

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

GENERAL MEETINGS

On 13 November 2013, Special and Annual General Meetings were held in succession at the Aberdeen Grammar School Former Pupils Club Centre in Aberdeen, 31 members attending. The Committee had called the SGM to consider the following additional clause to the Club's Constitution: *'The Committee shall have discretionary power to make representations or financial contributions to other bodies in pursuit of the Club's objects.'* This was agreed, only 1 vote dissenting.

At the AGM, the following were re-elected as Office-Bearers: Adrian Scott (President), Sandy McIntosh (Vice-President), Derek Pinches (Vice-President), Ken Thomson (Secretary), Derek Pinches (Treasurer), Kees Witte (Hut Custodian), Derek Beverley (Day Meets Secretary), Chris Wilson (Climbing Secretary), Marj Ewan (Weekend Meets Secretary), and Colin Brown (Communications Secretary), with no nominations for the posts of Honorary President (in view of the very recent death of Graham Ewen) or Social Activities Secretary (although Anne Pinches agreed subsequently to carry on in this role). The following were elected to "ordinary" membership of the Committee: Sue Chalmers (Ordinary), James Friend (Ordinary), Stan Urbaniak (Ordinary), Garry Wardrope (Ordinary), Donna Ryan (Ordinary), Alex Barbour (Associate), Ross Littlewood (Associate).

The Treasurer reported that Club membership stood at 414 (1 down from the previous year), and that the bank account stood at £112, 000 including the Willie Robb Bequest (see below). The main Club subscription rate was kept at £13, plus £14.25 for the MCofS.

Apart from reports of Meets etc. (see below), the main AGM item of interest was the announcement that the Club had recently been notified of the bequest of £40,336.44 from the estate of the late Willie Robb (see the Club Journal Vol. 22, No. 110, "In Memoriam" section). Over 20 options, some specific and some general, for the expenditure of this sum were discussed, and the incoming President undertook to see that the Committee would consider all these, with

more specific proposals brought forward for general Club consultation in 2014.

At the AGM held on 12 November 2014, 34 members attended, with the following elected as Office-Bearers: James Friend (President) in succession to Adrian Scott who stood down, and Jim Bryce (Weekend Meets Secretary) in succession to Marj Ewan. Garry Wardrope succeeded Derek Beverely who had served as Day Meets secretary for five years. Other Office-Bearers being re-elected. The following were elected to vacant Ordinary membership of the Committee: Sue Chalmers (Ordinary), Euan Docherty (Associate), Marj Ewan (Ord), Robert Fox (Ord), Benn Hitchen (Ord), Ruth Payne (Ord), Stan Urbaniak (Ord) and Marion White (Ord).

The Treasurer reported that Club membership stood at 406 (8 down from the previous year), and that the bank account stood at £111,266 including the Willie Robb Bequest. The main Club subscription rate was once again kept at £13, plus £14.25 for the MCofS. Most discussion revolved around the Willie Robb Bequest, for which slides were shown describing the Committee's work on this over the past year. This had included investigating and short listing 5 "main options", including a second club hut, a footbridge at Derry Lodge (an option significantly affected by the destruction of the existing footbridge during the floods of August 2014), tree planting at Altanour in Glen Ey, a bike shed at Muir, and (further) financial support for Club Meets. These options had been put to the membership for consultation in May/June 2014, and further investigations carried out since then on three (the bike shed having been erected out of general funds, and the meets support option having been discarded). However, for various reasons, namely the lack of a suitable hut site, uncertainty over the NTS position at Derry Lodge and the lack of a response from the estate at Altanour, no actual Bequest spend had yet occurred. Adrian Scott proposed an immediate decision to allocate the Bequest to a Grant Fund, whose interest would be used to support such causes as overseas expeditions. This provoked considerable discussion, which also covered the options previously explored, and the propriety of an immediate AGM decision. In the end, it was agreed that the Grant Fund idea should be considered by the Committee, while other options remained on the table.

