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President's Column

A new millennium and a new president !

For the benefit of those members who don't know who I am, I will start with a short introduction of myself

I have been a member of the club for 24 years, having been first introduced by the late Norman Knight Kinnettles. Sixteen of these years were spent at Fersit, near Fort William. Those of you who have climbed The Easains: Stob Coire Sgriodain and Chno Dearg will know this area well.

The meet calendar for this year has been constructed from suggestions received from members, and I hope the walks will attract regular and not so regular members back to the hills. I would also like to emphasise there will be a low-level walk on all meets for those not wishing to undertake a hard climb.

I feel very honoured in being awarded the distinguished title of President, following in the footsteps of my very good friend Rita Norrie who was also President for a number of years, I will try to keep the side up Rita.

With the assistance I know I will receive from members and the other dedicated committee members, I am confident we can get the club going from strength to strength.

To close I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the committee and all club members to say a big "Thank You" to Jim for the last 3½ years he presided over the club, and I hope we will hear the strains of "Far I Wi Noo" from him for some years to come on many of the proposed walks.

ETTA

WEEKEND MEETS 2000

SKYE 20 - 22 OCT 2000

Roy has booked the SkyeWalker independent hostel in Portnalong where we had such an enjoyable stay last year. All rooms have individual bunks with bed linen provided. All the smaller rooms have been booked (4 with 2 beds and 1 with 4 beds) Names with a deposit of £10 to Roy Rennie as soon as possible.

MOIDART-ONICH23-25 March 2001

Because there is no suitable accommodation in Moidart, Roy has booked the Alex McIntyre memorial hut in North Ballachulish. The idea behind this is that members could use the Corran Ferry to gain access to Moidart and give the club's Munro baggers the option of heading for the Mamores or Glen Coe. The hut is owned by BMC & MCofS jointly and has been done up to quite a high standard, eight bunk beds and one alpine platform have been booked. Facilities include mains electric & water; electric cooker; microwave; fridge; all utensils; multi-fuel fire (fuel provided); electric heating in dorms (£1 meter); hot water and showers; drying room; WC's. Members wishing to book a place should contact Roy with a £7 deposit. Total cost for weekend £7 + electricity

KNOYDART 4-7 May 2001

The big adventure of the new meet calendar is a trip into Knoydart. After a very memorable visit to Barrisdale in 1997, we have decided to approach from the South this time, which will involve a boat trip from Mallaig to Inverie. Roy has hired the Torrie Shielling Hostel (see enclosed brochure) which is situated just outside the village of Inverie. This is the most expensive hostel the club has ever hired at £15 per person per night. The boat trip from Mallaig to Inverie on the Friday night will cost £50 for up to 12 people. Because the Torrie Shielling require a large deposit to be paid by December, members who are interested will have to book and pay a deposit of £25 to Roy by 6 December 2000. Total cost of ACCOMODATION will be £45. (boat hire will be extra) Bookings will NOT be accepted unless the £25 deposit accompanies them. Members who gave their name to Colin as being interested in

Knoydart will still have to book officially with Roy on 01307 840271

Date for the diary

1 -3 June 2001 Ratagan Youth Hostel - Full details next newsletter

IT WON'T HAPPEN TO ME Nick Parsons

Even after reading Allan Court's article in Newsletter 14 I thought "It won't happen to me" After all, Allan was injured on a serious ice climb and I would never even tackle such a thing. So it was a bit of a shock when it did happen to me.

It was a Club weekend to Glen Etive and I had had a good walk with Colin, Ray and Bill Mill, successfully bagging another two Munros - Stob Coir an Albannaich and Meal nan Eun. (Yes I'm claiming them even if I didn't walk all the way back down!). We had some good winter conditions and carefully negotiated snow and ice covered slopes between the two hills with Ray demonstrating his navigational skills in the mist. The final drop to easier terrain was down a quite steep, wet and muddy slope, which was of course no problem to a group with our experience. We soon found the path leading back down the glen and as we went along this easy walk out I was looking forward to Margaret's stew and maybe even a wee dram while we played John Nome's Munro game.

What happened next I'm not too sure about but I guess I just slipped on the mud and twisted my foot badly. As I went down I heard a loud crack, which was my fibula snapping in two. The pain was like nothing I have ever experienced and I know I made lots of noise about it! After 10 or 15 minutes the pain had in fact eased quite a bit and my companions even got me standing but there was no way I could put any weight on my right foot. I apparently went very pale and Colin gave me some homeopathic anti shock remedy, which certainly seemed to work. It was clear that I was not getting off the hill under my own power, and I'm a bit heavy to carry I was somehow put into a survival bag and Colin went to call out the Mountain Rescue, while Ray and Bill stayed with me.

