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Some of this road widening seems totally unnecessary. Why, for instance, after building an expensive by-pass round Llanberis, is the road through the village now being widened after all these years?

Ogwen has not escaped either. To compensate for the loss of water from Cwm Marchlyn, work is in progress to increase the capacity of what used to be the beautiful and remote Ffynnon Llugwy. A tarmac road has been constructed up to the lake. A kind of marshalling yard has developed at its mouth, complete with earth movers of all descriptions. The air is heavy with diesel oil. The Ogwen and Nant Ffrancon valleys have been churned into a muddy mess during the construction of a pipeline to carry the water from the enlarged lake.

The work is progressing at a fantastic pace. Why? Is it because in the energy hiatus in the aftermath of the oil crisis they are worried that someone may ask why we need extra capacity to cater for reduced consumption? The C.E.G.B. can more easily deal with this kind of threat by presenting a fait accompli.

No doubt there will be many more disturbing items in store for us in the future catalogue of events. We have not heard the last of this story. Watch this space to see in what other interesting ways your tax money is being spent.

As a club, we must ensure that we receive adequate compensation for anything that adversely affects Tyn Lon and its land particularly with regard to road widening. It would be rather naive to assume that the Local Authority or the C.E.G.B. would pay out voluntarily without claims being pressed hard. Past events have proved this to be only too true. The committee should keep this matter under constant review.

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CLUB MEETS - Dave Irons

Borrowdale Meet March '74 Only eight people attended this meet at Grange. We were blessed with magnificent weather on both days of the weekend; so hot in fact that the heat haze obscured the mountains which were still trimmed with snow and what should have been fine photographic views.

On Saturday, John Beddard and party enjoyed a good walk over Green and Great Gables, while John Rooker, Pauline, John Bartlam and myself walked up to Raven's Crag and did Corvus, a long rambling easy climb. Afterwards we walked up to the top of Gharamara.

On Sunday, the above party climbed on Gillercombe Buttress, while John and Val Beddard, Ron Ellis, and Alan Daffern went over Scafell. Excellent weekend.

Langdale Meet Laughrigg May '74 This meet which was reasonably well attended met up at the Skelwith Bridge, but thereafter got split up owing to some difficulty in locating the Laughrigg campsite. Some people went to the National Trust site, the rest eventually finding the farm at Laughrigg. The weather throughout the weekend was excellent.

On Saturday, Ros, Garth, Lew and myself climbed on White Gill. Other parties climbed on Raven's Crag. On Sunday, the same four-some spent the day climbing on Pavey Ark which was perfectly dry. Lew and Garth attempted Rake End Wall, but finished up the Chimney. Ros and I climbed two pleasant routes, Crescent Slabs and Deception.

A good weekend. Next year it is hoped that everyone will find the Laughrigg site as it is far nicer than the Trust site.

Cowarch Meet June '74 Thirteen people camped under the huge vegetated bastions of Cwm Cowarch.

Saturday was rather overcast but the rain held off, and the crags were dry. John Beddard, Bill and Ron went over the Arans. Jon, Elaine, Tim Walker and myself climbed on the central area of the cragg, doing nine climbs between us at differing grades and quality. Some routes have plenty of vegetables but there are some nice bits of rock amidst it all. The best of the routes done included Bluebell, Babylon, Will-o-the-Wisp, Mud Slide Slim, and Yellow Policeman. The evening was spent in the very crowded pub in the town. Jon and Elaine only just made it, having climbed until 10.00 p.m.

Sunday was wet. The party de-camped and decided to re-meet under the magnificent, solid, golden towers in the sunset etc., etc., rocks of Llanymynech. After a preliminary tour, Jon, Garth and Tim did Blind Faith. Then Jon and Dave did the big corner called the Nibbler in the lower quarry. It gave a good clean pitch, crowned by an overhanging hawthorn bush.

There have been two successful unofficial club meets, firstly to Aviemore, when twenty-four members went by coach. Some of the party skeid, which proved to be quite expensive at £2 per day for a lift ticket. On Saturday the snow was very icy, but on Sunday the powder snow built up in Coire na Ciste and the White Lady. This was quite good.

The climbing members of the party reported good conditions on Saturday, not so good on Sunday.

The cost of the trip was £6 per head - quite reasonable, but although everyone enjoyed themselves, it was generally agreed that it was very tiring.

Secondly the Lundy trip, where the Easter holiday was enjoyed by eight members. An ideal place for anyone who likes Cornwall without candyfloss.

(The next three meets are reported by Jon de Montjoye:-)

Wasdale Well attended meet both by members, midges and superb weather. Most members camped at the National Trust campsite (except the North Wales contingent - but that's another story).

Scafell Crag was invaded on Saturday and all the classic routes received a good hammering. In all about seven routes from V. Diff. to H.V.S. were ascended one way or another.

Sunday dawned even hotter and Gable was the target for most of us (except the Fenton/Walker team who had gone to Borrowdale by mistake on Saturday and felt obliged to cleanse their souls by visiting Scafell). Kern Knots and the Napes were duly clubbed on death. Particularly to be recommended is the magnificent Tophet Wall.

An excellent meet in complete contrast to the previous year.

Dow Crag This meet was held at Tyn Lon due to atrocious weather. Activities included wood chopping, swimming on the Glyders, and the odd visit to Tremadoc.

Gordale This was possibly the best attended meet so far - twenty-two bodies in all. However, whether this was due to the excellent dinner - courtesy of Mrs. Fenton - or to the attractions of the repulsively loose and overhanging white stuff answering to the name of limestone is not quite clear.

Saturday saw the Devlin/Fenton team doing battle with the second pitch of Malham Central Wall which had managed to escape their notice in the dark last year. Gordale was the scene of another skirmish, with the feminine team of Hindle/Fenton laying siege to some of the free climbs on the wings, (both rock and climbers escaped with only minor injuries!) One of the few completed routes of the weekend was Cave Route led by Dave Irons and seconded in blind fear by myself.

After a magnificent dinner on Saturday night, Sunday produced a miserable wet day, and approximately half the meet disappeared underground, led by the human mole. Meanwhile Lew was heard trying to persuade Al Cumberland to do Cave Route, and apparently succeeded, as they were seen later asbeiling from the cave, the last pitch having escaped once again due to darkness. Also important to note was the five-day ascent of the first pitch of Malham Central Wall by Martin Jolly and team.

A good meet.

