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President's Column

Greetings to all you Club Members. I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, with the prospects for a good Winter in the hills looking favourable as we prepare to step into a new century.

Our Club is now in its 38th year and is still looking good in many aspects. However, the lack of the younger members, and families, has to be of concern as it is only through the influx of these that the Club can continue to prosper and maintain its original aims.

Many things have changed since those early days and legislation, rules and regulations governing the right to roam, in my opinion, have detracted in many ways from the basic ideas of enjoying our day on the hill. The enormous amount of people going to the hills to-day has obviously brought this about, but I feel that Clubs like our own can still provide a healthy introduction to hill-walking and mountaineering and promote the true spirit of companionship which, to me, appears to be sadly lacking to-day.

Throughout this year I have discussed the changes which have occurred in recent years with many old friends and also with climbers and walkers whom I have met in the hills, both at home and abroad, and the same disquiet seemed to arise in all our discussions. What was most evident in all the discussions was the ever-increasing numbers taking to the hills with the sole aim of charging

around "doing the Munros" in the shortest possible time and, as often as not, seeing nothing of the beauty of our country and caring even less about it.

This might seem like a scratchy old record being played again, but this feeling is obviously being transmitted to the general public as well, and this may be part of the reason for the decrease in younger members and families joining Clubs where an incorrect image is, often mistakenly, being portrayed. Not for the first time have I heard comments made about our Club being for hardier souls, capable of doing long hard days in the hills. This problem is not ours alone, but only we can rectify it and it is obvious by the numbers joining Clubs, some right on our own patch, that there are families out there who still want to be associated with Clubs who can provide days on the hill to match their capabilities.

This I feel should be a challenge for the Club going into the new year and new century - bring back the families and the young ones and hear their ideas for maintaining the Club, but also help them to understand the true companionship to be gained through a mutual love and respect for our mountains and mountaineering.

Throughout the year, again the meets have been a success and, again, largely due to the few - I'm sure we all know who they are. To all of you who put so much into the Club, year after year, I say grateful thanks on behalf of all the Members. The progress you have made in arranging next year's meet to foreign parts should provide an exciting first for the Club and on this you should be congratulated. On the home front, there are a lot of good meets still to come and I hope to join you on some of them. I can only apologise for not getting on the hill more often this past year but, unfortunately, the old body has taken quite a bashing recently and so another hill has to be climbed and another challenge met. Fortunately, I am still busy and the mind and imagination is still active, I think, and I still have ambitions, hill-wise.

I will now finish by thanking everyone in the Club who has supported me over the last 3½

years and for this I will be forever grateful.

I will be standing down at the next A.G.M. to make way for someone who is more capable of leading the Club forward in the coming years and I will become again an ordinary Member, maybe occasionally, in the next century, asking the question TAR I WI NOO?'

Jim

Festive Meets

For many years now, the club has had unofficial meets during the festive period. There have been some epic days in the past - the retreat in a blizzard from the Tarmachan Ridge or the walk on Meall Corranaich a cold still sunny day in temperatures of -15C. Since these heady days of the mid-80s we have calmed down a little and recognised that people want short walks near at hand. Last year's events took us up Glen Mark and Glen Lee the day after the hurricane and onto Deuchary Hill a week later. Some ideas for this year's walks are a round of Glen Moy, the south ridge of Glen Lochsie at Spittal of Glen Shee or Benachally. For the first time, these unofficial meets are noted in the meet calendar. The printed dates are Sunday 26th December and Sunday 2nd January. However these dates are provisional and depend on personal commitments and the weather. So why not walk off that big Christmas dinner, and that thumping Millennium hangover and get out for a wee walk. Keep in touch with the meet secretary.

WINTER PROGRAMME - Kingsmuir Village Hall

Wed 5 Jan (recent press report gave the wrong date)	Peru Brian Coull
Wed 2 Feb	Wildlife and Flora in the Angus Glens Ken Slater
Wed 1 Mar	A.G.M
Wed 12 Apr	Mountain Skills Myre Car Park 6.30p.m.
Wed 17 May	First Aid Janet Coull
Wed 14 Jun	First Aid Janet Coull

WEEKEND MEETS 2000

Glen Etive 24-26 Mar

The Grampian club hut at Inbhirfhaolain has been booked for our weekend in Glen Etive. Members will find all the details of the hut in the enclosed inserts. Names with a £6 deposit to Roy Rennie as soon as possible. Total cost of weekend will be £6.

Cannich 28 Apr- 1 May

Roy has booked the Glen Affric backpackers hostel in the village of Cannich for the May Day weekend. The hostel is situated next door to the Youth Hostel and camp site. This is an ideal base for the hills of Glen Affric, Glen Cannich and Strathfarrar. An information sheet giving full details is enclosed. The weekend will cost £18 per member. Members who wish to book a place in the hostel should contact Roy with a £15 deposit.

