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**Leeds Mountaineering Club**

(WE know how to LIVE!)

# EDITORIAL POLICY:

It is only right that the members recognise the editorial policy:

1. I am a bit new to this (in other words 'Please be gentle with me...').

## LETTERS TO THE ED

Nobody's written to me. (Nobody loves me).  
 However, I've been telling myself it's early days and Previous Ed is still doing the email newsletter and I've picked up a few things from there myself for this newsletter.  
 I trust I will receive some mail myself or I'll be getting a complex) (and I've got enough of those already, thankyou).



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## FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

### Hard Copy newsletters (Quarterly)

Each time a 'finished' newsletter is published, work starts on the next issue. This means we need a constant supply of articles and, of course, pretty pictures, so please don't forget to send them in. If you are unsure about content (**it doesn't have to be mountaineering**) then please ask around other members of the club (Dave Hughes or Rebecca Cole might be good starting points).

If you have something you would like to include in a future newsletter, please send it via:

Royal Mail to: LMC Newsletter Editor

email to [susan.sharp@hammonds.com](mailto:susan.sharp@hammonds.com) (MUCH TO THE AMUSEMENT OF PREVIOUS ED I am going to have to ask you all, wherever possible, to send attachments in Word until I get used to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century) (don't hold your breath).

PS: piccies I seem to be able to cope with (I'm as puzzled as anyone at this development).

### Email newsletters (Weekly):

If you have an email address and would like to receive LMC email newsletters then please email your request to [madmountaineer@madasafish.com](mailto:madmountaineer@madasafish.com).

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## MEMBER DISCOUNTS!!!

I thought I'd get this article in sooner rather than later so here goes - Once you have become a full member you will acquire a membership card which will entitle you to claim discount at some retail outlets which (naturally) specialise in walking, camping and climbing gear. If you have any updates on these, please advise Ed or send the information to [madmountaineer@madasafish.com](mailto:madmountaineer@madasafish.com) by email. At the time of going to press, 10% discounts are available at all of the following outlets:

- True North, 26 Otley Road, Headingley, Leeds ([truenorth@outdoorstuff.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:truenorth@outdoorstuff.fsnet.co.uk))
- Nevisport, 34-36 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds
- Centresport, 57-59 New Briggate, Leeds
- The Camping and Leisure Shop, Leeds
- Blacks Outdoor Leisure Ltd, 42-46 Trinity St Arcade, Leeds
- YHA Adventure Shops, 119-121 Vicar Lane, Leeds
- The Great Outdoors in Yeadon
- Chevin Trek, Otley
- Needle Sports, 56 Main Street, Keswick
- The Joe Brown Shop, Menai Hall High Street, Llanberis and at Capel Curig

# Visitez La Corse!

Imagine a small, sun drenched Mediterranean island with a jumble of impressive rugged peaks at its centre. Imagine Corsica.

“Une montagne dans la mer” is how they describe Corsica. However it's really a range of mountains and this small island (approximately 120miles north to south and 50 miles wide) actually boasts 117 peaks above 2000m! And they are spectacular mountains. Monte Cinto is the highest at 2706m but on our trip we scaled Paglia Orba which is 2525m high and one of the island's most impressive peaks.

This was an Exodus trip; the aim was not the famous GR20 long distance walk (although we did cross paths on some occasions). Apparently, some 17000 trekkers attempt the GR20 each year. Rather we were to walk from Corte, the old capital in the centre of the island westwards to the coast taking in some of the high mountain terrain en route.



Ewia,

Corsica

Early on day 7, we set off towards the central high mountains, walking underneath Monte Cinto to Lac du Cinto and then a scree scramble to a col. Here we were rewarded with (for me) the view of the holiday. Until this point I had not appreciated how extensive or impressive the Corsican mountains were but ahead was the full range unfolding.

There was high white cloud above and the sea beyond; it really was a wonderful sight. We looked across to the sawtooth ridge, at the end of which was Paglia Orba, our formidable destination. We then dropped down to the mountain hut at Vallone on the GR20.



Paglia Orba, Corsica

July is supposed to be the hottest month with very little rainfall and temperatures soaring into the 90's. However, we encountered some inclement weather which sadly meant the trek planned for the following day was not made. We were to walk from the Vallone hut to the Cirque de la Solitude, an apparent highlight of the GR20.

I was really looking forward to the trek which is a series of sheer stepped pitches negotiated by means of fixed chains and ladders and which takes you across the head of a very steep valley. Instead we sat around the mountain hut getting higher only via means of caffeine and sweet-chestnut beer!

After our day of confinement, we were chomping at the bit. The weather had improved and by midday on this bright, fresh morning, we had walked up to the Ciottulu hut, the island's highest mountain refuge. The intention had been to ascend Paglia Orba that afternoon but the weather closed in again, this time with hail and snow. Great! A further half day of silly games in a mountain hut!

Not to be defeated, we got up at 5.30am the next morning and started up Paglia Orba. From certain viewpoints it resembles a larger version of the Cuillin's Bastheir Tooth yet from other angles it looks far more benign. Our ascent route provided a challenging scramble to the summit, probably a grade 1 or 2 being a little tricky at a couple of points.

By mid morning though we had all reached the summit. Only for the cloud to come over. So the views were not as extensive as we would have liked. Having said that, some of the early morning views across the island out to the coast were memorable.

Once away from the high central mountain range, we headed west to the coast and had a couple of stops en route. The villages are really very attractive – terracotta roofed and perched high on steep forested mountain sides. Evisa is a splendid if rather sleepy little mountain resort set amidst Corsica's ancient sweet-chestnut forests. Well worth a visit as is Ota.

And what better way after 10 days walking than to chill out on the coast. We ended up at Porto, which I rather took to. It's a small, modern resort which nestles into the Corsican coastline. While the beach is more stony than sandy, the setting is wonderful with an amphitheatre of mountain sides plunging into the sea. And an early morning skinny dip proved the ideal way to start the day!

Walking days often incorporated swims in the cool, clear mountain streams and rock pools. Corsican hospitality was notable, more for the wrong rather than the right reasons! This was not always the case though as we got a very warm welcome in Ota at the gite d'etape chez Felix. Accommodation on the trip was a mix of camping, mountain huts, gites d'etape (ie dormitory style accommodation) and hotels.

All in all, the holiday was great fun, full of laughs with the group and a lively trek leader.

In some ways (and in retrospect) it was disappointing not to have spent more days in the higher mountains. However, that means there's plenty of unfinished business – both for the mountaineer and the climber; the Bavella area in the south is the rock climbing area. So, I'm really keen to return to Corsica some day. There are numerous mountain huts but my preference would probably be to rent an apartment and a car and have trips of one day or longer out into the central high mountains.

**Lesley Houfe**

PS Check out the "Corsican Trials " trek details on the Exodus website ([www.exodus.co.uk](http://www.exodus.co.uk)) to see some of my photos from the trip – they could just whet your appetite!



## LODGER SOUGHT

Grahaeme Lauder is looking for a lodger. If you are interested, please contact Grahaeme on 0113 274 2314.



### TIPS OF THE QUARTER

- WATERPROOF RUCKSACK LINERS can be bought in 'walking' shops at around £10 each but, before you splash out on what is, basically, an expensive plastic bag, you might like to try rubble bags! They are sold at most large supermarkets, situated near/with bin-liners, at a fraction of the price (around £2 for a pack of 5).
- FLAT LACES come undone less often than ROUND laces (?).

I'm sure there are lots of fantastic tips out there. If you have any you'd like to pass on please let the Ed know and they'll be appear in later newsletters.

### THE PITTER, PATER, OF LITTLE FEET

Simon & Allison Vallance are pleased to announce that their family now has a fourth member - **Erin** - who was born on 15th March at 4:41am, weighing 6lb 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>oz.

Both mother and baby are fine, at home and enjoying the fine spring weather.

# MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at The Victoria, Great George Street, Leeds

28 January 2003

## 1.0 PRESENT & APOLOGIES

17 fully paid up members plus several prospective members. List available if required. Apologies received from Celia Budleigh, Lesley Houfe and Ken Findlay.

## 2.0 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

These were read out and accepted as an accurate record of the last meeting.

- 2.1 The Sarek Expedition was discussed – no members went on the trip and no feedback has been received.
- 2.2 Organising a February trip outside of school half term has been considered but not implemented.
- 2.3 Various social events suggested have not materialised.

