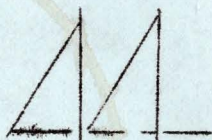


Venture



AUGUST

1977

NUMBER

25



VENTURE

1971

AUGUST

25

NUMBER

VENTURE 44. A sort of magazine, by, for, and about the
44th Gloucester (Sir Thomas Rich's) Venture
Scout Unit,

NUMBER TWENTY FIVE

AUGUST 1977

Editor Rob Dalton

UNIT OFFICERS

V.S.L.	F.Henderson
A.V.S.L.	W.R.Spear
Chairman	Steve Preston
Secretary	Mark Evans
Treasurer	Chris Pashley
Recorder	Dave Brown
Quartermaster	Phil Champion
Executive	Simon Weston
	Ian Fletcher

CONTENTS

Editorial.	2
A Walk in the Black Mountains	
by Rob Dalton.	2
Notes and Newsby V.S.L.	3
Sponsored Sundayby Pete Green.	4
Deans Walk Excavation by Mark Bennett.	5
Shirley Williams, Education etc.	
by Mark Evans.	9
From all Points	10
How the West wasn't won	
by Pete Irvine	11

EDITORIAL

When originally asked to take over the job of editor of "Venture 44", a certain member of the Unit, then in the 5th form asked me to make sure that the magazine contained "sophisticated smut" so that his mother - apparently an avid reader of this publication would not be able to understand it. Strict censorship does not permit me to do so, but I hope you enjoy this magazine anyhow, Mrs F...

This, the "jubilee issue", differs slightly from previous editions in that as well as the usual reports and descriptions of Unit activities, hikes, etc, there are articles with more general and wider ranging subject matter. This seems a good idea to me, and I would welcome further articles of a similar nature - perhaps even replies to or criticisms of views expressed, for our future issues. Surely some of you have printable views, ideas, stories, hobbies which may be of interest to our readers. Have a go at some creative writing - all contributions gratefully received, especially from ex-members.

Since the last issue the Unit has been involved in many activities, some of which are alluded to elsewhere in the magazine, and some to be chronicled later. One event that does stick in my mind, however is described below.

A WALK IN THE BLACK MOUNTAINS

The annual Black Mountain Hiking Competition took place this year on the weekend July 8-10th. It was organised jointly by the Gwent County Scout Council and 69th Army Youth Team, and was based at the Welsh Brigade Depot Cwrt-y-Gollen at Crickhowell. Our Unit entered a team in the Senior section which consisted of Steve Allen, Mark Evans, Julian Williams and Wally Champion, and a Junior team of Simon Weston, Ian Fletcher Dave Brown and myself. Most of the other teams were Welsh, and in our section all were older than us

(continued on page 8)

NOTES AND NEWS

The early summer is the time when examinations rear their ugly heads, and the Scout headquarters no longer echoes to the thud of table tennis balls, or the gentle tinkle of broken glass as yet another window is smashed. Formal activity stops, but this year, as always, plenty of informal happenings occur. This year canoes have been in, and three new fibre-glass vessels have been constructed. All the older wooden craft have been refitted, and the canal once again is being used, at vast expense!

The district skittles tournament has come and gone - guess who won it! Various outside jobs have been taken on in conjunction with Glosaid, including digging out a jumping-pit at the District Headquarters,

This is also the time when members move away from School and the Unit, but until those exam results come out we are never sure as to who we will lose. However we can say our farewells to two stalwarts who have gone to fresh fields and building sites new.

BREN NOONAN, one of the true characters of the Unit, has disappeared in a southerly direction with his shovel and has joined some of his compatriots in the construction trade. His colourful language and darts playing will be missed by all of us.

MARK EVANS, our secretary, has gone to work on a farm near Chedworth for a year. Mark has been one of the major driving forces in the Unit for some time. He has always been a determined and wholehearted supporter of Venture scouting, and has never been afraid to speak his mind on controversial issues. We shall miss his presence in all sorts of ways, and I am sure all the Unit will join me in wishing to him and Bren all the best in the future.

Talking about wishing people all the best, several members of the Unit were at St. Catherines Church at the end of last month for the wedding of Bill Spear and Rebecca Cooper. As someone said, our ex-Scout Leader, J. Y.C. is not losing a daughter, but gaining a pun-in-law!

A SPONSORED SUNDAY

Cheltenham Round Table's 30 mile sponsored "Jubilee Walk" took place on Sunday 26th June on a route Cheltenham to Gloucester to Tewkesbury and back to the start at the Racecourse, each leg being about 10 miles. The organisers estimated that 2500 walkers entered, a fair proportion of whom were children who walked a shorter route round the race course. Half the money raised by each of the walkers went to his own organisation, the other half to local charities supported by the Round Table, such as the Cotswold Hospital Radio Service and the St. Vincent's Day Care Centre. When all the money was collected by our six walkers, namely the V.S.L., Steve Preston, Phil (Wal) Champion, Dave Brown, Pete Green and Rob Dalton, we had raised £67.