MEETS AND EXCURSIONS

DAY MEETS

Derek Beverley was Day Meets Secretary for the period under review, and reported as follows at the 2013 and 2014 AGMs. In 2012-13, a total of 121 participants had attended such meets, to which the Club had contributed a total of £348. In 2013-14, 135 had participated, with a net Club contribution of £535. Travel modes had included hired coaches (at a cost approaching £500 per trip, though one shared), service buses, the Westhill Community minibus driven by a Club member, shared cars, and train (to Inverurie). He then stood down after 5 years in his post, and was heartily thanked for his work.

| | 2013 | 2014 |
|-----------|--|---|
| January | Lochnagar (coach) | Lochnagar (coach) |
| February | Cairngorm Northern Corries (car) | Sgor Gaoith & Mullach Clach a' Bhclair (cars) |
| March | Ben Chonzie (minibus) | Northern Corries (minibus) |
| April | Cruach Ardrain Traverse (minibus) | Glen Shee (shared coach) |
| May | Ben Wyvis Traverse (minibus) | Mona Gowan/Morven Traverse (minibus) |
| June | Morvich to Glen Affric (minibus; overnigher) | Knoydart (minibus and boat; overnigher) |
| July | Ben Lawers (cars) | - |
| August | Glen Geusachan & Beinn Bhrotain (cars) | Glen Muick to Glen Clova (minibus) |
| September | Cairngorm Traverse (shared coach) | Cairngorm Traverse (coach) |
| October | Eastern Glen Cluanie (cars) | Ben Vrackie and Ben Vuirich (minibus) |
| November | Glen Callater (minibus) | Ladder Hills (minibus) |
| December | Glen Esk (minibus) | Derry Cairngorm (minibus) |

WEEKEND MEETS

Over the two years under review, Marj Ewan acted as Week-end Meets Secretary until resigning in May 2013 for personal reasons, after which Jim Bryce took over. In 2012-13, there were 11 such meets, most of which broke even. Week-end Meet charges to members had been capped at £15 pppn. In 2013-14, with the same number of meets, there had been a considerable Club contribution, of £801, mostly due to losses at Ariundle.

| | 2013 | 2014 |
|-----------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| January | Muir Cottage (Burns Night) | Muir Cottage (Burns Night) |
| February | Highland Hostel, Newtonmore | Roybridge Hostel |
| March | Blackwater Hostel, Kinlochleven | Aviemore Bunkhouse |
| April | Blackrock Cottage, Glencoe | Kinlochewe Hotel Bunkhouse |
| May | Gairloch Carn Dearg SYH | Ariundle Bunkhouse, Strontian |
| June | Coruisk Memorial Hut, Skye | Sail Mhor Croft, Dundonnell |
| July | Cairndow Hall, Arrochar | Strawberry Cottage, Glen Affric |
| August | CIC Hut, Ben Nevis | Naismith Hut, Elphin |
| September | Newlands, Lake District | Portnalong, Skye |
| October | Glencoe Independent Hostel | Inverardran Cottage, Crianlarich |
| November | Bye the Way Hostel, Tyndrum | Raeburn Hut, Laggan |

OVERSEAS MEETS

Austria: in September 2013, 9 members plus a guest spent a week based at Kaprun near Zell am See on the edge of the Hohe Tauern National Park, with splendid views of the nearby Kitzsteinhorn (3203m) and the Groszglockner (3798m) above the Kaprun Dam.

Dolomites: in July 2014, 14 members based themselves in Corvara, and explored the area's many *via ferrata*, walking paths and historic sites. The meet was splendidly organized by Adrian Scott, (see page 182).

MID-WEEK WALKS

Arthur Dickie continued to supervise these popular Thursday walks during the review period. Attendance ranged from 8 to 32, and conditions from splendid to very wet indeed (e.g. Glen Tanar!).

| | 2013 | 2014 |
|-----------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| January | Craibstone/Tyrebagger | Inverbervie Coastal |
| February | Kincorth/Tullos Hills | Strathfinella Hill |
| March | Fungle/Baudy Meg | Fetteresso Forest |
| April | Glen Dye/Clatterin' Brig | Carn na Drochaide |
| May | Brown Cow Hill | Glen Buchat |
| June | Hill of Wirren | Glen Callater/Creag nan Gabhar |
| July | Culardoch | Carn Ealasaid |
| August | Boddam/Cruden Bay | Sandy Hillock |
| September | Burnt Hill | Glen Girnock |
| October | Gannoch | Mormond Hill |
| November | Pannanich Hill | Glen Tanar |
| December | - | Bennachie |

CLIMBING

Chris Wilson acted as Secretary for this aspect of the Club's activities during the period under review. Summer activities continued as before, i.e. weekly evening visits to various coastal locales, with occasional forays inland to Ballater or to the sport-climbing quarries in Angus. The summer evening meets continued to

be popular, with average numbers around 10 club members. The meets continue to attract new members who have limited climbing experience and are looking to climb with experienced local climbers. At the weekends there were trips to both local crags and some that are too far away for evening meets, e.g. Glen Clova and Logiehead. During the winters most activities switched to the indoor climbing walls at the RGU (in 2012/13) and Transition Extreme. On the regular Club weekend meets, Club climbers completed a varied collection of routes on inland crags, sea cliffs and mountains.