Inchnadamph June 2nd - June 4th

Roy has booked the Assynt Field Centre at Inchnadamph for the above weekend. This is one of the best independent hostels in the country with a breakfast of cereals, toast, tea or coffee included in the price, (see enclosed brochure). The field centre is ideally placed for the Munros of Ben More Assynt and Conival together with other impressive peaks such as Suilven, Quinag, Canisp, Cul Mor and Cul Beag. Names with deposit of £10 to Roy as soon as possible. The total cost of this weekend will not exceed £20 per member.

Weekend Meet Notes

1. The committee have discussed a complaint from some members attending the Lake District weekend that they did not receive prior notice of the total cost of the meet. We have therefore decided to announce, where possible, the charge per member for each weekend meet through this newsletter. The committee do however reserve the right to alter these charges if circumstances change.

2. The deposit system for the weekend meets is being reviewed by the committee after 3 members failed to turn up for the Lake District meet at a cost to the club of £30
3. Our excellent weekend at Skye in October was made even better when the hostel owner gave us a very generous and unexpected discount. As a result the club owes money to the members who attended the meet! Roy intends to rectify matters by giving those members a reduced rate for the next weekend meet they attend, but if anyone prefers a cash refund please see Roy directly.

New Munroists

Congratulations to Frank Low and Bill McDonald who have recently completed their Munros. Frank's last was Sgurr nan Gilleon on Skye on Saturday 23rd October which was a fine autumn day. Bill's last was Sgor na h-Ulaidh in Glen Coe on Saturday 13th November, which was another fine autumn day. They join the club's growing list of Munroists and their names will be added to the scrolls very soon.

High Tea 2000

This takes place on Sunday 16th January. The location for the meet are the Lomond Hills where there are a variety of walks of different lengths are possible. The plan is to meet at 9am at the Myre car-park in Forfar (for car sharing) and then to meet again at Craigmear car park in the middle of the hills at 10am-10.30am. Those referring shorter walks may want to arrive later. Craigmear is on the minor road over the hills between Falkland and Leslie. High tea is booked for 4.30pm-5pm at the Lomond Hills Hotel in Freuchie. We'll be able to get into the hotel from 4pm onwards. The hotel require to know numbers for high tea beforehand, so please contact Colin or John if you are going.

7 MAD MUNROISTS !!

IN AID OF MENINGITIS - 7 mad Munroists climb 7 Munros - THE GLEN SHIEL RIDGE

The seven of us set off on Friday evening in 2 cars with 2 cycles and reached Rattigan Youth Hostel about 10:30 pm.

6a.m. Saturday the alarm clock rang. After a quick breakfast we set off at 7 a.m. to position one car at each end of the ridge with the 2 cycles half way in case anyone had to abort the walk.

At 8a.m. we set off from the Cluanie Inn, in high spirits, for this 14K trek. It was an easy walk up a tarred road, then we struck up the hillside to Munro number one, Creag a Mhainn (947). There we met another party of hill-walkers, being led by an experienced guide, sitting enjoying the sunshine. The ridge was quickly gained as there were no technical difficulties, just clambering up and down rocks with narrow, dramatic sections which had a steep drop to one side. We soon climbed Drum Shionnach (987) and Aonach air Chrith (1021). By this time we knew the other party and had our photograph taken on the top of every Munro by one of their party. Soon we reached Maol Chinn-dearg (981) and it was lunch time ! over half way and only 1p.m. The views of Glen Quoich were magnificent.

No one was tempted to take the easy way off at number four and with a little climbing over a grassy plain we reached number five Sgurr and Doire Leathain (1010). Another photograph and a short break and we headed for Sgurr an Lochain (1004). Unfortunately some mist rolled in but we had time for another photograph! 7 Munroists in purple T-Shirts posing once again. Perhaps Hello magazine would like our style and fashion.

Now for the tricky part. We bypassed the top Sgurr-Beag and clambered up the rocky path to Creagan Damh (918). The Munros were completed by 5p.m. We continued to follow the dyke further on and then branched down to a fairly steep gully and made for the river Shiel. This was crossed and we had a rather long walk out to the car. It certainly saved us from a long 7 mile walk back to the hotel. The time was 7p.m. which totalled 11 hours altogether.

Back to the Rattigan Youth Hostel for a quick shower and a bar supper in the Glen Shiel Hotel.

The Glen Shiel Ridge is fabulous and we had a perfect day for walking it. We collected sponsorship money from our fellow walkers and many, many thanks to all the Forfar hill walkers who so kindly sponsored us too. In all we raised over £550. Well done the "MAD MUNROISTS"

Etta, Margaret, Carol, Carolyn, Nan, Alison and Jean.

ARTICLES FOR SALE In Good Condition

GENTS GORTEX JACKET LARGE
RED £25

LADIES GORTEX JACKET
MEDIUM GREEN £25

LADIES RAICHLI STIFF SOLE
WINTER BOOTS - SELDOM
WORN £35

All enquiries call 01241-873991

PROPOSALS FOR AGM HUT CUSTODIAN:

It has been suggested that the hut custodian should form a committee to assist with the running of the club hut in Glen Clova. The committee could then assist with

- A: Bigger work parties
- B: Share the role of hut custodian and share the workload
- C: Share supervision duties of hut custodian

This matter will be raised at the AGM. If you have any thoughts about the subject then the AGM is the time to get your point over.

