



Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland
Edinburgh Section

25 Plewlands Gardens
Edinburgh
EH10 5JS
31 October 2004

Edinburgh JMCS members,

NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2004

Welcome to the October newsletter. Please find attached:

- An invitation to the AGM & Annual Dinner from President Helen Forde
- An agenda for the AGM
- The minutes of last year's AGM
- The minutes of the EGM on the future for Jock Spot's
- An annual subscription form for 2004-2005
- The current membership list

As you will know SMC member and MC of S President John Mackenzie has kindly agreed to be guest speaker at this year's Annual Dinner so it promises to be an interesting evening. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

There's a lot happening at this time of the year with discount nights, lectures, and the annual dinner. Don't forget the climbing wall evenings at Heriot-Watt and the monthly pub meets. The winter meets kick off in Glen Etive just before Christmas, so let's hope for good winter conditions.

Details of these activities are to be found overleaf. I look forward to seeing you over the next few months.

Regards,

Neil Cuthbert
Secretary Edinburgh JMCS

Membership

A few (light-hearted) facts on the membership:

- The section currently has 82 members. Of these 6 are aspirant and 7 associate members
- Email communication reaches all but one member
- There are currently 42 mobile phone numbers listed. In 2002 70% of UK adults owned a mobile phone so we are bucking the trend
- Edinburgh remains the most popular location with about 54% of the membership residing in the capital city. Dunfermline is (perhaps not surprisingly) the next most popular choice. Third is Ullapool
- The most popular first name for members is David. Runners up are Bruce and Alexander. The link? Medieval Scottish Kings...

Winter Meets Programme 2004-2005

Date	Venue	Notes
17/18 December 2004	Inbhirfhaolin, Glen Etive	6 Places £4 ppn
7/8 January 2005	Muir of Inverey, Braemar	6 Places £6ppn
28/29 January 2005	Smiddy, Dundonnell	10 Places. £5 ppn
18/19 February 2005	Blackrock Cottage, Glencoe	10 Places £4ppn
4/5 March 2005	Ling Hut Torridon	8 Places £5 ppn
25/26 March 2005	CIC Hut, Ben Nevis	8 Places £5 ppn

Further details of the huts are available on the club web site (www.edinburghjmcs.org.uk)

If you wish to attend a weekend meet please telephone Meets Secretary Patrick Winter no earlier than the Monday preceding the weekend. Bookings are taken on a first come, first served basis. Further places at Muir of Inverey are likely if required

SMC Eastern District/ JMCS Slide Nights

9 November - Neil Boyd double feature "The North Face of the Eiger" and "Mountaineering in Columbia"

The second feature being part of this series' South American theme, which will be continued in the New Year.

14 December - Des Rubens Anglo-Scottish Vilcanota Expedition to Peru.

The expedition has helped to forge closer links between our two countries (Scotland and England, not Scotland and Peru). The Vilcanota area, close to the old Inca capital of Cusco, is less well known than the Cordillera Blanca further north. Although deep snow meant a change from the original objective of the South Face of Colque Cruz 1, the expedition, entirely composed of SMC members, was highly successful in other ways. Three first ascents were

made, one of a previously unclimbed mountain. Stunning scenery, local colour and the knowledge that even mountaineers entering (or well into) their "golden years" can still achieve worthwhile objectives.

11 January –Members slides

Themes to include nostalgic views of last summer; early winter routes; inspiration for the coming year; images of far away places

9 February – Ian Mitchell

The well-known author and historian, Ian Mitchell, will give a talk based on his book "Scotland's mountains before the mountaineers". A version of this show was "enthusiastically received at Banff International Mountain Book and Film Festival 2000". Not to be missed.

8 March – Nick Williams

The author of the new 'Pocket Mountains' guidebooks will talk about how he went about creating this popular series.

JMCS Members slide night

Pat & Dave Buchanan have kindly agreed to host this year's slide night on Thursday 9 December from 19:30 to 20:00 onwards. Please bring a selection of slides (no more than ten) plus food & drink. The address is:

5 Mortonhall Road
EDINBURGH
EH9 2HS

t. 0131 667 7497

Digital projection should also be available. Members should send their images by e-mail or on CD to Dave (d_buchanan@uk.ibm.com), preferably about a week beforehand.

2004 Summer Meets Reports

All reports by Meets Secretary Patrick Winter.

