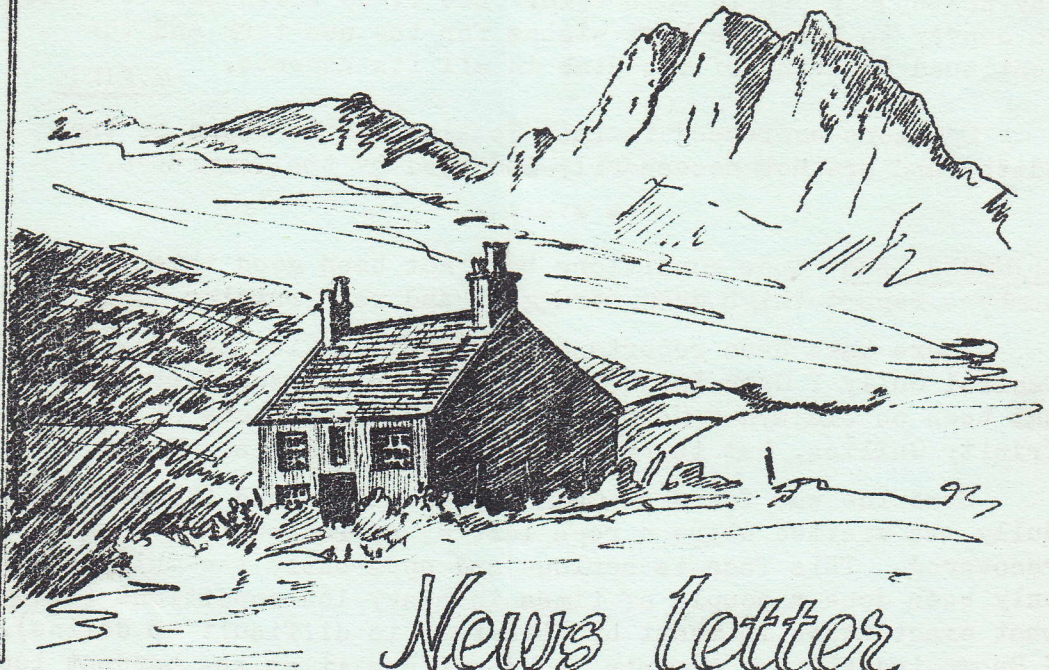




The Ceunant

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB



News Letter

9/3/59.

By the time this fourth issue of our Newsletter is published, the Annual General Meeting will be over, and the new committee will be preparing for its forthcoming duties on our behalf.

Every sort of club has its administration, necessary chores carried out (in theory) by those best suited for the particular duty. Oftimes thankless tasks, subject to criticism and to no reduction in subscription. Jobs like looking after the cash, correspondence, reports, minutes, outside relationships, arranging this and arranging that, wardening the huts. No one knows what the duties can entail until one tries them. Spare a thought then, as you enjoy the fine amenities of your club for the work that has made these amenities possible, and in particular at this time for the initiative and opportunism which brought us Tyn Lon.

So much will no doubt be said at the AGM regarding the years progress, our assets, and liabilities, and the good things in store, to render superfluous whatever comment your Editor may now humbly pen in this vein. Let it be sufficient therefore to convey to everyone best wishes for the new term and the continued thriving of the club in all its aspects. M.KING.

Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the Editor and are not necessarily endorsed by the Committee.

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CLIMBING NEWS Snow conditions have not been good this year, members report thig deep struggles and rain ruining conditions.

There have been reports of considerable ice in the gullies. Central Gully, Y Garn has been done and we believe that a party has been on Clogwyn-y-Garnedd, presumably after one of the Trinity Gullies, but there are no further details.

Some ice was found on Cefn Ysgolion Duon and the Western Gully was visited where a rope left by a previous party was recovered. This face is serious and apparently the gully has only been done a couple of times in heavy ice conditions (though what exact state is meant by this term is difficult to define). J.Brown led the two ascents and describes it as the hardest ice climb he has ever done! Failure was due to too late a start and slow progress, but was a useful reconnaissance and experience.