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LUNDY - Jon de Montjoye

After hearing so much about Lundy for so long, I decided that we should go there and have a look for ourselves. Our party, originally consisting of four - Elaine, Joe, Dave and myself soon became eight with the addition of Ros, Garth, Pete and Tim. And so it was on a rather unsettled Good Friday that we set off from Ilfracombe on the tourist boat. We were soon to find that there were quite a few other climbing parties aboard. One particularly strong party included Littlejohn, Darbyshire, Bob Moulton and Ken Wilson (hereinafter known as Big K).

The latter made his presence known about two minutes out from the mainland by asking Joe what grade he climbed - but that's another story.

As there is no harbour on Lundy, boats have to anchor off shore in the landing cove and any visitors to the island are ferried ashore by a smaller boat with a small inboard diesel engine. The visitors then stand, frantic on the shore and watch their precious luggage being thrown from one vessel to another. One unexpected bonus was that all the luggage is loaded into a trailer and taken to the "village" by tractor.

Anyway, to the campsite where we find the Rev. Pete Soppit preaching to the assembled congregation:

"The wind here bloweth from the West, therefore, good fellows, go forth and pitch your tents on the East side of the wall."

For the next three days an Easterly force 8 wind blew. This was in fact to turn out to be another unexpected bonus, as it meant that the West side of the island (where the climbing is) was completely sheltered.

The usual Ceunant enthusiasm for climbing excluded four members of the expedition, but after a lot of nagging, they even agreed to come and do a route, after another brew!

That afternoon we went to the flying buttress area, which is only about five minutes from the campsite. The cliff itself lies below the ruins of the Old Battery where there are two very rusty old cannon pointing out to sea. It was inevitable I suppose that Brennan found it necessary to try to trundle them into the sea, but having failed, we set off down the descent path, and after some boulder hopping we arrived at the foot of the Flying Buttress, a magnificent 150ft. high sweep of rock lying against the mainland cliff forming a huge bridge. The climb we had come to do, Diamond Solitaire (V.S.) took the slabby right-hand wall of the bridge and is best done in one elegant 150ft. pitch, rather than break it up as the book suggests. It wasn't until we had climbed this pitch that the other half of the party (Pete, Tim, Ros and Garth) arrived. We all then did Flying Buttress route and Horsemans route. A hectic first day.

The pub is very quiet, almost a smugglers hideaway, and a good evening was spent playing darts and avoiding Big K, who would talk at anything that moved!

Saturday dawned and it was cold and windy on the top of the island (this was to prove characteristic of the next few days. However, dropping down on the West side of the island it became very warm and sunny). We all elected to go to the Devil's Slide area, about two miles North of the campsite.

Everybody did the classic Devil's Slide route which was pleasant and in fact got quite thin towards the top. Having completed this route, Joe and Dave went to do Devil's Spine, and Elaine and I to do Albion, which takes the left bounding corner of the 400ft. Slide. Meanwhile, the Soppit, Walker, Fenton team were still bravely mountaineering their way up the Devil's Slide route. It was rather unfortunate that our route and their route converged at the top and shared the same finish. Now three parties, all climbing the same pitch at once, and all using double ropes can produce interesting results. 400ft. of rope on a 50ft. traverse - it was eventually solved by Ros stepping over my ropes and under Tim's rope and cutting Pete's rope in half and tying it back together again in a bloody great granny knot! Lethargy descended upon us.

It was, however, still light, and it was Brennan who dragged three of us off to climb the Forgotten Pinnacle (he's got a thing about them, pinnacles that is, its worrying when you climb with him). We

arrived on the boulder beach below the "pinnacle" and immediately lost Dave "the mole" Irons down some huge hole. He eventually re-appeared about 100 yds. further on, wearing a grin from ear to ear. We then inspected the proposed route and were duly repulsed by it and decided to make our own new route on the right hand wall - a good 140ft. jamming pitch using two parallel cracks after an initial easy section - Echo (V.S.)

Another identical night in the pub, followed, but with Big K getting even more excited, telling us how some absolutely fantastic "tasty" route was magnificent - he was still reeling off the superlatives when Bob Moulton silenced him with one blow of a clenched jaw by saying, "But Ken, you haven't done it!" - Large pinch of salt to be taken with Big K's advice from now on.

That night I purchased for the meagre price of 15p a supplement to the guide from Bob Moulton and after consulting this the next morning, we all decided to do an "impressive but surprisingly easy climb" betrayed only by its name - Cow Pie - only Severe - just the job. The events that day are not really worthy of mention, except five of the party "psyched" out after the first pitch, and the remaining three, Dave, Joe and myself had to be winched up the top pitch gibbering by Tim who supplied a top rope!

Undeterred, we marched off in the direction of Needle Rock, another pinnacle (and Brennan's idea again) to do a climb called Integrity, which turned out to be superb. It was marred slightly by Dave who arrived at the foot of the climb well after at least the three of us had arrived at the top. He had spent about an hour descending the extremely steep grass slope leading to the beach and had sustained a fall of about 20ft. Strange how steep grass worries him as he is a Derbyshire limestone fanatic!

Having done with Needle Rock, Dave and I went off to look at the Devil's Chimney. We caught a glimpse of it but could not actually reach it due to the tide. It is a fine stack about 120ft. high in magnificent surroundings. The great green cliff at the back of it yields some very fierce looking lines, one of which was being climbed while we watched by Bob Moulton and Big K. They must have had quite an epic as they did not appear in the pub that night until about five minutes before closing time.

The next day was our last on the island, and the boat was due to sail at 4.35 p.m., having come from Ilfracombe at mid-day and landed several hundred tourists who would walk up to the village and spend two hours in the pub and then stagger back down and puke their way back to Ilfracombe. We reasoned that if the boat did

not leave until late afternoon, then we would have at least half a day's climbing before pulling our tents down and packing up. However, this was not to be the case. Due to the strong Easterly winds, the boat could not land any tourists, but only pick up a small number of people from the island - us.

This arrangement would have been fine but for two things:-

- (1) We would have to be picked up from the landing cove at 1.30 p.m.
- (2) Nobody told us!

Nobody told us, that is, until about 10.00 a.m. However due to a long list of misunderstandings etc., Garth and I went off climbing. We went originally to do Albacore, a route just below the campsite but we could not find the way to the bottom of the cliff. We then decided to go and do Diamond Solitaire. It was so good it deserved another ascent, and anyway Garth had not done it. Having duly made another ascent, I set off back to the campsite (Garth, Ros, Tim and Pete and been granted another days stay), only to be met by Elaine cursing and swearing at me, saying that the boat went in five minutes. We struggled down to the landing cove. The five minutes Elaine had been hysterically shouting about stretched into two hours before the boat finally did leave.

