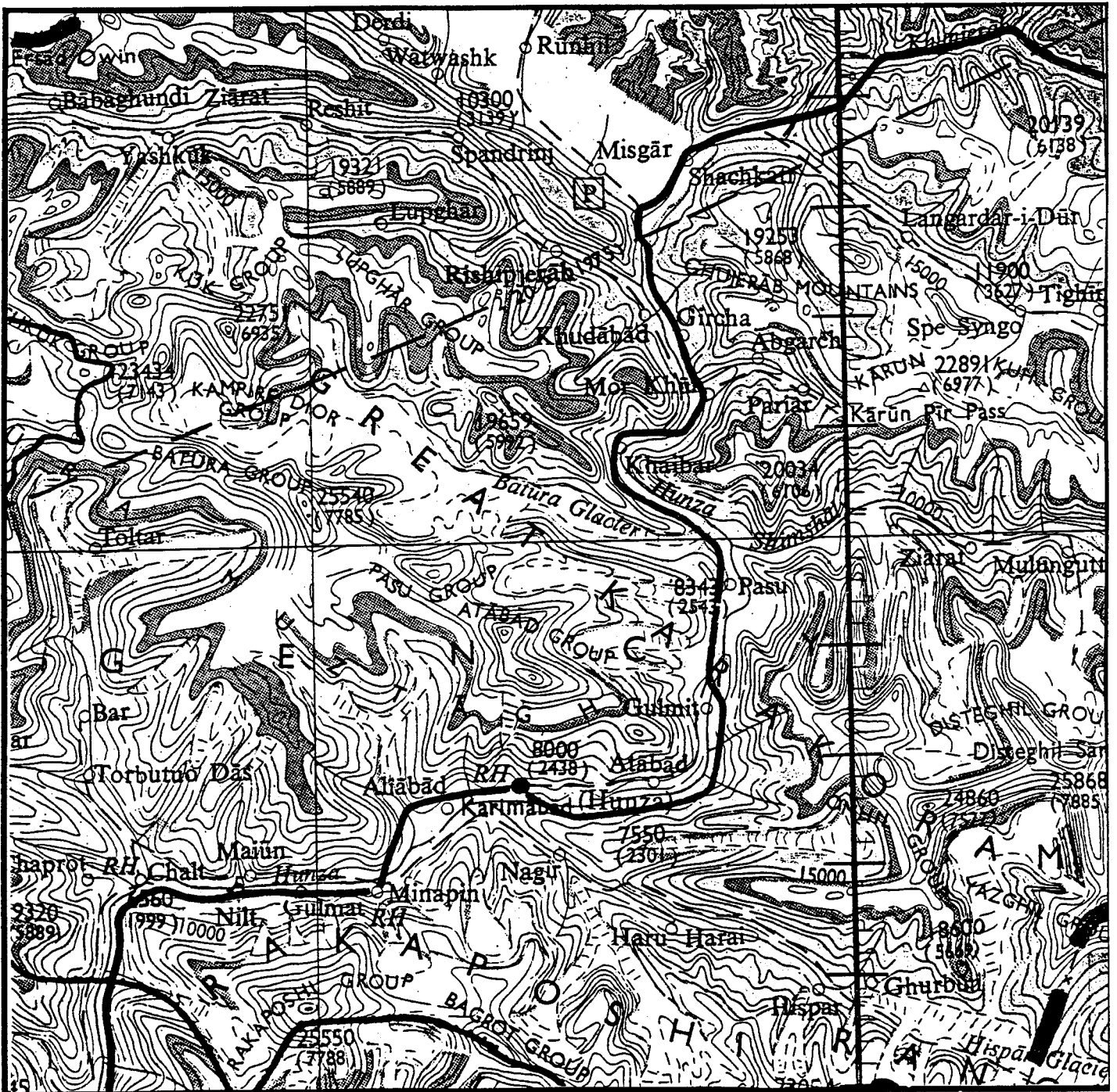


Ceunant Newsletter

October 1995



1995 Committee

Chairperson	Julie Duggan
Vice Chairman	Graham Sutton
General Secretary	Adrian Casey
Treasurer	Nick Oldfield
Hut Warden	Bill Beddard
Hut Secretary	Val Beddard
Membership Secretary	Paul Hennelly
Outdoor Meets	Mark Hellewell
Indoor Meets	Tony Millichope
Magazine Editor	James Walker
Ordinary Committee Member	Paul Green
Ordinary Committee Member	Danny O'Keefe

Contact no:



Chairpersons message

Hello,

Yet again another summer seems to have come and gone too swiftly. It feels like only yesterday, that I was looking forward to three weeks in the Dolomites. I hope you too had a wonderful summer's climbing and trekking - the weather certainly could not be faulted this year.

Heading for winter, skiing and ice climbing holidays are on members' minds. Don't forget to ring around or visit the Queens Tavern to arrange trips for the winter season.

I am now awaiting a decision from The Foundation for Sports and Arts for funds to extend and renovate Tyn Lon. However, due to the Lottery fund demands, the Foundation is being starved of cash - I will keep you informed of any developments.

Many thanks go to all members who have helped with the publication of the newsletter, especially Paul Green who has undertaken this awkward task - Thanks Paul!

Hope to see you soon,

Julie Duggan - Chairperson

P.S. James Walker - Magazine Editor. Please make James' job a little easier by writing down your latest exploits for the next magazine. Thanks.

