

The **Cumant** Mountaineering ULub



DECEMBER, 1961.

NEWS LETTER

E D I T O R I A L

The festive season is upon us once more, and with it the hope of some good winter conditions on which to practise our snow and ice techniques. Looking back over the year, the weather has not been all that could have been desired; but nevertheless, people have gone on climbing and enjoying mountains, for the satisfaction which a mountain lover derives from following his chosen pastime cannot be dampened by the mere vagaries of an English summer.

The compliments of the season, then, to all members and to mountaineers in general, and our best wishes for the safe and successful continuation of your sport throughout the coming year.

- - - - -

When one thinks of mountaineering, the mind conjures up visions of the open air, towering cloud topped peaks, challenging rock faces, the companionship of a few chosen friends, and the sound of the wind in the gullies and rushing streams. 'Escape to the Hills' has been the title of more than one treatise on mountaineering, and in one sense that is what mountaineering is - an escape from the rush, smell and noise of everyday city life.

It is distressing, therefore, to note that the noise of everyday life is beginning to follow us into our mountain fastnesses, by way of the portable radio set. In recent months these wretched things have been heard blaring from rucksacs and anorak pockets in increasing numbers. The owners are usually quite happy to leave them on all day long; the reproduction is frequently atrocious, with the music coming out as a high pitched squeaky blare; and the net effect is that one person can make life a misery for everyone who is unfortunate enough to be in earshot.

Have the days gone when intelligent conversation and self made entertainment were all that were required in mountaineering circles? When we pause in our ascent to

PAGE THREE

stare at the majesty of nature about us, are we now doomed to have the silence shattered by the hysterical warblings of the latest crooning prodigy?

It is probable that as a background to atomic power stations, pump storage schemes, power lines, and all the other atrocities which modern society tries to inflict on its national mountain heritage, all this noise may seem to fit in. But while there are still some values left, how about leaving canned music to the juke box addicts, and leave the hills in peace?

Unless otherwise indicated, all opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the Editor and are not necessarily endorsed by the Committee.

Publications Editor - I.D. Corbett
420 Shirley Road
Birmingham 27.

CLUB NEWS

PEN CEUNANT - Report of extraordinary general meeting held 27th September 1961.

The Club's sub-tenancy of Pen Ceunant terminated on 12th November 1961, and this meeting was called to acquaint members with the facts and to ask for their comments.

The position, as outlined in a memorandum accompanying the notice convening the meeting, was as follows.

The Club had been offered a lease of the cottage, and the Committee had considered very carefully whether it would be in the Club's interests to take this lease on the terms offered. They came to the conclusion, with regret, that it would not be advisable, for the following reasons:-

1. Club members rarely used the cottage.

PAGE FOUR

2. Regular outside bookings would be needed to make it an economic proposition, and in order to obtain such bookings considerable expense and work would be necessary to make the cottage attractive.
3. The repair covenants of the lease called for continuous maintenance, and apart from the expense, the Committee felt that with much work still to be done at Tyn Lon support for working parties would be difficult to obtain.

The Chairman opened the meeting and asked for questions or comment. Ron Close asked whether it was known if road widening was likely to jeopardise Tyn Lon. The Chairman replied that a thorough search had been carried out when the property was purchased, and no indication had been found of road widening plans in the vicinity of Tyn Lon.

As there were no further questions, the Chairman put the proposal to the meeting "That the Club does not take on a lease of Pen Ceunant when the sub-tenancy ends on 12th November 1961". This proposal was carried unanimously.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

- - - - -

Important dates

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the Cambridge P.H. on Wednesday 14th February 1962 at 7.00 pm.

The Annual Dinner will be held at the Dolbadarn Hotel, Llanberis, on 10th March 1962.

Subscriptions

After considering the state of the Club's finances, the Committee feel that an increase in the annual subscription is desirable.

PAGE FIVE

To avoid calling a special general meeting, it has been decided to deal with this matter at the A.G.M. As a result, for 1962 only the rule that the annual subscription must be paid by January 31st and that only paid-up members may vote at the A.G.M. will be waived. To avoid this complication in future, the Committee will propose an amendment to the Constitution which would give the Committee powers to alter the annual subscription from time to time without reference to a general meeting.