In this situation, when it is too rough for tourists to go ashore, the shipping company try to make up for it by taking them around the island in the boat. I felt green with envy as I watched Ros, Garth, Pete and Tim through some tourist's binoculars sunning themselves on the ruins of the old battery. Still, there's next year.

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"AVALANCHE" - Pauline Egan

The weather had been breaking gradually since the time that we had arrived. On Tuesday evening it had finally broke and twelve inches of snow fell overnight.

Great despondency set in at the Braun Schweiger Hutt as several parties including ourselves had spent the last few expensive days waiting for the weather to clear so that we could attempt the Wildspitze.

Wednesday morning began on a light note, with a Christmas atmosphere both outside and inside the hut. A group of Germans made a snowman which they draped with a rope and equipped with an ice axe. Another attitude to the snow was reflected in the word SCHEISSE outside the front door.

The Rock and Ice Group (my course) spent the morning in the hut learning from our guide, Paul, how to estimate positions and plan routes for complete white-out conditions. We planned a route from the hut to a local peak, the Innere Schwaire Schnide, which in good conditions takes about three hours.

The snow ceased and after lunch, the guides decided that we would go out and do the route as we had planned it in the hut that morning.

Trail breaking was difficult as the snow around the hut came up to our knees and as I was third in line it seemed especially so. The guides became tired of this hard work and so, one by one, members of the group were ordered to the front of the party. I was lucky the snow was only just above my knees, but walking like that was extremely tiring, and I was glad when my turn was over and I could retire to the back of the group and walk in nice compacted steps.

As we gained in height, towards the top of the col, the snow became steeper and the trail breakers were now thigh deep in snow. Progress was slow and there was plenty of time to look around and admire the superb views from the Rettenbachjoc and wonder at beautiful blue-ice falls nearby. We also saw evidence of small powder avalanches, but they were not every impressive.

Ahead the route lay up a steep rock gully. Paul led up followed by Reinhand (the other guide). Reinhand remained at the top of the rock pitch to belay us whilst Paul went on. The rock was very slippery and loose and I was relieved to be on the snow again at the end of the pitch. The snow was now very deep, and Paul struggled as he tried to flounder up some kind of path.

I moved up a step at a time in the deep snow. Suddenly, a shout "look out, Avalanche". A huge blanket of snow hit me and I was forced backwards, off my comfortable step where I had been resting, to be swept down by the avalanche.

I panicked and screamed. It was unbelievable, one moment the snow had seemed a friendly place, a welcome relief after the loose rock, and now it was an enemy and killer.

I was tumbling over, hitting rocks, somersaulting always downwards, totally out of control of the situation and aware that no one could possibly help me.

For one moment it seemed like some avalanche rescue practice, specially created by the guides, where several people would be swept down by an avalanche and others would rescue them. But this was no practice.

The wave seemed to slow a little and gradually stopped. I couldn't feel any pain, but I was immediately aware that I was below the surface of the snow.

I was lucky - the snow lying on top of me which I was involuntary swallowing did not seem too heavy as I could breath quite easily and my right arm could move freely. With this arm I began clawing away the snow from my face. Within seconds I felt hands rapidly scraping away the snow from above. Scraping the last of the snow from my goggles, I saw my rescuer, Paul.

I stood up and looked around the saw Julia close by, buried to her neck in snow. She was shouting that she was fine but needed help to get out. We freed her and then turned our attention to Andrew. He was moaning with pain and seemed unable to move. The party split-up - some to go to the hut for the rescue sledge, others to remain with Andrew and keep him warm.

I stayed with Andrew whom we covered with bivi-bags and all the spare clothing we had, and then sat around him to prevent heat loss. It seemed incredible that at one moment we had been 100 metres higher enjoying ourselves, and now everyone was shocked and unable to find words to express what had happened.

Andrew seemed to be seriously injured, but amazingly, no one else had been hurt, although I think most of us were suffering from shock and we later found out that Paul had sprained both his wrists and broken a rib.

The time seemed to drag as we waited for the rescue team, as we could not see the hut from where Andrew lay. Again there was time to look round, but this time the snow looked menacing and the ice-fall no longer looked beautiful but dangerous.

The sledge arrived and Andrew was gently transported to the warm and friendly hut. The helicopter was sent for, but it would not land near the hut, so Andrew was roped onto the hut lift to face a twenty-four minute journey to the valley. He was then taken to Innsbruck Hospital where he was found to have a perforated liver, a dislocated collarbone, and possibly a broken vertebrae.

Even then, as well as now, it seems amazing that no one was killed in the avalanche, because we were all carrying ice axes which could have injured us in the fall, although fortunately no one was wearing crampons. The rescue was organised very efficiently and Paul saw to this, although he must have been in pain himself.

I hope my experience will serve to remind others of the danger of

fresh snow, particularly in gullies. I am grateful for the experience because it has given me a respect for the Alps I do not feel I would have had.

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We came that way by choice,
Preferred
Desert and altitude
That was the way we chose,
We should choose it again.
We should come that way again
Though not the men we were.
Mountain fever has left us thin,
We still see snow, the wind
That drove the grit against the skin
Has left our faces scarred,
Our cheeks have fallen in,
Our foreheads wear the anxious lines
That acid doubt takes time to groove.
But why complain?
We are not without reward
For our senses were enriched
By the difficult and rare,
The rare and strange,
The little known, the chanced upon,
Moments worth waiting for
And slowly won by weeks of care,
Moments when hope fell open like a shell,
And showed the pearl,
And the pearl lay in the palm.

William Plomer
(submitted by Ron Ellis)

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MY ARTICLE FOR THE NEWSLETTER - G. Fenton

In response to Joe's constant reminders for articles for the Newsletter, here's mine. *It works! It works! J.B.*

We had just come down from the Vittorio Emanuele II hut in the Graians, after three action packed days running up and down these big 'Bonks'. Well actually I had for the most part staggered up behind Tim, Dave and Ros. In our absence Dave's blow up tent had

deflated itself, and it was now raining and things were getting wet. However we all kept our cool and blew it up again. Two days and many pumping sessions later, whilst in the Val Veni, it appeared to give up the ghost altogether. But as our ingenuity knew no bounds it was repaired with a spanner.