Raw Head Hut, Langdale Lake District 23rd April – 25th April

Members Present: Patrick Winter, Francis Winter, Linda Corlett, David Small, Brian Finlayson, Sue Marvell, Sandy Sharp, Dave Amos

Fine weather prevailed for the first of the summer meets and the high Lakeland crags were in good condition and quite busy.

I don't have all the details of what people climbed so please forgive me if you're bold E5 ascent of something goes unmentioned!

Routes climbed include the following: Dave and Sandy, Pluto / HVS - Raven Crag

David and Linda, Original Route / Severe, Revelation / Hard Severe & Centipede – all at Raven crag & Bachelor Crack / Hard Severe & Bracket & Slab climb – Gimmer

Brian and Sue, Introduction / Hard Severe 'B' route / Severe – Gimmer

Francis and Patrick, The Red Edge / HVS, Bridge's Route / Hard Severe, Square Chimney / Medusa Wall combination / Very Severe all at Esk Buttress in the Scafell region and Eliminate 'A' / Very Severe & Leopard's Crawl / HVS at Dow Crag, Coniston

A leisurely meal was enjoyed on Saturday night, but we were somewhat overshadowed by a large contingent of the FRCC who were also present. Well it is their hut I suppose!

Ardgour Camping Meet, West Highlands 28th May – 31st May

Members Present: Susan Jensen, Bryan Rynne, Stewart Bauchop, and Simon Fox

The forecast was a little 'iffy' for this meet and not many people came. Those who did risk it however were rewarded with reasonable conditions and got some classic routes done.

Simon and Stewart who had probably planned originally to bivouac on the top of Garbh Bheinn went instead to the Buchaille and climbed the celebrated North Face Route / Very Difficult. Stewart reported that a pair of inconsiderate climbers in front had left their rather menacing dog secured to the prominent spike where the route starts, thus necessitating an awkward traverse to avoid it.

On Garbh Bheinn Susan and Bryan climbed the classic Butter Knife / Very Severe, followed by Scimitar / Very Severe avoiding patches of wet rock here and there.

Coruisk Memorial Hut, Skye 18th May – 20th June

Members Present: David Buchanan, Pat Buchanan, Ali Borthwick, Andrew Borthwick, Patrick Winter, Stewart Bauchop, Eddie Gillespie, Thomas Beutenmuller, Linda Corlett, David Small

When I arranged this meet I must confess to some concerns as to whether or not anyone would take the trouble to journey to this sequestered outpost in the Cuillin, but it was a case of 'ye of little faith' as our booking allocation was

exceeded in the end and one person had to camp outside in the wind and rain.

Indeed the weather could have been much better but we all sailed hopefully on the Friday from Elgol on the Bella Jane Ferry in glorious weather.

The following day began with some sunshine and clear views of the Cuillin and those of us with plans of attempting a traverse of the ridge set off early. The sun was soon to be replaced with cloud, mist and rain however and any ambitious plans were rapidly scaled down. Nonetheless most parties undertook an ascent of the classic Dubhs ridge. No one expected any snow, (late June after all) but that's what we got on the ridge!

Descending into Bealach an Garbh Coire Stewart and Patrick spotted an unlikely spectacle – about 20-armed soldiers, borne down by huge rucksacks on a training exercise.

The final descent back to the hut was treacherous and tedious, negotiating a series of gabbro slabs and rough terrain.

Meanwhile Eddie and Thomas attempted a direct ascent of Garbh Bheinn via the North East Ridge but were repulsed at the higher reaches by wet rock and poor visibility.

Next day saw no early improvement in the weather. Patrick and Stewart went up to Mad Burn Buttress hoping to attempt some easy climbs but it was too wet. David and Linda set off hoping to do the Inn Pin, until 'motivation gave out in humidity, mist and rain'.

Dave Buchanan who has written his own account of this meet, which can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, began the long plod back to the Elgol road via the Sligachan path, with Pat accompanying him for some of the way.

Later in the afternoon the weather brightened up a little and Patrick and Stewart, made an ascent of Sgur Na Stri, a fine peak offering great views of the surrounding mountain scape.

That evening those of us who like fish were presented with Andrew's catch from the shores of Loch Scavaig.

Monday, our return day, dawned sunny and bright, but no one was really sorry. It had been an excellent weekend.

Lagangarbh Hut, Glencoe and Camping Meet at Creag an dubh-loch, East Cairngorms (Late July and Mid August)

Sadly these meets were not attended by anyone due to either poor weather or lack of interest.