The proposed new subscription rates are:

Normal membership	£1. 1. 0. per annum
Joint membership	£1.11. 6. per annum
Entrance Fee	10. 0.

Indoor Meets

Members are asked to note that the first Wednesday of each month is usually a lecture or film show evening, and that the starting time on these occasions is 8.00 pm.

During recent months lectures have been starting with only a handful of members present and finishing with a packed house, the latecomers having crept into the room in a steady stream throughout the talk.

These goings on are bound to disturb the speaker and the audience, and in one instance a very interesting talk, having started late due to poor attendance, had to be cut short because closing time arrived before all the questions had been dealt with.

It is appreciated that some members attend evening classes and cannot arrive early; but we feel that in the majority of cases members just do not remember that a lecture is being held, and that with a little more effort on everyone's part the lectures could get off to a prompt start with a reasonably full attendance.

Letting of Tyn Lon to visiting clubs

It has been decided that Tyn Lon should be let fully to visiting clubs on weekends when the Ceunant Club has a weekend meet elsewhere. This will mean that the hut will not normally be available to members when there is an outside booking, so you are advised to look at the booking list on the notice board.

Members are reminded that they should at all times inform the Hut Warden, John Urwin, 79 Bells Lane, Kings Norton, 30, when they wish to use Tyn Lon.

Mountain Rescue Film

A letter has been received from Harold Restall thanking the Club for the donation of 30/- sent to the Mountain Rescue Committee following the showing of the film in July.

PEN CEUNANT

by Alan & Jean Green

As two of an apparently diminishing number of members who enjoyed weekends at Pen Ceunant, we cannot let its passing go unlamented.

Members now take it for granted that we should have a base in Snowdonia, but the acquisition of Pen Ceunant in 1955 represented a great advance over borrowed huts, youth hostels and inadequate camping equipment. The Club was then the Birmingham & District Group of the Mountaineering Association, and shortly after they took over Pen Ceunant the group broke away from the M.A. and became an independent club. A new name was needed and it seemed appropriate to take the name of the hut. Although very few can pronounce it correctly, the club has flourished well enough as "The Coynant".

Pen Ceunant lacked some of the mod.cons. of Tyn Lon, but it was in some respects the more attractive cottage. Its high position gave fine views of the hills and the

PAGE SEVEN

lake (particularly when the morning wash bowls were lined up on the slabs outside the back door!), and in the days when coaches were used for meets, it was quite a pleasure to plod up the hill on a starlit night, with the sound of the river a welcome change from urban noises. As the cottage was small and compact, and had a fire with an excellent draw in the common room, it was soon made welcoming, although when the Tilley meths had run out or water had to be fetched in the pouring rain, there was the odd moan.

Members will have their own favourite memories of the hut, and one of ours concerns the disposal of rubbish. Lacking a bin, most of our refuse at one time went into the river. One Sunday morning one of our larger members attempting to dispose of a sack of rusty cans was a little wild in his aim. The cans came to rest at the water's edge, at the foot of a steep and greasy slab. With some misgivings he was given a top rope of a moth-eaten length of hemp which was lying around, and descended and returned safely enough. Later in the day the rope was rigged up as a clothes line and a pair of socks hung thereon. It broke.

We shall not forget Pen Ceunant, nor the people whose work and enthusiasm made possible the many good meets we had there.

HUT RULES

The following rules, applicable to the use of Tyn Lon, have been drawn up by the Committee, and parties using the cottage are collectively responsible for seeing that they are adhered to.

1. Before leaving the hut at the end of your visit:
Make sure the following are turned off :-
Water (tap beneath window on pavement)
Calor Gas
Electricity

PAGE EIGHT

Burn as much rubbish as possible: and put all tins in the dustbin.

Remove all bottles and perishable food from the hut (note this does not mean deposit same in the garden)

Flush toilet twice, after turning off drain taps.

Lock up all round and close all windows.

2. During the weekend:

Check that there is sufficient coal, calor gas (use the rear cylinder), washing-up materials, Harpic, toilet paper etc., for the following week-end.

