend may wish to dispute this.....
- “Raining”** The major, constant feature of mountain weather
- “Not much of a view”** A complete white-out.
- “A View”** Rocks just visible through the mist
- “A Good View”** Rocks clearly visible through the mist

- "A Great View"** Mountains clearly visible through the mist. This phrase does not mean much to most GUM club members.
- "Sun"** A rarely sighted stellar body which is reputed to give warmth and light, though usually to the other side of the valley.
- "Short Walk"** Less than 20 miles. Not far enough.
- "Long Walk"** More than 20 miles. Too far.
- "Sir Hugh Munro"** A mountaineering deity who has a lot to answer for.
- "Munro"** An excuse.
- "Munroist"** A graduate mountaineer.
- "The Ben"** Ben Nevis, Britains highest mountain. Over 4 metres of rain per annum and still people go up.
- "Table Traversing"** An activity not to be engaged in on, over or under your maiden aunts dining room table.
- "Steall"** A "bothy" (q.v.) near "The Ben" (q.v.) which is "almost there" (q.v.) up a "path" (q.v.) which is "interesting" (q.v.) at night and which terminates in a rope bridge which is "very interesting" (q.v.).
- Evenings are spent "table traversing" (q.v.) and behaving as if in "The Partick Tavern" (q.v.).

# Club Reunion

## Kingshouse Hotel.

There will be a club reunion at Kingshouse Hotel on the weekend of 8th - 10th May 1992. There will be no buffet as last year but other events may be organised on the weekend. If you require bunkhouse or hotel accommodation then contact the Kingshouse on 08556 259. Many of the oldies are coming along as last year, so some members may be interested to have a chat with them about club activities since 1941.

Maybe it would be a good idea if we organised some hillwalks or even climbs with them. But beware, they will leave us miles behind. Some of the oldies are already out on the hills training on their zimmers!

**Be there or be SQUARE !**