Club parties have done Munich and Belle Vue Bastion recently in warm sunshine, with snow in the gullies.

The Thumb, a pinnacle to the right of Dinas Cromlech about the level of Flying Buttress, is well worth a visit. It gives a good crack on the short side of Severe Moderately Difficult standard!

A party were successful on Slape in rather greasy conditions, perhaps the strongest lead so far this year.

The Climbers Club are working on a guide for South Snowdonia which will include Tremadoc and the Moelwyns.

J. Brown is still finding room for routes and has done a new one in the Gwynant of Extreme Severity called Ferdinand.

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EDITOR'S NOTE Will people please let the Editor have information on any unusual mountain route or activity, it doesn't have to be hard necessarily. We are not much interested in the club's 50th party on Gashed Crag (though we might be in the 100th) but in any report on a seldom visited route etc., so please keep in touch.

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Members are happy to have placed on record and to heartily congratulate Mary and Mike King on the birth of a brother for Susan, Ian Trevor, on 30th December, 1958. With very best wishes for their future happiness.

JOHN D.

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A day will come, perhaps, when winter mountaineering will surpass summer mountaineering.

MARCEL KURZ.

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TREMADOC MEET - 21st November, 1958. In spite of a poor turnout, 10 members and 11 guests, the club spent a most enjoyable weekend at Pant Ifan.

Saturday was cold but dry and the Upper Tier proved the most popular cliff, although on the Lower Tier, Olympic Slab, Great Western and Poor Man's Peutery were climbed.

Sunday was fine and sunny but again members preferred the Upper Tier, and nearly all succeeded in climbing Rammers Route.

Other people top roped Stromboli a very fine route first climbed by Harry Smith.

This annual meet to Tremadoc seems to have produced more climbing activity than any other meet and I am sure that we should endeavour to visit these technically interesting rocks more frequently.

LLANBERIS MEET - 9th January, 1959. Although road conditions were bad this meet was attended by 11 members and 4 guests. Snow fell heavily during Friday night ruining all chances of good snow and ice climbing.

On Saturday, one party traversed Crib Goch in deep snow and arctic conditions, while the other party walked over the Moel Eilio range. No climbing was done on Sunday due to bad weather, but icy roads provided plenty of excitement on the way home.

It is said that "Jupps Hearse" refused to trust the road beyond Wellington and forced its occupants to spend the night in the cells.

A.M. DAFFERN.

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It is worth recording the most extraordinary exodus of a BAI member from a topbunk at Pen Ceunant. It is reported that he bounced on the ceiling, left his sleeping bag completely and crashed to the floor. Poltergeist are suspect.

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A splendid time was had at Pen Ceunant over Christmas. No serious climbing was done, though a party nearly got themselves benighted on Dinas Cromlech. Some time was spent on Braich Ty Du where the Editor lost a splendid hat in the high wind. It left his head vertically upwards at a tremendous rate and was last seen going over Cwn Idwal at two thousand feet.

Some serious drinking was done on Boxing Day however, after a glorious meal at the Dolbadarn. The party were given use of the dining room, a big fire and a record player. The only deficiency was of ladies, the lone representative of the sex being in great demand. Excursions were made out to the village in pursuit of partners, but no one could be prevailed upon to join the party.

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Pen Ceunant hut warden is reported to be hiring a geiger counter on behalf of members to check radiation following numerous visits to the hut by the climbing group from Harwell.

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CARREG MIANOG. Climbers Club Guide. Vol.VII. - The Carneddau.

