



Forfar & District Hill Walking Club

NEWSLETTER 9

June 1996

President's Column

To begin a presentation, an address, or letter, with an apology is, so I'm told, not the done thing, but, as my record of getting things wrong apparently outweighs my getting them right, why change the habit of a lifetime at this late date.

The apology is for the overdue issue of this Newsletter and it is entirely my fault that it is so late. I make no excuses other than the fact that I have struggled to come up with something original for my first column.

Having to follow in the footsteps of Colin and those came before him will be no easy matter and I can only feel thankful that the other members of the Committee have remained in place and I ask that they bear with me while I attempt to get into a higher gear (EXCUSE THE PUN).

It would be bad form to go any further without giving thanks for all the good work put in by the outgoing President and so I say, Colin, thank you. I won't attempt to describe all the benefits you introduced to the Club, as I'm sure you would not wish that, but suffice to say that I am sure all the members would agree that you steered the Club successfully into the high tech world of the nineties while your personality and family commitment you helped to retain and extend the original aims of the Club.

With that in mind I have the answer to the question "FAR I WI NOO" and if I wish to know " FAR I WI BEEN", I have only to look back through the diaries and that is well recorded. That poses the question "FAR I WI GAEN TULL NOO??"

I am in no doubt that we are not alone in asking this question. Have we seen the last of those magic days when it was rare to meet the occasional walkers and climbers and enjoy the exchange of experiences and mutual interests? As the numbers going to the hills continues to increase, what used to tie regarded as etiquette and camaraderie appears to be very much on the decrease and I feel a great sadness for the loss of what I always felt was a very important part of the mountain experience. The rush to get the next MUNRO bagged by whatever means e.g. mountain bike as far as possible and then maybe even running up and down the last hundred feet or so seems to have produced a new breed of person into the hills with no thoughts for others or anything but their own selfish aims. Yes I can see the benefits of cycling into Derry Lodge or similar areas so that one can spend a longer day on the tops or to tackle some rock route when time is in short supply, but the motive in this case is entirely different and has been practices since mountaineering first began. To go to the hills for the sole reason of bagging Munros seems to me to be such a waste and certainly does not help to promote the "Good Companions" feeling which is necessary if a Mountaineering or Hill Walking Club is to continue to grow and introduce new generations to enjoy and understand the freedom of our mountains which is rightfully part of their heritage. If, over a lifetime of hill walking, one has completed all the Munros, then I say " well done, good and honest companion" but if that has been the sole aim, what then, and what have you gained or, more important, what have you given?

This brings me now to the "BIG ISSUES" affecting the future of hill walking and mountaineering in Scotland and this does not refer to the paper being touted at every street corner in the UK, although certain comments being propounded by some of the so-called experts might read better in the said paper:-

- The right of access to roam our hills in jeopardy?
- Disagreement over whether a railway should replace ski lifts so that more tourists can be shuttled up to restaurants selling junk food at inflated prices and provide jobs and profits to anyone provided he or she is not a native of this country.

Out of these issues have grown an ever-increasing number of Societies and Committees producing more and more rules and regulations and creating more and more needless conflict between those who earn a living from the land and those who wish to enjoy it for recreational purposes.

These issues and the subsequent discussions of them have produced a document known as the CONCORDAT and it would appear that it is the in-thing at present to drop this word at every opportunity, although as yet the document has not been finalised. You may ask what all this has to do with Forfar and District Hillwalking Club and all I can say is that it affects us all whether we like it or not, but as a Club we should continue to encourage young people to join us and provided we can introduce them to the hills and ensure that they know the rules then hopefully we will have done a little towards maintaining the spirit of the hills and our Club.

The CONCORDAT will outline certain responsibilities, one of which I quote: "It will stress the need for courteous and responsible behaviour by all and the ethic of care that all should show for the environment". Maybe not word for word, but I'm sure we have been promoting exactly these sentiments since the Club was formed.