## 3.0 OFFICER'S REPORTS / MATTERS

### 3.1 Chair (Andy McRoyall)

Members of the committee were thanked for all their hard work over the year, and preceding years for those standing down after their times were up. The club had suffered some disorganisation during the year and was disaffiliated from the BMC for a short time but this was now sorted out. There had been a boost to advertising through the internet, posters and an advert in Climber. There is now a club e-mail contact address. Administration had been improved with a member's handbook and new application form. Expectations of club members are included in the handbook. Honorary membership and Mountaineer of the Year were mentioned, the latest recipients being Jack Jowett and Ken Findlay respectively.

### 3.2 Vice Chair (Hazel Arthur)

Hazel reported a successful dinner at the Sca Fell Hotel with 50+ attendees. The same venue is booked for December 13<sup>th</sup> this year. The bash was not held due to a lack of bookings.

### 3.3 Treasurer (Paul Spinks)

Audited accounts were presented showing a deficit of £12.82. There is however a total of £3050.64 in funds held. A meet analysis was presented.

Richard Cole had done a good job at keeping costs down on poorly attended meets. Big losses had been incurred on Dunmail Raise, CIC and Skiddaw House. BMC subscriptions had gone up and were now collected quarterly. Subs have increased to £13 this year. It was questioned whether this should be increased further but it was stated that any money needed to cover losses on meets would be made by increasing meets fees. The need for this is however unlikely. Cae Amos donations are still to come through from the band.

### 3.4 Meets Secretary (Richard Cole)

All meet leaders were thanked and new ones were sought for the next meets card. Due to losses, the CIC will not be booked again. Lagangarbh is fully booked. Ty Powdwr needs support. Evening meets had been fairly well attended. The success of camping meets depended on the weather. Perhaps the gazebo will improve this!

### 3.5 Membership Secretary (Ken Findlay)

Ken was not at the meeting but sent in a report as follows: 10 people recruited to full membership in past year. Currently 9 prospective members. 23 new enquiries resulted in 8 people coming to the pub on a Tuesday. 5 of these 23 saw our posters, the remainder found our details through the internet. Current committee thanked and new committee wished well.

### 3.6 Cae Amos Secretary (Simon Vallance)

There had been a good work meet with repairs carried out to the windows, porch, structure and roof. The November meet was cancelled due to lack of interest. Next meet is February 22. People were encouraged to use the hut but should book through Simon first. Committee thanked for support.

### 3.7 Newsletter Editor (Paul Hudson)

Thanks to those who had provided articles, quality has remained high with some individual's work commented on. Has just discovered some long lost articles which will be passed on for the next issue. The newsletter is important for the richer quality of the club. Has been a pleasure to be Editor for three years and looks forward to seeing the newsletter under a new hand.

#### 4.0 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

All were unopposed:		
Chair	Andrew McRoyall	(3 <sup>rd</sup> year)
Vice Chair	Paul Spinks	(1 <sup>st</sup> year)
Treasurer	Richard Cole	(1 <sup>st</sup> year)
Meets Secretary	Dave Clark	(1 <sup>st</sup> year)
Membership Secretary	Les Holbert	(1 <sup>st</sup> year)
Cae Amos Secretary	Simon Vallance	(2 <sup>nd</sup> year)
Newsletter Editor	Susan Sharp	(1 <sup>st</sup> year)
2 x General Members	Will Parsons	(1 <sup>st</sup> year)
	Rachel Burkitt	(1 <sup>st</sup> year)
Auditor	Pete Latimer	(3 <sup>rd</sup> year)

#### 5.0 INTERMISSION

Beer and crisps were consumed.

#### 6.0 FUTURE MEETS

It was agreed that there would be no more Stonethwaite camping meets due to the state and noisiness of the site.

Poor attendance at Welsh hut meets was discussed. This has improved with the influx of newer members.

A camping meet at Glenridding was requested as well as meets at Gillerthwaite, Aran and in the Peak. All to be considered by the committee.

#### 7.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The question of separate sex dorms was raised. It was agreed that they would not work but that separate wcs and facilities would be designated in huts where this was possible.

Lights out and being quiet on meets was discussed. It is up to members to be considerate. Where there is a problem then the meet leader has the authority to tell people to be quiet and to turn lights out in dorms.

Hut fees have increased to £6 per night with the resultant deposit increase to £12 for normal meets and £18 for Scottish meets.

If a prospective member has paid their first £6.50 after October they will not have to pay the initial £6.50 again in January. If they paid before October then it will be due again in January.

Jack Jowett thanked the club for awarding him honorary membership

The meeting closed at 21.45.

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# Easy Fruit Cake

THIS CAKE is ideal for mountaineering trips, as it's full of fruit and doesn't use any fat. In fact, one slice gives you more calories than any of those so-called "energy bars" (eg Nutri-Grain or muesli bars) – and it works out much cheaper!

MAKE IT IN ADVANCE & wrap it in tin foil to mature before you eat it...

POURING WHISKY over it each day helps keep it moist too...

- Ingredients:**
- 350g/12oz dried fruit (sultanas/currants/raisins/dried apricots/whatever you fancy)
  - 110g/3oz soft brown Demerara sugar
  - about 200ml/mugful cold tea (without milk!)
  - 1 large egg
  - 225g/8oz self-raising flour

**Instructions:**

- Make a good strong mug of tea, without milk, and let it cool down
- Place the fruit & sugar in a **bowl**, add enough cold tea to just cover it, then leave to soak overnight (The fruit will swell up in the tea)
- Next day, put the oven on at Gas mark 3, or 325 degrees F /170 degrees C
- Add the egg to the fruit & mix it in well
- **Sieve** the flour into the mix a bit at a time and stir in with a **wooden spoon** until you have a thick mixture
- You could also add mixed spice, cinnamon or nutmeg at this point
- **Grease** a **large loaf tin**, and line it with **greaseproof paper**
- Spoon the cake mix into the tin, then put it in the heated oven for about 1 1/2 hours
- The cake is done when the top is crusty and starts to shrink away from the sides of the tin
- Leave to cool slightly, then turn out the cake onto a **wire rack** to cool completely

Keith Waddell

# Coniston, 22/23 November 2002

## 'The Curry Meet'

Grahaeme Lauder, Lesley Houfe, Paul Spinks, Ken Findlay, Janet Allison, Simon Brocklebank, Dave Hughes, Geneviève Shaw, Sarah Woodford, Rebecca Hilton, John McMullen, Debbie Hargraves, Alun Evans, Roger Voller, Steve Corcoran, Dave Clark, Chris Buck, Simon Vallance, Hazel Arthur (plus visits from Sarah, Giles and Martin)

I apologise in advance for this meet report – everyone else's always seem like a good read but I don't know how to write them like that! Also, I gave the destinations book to the next Meet Leader and so can't remember what everyone's walks were but hopefully you will be entertained a little bit anyway ...

On Saturday morning Simon V set out in the early light with Roger and Dave C for a little stroll (you know, the usual 16 mile hike), and there was still bright sunshine for at least ten minutes when the main party (Lesley, Dave H, Paul, Geneviève, Sarah, Rebecca, Debbie, John, Grahaeme, Steve, Alun and me) set out about four hours later (OK, two hours later). There was an advanced party of seven on our walk because some of us had to hang around waiting for Steve to adjust his neckerchief (more on this later). Ken, Janet, Chris and Simon B set out to do something rocky and energetic (you'll have to see the meets book for more info) just before us. We went some ridiculous route to Wetherlam via Steel Edge (seemed a long way round to me anyway!) but it became more interesting when we bumped into a dozen or so lithe young men running around in blonde wigs. They were a little disoriented at first but decided Wetherlam was the right direction and shimmied off ahead of us. We came across them again in the pub later, well into drinking yards of ale sans wigs.

Our rearguard action dissembled in increasingly heavy rain and Alun, Corky and I opted for the short route home, despite Alun having kept us all waiting half an hour earlier while he tussled with his zips and flashy waterproofs. Grahaeme and John continued stoically, determined to reach Dow Crag. They successfully misled another group who followed them thinking they were going up the Old Man, but it didn't delay them any on their route to the pub. On our way down, Corky managed to pick up a Swedish walker wearing platforms – which are to be recommended for crossing bogs – and her increasingly distant boyfriend, his feet attractively ensconced in plastic bags. He managed to shake off Corky with some feeble excuse about stopping for lunch and the three of us meandered down to the hut to dry off. Needless to say we all rendezvoused at the pub later, but not before doing some vital curry preparation.

The curry was a superb team effort and on the table for 8.30pm (quite astonishing really!). We chopped up lots of stuff before going to the pub, and Ken, Janet and Chris started it all cooking when they got back in the first leg, which was brilliant. Commendations have to go to Alun for his control of the spices, the hut for its range and quantity of pans and to John for his secret (and excellent) cooking method for spinach – interfere at your peril. Paul cooked a very exotic fish curry too – we can recommend the recipe ((you can't always get hold of kaffir leaves though – I tried on Saturday). However, it seemed as though everyone in the big dorm went to the loo at least three times each in the early light. There was about ten times more curry than we needed (and I was worried we weren't going to have enough) and if anyone would like to sample it, there's still several meals-worth in my freezer!

