

## MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS—GRAMPIANS AND CAIRNGORMS

Compiled by JOHN DUFF

- 6.2.83 Eighteen soldiers of 8th Battery (R.A.) 29th Commando Unit, Plymouth were reported overdue on a walk from Glenmore, Aviemore to the Linn of Dee, Braemar via the Lairig Ghru in blizzard conditions. Found safe and well at Derry Lodge where they declined assistance and made their own way out the following morning.
- 10.2.83 Two Nottingham climbers were ascending a climb known as 'The Vent' in Coire an Lochan when one slipped and fell about 35 feet on the rope. His crampon caught on ice and twisted his ankle. His friend walked out to Glenmore Lodge and summoned a helicopter.
- 17.2.83 A party of four English climbers were ascending Pinnacle Gully when one was struck by a windslab avalanche and fell 1,000 feet, suffering slight injury.
- 21.2.83 Two men from Kent were climbing at Coire an Lochan when one fell. They were rescued, then taken to hospital by helicopter.
- 3.4.83 A solo walker from Inverness lost his way in white-out conditions in the Bynack Mor area. When darkness fell he dug a snow trench and covered himself with a space blanket. An extensive search was carried out by rescue teams during the night. At first light he was located by RAF helicopter.
- 13.5.83 A 36 year old male ornithologist was reported overdue, due to a misunderstanding after spending a week in the hills on Invercauld Estate, Braemar. A search party found him making his own way off the hill, near Corndavon Lodge, Crathie, safe and well.
- 22.5.83 A hillwalker from Aberdeen was crossing a burn near Bynack Stables when she fell and sprained her ankle. She was taken from the hill by a mountain rescue team.
- 28.5.83 A hillwalker from Carnoustie whilst in the Lairig Ghru suffered severe muscle fatigue and was overcome by exposure. He was removed from the hill by a mountain rescue team.
- 2.6.83 Two males of 15 and 36 were two of a party of 15 pupils and 3 teachers, from Warrington, spending a week hillwalking in the Cairngorms. On the 5th day, shortly after leaving their camp in Glen Luibeg, Braemar, the younger showed signs of suffering from hypothermia and about the same time the other slipped on the muddy path at the same location. Both were put into a tent until the arrival of the rescue team and thereafter taken to Braemar where they received medical attention.
- 12.6.83 A 38 year old male was walking northwards through the Lairig Ghru with five companions when he became unwell. He was assisted to Corrou Bothy where he was later picked up by an R.A.F. helicopter and flown to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, where he was found to be suffering from a stomach upset.
- 15.6.83 A member of the Royal Air Force was struck by a dislodged boulder at Lurchers Crag.
- 18.6.83 A 28 year old male slipped and fell about 600 feet on hard snow while descending Braeriach into the Lairig Ghru. As he did so he hit protruding boulders and received a stomach wound and body bruising. After receiving first aid from his companion he continued down into the Lairig Ghru, where he remained while his companion went for assistance. A helicopter in the area on another mission was diverted to his assistance and evacuated him to Ninewells Hospital, Dundee, for attention.