R O Downes Hut, Calver – Peak District – September Long weekend

Members Present: Sandy Sharp, Dave Amos, Dave Buchanan, Ruth Love, Helen Forde, John Fowler, Patrick Winter, Francis Winter.

Set just outside Calver, in the Peak District this hut owned by the Climber's Club was felt by most to be a little lacking in character compared to our own dear huts, but it was in a lovely setting and a roof over our heads. Unfortunately there were many climbers club members also resident, some sleeping in the living room!

Saturday morning started inauspiciously with cloud and rain and for most this meant the ritual trawl around tea and gear shops, but by lunchtime it brightened up and everyone went climbing.

Two parties (Sandy & Dave) & (Patrick & Francis) went to Millstone Edge for some classic gritstone training and since our hut was gaining a distinct London feel about it with all the crowds did New Bond Street / HVS, Great Portland Street / HVS, Great North Road / HVS, The Mall / VS and Covent Garden / VS.

Meanwhile the other two parties (Helen & John) & (Dave and Ruth) went to Birchens Edge for classic gritstone as well and did a variety of routes including: Porthole Direct / Hard Severe, Emma's Dilemma / Hard Severe & Kiss Me Hardy / Severe.

On Sunday two parties (HF & JF) & (RL & DB) went to Froggat for more grit and climbed Green Gut / Severe, Allen's Slab / Hard Severe, Slab Recess Direct / Hard Severe, Trapeze / Very Difficult, Heather Wall / Severe and Sunset Crack / Very Severe.

The other two parties went up to Matlock for some classic, polished limestone and at Wildcat Crags did Derek's Dilemma / VS, Catacomb Direct / HVS, Golden Yardstick / VS, Cataclysm / VS.

Later Francis and Patrick went to High Tor, for Darius / E2 5c – a magnificent route.

Monday morning dawned cloudy and wet, but gradually brightened up.

Two parties (S & D) & (R & D) went to Laurencefield Quarry for a few routes before returning home (Great Harry / HVS, Three Tree Route / Hard Severe and Red Wall – Delectable Variation / Very Severe). Sandy also led an E1 whose name escapes me.

(P & F) checked out Stoney Middleton, a very accessible limestone crag and climbed Aurora / Very Severe and Froth / Very Severe.

Altogether, a worthwhile weekend despite rather mixed weather.

The Salving House – Borrowdale – The Lake District 1st October – 2nd October

Members Present: Dave & Pat Buchanan, Bryan Rynne, Eddie Gillespie, Thomas Beutenmuller, Robert Fox, Patrick Winter, Francis Winter

We hoped for quiet, bright autumnal weather, but got mostly wind, rain and hailstones with the occasional sunny interlude.

Nonetheless two brave parties, (Dave & Bryan) and (Thomas & Eddie) headed up to Raven Crag for the classic Corvus / Difficult, aptly described in the guide as 'a route for all seasons'.

Robert and Patrick ambled up to Glaramara, Pat did a local circular walk and Francis consigned to the hut because of a key problem, pondered the Guardian crossword, warmed by a lovely fire.

Saturday night was very crowded and noisy in the hut as we were sharing with a bunch of lively dog handlers from the local mountain rescue teams.

On Sunday the forecast was for more inclement weather in the North West, so Eddie and Thomas headed off to Northumberland and managed a few routes at Berry Hill before rain stopped play while the rest of us went for a pleasant low level stroll in the Rosthwaite area to appreciate the autumn colours, before returning home.

Articles

Walking in to Coruisk

Pat had, for a long time, wanted to visit Loch Coruisk, and stay at the hut there. So she was eager to join the June meet and take advantage of the boat charter. I couldn't take the time off work, so I would need to walk in. At least I would have a light sac!

Generally I can be fairly flexible about my finishing time on Friday, but this Friday one of my customers requested a 4 o'clock meeting so it was well after 6 when I left Edinburgh. Because of the road works on the Bridge, I travelled up the West coast route. I wanted to eat on the way, and this proved surprisingly difficult. Callander seemed too soon to break my journey. I tried the Green Wellie Shop restaurant, and wasted precious time discovering that this closes at 5 or 6. Never mind, fish and chips in Kyle of Lochalsh would be suitably romantic looking over the sea to Skye (I don't like the fish and chips in Fort William). Unfortunately, the shops had closed long before I arrived shortly after 10. Actually, I'm not sure they have ever been open. Eventually, I made do with a pork pie and some crisps from the 24-hour service station at Broadford.