Some memorable items of interest from the weekend:

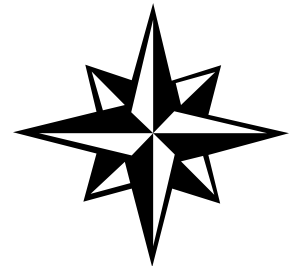
- Lesley rejected Dave H's offer of a lift, despite his turning Grahaeme down to keep a space for her, and then left early on Sunday to go supermarket shopping – I know, what can I say?
- There was a slight altercation on Sunday when Grahaeme tried to poke Dave's eye out with his map case but luckily no lasting damage was done and he denies any malice aforethought. Just beware of gazumping Grahaeme in the future ...
- Roger Voller had a baptism of fire on his first meet – two days trekking with Simon V and Dave C and a group meal, but despite falling into bogs (valiantly accompanied by Dave although on separate occasions) he seemed to survive.
- 'Cul de sac' translated means 'Ass of the bag' (and I always thought it sounded really posh!).

- There was an excellent catalogue in the pub selling a whole range of things you could never live without, including your own guardian angel, callous removers, life-sized hide and seek dolls (don't ask) and highly fashionable cowl balaclava hats. Dave C has all the details.
- Ken and Dave H exposed their hidden talents in the after-dinner singing game on Saturday night. Trying to identify songs when you only hear 'lalala' or 'mmmm' is harder than you might think, particularly when it's John doing the 'mmmm-ing'. This is a game which is easy to replicate at home – just make a list of well-known song titles and a list of different sounds and then each person has to do a few songs in the style given... Maybe you had to be there! It is good, honest.
- There were some weird moments when Grahaeme and Dave tried to convince me that I had been to the hut before, although I could remember nothing about the inside of it at all. Spooky.
- Dave C sustained a large bump on his head from giving it a good firm whack getting into his bunk on Saturday night. He was extremely controlled about it though, the bash was much louder than the adjoining 'Ow'.
- Steve demonstrated the many uses for a neckerchief (if that's the appropriate term)– you'd be amazed; I think one of the permutations could hold water for up to 5 hours. They should list them in that catalogue. Watch out though girls, Steve's gone for contact lenses to increase his irresistibility, and it obviously worked for the Swedish maiden.
- Sarah Woodford leads us to believe that the size of gentlemen's trouser pockets is decreasing – be on your guard for a hand slipping into your pocket to add to her research!
- The weather wasn't too bad on Sunday but no-one else could confirm John's sighting of snow. Lots of walks were enjoyed and I hope everyone went home feeling good.

John Pulford

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# 'Route Checking'



Well it was all my own fault, how many years have I known him, how many times have I found this weakness? Who, you could ask, led the group on a day out to climb on Pillar only to admit that he neither had a map or knew the way round to the climb.

So who were to join us I asked ~ and answer came there none. We were the first out of the hut and made our way along the main track towards Great End. Other travellers were also on the path as was quite a lot of water. The fells above us were decorated with ribbons of white as all the overnight rain descended in glorious torrents. As Taylor Gill Force came into view it was tremendous and all its fingers were full to the brim.

At first I thought oh yes the scramble must be on the left just as one crosses the bridge where Taylor Force meets Grains Gill and then it dawned on me that it was not! The scramble we were aiming for was on the slopes of Base Brown. Base Brown lies to the north of Taylor Force, at the moment I realised this we were standing most definitely upon its south! May I have a look at the description in the book I asked; there it was 'take the path right at the farm, under the arch'. We had not done that at all. As I said I blame myself entirely, I had not bothered to look at or check the approach thus we were on the wrong side of a stream that was in a bit of a spate. We are on the wrong side I commented.

Crossing the bridge we left all the other walkers behind as we turned immediately right along a wall while others followed the more normal tracks. Even at the widest bit the water was rushing by and it would require the removal of socks etc and a crossing in boots, I must remember to take out the inner soles I though as we stood at the side of the beck. Glancing up stream he spied a log that joined one bank to the other and went off to investigate. After a few moments I followed and that was a funny thing as well, because even though I was following I arrived there first. The log below me was black and wet from the spray of the water as it ran over an edge and into a pool. The smoothness of the log was interrupted by nodules of long lost branches and at the far end– joined one piece seemed to come from the log and be joined onto a large grey rock.

The log seemed to be anchored to the rock so I moved down and put myself astride it, it seemed secure so I moved out a little. The protuberances were both a help and a hindrance; they gave some thing for my hands to grasp but also made it difficult when moving the legs. As I moved over

I kept eyeing the piece of wood going from the log to the rock trying to work out if it was joined in some way or just resting. Just as I had decided that there was some fixing or other and felt a little safer I found out I was wrong; it moved and fell from its link with the rock and the log turned a little. "Man of 53 drowns in Lakes Stream" flashed through my mind. Fortunately I kept my balance and gradually made my way to the far side. My partner now had to follow "I could not have rescued you if you had fallen in you know!" I think I had known that. Gingerly and with me standing on my end of the log he followed. The scramble started where the crag fell down to meet Taylor Gill Force. The rock was surprisingly good and without much lichen. We made the few moves that let us regain the path, crossing it we continued up and surmounted one outcrop after another. The rock kept its character and it proved to be a quite delightful scramble. The highlight was reached when a little wall of rock confronted us, the easy way the book said avoids this by walking left and into a gully, we took it head on. My friend went first trying out a couple of moves on the first rocks before establishing himself at a little niche about 15 foot above me. Here he tried one move after another but all to no avail. There was a move he thought but he was unable to place his foot where he wanted it, it was just too high for his short legs.

Thus it was my turn to climb and his to get a bit chilled, reaching his high point I soon made the awkward move but only to find myself in a more difficult situation with nowhere to go to. After some time I decided that I needed to move left round a little buttress that seemed to be pushing me out a bit too much for my liking. I looked harder for the 'always to be found' ideal hand hold; I found none: I looked round for that 'less obvious better foot hold', I found none. I must have been there for 20 minutes and now my hands were getting rather numb with the cold, I had already tried the move numerous times but now knew that it had to be done if I were to do it at all. Checking the nut lodged behind a flake of rock I tentatively moved out onto the edge and just managed to keep my balance, one more move and a hand hold was found, phew. A sling around a small spike and I made the final move up. It took a long time for my hands to get warm again and my second had already started to climb before the belay was in place hampered by woody fingers.

The rocks above rambled on maintaining the 'Scramble' part of the description and Brown Base was just a walk away when that came to an end. The day was completed with a climb onto Great Gable where two sets of LMCs were found to be loitering and a walk over to Sprinkling Tarn to eye up the 'snow filled gullies' of great End before returning to the hut via Grains Gill.

**Simon Guilfoyle (Wears Silly Hats)**

(Yep, I know: fine talk from someone who falls out of her bunk in the middle of the night!)



## LMC SONGSHEET



The hut meet immediately prior to the issue of this newsletter was at Duddon where, for the record, we had two full days of **glorious** sunshine (we took plenty of pictures to prove it) (proper sit on grass with tea and book sort of weather).

Some of us wound Saturday night up in the pub with some of Johnny Mac's fiddly music and a bit of a sing-a-long. Only a few people knew any words (...) and we decided we think (...) we need a club songsheet???

If you have the lyrics to any songs you think would go down well at such a gathering, please send them in to the Ed. If you know of a song but not the lyrics and can't find them anywhere, please suggest it and I'll see if I can find the lyrics for it.

Don't worry I will liaise with all you musicians/singers out there – I'm not exactly famous for my own musical or singing skills (well not in a good way anyway).

# HAVE YOU EVER FANCIED A COURSE TO IMPROVE THOSE RUSTY SKILLS?

HERE ARE JUST A FEW CURRENTLY ON OFFER

## THE BMC RUN COURSES TO IMPROVE WALKERS AND CLIMBERS SKILLS.

### Alpine Courses

Based in the Chamonix Valley in June, July & August, for climbers & mountaineers who have experience of British mountaineering & want to climb in the Alps. Ratio of 1 Guide: 3 participants, 3 days in duration. They give a practical introduction to glacier travel, crevasse rescue, avalanche assessment & use of equipment.

Application forms are available from the BMC from early March each year, selections are made early in May. The deadline for application is usually end Apr/early May.

### Winter 2003/2004 Mountaineering Courses

Based in the Cairngorms, these bridge the gap between summer climbing/walking & winter mountaineering. The ratio is 1 instructor to 6 participants, 2 days in duration. The courses cover use of ice axe & crampons, navigation & avalanche assessment.

