

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

GENERAL MEETINGS

Since the previous issue of the Journal (in early 2018), there have been two Annual General Meetings of the Club, in 2018 and 2019 - with nothing special to report from either! However, this journal of record must be maintained, and so ...

The AGM held on November 14, 2018 was attended by 22 members. Apart from the meet and other reports summarised below, the main items reported were the untimely death of the Weekend Meets Secretary Jim Bryce, and the publication of the previous issue of this *Journal*. The Treasurer reported that Club membership stood at 383 (4 down from the previous year), and that the Club's bank accounts on 30 September 2018 stood at £100,586, after an annual deficit of £5,459. The standard Club subscription rate was kept at £13, plus £16.25 as the Mountaineering Scotland affiliation fee (or £18.25 if MS's proposed rise in that fee was approved – which it was not).

The following were elected or re-elected as Office-Bearers: Ruth Payne (Hon. President), Marj Ewan (President), Colin Brown and Sue Chalmers (Vice-Presidents), Ken Thomson (Secretary), Derek Pinches (Treasurer), Kees Witte (Hut Custodian), Garry Wardrope (Day Meets Secretary), Sue Chalmers (Weekend Meets Secretary), Rod Campbell (Climbing Activities), Eilidh Scobbie (Social Activities Secretary) and Colin Brown (Communications Secretary). The following were elected to “ordinary” membership of the Committee: Izy Kirkaldy, James Hirst, Mark Peel, Adrian Scott and Jamie Vince (all Ordinary Club Members).

The AGM on November 13, 2019, was attended by 31 members, the Treasurer reported that Club membership on 30 September 2019 stood at 361, and that the bank account (including a donation of almost £10,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Clachnaben path) stood at £116,561, after an annual surplus of £15,975. The standard Club subscription rate was kept at £13, plus the MS affiliation fee of £16.25 (or £17.55 if MS's proposed rise in that fee was approved at the MS AGM – which indeed happened). All Office-Bearers and “ordinary” Committee members were re-elected, with Ivan Hiscox added to the last category. The main AOCB covered the Club's attitudes to various issues to be raised at the forthcoming MS AGM and EGM at Glenmore

– where in the event the future Club’s voting power was raised from 40 to about 300 (our “active” list).

Other general Club developments included the “promotion” of about 25 Associate Members to “Ordinary” status in early 2019, in recognition of their competence on the hill, and the contribution of several Club items to a centenary exhibition organized by the Munro Society in the Perth Library.

MEETS

DAY MEETS

In 2017-18, there were a total of 103 participants on these meets, to which the Club contributed a total of £763. In 2018-19, there were 112 attendances, with a net Club contribution of £532, including two coach hirings. The locations were as follows:

	2018	2019
January	Lochnagar*	Lochnagar*
February	Ben Vorlich/Stuc a’Chroin	Mount Keen
March	Snowholing	Snowholing
April	Deeside	Morven
May	Angel’s Peak	Feshie – Coylumbridge
June	O/N: Knoydart	O/N: Linn o’Dee – Atholl
July	Ben Lawers	Ben Wyvis
September	Cairngorm Traverse*	Cairngorm Traverse*
October	Ballochbuie	Beinn Bhrotain
November	Muick-Clova	Mount Battock
December	Strathbogie	Bennachie

Coach trips marked with *, most others by minibus

The 2018 Snowholing Meet turned out a bit differently than planned: a latish start, the closure of the Cairngorm ski road, boot/crampon problems, lack of snow depth and high winds all led eventually to a retreat from Ciste Mhearaid to the Glenmore campsite.

WEEKEND MEETS

Net Club contributions to these meets in 2017-18 and 2018-19 amounted to £183 and £163 respectively, with ever-healthier numbers leading to several “full up” messages. As can be seen below, a number of new locations were selected (e.g. South Laggan, Lael) but also several old favourites. The Jura meet in July 2019 was probably the two-year highlight, with 18 camping, sunbathing, swimming, etc.!

	2018	2019
January	Muir Cottage	Muir Cottage
February	Roybridge	Newtonmore
March	Aberfeldy	Corran, Fort William
April	South Laggan	Kintail
May	Dundonnell	Coruisk
June	Torrison	Cannich
July	Glen Affric	Jura
August	Lagangarbh, Glencoe	Loch Ossian
September	Glen Brittle	Borrowdale
October	Elphin	Lael, Ullapool
November	Glenfinnan	Blackrock, Glencoe
December	Onich	Crianlarich

OVERSEAS MEETS

Activity on this front saw Derek Beverley and Jamie Vince in 2018 enjoying the Austrian Verwall Alps, while Izy Kirkaldy, Mark Peel and Rod Campbell climbed via ferrata, in mixed conditions in the Italian Dolomites. In 2019 Derek Beverley visited the Stubai Alpen, as did Rod Campbell and Mark Peel

CLIMBING

This field of Club activity varied, as usual, with the weather (which was good in summer 2018 but poor in summer 2019), but the Weekend Meet to Borrowdale in 2019 was a highlight. During the winters, most activities took place on Tuesday evenings at Transition Extreme (TX) down at the Beach. In spring 2019, after a good deal of to-ing and fro-

ing, an agreement was signed, giving cut-price TX entry for Club members, in exchange for a £500 Club donation.

MID-WEEK WALKS (MMWs)

In mid-2019, Joyce Ritchie took over from Marion White as Coordinator of these popular series of meets. With the opening of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, the usual Aberdeen meeting point settled down at the Kingswells Park and Ride.