Well the object of being there was to climb Mont Blanc; not the ordinary way, no hordes of tourists for us. A "direct and elegant route" read the guide book, the Rocher du Mont Blanc from the Quintino Sella hut. No guardian - good - no need to pay. So our intrepid party set off up the Miage glacier, light in mind and foot. After two hours my feet were no longer light and it was beginning to dawn on us that not many people seemed to go to the Quintino Sella hut. After front pointing up a gravel encrusted ice slope, negotiating tottering seracs, and climbing a pitch of at least Severe, it came to us that the guide book writer had not been here either. The rest of the hut slog, climb, scramble - one cannot call it a walk - has faded happily into oblivion, but I do remember seeing a wooden cross high up on the ridge we were following, and Tim saying the hut "must" be before that. (Perhaps he was just saying that to keep my spirits up). But it wasn't; the hut was past the cross.

The Quintino Sella hut stands at 3371m. or 11,124ft. and consists of a wooden shack with a tin roof held on by a squeaky wire, and surrounded by a stone wall to give the illusion of permanence. It is divided into three rather squalid rooms, one of which is equipped with a woodburning stove. The table and benches were solid enough, but all the corners had been gnawed round. Rats were suggested, but how would rats get up there. Perhaps it was marooned climbers driven mad by starvation. We had no need to starve - the food had been calculated for a night in the hut and perhaps another on the way down. As a rest day had just been unanimously agreed, the food went straight on to ration.

Our rest day turned out to be dull and cloudy with occasional spells of drizzle. Tim and I enjoyed ourselves cutting wood with a toffee hammer and a small wood chisel. After an hour or so, large rocks were used to smash the wood into usable pieces. Our wood supply consisted of a door post, and it soon became apparent that it wasn't going to last. A trip down the ridge to the remains of an earlier hut seemed to be on the cards. But Tim and I suggested the cross outside the hut before that. The fire was not an outstanding success; heat usually meant lots of smoke leaking from the chimney joints, and when we opened the windows, usually after threats from Dave, who did not see himself as a kipper, the smoke blew back in from outside.

That night a terrific thunderstorm broke over us, as we lay in our hut with a tin roof on the crest of a sharp ridge. At 2 a.m. it was very cloudy, so we went back to bed - but low and behold what a beautiful day it turned out.

Dave went crystal hunting to stave off hunger, Tim settled down to "War and Peace", Ros went to sleep, and I, in the best traditions of British alpinism, went trundling.

Food was now quite a problem. A labelless tin found in the hut was opened heated and eaten on my part without relish. We are still discussing the contents of that tin.

The big day had now arrived, and a good job as we would all be too thin in a few days to carry on.

Out of the hut onto the snow, no easy slope to start with, but a steep snow/ice slope to a rock rib turned on the right, over some horrid holes onto an easy glacier. After a steady trog, another bergshund and a loose couloir down which rocks bounded at the slightest touch, a short scramble led to a buttress. There were two ways, a right way and a wrong way; we started up the obvious but wrong way. Loose steep gullies. Dave dislodged a block which landed between Ros and I, showering us with fragments. No harm was done, however, and a short pitch led to easy ground.

After a rest we were soon on to the snow. At the beginning it was easy, and nice to be on the snow, but after 500-600ft. it was hard going front pointing. My ankle was aching and Ros had cramp in her left leg. A few rocks just below the ridge was our lode stone and eventually we got there. Tim and Dave were by this time on the way to the summit.

We sat down and rested and watched Tim and Dave coming down. Now it was our turn. Leaving our rucksacs we plodded up and after several false summits finally stood at the top. It was now 3.30 p.m. It had taken us twelve hours. The view is not very spectacular as one looks down on all the other hills.

Time to go, photo's, pick up the sacs, rest again at the Vallot hut. Many people, far more than the hut could comfortably hold were staying there in readiness to traverse the Blanc to the Coldu Midi. We carried on over the Dome du Gouter, another 4000m. peak, and down the ridge to the Col de Boinassay. We put the rope on again as the ridge was quite slushy. Tim and Dave were already crossing the bergshund below.

The sun had left the Dome Glacier for over an hour by the time we

reached it and the snow was beginning to crisp. We followed little Martini flags down the endless glacier till, in the gathering gloom, we came to the Gonella hut.

At 2.30 a.m. next morning, lying in bed watching today's climbers stumbling around getting ready to start up the hill, it was pleasant to roll over and go back to sleep. We had done our bit.

Down towards food, green grass and running water, funny how one misses trees, tinned pineapples, a shower, and clean clothes.

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FIRST STOP THE BOTTOM - Dave Irons

The August Bank Holiday bogtrot did not materialise this year as the proposed day of the walk was distinctly grim weatherwise. It was our intention to do the Yorkshire Three Peaks, but on looking out of our tents at the prevailing weather at 5.30 a.m. on that Sunday morning sent us straight back to the comfort of our sleeping bags without debate. It rained hard all day!

However, to compensate for our disappointment, the weekend did provide us with a highlight of an unusual and unexpected nature. The party consisting of Ros and Garth Fenton, John Rooker and myself had driven up on the previous day, and, after locating a suitable campsite at Horton in Ribblesdale and having pitched our tents, we were left with the afternoon to while away. I suggested that we went for a bit of a stroll to get loosened up in readiness for the hard day's course tomorrow. Garth, having seen a little of the dales and its spectacular pot-holes, and being interested in pot-holes, suggested that we stroll up to Ghaping Gill, the most celebrated pot-holes in the area.

Accordingly, we drove to Clapham and walked up through the grounds of the Ingleborough Estate, past the show cave - which is excellent - and through Trow Gill Gorge onto the open moorland below the long, flat-topped mountain of Ingleborough. On our walk up we had noticed that there were large numbers of muddy lads and lassies about, coming from, and going towards the direction of Ghaping Gill, and on arriving discovered the reason; the Craven Pot-hole Club were holding their annual "Winch Meet". The sides of Fell Beck above the pot-hole were full of tents, landrovers, and hundreds of people, and over the top of the main shaft there was a scaffold built.

We were rather disappointed as we could not see much of the hole. Then suddenly there was a lad standing before us with a handful of tickets. "Want to go down," he said. "El return trip."

I was taken by surprise. It had not occurred to me that I might be going down there. I was very tempted. "But we have no gear." I said. "That's O.K. All you need's a cag." He said.

I was very tempted. We stood around debating the point and eventually Garth and I decided to go down on the winch. Our going decided John, so all three of us handed over fl notes excitedly and donned cags and helmets. Ros thought fl too expensive.

A girl on the scaffold asked us where we intended going in the cave system once we were down. I explained that we were mere tourists, and in the book she wrote Main Chamber next to our names.

