

FORFAR AND DISTRICT HILL-WALKING CLUB

NEWSLETTER

No. 3 JUNE 1993

A FEW WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT.

Summer is here again. All hillwalkers like this time of year when the daylight is long, the hills are relatively dry and the air is warm. At the May weekend meet at Dundonnell, I saw my first swallow and wheatear of the year and heard my first cuckoo of the summer. Yet despite these signs, we were treated to biting cold winds and snow showers.

Weekend meets are certainly popular these days. More so, since we have turned slightly soft and started using bunkhouses or hostels. On the other hand, the attendances at day meets continue to be disappointing. OK - we haven't been blessed with our fair share of good weather but where are you all?

As you can see later in your new 93/94 meet calendar, due to the interest in weekend meets, the committee added a couple of weekends bring the total to 5. We are going to the Borders in September - tough luck for all you Munro-baggers but excellent hillwalking to be had. Our extra weekends are in November at Whitehaugh and in March at Roybridge. I have been assured by the hut custodian that the weekend will NOT be a work party but a truly social occasion! So bring your dancing shoes! Our March weekend is reinstating our "traditional" winter weekend which was dropped in favour of the May weekend a couple of years ago. But now we have both! Next May we return to Dundonnell to let some of us try the rocks on An Cheallaich again. In June we return to the ski club hut at Bridge of Orchy (were there in 1992 for Boots Across Scotland). We haven't reduced the number of day meets at all - merely moved a couple of them (April and October) away from the holidays to assure a better turn-out.

This is a non-political publication but I have to mention one of the current government's obsessions - selling off public assets. As you probably know, the government is preparing to sell off (among other things) the Forestry Commission. The Forestry Commission is Scotland's biggest landowner (14%). Although much of it's land is a disagreeable blanket cover of mature Sitka spruce, their recent policies of mixed deciduous and conifer plantings are creating some stunning countryside which is both beautiful and a valuable habitat for wild life. Regardless of what it looks like, it belongs to you and me - free for us to roam and enjoy. The consequences of a total sell-off may be disastrous - forests may be cut down for a quick profit with no commitment for replanting it, wildlife habitat destroyed, access may be restricted and whole communities depending upon forestry left stranded. We will be the only country in Europe without a national forestry body. Let's all follow the debate with interest and be prepared to act as a club as circumstances dictate.

On a cheerier note, here is a photograph of the club "high tea" in Glen Isla Hotel in January. Unknown to the smiling faces, snow was falling outside and we were all about to have a tricky journey home (wish the blizzards has come earlier - 4 days up there and I had my XC skis with me). Next year, we'll make sure that the Norrie-mobile is fitted with tyres with some treads!

Colin, President

**MEMBERS ARE RESPECTFULLY REMINDED
THAT SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE. FEES
ARE UNCHANGED SINCE LAST YEAR.**

**WOULD MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL
OPEN MEETINGS WILL NOW START AT
7:30pm IN JARMANS HOTEL FORFAR**

- ◆ Rita Norrie became the most recent munroist in the club on Sunday June 6th. She was joined by many friends and members climbing Sgor na h - Ulaidh in Glen Coe to complete 280 munros. Congratulations on a superb achievement

Irreverent thoughts of a Mountain Mind Competitor

By DAVE MUIRISON

The big day had arrived. I had arrived, (ok so I had volunteered). I was rubbing shoulders and locking horns with the elite. Yes I was in the FDHWC team for the Mountain Mind Quiz. Taking my seat with Colin San; Far East explorer and conqueror, without the aid of oxygen or insurance, of Mount Fuji 12,334 ft. My other team mate was a participant in many mountain epics and rescues and runner up to Hamish Brown in the "Brian Coull lookalike competition". The journey to Perth was uneventful accompanied by our supporter, (yes singular) Janet, who sat humming that well known Tammy Wynette theme tune. Acunning ploy by the organisers, or was it? Part 1 of the competition, in providing a street map with the venue incorrectly marked, left us temporarily misplaced. Cries of "Far i wi Noo" echoed round Perth till we arrived at the "Civil Service Club", that helped explain the map error. The teams had assembled. 11 teams of 3, ready to do battle. First mistake: - dressed as I was in smart shirt and leather jacket, when the obligatory dress was lumberjack shirt and grey beard, even for women. Perhaps I was attending a meeting of Arbroath supporters by mistake and was seated among Danny McGrain's bearded army? The Chairman welcomed us, before sadistically wishing us well, having spent the previous month setting spine chilling questions for our "enjoyment"!