Applications to the BMC by 30th November each year.

### ALAN KIMBER

Calluna,  
Heathercroft,  
Fort William PH33 6RE.  
SCOTLAND

Voice: +44 (0)1397 700451;  
Fax: +44 (0)1397 700489.  
<http://www.westcoast-mountainguides.co.uk/>

### SUMMER HILLCRAFT COURSES

Navigation awards  
Winter skills  
Navigation coaching  
Via Ferrata course  
G.P.S course  
<http://www.cndoscotland.com/>

## Courses at Plas y Brenin

There are LOTS!

<http://www.pyb.co.uk/courses.htm>

## HIGHLANDER MOUNTAINEERING

### Winter Courses

All Winter Skills Courses  
Greater Range Prep Weekends

### Summer Courses

SPA  
Training and Assessment  
Rock Climbing  
ML Training and Assessment  
Summer Hillwalking and Navigation  
Ropework and Scrambling

<http://www.highlandermountaineering.co.uk/>

## THE 2004 LMC PAKISTAN EXPEDITION?

Anyone interested in a 5 week Summer Bash with a difference?

The Government of Pakistan has announced that all peaks up to 6500m will be considered as trekking peaks for 2003 & 2004. This announcement was made in connection with the Golden Jubilee Celebration of Nanga Parbat and K-2 first ascent. Before this, all the peaks above 6000m were considered as expedition peaks with a royalty fee.

NOTE ALSO 50% DISCOUNT ON ALL PEAKS ABOVE 6500M

Website: <http://www.atp.com.pk>  
email [enquiry@atp.com.pk](mailto:enquiry@atp.com.pk)  
News & Information  
Adventure Tours Pakistan & Silk Route Caravans  
P.O. Box # 1780  
Phone # +92-51-2252759, 2260820  
Fax # +92-51-2264251

# 'Sunday Strolls'

It was a Sunday in the lakes. Sundays, unless they are fantastic days when everyone rushes out hating the moment of departure home, tend to be slow. This day was marked by the accuracy of the weather forecast's cloud level and the expectation that the prediction of rain would be equally accurate. there were murmurs of shopping and going home as the mist out side swirled down to obscure all the ridges in view. In Patterdale there had been a Sunday walk led by Geneviève to some little hill called Beda Fell and a little top known as Brock Crag. They were nothing special and quite innocuous; to Geneviève however they were something else entirely, they were ticks!

It may be David Hughes' fault, it may not but it is true that he is the biggest ticker of them all and a rumour abounds that his shopping emulates his walking in that he is trying to visit every grocers within a ten mile radius of his Ilkley home. I have seen David and Geneviève talking on occasions but I suppose it may be a self-inflicted problem and I do not think that there are any pills for it.

While the table sitters sat, Genevieve and Graheame Lauder were bustling, I and a few others noticed this and decided to investigate. The plan was it seemed to visit Heron and Sergent's Crag. By the time we left, the crew had grown to six and Adam joined us in Stonethwaite having been abandoned by others who had left boots in the hut. Thus Rachel, Les, Michael, Grahaeme (whose name never comes out right?) (*oh yes it does – I've checked it with the man himself – who didn't seem terribly bothered – but I've added it to my spellcheck dictionary anyway to try and make sure I get it right – Ed*), myself and Geneviève as leader set off from the cars towards the two ticks. It was dry overhead if a little wet underfoot.

Above us only crag, below us only earth. The slope was steeper than expected and Grahaeme (*ta daaaaa - Ed*) had carefully copied out the route from the FRCC book of Lakeland hills because of its directional complexity. We all listened to his reading and made our way up the slope to what we thought was the place where the wall abutted the crag and a wooden stile allowed access across it. The wall was broken down and there was no evidence of a stile made of anything ever stood here. There was an encouraging 'open gully' however and soon we were on the way up that. It was quite steep to begin with so when it got even steeper and even a little more steeper after that we began to wonder. The Crux. Above us was a split in the rock on one side and a really steep grassy slope on the left. There are not many places where grass slopes reach verticality; this was one of the few. I looked at the split and did not like the way it steepened at the end so followed Grahaeme at the crucial point a wire fence attached to a post lying horizontally above lay invitingly over the slope. I do not think that on every Wainwright one needs the assistance of artificial aid we however did on this one.

Michael had differed in his opinion from mine so while all the rest used the ladder to ascend the vertical he had moved to the rock split. When he did make it to the top having to dig for handholds beneath sods of grass and soil he did not seem to think that his route would make it into any new climbing guide of the area.

The rest of the day was as one might expect, reasonable walking across the two tops and a slippery descent on the slopes down to a bridge at the top end of Langstrath Beck. Michael stayed on the right hand side of the beck while the rest of us moved to the path on its left. Les went shooting off and Michael disappeared into the distance. Rachel suffered a bit on the way down but it had nothing to do with Corky as he was not even on the meet, her bother was a migraine that affected her sight, she struggled on manfully (even women can do that sometimes) and the yellow tablets (yes there are tablets for that) did there deed by the time she reached the cars again.

Paul Hudson



# 'Departing'

Unlike some I am quick to learn names and that is fortunate as I meet a lot of people over a year.

The hour was seven, Paul had woken earlier and lay waiting a moment. Ken had moved first, stepping down the ladder to floor level, dressing then moving down stairs. His aim was set, the evening before he had agreed a venture and checked for all the right equipment; better safe than sorry! John rose next the sleeping bag zip giving cause for concern in case it kept him captive all the day. He too exited the room dressed for climbing. Last evening he too had checked and rechecked the adequacy of his metal devices to employ against the mountain rock. Richard and Rebecca allowing a more leisurely arrival of the day stayed in their bags.

Across in the other upstairs room people, made restless by the 'below stairs' noises, turned in their warm snug sleeping bags. Tea and toasted bread smells drifted up the stairs from the kitchen. Peter opened an eye, the road to Loch Eil filled it. A good day out and one that would give solitude and a peaceful mountain excursion; at that moment Michael turned over, somehow waiting. After a few minutes Peter drifted over the snow clad hills of the past, crisp white snow and a single set of footprints. He raised himself on an arm surveying the room; rucksacks lay about, evidence of discarded clothing, sleeping bags and sleeping bodies. He rose to join the kitchen crew.

Quietness returned above stairs just as the noisiness grew below.

Michael somehow knew that it was his turn to rise, none had woken him but now he was conscious. He wondered what his girls would be doing now, glancing at his watch. Who could tell? Quiet or Madness he wondered, what would it be like at home: both? In the kitchen a cup of tea was poured for him and he ate his cereal.

Daylight was now strengthening, the day gathering; others stirred. One by one they emerged from their cocoons; new people for a new day. Yesterday's travellers were today's walkers and climbers. Fleece, thermal gear, gloves and boot were assembled, packed and later checked. The other Paul and Lesley descended to the kitchen, Rachel and the other John, Geneviève and Rachael followed.

A rattle of metal objects echoed round the hallway; it seemed that Ken and John needed to recheck those aids of climbing so carefully chosen the night before. Once, twice and yet again. It seems to me, it must be the more checking you do the more you enhance your prospects of the day (*Absolutely - it takes me a week to half prepare for then a week to unpack after each meet yet I can do a week on the Med at 2 days' notice and with half as much luggage and I'm hardly a climber - ? - Ed*). Jolted by the noise Richard stretched; he noticed how bright the window light was, the view was obscured by condensation but it was still obvious that the day was getting underway. He rose quietly hoping that Rebecca would also stir and wished her into wakefulness. It did not work.

Tea and joviality filled the kitchen, people clashing, passing, moving, commenting, eating and drinking. Rebecca slept on but upstairs Paul lay awake, no reason it seemed for him to rise this day. Voices filled all the rooms now; Ken and John who might have made the early start and been on the moor by eight; perhaps enjoying the other human companionship, perhaps disorganised, readied at last to go. A book was opened and Ken, jolly but also anxious in the act of departing, wrote some comments; others laughed. One last repack and they were off, leaving the door ajar for the cold morning air to invade the snug atmosphere.

Rebecca had risen some minutes earlier, cajoled by Richard in the end and then Paul at last rose just in time to see Ken and John set off towards the Buckle from an upstairs window. Fresh morning air here crept in to the night's fug.

Everyone was up now, making, doing, planning, soon I'd be alone. More writing was put into the book, Sgoor a' Choise, Meall Mor and something quite illegible even to me and I have seen all sort of scripts in my time. Then something that took me quite by surprise happened; a new person entered the front door, sleeping bag and lots of kit! I am used to people arriving in the evening and then departing during the day; this was most unexpected, most unusual. The new arrival was Adam. Conversations continued as parties of people coagulated. Adam the newcomer was looking for something, he was unable to find it so it was borrowed. The next thing to occur was more usual, a couple of visitors looking for something as well; it was friends this time and they could not be borrowed so they went off to look for them.