So I set off undernourished and later than planned on the track to Camasunary at about 11pm. This is a good track and this part of the walk went well. As I descended to Camasunary, I briefly caught sight of a white owl flying below me.

There is no bridge or stepping-stone over the river at Camasunary and it is also tidal. To my surprise I crossed it without the water going over my boots. The sky was very overcast and although this was close to the longest day it became surprisingly dark. I had a Petzl LED headlamp with me, and while these are excellent for reading in bed, the beam is not quite strong enough for searching out the right path along the side of Loch Scavaig. Long before the Bad Step, the path traverses various turf laden slabs, and I got myself into a few interesting situations.

The Bad Step itself was not a problem. I had crossed it in daylight some ten years ago so I knew what to expect. This meant I recognised it when I came to it, and I found the way across without much difficulty. It is basically a moderate scramble, and darkness doesn't make it much more difficult.

I felt I was nearing the end of my journey now, which was encouraging since it was after 1am. I think I lost the path for a while since I had spent a bit of time stumbling across a stony and overgrown section of beach. Once I was back on the path, I made good progress to the stepping-stones, which cross the short river between Loch Coruisk and Loch Scavaig. At last I thought – nearly there.

Actually, the hut is quite a long way from the stepping-stones and is not easy to find, especially as I hadn't looked at the map for the first half hour or so of random search. Eventually, I crept in to the hut at about 3:30 am.

Later that morning I joined in the mass ascent of the Dubhs, and on Sunday I took a longer walk out via the Sligachan path and Strath Creitheach. This route was surprisingly busy with people walking between Sligachan and Elgol.

Pat spent Saturday walking round Loch Coruisk and on Sunday accompanied me to the col between Sgurr Hain and Druim Hain.

An excellent weekend.

Finally, an invitation to join a trip with London JMCS:

'Sailing Skye – May 2005'

Skye, sea-lochs, munros and mussels – all on the agenda for another memorable Scottish sailing adventure with the JMCS.

Our ambitions for 2004 were only partly realised and there are many great opportunities to access remote mountains by boat in the Skye area. The Sgurr Dubh ridge from Loch Scavaig, Pinnacle Ridge from Loch Sligachan, Bla Bheinn from Loch Slapin amongst others.

We can dream of where we'd like to go but the weather will decide where we can go. The important thing is to go – "ascendite ascendentis" as we like to say in the JMCS.

So here are a few dreams:

1. Experience

The link below shows photos from the 2004 trip and gives a very good impression of our week:

<http://www.tripe.demon.co.uk/scotland>

I hope this is 'inspiring' as there's more where this came from and we're going back to look for it.

In one form or another this is our 5th Scottish sailing event.

2. Crew

We have enough experienced crew to accommodate those with limited sea miles. Good all-round mountaineering experience (but not necessarily rock climbing) is preferred, as we shall need to be self-sufficient in these remote areas.

Numbers are not particularly limited but affect boat selection(s).

3. Organise

May is the best time to go to Scotland because the weather is reasonable and the midges are absent. Which also means it's the most popular and so we must book well in advance. This means non-returnable deposits before Xmas. So in October/November we are simply looking for interested people (no commitment), talking over ideas and dreaming.

Meet leader is Chris Bashforth
mailto: chris.bashforth@hp.com
01344 365 276 (daytime)
0161 476 4036 (evening)

4. Plan

The format of 2004 worked well:

- Travel to Mallaig Saturday (perhaps May 7th 2005)
- Collect charter boat from Ardvasar (Sleat peninsula, Skye) Saturday afternoon (via Mallaig ferry, 3pm)
- Head off to nearby anchorage (Scavaig, Rum, Isle Ornsay, Inverie)
- Sail/walk/climb/sail as weather permits for 5 or 12 days
- Return to Ardvasar for Friday afternoon, clean & pack
- End-of-trip dinner and a wee dram
- Leave boat Saturday morning, return home.

Not sure if that's 1 week or 2 yet! Options for both.

Dates: suggest May 7-21st to avoid bank holidays

Cost: ~£450 (1 week), ~£800 (2weeks)

Detailed plans emerge during the spring including travel logistics, equipment, catering, final payments, insurance, etc.

Contact Chris Bashforth (Secretary, London JMCS) for more details.