Round 1 proper, bell sounds, seconds out, women and children first. A team round: Identify that mountain/glen/loch/river/car park/corrie etc. Sixty slides flash up on the screen at the rate of one every 15 seconds, by the last few the strobe light effect had got to me and they all looked like Flicks

Nightclub. Colin dipped his pen in his pint of lager to cool it down; he had drawn the short straw and was writing down our answers. Try identifying and writing "Braigh Coire Chruim Chalgain" (Beinn a Gloh) all in 15 seconds. Bell sounds again, collapse against the ropes, 3 teams eliminated. FDHWC score 46 out of 60 and survive. Top score - 58 from Ancrum Club Dundee.

Round 2 : Three individual questions to each team member in turn. I had been warned that I would know the answers to everyone's questions except my own. How true this was to prove, well 1/2 true anyway. Question three was a tough one. Name the highest munro North of the Great Glen. Ah! The trick question of the three. He would have said Glen Mor. Which Great Glen does he want? Glen Morangie - No of course he means Glen Millar. Most famous song "Pennsylvania 65000" that must be the map reference, "Ben More Assynt" I guess wrongly again by 607 ft. No, the correct answer is Carn Eighe. I say eh! He says no eighe, I say oh, still none the wiser. Score for Dave out of 3 - 0. I sat quietly with Brian and Colin of the beards feeling like the drummer from ZZ Tops, why had I shaved mine off 2 years ago! Score time. Both Brian and Colin score 5 out of 6.

Round 3. Corbetts. Not much joy here I could only think of little Ronnie and Olga.

Round 4. Climbing terms - Jumar, Prussick - -. I look round the hall hoping to see a friend. Magnus Magnusson, the question-master, "pealed off" and answered two of his own questions before the teams had time to answer. The heckling from team Carn Dearg had finally got to him.

Round 5. Worldwide Scene.

Name the last Briton to die on Everest. I knew that one, wasn't it Farmer Ted Moulton", the job later taken over by "John get down Shep Noakes". Apparently not it was C R something or other.

Round 6. Rock types. Now you're talking, Glam, Country, Acid, BIues, Rock and Roll I know them all - -No sir something called Greiss, Quartzite and Bathsalts!

Round 7. The humble Bothy.

Just how many questions can he ask about Ranulph Fiennes' dog 'Bothy' anyway? Slide of a man beside a pile of stones, name the dilapidated ruin? Isn't that Farmer Ted Moulton? No apparently it's the "Nest of Fannich", after the fire.

Round 8. Navigation. How do you get off a mountain top in white out conditions? Get in single file and follow Stuart or Brian? No, wrong again. Well it works every time for FDHWC.

Round 9. Misc. Contestants look shell shocked, have they hit the wall (No not the climbing wall again!???) Name the dead plants in the plastic bags? Silage perhaps! - - No. Gaelic names for Eagle and Midge? Well I've heard the little devils called many things before but not that one. It was all over, scores on the doors time. Winners on the night. Grampian Club with Perth Club runners up. Trophy a fine miniature ice axe (ah well next year perhaps). Next year!! oh no I'm no masochist. But I'll be there supporting an all female FDHWC team represented by members of the Munroist Fraternity perhaps? The gauntlet is down!

Disclaimer: -The author accepts no responsibility for the above comments suffering as he is from 'Pulmonary Oedema', contracted during his short expedition in the rarefied atmosphere in Perth.