Time continued and I waited to see what else would unfold. More people were now standing round while a few rushed to and fro. The standers waited, the others seemed to rush more quickly.

Departure was sudden and complete, it always was. Not this time however Paul who had prepared nothing, no sandwiches, no rucksack though he had been given books by some sat in the kitchen.

I am used to quiet times, some weeks I seen none at all; I am used to noisy times, when alcohol and food and people fill all the rooms. This was however a little unusual, rarely did anyone keep me company on a good day, people are never here when the sun is out and the sky dry; to day I am not alone, there is Paul.

**Lagangarbh**

## FORTHCOMING CLUB MEETS

Nights Away	Accomm + Places	Title	Venue	Meet Leader
<b>11+12 April</b> <b>BOOKING NOW!!!</b>	Hut(10)	Do The Snowdon Horseshoe the Findlay Way	PCU, N Wales	Ken Findlay
<b>17-20 April (EASTER BANK HOL)</b> <b>BOOKING NOW!!!</b>	Hut(10)	Cairngorm Meet	Braemar, Scotland	Andy McRoyall
<b>02-04 May (MAY DAY BANK HOL)</b> <b>BOOKING 2<sup>nd</sup> April onwards</b>	Hut(10)	Mountain Guide Meet	Crianlarich, Scotland	Peter Latimer
<b>**16+17 May</b> <b>BOOKING 16<sup>th</sup> April onwards</b>	Camping	tba	Ogwen.	Dave Clark
<b>**23-25 May (WHIT BANK HOL)</b> <b>BOOKING 23<sup>rd</sup> April onwards</b>	Camping	tba	Northumberland	Andy McRoyall
<b>**06+07 June</b> <b>BOOKING 6<sup>th</sup> May onwards</b>	Camping	tba	Glenridding, Patterdale	Grahaeme Lauder
<b>**20+21 June</b> <b>BOOKING 20<sup>th</sup> May onwards</b>	Hut (12)	tba	Cae Amos	Simon Vallance
<b>**04+05 July</b> <b>BOOKING 4<sup>th</sup> June onwards</b>	Camping	tba	Buttermere	Keith Waddell
<b>**18+19 July</b> <b>BOOKING 18<sup>th</sup> June onwards</b>	Hut (18)	tba	<b>Summer Bash,</b> Duddon Valley	Paul Spinks
<b>** July/Aug</b> <b>BOOKING – See Meet Leader</b>	-	-	The Alps	Ken Findlay
<b>**01+02 Aug</b> <b>BOOKING 1<sup>st</sup> July onwards</b>	Camping	tba	Nether Wasdale	Andy McRoyall
<b>**22-24 Aug (AUGUST BANK HOL)</b> <b>BOOKING 22<sup>nd</sup> July onwards</b>	Camping	tba	Mid Wales - TBC	Simon Vallance

## \*\*YOUR NEW MEETS CARD SHOULD BE INCLUDED WITH THIS NEWSLETTER. IS YOURS?

**Every Tuesday evening starting at 9pm** there is a meet at The Palace Pub, Kirkgate, Leeds (near City Bus Station, next to Leeds Parish Church).

**One evening mid-week most weeks** some members meet at Leeds Climbing Wall - ask around for details if you are interested.

### **WaterAid Munro Challenge 2003 - Sat 14 June 2003.....**

For the third time WaterAid is looking for people to take to the hills & try to bag a place in the Guinness Book of Records with a new world record by putting a team of 4 to 6 people on top of all 303 mountains over 3,000' in the British Isles on Saturday 14 June between 12 noon & 2pm - in all, an estimated 5,000 people. A fundraising target of £250k has been set for the provision of WaterAid funded safe domestic water, sanitation & hygiene promotion to the world's poorest people. Rachel Burkitt says 'Being a new member & therefore still naïve & gullible (bless!), I'm interested in getting together a team for this event. We can request our particular Munro (for the baggers out there) or be allocated one. It could be a pretty good weekend in the Scottish hills with the added bonus of raising money for a great cause. You get to feel good twice over! Anyone crazy enough to be interested, please get in touch with me (Rachel) on 0113 2663899 or [rachel@claranet.com](mailto:rachel@claranet.com) by 11<sup>th</sup> April at the latest so I know whether an LMC team is a goer.

### **The 2004 LMC Pakistan Expedition.....**

A five week Summer Bash 'with a difference' - details can be found on page 18 of this newsletter.

# THE LAST PEOPLE TO LIVE AT CAE AMOS?

Some of you may have looked up ancestors on the Government's 1901 Census website. The Church of the Latter Day Saints have gone back even further to 1881 and their website [www.familysearch.com](http://www.familysearch.com) is worth a visit. It took a while to find but Andy McRoyall managed to discover the details of the family living at Cae Amos in that year. In fact there were two families; 71 years old Griffith Roberts, his wife and servant in one part (presumably the left hand section which is now derelict) and Griffith's son, Owen, and his family in the main part. Further Roberts lived in Gyfng – Farmer Nash's house. The neighbours to Cae Amos were two families of Williams, who presumably supplied their daughter as a servant to old Griffith Roberts. By 1901, there is no record of Griffith or his wife and it is likely that they passed away in the interim. The younger Roberts family had moved to Garn, a village nearer the coast. There is no record of Cae Amos so it is a fairly safe bet that it had been abandoned by the turn of the twentieth century and the next (temporary) inhabitants were those LMC pioneers seventy years later.

Here are the 1881 census details:

**Dwelling** Caeramos  
**Census Place** Penmorfa, Caernarvon, Wales  
**Family History Library Film** 1342333  
**Public Records Office Reference** RG11  
**Piece / Folio** 5553 / 28  
**Page Number** 1

Name	Relation	Marital Status	Gender	Age	Birthplace	Occupation	Disability
Owen ROBERTS	Head	M	Male	32	Penmorfa, Caernarvon, Wales	Agricultural Labourer	
Jane ROBERTS	Wife	M	Female	33	Llanengan, Caernarvon, Wales		
Griffith O. ROBERTS	Son		Male	7	Penmorfa, Caernarvon, Wales		
John G. ROBERTS	Son		Male	6	Penmorfa, Caernarvon, Wales		
Owen F. ROBERTS	Son		Male	1	Penmorfa, Caernarvon, Wales		
Robert ROBERTS	Son		Male	4m	Penmorfa, Caernarvon, Wales		

Name	Relation	Marital Status	Gender	Age	Birthplace	Occupation	Disability
Griffith ROBERTS	Head	M	Male	71	Penmorfa, Caernarvon, Wales	Farmer, 100 Acres Of Land	
Ellen ROBERTS	Wife	M	Female	67	Dolbenmaen, Caernarvon, Wales		
Ellen WILLIAMS	Serv	U	Female	18	Penmorfa, Caernarvon, Wales	General Serv	

## AND CAE AMOS NOW (HOME, SWEET HOME) ...

<p><b>The Rustic Charm Of A Cottage In The Welsh Mountains</b>                  12 Beds                  Excellent Barbecue Spot                  Secluded Location                  Stunning Scenery &amp; Walks</p>		<p><b>How CAN You Resist?</b>                  The Next Meet At Cae Amos Is  <b>20th &amp; 21st June!</b>                  And It's All Yours For A Mere £6.00 Per Night....</p>
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# 'N'ice Climbing'

## (a training course recounted)

He'd said to keep an open mind, but I certainly wasn't expecting this. Or maybe I was. The last time a man in ropes and harness with only his eyes peeking out from protective clothing had blindfolded me was, well... yes, indeed. He handed me my axes and I headed blindly uphill, back to the frozen overspill that we were using as the day's implement of torture. The final day of the five-day course, the Cairngorms were our playground (or at least a couple of its' corries), the sun was shining and I was climbing an icy waterfall with a blindfold on. Very exciting stuff.

The three of us – myself; Alan, the only other student in my group; and the instructor – had watched the ice and snow melt and sublime under the sunny winter skies with each day's walk into Corrie an T'Sneachda, where we spent the first three days of the course, and then Corrie an Lochan which held more snow and ice. Alan and I, of the six course attendees, were the keenest and so were paired off with our own instructor. The low student:instructor ratio and their flexibility saved me from the frustration of spending a week with one of the others, who had never put on a pair of crampons before.