Editorial

Thanks particularly to the following who have helped me by making contributions regarding meets to this newsletter:

Sue Traynor - Brotherswater, Dolomites (account no. 2) and Cornwall

Nick Oldfield - The Calanques and Borrowdale

Tony Millichope - Evening Cycle ride

Mark Hellewell - Dolomites (account no. 1) and Lundy

As you appreciate the newsletter only scratches the surface of the activities of the club and its members. A large portion of the club is regularly active out their on the crag and some great climbing and mountaineering has been achieved. As an example during recent months this has included an ascent of the Old Man of Hoy by Trevor, Keith, and Paul. No doubt that there are other notable achievements (whatever the grade) by club members and we all have our epics. We are all interested in these achievements and are more than happy to make a brief mention of these in future newsletters, so please do not hesitate to let me know. More detailed accounts should be saved for the magazine. In the meantime just keep on climbing.

Finally, I draw your attention to the Indoor and Outdoor meets list which is set out near the back of the newsletter. There are still a number of good meets left in the year and I hope to see you there. Thanks to Tony Millicope and Mark Hellewell for their work on the meets list.

Paul Green

PS. I'm personally looking forward to a Balti Chicken and Vegetable Madras at Imrans on December 20th - see later.
The cover map is the Karakoram Highway, Pakistan - 75°E 36°N

Notes and notices

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Anne** and **Tony Millichope** (& **Amy**) on the arrival of baby **Kate**.

New members

Welcome to new member **Hazel Preece** who became a full member on September 6.

Welcome also to **Roger Lavill** and **Ken Hipkiss**, previously full and active members who have recently been readmitted. **Graham Spenceley** is now back on the members list after returning from New Zealand.

We have recently seen an unprecedented rise in the number of enquiries regarding membership of the club. Consequently, there has been an increase in provisional members. During recent weeks, **David Burrows**, **Brian "Leo" Davies**, **David Evans**, **Robert Gilkes**, **Kevin Hill**, **Maggie Ingram**, **Don Mason**, and **Elizabeth Anne Simpson** have joined as provisional members. We look forward to seeing you on future meets.

Telephone list

Attached is an up to date version of the telephone list. Please forward any amendments to **Paul Hennelly**.

Theft from Tyn-Lon

During the annual barbecue on 23 June certain items were stolen from the lobby of the cottage. These items included a rucksack containing personal clothing and climbing equipment. This is very unfortunate and is understood to have occurred following the departure of a group who had entered the cottage without invitation late in the evening. This incident follows the loss of the microwave earlier in the year. Clearly extra vigilance from all members of the club using the cottage is required and the committee suggests the following:

- do not leave baggage or valuables (including climbing gear and rucksacks) in the lobby - transfer all belongings upstairs on arrival
- lock all doors (front and back) when you are the last person to leave the cottage even if only to go to the Vaynol
- ensure all windows are secure - the committee have noted instances where windows have been left wide open inadvertently during the day
- do not ignore people who enter the cottage you don't recognise as members - establish who they are

Please note that the club is not insured for these losses.

Acquisitions

The club has now purchased a large (17.5' x 22') polypropylene sheet of the type seen covering market stalls. Very strong eyelets all round its edge and very versatile for creating a covered cooking/communal gathering spot on camping meets, particularly the longer meets abroad. All that's needed are a few odd poles and some guy lines and pegs to create a large porch area that everyone can benefit from without having to pay for the extra space taken up and it folds up quite well. If anyone wishes to make use of it, contact Outdoor Meets Secretary (**Mark Hellewell**).

WANTED: Does anyone have any old or spare poles they might like to donate to the club for above mentioned usage - if so contact any of the committee - thanks.

New water heater

As you may have noticed the cottage sports a new water heater in the kitchen. The committee thanks **Bill Beddard** and **Keith Willington** for their hard work in installing the heater.

Found

If you have lost a chalk bag recently - call **Paul Green**.

Review of meets since last newsletter

Brotherswater - February 24-26

Twelve places were booked in the bunkroom at the Brotherswater Inn, Patterdale for this meet. Ten of these and spaces at the campsite next door were taken by members various. It was a novel experience to be sleeping in what had been the main bar until very recently. Ornamental sherry casks decorated the walls and the carpet, recipient of spilt beer for several decades, made it impossible to stand still for long without becoming permanently stuck. The gas fire effect gas fire in the new bar and the ice crystals tinkling in the bath provided an appropriately Arctic ambience for this winter meet.

None of this mattered (much) however. It was cheap. And, those who arrived during daylight on the Friday were delighted to find snow down to 1500 feet; winter wonderland stuff glittering icily in the afternoon sun. Needless to say, this being the lakes, these conditions did not last all weekend. They got better. We ignored the dire forecasts and decided that it's blind, naive, optimistic faith that brings good weather and we had loads of that.

Miraculously, we were geared up and at Greenside by 9.00 am on the Saturday, in various states of consciousness. Walkers headed for Striding Edge. Climbers headed for the Red Tarn Gullies to tackle two routes romantically named Number 2 and Number 3. Mark chopped his way through a previously beautiful cornice with the subtlety of a JCB. Why? "Because I want to and I can". Keith's lip had a little quiver because his favourite peg had to be abandoned at the belay. Jules gave her Granddad's crampons their first outing in 50 years. Then we all met on the top to stroll down Grisedale where a spare car had been usefully parked.

A truly wonderful meal was scoffed at the Queen's Head, Troutbeck. "Sex on a plate" mumbled our Outdoor Meets Secretary through a mouthful of one of his several puddings whilst Keith discovered his peg had mysteriously turned up with his dinner, courtesy of Jules.

The next day, our walking contingent were undeterred by the prospect of a long plod up High Street in the hot sunshine and set off wishing they had brought the Ambre Solaire. The climbers mostly assaulted the Dollywaggon area after a long walk during which most clothes were shed and stuffed into bulging sacs. In spite of the overnight frost, the snow was softening rapidly. James, Hills and Bella enjoyed their route. Tony and Gordon were successful in Dollywaggon Gully but Chock Gully repulsed a determined attempt by the rest of us. It was pretty repulsive. I wished I'd taken my snorkel. But at least it had a name!

