

X ABA MOUNTAINEERING CLUB NEWSLETTER SPRING 1998

CLUB NEWS

Greetings to you all. This newsletter is just that, a newsletter containing snippets of news passed to me over the past year or so, and contains no tedious articles of what people have done on recent holidays.

Finances We appear to have just about enough in the coffers at present and have paid Gwilym the full £1000 rent. Thanks to all who have paid their subs. To those of you who who haven't, we do need your money because we have no reserve with which to carry out maintenance. The hut will slump into disrepair and you'll end up camping, and it's cold and wet out there. Thanks also to those of you who have paid **hut fees for guests**. Do keep them coming as they do make a big difference to our finances.

Reminder:

£25 p.a. for full members

£10 p.a. for associate members
(no key)

Guest fees £2 per person per night.

Send all monies either to Tim Sparrow or Ian Owen, cheques payable to X ABA M.C.

Welcome to new member;
Aldous Everard, brother of Toby

E-mail addresses; Send your address to:

Tspadge@btinternet.com for inclusion on the club list

Dinner Meet 1997

Last year's dinner was something of a record, 52 diners sat down to the usual vast repast, followed by dubious entertainment provided by those still sober enough to stand up and speak without dribbling. I shan't follow up one notable complaint that there was 'too much food' unless you want to go back to Cobdens. They also charge more for less, a fine example of modern business.

This year's dinner is on the **5th December** again at the **Royal Oak Hotel** in Betws-y-Coed

Other dates for your diary are **Working Weekend** on **23rd -25th May** (i.e. Whit w/e) Break the habit of a life-time and turn up, but come armed with paint brush, hammer, nail and cordless drill, but don't forget your sense of humour. Neither Smeglette nor Chris Dainton will be there this year so that might encourage a few new faces! Jobs that need attacking this year are the perennial painting, some restorative work on the annexe after a sheep became mysteriously trapped there for a very messy spell and an exhumation of the path to the hut which is a task for someone with a penchant for mole worrying.

People

Owen Burt has been reproducing (was that wise?) and has now moved all the way from Llangadog to Llanwrda, making the trip to the hut 10 miles less. For those of you who don't know Owen he was Paul Revell's #2 rag man during those heady years when one Aber Hall could collect more than most universities. He provided such wonders as the 'Erectometer', charting the progress of fundraising from flaccid zero to a full on stiff £100 000 or more!

Alistair Boyd has also been reproducing with the aid of his wife Jude, and young Alexander William is now with us, reputedly having long arms and legs and a penchant for racing Morris Minors. Congratulations to you both. A notable wag commented that Boyd Junior was in fact named after Al's dog! (What finer compliment could a young man be paid?)

Chris Clark also hopes to be on the move, this one is really upping sticks....next door! 'Gnome' sends me a juicy piece from the Sheffield Telegraph which ran a piece on him and I quote '*Chris...ranks the excitement and satisfaction of a perfectly executed performance on a par with skiing, snowboarding and fast car driving*'. I think it was referring to canoeing a rapid but could equally refer to anything involving foam, deep holes,

People news.....

haystacks, neoprene, and getting his blades wet. He is less likely to be seen paddling these days having caught the 4 WD bug and churns up the local countryside in the frustrated hope that he might get stuck and have to get the jack out. Last summer he went to Iceland on a paddling and 4-WD cruise with brother **Paul** and **Toby Everard**. They also paddled in Costa Rica in the summer of '96, avoiding crocodiles, paddling rivers that went through swimming pools (due to the effects of a recent hurricane) and sometimes avoiding fallen trees. Which brings me neatly onto **Toby** who has recently returned to Wales from Scotland, having whittled, and coppiced all the available woodland there and needs some more to keep him happy.

Chris Dainton has just embarked on a 2 month 'cragging and shagging' trip to the States. He has also just started a new job based in Cardiff, though still living and working mostly from home. How he has managed to wangle a deal like that defies imagination, but he has had to face the awful reality of a Daewoo company car. This man used to own a TVR, and drip testosterone from his ears! Gnome also reports that he had his hair peroxided just before leaving for the States. I can't wait to see the roots.

Bill Dean our venerable ex-president/dictator sent me vast reams of news of his family and activities over the past year. His family obviously didn't see much of him and it also seems there is money in stamps judging by his playtime activities.

1997 saw him skiing twice, a trip to Yosemite and two trips to Scotland. He especially rates La Grave (near Briancon) for skiing; 1 lift and no runs! However, 7000ft of off piste descent should do most people. In Yosemite he went up Half Dome in a thunderstorm before embarking on an epic solo drive through the Sierra Nevada and Death Valley to Las Vegas and on to San Francisco. The thought of our Bill taking a walk down the 'strip' of Las Vegas with all those big flashing lights and buildings and Casinos and rude womenand he managed to get a luxury room for \$29 and breakfast for \$2!. He knows when and where to flash his wallet!

Rod Eddies married last year, a sumptuous celebration of which the highlights were Ros (his wife) falling over when leading the dancing and later spending the first hours of her 'nuptials' being violently ill. Someone told her it was impossible to get drunk at your own wedding! Rod has started up his own geophysical company which appears to be a booming success. He recently appeared on the National News after having found the extension to Poole's Cavern in Buxton after a week's work, something that previous 'experts' had failed to do after 30 years! He is bouldering in Fontainebleau as I write

Phil England is yet another reproducer and is now father to two; Cai and Ceri. He has also moved to a country residence

near Llandeilo. Family duties and work have prevented much activity on the outdoor front though he has been out on the bike and in the canoe occasionally. It is good to report that he appears to be restored to good health once more though he doesn't fill his Ron Hills quite like he used to.

