

**MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS**

- 6.4.77 Two men, well clad, were walking in poor visibility and strong winds above Coire an Lochain when a cornice collapsed resulting in one of the men, aged 32, falling, sliding and bouncing about 600 feet. His companions raised the alarm. Mountain Rescue personnel and a helicopter were alerted, but the man, only slightly injured, was able to walk out with little assistance.
- 21.5.77 Angela Mary Wrapson, Edinburgh, accompanied by two companions, was walking through Lairig Ghru from Aviemore to Braemar when she injured her right foot. She managed to get to Luibeg Cottage from where she telephoned the Police for assistance. Conveyed to Braemar by Landrover.
- 21.5.77 Richard William Sumner (54), Middlesex, was walking the ridge between Dubh Loch and Loch Buidhe, Balmoral Estate when he collapsed and died. Evacuated by helicopter.
- 24.6.77 A Dutch youth, aged 19 years, with no snow experience and poorly clad, studying reindeer in the Cairngorms, was crossing a patch of snow near the Summit of Coire Ruadh when he lost his footing, slid down the snow slope and fell about 50 feet onto rocks, sustaining a fracture of the left leg and lacerations to his head. A helicopter and doctor attended and removed the casualty to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.
- 9.7.77 A 14 year old schoolboy, well clad, accompanied by his father and a female companion, was descending a rocky slope on the west side of the Col of the Fiacaille of Coire an t-Sneachda when he lost his footing and fell down the rocky slope for a distance of about 60 feet. He sustained lacerations and bruising to his back and head and was removed by helicopter to Raigmore Hospital.
- 11.7.77 A 27 year old female was climbing the Savage Slit in Coire an Lochain along with three companions. About 200 feet up the climb she inserted her hand into a crack on the rock to get a hand hold. When she tried to remove her hand she found that her wedding ring and engagement ring were stuck in the crack and she was unable to release her hand. Assistance was summoned and, eventually, by using a liquid called Fluid Film, the woman's hand was released and she was none the worse.
- 24.7.77 Ann Elizabeth Hughes (23), Strathaven, along with three companions became ill while hill-walking on Ben MacDui. She was able to continue to the bottom of Sron Riach from where she was picked up by Landrover. She declined medical attention.

- 27.7.77 Howard Piper (23), Ilford, twisted his knee while walking southwards through Lairig Ghru. Telephoned Police from Luibeg Cottage from where he was picked up by Landrover.
- 5.8.77 Hillwalkers called at Police Station, Aviemore and reporting meeting a man, woman and child in an 'exhausted state' near Pools of Dee heading south. Search mounted. The three persons involved (who had not been in difficulties), read of incident in evening press and immediately reported to Police.
- 30.11.77 James Wilson Denny (19), climbing in Winter Corrie, Glendoll fell some 15 feet and fractured facial bones and right wrist. Airlifted out by helicopter.
- 3.12.77 Paul Duff (20), Belfast, skier became lost on ski slopes at Cairnwell. Found safe and well.
- 27.12.77 Four men, well clad, were climbing in Coire an t-Sneachda. On completing their climb they separated into two couples. One couple, aged 32 and 40 years, without map or compass, headed for the Coire Cas car park, lost their way in poor visibility and ended up at Fords of Avon Bothy where they took refuge. They then decided to try and walk out and wandered blindly through the hills to Coire Odhar where about 1800 hours they bivouacked. About 2300 hours they again began walking by moonlight and followed the water of Caiplich to Castle Gorge. Realising they were hopelessly lost, they retraced in an effort to locate Fords of Avon Bothy, where they arrived about 0900 hours on 28.12.77. Shortly after arrival there they were rescued by a helicopter summoned for the search operation. They had walked about 25 miles in very bad conditions. Other than being tired and cold they were uninjured.
- 28.12.77 A 24 year old man, well clad, and his companion were climbing in Coire an Lochain, when he was avalanched and carried down for approx. 200 feet. He sustained a broken leg and was uplifted by helicopter and conveyed to Raigmore Hospital.
- 11.1.78 George Duncan Anderson (21), Aberdeen, was reported missing on walk from Mar Lodge to Glenfeshie. Found dead from exposure the following morning by helicopter crew about five miles east of Glenfeshie Lodge.
- 15.1.78 Five students, adequately clad, were engaged in snow climbing on Stob Coire Cas when one, aged 33 years, overbalanced and fell 200 feet down the slope. He sustained serious head injuries and was conveyed by helicopter to Raigmore Hospital.
- 21.1.78 John Robertson Greenhill (22), Menstrie and Stephen Crossier (19), Invergowrie, climbing Raeburns Gully, fell about 400