Meanwhile, Jan and Julia were doing their first winter route at Red Tarn; a memorable experience and an appropriate name; Number 1.

Ceunant two, weathermen nil.

If you didn't come you should be as sick as a parrot. Great meet.

The Calanques (France) - April

The trip got off to a shaky start when the two halves of the party failed to meet as planned due in no small part to being in two different towns. We met up a day later to find neither party was full of tubes and in need of post crag hospital visits as we had imagined. Just as well, you don't want to waste valuable drinking time.

On their way down Maggie and Keith had stopped in Les Alpilles where the bar "Armand", scene of many babyfoot epics last year, was full of Norwegian school girls. Arriving one day later Paul Collis and John Haine spent every spare moment in the bar but failed in their attempt to brush up on their conversational Norwegian.

Access to the crags at En Vau was by boat; the boat men would approach at high speed then just as we seemed about to crash would ram the boat into reverse. Not to be outdone it was a matter of honour for the Ceunant team to step from the boat up to the narrow rock ledge which served as a landing stage no handed.

The climbing turned out to be multi pitch adventure climbing, with bolts, rather than the single pitch clip ups someone (OK it was me) had been expecting. One classic route called La Siray involved a diagonal tyrolean abseil, impeccably set up by Mark, though Maggie did find herself unable to reach the ground at the far end.

There were a couple of free standing pinnacles, including one with a caving route and generally more fantastic lines than you could shake a stick at. Now where did I put my stick?.. Although we did come across a few grading anomalies.

En Vau is well supplied with traverse lines so we felt we just had to do one. The climbing was easy for the most part scrambling along bedding planes, which was just as well as the runner consisted of tied off rhododendrons, bolts being confined to the occasional harder part. As we enjoyed the worlds most exposed picnic half way along we met a German suicide squad coming the other way. The sole purpose of the rope seemed to be to ensure that if you fell off you didn't die alone. The vexing thing was they probably made the last boat out, whereas despite overlapping pitches and generally burning stealth rubber in a final cavalry charge we didn't.

Anxious to avoid the long sweaty walk out a second time we were on the narrow ledge leading to the landing in good time the next day. However we had reckoned without the French national sport of pushing in. A chap started to ferry his cool boxes, pushchair, etc past us. Fair enough we thought - ready to put on the boat without any delay. when he started trying to do the same with his family who were after all independently mobile we feigned ignorance and didn't get out of the way. In the end there was room for everyone and the last chopper out of Saigon tactics were unnecessary.

Next day who should be at the crag but monsieur le pushchair. "Do you mind if I go in front?" he asked. " I shall gallop up this" He was later observed hanging from the first bolt... And later still he threw his abseil ropes on top of Mark and Sue, who promptly tied the ends so they wouldn't pull through. After letting him sweat a while they threw the ends down.

This little unpleasantness aside we had a great time. The climbing here is superb, and its a good place for families with climbing direct off the beaches and towns well supplied with ice cream shops. Go there you wont be disappointed. It's also a good place for 15" pizzas, sprinkled with well'ard chilli oil.

One final quote from Mark sums the place up. "You could get into some serious trouble here, it's great isn't it?"

Cornwall - May 5-8

Three years ago I went on a meet. Just as I was getting bored with sitting in the appointed pub, writing the answers to my crossword small enough to fit the spaces, everyone else arrived. Both of them. I could have stayed. But only if I was prepared to go green and sprout bristly little hairs so I made some excuses and went home.

Happily, things have improved a bit since then. We have a well publicised meets programme, an assertive "Come on the meet or we'll make you cry" approach from leaders and more and more members who get there of they possibly can because they think that meets are largely what the club is for.

Thirty such members, assorted friends, offspring and pets crawled out of their tents at the Kelnack Camp Site near St. Just on the first morning of the Cornwall meet. It was early. It was too hot to stay in a tent. Our Treasurer crawled out of someone else's tent due to an inability to count the necessary number of poles to pitch his own. The Brady Bunch strolled over from their B&B, Jim only a little hung over from the homebrew the landlady had forced upon him the previous evening.

The colours and fragrances of the gorse, wild garlic, sea pinks and bluebells were glorious and the weather continued to be hot and sunny all weekend. Walkers covered long stretches of coastal path and returned glowing with the gobsmacking wondrousness of the scenery and in spite of several layers of factorlots cream. Climbers visited Sennan, Chair Ladder, Kednijack and Bosigran because they have something for everyone. There was a general heat-induced lethargy but everyone seemed happy with what they did.

Low tides were late in the afternoon so we made an evening visit to Fox's Promontory and enjoyed several middle-grade, single pitch routes. St Loy was recommended as being non-tidal (true), quiet (probably true until we arrived) and sheltered (God, it was hot). It was approached along a beautiful, sub-tropical valley via only a few wrong turns because we all knew better than to take the advice of the guidebook; VS should have been spelled with a capital E and a number.

Several people were tempted to join the basking shark in the navy blue sea below. Happily the shark was not harmed by the experience. And the expected team of conservationists failed to turn up to tow Steve out to sea in case he suffocated himself in the shallow water.

My own favourite route of the weekend was Terrier's Tooth at Chair Ladder. To add to its atmosphere, sea mist wafted in as we began and the foghorn started moaning. But that might have been Nick who had carelessly put his head in the path of a large plummeting hex. His injury paled into insignificance though when I discovered that my legs had suddenly become paralysed. What a relief to find the large piece of granite so kindly tucked into my sac by someone who must have thought that I might like to take it home, break it up and build a rockery.