FOUND:

Front towing eye - John Norrie

INFORMATION:

The annual Grampian Club lecture will take place on 28th January 2000 in the Tower Buildings Dundee University. The speaker will be Kevin Howett the National Officer for McoFS. Tickets at the door. To confirm times please call John Norrie.

AGM

The Club's AGM will take place on Wednesday 1 March at 7.30pm in Kingsmuir village hall. In addition to the usual agenda and cheese and wine, the following motion is to be put to the members:

"A new category of membership, known as associate membership, shall be created. Associate members shall have all the rights of full members with the exception that they shall not be insured under the M. C. of S. scheme and shall not therefore be allowed on more than one club walk in any year. The level of subscription shall be set at

a level which reflects the reduced cost to the club. An associate member will have the right at any time to become a full member on payment of the difference in subscription."

Please come along to the AGM if you possibly can. This is your chance to have your say in the running of the club.

Jake the Peg?

By Eamonn Robagger

The article by A M Robertson (not to be confused with A E Robertson, who is a bit older and has done a few more Munros) in the last Newsletter reminded me of a curious conversation which I overheard one member having with herself during the ritual shirt-changing, body-spraying, etc. On arriving back at the bus after a rather wet and miserable day on the hills, this lady member set about changing herself hurriedly outside the bus behind some of the men, having been given assurances that none of them would turn round. She gave us a running commentary on progress, however. "Right, top half first...off with the wet stuff...one, two...ah!... that's better...now for the bottom half...one, two..., three!" Looks of puzzlement followed. "Goodness gracious", I thought, "Dearie me", thought another, and "Sacre bleu" thought yet another. If only I'd had the courage to turn round! I have seen the lady member a few times since but cannot spot anything unusual about her anatomy.

Meets Reports

June 99 - Dec 99

The numbers in brackets represent the numbers attending.

June 99 - Arran weekend (19) Left cars at Ardrrossan and caught ferry then bus to Corrie. Accommodation high on the hill. Horrendous day on Saturday. A small group attempted Goat Fell. Most walked round the coast to Lochranza. Soaked to the skin. Warmed up with a dram at the distillery before catching bus back to Corrie. Sunday was a better day - sunny but strong winds - Goat Fell and north along the ridge to Cioch na h Oighe before dropping to Sannox

July 99 - Linn o' Dee (12) No bus. Left from Linn o' Quoich and climbed Beinn a'Bhuird. Cloudy on top so didn't cross to Ben Avon.

August 99 - Loch Ossian (19) Caught train at Rannoch Station to Corrou. Three walks - Beinn na

Lap, Sgor Gaibbre/ Cairn Dearg and Leum Uilleim. Great weather but the midges were the worst ever experienced, especially while waiting on the train.

September 99 - Glen Coe (14) Poor weather in the west while roasting in the east. One group climbed Buachaille Etive Beag in cloud and rain. The other group circled the hill via the Lairigs.

September 99 - Lake District (10) Great accommodation above Glenridding. Strong winds all weekend. Walked north along Dodds ridge on Saturday. One group on Place Fell and one group on Gowbarrow Fell on Sunday.

October 99 - Glen Prosen (11) A round of the head of Glen Prosen striking up left from Kilbo over Broom Hill to reach Mayar from the west and on to Dreish and down the Shank. Strong winds and heavy showers, but good visibility at times.

October 99 - Skve weekend (19) Fantastic weather for Skve and October. Sgurr nan Gillean on Saturday for Frank's last Munro. A small group on Pinnacle ridge. One on Glamaig. Others at the Quirang. On Sunday groups on Bla Bheinn, Sgurr a' Mhadaidh, Sgurr a' Ghreadaigh, Ciste Dubh, Old Man of Storr, Beinn Sgulaireid.

November 99 - Mount Keen (12) No bus. Was to have been Ochils, then changed for Bill McDonald's last Munro but then changed but poor weather meant a cancellation. Instead Mount Keen climbed with traces of snow. Cloudy on top.

November 99 - Sgor na h-Ulaidh (15) An unofficial meet. Bill McDonald's last Munro (appropriately in Glen Coe). Lovely cold clear day with great views. Only disappointment was news of Scotland's defeat at Hampden.

December 99 - Glen Oqil (9) Bus cancelled for 2nd month in a row due to poor numbers. Group struck up the west ridge of Glen Oqil in fine snowy conditions as far as Toardy Hill until heavy snow started.

Mallorca 2000

The last newsletter contained a proposal for a millennium meet to Mallorca next October. A meeting was held in the Commercial Inn at Letham to discuss this further. Sufficient numbers were interested and the trip is going ahead. A booking has been made and the preliminary deposits have been paid.