I hope I haven't bored you too much with these ramblings and I can only hope that we will have an outstanding year ahead. The Meet Calendar shows some exciting prospects and I look forward to sharing some days on the hills with you all. I also hope to have some big surprises for the indoor meets this winter and look forward to some full houses. To those members who no longer go on the outdoor meets, please, come along to the indoor evenings- reminiscing on past adventures and days in the hills is part of the backbone of all good Clubs.

In conclusion, a quote from one of the pioneers of mountaineering to his friend, supposedly on SGURR ALASDAIR in SKYE:-

You know, ALF, going to the right place, at the right time, with the right people, is all that really matters. What one does is purely incidental".

I wish I had said that, but I know I'm with the right people, and I know we go to the right places - so let's enjoy it.

JIM

MEET CALENDAR 1996 TO 1997

MONTH	DAY	TIME	BUS /OT	PLACE	OS MAP 1:50,000
July	7	7:00	OT	Ben Alder	42
July	13	11:00	OT	Maintenance Day, Whitehaugh	
August	11	7:00		Linn O'Dee	36,43
September	7,8		OT	Shielbridge	25, 33, 34
September	22	7:00	TW	Ben More/Stobinian	51,57
October	13	7:00	TW	Glen Lochay to Glen Dochart	50,51
October	26,27		OT	Onich	41
November	10	7:30		Ben Chonzie	51,52
December	8	8:00	TW	Glen Esk to Glen Clova	44
January	12	9:30	OT	Glen Isla and High Tea*	43,44
February	9	8:00		Stuc a'Chroin	51,57
March	9	7:30		Drumochter East Side	42
March	22,23		OT	Mill Cottage	35,36
April	13	7:30		Loch Laggan South Side	34,42
May	3,4,5		OT	Knoydart (Barrisdale)	33
May	25	7:30	TW	Glen Lyon	51
June	8	7:00	TW	Blackmount	50,51,56
June	21,22		OT	Oban /Mull	47,48,49,50

TW means through walk, OT means own transport

*High Tea at Glenisla Hotel

Whitehaugh **From the Hut Custodian**

Time for a pat on the back. Thanks to club members efforts and Clova Hotel, last year saw income from Whitehaugh at a healthy level. Please continue to help at our maintenance days this year, many hands make light work. The ravages of time and weather have taken their toll on the roof at Whitehaugh. Stuart Fergusson and I gave it the once over and came to the opinion that it would require to be replaced in the near future.

The present felt roofing material has been on for approximately 10 years and has now about had it. Replacing this with another felt one is an option but replacement would be required again in a further 10 years. A better solution, in my opinion, would be to fit a permanent roof, as fitted to many industrial and farm buildings. That is plastic coated preformed steel sheeting or some other material. Expensive yes, but a one-off cost and only if this can be done without the club going into debt.

The new committee will be discussing this and other options but I would like to appeal to any members who can offer technical advice and know how, contacts with roofing firms, material suppliers, advice on any available grants from sports or local councils, bodies who might assist from training for work schemes etc. etc.

As you may well know, our club does not own the property but it is in our own interest to keep Whitehaugh in good condition as it is our main source of income and subsidises all club activities. Can you help? Do you know someone who can? Please contact myself or any committee member.

Later in the year, in the good weather, when the river level is down, we also hope to do some work on the erosion problem at the bridge using the other gabian basket. This will appeal to all those who like messing about in the river and building castles, so look out your wellies and / or scuba gear. Details to follow. See you at the work parties.

Winter Training

It may seem inappropriate to raise this subject in June. However places on the MCofS courses are always oversubscribed and allocated on a first come basis. Anyone who might want to go on one next year should let Nick know. You will then be sent an application form and details asap (in September or October). You are not committed until you send a cheque to Glenmore Lodge. A free winter skills booklet is available from Nick. We also have a video. Our attempts to arrange winter training was not very successful due to the wrong type of snow!

Changes to the Constitution

The AGM on 6 March 1996 approved the following changes to the Constitution. Rule 17 is amended to say that prospective members will be asked to join after one month. Rule 3 is amended to say that the committee shall consist of 8 members, the additional member being the hut custodian, as long as we have a club hut. Rule 11 is amended to say that the hut custodian will also give a report at the AGM, as long as we have a club hut. Rule 24 is amended in that our membership of the MBA will not be renewed.