This very steep crag is just on the corner of the Cwm containing the Ffynnon Llugwy opposite the ridge of Pen Helyg. It is easily seen from the Ogwen road in line with Gwern-y-gof-Isaf and to the right of the farm on the hillside below the long ridge of Carnedd Dafydd. The best approach is to this farm via the lane leading to it from "Tyn-y-Shanty"! Cross through the farmyard and continue to a gated bridge over the dyke, then bear right obviously to the cliff.

The West Buttress is on the extreme left, the routes going up near the corner on its left. To the right of the corner is a distinctive cave from where a most entertaining route starts - The Crawl Climb. This seems quite hard in one place and the hand and knee work round a sensational corner is very exciting.

The Crack and Corner Climb also V.Diff., is worth doing, the top 50 foot groove being a good pitch in good line.

The harder routes are very hard due to the verticality of the rocks and look quite "tigerish". One would imagine that 100 feet of Biceps Wall are quite enough, more would be Extreme!

In short the place is well worth visiting. It faces South and takes the sun all day. Half-an-hour suffices from the road, and it all goes to show that there is good climbing if you care to look around you, quite as handy as the over-populated crags of the Milestone or Gribbin. It shouldn't matter whether a route is well known or not so long as it is good and the climber is enjoying himself, more so with short routes of a "practice" nature where variety hastens experience gained.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING The third Annual General Meeting of the Ceunant Mountaineering Club, Birmingham, was held on Wednesday, February 11th, there being 25 members and 4 guests attending.

The minutes of the last meeting having been formerly read and approved, the Chairman rose to give us a heartening speech in which the main factors were the fine support for the Tyn Lon

project, the higher standard of climbing generally, the advent of a club Newsletter and the much more consistent use of the hut by small parties.

Enlarging on these points, the intensified use of members' private transport was noted, this outweighing the virtual abandonment of coach meets, the loss on which was quite insupportable. The comment was made that the number of small parties and groups of members going to the mountains was a very healthy sign, as also was the rise in rock climbing standard and in home mountaineering generally by the active nucleus, a nucleus which is expanding encouragingly due to new membership. To offset this activity however, the lack of sport by the walkers was noted, there being nothing outstanding in this field to record, with but one fantastic exception. To traverse the three thousands once in a year is most commendable, to do it a second time is out of this world! All credit was given to Colin Coleman.

The Chairman then touched on the warmth of the support for Tyn Lon, and though the work was a little behind, the next two months would be a critical time in the course of which we might well see the hut in general use. There is still a vital need however, for working parties.

There were some kind words spoken of the Newsletter editorship, and the point was put that the paper was much in the hands of the members and could stand or fall by its contributions.

Further kind mention was made of members activeness which had resulted in quite an extraordinary number of babies having arrived in the past year.

Attention of the gathering was drawn to the changes in committee, retiring officers, Beryl Close, Stan Storey and Colin Coleman being accorded those words of appreciation which they so richly deserve.

The Chairman closed with an expression of thanks to several guests, who entirely free of any obligation whatsoever, have worked energetically on Tyn Lon.

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Our General Secretary next reported that there had been 49 renewals of subscriptions and that there had been 6 new applications. This showed a drop of 7 from the previous year,

but there was still a number of potential members attending meets.

The affiliations of the BMC and support for the RA in their work was mentioned. Members were asked to note that BMC circulars were available for their perusal.

The invitations from the MAM to indoor lectures was noted as also was the kind approach by the Stafford Club to join their club coaches at Wolverhampton.

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In next order the Treasurer announced that we had paid our way despite additional expenditure, such as the Newsletter and additions to the library. These had totalled £12.10.0. Affiliations amounted to £5.6.0.

Expenditure of £60 is anticipated on the General Fund, but there were less and less coaches and we should not look to any income from this source in 1959.

Encouraging was the income on the hut fund of £20, despite a number of working parties using it free of charge. Set against this was general expenditure for Tyn Lon, of insurance and keys, £4.15.7.

