

June 68

CEJUNANT



# CEUNANT MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

NEWSLETTER - JUNE, 1968.

Cover Photograph -

Skylon, Carreg Wastad,

by Ken Wilson.

## Editorial .....

It is eight months now since the production of the last club newsletter. I had hoped to produce one before now but there seems at present to be a general apathy amongst club members to support its production. This is an 'old moan' of course and any editor's chief task is to persuade people to write.

Few of those asked (repeatedly) to write articles have done so, so once again we see the same familiar names appearing at the bottom of those articles I have managed to secure and publish as in previous newsletters. Several members are, however, going abroad for long periods this year - to Norway and the Alps so the next issue should be more interesting and varied.

The winter is generally a slack period for climbing - last winter particularly so due to the restrictions imposed while the country was suffering a Foot and Mouth epidemic. This meant of course that meets had to be cancelled including some like the Lakeland meets which are usually very well supported, although a group of about a dozen or so people made weekly Sunday trips down South to places like the Avon and Cheddar gorges and Wintours Leap so the clubs climbing activities did'nt cease altogether.

Happily, since the lifting of the restrictions things have got back to normal and a lot of good climbing has been had by club members.

D. A. Irons.

E d i t o r

## A. G. M. Report . . . . .

The following is a list of points discussed at the A.G.M. and the committee meetings following it which it is hoped that club members will abide by and partake in as required.

(a). It was agreed at the A.G.M. that quite often at Tyn Lon there was excessive noise late at night and that members, prospective members, and guests would in future refrain from such excessive noise. Any persons found to be making such noise would be asked to be quiet and if such requests were not heeded or the same persons were causing disturbances regularly then they would be reported to the committee. It would then be at the discretion of the committee whether such persons would be banned from using Tyn Lon for a period of time to be decided.

(b). With reference to the last comment the use of the radio late at night in Tyn Lon is to be discouraged.

(c). A more rigid control on the number of guests invited to Tyn Lon by members is to be enacted. Thus each member is allowed to bring two guests only per night and the member will be responsible for the behaviour of their guests.

(d). The washing of crockery and cooking utensils has not been carried out well enough in the past and people using Tyn Lon are implored to cleanse all equipment used by them after each meal. If the committee feels that this is not being adhered to then the crockery and cooking equipment stocks will be withdrawn from Tyn Lon.

(e). At the end of each weekend or any other period of stay, Tyn Lon should be left thoroughly clean and tidy throughout. The main tasks are:

1. Sweep out all rooms.
2. Washing down cooking and eating tables.
3. Emptying trash cans into dustbins and placing dustbins at the front of the cottage for collection of refuse.
4. Cleaning down the sinks in the wash room.
5. Turning off electricity at supply meter and gas at the cylinders (also water at cock-stop outside the front of the cottage beneath window of wash room in winter months).

(f). A duty hut warden is to be appointed each week-end by the chairman or other committee member each Wednesday. He will ensure the smooth running of Tyn Lon, encourage people to carry out their duties, collect hut fees and make a report to the committee of any misbehaviour.

(g). If an outside party makes a full booking of Tyn Lon (18 or more is a full booking) then members are not allowed to use the cottage at all or camp in the grounds.

(h). If females staying at Tyn Lon require separate accommodation then the middle dorm is to be set aside for their use as and when requested.

(i). Fees at Tyn Lon now stand at (per night):

#### HUT FEES

Members .. .. .	2/-
Prospective members .. .. .	3/-
Junior members .. .. .	2/-
Guests .. .. .	5/-
Children (under 10) .. .. .	1/6d.

#### CAMPING

Members .. .. .	1/-
Prospective members .. .. .	2/-
Junior members .. .. .	1/-
Guests .. .. .	3/-

(j). The new position of Junior Members has been created for those between the ages of 16 and 18 years with an annual subscription of 10/- and fees at Tyn Lon as those for members. The number of these new members will be limited to ten.

## Knots in Kernmantel Rope - A Warning .....

The B.M.C. Equipment Sub-Committee reports that some knots have been found to be very unreliable in certain kernmantel ropes. In some instances it has been impossible to form a secure Tarbuck knot, and it has been reported that a bowline secured by two additional half-hitches came undone and allowed the rope to fall out of the leader's waist karabiner. This behaviour is caused by the rope having a greatly reduced flexibility when it is bent over a diameter approaching its own. The Tarbuck and Bowline knots appear to be most

susceptible and the double figure-of-eight knot the most reliable for such ropes. Climbers should check the knotability of kernmantel ropes when considering their purchase.