So it was a very relaxed weekend. The cultural attractions (St. Ives Gift Shops Direct), extreme scenery, various crags, severe cream teas and St. Austell Ales were thoroughly enjoyed. Nick celebrated his birthday. Andy patriotically celebrated V.E. Day with Spam fritters for breakfast. But fortunately Zoe managed to find where Oliver had hidden everyone's car keys so we had no excuse not to go home.

It was great to see some people who have not managed to come along for ages. And we all got what we deserved, a good time in good company. Let's do it again soon.

Evening cycle ride - May 25

One Thursday evening in May saw 15 of us, of all ages (8 to 50 something) putting our best pedal forward and setting off over what can be best described as *mixed terrain*. By the time we reached the first pub, "The Cat", Enville a few running repairs seemed necessary, along with some topping up of essential body fluids. The team now split for the second leg to rejoin at "The Anchor", Caunsall. The last leg along the canal as darkness fell proved a typical finale to a Ceunant evening out.

It was nice to see a few of the now less regular faces on the scene again and many thanks to Bill Beddard for sorting out the route.

Tyn Lon - Extracts from the hut book

The following are extracts from some of the entries made in the log book kept at the hut during recent weeks.

Feb 18 - 21 - Mick and Tim Brighton on their weekend of retreats from *Amphitheatre Buttress and Milestone Buttress* encountering very poor conditions. Meanwhile Danny and Keith are on *The Sylvan Traverse Mod* and Sue and Mark make a fine snowy ascent of the *Trinity Face I / II*

Mar 18 - The start of a great Welsh winter weekend. Sue, Maggie, Keith, Andy, climb *Central Trinity I / II* and Adrian, Nick, and Tony ascend *Trinity Right Hand II / III*, and *Ladies Gully III* finishing in a hailstorm.

Mar 19 - Amy Millichope goes to the underground power station. Meanwhile, Adrian, Tony, Nick, Sue, Hazel, Paul G, Andy and Tim make a mass Ceunant ascent of *Parsley Fern Gully I*, with Ade and Tony branching off to do *Sinister Gully III*.

Mar 25 - Val, Bill, Roy, Barbara, Maggie, Clive and a "gang of dogs wander around telegraph poles" !

Apr 2 - Clive and Gordon got sunburnt on Carreg Wastad climbing *Ribstone Crack Vs 4c*, *Skylon HS*, *Trilon Vs 5a*, and "failing" on *Unicorn HVS 5b*. Meanwhile, James, Hilary, Joe, Bill, and Dennis scramble up Tryfan and the Bristly Ridge.

Apr 29 - May 1 - A "bostin" weekend for Danny and Keith starting in the slate quarries with *Bella Lugosi is Dead E1 5b*, *Biggles Flies Undone E1 5b*, *Gnat Attack E1 5c*, and *Massambula E2 5b* followed by *Cemetery Gates E1 5b* on Dinas Cromlech.

May 20 - Clive and Tony M climb *Sweep S 4a* at Craig Issalt and put up new route *Schwept S 4alb*.

May 27 - Joe and Kat walk across Moel Y Gest together with a "large hairy beast which tried to herd everything".

Jun 10 - Joe and Bill climb *Reign S, Congl VS 4c* at Craig Rhiw Goch noting an outdoor centre group "doing what comes unaturally".

Jun 16-18 - Danny and Keith climb *A Dream of White Horses HVS 4c* on Craig Gogarth twice after being held up for four hours (in an exposed position) on the first attempt by "a total knobber".

Jun 24 - Despite the queues Paul G and Tim climb *First Pinnacle Rib VD* and *Thompsons Chimney HS 4b* dodging falling rucksacs and followed by the traditional silliness in jumping Adam and Eve.

Jun 25 - Danny, Steve, and Nick tackle *Amphitheatre Buttress VD* on Craig Yr Ysfa with "thick heads and no energy".

Jul 29 - After dodging plummeting sheep and getting lost Gordon, Paul H, Val, and Dave Evans climb *Western Gully S* at Ysgolion Duon (the Black Ladders).

Jul 30 - Paul H, Val and Dave climb *Spectre HVS 5a* at Clogwyn Y Grochan cooling off in the river.

Aug 5 - Cogwyn Du'r Arddu - Val, Paul H, Adrian, and Keith climb *The Corner HVS 5a*, and *White Slab E1 5b*.

Aug 6 - Keith, Adrian and Mick climb *Lorraine Vs 4c*, Dins Mot who were apparently the only team

capable of choosing a chilly climb in the shade during the glorious weather.

Meanwhile, Tony, Roger, Sirch, Mick, and Graham Spen. spent the day climbing at Cym Silyn then swimming in the lake.

Aug 9/10 - *Piggots Climb VS 5a*, *Llithrig HVS 4c* whilst camping up at Clogwyn Du'r Arddu - Paul H and Trevor.

Aug 11 - Bill and Paul H traverse *The Black Belt HS4c*, all 645ft of it, at Craig Ddu.

Aug 21-24 - Suttys "trip down memory lane" and solo of numerous classic routes on Tryfan and Criag Yr Ysfa.

Aug 25 - Bill and Suttys climb *Comes the Dervish E3 5c* and are attacked by rock throwing sheep on *Petite Fleur HS 4b* at Craig Ddu.

Aug 26 - Graham Spenceley gets absolutely plastered and vows to drink Tomato juice only in future !

Aug 27 - Suttys and Adrian climb *The Strand E2 5b* at Gogarth and, on the following day *Lighthouse Arete VS 4b* with the "fine sight of Ade's fallen guidebook floating into oblivion on the ebb tide". Consequently they move on to Bus Stop quarry with Suttys leading *Scarlet Runner E4 5c*.

Sept 2 - Adrian and Andy on a slate extravanza Knotching up a total of 9 E points with Adrian leading *Sterling Silver E2 5c*, and *Scarlet Runner E4 5c*. Andy "butterfingers" Ring leads *Equinox VS 4c* cleanly and also *Massambula E2 5b* and promptly qualifies for the rope course in November by dropping his rope after untying at the top.

