

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

When a new Club Secretary comes to write his (or her) first Proceedings, he (or she) is aware of the beady eyes of Club officials upon him (or her), especially those of the Editor of the Bicentennial Book of the Club due in 2087, when the details of names and events in those far-off days in the early twenty-first century will have faded from the memory of man (if not woman). More immediately, all those Club members who have assisted in its activities over the three years since the last issue of the *Journal* will be expecting their efforts to be fully and accurately recorded for both the current readership and posterity.

In such circumstances, one naturally turns to the output of his (or her) predecessors. Slight hopes were raised in the breast of the current Secretary by his discovery that the first volume of the *Journal* ('*Issued Twice a Year*!') contains no Proceedings but only 'Excursions and Notes'. However, the bureaucratic rot of the Proceedings seems to have set in early, and to have continued ever since. But reading previous Proceedings is a chastening experience. Five of the ten Secretaries in the twentieth century served for more than ten years, and two for over twenty: Alexander Inkson McConnachie between 1889 and 1910, and the perhaps less splendidly named Richard C. Shirreffs for a record 25-year stretch between 1972 and 1997. Their Proceedings cover Club activities comprehensively (in the early days there were no Secretaries for Day Meets, Climbing, etc., and indeed the Secretary was also the Treasurer) and in detail (in 1935, "*The party left Aberdeen at 7.35 P.M.*"; and "*the front four seats were occupied by the Presidential stick, the Presidential rucksack, the Presidential boots, and the President*"). Standards may have fallen slightly since then, but there seems no option but to obey the Editor's *diktat*.

GENERAL MEETINGS

The three Annual General Meetings since the last issue of the *Journal* have been held as follows, all at the Aberdeenshire Cricket Club, Morningside Road:

17 November 2004, with 45 members attending; the following were elected(*) or re-elected as Office-Bearers: Anne Cordiner (Hon. President), Ian Bryce (President), Eilidh Scobbie (Vice-President), Garry Wardrope* (Vice-President), Ken Thomson* (Secretary), Derek Pinches (Treasurer), Robbie Middleton (Hut Custodian), Andy Lawson (Bus Meets Secretary), Peter Bellarby (Social Activities Secretary), Kevin Bannister (Climbing Activities Secretary), Tim Walmsley (Week-end Meets Secretary) Garry Wardrope (Communications Secretary). The following were elected to vacant Ordinary membership of the Committee: Alec Macmillan, Ruth Payne, Claire Marris, Bill Stephenson. Club membership was reported as 503, down two from the previous year. Robbie Middleton made a presentation on the Muir Cottage refurbishment, which was already at an advanced stage.

16 November 2005, with 30 members attending; the following were elected as Office-Bearers, others being re-elected as in 2004: Richard Shirreffs (Hut Custodian), Alec Macmillan (Day Meets Secretary), Dave Ogden (Climbing Activities Secretary). The following were elected to vacant Ordinary membership

of the Committee: Alex Barbour, Colin Brown, Julie Bruce, Adrian Scott and Tim Walker. Club membership was reported as 501, down two from the previous year. During the meeting, Robbie Middleton made a presentation on the near-completion of the Muir Cottage project.

15 November 2006, with 32 members attending; the following were elected as Office-Bearers, others being re-elected as in 2005: Eilidh Scobbie (President), Adrian Scott (Vice-President), Anne Pinches (Social Activities Secretary). The following were elected to vacant Ordinary membership of the Committee: Derek Beverley, Neil Gauld, Ben Mellor, James Hirst. Club membership was reported as 468, a drop of 33 from the previous year. Ian Bryce and Richard Shirreffs (a member of the MCoFS Working Party) led discussion of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland's incorporation proposals, which had taken up much Office-Bearer and Committee time during the year and appeared to be coming to a head on terms more satisfactory than had at first seemed likely.

ANNUAL DINNERS

The three Dinners since the last issue of the *Journal* have been held as follows:

20 November 2004, at the Treetops Hotel, with Jamie Andrew giving an impressive account of his 1999 ordeal in the Alps, and afterwards signing his book *Life and Limb* despite amputated hands (and feet).

19 November 2005, at the Treetops Hotel, with Ken Crocket of the SMC, who showed some of his personal and historic slides during his talk 'The Path to Minus One – Tales of the Grippid'.

10 November 2006, at the Old Mill Inn, Maryculter, with the well-known SMC member and mountaineering guide Andy Nisbet, who showed his own slides of local climbing, often in dubious conditions, during his talk. This Dinner differed from previous ones in several respects, being held on a Friday, before the 2006 AGM, determinedly informal (no speeches!), and about 30% cheaper than the one a year before.