There had been a remarkable total of 444 bed nights by members, realising £44.8.0. Champion hut dweller, duly acclaimed, was Tony Daffern, with 38 nights; with John of 'like ilk' a close second at 37. Guest nights were 158 @ 2/6, and 159 @ 3/6 after the guests fee was raised, realising a total of £47.11.6.

It was mentioned that the rent of Pen Ceunant had been reduced by Mr. Hughes by £1 per quarter, in recognition of the improved state of the property.

There was a substantial reduction in cash balance from 1957, entirely due to Tyn Lon expenditure. As a result of this finding, those members who had not been in a position to support the loan were circularised. This was exactly half the membership. There is, however, sufficient monies promised by others and not yet asked for, to ensure, without doubt, that Tyn Lon can be fully completed and put into service as a fine club hut.

Our worthy treasurer then explained why he was no longer able to stand in this office. He had, at the age of 49 at long last grown tired of working for others and was now to branch out on his own account. The club's appreciation and its very sincere good wishes for the enterprise, were placed on record.

Ron Close made a short speech in appreciation of the concise presentation of the financial reports.

Indoor Meetings were next under review and showed reasonable attendances. Talks had been of a high standard in widening knowledge and ambitions. It was noted that Thursdays informal meets had fallen off, and Tony Hammond asked if the venue could be changed.

So far as Outdoor Meetings were concerned, it was with some satisfaction that a loss of £9 in 1957 was announced to have turned into a gain of £12.5.9. on shared coaches, though club only coaches had lost over £5. We can therefore no longer run our own coach meets, and as the club is not prepared to subsidise the BAI courses by part paying for the instructors "free" seats, and the Cave and Crag can no longer support half a coach, there is only the Stoats with which to organise meets. Future club meets must therefore use private transport within the club.

Members were urged to have public holidays further afield, and the feeble response for meets to the Lake District and Scotland at these times was a cause for regret.

The stricter organisation of meets was brought up by Tony Daffern, and it was substantiated that meet leaders must realise their responsibility to potential members in the party, to ensure they have someone to climb with. It was likewise stressed that he must have the co-operation of experienced people at the meet in making up parties.

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Committee nominations came next and it was noted with great regret that once again there had been no nominations from the floor of the club. The onus, therefore, fell on the old committee a state of affairs quite out of keeping with a properly democratically constituted club, which might well be mis-interpreted were it not widely stressed that the committee had received no other nominations. These remarks are a little atoned by a nomination at the last minute for R.D.Davis as Outdoor Meets Secretary.

Our new Committee is as follows:-

Chairman, J.F.Knight.	Gen. Secretary, Miss J.Burwell.	Treasurer, M.Kerby.
Indoor Meets Sec., A.Daffern.	Outdoor Meets Sec., R.D.Davis.	Hut Warden, J.Urwin.
Committee Members: J.Daffern, M.King, Miss J.Upton.	Auditors, D.Foyle, C.Coleman.	
Librarian, Mrs.S.Close.		

The meeting finally widely discussed the amendment to the Constitution covering joint membership of husband and wife if either is already a member. The original proposal was itself amended in such a way that the membership should not be completely automatic but should still be subject to a proper nomination and the approval of members, without it being necessary for the applicant to attend any qualifying meets.

The Chairman closed with a word of thanks for the admirable co-operation by those present in the evening's business.

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RETIRING CLUB OFFICERS It is with great honour that I am writing this appreciation of the work of our Secretary of three and a half years' service, Beryl Close. As Miss Newman, Beryl belonged to the Mountaineering Assoc., B'ham Group, and therefore became an original member of the Ceunant Mountaineering Club. The noble duty of Club Secretary was soon hers, a duty which has been diligently carried out in the most efficient manner. I think perhaps the work of Secretary involves more "spadework" than any other club duty, and is vitally important particularly where outside contacts and relations are concerned. In view of progress therefore, it is quite obvious that Beryl has conducted our 'paper' business in a most conscientious manner. It is therefore with regret that we learn of her decision to relinquish her post, and there are no words to adequately express our appreciation and thanks.