Local suppliers are:

Coal - Co-op, Llanberis

Calor Gas - Snowdon Garage

Everything else - Birmingham House, Llanberis, or the local shop at Nant Peris.

The club has credit accounts with all except the Nant Peris shop.

3. When staying at the hut:

Members and guests are requested to observe reasonable quiet after 11.30 p.m. Remember there may be someone trying to get an early start.

4. Mountain Rescue Posts are situated at:-

~~Pen~~-y-Gwryd Hotel - Telephone Llanberis 211

Ogwen Cottage

Royal Victoria Hotel, Llanberis.

NOTES FOR MEETS LEADERS

Leaders can contribute considerably to the success of meets, and the following notes have been compiled for their guidance when organising their outings.

1. Publicise your meets and start collecting names, and 10/- deposit for minibus if used, at least two weeks beforehand.

PAGE NINE

2. If a new area find out all you can about camping/
barring/hut arrangements and about climbing and
walking in the area.
3. For private transport meets find drivers and arrange
whom they should take.
4. During the weekend keep an eye particularly on new
members and guests, making sure that they have
someone reliable to climb or walk with.
5. On certain weekends one day will be set aside for
training and you should organise ropes and walking
parties for this day.
6. You are RESPONSIBLE for making entries in Hut Books
and Fee sheets, and collecting the necessary fees.
Members should be encouraged to make entries in the
Log Book. When other Clubs huts are used, fee,
fee sheets and key should be given to Meet Sec. as
soon as possible after the meet.
7. You should organise cleaning of huts and EVERYONE
should be encouraged to help.
8. Give the Outdoor Meets Sec. at least one months notice
if possible if you are unable to lead your meet.
Find a substitute if you can.
9. Return Meet Information sheet (Which will be given to
you a week or so before your meet) to the Meet Sec.
with as many details as possible filled in.
10. (Added by the Editor) Write a meet report for the next
edition of 'Newsletter'.

- - - - -

COMMENT
by Tony Daffern

"The writer holds strong views that climbing is only suitable for those who have reached an age of discretion. Boys may be taken out by their experienced elders, but before the age of 21 serious work such as leading, should not be undertaken".

The above appears in "First steps to Climbing", written in 1923 by George Abraham, a pupil of Owen Glyn Jones, and one of the earliest rock climbers.

How different things are now. On our day meets to gritstone, eleven year olds solo climbs which we can only just accomplish on a top rope, in Wales a fifteen year old follows Cenotaph corner and it is led by a sixteen year old on sight. It must be remembered that as late as Spring 1958 The Corner had only had 9 ascents.

Joe Brown led his first VS at the age of sixteen, and in those days VS was the top of the grade. At the age of twenty he put up such climbs as, Hangover, Cemetery Gates, Diglyph, Vember and The Boulder (which the rest of the party were unable to follow).

Now we hear the old man of twenty-five say "If I was ten years younger I might have been able to climb excess", or "I'm past it now, might as well take up walking". It is reported that Brown himself said that a climber is finished at twenty-five, but it is interesting to note that in the last two years he has discovered some of the hardest climbs in Wales at Tremadoc.

I do not think however that these hardest routes call for young muscles, but rather for trained muscles and with it steady nerve. The younger climber is fearless and confident, whereas the older one realises the dangers and relies more on adequate protection. Neither can climb well without sufficient training, and it is here where the younger climber, with practically no commitments

PAGE ELEVEN

and unlimited enthusiasm is at an advantage.

Abraham goes on to say, "On rocks boys will be boys and the spirit of competition cannot be eradicated". Fortunately such competition is very rare in actual rock climbing, and the spur of "so and so has done a certain climb so I should be able to do it", is more often found than "so and so has done a certain climb so I must do it."

Such schemes as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and the West Bromwich Mountain Centre at Plas Gwynant are designed to encourage leadership and enterprise, and, as it is only to be expected that younger people will go around on mountains alone, it is to be hoped that these organisations will instil a certain amount of common sense and responsibility in their pupils. George Abraham's views about boys under twenty-one are possibly based on their lack of responsibility and overconfidence, rather than lack of ability, and, so far as safety is concerned, should still be considered.