## Patterdale Meet .....

After the weekday digressions on hazy Formby beaches and hazier Liverpool pubs, we eventually found ourselves in the Lake District on Saturday morning. Visibility was poor. Although the high cloud was off the tops, there seemed to be trapped underneath it a mixture of smoke and mist which gave the landscape a lifeless two-dimensional appearance. There was a great deal of freshly fallen snow, soft in places, and hard in others where the previous day's sun had affected it and where it had now re-frozen, for the temperature was below freezing point.

We carefully made our way through the ungainly hoards of stretch nylon skiers involuntarily performing stem-christiania crash dives all over the suicidal two degree inclines at the back of the Kirkstone Inn. We eventually emerged unscathed from the mass of shrieking and chortling humanity on to the peace and quiet of Ravens Edge. By this time the mist below the cloud was beginning to dissipate, leaving the cloud base above darker by comparison, and which was in our expert opinion now about to produce more large amounts of snow at any moment. Bravely, in the face of the impending elemental fury, we continued on our intrepid way along Pike How and on to Mon. John Bells Banner. By now our bloodshot eyes noticed the weather to be concocting further changes which were beginning to occur with remarkable rapidity. Instead of the projected blizzard, the cloud was parting and large patches of blue sky appearing. The day had taken on a completely different aspect.

Feeling rather fortunate we lazed our way slowly over Stoney Cove Pike and around to the heads of Threshthwaite Cove and Ravens Crag, periodically collapsing to lie down in the snow in the sun watching the shadows of the last remaining clouds race across the hillsides, leading the eye over to Helvellyn and Scafell to the shining sea beyond. The hills with so much snow on them became dazzling to the eyes. We continued thus into the

afternoon reluctant to leave the tops in such perfect weather conditions. A half-hearted inspection of the shadowy gullies of Raven Crag produced the verdict that the snow in them was too powdery and unstable under the cornices.

Presently, however we descended via Caudale, into the shadows of the valley near Brotherswater. After having slowly and painfully trudged to the top of the Kirkstone Pass, we made our way down again, this time just as slowly and in apparent defiance of Newton's laws of Motion in that engineering curiosity, Stoke's tat wagon to join the assembled Ceunant multitude encamped in the fields behind Low Hartsop village. When a census was taken of this multitude, it was found that it consisted of two members and three country members.

That night lying in a bag which was in dire need of re-stuffing, I could only hope that the intense cold was a portent of good weather for the following day. The sky was completely clear. The stars had that hard metallic glitter that accompanies extreme cold. The ground was as hard as concrete. As the effects of the blood in my alcohol stream diminished I could feel the cold, which three pairs of socks, two pairs of trousers, three jumpers, a palaclava helmet, and two pairs of gloves did nothing to allay, creep insidiously upwards from frozen feet to freezing legs. I had alarming visions of a Lake District Annapurna, with snipped off limbs being tossed casually into the emergency lane as we wound our way down through the Lancastrian foothills. At one stage I put my feet into my rucksack and put the rucksack into the bag. The morning eventually came with me firmly convinced of what seems obvious to others, of a centrally heated existence 150 miles further to the domestic South.

What happened immediately after rising remains a blank except for discovering the few inessential pieces of camping gear we had forgotten such as bread, stoves, matches, tin openers etc. and pushing the previously mentioned pile of scrap iron.

We eventually found ourselves going towards Helvellyn in the most perfect weather conditions imaginable. The promise of the previous night

held good; the sky was absolutely clear from horizon to horizon. I had difficulty in reminding myself we were not in the Alps as we made our way in shirt sleeves along the cornices of Striding Edge. There was not the slightest breeze, visibility was perfect; the hills in every direction were blindingly white in the sun. Nearer, the deep shadows in the gullies seemed to emphasize heights and depths and gave, as in the Alps, deep contrasts of black and white, which for us were rendered less harsh by the post alcoholic haze. We continued round to the summit of Helvellyn where we leapt over the cornice on to the face above Red Tarn, much to the consternation of the seriously roped parties further down the face. After a traverse of a few feet we zoomed back over the cornice again to emerge before the organized stares of a passing regiment of Baden Powell's Innocents.