THE COMMITTEE

Though not a regular feature of these Proceedings sections of the *Journal*, it seems appropriate occasionally to lift aside the veil of secrecy that may seem to shroud the main executive body of the Club. The practices and structures of the Committee naturally vary over the years, with changes in the Constitution (the most recent being the creation of a Communications Secretary in 2003), and in activities (for example, a dedicated working group for the Muir refurbishment). The agenda and deliberations of the Committee are also influenced – more or less, usually the latter – by the personalities and preferences of the President and Secretary.

At time of writing, the Committee consists of ten Office-bearers (excluding the Honorary President) and nine 'Ordinary' Committee members. This makes for a large group at meetings, which are held every six to eight weeks on Wednesday evenings in the Aberdeen Grammar School Former Pupils' Club Centre on Queen's Road. In addition to the usual approval of minutes etc., the regular agenda includes new membership applications, reports and proposals from Office-

Bearers, and in recent months the Club's relationship with the Mountaineering Council of Scotland (see below). Responses by the Club to the various consultation exercises are also considered, though usually only formally for lack of time at and between Committee meetings. In the period covered by these Proceedings, these included consultations conducted by the Scottish Executive (planning system), the Cairngorms National Park Authority (25- and 5-year Plans, and their Outdoor Access Strategy), and the National Trust of Scotland (new paths at Linn o' Dee).

The Committee also appoints or confirms individuals to various representational roles (e.g. with the Aberdeen and St. John Mountain Rescue Association, the North East Mountain Trust, and Upper Deeside Access Trust), and to non-Constitutional posts, of which the main ones in recent years are:

Membership and meet enquiries: Alec Macmillan and Jean Robinson
 Muir Cottage bookings: Alex Barbour
 Librarian: Gordon Stalker, Claire Marris
 Thursday Mid-Week Walks: Jack Connell
 Piper's Wood: Robbie Middleton, James Friend
 Training coordination: Neil Gauld
Journal Editor: Lydia Thomson

THE MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL OF SCOTLAND

The Club has been a member of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS) since it was formed in 1970 by the Association of Scottish Climbing Clubs to represent the views of the mountaineers of Scotland. At the MCofS Annual General Meeting in 2005, a decision was taken in principle to move to incorporation, i.e. to convert to a limited company, giving it a legal identity in line with recommendations from Sportscotland, the Scottish Executive agency which funds certain MCofS activities. In spring 2006, draft company Memorandum and Articles gave rise to serious concerns amongst several clubs, including the Cairngorm Club, and these drafts were withdrawn by the MCofS Executive Committee at the June 2006 AGM. At the same time, a MCofS Working Party was set up, with Richard Shirreffs as a member.

Throughout the rest of 2006, many revisions were made (mostly by e-mail) to the draft Memorandum and Articles, some after a series of Club Forum meetings, one of which was held in Aberdeen. Throughout this process, the Cairngorm Club maintained its own MCofS working party, comprised of Eilidh Scobbie, Ian Bryce, Ken Thomson, Richard Shirreffs and Derek Pinches. The main improvements, from the Cairngorm Club's point of view, concerned:

- maintaining club membership of the MCofS members, rather than having clubs act only as "post-boxes" for individual MCofS members
- retaining the block voting system (under which the Cairngorm Club has 40 votes), instead of moving to some form of individual and proxy voting
- clarifying the procedures for conveying notices to the MCofS membership and for the adoption of MCofS policies.

At a Special General Meeting of the MCofS on 17 February 2007, when the Cairngorm Club was represented by Ken Thomson and Richard Shirreffs, a motion to turn the MCofS into a company without share capital, and limited by guarantee, was passed after minor amendments. A separate motion to adopt a Child Protection Policy Statement (which would affect clubs only indirectly) was also passed. At the time of writing, it is expected that the legal steps will be completed during spring 2007.

Ken Thomson
Secretary

MEETS AND EXCURSIONS

This is the first report on day meets since Graham Ewen demitted office as Bus Meets Secretary at the November 2003 Annual General Meeting, following his 36 years of service. Ken Thomson paid tribute to Graham's heroic effort in the last (Number 107) issue of the *Journal*. I would like to add my own thanks, having come on bus meets and been a beneficiary of his efforts since the mid-eighties.

Graham was succeeded as Bus Meets Secretary by Andy Lawson, and over the past year by myself. This may be an appropriate point to review the bus meets situation over the past three years and look to the future rather than give a blow by blow account of each meet.