New Climb

Clogwyn Du'r Arddu - MEMESIS
Extremely Severe

Takes the slab between Sheaf and Narrow Slab. Really a direct variation on Sheaf - far harder than anything else on that climb.

Gain the slab via pitches 1 to 4 of Sheaf.

5) Gain the left edge of the slab, as for Sheaf, then continue up for a few feet on the edge (good runner) and step right into the grassy crack in the middle of the slab. Continue up for a few feet then traverse left (crux) and up to reach good niche and belay.

90 ft. A serious pitch.

6) Climb the layback crack to belay above

PAGE TWELVE

20 ft.

7 & 8) Finish up Sheaf.

First ascent M.E. Connelly
 M.S. Manser

June 1961

MEET REPORTS

CWM SILYN 1-3 September by M. Manser

Fifteen present and future members of the Club reached the Cwm over the weekend, to take full advantage of the varied facilities available in the area. Mild weather blessed the walk from car to camp on Friday night, and tents were raised in an ideal position on the rising ground between the lakes.

Saturday morning started with the unceremonial launching of Dick Berger's laboriously inflated rubber dinghy. This was equipped with a sail somewhat reminiscent of dear old Maggie's proud possessions! During the day many fine climbs were achieved by the party, Mike Connelly leading Kirkus' and Central route (V.S.). Tony Daffern's performance on the final pitch of Kirkus', whilst obviously affording considerable personal satisfaction, aroused the wonder of all witnesses!

Feminine screams from the upper cliff were found to have been caused by an ungentlemanly attack on Val. Yardley by a winged 'b' in a football jersey.

The evening began with bathing, and a rapid exchange of skippers on "Nautilus" (the rubber dinghy), ensured that Messrs. Daffern and Connelly were 'well-soaked' at an admirably early hour! The entire party then repaired to the Quellyn Arms at Rydd Ddu for a pleasant pint (or so), and were entertained by a fine display of celestial fireworks.

PAGE THIRTEEN

Sunday was unfortunately misty, though dry, and after a rather misguided start, the cliff was reached once more. Outside edge, a superb V.Diff. with clean exposed rock, proved popular. Tony and Mike reported the upper slab (S) a worthwhile route. The Ordinary Route and variations was taken both ways by Dan Davis, Pete Hay and Tony Kettle.

Although lacking the friendly warmth of the previous day, the lake drew Mary Kahn to give a solitary but much admired display of aquatics, while hungrier members brewed up before striking camp.

Newcomers John Kelling and Roger Orgill were welcomed on this outing, for former joining the growing ranks of the facially hirsute.

Altogether, a very pleasant meet.

- - - - -

FAMILY MEET 15-17th September by Mary Kahn.

A very enjoyable weekend was had by those present, although the meet was very poorly attended.

On Sunday, Graham Close, aged one year and ten months, and Richard Urwin, aged eleven months, were carried to the Col below Y Garn. It was a beautiful sunny autumn day, which helped to make up for Saturday, when we had gale force winds and were unable to venture far.

- - - - -

CURBAR 1st October by Ivor Corbett

There was an excellent turn out for this meet, 32 members and guests being present. The day got off to a fine start, even the Jupp pantechnicon arriving at the Hall of Memory more or less on time, and in fine style. What was originally thought to be Harold blowing his horn to announce his arrival merely turned out to be the brakes going on. The subsequent loud explosion and cloud of

PAGE FOURTEEN

white smoke raised doubts as to whether the master of the Rolls would get to Curbar at all, but these proved to be unfounded.

On arrival at the edge, those people with guide books were to be seen wandering around desperately trying to identify some of the climbs, a feat which generally speaking was not achieved by anyone all day.

The use of ropes seemed to be beneath everyone's dignity, and people were soloing all over the place. However, the climbs seemed to range from desperate to impossible, and more than one bold solo effort finished on a top rope.

Later in the day, when ropes came back into fashion, attention centred round a climb generally believed to be Potter's Wall. Several people succeeded in climbing it, others retreated or fell off, all to the enthusiastic applause of an admiring audience. The meet leader had long ago lost all interest in the proceedings and was discovered asleep behind a boulder.