Either to satisfy our rampant keen-ness or to remind us of appropriate humility, our first day out took us to Invernooky, a grade III mixed climb of about 4-5 pitches. George Reid, our instructor for the first three days, talked us through techniques of using crampons and ice axes in vertical rocky and frozen media – including the value of frozen turf - as he led the route. With each bit of protection put in, he told us about the whys and wherefores of the gear, clearing out the snow and ice to look for rocky placements or putting in ice screws or warthogs. Scottish winter climbing at its best – end of the day means washing the mud off your crampons.

I had spent the previous weekend with a guide-friend out of Fort Williams, who had given me my first real taste of winter climbing – Number Three Gulley Buttress (grade III) on Ben Nevis (lovely, especially that exposed bit at the top where you can see 800 m or so of space beneath your front-pointed feet) and Siamese Twin (grade IV 4) on Aonach Mor. Snow and ice-covered, I seconded up the routes with considerable glee, getting used to the feeling of solid and axe crampon placements, as well as what it felt like to have them slip. Yikes. In the route next to us, Left Twin, were a couple of geezers heading up and one of them was saying that he wasn't sure why he did this – “summer climbing, at the end of the day you say ‘yes, what a great time!’. Winter climbing, at the end of the day you say ‘yes, I survived!’”. I didn't really understand that until a couple of days into the course, when I started paying more attention to the potential consequences of a fall. It didn't happen, fortunately.

Second day of the course took us to what was reportedly some of the best (read ‘only’) fully in-condition ice routes in the northern corries that week – Aladdin's Mirror and Aladdin's Mirror Direct (grade IV). Again seconding, we learned more about technique and gear placement and how to best stuff your pockets with the food you will be eating that day because there is little chance you'll get your rucksack off to get at it while either belaying or climbing. I'd seen someone on Aonach Mor with a some kind of neoprene covering over a Platypus hose to keep it from freezing; that seemed much better than wistfully thinking about the water bottle that I couldn't reach.

The days were long and full – third day, Alan and I started leading on grade II snow and ice gullies. Alan had considerably more climbing experience than I – SPA and instructor at his local climbing wall, as well as replete with stories about climbs on various types of rock around the UK and the Alps and so on, he did go on a bit – and so I had the benefit of both George's and Alan's experience as I learned gear placement, setting up belays and stance management in winter conditions. By the end of the fourth day, which we also spent leading, we were getting pretty well-versed in snow belays, cool Russian-sounding things you could create with ice screws and a bit of string to clip into on the way up or down (Abalakovs, I believe), and could we change over leaders with much less faff, making the whole process much warmer. Brendan Wheelan had taken over as instructor for the last two days of the course, so we switched from a Scottish to an Irish accent and I got to hear a lot of Alan's stories repeated on the way up and down the hill. Great. Fortunately, I was quite a lot fitter (or at least 15 years younger) so I would quietly wander on ahead while he bent the instructors' ears about his glory days. Perhaps I don't really do him justice – some of the

stories were quite interesting, but sometimes you just wanted to listen to the ptarmigans and the ever-present wind in the rocks. But he's a good guy (in case he ever reads this). I'll be climbing with him sometime this summer.

It was Brendan who asked us to keep an open mind. The last day of the course we were a bit short on time, as we had to be back to the minibus by 4pm – previous days had us off the hill around 5:30 or so, just enough time to grab the remnants of the daily ritual of tea and cakes in the Lodge dining room. Rather than do a full-on route, we had some more skills to cover like snow bollards, buried-axe belays, use of dead-man plates as running and static belays, etc. We were near a frozen overflow of about 30 m in height, so after the skills we set up a belay (using the aforementioned dead-man – where does it get that name, really?), and at Brendan's prompting spent more time practicing technique rather than endurance. The first run up was with one axe, and you couldn't switch hands. The second run up was for speed – solid placements first time. Alan was very pleased that he beat my time by about a minute... but I still carried both ropes and some of the gear down the hill because of his gammy knee... no, not competitive, why do you ask?... The third run was blindfolded and was amazingly instructive as to what a solid placement sounds and feels like rather than relying purely on the visual and humming and hawing before even trying anything. "Dangle and whack" is what George Reid called ice climbing. I have to agree – it was hard, but mixed was much more strategic and varied.

At the end of the course I was buzzing with energy, which was soon wiped out by Saturday with Ken's 4-route plan on Stob Coire nan Lochan at that weekend's meet at Lagangarbh. I can't wait to get back out onto the ice – just wish they'd make the approaches shorter.

Susan Jensen



## LMC AWARDS DECEMBER 2002

I intended to include a list of all last year's award winners in this newsletter but I blew it (shame on me).

It seems unfair of me to only mention those I can recall **but** I feel it would be a shame to not mention them - for special reasons –

Jack Jowett is our **first** Honorary LMC Life Member (as already mentioned in previous newsletter);

Steve Corcoran (Best LMC Newsletter Article 2002) because around the time we publish this newsletter he is leaving our shores for more mountainous ones in France (I'm sure we all wish him well!); and

Ken Findlay (LMC Mountaineer Of The Year 2002) because, and I hope this goes some way towards making up for my above error, he posed for the interesting piccie on the right demonstrating for us what kind of, erm, tongue (?) one can expect to see on a Mountaineer Of The Year.

I will try to include the full list in the next newsletter.



# Ulaan Baatar to Ulaangom

## 'An interesting journey'

When Ken Findlay, Les Holbert and Paul Hudson planned the visit to Mongolia's unfrequented mountains in the extreme west of the country, the plan was to fly as far as possible. An outbreak of Foot & Mouth however put paid to any plans and an overland journey of between 3 and 5 days was the only option. Here's my (John Given's) story of part of that trip, from Ulaam Baatar to Ulaangom.

We loaded the van up in the dark outside the old soviet style apartment block where Amaraa, a lecturer in immunology at the university, had used a small two-bed apartment to create his ten-bed youth hostel. At \$4 per head per night he could double his month's salary with four nights full occupancy. Bags and boots thumped and bumped in narrow corridors. Voices muttered in the cupboard under the stairs.

Take another look the next time you pass a cupboard under the stairs. Imagine a small Macbeth style cauldron of steaming mutton with bones sticking out, a small hunched old woman squatting on a three foot by four platform, the disembodied voice of an old man buried somewhere in the bedclothes behind her, a portable television, and some family snaps stuck to the wall. I never got round to asking how much rent they paid.

The deal had been for exclusive use of the van but something must have been lost in translation, because, by the time we cleared the stockaded Ger suburbs of Ulaan Baatar and bumped back to the metalled road, there were five more Mongolians on board: a young couple with baby son, two women Ætraders<sup>1</sup>, one very large, and an older guy up front with the two drivers.

With the realisation that this would not be a straightforward trip beginning to dawn with the day, we headed west into the vastness of the great Mongolian steppe.

The interior of the van was basic, a sliding door allowed access, two three person benches faced each other, with room for three more at the back squashed up against the bags and gear piled against the back doors. Into this space were squeezed the twelve assorted travellers. We soon discovered that some seats were better than others, that the van's springs were shot, and that the drivers' road manners had been derived from the Mad Max school of motoring.

We started with a 4-4-3 formation, an all Mongolian front line facing back, with the Brits and Nasaa mostly on the two benches at the back, apart from frequent bouts of weightlessness, as the van lurched and crashed round, over or through the frequent potholes. With every passing vehicle and with every bone jarring impact choking clouds of fine dust filled the van. Seats on the outside of things, where you could wedge yourself against the body of the van, and just the one other body, were best. Stuck in the middle was worst, every adjustment of position a complex unspoken negotiation with the neighbours, nothing much to hang onto, and the gnawing conviction that yours was the most uncomfortable seat.

Not knowing when it would stop didn't help. We'd wondered a bit at the various estimates of three to six days we'd been given for the trip. Now all became clear. There was a tourist version that involved things like stopping to sleep. Then there was the Mongolian version that didn't. We had apparently booked the Mongolian version. Given that it was a fixed price for the trip, the drivers were not for hanging about. We hadn't packed the bivvy gear for access, nobody wanted to be the one to call a halt, and so on and on we went trailing an impressive cloud of dust across the steppe.

The days developed a rough routine, breakfast about 6:00am, lunch about 12:00am, dinner about 8:00pm, tea about 3:00am. This latter break involved bowling up at some isolated Ger, seemingly chosen at random, provoking a frenzied dog attack, shouting its occupants awake, and then piling in for a cross-legged encounter with a bowl of boiled marmots and some mares milk.

The open handed and gracious hospitality with which we were received was such that offering payment often felt like offering offence. Steamed mutton dumplings known as Buuz quickly established as the discerning carnivores snack of choice.