Evening Meetings

There are no evening meetings in July or August.

Access

Copies of the Letterewe Accord and the Concordat are enclosed.

Safety Information

The Mountaineering Council of Scotland has sent guidance on safety to all club secretaries. They advise that the following points should be brought to the attention of all walkers, especially novices. (Reproduced verbatim - their capitals).

1. Hillwalking is a summer pursuit. HILLWALKING IN WINTER IS MOUNTAINEERING.
2. Use the correct equipment and clothing for the expected WORST weather conditions.
3. Know WHEN and HOW to use that equipment. Practice walking in crampons, ice axe braking, cutting steps, use of the rope and belay choices on rock and snow. A weekend's practice in this will prove invaluable to beginners.
4. Know how to use a map and compass. Again practice BEFORE going on the hill as well as in safer locations before heading off into remote areas.
5. Become familiar with weather reports, snow and avalanche reports and use them to plan your day.
6. The majority of FATALITIES involve head injuries sustained when tripping over or SLIPPING whilst walking. On snow covered ground such a slip easily leads to a serious out-of-control slide. Consider wearing a helmet when on precarious ridges with steep slopes all around or when descending difficult craggy hillsides or steep slopes leading to rough ground. Better still concentrate on not slipping in the first instance. Having the most appropriate footwear will help.
7. Make sure that members of the meet can cope with the difficulties and hazards of the intended route and that the more experienced in the group can cope with all eventualities including first aid. Don't be afraid to abandon plans if conditions prove dangerous or beyond your experience.
8. Individual responsibility is important. Know your limitations and never be afraid to say NO

Technologies Information Paper

Nick has copies of a MCofS paper on the use and misuse of GPS (Global Positioning System) navigational instruments and portable phones. In many parts of the hills and glens portable phones will not work.

FROM THE MEET SECRETARY



The day meets continue to be reasonably well attended, the Cam an Tuirc / Achaladder meet was particularly spectacular with ideal snow conditions and very low temperatures. The Brig O'Turk / Balquidder through walk was a pretty miserable day, the kind of walk when most of us say "I'd really like to do this in good weather" - maybe next time. The weekend meet to Arrochar was highly successful, excellent conditions and lots of different hills to climb. The accommodation was adequate even if shared with 140 cub scouts!

Unfortunately 1 was unable to attend the Lairg weekend, which in terms of accommodation and the weather was reportedly highly successful. Those members who felt that the charge made for accommodation was somehow inequitable are asked to write to the treasurer for any reimbursement. It is perhaps worth mentioning at this juncture that a number of members have expressed their concern at a moving away from the basic ethos of Club outings, namely mutual enjoyment of the hills, to the emergence of internal groupings more appropriate to private organised trips.

The new meet calendar is given below and will be printed soon. Please remember that any changes will be raised at the evening meetings and put into the local papers. I feel sure there will be something for everyone and wish you good walking during the coming summer and autumn.