DANDERS

Ruth Payne once again organized these events for (mostly) less active members, with a short walk followed by a convivial lunch at a suitable nearby location. Venues included Brimmond/Kirkhill, Drum Castle/Mains, and Kinord/Dinnet.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

These continued under the capable management of Anne Pinches, though at the 2014 AGM she announced her impending withdrawal from this role.

ANNUAL DINNERS

Two Dinners were held since the last issue of the Journal, one at the Old Mill Inn, Maryculter, on 22 November 2013, and the other (after the Old Mill was closed in advance of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral) at the Treetops Hotel, Aberdeen. They featured speakers as follows:

- 18 November 2013: Phil Glennie described the development and work of the Braemar Mountain Rescue Team
- 21 November 2014: the well-known adventure cameraman Keith Partridge - of "Touching the Void" fame - provided a gripping audio-visual presentation covering several of his trips, including scenes from an awe-inspiring cave in South America.

INDOOR MEETS

(* indicates presentations by one or more Club members)

2013

January: Members' Night*

February: Viktor Musial* – *Kilimanjaro Adventure*

March: Neil Cromar* – *Good Days in the Hills*

October: Heather Morning – *Mountain Safety*

December: Ruth Payne* – *With Passport and Pension*

2014

January: Members' Night*

February: Eric Johnston* – *Climbing and the Cairngorm Club*

March: Linda di Maio – *Portrait of Bhutan*

October: Murray Swapp – *The Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust*

December: Richard and Gill Shirreffs* – *Walking in Greece*

In addition, a barbecue was held at Templars Park, Maryculter, in June 2013, and a meal at the Old Mill Hotel in June 2014. Finally, Garry Wardrope organized a "Helpers' Evening" in March 2014 in the form of a downtown meal provided for non-Committee members who had assisted the Club over the previous couple of years.

COMMUNICATIONS

Colin Brown continued as Communications Secretary during the period under review, maintaining the Club's website www.cairngormclub.org.uk, and the Members' Forum which increased from 122 to 160 members, (involving 614 topics increasing to over 850, and from 3100 individual posts rising to 4900). He also managed The Yahoo! email system, produced three Newsletters each year, and saw to the monthly updating of Club Meets posters for display at shops, libraries, etc.

MUIR COTTAGE

Muir has continued to be very popular, with about 2000 bed-nights booked per year at charges maintained at £10 pppn (£5 for Members). It brought in revenue of £15,000 (2013) and £19,000 (2014) before routine costs, which approximate £5,000. Work Weekends timed to follow a local Mid-Week Walk in April or May have also proved successful, and, other than the usual cleaning and painting, have included drain repairs at the north-east corner, the reconstruction of part of the southern boundary dyke, and the planting (in 2014) of a few locally “acquired” tree seedlings near that dyke.

In 2013, the aging Vigilant wood-burning stove in the lounge was replaced with an efficient modern one (a Clearview Vision), and a stainless steel flue installed. This has approximately halved the consumption of firewood, whose supplier has recently switched from Invercauld to Mar Lodge. In the slated roof some deterioration was discovered in the wooden sarking, and bad sections were replaced. The plastic northern gutters proved incapable of coping with voluminous snow, and are now routinely removed for the winters.

In 2014 solar thermal panels, of 1200 KWh/yr capacity, were installed on the roof above the Members’ Room, and a new hot water tank installed. Loft insulation was also laid above the common room, and LED light bulbs installed with a £300 Green Deal subsidy. All this has significantly reduced the Muir electricity bills, and in addition about £250 per year is being received under the government’s Renewable Heat Incentive scheme. Also in 2014, a new shed for mountain bikes and the storage of paint and spares, was constructed to the north of the main building, leaving the old sheds fully available for firewood.