Paul Fox has taken early retirement from the legal business (Birmingham breathes a huge sigh of relief) and has started employment as an airline pilot. Rumours that Aeroflot were the only company willing to take him on are unjustifiably untrue.

Ant Jones is back in Europe, living very near Fontainebleau and is still searching the skies for space dust and Clanger faeces. He recently joined up with Geoff Thomas and Tim Sparrow for a week of ice climbing and skiing at La Grave and proved amongst other things that aging and hair loss are not connected!

Ian Jones (Smeglette) has left our shores for what may be an extensive spell in Ecuador, in search of volcanoes and love. He must have meant it because not only did he leave his mountain bike behind but also sent all and sundry emotional e-mails about how we wouldn't see him again. Working w/e is a viable option this year! (What about next year?)

Alex Langdon has moved from her country res. to Wilmslow and seems busy making housey housey. Is she nesting?

Tim Lewis has been continuing research into cetaceans by spending long spells on a storm tossed North Atlantic listening to things that whistle and click in the night. A diet of krill and squid would give me indigestion too! He foolishly attempted the

Longmynd Hike (50 miles) last year but completed it against his better judgement.

Pete Oliphant is yet another to catch the infectious bug of parenthood. Isn't there something available in modern medicine to combat this frightful disease?

Helen Osborne appears to be back into walking mode again. Geoff is being dragged screaming up boggy hills in this latest surge of enthusiasm and is scared of sinking into a peat bog and being lost forever due to his small feet.

Ian Owen (Stumpy) lives the life of a recluse near Builth Wells or Devon at weekends and has not been seen near a cliff in Wales for many moons. The beating drums tell me that Ian has just been appointed to Head of Maths at Presteigne.

Tim Pakenham (Blutes) is also busy fathering young girls and doing a fine job of it too. He hopes to bring them to the hut soon to play with all those little currants on the grass!

Isn't it about time that **Family Weekend** was restored, when all these reproducers can take their offspring to the hut without fear of having to sleep with ne'er-do-wells like Clark, Fox and Dean? For those of you who don't remember this w/e is set so that families and their wellbeing have priority. Others may use the hut but must expect to give way to families, not keep them awake with loud whisky stories and song and expect to put up with early morning risers and the smell of dirty pants! Parents can meet and discuss feeding techniques, reminisce about how they used to go out climbing and compare their ever expanding midribs whilst keeping their own wee'uns awake as they give the whisky bottle a good caning! How about **July 25th-26th**?

Paul Revell is yet another one who may find the above useful,

being father to Dylan and another as yet unborn..... He has visited the hut with them both, and will return.....

Tim Sparrow(ah, me!) had a good year, finally getting up Khan Tengri in the Tien Shan, reaching the top in some rather inclement weather (one of those moments when you have to tell yourself that you don't do it for the view and that your nose and toes are still there). The club altitude record stands at 6995m and is waiting for someone to knock me off my smug pedestal.

Plenty of cragging, paddling and mountain biking has also been enjoyed. Together with **Geoff Thomas** I am going to the Caucasus this coming summer and eagerly anticipating the South Wales Sandstone season, bolted gritstone in gluesniffer's surroundings. A real delight and antidote to the long evenings spent at the new monster roof climbing wall near Merthyr.

That's all the people news I have at present. I am sure there must be loads more but either you haven't told me it or more likely you have and I have forgotten it. Sorry!

Other bits

Anyone got any old **teapots** or **large kettles**? The ones in the hut have become pretty foul and could do with replacing. None of them have lids either.

Water. We have been turning the water on and off at the hidden tap behind Gwilym's house. Gwilym didn't realize we had an isolating tap at the hut. **Would all hut users please turn the water on and off at the start and end of their stay using this tap.**

It is located under the window that faces Gwilym's house, under the big stone and iron plate.

New users of the hut will soon find a file there containing useful bits of info regarding use of the hut. Please read it!

Log Book: It is obvious that some people stay at the hut but don't record their visit in the log book. Either they don't realise it is there (unlikely), they are very secretive or modest about their activities, or they shouldn't be there and don't want others to know.

Please at least record your visit in the book so we have an idea of how much use the hut is getting. If people are staying who shouldn't then keys are being misused which is a shame as we replaced the lock recently for that reason. Please keep your key undereerrlock and key? Don't let it out to people.

Extra Extra Extra

Ed Brown (of classic boulder problem in Yorkshire fame) is now working on the rigs as an MWD Engineer for Halliburton Geodata. He will have to move to Aberdeen for this and is set to be reincarnated as an ice climber. He recently did Positron at Gogarth, a 5pm start resulting in a 12pm arrival back at the hut!

Phil Tarplee was also spotted recently outside the Snowdon Cafe in Capel. This wasn't a difficult task as the sun was briefly eclipsed as his gargantuan bulk did a 3 point turn in the car park and a police *Wide Load* convoy escorted him up the path to the cafe. Despite all this he reported that he has been very active on the skiing front but is seeking resorts with wider pistes!