STUART

**Ben Vuirich Trig Point
Adopted by the Club!
Photo Roy Rennie**

FORFAR AND DISTRICT HILLWALKING CLUB CONSTITUTION AND RULES

1. NAME: The Club shall be called - FORFAR AND DISTRICT HILLWALKING CLUB
2. OBJECT : The object of the Club shall be -
To encourage public interest in hillwalking and arrange transport for Club members at moderate cost.
3. The Club shall be governed by a committee of eight (8) members.
These are:-1 President, 2 Secretary, 3 Treasurer, 4 Meet Secretary, 5 Assistant Meet Secretary, 6 Press Secretary, 7 Committee Member, 8 Hut Custodian, as long as we have a Club hut. Five (5) committee members shall form a quorum.
4. The committee shall be responsible for running of Club affairs. Any bye-laws made by them shall be submitted for approval at an open meeting.. A two-thirds majority must be obtained before any bye-laws can be adopted.
5. All motions relative to the Constitution of the Club are to be recorded by the Secretary at the back of the Minute book and brought up for discussion at the next AGM.
6. The President, as Chairman, shall be in charge of all official Club meetings. The President will remain neutral as much as possible but hold the right to intervene in any argument which may be detrimental to the good of the Club and its members. The Chairman will have a casting vote which may be used in the event of deadlock.
7. The Secretary shall record the Minutes of all official Club meetings in the Club Minute Book. These minutes shall be signed by the Chairman (or acting Chairman) at the meeting at which the minutes were read, approved and seconded. All official correspondence shall be dealt with through the Secretary unless otherwise decided by the President.
8. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial affairs of the Club. All funds shall be placed in the Club's bank account except for a small sum which the Treasurer shall retain for immediate needs. Money can only be withdrawn from the bank on the signatures of two (2) members of the committee including the Treasurer. A cash book shall be kept by the Treasurer where all transactions shall be recorded. This must be kept up to date in order that a monthly financial report shall be given. The Treasurer shall be responsible for payment of all Club accounts. The Treasurer will present a financial report and approved Balance Sheet at the Annual General Meeting.
9. The Meet Secretary shall be responsible for the good behaviour of members on Club meets., and also for the hiring and payment of buses and the collection of bus fares. A log book shall be kept by him giving a record of events regarding Club meets, and a report shall be given at the monthly meeting.
10. The Press Secretary shall be responsible for advertising Club meets and submitting reports to the Press. All Press items relating to the Club shall be kept in a book reserved for this purpose, and a report given at the monthly meeting.
11. The Annual General Meeting shall be held in March. Fifteen (15) members other than juniors shall form a quorum. At the AGM a report will be given by the President, the Treasurer, the Meet Secretary, the Press Secretary and the Hut Custodian (as long as we have a Club hut) respectively. Two (2) Auditors shall be elected, who will check the Treasurer's Balance Sheet prior to the next AGM and report accordingly.
12. Any committee member who neglects official duties may be called upon by the committee to resign. Any Club member who disobeys Club rules may be brought before the committee.

13. Yearly membership and fees shall be as determined at the AGM. A membership card shall be given to members on receipt of the membership fee which will become payable immediately after the AGM.

14. Junior members, as defined at the AGM, shall not hold the right to vote, and shall not be permitted to hold official posts.

RULES REGARDING CLUB MEETS

15. Official day meets will be held on a monthly basis. Weekend meets will be additional to the monthly calendar.

16. Junior members shall pay half the adult fare on official meets.

17. Visitors will pay the same bus fare as Club members and will come under the same rules on Club walks, but after attendance for one month will be expected to join the Club.

18. Junior members (inexperienced) must be accompanied by at least one responsible senior member while on Club meets and on the bus.

19. The Club or its members are in no way responsible for any member or visitor who becomes the victim of any accidental mishap while on an official meet.

20 Any member whose action in any way endangers the safety of other members shall be reported by the Meet Secretary to the committee.

21. In the interests of safety while on Club walks, all members should keep together regardless of weather conditions. Any members wishing to leave the main party must first obtain permission from the Meet Secretary - minimum 4, two of whom must be experienced hillwalkers.

22. It is important that members and guests be appropriately prepared for hillwalking, therefore the Meet Secretary has the authority to inspect members' equipment and advise accordingly.

23. All names for weekend meets are to be in the Meet Secretary's hands two weeks prior to the meet.

24. The Club shall be affiliated to the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, and the Scottish Rights of Way Society.

25. The annual donation to the Scottish Rights of Way Society shall be at least £10.00

26. All equipment such as First Aid boxes, ropes, splints etc. which has to go on every Club walk shall be allocated to individual members.

27. No dogs shall be allowed on any Club walk.

LIST OF RULES FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

1 The photos entered must have some connection with hillwalking (the Club preferred).

2 There will be three classes:-

(a) colour transparencies

(b) colour prints

(c) black and white prints (at least postcard size).

3 All entries to be in by the date decided by the committee each year.

4 The competition to be judged by an independent judge, appointed by the Committee each year.

Constitution updated April 1996