Among the innovations which Andy introduced was a widespread use of e-mail communication for bookings as well as an advertising system over the Club website reminding members of upcoming meets. This reflects the reality that most active members are now in e-mail communication, but full details of meets are of course still available in the *Newsletter* for those who are not. This system is working well.

A number of other significant changes have now been put in place by the Committee. The Bus Meets Secretary (now called the Day Meets Secretary) is no longer responsible for all aspects of organisation, indeed the role is now more one of a coordinator. Most of the work now falls to Day Meet Organisers, who are appointed in advance for each meet. Detailed protocols have been drawn up by the Committee to give guidance to organisers and to ensure a consistent approach. Protocols are also in place for those leading the President's Parties. The role of the Day Meets Secretary is pretty well limited to booking buses, booking meals if appropriate, and drawing up a schedule of meets in consultation with the Day Meets Sub Committee and of course with the approval of the main Committee.

It is clear from reviewing the *Journal* reports of the past twenty years or so that there has been a shift away from bus meets as a primary area of Club interest, at least for the time being. This is in strong contrast to other activities which are in a very healthy state. Avoiding all attempts at a sociological analysis, there are probably economic factors at work. Day trips are increasingly expensive. The cost of fuel and therefore of bus hire continues to rise steeply; few hotels will serve a meal any longer at a price which is palatable; and the legal restrictions on drivers' hours now limit the scope for long distance day meets in summer time.

For the eight years between 1985 and 1993, attendances averaged 32 per meet with 52 turning up on the Cairngorm Traverse in 1991. Thereafter a long decline set in, now reaching a point where attendances have averaged 20 per meet over the past three years. The maximum was 37 on the Cairngorm traverse of 2004 and the minimum was 9 on the Ochils trip in November 2006.

The Lochnagar meet in January is still well attended, as is the Cairngorm Traverse in September. And there have been adaptations to changed circumstances. For the past three years, February meets have been epic ventures by minibus, catering to smaller groups of members and allowing some flexibility in destination depending on weather conditions. More use of minibuses will be made in the future. And of the nine meets in 2006, only four involved set meals. This is probably the trend for the future, with optional bar meals being the rule and set meals on special occasions, such as perhaps the Lochnagar meet in January and the end of year meet in December.

I would like to thank all those who have acted as Day Meet Organisers over the past year, all those stalwarts who have headed up President's Parties over the past three years, and Andy Lawson particularly for easing my transition to Day Meets Secretary. May you all step forward again and volunteer your skills and services in the future!

2004

11 January	Lochnagar (29)
8 February	Ben Lawers, minibus (13)
7 March	Mount Keen and Loch Lee hills (25)
28 March	Ben Avon and Beinn a' Bhuid (31)
9 May	Ben Chonzie (27)
5 June	Achlean to Coylumbridge (26)
12 September	Cairngorm Traverse (37)
10 October	Bridge of Gairn to Invercauld (12)
7 November	Sidlaw Hills (19)
5 December	Ben Vrackie (26)

2005

9 January	Lochnagar (28)
13 February	Laggan and Craig Meagaidh, minibus (9)
13 March	Glas Tulaichean and surrounding hills (15)
10 April	Braes of Glenlivet to Corgarff (13)
15 May	Drumochter hills (21)
11 June	Ben Lawers Traverse (19)
11 September	Cairngorm Traverse (23)
2 October	Baddoch to Inverey (15)
November 12	Speyside Way, minibus (13)
4 December	Ben Rinnes and Corriehabbie (15)

2006

8 January	Lochnagar (24)
12 February	Am Faochagach, minibus (12)
12 March	Glen Clova (13)
14 May	Loch Rannoch to Dalnaspidal (12)
11 June	Cockbridge to Invercauld (22)
10 September	Cairngorm Traverse (32)
8 October	Schiehallion (17)
12 November	Ochil Hills (9)
3 December	Glen Shee to Braemar (24)

Alec D Macmillan
Day Meets Secretary

WEEKEND MEETS

I must confess that I didn't realise that the position of Weekend Meets Secretary involved writing this piece for the journal. If I had, then I would have kept better notes or chased up meet coordinators a bit more robustly for details of what went on during their meets. As it is I'm relying on the Weekend Meets Diary (very incomplete – there is a gap from February 2005 through to May 2006!) and my memory (even less reliable than the Meets Diary) to put this piece together.