AN ADAPTION OF HOLY WILLIE'S PRAYER

O thou that in the heavens does dwell
Please hearken to this tale I tell - of hill run story
And perhaps you'll see it in your place
To grant all mercy to our face - sae kind an holy

We tramp the hills ower a' the counties
Admire your wark o' liberal bounties - sae grand a scene
An face the wrath o' wind and rains
The experience gained well worth the pains - once more severe
But Lord it's no the rain that worries
Or fear o' fa'in doon rocks and corries - that's no the fuss
Ye see afore thae scenes o' exultation
One must board this weird contraption - Bob Davidson's bus.

It snorts an' rattles an' lets in watter
Maks sic' a noise it droons the chatter - ye've seened yirsel!
D'ye mind your day it ga'ed afire?
Synne comin' hame it burst a tyre - twas made in Hell.

At Cairnwell a hose burst doon the seam,
An we lost Graham Norrie in a cloud o' team - o' mercy me,
An then ae nicht when comin' hame
The lichts gaed wrang, we had nae glaem - we couldna see!

Fan belts, batteries an' shovels galore
This tale could last forever mor - o grief, despair,
But kenin ye've got mair adae,
Than listen tae whit I've tae say - jist a wee bit mair.

Ach I've maybe been a bit unfair
For Alexanders wid charge us mair - the hills tae see,
An, nae doot, their drivers wid be sweer,
Tae gie us time for chips an' beer - an mak wir tea.

Ach tae hell wi yer buses wi fancy name,
The eens we hire's aye gotten us hame - no needin anither,
So here's tae Bob an' his b—— auld bus
For cairtin us an' them whas like us - a thegither

AG 19/1/72

A.G = Angus Grewer - Read by him at the Club Dinner Dance
c 1972

OTHER EVENTS:

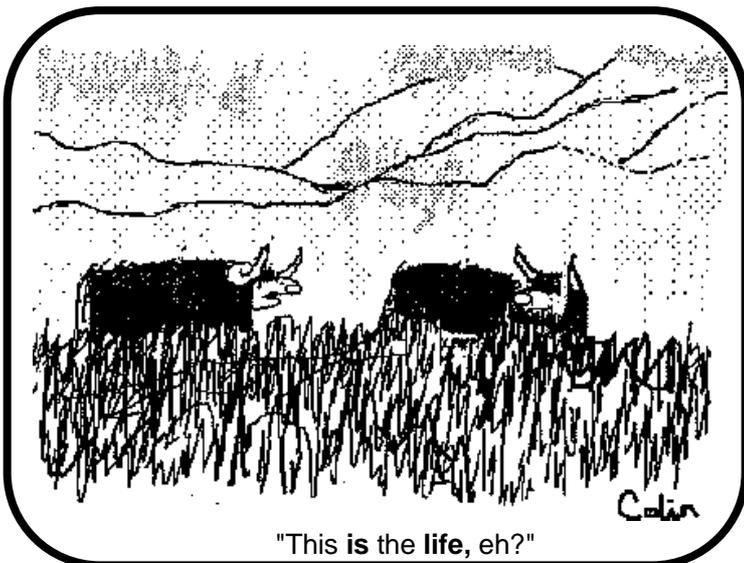
Tayside Mountain Rescue Association. Sponsored
Walk 20-6-93. Possible route - Kirkmicheal -
Dunkeld.

Tayside Mountain Rescue Association.
Cheese & Wine/Race Night 20-10-93. Possible
venue : Camperdown House.

CLUB NEWS

- The club has applied to adopt three trig points. These are Hill of Wirren, East Wirren and The Crannel.
- Club High Tea for January 9 1994 is to be in the Edzel area after a walk to visit our trig-points. Any suggestions on venue to any committee member.
- The Club has recently introduced an unofficial Hut committee. A volunteer is still required to serve on this committee. Names please to John Norrie.
 - Bookings are now being taken for the weekend meets to Grey Corries Lodge in March £7.50 per night and to Dundonnell in May £6 (approx) per night. Would members please note that a deposit of £5 will now be required within 4 weeks of the weekend in question. Names to the Secretary please.
 - Articles for the next Club Newsletter will be gratefully received by the Secretary.