Borrowdale - May 26-29

This meet was not as successful as might have been hoped, it rained more or less all day for three days. Nevertheless people got out and did more than the usual gear shop, cafe, shop, pub scenario. It was gratifying too that such a large number of people were prepared to turn out despite the weather forecast being grim for the whole weekend.

Maggie, Fiona, Nick and the Brady Bunch went to a mouse shop, the rest walked up Grey Knott lured by the promise of a pile of stones marked on the map.

Angus got out on his new mountain bike. He came back covered in mud so obviously had a successful trip. Adrian Wilkinson and Declan got some climbing in on a suitably overhanging rock.

And to top it all off the National Trust were so pleased we could make it to their centenary celebrations they laid on a firework display for us.

Midsummer barbecue - June 17 / 18

Well attended by new and old members alike this meet met with the usual success. Allocation of space on the grill was superbly controlled by Andy Ring who on the promise of a bribe would allocate a good spot. A quick adjournment to the "Vaynol" was made following an attack of a black cloud of midges. The inevitable consequences of a visit to the pub then followed. The happiest "person" during the evening however was possibly Luke, who, not content with the occasional titbit, made one or two slick manouveres and snaffled the prime cut steak of an unsuspecting target. At one instance this resulted in the rapid consumption of Keith Willington's last and specially prepared brown roll. Good on yer Luke !

Canoeing Evening- July 20

After a scorching humid day what better than to go canoeing (& swimming) in the River Severn ! Twenty nine turned up for the canoeing together with a number of others who spent the evening in the Lion Inn. As in previous years the usual pitched battle with water pistols, garden sprayers, and buckets began immediately as the canoes were lowered into the water. Military like strategy then followed. This years award went to a four man canoe comprising Adrian, Tim, Paul, and Alison who managed to camouflage their canoe in reeds on a small island. Ahead of the pack they were then in an ideal position to surprise passing canoes by jumping in the water and promptly raiding unsuspecting canoes. The next few miles were a case of dodging the fisherman - Jan came close to punching one on the bracket ! Always be on your guard on this meet. Just when she thought it was safe, Azara was lured into a trap whilst walking up the bank leading from her canoe. She received a right good soaking from a full and final barrage of well aimed buckets.

A perfect end to the evening was spent in the Lion with our pre-arranged meals and well earned beers. Those with more sophisticated tastes tried a number of the home made wines available at the bar, with Elderflower seeming to be the most popular.

Thanks to Barbara and Val who looked after all the car keys.

News from the wall (May to August)

As you are aware The Rock Face in Birmingham is very popular with a number of members and increasingly is becoming a good place to meet prospective members. As is appreciated by those using the wall (and often criticised by others) the availability of frequent and bomb proof bolts generally enables a higher standard of leading than on the real stuff outdoors. However it is damn good fun and can help build strength and technique. It's exciting too, considering the height of the main leading walls (one of which is over 20 metres). For those who have not used the wall before there are two leading walls one of which has a more sustained overhang. In addition there are three areas dedicated to top rope problems with in situ ropes for your use, together with two bouldering areas. The centre caters for all abilities from Mod to E7. So there is definitely a route for you!

"Oh no not those fancy tights again !"

Setting the standard at the top end of the grades, as usual is Mark Helliwell, who, not content with frightening all the ladies with his fancy spray on lycra pants, can be regularly seen frightening everyone else by warming up on E4's. Trouble is Mark's warm up is usually followed by quick warm down on an E3, E2, E1 etc. Come on Mark - get your finger out - E5 6b is your target !

"Is that bloke with the grin stuck up there ?"

Mark's antics usually always frighten Danny O'Keefe who can regularly be seen hanging from a roof taking a breather and contemplating further punishment by having been made to second

Mark. Danny can otherwise be seen making good progress on grades up to E2 and has made a clean ascent of the strenuous white route at E2 5b on the new steep roof.

Star performer ?

A recent visit by Channel 4 to produce a pilot for a potential outdoor series clearly excited the club secretary Adrian Casey who, under the scrutiny of TV cameras and microphones performed admirably above his grade. How can you possibly ask for the rope to be taken in tight with all those people (and the nice ladies from Channel 4) watching ? Since then Adrian has made further progress which has included a clean ascent on a strenuous and demanding E4 6a (the infamous yellow route) on the main wall.

Diet of carrots

Paul Green, having led cleanly routes on the main wall at up to E1 5b has recently climbed a strenuous new blue route through the main roof graded at E1 5a. On other key routes Paul appears to suffer from random colour blindness under pressure and a yellow route can become a yellow, white, green and red route. A healthy pay out of rope from the belayer on each indiscretion together with a carrot appears to be solving the problem !

Tea breaks

Between traditionally lengthy tea breaks, during which the world is put right, that dynamic duo in the form of Julie Duggan and Fiona Macintosh can be regularly seen providing first class entertainment on difficult problems particularly on the top rope wall. Julie and Fiona's recent successes include a number of E1 and E2's.

"My legs are too long"

Yes, this was the feeble excuse given by Tim (lanky) Slater following a number of embarrassing moments in negotiating the overhang on the main wall. Tim can also regularly be seen cheating by harnessing that annoying ability to reach holds out of bounds for the rest of us. His favourite routes regularly employ what appear to be sexually self gratifying wide (and painful) bridging manouveres and accordingly he has made good progress on an E2 5c bridging route in the centre of the main wall.

Route setter

New provisional member *Kevin Hill* recently cruised an E3 6b route on the main wall wearing a pair of jeans, stout walking boots and under the influence of a nasty hangover !! He acts (when not at university) as a part time route setter at the wall. Kevin comfortably climbs at E5 and has cleanly led routes at E6 recently. Watch this space !