- 18.6.83 An adult female was one of a party of 33 on a sponsored walk going southwards through the Lairig Ghru, when she twisted her ankle near the Pools of Dee. She continued to a point opposite Corrou Bothy where she decided she could go no further. Some of the party continued and on reaching Derry Lodge, telephoned for assistance. During this time she continued and was met by the rescue team near Derry Lodge. On examination she was found to be suffering from a sprained right ankle and blistered feet.
- 30.6.83 An Edinburgh man, whilst hillwalking at Carn Ban Mhor, Glenfeshie, with his wife, suffered a minor heart attack and was removed from the hill by helicopter.
- 25.7.83 An Edinburgh female had walked to the Ptarmigan Restaurant when she felt unwell and collapsed. She was removed to hospital by helicopter.
- 2.8.83 A teacher from Darlington slipped on snow, fell 15 feet and struck a boulder. She was uplifted by helicopter and taken to Raigmore Hospital.
- 16.8.83 A hillwalker from Stonehouse underestimated time required for walk to Devils Point. Mountain rescue teams searched and found him on his return journey.
- 16.8.83 A 17 year old male was a member of a group on an Adventure Training Scheme, engaged in rock climbing at Craig-a-Barns, Dunkeld. He fell approximately 8 feet at the start of a climb, and had to be stretchered off the Craggs to an ambulance at the roadside. He was taken to Bridge of Earn Hospital having sustained a fractured collar bone.
- 27.9.83 A hillwalker from New Pitsligo became ill and collapsed. He was rescued by Land Rover and later conveyed by ambulance to Raigmore Hospital.
- 2.10.83 A teacher from Inverness was leading a party of children through the Lairig Ghru when bad weather delayed their return. Mountain rescue teams were alerted and spotted these people coming from the hill.
- 6.11.83 Rescue teams called out to make a search of the Logie Coldstone area where lights had been seen low in the sky and it was believed a light aircraft had crashed. No trace found of any aircraft.
- 18.12.83 A hillwalker from Paisley became separated from the main party and was unable to re-establish contact due to bad weather. He was later found by a mountain rescue team and dog handler at Sinclair Hut.
- 26.12.83 A lone hillwalker from Leeds fell and dislocated a knee. He managed to make his way to the Chair Lift Car Park and was transported by ambulance to Raigmore Hospital.
- 26.12.83 A 33 year old female was fatally injured when she slid about 900 feet out of control on ice covered snow, on the east side of Cuidhe Crom, Balmoral Estate, hitting protruding boulders en route. She had gone to the aid of her companion, a 60 year old male, who had slid down the steep slope but managed to stop himself. He was uninjured.
- 30.12.83 Two hillwalkers from Kilmarnock and Belfast, became benighted on the hill and were later found safe by a rescue team and dog handler at Sinclair Hut.
- 30.12.83 A female from Aylesbury was receiving instruction on the use of an ice axe when she lost her footing and slid some 150 feet. She was removed from the hill by helicopter.
- 1.1.84 Two climbers from Newcastle were caught by darkness on Coire an t'Sneachda and bivouacked on the hill. A mountain rescue team located both men on the hill.
- 3.1.84 An 18 year old male was benighted in Corndavon Lodge Bothy, Invercauld Estate, because of blizzard conditions and reported missing. He was found safe and well early the following morning.



- 5.1.84 A 26 year old male was spending a few days walking in the Cairngorms but remained at Corrou Bothy when caught up in blizzard conditions. His mother reported him missing and he was found safe and well at Corrou Bothy by the rescue teams.
- 6.1.84 A hillwalker from Spain got lost at Bynack Stables due to not having a map or compass. After an extensive search by a mountain rescue team and R.A.F. helicopter, he was spotted near Bynack Stables.
- 6.1.84 A hillwalker from Bristol went to the hills without map or compass. He took the wrong way on Coire Cas and got lost, eventually arriving at Tomintoul.
- 15.1.84 A schoolteacher and six boys got lost due to inability to navigate in bad weather conditions. However, they found themselves at Bynack Stables and then made their way to Glenmore Lodge. An extensive search was undertaken by mountain rescue teams.
- 22.1.84 Two soldiers, aged 30 and 37 years set off from Coire Cas Car Park for a two night snow holing and navigational exercise in the Cairngorms on 20.1.84. They encountered exceptionally bad blizzard conditions and were reported missing when they failed to turn up at their appointed times. Lengthy searches were made and on 26.1.84 their bodies were found in the snow in Coire an t'Sneachda.
- 22.1.84 Four hillwalkers were caught in the open in bad weather conditions. Three perished and one managed to reach safety. The bodies of the three deceased were later located on Coire an Lochan by rescue teams and helicopter.
- 5.2.84 A 26 year old male became exhausted after spending the night in a snow hole in Glen Derry and walking out to Derry Lodge in deep soft snow. From Derry Lodge he telephoned for assistance and he was evacuated by a snow vehicle.
- 12.2.84 A 39 year old male strayed from ski-ing area at Cairnwell in bad weather. Eventually found safe and well by search parties. R.A.F. helicopter using specialised heat seeking equipment used during night search.
- 19.2.84 A climber from Orpington was blown off the edge of Coire an t'Sneachda by a gust of wind. Rescue team removed body from the hill.
- 26.2.84 Two males of 20 and 24 years were caught up by darkness while climbing in the north-east Coire of Lochnagar, and were reported overdue by two other companions. They eventually made their own way back to Spittal of Glenmuick where they were found in their car by searchers en route to look for them.
- 27.2.84 to 4.3.84 A Netherlands couple of 42 and 39 years were on a week's hillwalking expedition in the Cairngorms. Blizzard conditions prevailed which slowed their progress and they were reported overdue by their landlord. Search parties met the couple, safe and well, walking out.
- 2/3.3.84 A 17 old male, one of a party of five R.A.F. personnel taking part in a four day exercise in the Cairngorms, became detached from the rest of his party in whiteout conditions on the Fords of Avon/Bynack Stables path. Search parties were called out to make an all night search but with negative results. The following morning he was found safe and well by a search and rescue helicopter after he had snow holed for the night.
- 25.3.84 Four girl students went on a hike in snow conditions over a circular route from Glen Doll Hostel, to Loch Muick and return. On the return leg of the journey over Capel Mounth track, they encountered deep soft snow which slowed progress, drove them downhill off the track until darkness fell and they became lost. Their failure to return was reported to the Police and rescue teams set out from Glen Doll and Braemar to search over the route. About midnight the sound of a whistle and screams carried by the wind, guided a team of searchers to the missing girls, who had built a snow shelter