It seemed like a long time and was quite dark before a line of lights was seen heading towards us and I was feeling very cold, although it was mild for March. It was about 3 hours after my accident before the Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team arrived. One of them with a pair of scissors made short work of the survival bag, my trousers, my laces and my socks and started to find which bit of my leg was hurting. After he put an inflatable splint on the pain was reduced considerably and I even declined the offer of painkillers. I was told "If the ambulance crew want to remove that splint tell them to F*** off" I was then trussed up like a turkey in the stretcher and we started a high speed descent to the rescue landrover. The stretcher had a wheel in the middle and it was mostly wheeled rather than carried and it bounced all over the place. I could see why they were so keen to make sure all the straps were done up tight - there was no way I could have fallen off it.

We came to a track and I was put on top of the straw in the back of a shepherd's pickup with one of the Team sitting in the sheep urine next to me. (At least there were no sheep in it). This then went bouncing down to the road with the landrover following. The ambulance had been waiting for some time before we arrived and I was lifted off the rescue stretcher and onto the ambulance stretcher and was soon strapped into the ambulance and heading for Fort William. The ambulance man had a series of medical questions, which were to become very familiar in the next few days as a whole stream of medical people were to ask me the same things, and before anyone asks, yes I can wiggle my toes!

At the Belford Memorial Hospital in Fort William, I began my now intimate relationship with hospital ceilings. I've worked in hospitals for years and never normally notice the ceilings. We couldn't use the main casualty entrance, we used the one "for heavier people" and I was wheeled along to casualty. The first priority on arriving in casualty was obvious - to get a bottle before I disgraced myself all over their trolley! Next was of course to have X-rays. The bad news was that the foot has to be aligned in a certain way for X-rays which means removing the splint and moving the foot about. This was not fun at all. They let me see the X-rays. I could see my fibula with two ragged ends some distance from each other. They also showed me the unnaturally large gap between the bones of one side of my foot and the bones of my leg. I was told this was due to ligaments having been torn off

The next piece of fun was manipulating the bones into alignment as much as possible before putting a cast on. Fortunately I was given painkillers and Entonox gas before this happened. Although I could feel them working on my foot I felt no pain at all. It was now well after midnight and I was put into a bed and got some sleep.

Next day arrangements were made for me to go to Ninewells hospital to see the orthopaedic specialist and I got there in the back of Brian's car with my foot raised on some of Brian's kit. This was a glorious day and we could see the tops of all the hills as we headed out of Fort William and along Loch Laggan.

I was admitted to ward 17 at Ninewells and was not long there when Tilda appeared, as she now works on that ward having finished travelling the world for a while. The surgeons looked at my X-rays and decided a pin would be needed and I should go to theatre on Monday. After another day to recover from the surgery I was put into a cast again, shown how to use crutches, and sent home to recover and wait for my first out patient appointment to see how things are developing.

It will be at least 5 months before I'm seen on the hills again, all due to a lapse of concentration on easy terrain. You can think of me when you're out on the hills this summer, but watch where you're putting your feet and make sure you have clean undies on!

COINCIDENCE ??

A Violet Parsons fell on Cam Dearg 3 weeks after Nick and broke a leg!

LOST BOOK

Would the person to whom I loaned my June Parker guide book, and maps etc on Mallorca, please let me know, as I haven't a clue who borrowed them
J.Norrie
Sheneval
Elliot ARBROATH

I've brought some extra jerseys in case there's an accident – John Norrie

This was a passing remark by the meet secretary while exiting the bus on the Laggan meet. He was of course referring to Nick's unfortunate slip in Glen Etive,

but, why should Colin have to carry extra clothing for other people? Although the site of Nick's accident was a) near the road, and b) easily accessible to the rescuers, it still to 4 to 5 hours from the time of the accident until the rest of the party arrived cold and hungry back to Inbhirfhaolain.

An accident on the street of any town can be reported and cleared up in a short time. An accident at a football match can be cleared up in an even shorter time, because help is within 50 yards. But an accident on the hill is a vastly different scenario, because, a) reporting an asking for help can take a lot longer (mobile phones don't always work) b) rescuers can take a seemingly long time to get to the casualty c) adverse weather and terrain conditions can add to the problem. So we should ask ourselves, in the event of being involved in an accident on the hill (not necessarily the casualty) and we have to stay put for a few hours, have we each enough clothing and food to maintain comfort and energy as may be necessary?? If so, then Colin won't have to carry all those jerseys around with him!

Meets since the last newsletter

Number attending in brackets

Boxing Day 1999 : Glen Moy (8) Very icy roads. Circuit of the west burn. Snow, bright early. Low cloud later

Jan 2nd 2000 : Cat Law (12)
beautiful day with good views

January 2000 : The Lomond Hills (31)

West Lomond, Glen Vale, Bishop Hill, East Lomond. Fine sunny day. Very clear Strong westerly wind. Excellent high tea in Freuchie later

February 2000 : Deeside (14)

Another alteration. 2 groups. Started at Invercauld. Finished at Inver. One climbed Cam Liath & Culardoch. The other traversed below Culardoch. Very strong SW winds. Cloud lowered during day Just beat the rain.