Gaping Gill's Main Shaft is about 30ft. in diameter, and in one uninterrupted drop of 360ft. lands one in the huge main chamber. From the chamber, several miles of arduous passages lead off. I could not see the bottom from the scaffold platform. It was obscured by spray from a water fall that sprouted out of one side of the shaft about 50ft. down.

The chair came up through the trap door in the platform. Sitting in the chair, I was clipped in casually and lowered through the trapdoor. The descent was over in a minute, but what a descent down an incredible dark hole in the ground, full of spray and mist and darkness, with black, wet walls all around. I looked for the possible line of the climb that has been made up the shaft; in places it looked quite feasible but in such a place! Looking down into the darkness I saw lights coming up, and suddenly I was down, stepping out of the bosun's chair into the vastness of the cavern.

A couple of dozen mud-caked figures stood queueing for the ride back to the surface, having made their trips; but beyond their lights all was darkness in all directions. While waiting for Garth and John to come down, the darkness gave way to dimness as my eyes got accustomed to some light which managed to penetrate through the spray into the chamber.

When they had arrived, we were given a tour of the chamber, which, although large, didn't take long as it is open and uncomplicated. At the West end, beyond a mud bank, lies the slope up to Western Passage and the main sink for the water flowing into the chamber. At the Eastern end lies the South East passage above the rocks of Telephone Corner and to the left is a slope up to East Passage. The floor of the chamber is mostly shingle and cobbles but with no large rocks. Constantly there is the roar of the waterfalls and the splash of water striking stone.

To get back to the surface we had a long wait in the queue, shivering in the dampness. The ride up, however, compensated for this as it was slower and gave one more time to look about the shaft. An exhilarating experience!

JARGON ("CLAP TRAP") - J. Pettet

1st person: *He's been around you know.*

2nd person: *Yeah! You can tell that by the rust on his crabs.*

Laying away: One night jump in Scotland.

Whillans Harness: Patented truss to support stomach distended by too much beer drinking. When worn by person with rusty crabs you know he really has been around.

Chest Harness: A canvas brassiere for guys who like a change.

Techniques:

- a) Hand traverse: Insert fingers firmly inside lip of crack and proceed expertly to success.
- b) Foot traverse: Ditto with toes - not quite the same amount of feel.
- c) Jamming: As (a) and (b) but insert whole hand and foot (sometimes together!)
- d) Chimneying: When cracks achieve giant proportions insert whole body - not for the faint hearted.
- e) Stemming up an off-width flare: A combination of (a) to (d), used only by the masters when encountering perverted cracks. Long psyching up requiring unparalleled frenzy of wild grabbing, pulling and writhing so that the knee, heel or nose can be kept inside. One momentary fault can cause premature ejection.
- f) Plastic bivvy sack: As brought to our attention by Brennan Sex Aids Inc. A plastic bag for raising the body heat of voyeurs who think they have tried everything - comes in wet look.
- g) Perlon: Recent continental import guarantees safety, does not kink with rough usage, supple in fingers, kind on hands, but, as with other protectives, must be thrown away after a good root.
- h) P.A.'s: Close fitting rubbers as used on all good roots. Beware - if worn too tight the end will bend the physical parts causing possible permanent disfigurement.
- i) Black Ladders: A root up a pair of black tights.
- j) Glyder Fach: Little known insult to cockneys from the Welsh.

ALPS '74 - J. Brennan

Rooker's clapped out wreck arrived in Arolla, having been transported across Europe by us four - Dave Irons, Nick Taylor, The Culprit, and myself. Now, under cover of darkness, we were pushing the thing stricken by a bad dose of altitude sickness up to the campsite.

Consternation, the beautiful, archtypal sylvan meadow of our dreams, smelling softly of pines and summer flowers was over-run. Wogs, Huns, Micks, Poms, Frogs, Hi-Ti's, Paki's everywhere. Where to park? Yes, in the middle of the lane, to cause maximum inconvenience.

Early morning in the sun. Notoriety quickly established with unmistakable territorial claims. Gear spread out in all directions, a violent game of football to drive nearby campers away and give ourselves some breathing space.

A voice, used to command, the South East etched into its arrogant flat cadences, approaches.

*"I say, my man would you move your jolly little car."
"Piss off."*

Amazing effect. We are left alone, our peace disturbed only by the tearing and rending of metal as a car rips into a boulder trying to get past our now resting vehicle.

At about mid-day we set off, on our way to the Vignettes Hut. From far off, a faint cry is heard, *"It's O.K., we can move now they're going."* Strange. Must try to be nicer to people in future. Crowds always seem to bring out the worst. Also the after affects of a long cramped journey in the dreaded machine, and everyone else's driving but my own.

Now that we are on our way, the weather looks threatening. We seem to be the only ones going up, with masses of people fleeing the mountain. At any rate, there is plenty of room in the hut. This is fortunate, as we sit there nearly the whole of the next day, with white-out conditions outside, relieved only by the occasional snowfall. In the evening we decided to go down, to the dismay of a campsite now trapped again.

Great revellries follow later that evening, culminating in the gate-crashing of the Annual Dinner of the Belgian Alpine Club, a sort of continental Ramblers' Association. Much drinking and dancing. This is no way to get fit. Besides it seems to have

strange affects on the behaviour of the natural world. For instance, why are the stars shining through the roof of the tent, and why has my sleeping bag lost all its warmth? Presently I revive and stagger on up the lane.

The next day is perfect, judging from the amount of it that manages to filter through a throbbing hangover. Rooker apparently is dead, drowned in a sea of vomit. This is an extremely selfish act, as it means that we will have to climb as a rope of three. We hurriedly repack and shoot off to the Vignettes Hut again, leaving the body to be disposed of later.

This time the hut is bursting at the seams. Everyone in the valley seems determined to make the most of what is said to be the first good spell of weather for a week. No room anywhere, not even to eat. A wave of the sorcerer's wand is required. Catch the Warden's eye and speak the magic words, "Fac Nord", and low and behold, we are issued into a spacious inner sanctum, shared only with members of the British Army Himalayan Expedition 1975.

The next morning, at the ungodly hour of 12.45 a.m., we are out and staggering through powder snow across a pitch dark glacier. It does not take long to get to the foot of the face, but what we see there is rather disturbing. The entire lower half of the face has collapsed, leaving a jumble of blocks at the bottom. We hesitantly start off, but everything is covered in powder snow. The temperature is barely below freezing. The ice wall formed by the collapse, which now supports the upper half of the face, leans down at us threateningly. There is the dry rustle of falling particles. Enough.