- at the headwaters of the Moulzie Burn. They were suffering from slight exposure, but after hot food and drink they were strong enough to walk with assistance back to Glen Doll Hostel. They did not require medical treatment.
- 26.3.84 A lone hillwalker from Glasgow was caught in severe avalanche conditions and was missing for approximately one month before his body was found in Coire Domhain, Glenfeshie.
- 3.4.84 A lone hillwalker from London got caught in bad weather on Coire na Spreidhe and was found dead on the hill by a hillwalker.
- 10.4.84 A man of 48 and two boys of 13 were on a hike from Glen Doll to Mayar, via the Kilbo Path, in snow conditions. They encountered falling snow and spin drift and they were forced to take shelter as darkness fell. Their failure to return was reported to the Police and rescue teams set out to cover the route. Clear conditions between snow showers allowed searchers to find the party near the head of the Kilbo Path during the night. Due to the extreme cold, the condition of the two boys was found to be deteriorating and a helicopter from R.A.F. Leuchars was able to uplift the party from the locus and convey them to Ninewells Hospital, Dundee. All three were treated for exposure.
- 11.4.84 A 27 year old female was one of a party of eighteen members of the National Red Rope Mountaineering Club, hillwalking in the Cairngorms and was descending from Cairn Toul to the Garbh Coire Bothy. In doing so the front point of her crampons caught in the hard snow twisting her leg badly as she fell. At the time she felt pain in her leg but with assistance got down to the bothy where she spent the night. The following morning she was unable to stand on the leg in question. Assistance was eventually summoned and she was uplifted by an R.A.F. helicopter and flown to an awaiting ambulance. In hospital, she was found to have a fractured right fibula.
- 24.4.84 A cross-country skier from Merseyside overbalanced on Coire Cas and slid 200 feet. He was located by the ski patrol and removed from hill by helicopter.
- 3.6.84 A hillwalker from West Midlands became lost due to mist. She was removed from the hill by a mountain rescue team.
- 21.6.84 A youth from Cranwell fell whilst rock climbing on Lochan Vaine. He was airlifted out by helicopter to Raigmore Hospital.
- 6.7.84 A 47 year old male, accompanied by his son were hunting for rabbits on the banks of the Erich near Bridge of Cally, Blairgowrie, when he slipped and fell down a 60 foot cliff face. Due to his location, a rescue team attended. He was found to have sustained serious injuries and was raised by roped stretcher, then removed to Dundee Royal Infirmary by ambulance. Both serious external and internal injuries were diagnosed. At a later date he was transferred to Ninewells Hospital, Dundee, but failed to recover and died on 31.7.84.
- 8.7.84 A 28 year old female became separated from her brother in clear weather while climbing Clachnaben, near Banchory because she was lagging behind. An all night search was mounted and she was found suffering from fatigue and exhaustion in the grounds of Glen Dye Lodge. She refused medical attention.
- 26.7.84 A hillwalker from Bolton underestimated his time of return and rescue teams were alerted. However, Aviemore Police spotted him coming from the hill safe and well.
- 26.7.84 A female hillwalker from Dundee suffered a heart attack whilst walking in Lairig Ghru. A passing walker contacted rescue services when the remains were taken out by helicopter.