The days heroics over, we went in search of solid sustenance from the Costellos who had arrived on the summit on skis. The previous day they had skied both ways along the length of High Street. After relieving them of their food we continued our way along the ridge over Neathermost Pike towards Dollywagon Pike, still hardly believing conditions to be as they were. On our left there were impressive drops over cornices into shadowy gullies or down snow covered cliffs. By evening we had reached Grisedale Tarn where we lay on the boulders soaking up the sun, reluctant to leave its warmth for the frozen shadows of Grisedale. My nose by this time had taken on a distinctive colour from the action of the sun. My eyes too, from excessive glare were doing their best to match its complexion making me apprehensive of my interview prospects on the morrow.

Eventually we staggered off - this time from fatigue.

Joe Brennan.

## Cwm Silyn . . . . .

The meet was well attended with most people camping up by the lake by Saturday night.

A late start was made towards the crag because the haul up to the lake and the great encampment was made on Saturday morning. The weather was dry but windy and very cold and thus the first routes done were difficult to enjoy. Fortunately towards the evening the wind dropped and the clouds departed and we and the sun beamed at one another and enjoyed a warm friendship (i.e. those who were still on the crags and not scurrying to the boozier).

Climbs done this day included many ascents of Outside Edge, (including one descent), ascents of the Ordinary route, variations on Direct Route (easier and harder), two ascents of the classic Kirkus's Climb and in the evening an ascent was made up the front of the buttress by way of that magnificent route "The Crucible".

I feel that it is worth mentioning here that Derek and Diane camped on Friday night in the Gwynant then on Saturday morning motored to Cwm Silyn -- walked up to the lake -- discovered the encampment -- decided it was a good spot -- Derek went climbing whilst Diane and Angela H. returned to the Gwynant -- decamped -- returned to Cwm Silyn -- carried to the lake and encamped.

Any comments by our work study engineers would be welcome.

Sunday morning broke with clear skies and warm sunshine but by the time the crag was reached it became overcast, mist swirled and a little rain was suffered and the cold wind bit.

Two parties climbed Ogof Direct and found it greasy and difficult enough. The Direct Finish put up by 'Arry Smith was climbed and found to be really hard under the conditions. This line was seen to continue and was climbed at about H.V.S. standard with a peg for aid in the top wall.

Other routes done were Outside Edge again, a party was repulsed from Kirkus's and in the evening when the weather changed again a party of five did a combination of the Direct and Central routes, while another party enjoyed Brigg's Climb.

Slowly we decamped and drifted towards the cars - reluctant to leave the Cwm, now filled with evening sunlight.

Peter Holden.

## Easter - By, Above, On and In the Sea .....

Quite a number of people from the club visited Anglesey over Easter weekend and a lucky few even managed the whole week there.

An excellent campsite was used near Valley - quite a relief to be away from the climbing fraternity - though difficulty was experienced by most in finding this site - although it is quite accessible (when you know how).

Climbing began on Saturday when six of us visited Cartell Helen and enjoyed Pel, which is a superb climb on sound, steep rock with a profusion of holds (mostly) and is probably the best introduction to climbing on Anglesey. Then a party of four climbed Blanco which is superb and deserves to become a classic, steep, good holds and two overhangs.

Sunday, like the previous day was sunny but cold in the shade. A party of four intending to do Pentathol found the tide was too high and had to resort to Gogarth, the classic of the main cliff. A superb route but not really recommendable for a party of four. The climbing is steep and exposed with two hard pitches, the second and the top - the rock being generally good.

On Monday a huge party was assembled on the midway ledge on Castell Helen - ten of us. Atlantis was led and seconded then Roger Lavill top-roped a number of the others up it, while other parties did The Rap and Blanco. After this assault the party split up. Two, with much trepidation abseiled to the bottom of the Mousetrap and quietly prepared the gear. Once actually climbing they really enjoyed themselves on the steep walls, weaving up the curving chimneys and wandering up the easy slabs. The climb as an expedition is magnificent

on very strange rock, some loose, some even sound with tremendous exposure. The technical standard is not too high - three pitches of H.V.S. and one severe pitch, but the climbing is very serious because of the nature of the rock, although it is not as terrible as the guide book would have us believe.

Other parties went to Gogarth and did The Ramp - solid but technically thin and very good. Pentathol was also done by Robin and Hazel Costello.

Tuesday was a rainy day so after a late start a canoe was launched near Castell Helen in rough seas from a rocky cove at the bottom of a huge grass cliff. This was found to be a very enjoyable pastime with good views to be had of the cliffs. Landing the canoe was quite an adventure and getting progressively more difficult and dangerous as the tide turned. By the time Derek Grimmett had returned from his trip jagged rocks were showing between the waves and the water was dropping up to 15ft. below the landing ledge. Eventually he made his bid to land - came in on a high tide - was caught by the spectators at the front but unfortunately as the swell dropped Derek was left sitting in a vertically positioned canoe. This was too difficult to extract himself from and on the next incoming wave he toppled into the sea much to the mirth of the unhelpful spectators, who were curled up with laughter on the rocks. Fortunately he could swim and managed to clamber ashore. The next problem was to get the canoe back up the cliff, very steep grass and rock. Combined tactics and a fine cohesive effort by half-a-dozen of us overcame the slope.