At 5 o'clock the congregation began to disperse in the direction of the 'Boar's Head'. During the boozing session some rogues got at the Juppmobile, which was very prettily decorated with 'road up' barriers, fire buckets and flower pots.

Some people have no respect for ancient monuments!

- - - - -

CARNEDDS Oct.20 - 22nd by Tony Daffern

A well attended meet in spite of the rotten weather. The camp site was by the reservoir in Cwm Eigiau, the valley which leads up to Craig-yr-Isfa, and was approached by a steep rocky, potholed cart track, described by two of our most respected members as a reasonable road. A little confusion was caused by one edition of the ordinance survey map marking it as a track, and another as a footpath, and

PAGE FIFTEEN

most of the party arrived rather late at the site. It must be put on record that while the two heavily loaded Austins had to be pushed up one hill, the two equally heavily loaded Fords managed it by themselves. "BMC" please note. The only casualty was Pete Hay, who worked on the theory that if he went fast enough he should fly over the potholes. He didn't, and ended up with only two gears left. Only one enthusiast went down to the pub on Saturday night!

The weather on Saturday was not too good, and most of the party went walking over the Carneddys. Two stalwarts, the same two as at Dow Crag, were again in danger of being benighted, this time in Amphitheatre Gully.

On Sunday the weather was worse. The club tigers inspected closely the start of Mur-y-Niwl, looked at Pinnacle Wall from afar, failed to get up Amphitheatre Rib, and returned soaked to the card school in Fred's van.

- - - - -

PEN CEUNANT FAREWELL PARTY 3-5th NOVEMBER by Ivor Corbett

The meet to Avon Gorge, scheduled for 5th November, was cancelled so that a working party could be assembled to clean up, and say farewell to, the cottage which gave the club its name.

The response was very good, with 29 members and guests occupying the two huts, and full use was made of the occasion to get some of the outstanding work on Tyn Lon completed in addition to the general clearing up at Pen Ceunant. All day Saturday the two cottages were hives of activity. At Tyn Lon a vast amount of paint was happily slapped all over the place, and all tree branches which were unfortunate enough to overhang our sacred precincts were chopped off. The garden wall, which had long looked like collapsing in several places, has been restored and now looks quite healthy. The midden heap which used to stand outside the kitchen door has been transferred elsewhere. (Entry forms for the dustbin rolling

competition may be obtained from Ian Mason). Peter Holden spent the day on the roof, performing astonishing feats with a bucket on the end of a rope. We understand that the main object of all this was yet another attempt to make the old cottage waterproof!

During the afternoon it was decided to donate the branches and brushwood to the village guy fawkes bonfires, and more children than we ever thought lived in the valley trooped in to carry it off.

When work was finished for the day, preparations for the farewell party at Pen Ceunant were got under way. A beer collection was made, and eventually everyone arrived at Pen Ceunant carrying mattresses and gallons of booze.

The Pen Ceunant party had built a very fine bonfire, constructed, we were told, on the soundest engineering principles. Indeed, it stood up very well until Daffern kicked it, whereupon it collapsed in a vast shower of sparks. Fireworks were provided and displayed by the Bearman's, and fried sausages and bread (from an enormous and doubtful looking frying pan) by the Websters.

The bonfire had been built rather close to a large shallow trench, and throughout the evening one person after another disappeared into this with loud yells. Those who had suffered stood around in fiendish silence waiting for the next victim to approach the unseen chasm.

As the evening progressed the older club members stood chatting round the embers while the younger ones drifted away. These were later discovered lying round the floor in the living room having their ears beaten flat by a screaming fortissimo bedlam from somebody's portable radio! The same people, having apparently lost the desire for sleep, talked and played cards till about 3 a.m. back at Tyn Lon.

PAGE SEVENTEEN

Thus passed the last evening of the club at Pen Ceunant. Across the misty valley shone the light of numerous bonfires and fireworks, and on the distant skyline beyond the lake the lights of houses gleamed through the haze.