M.KING.

It was with great regret that I heard at the AGM that Stan Storey was resigning from the position of Treasurer. Stan informed the Club that he was starting a business of his own, and would not be able to devote enough time to Club matters. Stan was a member of the B'ham Group of the Mountaineering Assoc., an original member of the Ceunant Club, and has held the office of Treasurer since February 1956, during which time he has ruled the financial affairs of the club with an iron hand. As our members will know, Stan has carried out his many duties in a way which has brought great credit, not only upon himself, but on the club he has served so diligently. Had it not been for Stan's persistent bargaining, his ability to conjure up money, and his restraining hand in the spending of it, we might never have obtained Tyn Lon. Finally I would like to thank Stan most sincerely on behalf of the members for all he has done for us and to wish him every success in his new venture. I hope that he will still find time to take part in some, if not all, of the Club's activities.

TONY DAFFERN.

We are all of us grateful to Colin Coleman for his services as Outdoor Meets leader for the past two years. In that time he has been faced more than once with transport difficulties with regard to meets. The problem has been "Can we fill a coach?" Or, on some occasions with joint meets, "Can we fill even half a coach?" The wisdom of his decisions has contributed largely to the turning of a small financial loss in 1957 to a reasonable profit in 1958.

Colin has served the Club for a number of years as an enthusiastic and active member. He has been on the committee for much of that time, coming to the club as an early member of the former local group of the MA. In writing this tribute to him, I am sure that it expresses, perhaps inadequately, the gratitude that we all owe to Colin. RON.CLOSE.

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..... The proper balance between judgement and confidence... that rare courage which can accept defeat and call upon sufficient reserve to climb down.

There is no technical high-road to the possession of judgement, it may be acquired only by long experience. J.E.B.W.

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"Belay" - a very apt word for it means "Enough" or "Stop"!

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A proposal is under consideration that the BMC and CCPR should adopt Ffrogatt Edge by an arrangement similar to that for Harrisons' Rocks, due to the present difficulty of access.

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What is meant by the Classical Age of British Rock Climbing? The MA writes - "Many parties may still be encountered on British hills who go to and from summits by way of rock routes using the rock climbs as incidents in mountain circuits. The Classical Age of British climbing is not dead".

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EQUIPMENT Nylon rope standards have at last been revised and the new Standard will be published in two to three months' time. Ropes will have distinguishing marks. Tests of the Jumar Clamp (these can do the job of prusicloops etc.) have been made in this country. Reports await Alpine tests. The price of the Scott Karabiner remains high, no progress having been made in this matter.

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The following may well be called Mountaineering by Me or some such futile title. I try not to ride any hobby horse in particular nor to expound any special theories or academic tolerences. A lot of people tolerate mountaineers, some with difficulty, but the widening influence of this splendid sport is of tremendous significance, for may there well not be now a disregard, basically ignorance for the fundamentals which have led to the development of the modern mountaineer?

"He was a great climber. He said 'Climb - but

I don't know why' ". Menlove Edwards.

Mountains are climbed because they are there. No one denies this. As a child if you looked upon a mountain and immediately felt thereat a desire to be on it, you were half-way there. The rest is progress - for some mountains are harder than others and a skill has to be learned and practiced and revised for the mountaineer has many mountains to climb and must stay in one piece to climb more.

But when are you mountaineering? You are mountaineering when the conquest of the peak is uncertain. Are you mountaineering when walking up the Pyg Track on a fine summer's day? Even though you may proceed over Y Wyddfa and Lliwedd and far down to the Gwynant. Are you mountaineering if the conquest of 200 feet of steep rock, an insignificant part of a mountainside, is uncertain? Are you mountaineering if you seek to climb Lliwedd by its North face, choosing your route to suit?