The first meet covered in this account is the 'Easter' Meet of April 2004, which was to Inchnadamph, Assynt. A good Club turnout was achieved with members staying in the hotel, lodge and also some hardy souls camping. Various adventures were had but the prize must be awarded to Fred Belcher, Garry Wardrope, Stephen Kirkpatrick, Fiona Sutherland, Kevin Bannister and Froach the dog for their expedition to Sulven using canoes and a sail made from Stephen's shower curtain! Other parties ascended Quinag, Glas Bheinn, Conival and Ben More Assynt other the course of the weekend.

The next meet also had a watery theme in that it was to Mull and Arle Lodge, with 25 members attending. The weather was very kind with warm sunshine for at least two of the days. Ben More received many ascents although one party headed to the south of the island for some climbing and took on some unwelcome visitors in the shape of ticks. McKinnon's Cave was visited as was the island of Staffa and Fingal's Cave, while others went to Iona.

After the Glenmore Lodge McofS AGM meet in June the Club headed to Culra Bothy and Ben Alder for the July meet. Some people walked, others cycled but an intrepid foursome decided to paddle down Loch Ericht in two canoes lashed together. Ben Alder and Beinn Bheoil were ascended on the Saturday followed by a campfire on the shores of the loch. A good tail wind allowed a speedy return to Dalwhinnie on the Sunday.

In August ten hardy souls made the long slog up the Allt a'Mhuilinn path to the CIC hut underneath the north face of Ben Nevis. Various climbs were completed and a traverse of Carn Mor Dearg and Ben Nevis was also achieved.



On the summit of Glas Maol

A wet weekend over in the Arrochar Alps was the next outing, staying at the Ardmay House Field Centre. Various parties ascended Ben Vorlich, Ben Arthur, Tullich Hill, Meall Bhuidhe, Ben Reoch, Ben Narnain, Ben Vane and Ben Ime on the Saturday. One couple went mountain biking, avoiding the heavy showers that afflicted the hill walkers. A fine communal meal was enjoyed that night back at the house. Sunday was even more of a washout than Saturday and everyone returned home early.

In October a large group headed over to the Glen Coe Ski Hut at the Bridge of Orchy. Once again the weather was pretty wet and misty. However, various parties ascended Beinn Dorain, Beinn an Dothaidh, Stob Ghabhar and Stob a Bhruaich Leith. The Corbetts, Beinns nam Fuaram and a' Chaisteil were also ascended with views of Glen Lyon a highlight of the day. The Strathconnon Inn Hostel was the venue for November's meet. On the Saturday some went up the Corbett Bac an Eich, whilst the majority went up Maoile Lunndaidh. Sgorr na Diollaid and Sgurr Fuar-thuill were ascended on the Sunday. The December meet was to the Aberfeldy Glassie Farm Bunkhouse. The approach involved a steep drive up through the forest, and had there been any snow or ice very few members would have made it. Fortunately, the weather was fairly mild although an atmospheric cloud inversion was seen on the Saturday morning over Loch Tay. Some went canoeing, whilst others went up Schiehallion, and a group took in Meall Greigh and Meall Garbh before deciding enough was enough and descending to a fine communal meal. Others spent the day mountain biking at the

Wolfrax trails at Laggan. Meall nan Tarmachan was ascended in thick mist on Sunday, but the ridge was left to a better day.

A Club record for a Burns Night meet at Muir took place in January 2005. Fred Belcher managed to entertain forty-two club members – well done Fred! In February, another stalwart of the Club was in action for the Killin Youth Hostel meet, when Anne Cassidy did an excellent job of providing a communal meal for the twenty-four members who attended. One party went up Ben Lui via the excellent Central Gully and then onto Beinn a' Chleibh. On the Sunday Meall Ghaordie was ascended via Glen Lochay.

The 'Easter' meet was the re-opening of Muir Cottage after extensive upgrading and this was celebrated in fine style with dancing to the music of the Reel Thing Ceilidh Band at the Mar Lodge Stag Ballroom. In April a visit to Willie Nicolson's Bunkhouse in Glen Elchaig took place. Andy Lawson did a lot of driving this weekend as he bailed out of going up Ruadh-Stac Mhor with a bad knee, drove to the hostel and then went home. However, his knee improved so he drove back west again and did Seana Bhraigh during the Saturday night – good effort Andy! Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan, An Socach, Creag a' Mhaim, Druim Shionnach, Aonach air Chrith, Maol chinn-dearg, Sgurr an Doire Leathain, Sgurr an Lochain, Creag nan Damh, and the Forcan Ridge and the Saddle were all completed on the Saturday though not by the same party. In May the Sligachan Bunkhouse meet was the scene of typical Skye weather, rain and high winds. Pinnacle Ridge was ascended along with Sgurr nan Gillean and Am Basteir.