Get the worst seat for the night shift and you were stuck with it all through the slow small hours. For me the right back seat was the worst, especially when the driver or his mate retired to join us on the bench sometime through the night. You couldn't see the road ahead very well in the dark

and so couldn't anticipate the jolts which smashed your head against the roof, or with a sharp crack against your neighbour's skull. In front of you was an improvised seat which would slowly collapse and press harder and harder against your knees jammed up against it. With people on either side, the only way to keep yourself from repeatedly headbutting the roof was to stick both hands between your legs and lock your fingers off round a sharp metal undercling. I spent dusty desperate hours locked in this position, struggling with cramp, hunched up and swaying like some weird parrot trying to persuade myself that it was all OEGood training for the Alps<sup>1</sup>.

The first sun in the van would put the whole team to sleep, and then all heads would sway in synch to the broken rhythm of the road until dreams banged against bone and another day began. When the Mongolians woke up they would sing sad love songs and rummage in cloth bags filled with an assortment of dead animals bits, which bits of which animals we were never too clear about, but some tasted quite good. We drove for three days and two nights, covered well over a thousand miles with the longest stop maybe three or four hours.

Apart from an agreement about the destination details of the route where vague, communication with the drivers difficult, the maps sketchy, and one bit of the Mongolian steppe looked much like another to our to our untutored eyes. We rarely agreed where we where, where we were heading for, or when we were likely to get there.

In general we went a little north of west. The first morning crawling slowly up a rough mountain pass towards dawn, stopping now and then to let the engine cool. On top a huge Ovoo, a sacred shamanistic cairn trimmed with strips of blue cloth, and raked poles fishing the wind. Wooden crutches and tokens of all sort littered the cairn left by the faithful or superstitious who would walk three clockwise times around.

I'd had little sleep for three days by the time we'd left U.B. and the ensuing journey I remember as a rather dream like experience. Endless horizons of grass, horsemen herding goats, a scatter of white Gers, some with satellite dishes. Impressive Japanese funded infrastructure projects pushing roads through forests and over mountain passes. Huge yellow earthmoving machines carving up and flattening out the land beneath the black silhouettes of mysterious wooden tepee like structures standing starkly on the heights.

Broad rivers sweeping through the grasslands. Bottles of Vodka with the drivers and their drunken pals on the edge of a desolate wood fenced Ger settlement beneath a dragon ridge. The kid who never cried or complained the whole way. A night of nosing through rough scrub desert and dried riverbeds looking for the way. Dendritic wanderings around the edge of lakes the size of Yorkshire, the shrunken remnant left by 30,000 years of postglacial evaporation. Recorded winter lows of 56 degrees. Dromedaries, shrunken dried up bodies of cattle goats and horses left where they fell. The stripped out carcasses of cars and trucks, the deserted ruins of soviet settlements. A first glimpse of distant snow capped peaks. A country where you could walk a thousand miles and never see a fence or sign that said Private! Keep Out.

John Given



## RECIPES / COOKING

You may have seen Keith's recipe for 'Lazy Man's Cake on page 6. If you have any other recipes or food ideas please send them in.

I was quite a hit on Saturday with my sugar snap peas (Geneviève liked 'em). Now they really are the lazy way out. I bought them in a pack from Morrison's and didn't even unpack them. Refreshing and tasty! In Capel Curig. Stuart Telford passed oat cakes around. I thought ooh what a yummy idea and took some to Duddon last weekend and they went down well when I ran out of butties.

A lot of members share cooking – one person does the starter, another the main course, another the pudding, etc. Last Saturday, Ed got away with just making the salad dressing but she won't be trying that one too often (it was an accident!).



Seeing as she's got room to mention it Ed would like it to be known that when a certain other member of the club gave her a lift home on Sunday, as she got out to open and close the last gate away from the hut, just when she was between car and door, he hit his windsreen washer squirters. 'Sure' it was an accident. (She's got a long memory).

# BUT WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

## About the Club:

The club was founded in 1574\*. Remarkably, some of the original ~~dinosaurs~~ (oops) members are **still** members. The current membership stands at around 60. (\*I lie – it was founded in 1962).

## About being an LMC Club Member:

The expectations of club members are as follows:

1. Abide by Club rules;
2. Act responsibly and courteously on the hills and in hut accommodation;
3. Assist meet leaders as requested;
4. Offer sociable guidance to new/prospective members;
5. If in possession of suitable transport, occasionally give lifts to other members; and
6. Complete 'Destinations' book before setting out on a 'walk' and tick on return.

Application for membership is open to anyone aged 18yrs+. Prospective new members are asked to pay a 6-month subscription and invited to attend 3 meets with a view to becoming a full member.

## About Club Meets:

The club holds 'away' meets approximately every other weekend.

Fees for away meets usually cover two nights' accommodation and most members join the meets on Friday evening although they can join later if they so wish. Bank holiday meets can be four nights long and the fees will reflect this. Fees for English & Welsh meets are £6 per night. Fees for Scottish meets are £9 per night.

Some members meet at Leeds Climbing Wall early on weekday evenings. Ask around if interested. Every Tuesday evening from 9pm there is a meet at The Palace Public House, Kirkgate, Leeds (near the City Bus Station and next to Leeds Parish Church).

The Club regularly organise expeditions overseas. Please ask around if interested.

## About the Accommodation:

Some summer meets are camping meets but most take place from a hut. There are similar clubs all around Britain and the huts we stay at 'belong' to various of them. The LMC has the use of a hut in North Wales by the name of Cae Amos (not available for use by other clubs).

All but possibly one of the huts we use has electricity; heating; separate female/male bathrooms, showers + toilet facilities; oven +/- microwave; toaster + kettle, etc. Some huts are more luxurious than others. Some have small libraries of mountaineering/hill-walking/walker related books. Most of the huts have on-site or very close parking facilities. Some of the huts are close to local licensed hostelrys, some of which serve food. More details can be found under 'Hut Rules' further on.

If you want to know what facilities are available at a specific hut, please ask around. (If anyone tells you tales of bogey-men (or -women) or anything that sounds as if it belongs in a Stephen Spielberg book, ask somebody else. If they give you the same line, move on again.)

## HUT RULES:

- ✓ No radios or walkmans or anything else that may disturb others;
- ✓ No mobile telephones allowed to ring in the hut;
- ✓ No smoking;
- ✓ No dogs within the hut (dogs may sometimes be kept within your car but check with the meet leader first because some huts do not even allow dogs within their grounds);
- ✓ Please show consideration for others if you are still up and awake when they have gone to bed
- ✓ (most huts) No walking footwear to be worn within the hut

Please note that mobile telephones suffer very bad (if indeed any) reception in mountainous areas, where the only places they will receive a signal with usually be up on the tops of some of the hills. All that will happen if you leave your mobile switched on when in a bad or non-reception area is: the battery will wear itself out in no time searching, in vain, for a network.

## About Activities Undertaken:

Some members of the club are real, live mountaineers (unhinged). At the other extreme, some members only hill-walk. Activities range from walking to scrambling and climbing and even mountain-biking. They might include sampling the above-mentioned hostelrys or even shopping (there are some very good mountaineering/walking gear shops in mountainous/walking areas!!!)

Evenings are spent eating and imbibing the odd drink. Most meets have a theme. Live music 'jams' (fiddle, accordion, flute, etc) are occasionally organised (take your instrument with you - and play!!!) and you may even find yourself being persuaded into wrapping yourself around a chair on the pretext it is a 'game' but really to see how supple you are (or are not) (*ow – Ed*).

Each Christmas the club hosts a Christmas Dinner, usually somewhere near good walks of course, involving slide shows, optional fancy dress and always various annual club awards (one of which is for Best Newsletter Article - so **get your articles in nnnnnnnnnow!!!**) (*I have only been on one of the Club's Christmas bashes (the last one - attended by over 50 members) and **thoroughly** enjoyed it - Ed*). There is also usually a Summer Bash which invariably involves live music.

## About Equipment You Will Need:

When attending away meets you will be going out on the hills and are expected to take equipment suitable for the time of year and the conditions you expect to face. This typically includes:

LIST 1 – ALL meets	
Walking Boots (with Vibram type sole)	Bivouac Bag/ Sleeping Bag/similar
Waterproof Jacket	Spare Clothing
Waterproof Leggings	Water carrier such as a large plastic bottle
Hat	Food for walking
Gloves	Breakfasts + evening meals (if not eating out)
Map	
Compass	Spare Food & Drinks
Whistle	First Aid Kit
Torch	rucksack or similar

LIST 2 - WINTER meets	
* ALL ITEMS ON LIST 1 *	
Ice Axe	Crampons which suit your boots
Gloves	
LIST 3 – CLIMBING	
* ALL ITEMS ON LISTS 1 & 2 *	
Helmet	Rope
Harness	Belay Device
Rack of equipment	
Some things which might make you rather popular with other members	
Firelighters	Jam
Twenty-pence coins	Errrrm – a smile?