- 1.8.84 Two males of 39 and 22 years left Glen Doll to hike to Loch Muick, Fafernne and return via Jock's Road. Their failure to return resulted in a search from first light on 2.8.84 by teams from Tayside and Grampian and a helicopter from R.A.F. Leuchars. They were traced on Carn-an-Tuirc and returned to Glen Doll none the worse of being benighted. They had become lost on 1.8.84 during the hike, due to fog and darkness and bedded down in a survival bag.
- 25.8.84 A local man had parked his car at the car park, Cairngorm and went absent from home for over a week. A full-scale search was conducted for two days with negative result. However, this man later called at the Police Office at Aviemore and reported his return.
- 26.8.84 Two males, both 15 years became detached from a party of 11 cadets and 6 adults of Arbroath Air Training Corps in poor conditions on Carn-an-Tuirc, Invercauld Estate. Rescue teams were called out together with and R.A.F. helicopter to search the area. About two hours after the search got underway, it was learned that the two youths had made their own way home to Arbroath and were safe and well.
- 2.9.84 A 24 year old male was fatally injured when he slipped and fell some 300 feet on wet slab rock while descending from summit of Devil's Point to Corrour Bothy.
- 3.9.84 A 25 year old male was reported overdue after a two day walk from Braemar to Grantown on Spey, via the Lairig Ghru. The following day a helicopter search was made of various routes in the Cairngorms in bad weather until early that afternoon when he arrived home safe and well, unaware of the ongoing search.
- 3.9.84 A hillwalker from Stamford, Lincs., left Braemar and walked through the Lairig Ghru, leaving a route card at Braemar Police Station. Several hours later his family reported him missing and members of a mountain rescue team set out to search for him. He was later located at Glenmore Camp Site.
- 23.9.84 A brother and sister of 57 and 54 years were two of a party of nine organised by a Rotary Club to walk through the Lairig Ghru from Coylumbridge to Linn of Dee, Braemar. The two became detached from the remainder of the party in very wet and strong windy conditions and were not reported missing until the rest of the group arrived at Perth at 0030 hours the following day. Mountain rescue teams made a night search of the area and at 0520 hours found the woman on the shoulder of Carn a Mhaim, disorientated, confused and unable to stand up due to exposure and hypothermia. She recovered after two days in hospital but with no recollection of what happened on the night in question. At 0750 hours her brother was found dead from exposure in the Lairig Ghru some three miles from his sister.
- 1.10.84 Two males of 39 and 22 years were reported missing after a one day walk from Glen Doll - Loch Muick - Fafernne - Glen Doll. They had become lost in poor visibility but were found safe and well by rescue teams the following morning.
- 13.11.84 Two males of 38 and 34 years left Coylumbridge to walk through to Glen Feshie, via the Lairig Ghru, and Glen Geldie on a three day expedition. They left no route card and due to a misunderstanding they were reported missing after two days out. Rescue teams were called out together with an R.A.F. helicopter. The two men were found safe and well and it was only just then that the misunderstanding was realised.
- 18.12.84 One crag-fast sheep removed from rocks in Coire Kander.
- 18.12.84 A 27 year old male slipped and fell on a flat wet rock while descending with a party from An Socach into Glen Baddoch, Braemar injuring his right