The MCofS AGM took place at Glenmore Lodge in June with a number of members attending and taking part in the organised activities prior, during and after the AGM. A trip across to the 'forbidden island' of Rum was the July meet. Whilst the rest of the country was sweltering under a heat wave, those on Rum enjoyed the best of Scotch mist until the heat arrived on the Monday morning, the day of departure. The Cuillin ridge was tackled in challenging conditions whilst low-level paths were taken by the less adventurous. A ceilidh was organised for those who hadn't had enough exercise, including Willie Robb, 'fresh' back from his 12-hour day on the Cuillin.

The good weather continued for the August meet to Achiltibuie and camping at the Achnahaird Bay campsite. Most people went climbing at Reiff though one party ascended Stac Pollaidh. Others went fishing and also diving for scallops. A fine, though midgey, barbeque was enjoyed by all on the Saturday night. Stan Urbaniak celebrated his last Munro on Mullach an Rathain during the September meet to Torridon Youth Hostel. A group continued the traverse of Liathach with the awkward descent off Stuc a' Choire.

In October the ever-popular Alex McIntyre Hut in Onich was visited by a large group of members. The weekend went well although the weather could have been better, wettish on Saturday and even wetter on Sunday. On Saturday Andy Lawson plus friends went up Bidean nam Bian via Sgreamhach. This was Andy's final Munro and they had a wee celebration on top, which continued through the rest of the day. Another party went from Mamore Lodge up Sgurr Eilde Beag and Na Gruagaichean. Other summits conquered included Beinn Odhar Mhor and Beinn Odhar Bheag from Glenfinnan, the Buachaille Etive Beag, and the Pap of

Glencoe. The others indulged in the Ice Factor at Kinlochleven, and retail therapy. On Sunday there was some canoeing at Roy Bridge, ascents of Carn Dearg, the Glen Roy Corbett, and more visits to the Ice Factor.

The meet at Mill Cottage, Glen Feshie in November was one of the best, with a real winter setting more like the grand snows of 1963. With deep snow and gales this was a time to see wild life, and wonder at the strength of nature. On Saturday the entire party of 7 set off in gales and were really proud to manage a wee Corbett above Aviemore in an hour over the guidebook time and on Sunday they managed another Corbett within the guidebook time. The attendance was select, with the rival attraction of Adrian's 50th birthday ceilidh leading to several cancellations. A new stove at Mill Cottage kept the party very warm. There were also seven members at Weem Bunkhouse in December. On Saturday a variety of Corbetts were climbed and also on Sunday. The bunkhouse was warm but probably over-rated.

The Burns Night Meet 2006 was held at Muir Cottage – a big thank-you to Eilidh Scobbie for organising this big event in the social calendar of the Club. February saw sixteen members staying at the Grey Corries Lodge in Roybridge. They enjoyed good conditions with ascents of various Munros of the Grey Corries, Corbett-bashing in Glen Roy and skiing at Glencoe. They found the accommodation a bit lacking, so no communal meal was possible.

The 'Easter Meet' was held at the ever-popular Laggan Potteries Bunkhouse with a small contingent in the Monadhliath Hotel. There was also an excellent ceilidh organised by Ian Bryce and Eilidh Scobbie amongst others. One party went up Sgairneach Mhor and Beinn Udlamain on the Saturday. In April a bit of a mix up ensued as the JMCS (Glasgow) managed to overlook our booking and give the hut to another club.

The meet in May was to Inverarden Cottage, Crianlarich. Cruach Ardrain, Beinn Tulaichean, Meall Ghaordie plus all the Ben Lawers group of hills were ascended on the Saturday in wet and windy weather. The meet in June can't be classed as a meet as only one person turned up for it – Tim Walmsley! I didn't mind, as I'd always wanted to do the Fisherfield Six over two days with a camping stop near the summit of A' Mhaighdean. The weather was excellent too with very few midges.

July saw the Club down on the shores of Glen Etive staying at Inbhirfhaolain Cottage with good weather, few midges and a composting toilet – what more can you ask for? The Smiddy, Dundonnell was the choice of venue for August's meet although half the people who turned up for the meet found alternative accommodation in Dundonnell; a bonus for those staying in The Smiddy, as it's a wee bit on the small side. One group traversed the pinnacles of An Teallach in the mist, although the weather cleared for the arduous descent off Glas Mheall Liath.