- feet. Greenhill found to be dead while Crossier had back and chest injuries. Both evacuated by Snow Trac.
- 21.1.78 Four students, aged 22, 20 and 28 and 18 years, adequately clad, were avalanched when climbing on the Goat Track, Coire an t-Sneachda. The two first-named both suffered from broken legs and were removed to Raigmore Hospital by helicopter. The third was removed by stretcher party and thence to Raigmore Hospital, the fourth was uninjured and walked out, although suffering from hypothermia. He was not removed to hospital.
- 29.1.78 In extreme blizzard conditions and against Police advice, four junior soldiers all aged 17, and inadequately clad, set off walking from Aviemore to Rothiemurchus Ski hut. A search was quickly mounted but due to the very adverse conditions the youths were not found until the morning 30.1.78. They were removed by helicopter to Raigmore Hospital, from where they were soon released.
- 24.2.78 John Henry Sterling (22), Glasgow and Mary Harold (21), Rothesay, skiers became lost on ski slopes at Cairnwell. Found safe and well.
- 26.2.78 David Wilson (15), Aberdeen skier, became lost on ski slopes at Cairnwell. Found safe and well.
- 24.3.78 A 19 year old student, well clad, was caught by a severe gust of wind and blown over the edge of the Fiacaille of Coire Cas resulting in him falling down a snow slope for about 300 feet. He sustained bruising to his body. The student was able to walk out assisted by other climbers, and the rescue team alerted was cancelled.
- 24.3.78 Search mounted when car was found apparently abandoned at Cairnwell. Search called off when it was later learned that the five occupants were cross country ski-ing in the area for four days.
- 24.3.78 A party of five men, quite well clad, were walking by the shore of Loch Avon when one of them, a 31 year old, sustained injury to his right knee. He was assisted to the Shelter Stone where he remained overnight. On the following day he was uplifted by helicopter and taken to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.
- 26.3.78 Harry Crawford (42), East Kilbride, was glissading off Craig Derry on a plastic sheet followed by other members of the party. On reaching the bottom Crawford stood up and was promptly felled as one of the party crashed into him. He sustained a double fracture of his left leg. Evacuated by Snow Trac.

- 2.4.78 Alan Christopher Wigginton (25), H.M.S. Condor, Arbroath, was cross country ski-ing on Ben MacDui when he skied over cornice surrounding Coire Sputan Dearg. Was uninjured.
- 9.4.78 Ronald Niven (28), Dundee and Eric Niven (20), Dundee fell climbing Douglas Gibson Gully, Lochnagar. Eric received only minor injuries while Ronald died before rescue.
- 15.5.78 59 year old mental patient went missing on a walk in the Glenmark area. Search for two days by helicopters, police and civilian teams. Man found safe and well in Ballater area.
- 3.6.78 Susan Cooper (32), Nairn, struck by falling rock at beginning of ascent of Eagle Ridge, Lochnagar. Sustained broken clavicle and minor head injuries. Evacuated by helicopter.
- 10.6.78 33 year old man went to photograph an eagle's nest in the Loch Loch area of Kirkmichael, Perthshire. He fell about 160 metres and sustained serious head injuries from which he died in Dundee Royal Infirmary two days later.
- 20.6.78 Pauline Mackay (17), Livingston, became ill near Loch nan Stuirteag, on walk from Fort William to Braemar. Helicopter called only to find that girl had recovered and no medical assistance required.
- 25.6.78 Brian George Kirkwood (35), Edinburgh, slipped and fell while crossing small stream behind Corrour Bothy. Received slight head and back injuries. Evacuated by helicopter.
- 3.7.78 Nigel Wilson (16), Herbert Bastian (16), Iain Gibbs (16), and Rude Andre (17), all London, overcome by exposure in Lairig Ghru. They had been on a three day expedition in the hills and were accompanied by four other youths and two teachers. Evacuated by helicopter.
- 8.7.78 David McLean (18), Aberdeen, went out of control while glissading down steep snow slope near top of Allt Clach nan Taillear and landed among scree at bottom. Serious facial injuries. Evacuated by helicopter.
- 12.7.78 Paul Schmitz (46), West Germany, slipped and fell 10 feet into River Quoich, while attempting to gain vantage point to take photographs of family. Received double fracture of left leg. Evacuated by Landrover.
- 16.8.78 Christopher Hempstead (16), fell whilst climbing on the Scottie, Glendoll and slid/fell for approx. 250 ft. Taken by police team and helicopter to Dundee Royal Infirmary with head injuries and body bruising.
- 19.8.78 A party of seven adult hill walkers adequately clad completed a climb of Braeriach and started to descend by Beanaidh Coire.

At the time thick mist restricted visibility to about five yards; later two of the party, aged 51 and 71 became separated. Both were well experienced. A rescue helicopter uplifted both men the following morning and found them uninjured. They had sheltered overnight.