Terror stricken, we turn around and descend. A large block, out of the firing line provides a useful shelter as we wait for the dawn. It is a beautiful night. We decide instead to do the ridge on the right of the face. This turns out rather tougher than expected, rather harder, in fact, than the face, as we established when we were forced back out onto it near the top. For anyone thinking of the Pettit Mont Collon, do the North Face, but not this ridge. It is dangerously loose. The guide book is definitely incorrect. Two members of the Army Expedition who followed us up it were of the same opinion. A long, tedious and gripping descent followed on rotting, melting snow. Again, the guide book is hopelessly inaccurate. As a work of fiction it is not even a good story. Judging from the inaccuracies throughout Volumes I and II, it is doubtful if Collomb has even been to the Pennine Alps. Some of the errors are so fundamental as to be almost unbelievable. We get back to the hut 18 hours after leaving it, to be greeted by the miracle of a reincarnated Rooker.

Our next port of call is Zermatt, where the gnomes grow fat and the climbers grow thin. Nick and myself had decided on the Triftjigrat on the North Face of the Breithorn. Dave and John were going to do Monte Rosa.

That night in the Gandegg Hut the usual conflict occurred with the late morning starters. Lying dozing in the darkened room, a strongly German accented "Elow" split the soporific silence. Giggles. Further repeats. More giggles. We were being got at. J.C., why is it that peace loving people like ourselves should be followed by trouble everywhere? One starts with the best possible intentions. Earlier resolution to be nice must be temporarily postponed.

"You there 'Elow', you understand English."

A pause.

"Ya."

"Well you understand that if you open your mouth once more, I will be compelled to kick your teeth down your throat."

Presently silence, but I have worked myself into such a state of agitation that I cannot find sleep again.

The guide book's 300ft. down onto the glacier turns out to be nearer 1000ft. To get to the route it is necessary to pass through an avalanche zone below a line of seracs. The glacier at this point was dry. It must have been in a highly stressed condition, for our footsteps were sufficient to trigger very loud cracks and recoils which sounded like rifles going off at close range. I am not the best equipped person to withstand sudden noises, and this, coupled with the sudden tremours of the glacier underfoot and the situation we were in, left me a shaking wreck by the time we got to the foot of the route.

The route itself was a delight, the only trouble being with dinner-plating ice which gave little security. It was duly completed without incident.

Whilst Dave and John headed for the Durrenhorn, we went up to the Rothorn Hut. The intention was to traverse the Wellenjuppe, Obergabelhorn and Mont Durand and descend to the Schonbiel Hut via the Col Durand and the Hohwang glacier. From the Schonbiel we intended to do a route on the Dent Blanche the next day.

The traverse is superb and is highly recommended, with sharp, exposed and very classic ridges. We set out in an apocalyptic, technicolour dawn, which, despite threatening the worst, turned into a beautiful day. The main problem on the route was, again, dinner-plating ice. Amazingly, despite the weather in Arolla, the

Zermatt area had had virtually no bad weather for some considerable time. The result was that the mountains were unusually bare. Much of the snow faces and ridges had turned to ice which was in very bad condition. This required steady progress, as a slip could not have been corrected.

On the way down, we passed an Italian party pegging their way up easy rock. Further down tempers frayed as we waded thigh-deep down the Hohwang Glacier. The heat was unbearable. Each closed into a private world. The mind hardly seems to function. I find myself thinking *"That's funny, my right foot seems lighter than my left."* I must be cracking up. But wait a minute. The sole has come off my newly repaired boot, sucked free by the cloying snow. It is all too much.

A cry hits the indifferent mountain walls and reverberates back at the startled Taylor.

"Damn Lockley, I'll ram this boot so far down his throat, he'll have to hammer the nails in his arse to repair it."

Must keep calm. No Dent Blanche tomorrow and that's for certain. No doubt the boot can be repaired in Zermatt at extortionate rates, but that will mean a loss of probably two precious days from an already too short holiday.

Everyone is together again for the last route, a very pleasant outing; the Fletschhorn in the Weissmies Chain. No troubles this time, except that the Warden forgot to wake us. The only shadow on the day was the thought that shortly we would be coaxing one small indolent Ford back across Europe, this time with the added weight handicap of several gallons of illicit alcohol.

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IRISH SEA CROSSING, 1974 - Martin Smith

After nearly 19 hours of paddling, Pete Davies, Nigel Matthews, Frank Goodman and Martin Smith completed an escortless canoe crossing of the Irish Sea by a new route. We set off from Wicklow in Eire at 22.00 hours on Tuesday, 11th June, 1974 and arrived at Aberdaron at 16.52 hours on Wednesday, 12th June.

After a particularly memorable sea trip in 1973, I decided that I should like to do something longer - something that had not been done before. Living in Wales, the Irish Sea is an obvious choice, and after looking at a chart of the oggin in that area. Wicklow to Aberdaron seemed a logical route which, as far as I know, had not been

canoed across before. Several people said that they would be interested but by Autumn a team of Nigel, Pete and I emerged and so we began training and planning in earnest.

The main considerations that we had to think about straight away were, when to do the trip, whether to do it East to West or vice versa, and how long we could wait for the weather to be right, and so we decided to go over to Eire for a week when the tides would be neaps, the days would be long and, statistically, we could expect some good weather.

Nigel volunteered as chart plotter, Pete to get a driver to bring the car back from Ireland, and me to write all the various letters connected with the trip. I started with John Chamberlain, who was one of the members of the 1972 crossing from St. David's to Rosslare. He was extremely helpful and sent me back four pages of foolscap information. Living in Snowdonia, I was also able to talk to Nick Gough about the trip and Derek Mayes who did the Dun Leogehaire/Holyhead trip.

Before long we had enough planning to make up an information sheet which I started sending out with the correspondence. One of these letters went to Valley Canoe Products asking if they might be able to help us with some equipment and Frank Goodman replied by asking if he could come on the trip, which we agreed to after we had met him a couple of times.

Training really consisted of paddling as often as possible. At weekends, doing sea trips together if possible, and during the week Nigel and I paddled on the estuaries we lived by - the Conway and Mawddach respectively. Frank practised on the Trent and Pete was fit anyway!

Monday, 10th June finally arrived, and we were on our way to get the 11.30 ferry at Holyhead with "Chuff" Gerrard, an R.A.F. Mountain Rescuer, who had kindly volunteered to drive us. I had already written to the coastguards to tell them of our plans, however, Nigel and I called in to give them the final details of our trip, whilst the others sorted out the tickets.