Join us !

Clearly, a lot goes on at the Rock Face particularly during bad weather or a weekday evening. Other members who now regularly use the wall include that converted new rockjock Bill Beddard, along with John Pettett, Hazel Preece, Keith Willington, Sue Traynor, Paul & Val Hennelly, Joe Brennan and recently Graham Spenceley, and numerous other members who occasionally use the wall. Wednesday night, before the Queens is very popular. If you are interested please come along. If you need a partner contact any of the above

Dolomites - July 15 - August 6

Account no. 1 - Summer alpine meets never were big on the agenda in the Ceunant social events calendar; in fact they don't usually happen - at least on a grand scale. For sure lots of us go abroad, but not necessarily at the same time or to the same place; in fact as a club we're quite skilled at avoiding each other sometimes! So this summer we did quite well when twelve of us met up for 3 weeks in the Dolomites. For most of us the Dolomites were a new experience and the long drive (750 miles from Ostend to Canazai) was well worth it. The computer printed detailed route description with accompanying map sections helped us all navigate our way without mishap and the return journey was quite easy by retracing the helpful oil slick left by John's otherwise stunning TR4A.

The Dolomites, as we were to discover, were just as the guidebooks said, absolutely stunning; the rock scenery dramatic, towering pinnacles and faces everywhere. The scale of things was often very difficult to judge. Sometimes it would take a while to realise that the face you were looking at had got climbers on it - those little white dots that slowly moved. Time allowances for routes were not to be underestimated but we regularly did, a matter of some concern when afternoon thunderstorms were a regular feature in these parts!

Base camp for the duration of our expedition was a spotlessly clean site in the village of Campitello, the originally intended site in Canazei two miles down the road being a little below expectations. As we all arrived on different days, camp Ceunant gradually spread itself out with its empty wine bottles and home spun deck chairs to form "the British sector", complete with generously provided "Happy 40th" balloons etc all around my tent. Needless to say it didn't take too long to upset the harmony of things - "English, Quiet!" Oh, how grateful they must have been when we went off on overnight forays into the hills.

Time spent in and around the camp site on rest days was thoroughly enjoyable. The weather was baking hot every day and it didn't take long to find the best ice cream parlour in Italy, the home made cheese shop, the "Rosticheria" take out and Heidi's Spaghetteria and bar where many sociable evenings were spent. Strong emphasis on holiday mode here!

Our camp site was splendidly situated for quick and easy access to the Sella, Catinaccio, Sassalungo and Marmalada groups, providing us with a most excellent tick list of 3 star classic climbs, walks and via ferrata's. Some of these, especially those in the Sella pass, were day out cragging venues, although early starts are advisable especially on harder routes. Time flies when you're having fun on a 14 pitch route!

Other classics were tackled from enjoyable overnight stays at Refugios. Everyone enjoyed these outings, walking up to them was a piece of duff on well-trodden and waymarked paths. A far cry from all the toil and sweat normally associated with alpine huts - such a relaxed atmosphere and no 2am alpine starts!

Even the easier graded routes provided high levels of verticality and exposure, but fortunately protection is excellent and trade routes are well pegged. A good example of this was the "Torre de logo" on the Vajolet Towers in the Catinaccio, one of the most famous and celebrated climbs in the whole of the Dolomites (and only a 15 minute walk from the Alberto hut in stickies and harness). Team Ceunant's mass ascent gave it ten out of ten for stunning exposure, good stances, good pegs, easy climbing and permanent abseil anchors to whiz you back to your starting point, a short stroll and refreshments at the refugio. A bad example of this was to be found the next day on the north face of the Punta Emma where I had time to contemplate the verticality, exposure, lack of gear and difficulty of climbing during my 40 foot pendulum fall from the final roof, as the rock came away in my hands. Helmets are good here. Other highlights included the amazing via ferratas that most of the party got stuck into. These fantastic old preserved and renovated iron ladderways were wartime pathways and now provide great sport that even Indiana Jones would be proud of, taking you up to the most improbable places with relative ease. The Marmalada, highest summit in the Dolomites, has such a route up its east ridge and received a club mass ascent, albeit staggered on different days. Crampons and axes were used for the glacier approach. A great day out.

I was particularly pleased to round off the holiday by achieving an ambition of mine to climb the north face of Cime Grande via the Comici route with Sue. The amount of pegs on this route actually make it a safer proposition and easier of route finding than many of the easier routes and thus it was pure enjoyment (my little 40th celebration!)

All in all, a productive, varied and enjoyable trip for all - we really should go again sometime!

Account no. 2 - Buongiorno Italia !

Tuesday 19 August - 9.30 pm Sella Pass - almost. Its nearly but not quite dark. An enormous pink jelly looms over the black rim of the valley. *Me*: "What's that then ? Sella Towers ? Sassalungo ?" *Mark*: "Oh wow ! That's beautiful ! Look at the sunset on that rock! Where's my camera?" *Me*: "Mmm nice. Are we nearly there yet?"

9.45 pm The campsite, Canazei. *La Signorina*:: "Ah, Eengleesh? Your friends, they were here. Now they are gone. To campitello." Deep foreboding overtakes me. I remember the Calanques meet, half the party waiting fretfully in la Ciolat and the rest in come other town for no better reason than because its name also began with a C. Once again, we seem to be in no danger of meeting the rest of the meet. But no...

10.00 pm The campsite, Campitello. *Joe*: "Orright chief" *Jim*: "You missed your birthday party. We had it yesterday." *Maggie*: "We saved some balloons but there's no booze left." *Julie*: "Here's your Happy Fortieth banner. You missed a great do." *Mark*: "But my birthday's today." *Jim*: "That's very inconsiderate of you." *Mark*: "Give me 5 minutes to pitch the tent, pave the patio, install the kitchen, fit the carpet, assemble the dining room suite, hag the curtains, wire up the lights and I'll join you in the bar. I need a flat bit, where's my spirit level?"