Rita Norrie became the most recent munroist in the club on Sunday June 6th. She was joined by many friends and members climbing Sgor na h - Ulaidh in Glen Coe to complete 280 munros. Congratulations on a superb achievement.



- Whitehaugh is available for use by all club members at any time. Please book through the Club Hut Custodian, John Norrie. The hut is in an excellent area and is in good shape. Make use of this superb asset at very reasonable rates.

IT WAS 20 YEARS AGO TODAY

By DOROTHY TOWNS.

It's nearly 23 years since I got off the train at Crianlarich with dozens of people all rushing to the tea-room, no buffet cars on the West Highland Line in those days! The train always waited till everyone was served, so I had to hang about waiting to pick up my luggage. The one man on duty had 3 hats, on a shelf, behind a sliding window in the signal box on the platform. As he went from job to job, he slid open the window and chose the proper hat for the job! It could only happen on BR. Ben turfed me out of the hostel next morning and off we went to the very popular week at Inversanda in Ardgour, across Loch Linnhe. Garven on a grand day remains a favourite. Resipol on a grey day, Johnny with a touch of the Montezuma's, a grey cagoule and a face to match! We did make a few sorties across the loch, Carn Mor Dearg and the slog of Beinn Bheithir. From Garven there's a lovely view across to Rhum the venue for some of us in 1971. Sandy, in his panic to get the boat, left the 18 pints of long life milk in his van! Not that they would have done much for Geordie, Andy and Jack, who didn't cater for their liquid intake, and soon exhausted the meagre supplies of McEwans at the post office, then spent the rest of the week with withdrawal symptoms! If Mallaig hadn't been so far, I think they would have swam for it! We had the excitement of looking for and rounding up a runaway bull, we looked in awe at the folie-de-grandeur of the Bullough's Mausoleum.

Janet and I swam at Kilmory, and we were on the top of everything, even Bloodstone Hill, we had to, to get away from the god-awful midges. No wonder the Manx Shearwaters burrow into the hillsides, sensible birds! 1972 found us at Tornapress, on Loch Kishorn, at the foot of Bealach na Ba, the road over to Applecross. We camped on both sides of the burn which proved to be tidal; we had our ups and downs! The 4 corries of Beinn Bhan were explored before the scramble on to the plateau, Beinn Damph was a good walk, but it's Ben Eighe on a hot day that sticks in the mind. I have a photo of Stan in Coire Mhic Fhearchair, with head gear straight out of Beau Geste. Ruadh Stac Mor was heat, glare and exhaustion! Gilbert was a tea man, but he spoke of that surprise cup of coffee for years afterwards. Kintail '73'. It was a lucky break to be allowed to camp in Glen Lichd, such a super spot, well away from the teeming masses at Morvich, and blessed with good weather; even the dreaded midge gave us peace. But, if I remember, it was there we were invaded by curious cows, nothing is perfect. Still, with Ben Attow on one side and the 5 Sisters on the other, what more could life offer? Well, it could offer A'Ghlas Bheinn on the way to the Falls of Glomach, The Saddle, Glenn Beag, Beinn Sgritheall with Gibb, what a gorgeous green was Loch Hourn that day. It was a different colour a few years later when we sailed across the loch, but that is another story! DT.

WHITEHAUGH UPDATE

In the last newsletter I reported a serious act of vandalism carried out on the house - members will be pleased to know that through Norman Erskine, unofficial Club Solicitor - the Club was fully recompensed for the hut damage done. Bookings for the hut from other clubs and groups steadily continue (some for the third time) in fact the latest booking is for March 1994. A wee point of interest - the group High Adventure who misplaced some mountaineers recently in the Caucus Mountains of Russia have also used our hut.

More use of the hut only brings in more revenue to the Club but causes more wear and tear on the place which of course requires work parties to carry out improvements, so what about volunteering the next time a work-party has been organised.

Once again the Club is deeply indebted to Graham and Anna Davie of Clova Hotel for acting as unofficial booking clerks on our behalf.

John Norrie.