After this rather strenuous 'do' the only people who had the energy to climb were Robin Costello and Ken Hipkiss who walked over to

Gogarth and did the Gauntlet.

Wednesday the group was much smaller, most people having gone home after the bank holiday. The sea was rough but the weather fine, and on leaving the camp site we meet a rather bedraggled John Kerry who had hitched up the day before and had camped in a field not far from the camp-site - he was absolutely soaked. Routes done that day were Central Park, very good, about H.V.S. and only difficult for the top 15 ft., The Ramp and the Gauntlet by Myself and Dave Irons, John came over later and also did The Ramp while Hipkiss and Costello were being impressed by the Mousetrap.

Thursday was cold and windy and with rain threatening. Five of us headed for North Stack Zawn and absieled into that impressive place down that superb slab to the ledge above the first pitch of Wen. The sea was too high to venture down any further so we contented ourselves with the top two pitches. The technical difficulties are not great but the exposure is tremendous and the rock needs careful handling, the top pitch being a serious lead. A very fine climb but rather time consuming with a party of four.

Friday was another very good day but the rocks were a little damp after the rain the night before. First thing a party of three was repulsed from the first few feet of Failsafe, and thus dejected turned to Bezel to find fresh confidence - a good climb and difficult enough for its grade. Now the sun was out the others arrived and two set out for Central Park while two others went for Fifth Avenue. The latter was found to be more difficult with more varied climbing - a really fine pitch..

Saturday was to be the last day of the holiday at Anglesey, so to finish an excellent week a party of three, Robin Costello, Dave Irons and Myself decided to venture on to Red Wall. A magnificent challenge - were we up to it - we could but try - by God we were nervous. A long chossy abseil led us down into a black, dark, evil gully at the bottom of the wall. We were glad to climb out of this to the bottom of the wall proper. The sight of this wall rearing above one's head is quite fantastic - a vertical red wall with curving yellow grooves of fascinating but horrible rock reaching out in all directions. Which one was one to choose to climb up - the mind boggled - the description was vague - the leader was apprehensive - the seconds subdued. Eventually the leader started on a line he had seen another party climbing - a diagonal groove on loose rock leading leftwards. Holds broke away, levitation was practised, height was gained, the route was lost, the wrong first pitch was climbed, a retreat was made, experience was gained, confidence was knocked. After apologies were given and consultation was made to no great avail, he set off again following his nose up steep, bad rock not at all confident of the way until he reached a good crack and placed a piton and thought of retreat (too complicated and depressing), he went on up difficult rock but with good protection and suddenly there was a small ledge and a peg belay - what a relief and a joyous shout to the second who was convinced he was off route. But only one peg and no chance of another was not very consoling in such a position. The seconds came up carefully and were impressed - we felt small and insecure - the wall appeared huge - the way was up. The start of the next pitch was steep with large, if not solid holds but not too difficult but this line ended in a small overhang of very doubtful rock, this had to be climbed and was spectacular with the exposure well felt and the difficulties high. The next 30ft. constituted the crux of the climb - very steep rock, a lack of holds and bad rock but with a good peg which was hard to leave both psychologically and physically. Eventually a small stance was gained in a shallow chimney

and four pegs were driven home into a clay-like substance for the belay. The seconds came up and found the crux difficult - we joked nervously on the constricted stance and all agreed that it would be wonderful to reach the top and stand on good sound ground.

By now we were shrouded in sea mist and were climbing to the accompaniment of the South Stack fog horn. From the stance we stared up at the overhanging chimney above and hoped that it would not be too difficult - we were pleased to see the head of a piton not too far above. This top pitch turned out to be less difficult than the one below but the rock was very bad and the exposure amazing. Soon we were all three standing safely at the top of a magnificent climb on terrible rock following an inescapable line (to borrow a phrase) and our first comments were that we would never again climb on that wall.

Now time has lapsed and memories plague me I am forgetting the danger and recalling the thrill - anyone for kicks ! - Red Wall is steep, magnificent and challenging.

Peter Holden.