On the boat, the journey was fairly uneventful. We gave our wrists some final exercise at the bar, and occasionally went up on deck to have a look at the sea. Being last on the boat, we were first off, and having got through the Customs without difficulty we drove down to Wicklow and set up camp. As expected, there are not many tourists in Eire now and we had the campsite to ourselves except for one other tent. A stone's throw away was Wicklow Lighthouse so we strolled

over and had a chat with the Lighthouse keeper. That evening we visited the local hostelry only to be told that the Guinness factories were on strike!

Naturally we were listening to the shipping forecasts with great interest this time. Irish Sea was gale force 8 and although this did not materialise it did not look as though we would be able to do the trip for several days.

Next day dawned fine so we had a prolonged festal until lunch time. On the 13.55 forecast it was still 5 and 6 Irish Sea but the general trend seemed to be improving, and it looked as though we might be able to make the trip the next night. Everybody was now feeling more energetic and we decided to go for a paddle around Wicklow Head. Although it is a fair way from Wales we can recommend it as a good trip with lots of caves, bird life and a tide race which we all had a play in. Chuff picked us up around the other side, where we listened to the still improving forecast which was Westerly 5, backing Southwest 3 or 4.

We could not seem to get a very detailed forecast from Dublin Airport so we rang through to R.A.F. Valley. I squeezed in the telephone box with Pete and tried to listen to the conversation. The Met. men said that it would be 3 and 4 Westerly for the next 24 hours and that the situation was not likely to improve during the rest of the week. Pete looked at me and said "It's on." So we went to discuss it with the others and then made the most difficult decision of all - To go! Frank drove back to the campsite at sixty, and then followed the most hectic three hours of preparation I have ever known. Gear packing, sticking charts to decks, filling flasks, making sandwiches, drinking dynamo, etc., etc., and all this interspersed with visits to the campsite loo. I did my bit to further Anglo/Irish relations by persuading two young Colleens to help us. We ate the last supper of Spaghetti Bolognese - ideal for this sort of venture! Then we drove to the Harbour stopping only to ring up the Marine Co-ordination Centre at Shannon who then telexed Holyhead to say we were on our way.

At 10 p.m. we paddled out of the Harbour and our voyage commenced. The wind was now blowing 3/4 behind us and I think we all wondered whether we would be able to surf all the way back to Wales. We also had a short stop as a bottle of orange juice became detached from Pete's boat but around eleven o'clock the wind died and the sea became really glassy and we all felt much happier. We were all amazed how long the light lasted, it did not get really dark until about twelve o'clock. At about this time a black shape loomed up, which at first we thought might be a boat showing no lights, but after a bit

more paddling we were relieved to find it was a buoy. We rafted up to look at Nigel's chart and confirmed it was the buoy marking the South end of India Bank about 5½ miles off shore, we then had a quick sup of Dynamo and carried on until 12.30 when we again rafted up to listen to the Shipping Forecast which was the same as the 18.00 one.

The sea was nice and smooth still, and navigation proved to be fairly easy as various stars appeared right on course although we had to check as we were being drifted North by the tide. Later on, the moon appeared to light our way.

At 02.45 hours the current was very noticeable as we came alongside the red light, and also quite quickly the wind got up. A few blasts on the foghorn fetched two very surprised looking lighthouse keepers but they promised to relay our position to the Coastguard.

Shortly after leaving the Codling the wind got up to its worst during the whole trip. At times it was as much as 5 and we all knew that if anyone capsized here and failed to roll, a rescue would have been a bit 'epic', also with the combined effects of wind and tide the lightship was soon left well behind us. Thankfully, after about an hour, the wind subsided and Wednesday dawned grey on a deep green coloured sea. I well remember our Breakfast stop - butties, Mars bars, tea and Dynamo, at about 05.00 hours, looking at the salt stained, tired faces of the others, and thinking "Do I look like that?" Although everyone had come a long way, we were all feeling O.K. but we knew we had a long way to go.

Other people we had chatted to had told us that the appearance of land was heralded by cumulus clouds on the horizon, but the low banks, dark stratus, completely surrounded us giving no clue as to where land might be, but at 05.45 hours a small dark shape appeared on the horizon. We had all expected this moment to become one of wild jubilation, but nobody seemed particularly excited. It was good though to be able to see something on the horizon - a goal in sight. Ever since daylight Guillemots and Razorbills had been flying around us, even a pair of Gannets which swooped down for a closer inspection. The original speck of land which we had seen gradually got bigger and other blackish blobs appeared about it and we, of course, began to speculate just what they could be but at this stage the land was not recognisable on the map.

At about 07.30 hours a Tanker which had approached very quickly passed within about 200 yards of us, and although Nigel blew the foghorn nobody came out on the bridge to look at us. We decided we had not been noticed and it seemed to us that it would be quite

possible to be run down if a ship going at that speed descended on you at night even though we had taken the precaution of having some white miniflares ready to fire.

For some strange reason I still had not managed to pass any water since we had started. The others were "peeing" quite happily at our raft ups and what had started off as a joke was now causing me some discomfort. We rafted up and I tried kneeling in the boat, dangling over the side, even standing up! All in the Irish Sea. That must be a record! But even that was to no avail, so I decided to roll down my Limpet spray deck which was fairly tight, to make myself more comfortable and "Hey Presto" it happened!

The next few hours passed without incident and although we thought that the land we could see was Bardsey Island we could not really be sure until at about mid-day I saw the tip of the Lighthouse. The others decided that I was having hallucinations, and it was an hour before they believed me!

Our original plan was to actually land at Bardsey and at 11.00 hours the island was clearly visible but the next two hours of paddling seemed to bring us no closer. The tide turned in Bardsey at 16.00 hours and so we decided to change course and paddle across the tidal stream to get us to the Braich-y-Pwll the tip of the mainland. There was a bit of "chop" in the sound but nothing too desperate and with no appreciable "slack" the tide carried us around the Headland until we went round the corner and there, two miles away, was the beach. Suddenly the wind came in from the North East, blowing against us, and it was as though the sea was showing us something right to the end.

We landed at 16.52 hours, not desperately tired, but looking foward to a hot bath and a meal. We chatted to the small crowd which quickly gathered around the boats and asked about our trip. We took a few photos and then retired to the comfort of the Ship Hotel where the Landlady made us so welcome. It is good to be back.