The weekend meet to the Lake District for the Aberdeen September holiday was attended by a hardy few who were prepared to put up with the 4½-hour drive south – less time than it takes to get over to Skye – as Fiona kept on reminding me. First we had to break-in to the Bowderstone Hut – no, we did have a key and it wasn't my Wirral upbringing kicking in – it was just that the Yale lock barrels kept rotating when the key was turned. We found out that the previous weekend

occupants had had a similar problem. Nice of the hut custodian to have warned us!! On Saturday a party went to climb Scafell and Scafell Pike and all the other 900m peaks en route, but Meg the dog wasn't happy climbing the gully on to Scafell. Poor Meg was very tired after her day out but not bad considering her age, in human terms, of 91 years. Fiona and I climbed Troutdale Pinnacle, a classic Severe, on Troutdale Crag Borrowdale, whilst Jim Bryce cycled part of the National Cycle Network around Cockermouth. After a communal meal and a few games of Uno Extreme, at which Willy turned out to be a real wizard, we all turned in. Sunday morning was wet but this didn't stop Brian and Willy heading up Skiddaw, Judy up Blencathra and Gordon heading back to Aberdeen to watch the Ryder Cup, while Jim continued his cycling odyssey. The weather turned planned rock climbing into a pleasant walk over Comb Fell. On Monday Willie, Judy and Brian made a quick ascent to the top of Helvellyn in one and a half hours, then descended by way of Lower Man, White Side and Brown Crag in beautiful weather.

October saw a welcome return to Blackwater Hostel, Kinlochleven and a large turnout by Club members, including four lady members who had walked there from Glasgow via the West Highland Way. Binnein Mor, Binnein Beag and Sgurr Eilde Mor were just some of the Munros ascended. Ten members visited the Wester Caputh Hostel in Dunkeld in November. Peaks included Ben Vuirich (a Corbett near Beinn a' Ghlo), Cam Chreag (a Corbett in Glen Lyon), Sgairneach Mhor and Beinn Udlamain, Beinn Dearg (the Munro north of Calvine), and Auchnafree Hill (a Corbett north of Crieff). On Sunday, Meall na Leitreach (a Corbett at Drumochter), A' Bhuidheanach Bheag and Carn na Caim (both Drumochter Munros), Beinn a'Ghlo, Creag Uchdag (a Corbett north of Comrie) were ascended.

The final meet of 2006 was to the Blackrock Cottage, Glencoe. Only ten members could share the delights of this homely wee cottage and the fine meal laid on by Bill Morgan on the Saturday night. One party went up the north-east ridge of Creise and then round to Meall a' Bhuiridh before following the ski lifts back to the cottage. Others went Corbett-bashing, or wandered around the Lost Valley. Buachailles Etive Mor and Beag were also climbed. The weather on Sunday gave everyone a good excuse to return early to Aberdeen.

What of weekend meets for 2007? Well, after a slow start but pushed into action by my enthusiastic wife, Fiona, and the publication of my scruffy Weekend Meets note in the July 2006 Newsletter, all of the meets have now been planned. Highlights include Dunkeld, Glencoe, Arran, Durness, Strontian to name but a few. Weekend meets allow for exploration of the far flung hills of Scotland. They are great fun and long may they continue!

EASTER MEETS

2004	Inchnadamph Hotel and Bunkhouse	(39)	Derek Beverley
2005	Muir Cottage	(20)	Robbie Middleton
2006	Laggan Potteries Bunkhouse	(32)	Adrian Scott

WEEK END MEETS**2004**

January	Muir Cottage	(34)	Fred Belcher
February	Laggan Potteries	(18)	Jean Robinson
March	Glen Affric Backpackers	(19)	Claire Marris
May	Arle Lodge Mull	(25)	Marjory Ewan
June	Glenmore Lodge (MCofS AGM)	(12)	Neil Gauld
July	Culra Bothy / Camping Ben Alder	(8)	Derek Beverley
August	CIC Hut Ben Nevis	(12)	Andy Lawson
September	Ardmay House Arrochar	(21)	Garry Wardrope
October	Ski Club Hut Bridge of Orchy	(20)	Ian Bryce
November	Strathconnon Inn Hostel	(13)	Jim Bryce
December	Aberfeldy Glassie Farm Bunkhouse	(16)	Tim Walmsley