12.00 pm Heidi's Spaghetteria & Bar. Heidi looks across at her only customers, the Ceunant, at a table covered with empty glasses and muses to herself that her biceps will be like Sly Stallone's if we call regularly.

2.00 The campsite. *Mark*: "Champagne, a cake with candles, it must be my birthday. Where's my second helping?"

Wednesday 20 August - After the sun has been up for three minutes, it's too hot to stay in a tent without going crisp. The early arrivals relate their adventures so far over breakfast. Maggie and Julie, the Ceunant Hard Women's Team, have an impressive collection of round purple bruises having been peppered with hailstones in a thunderstorm on their way down from their route a couple of days before. Julie enthuses about via ferrata but advises soloing the route on rock instead of clinging to steel cables if lightening threatens. Plummet into the void of go pop like a fly in a chip shop? What am I letting myself in for? I need a lie down. But perhaps we'll go to look at something later.

The Ceunant had a close look at as many Dolomites as possible over the following two and a half weeks. Those beautifully dramatic complicated white limestone spires and pinnacles were climbed by means of rock routes and via ferrata. The Sella, the Sassolungo, Catinaccio, Pia Ciavazes, the Marmolada and The Cima were all visited amongst others. At between 2000m and 3000m with loose, well weathered rock and a habit of glittering in the sun one minute and brewing up a thunderstorm the next, these are serious mountains. But it took a conscious effort to remember this sometimes.

Routes are easily reached by various means. It's often possible to drive to a surprisingly high point, especially if, like me, you are not familiar with the Italian for "Cars Forbidden Past This Point". Walks through the glorious colour of alpine meadows are easy and travelling by Italian telepheriques, survival is even easier. There are lots of Refugios all of which are almost as good as Tyn Lon would be if someone else did the cooking. Except at weekends, it is not really necessary to book in advance but it is easy to do so by phone. The Hard Women's Team preferred to after a night in a cage on a landing though. A night in a bivouac shelter would enable the very keen to wake up even closer to the start of a route. These bright red, lightening-proof boxes are held down with cables and reveal, Tardis-like, bunks, blankets, benches and a table in a space the size of an airing cupboard.

Whilst the generally lovely weather and the accessibility of the climbing made it difficult to switch out of a cragging mentality, it soon dawned that "guide book times" should be multiplied by a factor of at least 2 by ordinary mortals like me. These are big, big, routes. Nine hours for eighteen pitches seemed usual. The routefinding is not straightforward either. Naturally, these are mountains not crags. The wiggly lines of the greying photos in the English guides are accurate only insofar as they are usually shown on the right mountain. After that they give only a vague general direction. Local guidebooks are more accurate with cleared topos and they are easily translated with an Italian dictionary in one hand. This leaves no hands free for climbing but it is well worth doing beforehand.

Traverse paths and descent routes tend to be adventures and in my limited experience are best negotiated in daylight. The advice to take more water than you think you'll need is to be disregarded only if you might eat your "last resort" goodies like marzipan 4 hours after your last drink and 6 hours before your next. I didn't particularly.

Especially memorable bits of climbing for me included a traverse on Pia Ciavazes. How ingenious of Micheluzzi to prolong this lovely climbing by going sideways for 90 metres. Joe provided the best description of the arete on Torre de Lago: "Pinch grip the S.W. end of the mountain and climb it." That says it all really except that you can see a very small scale relief map of the valley beneath your heels as you do so. The Cima Grande proved to be as good a place as any to try out a bit of this aid climbing I'd heard about. And it was a good while descending to take the time to appreciate how friendly stars can look as they peek through clearing thunderclouds and how intensely pink the dawn can be from the vantage point of a ledge the size of my mantlepiece.

I think it is very sad to travel to somewhere far flung and interesting just to climb its mountains which must after all be similar everywhere; rocky, high and pretty to look at. Dolomites are different though. It was a revelation to me that a Dolomite can be climbed from its bottom to its top. That's climbing as in using hand and footholds, ropes, pegs and bits of gear. Not as in plodding interminably upward in a character-forming red mist of pain which is what I'm used to. So I was very happy to spend most of the time climbing even though this was my first trip to Italy.

Even so, I was not completely oblivious to the Tyrolean flavour of the area. I noticed that it was easier to communicate in German than English or in Italian for that matter. The food was good in a universally pasta-and-pizza way with some local exceptions; the ice cream parlour and the cheese shop being examples. But my closest encounters with Italian culture were Pavarotti on the car stereo and a compelling cable TV game show in which female judges drowned male contestants they didn't fancy in a swimming pool until there was only one left. He was the winner but I forget that he won because we were watching in Heidi's and by now the table was covered once again with empty glasses. Evidently, the Italians have some interesting attitudes to life which deserve closer study than I was able to manage on such a short trip. So I shall be going back, and for Longer. And there's a lot more rock to look at too...

Isle of Lundy - August 12 - 19

The club's fourth trip in five years - now becoming an annual event and already booked for next year. This venue is something special in UK climbing, the season is short and the climbing is spectacular. The solitude of an island retreat with simple but good accommodation and the good communal atmosphere usually found on Lundy combine to make this a unique experience.

Fourteen of us braved the high seas from Bideford on the "M.S. Oldenburg", a crossing of some 2½ hours depending on the weather which fortunately was excellent. The sea was calm, the sun shone brightly and it was baking hot for the week. In fact it really was too hot to climb on some afternoons and so a leisurely 1 or 2 climbs per day became the norm. But not just any old routes though!