	2018	2019
January	Kinellar & Tyrebagger	Hazlehead – Countesswells
February	Seaton Cliffs – Auchmithie	Sands of Forvie
March	Braes & Woods of Gight	Benaquhallie
April	Birse (not Ben Tirran: snow!)	Tap o’Noth
May	Ballochbuie	Braemar – Corriemulzie
June	Ailnack Gorge	Callater – Craig nan Gabhar
July	Monelpie Moss & Loch Muick	Airlie Monument & Glen Prosen
August	Corrie Fee & Mayar	Pressendye
September	Craig Leek	Elsick Mounth
October	Correen Hills	Hill of Fare
November	Kincardine o’Neil – Aboyne	Braeroddach
December	Crathes Castle	Haddo Estate

The November 2018 MWW commemorated, at the Kincardine o’Neil war memorial, Club members who lost their lives in the First World War (see Mark Peel’s article in the previous issue of this *Journal*). The 2017 innovation of a once-a-year MWW hired coach was repeated in 2019, to enable an A-to-B traverse of the Elsick Mounth, from near the Raedykes Roman Fort to cars left at Durris.

DAUNERS

Ruth Payne once again organized these events for (mostly) less-active members, with a short walk followed by lunch at a suitable nearby location. Venues during the period under review included Dunecht, Crathes, Haddo, Newburgh, Kinord, Stonehaven, Scolty and Forvie.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

ANNUAL DINNERS

The two Dinners were both held in the Beach DoubleTree hotel, and featured speakers as follows:

November 2018: Sandy Allan, on his traverse (and descent!) of Nanga Parbat's Mazeno Ridge with Rick Allen

November 2019: Stephen Venables, on "Thirty Years Voyaging to the Unclimbed Summits of Antarctica"

INDOOR MEETS

The usual series of slideshow talks were provided each winter, at the Sportsman's Club on Queen's Road in 2018/19, and at the DoubleTree by Hilton hotel at the Beach in 2019/20. Speakers and their topics were as follows (* indicates presentations by one or more Club members):

2018-19

October: Members' Night*

December: Eric Jensen*, "The Nature of the Cairngorms"

January: Robbie Middleton*, "The Cairngorm Club: 130 Years of Mountaineering"

February: Graham Wyllie*, "From Cairngorms to Matterhorn"

March: Anke Addy, "The Living Cairngorms"

2019-20

October: Malcolm Combe, "The Law on 'The Right to Roam'"

December: John Love, "A Saga of Sea Eagles"

January: Members' Night*

February: Robin Howie, "Reminiscences"

March: Carol Ritchie, “Scotland’s National Parks-a view from Europe”

SUMMER EVENTS

In both Junes 2018 and 2019, barbecues were held at Touckswood above Stonehaven, thanks to former Club President Adrian Scott, who was pleased to show off his trees, pigs and bothy. Neither meet attracted many participants, but more are hoped for in 2020.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Club’s website www.cairngormclub.org.uk and Yahoo! email system were maintained by Colin Brown throughout the review period, and three Newsletters were produced each year. The Members’ Forum increased between autumns 2017 and 2019 from 152 to 170 members, from 1093 to nearly 1200 topics, and from 6340 to 6900 individual posts.

MUIR COTTAGE

With Kees Witte continuing as Custodian, and Dave Kirk in charge of bookings, Muir occupation continued at satisfactory levels, with about 1700 bed-nights in 2017-18 but up to 2000 in 2018-19, with gross annual revenues of £16,000 and £19,000 respectively, and annual net revenues of £9,000. In the first of these years, some roof repairs were carried out; in the latter, the fencing around the property was renewed. In 2019, a long-standing hot water problem was finally tracked down to a frost-caused leak within the wall of the disabled toilet: repair has required pipe diversion to a more internal location, and re-plastering of the wall, but should result in lower electricity bills!

Both years’ Work Weekends were again successful, with much of the necessary housekeeping accomplished by a band of brothers and sisters. To reduce demands on Kees’s time dealing with “problems”, a Braemar firm has been commissioned to keep a monthly eye on the place, and to deal with relatively minor repairs.

PROJECTS

In 2018-19, the Club made a £1000 donation to the Mend Our Mountains project for the repair of the badly eroded route up the south side of Ben a'Ghlo; the path was publicly "opened" in autumn 2019. The Club also explored the repair of the well-used path up Clachnaben; in the event, a £10,000 grant from the National Lottery Community Fund made unnecessary an initial Club contribution. The Aboyne office of the Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland drew up a 40-page technical specification and employed the contractors to the job late in 2019. Donald Thomas has been "our man" in this project and deserves thanks for his knowledge and energy in pushing things along. Some further work, both by contractors and by volunteers, is planned for early 2020.

The four areas of land which the Club has fenced off against deer in Glen Ey – Piper's Wood Lower and Upper, and the two enclosures at Altanour – have received attention. In summer 2019 a new stile was erected into Upper Piper's Wood – the older stile between the Lower and Upper sections meant two "ascents" to access the latter and was disappearing into the undergrowth! Also, in 2019, a botanical survey was undertaken at Altanour, with most of the 115 plant species found there in 2016 re-identified, and about 25 "new" ones discovered. All very gratifying, even though it will take a wee while before young trees – some now protected in tubes – become apparent there. In November 2019, Richard Shirreffs took over "supervision" of the Woods, and quickly compiled spreadsheet lists of the botanical survey results, as well as identifying several items to be discussed and monitored in future years.