- 2.12.78 Stephen May (26), Aberdeen, on hill walking expedition became separated from his companion on Carn Bhinnein. Found safe and well by ground search.
- 19.12.78 A party of 5 men, aged 21, 21, 21, 20 and 23 years, adequately clothed were avalanched on a snow slope in Coire An Lochain and swept down for about 250 feet. Except for one who was uninjured, all sustained bruising and superficial injuries. The men were evacuated by helicopter and removed to Raigmore Hospital.
- 25.12.78 After leaving a route card at the Police Station, Aviemore, two men, aged 35 and 28, left to go hill-walking from Loch an Eilean to Braeriach, returning by night fall. They did not return and search was mounted. On afternoon of 26.12.78 both bodies were found Coire an Bogha Choiche. The bodies were buried except for one foot sticking out of the snow and had obviously been avalanched. Both deceased were well clad.
- 3.1.79 David John Kilburn (18), Droitwich, got lost in the mist while out walking from Braemar having crossed the frozen River Dee. Was benighted and sheltered below fallen tree in Glen Quoich before being found by ground search safe and well the following day.
- 6.1.79 Maurice John Tough (20), Aberdeen, skier, became lost on ski slopes at Cairnwell. Found safe and well.
- 14.1.79 Mark (13), and Paul Dempsey (12), Rutherglen, skiers, became lost on ski slopes at Cairnwell. Found safe and well.
- 14.1.79 Fergus Forbes Robertson (23), Stonehaven, skier, became lost on ski slopes at Cairnwell. Found safe and well.
- 27.1.79 Two men were climbing, unroped, but well clothed, in Alladins Couloir, Coire an t-Sneachda, when one, aged 21 years, slipped and slithered over stone scree for approx. 900 feet. He sustained fractured nose and lacerations to the face and general bruising, and was removed to Raigmore Hospital by helicopter.
- 28.1.79 Stanley Johnston (53), and John Storey (39), were overdue on a walk on Ben-y-Vrackie, Pitlochry, during a severe storm. Police and civilian teams conducted a search. Helicopter called at first light. Men returned well by themselves having sheltered during the storm, unaware of emergency created.

- searches were made in quite atrocious weather but the body was not found until 23.12.79, when it was found covered in snow on a cornice at the top of The Rummell, Coire an t-Sneachda.
- 27.12.79 Flare reported at Killiecrankie battle ground by very reliable shepherd. Area searched by police and civilian teams but no trace found. Flare described as red and of parachute variety.
- 31.12.79 Two army captains, well equipped, lost their way when walking from Coire Cas to Jean's Hut and wandered into the Lairig Ghru where they were avalanched. Both stayed overnight in the Sinclair Hut and were picked up by helicopter the following day. Both sustained superficial injuries.
- 8.1.80 Four climbers, well clad, started to climb Red Gully in Coire an t-Sneachda. One lost a crampon and discontinued the climb. The other three continued to the top to find almost white-out conditions. They decided to snow hole for the night. Their companion reported their non return. Advance search parties went to the area; the three men admitted to seeing white flares set off by the searchers but made no attempt to use their torches to attract attention. At first light they started down the Goat Track and were found by rescuers whilst descending by that route.
- 19.1.80 David Wilkinson (33), Birmingham, fell about 140 feet while climbing Black Spout, Lochnagar. Sustained minor injuries; evacuated by helicopter.
- 20.1.80 Michael and John Fawkes (27), Maryculter, and Douglas Fraser (22), Aberdeen avalanched below Parallel Gully 'A', Lochnagar. Other climbers in Coire went to assist and found Fawkes who suffered a collapsed lung and broken rib. Eight and half hours later Fraser was located with only his hands showing above the snow. He was unconscious but alive and evacuated by Snow Trac. He made good recovery.
- 18.2.80 Three separate ski-ing parties comprising six persons became lost on ski slopes at Cairnwell. All found safe and well together by ground search.
- 2.3.80 George Anthony Hardman (42), Altringham, Andrew James Coleman (38), Sale, fell about 600 feet while climbing Rae-burns Gully. Both fatally injured. Evacuated by Snow Trac.
- 7.3.80 On 5.3.80 a 39 year old Army Major left Aviemore to ski tour in the vicinity of the Lairig Ghru, intending to return to catch the overnight train to London on 6/7 March. His non arrival there was reported. A search was mounted and he was found

on 8 March in the Lairig Ghru near Sron-na-Lairig. He had obviously skied over a very steep slope and lost control thus meeting his death. He was very well equipped and very well experienced.

25.3.80 Neil McCallum (22), Fraserburgh, and Lynn Mitchell Brown (24), Largoward, fell a considerable distance while climbing Parallel Gully 'A', Lochnagar. Both died as a result of the accident before being found.

29.3.80 A woman and a man, 31 and 34 years, both very inexperienced skiers and unused to the mountains, went to ski at the Ptarmigan, Cairngorm. They wandered from the area, realised they were lost, walked down Coire Raibeirt into Strathnethy where they snow holed during the night. They were found the following morning by a rescue helicopter very tired and very cold but otherwise none the worse.

The Editor is grateful to John Duff, BEM of Grampian Police, for compiling the above list.