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DETAILS

The boats used were Anas Acutas Eskimo type Kayaks. Three of us had special lightweight L.D. paddles which we found very good. We all wore buoyancy aids for warmth and comfort as we decided that it would be necessary to take life jackets off to prevent chaffing.

The Balmoral, a ship of the size and vintage which made one think of Dunkirk, followed the beautiful North Devon coast for five miles before heading West into the Atlantic for Lundy. Strong sunshine and a cool breeze made the two and a half hour crossing pass quickly. The Balmoral then anchored in a sheltered bay and a tender shuttled back and forth to the beach with people then luggage.

The island is three and a half miles long by about a half mile wide and it is protected from the Atlantic Ocean by granite cliffs rising to 400ft. and it was these cliffs that had attracted us to the island.

Once you have walked up the steep and twisting path from the beach to the village where the thirty inhabitants live it is not necessary to do any more climbing to see the whole island as it is a plateau. This makes for poor campsites, as there is little shelter. However we pitched the tents by a wall which gave some protection from the prevailing Westerlies. The time was now 4.30 p.m. - time for a cup of tea and to go and do a couple of climbs on the West coast in warmth of the evening sun.

The rock lived up to expectations; it is light coloured granite, very rough and mostly very sound. Battery Rib and Horseman's Route, two medium grade climbs, were very enjoyable and left us wishing to return to the same area the next morning.

The Ceunant party consisted of the "A" team: Jon de Montjoye, Dave Irons, Joe Brennan and Elaine Hindle and the "B" team; Ros and Garth Fenton, Pete Soppitt and myself. There was a slight difference in philosophy between the two groups. The "A" team gave the impression of trying to minimise the cost per climb by doing the maximum number of routes during daylight hours, while the "B" team took advantage of the splendid weather to have an occasional siesta.

Thursday evening saw the first visit to the Marisco Tavern which was to become very familiar over the next few days. Here we met that inimitable spokesman for British climbing, Ken Wilson, the editor of "Mountain". He assured us that we were on Lundy during the biggest boom in British climbing history, but then he never was renowned for understatement. He also strongly recommended a route called 'ULLyses Factor (49c) to us and anyone else within a half mile radius. I thought this sounded a particularly intimidating climb until realising that 49c was not the grade of the climb, but its position in the guide book.

On Easter Saturday we climbed in the Devil's Slide area. 'The Devil's Slide' itself is a 450ft. slab rising out of the sea, gradually steepening, forcing an exit to the left at the top. Everyone

climbed this and Jon and Elaine also did 'Albion' (V.S.), while Joe and Dave did the Devil's Spine. In the afternoon, whilst looking for the Forgotten Pinnacle, Jon did a new route ('Echo' 140ft. V.S.) with a fine, open top pitch, and was followed up by Joe, Dave and myself.

The Lundy Guide reminds climbers that parties are responsible for their own rescue on the island and on Easter Day this twice proved necessary.

A mass assault was planned on a hard severe, 'Cow Pie'. This involved a nice 150ft. abscise, followed by scrambling round the rocks to the start, and an easy first pitch to a huge ledge where there was room for everyone to sit and watch the climb. First Dave had a go, then Jon. Finally Jon decided it was too loose to justify leading it, so I found an easy way up and lowered a rope. The more intrepid members of the party who had not yet retreated then climbed up, but not without some difficulty. In the afternoon we went back to the more heavily climbed areas and climbed 'Integrity', an excellent route on the seaward face of a pinnacle.

'X' was the second candidate for rescue on Easter Day, and this was at 11.00 p.m. He was in danger of being enveloped by a rather over-developed young lady who seemed attracted to this gallant climber. During daylight hours he maintained a healthy deference, but sad to say his perception seemed to decrease after an evening in the tavern.

During our stay the sky and the sun beat down making the scenery almost Adriatic in character. The sea was clear and deep green in colour. From the cliff tops you could see the sea bottom and watch the seals swimming underwater or lazing on the rocks. The fine weather was caused by an anticyclone over Britain which brought strong East winds, giving draughty camping, but beautifully sheltered climbing on the West coast.

Lundy is also a bird sanctuary, so climbing is not allowed in May or June. The symbol of the island is the puffin, but although we saw guillimots, cormorants, oyster-catchers, eider ducks, fulmars and many other varieties of gulls, lapwings, buntings, and wheat-ears - no puffins.

Easter Monday was our last full day. We chose a climb called 'Diamond Solitaire' to be a fitting end to the holiday. The start is in a dark, damp cave a few feet above sea level; from here you climb out under the roof of a cave to a V-groove with the sea crashing below. The groove is climbed strenuously for 70ft. before

stepping out onto the face and finishing up a steep wall to the cliff top. Even by Lundy's high standard, a magnificent climb. Certainly with the good weather we had, Lundy lived up to the claim to have the best sea-cliff climbing in the country after Anglesey.

We had been hoping that the weather would deteriorate on Tuesday as the boat cannot pick up passengers during bad weather. However our luck had to run out; the weather stayed fine and the boat, with us on board, left on time.

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NEW ROUTES

LUNDY - Echo 140ft. V.S. Takes the crack system just to the right of Forgotten Pinnacle. Climb easily up to the start of the twin cracks in the wall above. Takes these to the top. A fine pitch. First ascent: Jon de Montjoye, Tim Walker, Dave Irons, Joe Brennan. (There is still a fair amount of scope for further new routes on the island.)

CASTLEMARTIN, PEMBROKESHIRE - Stone Flower 90 V.S.

Start: from the second belay of Ring of Bright Water. Climb the awkward groove above, with increasing difficulty and wider and wider bridging. Bridge into as high a position as possible below the large overhang, until a good jug hold can be reached high on the arete on the left. After several "Hail Marys" and paralytic cramps in the thighs, swing sensationally out onto the arete on the left. Gain the crack above and continue to the top. An excellent, concentrated little route combining a variety of climbing techniques, on magnificent, sound rock.

Note: This area, along with many others of good potential, is completely ignored in Colin Mortlock's new guide to the Pembrokeshire. Otherwise it is excellent value for 6Op. Its main fault is that climbs which have not had a first ascent by Colin Mortlock have largely been ignored. For instance, climbs which have been recorded by members of this club in "New Climbs" have not been mentioned, although some are of excellent quality.

There are 330 routes recorded in the guide book. In the Castlemartin area ~~there must be~~ sufficient lines waiting for first ascents to fill at least half another volume.

Add to that the good campsite, good pub, good dartsboard, good surfing, good bathing. Go there. It is nearer than St. David's Head.