## Gannets on Kilnsey .....

We bivied under the Main Overhang and despite the rain it kept us dry - square-out 30ft. and 90ft. above us.

Saturday morning, dull cold - up we were at six o'clock and climbing by seven.

"CLIMBING PROHIBITED WITHOUT PERMISSION - NOT GRANTED AT WEEKENDS."

A notice stuck in the green bank, naturally we ignored it.

"Let's get off the ground before the police come."

Pete led up the first pitch, partly free, partly aided - not many pegs, mostly natural threads to a tiny stance - tied ourselves to the many rotting pegs.

The roof was jewelled with gear!

The first few bolts had disappeared and a fragile line stretched across the gap. Pete led out - nervy work until the pegs were reached. (The route was fully pegged). Slowly and nervously out and across.

"Six krabs, three of them alloys, someone must have had a real epic on here recently."

Pete stops on the lip of the overhang, a tiny figure. A few snaps taken to record the ascent. On he moves and out of sight. No sign of the police yet.

A few gaupers gaup.

My turn now. I relieve the belay of some of its better pegs and also a long red sling - then out. It's great, but I move very, very cautiously - the gear's pretty tatty - daren't come off here. On the lip at last and over it and up the wall - a sling full of krabs and other loot. A great pitch! The tension quickly drains away. Accidentally I kicked a stone but saved it from falling - underneath it another krab is hiding - incredible, a real treasure route! We climb the last loose pitch then scamper down and share the haul.

Dave Irons

## Sennen 1967 . . . . .

A week's holiday and the offer of the use of a cottage at Sennen Cove gave four of us an excuse to visit Cornwall to taste the climbing that the sea cliffs had to offer. We arrived at the village on a typical November night, pregnant with rain and wind blown spray. A few inquiries at the 'Old Success', an excellent pub by any standards, revealed that the cottage was a quarter of a mile away over the sand dunes. Half an hour's stumbling around among sand and boulders revealed a group of cottages in a small valley, one of which was the one we were to use.

Next morning dawned fine but windy with white horses racing across the bay and salt spray diffusing through the air. Our destination was Pedn Men Du, a cliff projecting from the south-west side of the bay.

After a short struggle down a steep greasy gully we arrived on a large wavecut platform below the cliff. Upon arrival on this platform we were immediately doused by one of the waves that crashed against the headland.

The fear of a further soaking gave our climbing unaccustomed alacrity and the first route of the holiday was soon over.

This set the pattern for the week. High winds combined with neap tides made climbing dry very difficult and for most of the day it was impossible to reach the base of the cliff. On many of the days spray was seen flying over the top of Pedn Men Du, over eighty feet high. Indeed, on one day, whilst intending to climb on Land's End, we found it very difficult to stand up without clinging to the rocks.

This situation set a definite routine for each day: one or two routes in the morning involving a soaking followed by several pints at the local and then back to the cottage to dry out our clothing.

Despite this several interesting, if not hard routes, were climbed. On one day David and Colin climbed Civy Route on Pedn Men Du. This superb climb involved a very steep first pitch up several cracks leading up an arete followed by an awkward overhanging block and a very exposed traverse into a final groove.

On another day David and I did a climb on Chair Ladder called

Wolverine Chimneys. This started off with a delightful chimney pitch followed by an airy traverse to a belay perched above the waves. The next pitch was an overhanging groove well supplied with large rough jugs leading to a 'Pulpit' - type belay shared with nesting gulls. A short pitch over an awkward overhanging crack led to the final pitch up a wall of rotten rock. This was the first time we had come across bad rock and proved to be rather unpleasant. Similar to climbing up the side of a giant suet pudding.

Whilst doing this route Colin dropped the guide book into the surf below. As it could be seen floating among the foam, David was immediately tied to the end of a rope and dangled, bait-like, above the waves. After several duckings and earnest appeals to his patriotism he managed to snatch it from Neptune's jaws. From there on it joined the clothing in the daily ritual of drying.

Generally speaking the climbing in Cornwall is much steeper than elsewhere, rather similar to gritstone. Friction is very good indeed and protection always easy to arrange. Technically the climbs are similar in standard to Wales as long as one allows time for adjustment to a different type of rock.

Finally, the 'Old Success' has a good, well lit dartboard, an excellent bar skittles board, a friendly landlord and a pint of bitter that tastes like Olympian Wine. All it lacks is members of the fair sex, a situation that we were told is remedied, with interest, during the summer months.

All in all Cornwall can be recommended for a pleasant change from the normal climbing centres with all the technical interest one could wish for.

R. Bennett