- ankle. Evacuated by helicopter to hospital in Dundee where it was found his ankle was badly sprained.
- 27.12.84 Two climbers from London were climbing Spiral Gully, Coire an t'Sneachda, when the lead climber fell and was fatally injured. They were located by the rescue teams and rescued by R.A.F. helicopter.
- 19.2.85 Three men from Sussex were climbing North End of Lairig Ghru when they were benighted. They were located next day by a mountain rescue team and R.A.F. helicopter.
- 5.3.85 A climber from Cumbria when at the start of the Vent, Coire an Lochan, was struck on the head by a rock. He was attended to by members of a mountain rescue team and later removed from the hill by helicopter to hospital in Aberdeen.
- 30.3.85 A 19 year old male and a 21 year old female failed to keep an appointment in Aviemore with two friends after leaving the Linn of Dee, Braemar to walk through the Lairig Ghru. The alarm was raised and the two missing persons were found safe and well in the Allt Garbh Coire Bothy early the following morning. They had become disorientated and stumbled on the bothy by chance, where they met two climbers who looked after them until the searchers arrived. They were airlifted out by helicopter.
- 31.3.85 Two hillwalkers from Aberdeen got lost but found a bothy at Garbh Coire where they sheltered for the night and were found at first light by a mountain rescue team.
- 5.4.85 A party of hillwalkers from Huntington were traversing the Coire an t'Sneachda ridge when one of the party fell and struck her head on rocks, causing fatal injuries. She was taken from the hill by helicopter.
- 24.4.85 A 20 year old male was descending Angels Ridge to the Allt Garbh Coire Bothy when one of his party dislodged a boulder. The boulder hit him, knocking him off balance, with the result that he fell some 100 feet over slab rock, badly injuring himself. He was airlifted out to Raigmore Hospital where he was found to be suffering from a crush fracture of his first lumbar vertebra and severe body bruising.
- 28.4.85 A 50 year old female with a party on a one day hike out from Glen Doll was descending via the Kilbo Path, on the return leg of the route, when she stumbled and fell breaking her left ankle. The emergency services were notified and she was assisted off the hill by her companions to an awaiting ambulance which took her to Dundee Royal Infirmary.
- 12.5.85 A skier from Lockerbie slipped on ice and fell some 350 feet on Fiascaill a Choire Chais. He was located by a mountain rescue team, then flown out by R.A.F. helicopter.
- 1.6.85 A 48 year old female in a group on a one day hike out from Glen Doll, was returning via Bachnagairn, when she went over her ankle on the rough path and was unable to continue. She was reached by Land Rover and brought down to an ambulance which took her to Dundee Royal Infirmary, where she received treatment for a broken right ankle.
- 7.6.85 Two females of 52 and 20 years left Kingussie to walk through the hills to Blair Atholl via Minigaig. When they failed to arrive, a search commenced during the night over the route as far as possible with vehicles. Rescue teams and a helicopter from R.A.F. Leuchars joined the search at first light on 8.6.85. The two were traced near the head of Glen Tilt by the helicopter, about 10 miles east of their intended route, having become disorientated the previous day due to heavy snow showers and taken the wrong track. They were unharmed having spent the night in a bothy, but were airlifted out to Blair Atholl.
- 12.6.85 Two 16 year old males along with others were taking part in a two day training exercise for their Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. On the second



- day the two became separated from the main group in bad visibility after one complained of fatigue, while walking between Tarfside, Glen Esk and Aboyne, via The Fungle Road. Rescue teams called out but the two missing boys found safe and well near Aboyne, making their own way back. They were minus their rucksacks which they had left on the hill.
- 22.6.85 A Manchester man was bird nesting at Craiggellachie Hill when he slipped and fell 100 feet to his death. His remains were removed by a mountain rescue team.
- 25.8.85 A 56 year old female, accompanied by a group was descending Kilbo Path returning to Glen Doll, when she stumbled and fell on the rocky path. Rescue teams attended and the casualty was stretched to the summit of the Path, where a helicopter from R.A.F. Lossiemouth uplifted and took her to Ninewells Hospital. She was transferred by ambulance to Dundee Royal Infirmary and treated for a broken ankle.
- 31.8.85 A 53 year old male, together with his two grown up sons, were uplifted to near the summit of Cairngorm by chair lift thereafter intending a one day walk to Linn of Dee, via Ben Macdui. The party lost their bearings on Ben MacDui and eventually came out at Loch Avon later that afternoon. Heavy rain and high winds prevailed. The father was suffering from sore feet and exhaustion when he was given shelter in a tent at the bottom of Loch Avon by two hillwalkers. The two sons continued to Derry Lodge to raise the alarm and he was eventually evacuated by helicopter.

*Footnote—The Editor is grateful to John Duff, B.E.M., of the Grampian Police Force for compiling yet another list of mountain accidents. John Duff acknowledges the assistance and information received from the Grampian Police Force, Tayside Police Force and the Northern Constabulary and mentions that apart from the Police teams, the rescue teams usually involved in Grampians and Cairngorms rescues are:*

*R.A.F. Leuchars and Kinloss  
Search and Rescue Dog Association  
Aberdeen, Braemar, Cairngorm, Glenmore Lodge,  
Gordonstoun School and Tayside Mountain Rescue Teams  
Helicopters from R.A.F. Leuchars and Lossiemouth.*