March 2000 : Glen Lochay (16) Strong winds, driving sleet and rain. An unsuccessful attempt on Creah Mhor and Beinn Heagsarnich. The Corbett, Meall nan Subh, climbed. A really drookit bus.

March 2000 : Weekend at Glen Etive (7)

Excellent accommodation at the Grampian Club hut at Inbhirfhaolain. Beinn Trilleachan, Stob Coir an Albannaich and Meall nan Eun climbed on Saturday Unfortunately Nick broke his leg and had to be mountain rescued (see separate article). Joined by 2

others on Sunday - Buchaille Etive Beag, and Beinn a Chrulaiste climbed. Very little snow considering the time of year

April 2000 : Loch Laggan (18)

Fine day, good snow and tremendous views. Beinn a Chlachair, Beinn Teallach, Beinn Chaorainn all climbed, a group walked the south side of Loch Laggan via "Monarch of the Glen", Ardverikie House and then cut inland to emerge at Moy Bridge.

May 2000 : Weekend at Cannich (20)

Tremendous 3 days in very good weather, staying at the noisy Glen Affric Backpackers Hostel (with cold showers!). Numerous hills climbed from Lock Quoich to Ben Wyvis, but concentrating on Glen Affric, Glen Cannich and Glen Strathfarrar

May 2000 : Inverev to Spittal of Glen Shee (14)

Cloudy damp start, but quickly cleared up to be a fine day. One group climbed Cam Bhac and then crossed to Loch nan Eun and then descended to the Spittal. The other group followed Glen Ey, climbed Beinn Iutharn Beag, dropped to Loch nan Eun, then climbed over Glas Tulaicchean to return by Glen Lochsie.

Accidents will happen

As mentioned in the meet reports, we had a serious accident during the March weekend in Glen Etive. A group of 4 had climbed Stob Cioir an Albannaich and Meall nan Eun. Conditions had been tricky with strong winds, low cloud and snow underfoot. The party descended steeply west from Meall nan Eun, down a treacherous snowy and rocky slope. All difficulties had passed and the group began the fairly level trek out along Glen Ceitlein, looking forward to Margaret's soup and stew back at the hut. Around 5.30pm, Nick slipped on wet ground, broke his tibia and dislocated his ankle. He was in great pain. It was apparent that he was injured (to what extent was unknown at that time) and that he couldn't walk out nor could the others carry him. Bill Mill and Ray stayed with Nick while Colin went for help. Mobile phones don't work in Glen Etive, so it a 40-minute trip to the road. Some kind Glaswegians ran Colin to the phone box at the bottom of the Glen. 999 was dialled and a mountain rescue was initiated via Newcastle 999 Centre, Inverness Police Headquarters, Glen Coe Police Station and finally Glen Coe Mountain Rescue Team. The Rescue team were down Glen Etive by 7.30 pm. Nick was reached via landrover and then foot at 8.30

p.m. and was placed in a waiting ambulance at 9.20 p.m. and whisked off to Bedford Hospital in Fort William, where he spent one night. He was then taken back to Ninewells (by Brian) and spent another 2 nights there while his leg was pinned. We all wish him a speedy recovery

Boots Across Scotland

At the time of writing, we are only 5 days from the 3rd Boots event. The club has been allocated Slioch and a fair contingent are making their way north to join in the event on Sunday 28th May. Although the club provides a donation, individual donations are welcome for this good cause. Contact John Dawson. The club took part in the last two Boots Across Scotland events -Meall Nan Eun in 1992 (during a weekend meet to Bridge of Orchy in June of that year) and Beinn a' Ghlo during a day meet in May 1996. Unfortunately, this year, it did not clash with a planned date of a meet. One date to remember while planning the 2004 meet calendar!

More Boots Across Scotland

By the time you read this, the "Boots Across Scotland" charity event will have taken place. For those of you who don't know, this event takes place every four years. The object is to have someone on top of every Munro at the same time. The Club has been allocated Slioch this time, so on 28th May an intrepid band of volunteers from FDHWC will be heading for the picturesque setting of Loch Maree in aid of charity. Approximately 12-15 members are expected to make the journey, with some staying overnight on Saturday and some travelling up in the small hours of Sunday morning. The object of the exercise is to raise as much money as possible for the "Boots" charity. Most of the proceeds go towards helping injured hillwalkers and climbers and also to mountain rescue teams. A collection was made on the bus on the recent meet to Inverev, which raised £34.60. The Club will also be making a donation. Any other members wishing to make a donation should contact a Committee member who will be glad to add your contribution to the total.