2005

January	Muir Cottage	(42)	Fred Belcher
February	Killin Y.H.	(24)	Anne Cassidy
April	Willie Nicolson's Bunkhouse	(10)	Derek Beverley
May	Sligachan Bunkhouse Skye	(15)	Garry Wardrope
June	Glenmore Lodge (MCofS AGM)	(11)	Ian Bryce
July	Kinloch Castle Hostel, Rhum	(15)	Eilidh Scobbie
August	Achilitibuie Camping	(20)	Dave Ogden
September	Torrison YH	(25)	Claire Marris
October	McIntyre Hut Onich	(19)	Marjory Ewan
November	Mill Cottage Glen Feshie	(7)	Ian Bryce
December	Weem Bunkhouse	(7)	Jim Bryce

2006

January	Muir Cottage	(34)	Eilidh Scobbie
February	Grey Corries Lodge Roybridge	(16)	Anne Cassidy
May	Inverarden Cottage Crianlarich	(14)	Fiona Walmsley
June	Glenmore Lodge (MCofS AGM)	(10)	Ian Bryce
July	Inbhirfhaolain Cottage Glen Etive	(8)	Dave Ogden
August	The Smiddy Dundonnell	(11)	Julie Bruce
September	Bowderstone Cottage Borrowdale	(8)	Claire Marris
October	Blackwater Hostel Kinlochleven	(22)	Marjory Ewan
November	Wester Caputh Dunkeld	(10)	Andy Lawson
December	Blackrock Cottage Glencoe	(10)	Joyce Ritchie

Tim Walmsley
Weekend Meets Secretary

ROCK AND ICE CLIMBING

Well, after a year and a bit as the club 'Climbing Secretary', ably assisted by Tim Walker, Bill Stephenson, Kevin Bannister and James Hirst at various stages, I am pleased to say that the climbing scene has remained as active and as vibrant as ever! Whilst the old faithfuls continue to get out and about on a regular basis, it is encouraging to see new members, both experienced and inexperienced alike coming along to check the club out.

As usual I have left writing this until the last minute, and being stuck in a London hotel room, I am a little unsure where the last Journal article left off! I do however think it appropriate that I begin in April 2005, with a fairly significant development in the Aberdeen climbing scene, which was the long-awaited opening of our first proper climbing wall, at the new RGU Sports Centre. In fact, it seems that climbing walls in Aberdeen are a little like buses, but I will expand on this a little later. With a proper, albeit small and hot wall, we now had no excuse not to train, so every Wednesday evening members of the Club could be found sweating it out and pulling on the plastic. This did of course mean that we were all like finely-tuned machines when it came to the Tuesday evening sessions on the local cliffs in May.

The evenings sessions were as well attended as previous years with weekly trips (weather permitting of course) to the local sea cliffs with the occasional foray inland to the likes of the Pass of Ballater and Legaston Quarry. Perhaps the highlight of the year was however an excursion to Clachnaben on mid-summer's night. This year we were treated with excellent weather, which inspired James Hirst to initiate the idea that we take a disposable barbeque up with us. So, in between burgers and the occasional beer to re-hydrate, people even managed to fit in the odd route, before walking off with a stunning sunset behind us. Also of note from this year was James Hirst and Jeff Knowles epic ascent of a route at Clashrodneay, resulting in perhaps the Club's only benighting of the year!

An excellent weekend was also had at the Costa del Reiff in August, with 20 or so members enjoying ceilidh dancing, fishing, more barbeques and midges. Some people even went rock climbing as well, on crags as far flung as the Leaning Blocks cliff, and Stac Pollaidh, making a change from the usual honey pot of the Pinnacle area.

With summer drawing to a close, the focus turned to winter climbing, and more climbing walls. From the first fall of snow in November, the enthusiasts were up to the high corries in search of some quality winter action. Bill Stephenson started a winter climber's e-mail list, which has remained active this year, with people looking for partners, sharing stories of adventure and reporting on conditions. I have even found myself signing up and getting the tools out from time to time. A wee jaunt was made to the CIC hut on the Ben, where despite conditions being a little thin we managed ascents of a number of the classic routes. This was also despite leaving the lunches up to Tim Walmsley, who considered a grown man could survive on a tube of Fruit Pastels and a pack of Mini Cheddars for 2 consecutive days in the hills. I should have thought he would know better, with his vast experience of Cairngorm Club bus and weekend meets!