We were quite a mixed bunch of varying abilities and climbs tackled ranged from severe to E5 and even a first ascent on our last day. As to be expected from sea cliff climbing, abseil rigging skills became honed to perfection by the end of the trip and as usual people were just starting to know their way round by the end of the week as the boat loomed near.

Simple pleasures like meeting up at the end of the day back at the "Quarters" to excitedly compare notes on the day's events, while someone gets that huge kettle on; laughing at others' exploits or misfortunes before strolling down to the tavern for a few beers and planning the next day's routes when we all know it's the beer talking and that the real plans are made hurriedly over breakfast the next morning, hoping others forget last night's brave words!

Sue and Danny on the Friday: (after big plans to do "The Ocean" E1 5b - at 420 feet, the longest route on the island and requiring a touch of cleaning and a very long ab):

8.30am "That's everything then; Big Black Rope, Another rope, climbing ropes, more rope, 28 slings, 2 racks, coffee, sarnies, wire brush, trowel defoliant, headtorch.....". "Let's go then."

10.30am "We don't deserve to be that frightened on our holidays."

10.31am "Let's do Albion then."

Nick on "Fear of Faust" (an E1 slab route of some delicacy and boldness);

"Miles above a small RP, gibbering like a good'un. Suddenly a white bearded old man in a blue hooded cape appears, "Use the force Luke, trust your boots". Suddenly everything is OK.

May the Force be with you."

Other matters

40th Anniversary Celebrations

The general consensus is that this should be held in Wales and be in addition to the annual general meeting. Clearly a fifties theme is appropriate in line with the formation of the club. There would appear to be favour towards a picnic / barbeque with the venue at the summit of Snowdon or the Glyders or in the Gwynant Valley. It is anticipated that a caterer can do a barbeque plus a variety of salads with pudding to follow for around £6 per head. A sit down dinner in a marquee in the garden has met with limited enthusiasm, possibly due to a feeling that the club cannot support two dinners. Having discussed with caterers the garden is large enough to seat 100 at a cost of £152 plus VAT, and dinners can be provided at around £12 per head plus a paying bar. Most caterers would be happy for us to provide our own bar. In such circumstances cars would have to be parked in the public car park up the road but this would be the case with any function in the garden.

It is also suggested that there could be a host of other activities such as • Anniversary T shirt - "Still Naughty at Forty"
• Get the Post and Mail involved • Reprint of old magazines • A special tankard

We would like to try and finalise arrangements as soon as possible however if you have any specific requests, ideas or observations on the above please contact **Nick Oldfield**.

Outdoor meets

Following an excellent summer the outdoor meets list for 1995 is now sadly drawing to a close. **Mark Hellewell** would welcome any suggestions for next years selection, so if you have something specific in mind please contact him. The following outdoor meets are scheduled:

<i>October 7-8</i>	North Pembroke, St. Davids Camping at the same spot as last year (when 30 people turned up !) Site: "Glan y Mor" (St. Davids dive centre). This is 5 mins walk from the Farmers Arms, an excellent spot in St. Davids. The climbing is sheltered and tends to get good weather at this time of year. More details to follow.
<i>November 3-5</i>	Tyn-Lon bonfire party
<i>November 24-26</i>	A weekend at Avon Gorge. Details to follow.
<i>March 4-8</i>	CIC hut

CIC hut

The club has secured a booking at the CIC hut for March 4 to 8 inclusive. Despite poor weather last year we had a good crack. This year we are going two weeks later so conditions should be perfect. To book your place contact **Nick Oldfield**. Cost is £25 for the five nights. Cheques should be made payable to "Ceunant Mountaineering Club".

Also dont forget you can turn yourself into a way honed ice cat on Tony Millichope's indoor ice meet in early January.

Magazine

The magazine is due out shortly. As you will appreciate it is now some time since the last magazine, and the impending one contains articles largely pre 1995. Consequently, James Walker would be grateful for your ideas on articles for the next magazine. In view of the 40th anniversary James is likely to be working towards publishing the next magazine by the date of the celebrations. Please would you therefore put pen to paper as soon as possible and forward articles directly to James.

List of shame

The following are currently in arrears in respect of their 1995 subscriptions. In the words of "Sinitta. " Shame, shame, shame, shame on you". So if your name is on this list do the decent thing and send your subs now !

John Bartlam, Keith Earnshaw, Jim & Jane Fairey, Derrick Grimmit, John Hart, Patrick Keeley, Gary Macauley, Pete & Sandy Meese, Tony Robins, Tony Tohill, Chris Wilkinson.

This will be the last newsletter you receive if outstanding subscriptions are not paid. Outstanding subs should be paid to Nick Oldfield, 2 Milford Avenue, Balsall Heath, Birmingham, B12 8UZ. The 1995 rates are: £18 joint, £12 single, £6 students / unemployed. Cheques should be made payable to the "*Ceunant Mountaineering Club*".

Reciprocal rights

For those of you going to the Alps, don't forget to take your Ceunant Membership card with you. Production of your card can sometimes obtain reduced rates at Alpine huts. It certainly worked last year at French C.A.F. huts in the Mt. Blanc area but we don't know if it is accepted in Italy or Switzerland. You're unlikely to get a club discount in Chamonix climbing shops (we haven't actually tried it) but it could save you buying the official B.M.C. reciprocal rights card.

Hut bookings

The following hut bookings have been made:

<i>October 15/16</i>	Work meet
<i>October 20/21</i>	London MC
<i>October 22/23</i>	J Stuffin
<i>November 11</i>	Ropework course
<i>November 18</i>	Goats MC
<i>November 24/25</i>	Shell Island Sailing Club
<i>January 26/27</i>	Logica Mountaineering Club
<i>February 17/18</i>	Capermontis MC
<i>March 22-25</i>	Solihull MC