The goal of the mountain lover may well be to climb the mountain of his dreams. Thus does he constantly better his technique and practices, and climb on the lowland crags which have little part to mountains. Thus does he pursue the snow and ice in wintertime, when the Pyg Track walk may well be mountaineering. Or better still does he be content to enjoy himself in physical endeavour and excitement in a general environment he loves? This is easier to grasp, but surely the mountain must be there to a great extent, predominant perhaps.

"I do not deny that to the mountain-lover mountains appear to possess personality, perhaps because the supreme Personality is reflected in the temporal loveliness of His creation".

Sir Arnold Lunn.

This may help some of us but not all. The acceptance of His mountain creation as supremely lovely is not confined only to the senses of those who climb them, rather indeed has the ultimate Personality affected the climber initially, fundamentally with a complex desire for expression for which he has only found a proper fulfilment on mountains.

This expression can perhaps be broken down even a hundred times, depending on the personality of the individual, reflected again in the individual approach to the conquest of mountains in the complete joy of satisfying effort and skill. We could recollect that Penhall had perhaps a morbid fascination for places of great objective danger, and we can think of other approaches to mountain climbing, as when nationalism rears its ugly head. When representatives of dictatorships, for instance conquered routes then of considerable danger, some of them pointless and of no charm as the Matterhorn East Face. Thus can competition manifest itself.

Perhaps a desire to be better than Charlie, which surely has no place here, for we are not competing or game playing but drawing pleasure from our efforts and our surroundings and from nothing else. If we are, then many people will say we have no right to be on the mountain, but either way, right or wrong, intolerance has less of a place in this sport than in any other. There remains then the mountain; the underlying fascination which once having attracted the child to the high places continues to draw him ever more, exacting from him the absolute limits of his adoration, and of the subsequent climbers craft and strength. The mastery of his route in all its perplexities of technique. Coming suddenly to the more material we, as a body of people in this club attracted together by compatible tastes, should not probably be unduly bothered as to why we climb, though it serves to think on these things. There is nevertheless a fundamentally wrong inclination to label home mountaineers as either a climber or a walker. This is dangerous ground, but whyever the differentiation? We must all walk, we must all climb, otherwise the number of our mountains ascended would indeed be puny. There is no valid reason though, why a person loving walking in mountain country may not belong to a mountaineering club. Alternatively, there is no more or less reason why a person interested only in the climbing of rock, wherever it may be, may not belong. It all depends on that part of a club's constitution which governs eligibility. Now we are back down to earth!

The writer invites comment on the above essay.

CRAIG-YR-YSA INCIDENT It would seem from the Coroner's report that the accident on Saturday Feb. 21st was primarily due to the leader struggling beyond his limit in the general conditions. It was misty, rocks were wet and it was fairly cold. Number one was 90 feet above his second and nearly 200 feet up Amphitheatre Rib when he fell. According to the second he was working on a bulge at the time using both knees, and had made several attempts. The ~~car~~ of Amphitheatre Rib is a groove so it is not at all clear exactly where the incident took place. At nearly 90 feet above the second on pitch 4 are twin cracks, rather awkward, but it is doubtful if these are visible from the seconds stance. There is definitely one intermediate belay. Some slack was taken in while the leader fell but he passed from sight of the second, probably into C Gully. The second climbed down, made the leader comfortable but regrettably became completely lost in the mist and eventually reached Talybont 8 miles away. The initial rescue party searched all night but were unable to find the leader who, in any case, died within three hours of the accident. It could be said that powers were over-estimated and conditions under-estimated. The Carnedd's tend to make their own weather and it is far too often overlooked that even in Britain temperatures can drop ten or more degrees in less than a thousand feet. Both members of the party were apparently casual acquaintances, having met for the first time the previous evening. The moral here is obvious.

The leader is reported to have climbed frequently in Snowdonia and in the Alps. The incident, however, could be said to indicate a regrettable lack of judgement at the time.

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