Like many others, I am however more at home in a dusty climbing wall once the nights draw in. So, just as we were starting to get bored with the RGU climbing wall, it was announced that Aberdeen was to get a brand new 'extreme sports' facility down the beach, under the name of Transition (see what I meant about buses?) I must have mug written on my forehead, as no sooner had the announcement been made than I found myself a member of the 'advisory board' for the project. Of course for any venture like this, the subject of fundraising comes up, so after a promotional evening in the Blue Lamp for any interested parties (read mugs again!), a sponsored climb was organised involving a team from most of the climbing clubs and groups in the area. The objective was to climb the height of Everest (collectively that is!) on the RGU climbing wall, over a period of six hours. In actual fact we must all be far better climbers than we gave ourselves credit for, as it was actually completed in around three, so just for the hell of it we all kept going in an effort to double the height. The Cairngorm Club Team (consisting of myself, Diane Colvin, Julia Harker, Jon Yearsley, Marj Ewen and Dave Kirk) managed a credible fourth place out of eight, and so at least managed to avoid total humiliation. Our efforts were not in vain however; the Cairngorm Club team raised a total of £1,500, as well as an additional contribution of £1,000 from the Club funds which all went a small way towards getting the Transition wall off the ground, and it is now due to open in March 2007.

So now let's get back to some proper climbing. Summer 2006 started somewhat surprisingly on the sea cliffs. After the success of the previous year it also seemed reasonable to think that we were charmed, and would enjoy another fine evening on sunny Clachnaben. I don't know that the few hardy souls who went up that night would necessarily agree with me. On the subject of drowned rats, the addition of a new venue in the form of Harper's Wall caught at least one member by surprise, when the nature of the somewhat dynamic and strenuous start resulted in an early bath in a rock pool for Mike Brian. Even the usual 'relaxed' Pass of Ballater was also not without incident, when James Richardson did his best 'Fred Belcher impression', by landing at my feet from part way up Pretzl Logic.

We also managed time for an impromptu barbeque at the Arbroath sea cliffs (seems to be a bit of a theme going on here) with the catering ably handled by Tiana Walker this time. A few hardy souls managed to brave the midges for a weekend meet to Glen Etive, where ascents of the classic Spartan Slab, Bludgers Revelation and January Jigsaw among others were enjoyed in excellent weather (for the Coe at least!).

It also seems the Club has turned in to something of a dating agency of late, with no fewer than four weddings in 2005, and a further one in 2006, and those are just the ones I can remember off the top of my head! I'm sure you will all join me in wishing all the happy couples all the very best for the future.

Anyway, here we are in winter again. A few folk already have a few routes under their belts and reports are starting to filter in about fat ice on the Ben. It's even snowing in London!

The program for the summer's climbing has now been finalised and promises an action-packed time for all, with trips to the classic venues, as well as some new tasty ones to catch out the unwary. So, I will leave it there for now, and again

hope to see you all in the hills and on the crags over the forthcoming year(s), for some more fun and frolics!

Dave Ogden
Climbing Activities Secretary

THURSDAY WALKS

The current format for Thursday Walks continues to be as described in the last *Journal* (number 107 p. 144-147). Jack Connell has acted as coordinator, and routes are organised by individual Club members. Attendance continues to be very healthy, with an average of around 20 taking part, and on occasion as many as 30, and the walks are a great chance for socialising, as well as taking us to a wide range of landscapes, from the seashore, to the countryside, to the less-known but very attractive lower hills around Aberdeen.

2004

January	Kirkhill Forest
February	Countesswells Woods
March	Methlick – Braes of Gight – Gight Castle
April	Seven Bridges Walk, Ballater
May	North of Cruden Bay
June	Mona Gowan
July	Mount Battock
August	Craig Leek
September	Cairn Leuchan / Am Mullach, Glen Muick
October	Rowan Tree to Back o' Bennachie,
November	Royal Cairns, Balmoral
December	Kerloch

2005

January	Green Chain Walk in west Aberdeen City
February	Hill of Fare above Millers
March	Scolty from Shooting Greens
April	Ballochbuie Circle
May	Clash of Wirren and West Wirren
June	Mona Gowan
July	Strathfinella Hill
August	Morven from Groddie
September	Correen Hills
October	Culblean Hill – Tullich – Burn of Vat
November	Tarves – Tolquhoun Castle – the Prop
December	Above Tarland



A Winter Outing above Tarland

2006

January	Kincorth Hill – Tullos Hill (Loirston Country Park)
February	Circular walk around Aboyne
March	Glen Tanar
April	Coyles of Muick
May	Loch Phadruig
June	Collieston – Forvie National Nature Reserve
July	Glen Esk – Burnt Hill
August	Geallaig – Glen Gairn
September	Birse – Gannoch
October	Clachnaben – Charr
November	Brimmond and Elrick Hills
December	Riverside Drive – Deeside Railway Track