NB: Cotton and especially denim fabrics are unsuitable to hillwalk/climb in as they retain water. Wicking synthetic fabrics are much better.

## About the Committee:

Paperwork and subs/membership, bookings, the newsletter, and social events, etc, are handled by a Committee which is voted in each year at the AGM. The Committee meets when necessary.

Cttee Member Title	Duties
Chairperson	Organise and chair committee meetings and Chair AGM and other special meetings.
Vice-Chairperson	Organise social events including Annual Dinner and Summer Bash.
Treasurer	Maintain accounts and financial transactions; and Collect subscriptions.
Meets Secretary	Prepare draft programmes of meets for the Committee to consider
Hut Secretary	Encourage use of Cae Amos; Develop plans for maintenance/improvement of Cae Amos; and Arrange Cae Amos work meets.
Membership Secretary	Deal with routine enquiries about membership; Maintain membership list; and Maintain club website.
Newsletter Editor	Collate material for hard copy quarterly newsletters
General Member	Duties as allocated by Committee, eg Arrange buy-in; Assist in production and distribution of hard copy newsletters; and Take minutes of Committee Meetings.

**A** (soz Rich – this was the only bit in the whole newsletter I really 'edited' – but it gets a mention later on anyway)

**FILM STAR?**

The date had been booked in for weeks, which went against my principles of Scottish climbing – leave it late, check the weather and the internet climbing reports and go at short notice. Booking in advance usually means sitting in a car at Cairn Gorm/Glen Coe/Torlundy while the rain keeps the wipers working overtime and the wind erodes motivation. It was different this time. Ten days of stable weather with sun during the day and cold nights. The only snag was the heat of the day (Aviemore hit 19°C on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March) and uncertainty over what would be in condition.

“Do you fancy Point 5?” Dave asked. A good suggestion; very high, north facing and often in condition. There was no doubt about wanting to do it, just a niggle or two over ability and how crowded it would be. The latter was solved by a suggestion on Alan Kimber’s web site – get a very early start or climb it at night.

The Friday evening drive up went smoothly enough but as we got changed under the street lamps of a Fort William car park, the warm air and strong winds off Loch Linnhe confirmed the North West was experiencing different weather to the rest of the country.

I woke up just before 2.00am and all I could think of was a bed at the FRCC hut in Kinlochleven. Get a grip! Wind the car seat back up, eat a banana and put your boots on – you’ll be fine. No I won’t - I’m knackered, it’s 8°C, it won’t be in condition. It might be - can’t tell unless you go and have a look, you’ll feel better when you start moving. No I won’t - we could do Observatory Ridge and have a late start. I hate climbing.

The alarm went off and Dave woke up with a start. I scavenged under the car seat looking for my banana. The Glen Nevis Youth Hostel looked inviting.

There was enough moonlight to walk as far as Lochan Meall an t-Suidhe without a torch ... or without a fleece for that matter. I was convinced the route would have fallen down. Under the brooding buttresses of Castle Ridge and along the bank of the Allt a Mhuilinn was a different story. The mountain obscured the moon, the wind blasted and we constantly lost and regained the path. Stumbling on boulders made for frustrating progress. The glow of a cigarette guided me to the shelter of the CIC hut where we sat and took stock. “This is the most intimidating place in Scotland,” Dave noted. “Excellent,” I thought. “He is human after all.”

The thing I always forget about climbing on The Ben is that from the CIC you’ve still got the best part of an hour’s walk to get to the routes leading off Observatory Gully. We plodded on in the beginnings of dawn light and began to get just a bit excited as a thin strip of white glowed from top to bottom of the crag. It looked like the route was complete. Head torches and the odd floating voice reminded us that this was a race and second or third place meant long waits and dodging falling ice. As we set up the final snow apron the next party caught us up...

“What are you doing?”

“Point 5 if it’s in nick. How about you?”

“The same... and it was yesterday.”

There was something that I recognised about the voice and manner of the next lad. As he babbled on, cracking one-liners and generally enjoying himself, it twigged. Andy Kirkpatrick. Arse, we were just about to get chased up our prized route by an Ice God. It got worse a few minutes later.

“We’re making a film. Any chance our camera man can second the first pitch with you? He can film us climbing from above.”

“Sure, no problem” I replied ... “Bollocks,” I thought. Our ineptitude is about to get caught on film and broadcasted to thousands. “What sort of film are you making?”

“A porno film!” he grinned. Stupid question I suppose. I made a mental note to knock the camera out of the hands of our new climbing partner.

I caught Dave up. “We’re going to be film stars. Don’t fall off.”

The snow ice was superb. First time placements and sculptured by a hundred boots so that the calf muscles didn’t get too tired. As I set off on the second pitch I pictured myself on the cover of the new ‘Hard Ice’ video and the trappings of fame it would bring me. I came back to earth with the first axe swing. Swoosh! Lots of powder and no purchase. Marvellous, I’m going to be filmed down-climbing and handing over the lead. Fortunately the ice was better further left and even the lack of gear didn’t seem a big issue. It’s amazing what the anticipation of scorn and ridicule can do for upward movement. The belay, a mass of pegs and tat, arrived a few minutes later. N.B. If the film makes it look like several hours later, don’t believe it. Tricks of the camera and all that.

The route lets up after four pitches and falls back to a grade two gully with the odd ice step. The exit over the cornice gave a few exciting and unstable moments and suddenly the plateau, sunlight and a deserted summit arrived. Grinning like school boys we stuffed ropes into sacks and food into

mouths and headed for Glen Nevis... desperately hoping for the walkers on the Tourist Path to ask us what we'd done.

Back at the car we pondered our options. Walking back into The Ben the following day had about as much appeal as a wet weekend in Wales. Aonach Mor (an easy day for puny legs) had looked bare and we were happy with our achievements. Home it was.

I woke up in Leeds on Sunday morning and it all felt very surreal. Had we done the route or imagined it? Hopefully we'll find out one day. The camera never lies!

Rich Cole - March 2003



**A Poym – Untitled (Ed)**

Up feeling ready for the off.  
Plans made yesterday hold firm;  
the ridge and a Munro,  
a challenge to be met.

Beinn Fhada, Bidean nam Bian,  
then onto 'nam Beith; the lights  
of the Clachaig to call the party home.

The grand day out, the sense of 'party'  
holds them all together.  
A common cause, support as each  
sees ridge of snow and sun.

Good eating; toast, tea and cereal:  
good talk; the jovial banter of a task undone:  
provisions made; the chocolate, cake and crisps.

Outside the cloud, an off day obviously,  
rests on saddles, idling the hour.  
A look outside to taste the air  
soon topples confidence.

The seven find themselves just five  
and other hearts and minds like wisps of mist  
now waver too, lost expectations.

The 'ice' eats in, allowing 'Thomas' there.  
Bonds that held them firm while night passed by  
begin to thin, to sever;  
Soon tears appear.

Two lone mountaineers hold firm,  
their day unchanged,  
their challenge to remain.

Better days the 'morrow, sun and views!  
A sky to call a sky; the mind's eye sees.  
That day fit for challenge, fit for photographs,  
recording efforts, an adventure proper.

Still mist lolls round Creise and up on  
Buchaille Ettive Mor it wavers, waving  
almost gleeful at the wavering resolve.

Still two hold firm against the passing time  
and gambits cross the floor;  
now mindful of those 'birds in a bush' or 'in the hand'.  
Some others feel the tug of 'what if!'

One player notes, if one returns then ninepin like  
the others may fall back;  
the longer game may still be won.

Time passes on, the rising's long gone by.  
An idleness descends pretending business.  
The day has let them sit and hurries on.  
Do opposites attract?

The effort of decision confuses thought.  
Somehow though mist's still settling down,  
longing for a 'winter's day' remain.

The longer challenge, the better fight  
are pulling threads. A clattering silence  
empties out the mind and one small voice  
remarks! The two are three!

Jealousy, at something missed;  
at something more exciting taking place;  
of others' "grand day out" ~ eat in.

The 'itchy' crampons scratch a mark on minds.  
Restless for their bite of snow  
they open up a wound; blood rushes in?  
No, longing fills the void.

The doubts that earlier took root,  
felt strong enough to hold the longing back;  
now find themselves diminished.

Now other longings weave another plaid  
and out the blue, or rather gray today,  
the two, were three, are five.  
The clan returns.

or "**How to prevaricate ~ On the  
Wavering of people in making a decision  
upon where to go from Lagangarbh  
~ High Hills or Low hills?**"

Paul Hudson