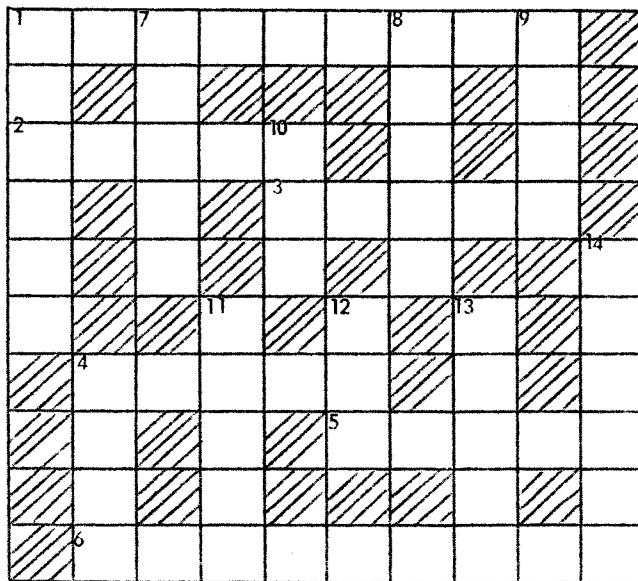
Many of the younger members of the club have never stayed in this sublime place, and one of the principal reasons for giving it up was the lack of use by Ceunant Members. We were reminded that, on the way up to the cottage earlier in the evening, one of the habitual Tyn Lon dwellers stepped out of the vehicle which had brought him from the valley and gazed around him; at Pen Ceunant, at the lights of the village below, and across the river. "This is jolly good" he said, "I've never been up here before; it's better than Tyn Lon."

Too late!

- - - - -

WELSH MOUNTAINEERING CROSSWORD

Compiled by Gill Howarth



Clues across:

1. A long climb on the big cliff.
2. Nervous drivers to Pen Ceunant might run into this.
3. Belongs to the M.A.
4. Early morning drawback to camping at Tyn Lon.
5. A certain barn might be described as this sometimes.
6. Grooves on Cloggy.

Down:

1. This Gully gives good winter climbing.
4. A strenuous pitch.
7. Gash.
8. Place to rest.
9. Some are led astray into this on a fine day.
10. What the novice must not do to the rock.
11. Also climbers on the Cromlech?
12. A tree in the news lately.
13. The Carneddau are considered this.
14. Few climbers on the Cromlech reach this place.

- - - - -

B.M.C. NEWS

Winter courses in Mountaineering and Climbing

The Scottish Council for Physical Recreation hold one week winter courses in Hill Tramping, Snow and Ice Climbing and Skiing at their centre at Glenmore Lodge in the Cairngorms.

Particulars from the Secretary, S.C.P.R., 4 Queensferry Street, Edinburgh 2.

Ski training expeditions for beginners are also arranged in Norway and Switzerland by the C.C.P.R. Details from C.C.P.R., 6 Bedford Square, London, W.1.

Public access to Langsett Moor

The Peak Park Planning Board announce that negotiations have now been completed giving the public right of access to some 5 square miles of country comprising Langsett, Ladycross and Hardern Moors.

FOR SALE

100 ft. Nylon rope, $1\frac{1}{4}$ " circumference. Price £2.
Apply to Mr. E. Wright, 2 Staplehall Road, Northfield,
Birmingham 31.

FORTHCOMING CLUB EVENTS

Indoor meets: (Held at the Cambridge P.H. starting 8.00pm.
prompt)

January 3rd. 'Lapland Trail', Talk by Mr. R. Higgins.

February 7th 'Hazard' - A cine film taken in the Dolomites with Joe Brown climbing.

PAGE TWENTY

Outdoor meets:

January 7th	BASLOW	Day meet. Climbing instruction will be organised. Leader, Mrs. J. Green.
January 19-21st	LLANBERIS	Leader, M. Walters.
February 4th	KINDER SCOUT	Day meet. Leader E. Webster.
February 16-19th	LANGDALE	Hut or camping Leader, I. Corbett.
March 4th	AVON GORGE	Day meet. Leader, B. Pearce.