R.D.

We set off from a carpark near the racecourse at 8.30 a.m. on a sunny Sunday morning. When we had done 2 or 3 miles I found an injured sparrow. After I had released it, several people, mostly called Wally teased me about what I'd done, asking me why I didn't pick up mutilated hedgehogs etc from the roadside. The first checkpoint - there were 6 at 5 mile intervals - was at Dowty Rotol at Staverton, and after getting our cards stamped we continued into Gloucester, stopping for a welcomed drink of milk at Dave's house, and on to the next checkpoint at Plock Court by way of Estcourt Road.

Lunch was taken at Coombe Hill checkpoint on the A38 and there we did things to our feet (to stop blisters or something, the V.S.L. said). The last two checkpoints were passed uneventfully, and our flagging spirits were raised by the V.S.L. making encouraging noises such as "That's £56 so far!"

Hot and sweaty, we arrived back at the racecourse at 5.10pm. and were greeted by clapping from the organisers and from other walkers who hadn't completed the 30 miles.

I must be mad, or maybe I should get sunburnt and blistered more often!

Peter Green

THE VENTURE AWARD.

One of the commitments of a Venture Scout is to undertake the training necessary to achieve the Venture Award. This bald statement may sound a little forbidding, but in fact the actual progress towards this goal

may be surprisingly painless and almost enjoyable, as a large proportion of what has to be done is up to the individual concerned. One part in particular which gives plenty of scope for inventiveness and initiative is that which comes under the heading "Creative pursuit".

Mark Bennett, who has recently achieved his V.A. is an enthusiastic archeologist, and has spent a considerable time on preparing for publication some diagrams to illustrate a local "dig". The following account outline what his job was. He has used this as his creative pursuit.

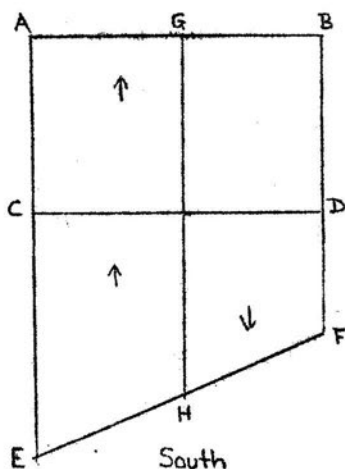
THE DEANS WALK EXCAVATION

The excavation commenced in 1972 and came to a conclusion in June 1975, when the site was excavated down to natural sand.

The site was in Priory Road gardens below some demolished cottages - 14 to 24 St Mary's Street, which originally were a continuation of a row of late medieval and post-medieval buildings still fronting onto the road

The early trench brought to light that there have been buildings at this spot from recent times back to at least the 13th century. The first notable features to be uncovered were ovens, which possibly suggest a type of occupation other than simply domestic. Also found was a loam deposit which might have resulted from the flooding of an earlier known course of the Severn. Further excavation showed that this was a Roman site, with post holes and pottery from that era.

At the end of June 1975 the easier job of excavating finished, and the long laborious task of putting all the facts together to produce a final report commenced.



The sections needing to be drawn were AB, CD, EF, AE, GH and BF. I was concerned with doing the first three of these.

When drawing the sections on the site, AB and CD were drawn looking northward, whilst section EF had to be drawn looking southward and then reversed later on. It was easy to draw AB and EF from the excavation as they are permanent features - being the north and south walls of the trench.

As CD is not such a feature it needed to be drawn in a different way. This was done by putting

ing a line across the trench from the east to the west walls, and then dropping plumb lines from it. The section was then drawn as each layer of soil was taken off.

The original sections were done roughly in pencil so then it was my task to complete the section properly - in ink - and add to it if the scale used to draw them did not fit into the scaled down dimensions of the actual trench. This job took me through many days and many, many records, cups of coffee, and two Rotring pens. The quill on one of the pens wore down from 0.2 size to 0.4 size!

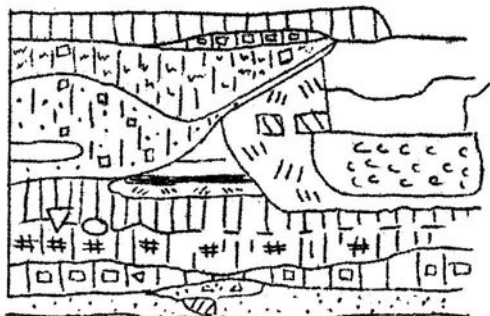
After the sections had been drawn came the even more laborious job of adding symbols to the drawing. Problems here were caused if the lines on the sections had been drawn too closely together because when the symbols were added, after printing the diagram would come out as a smudge, and the whole job would have to be repeated.

Some of the types of diagrams that were drawn are shown on the next page.

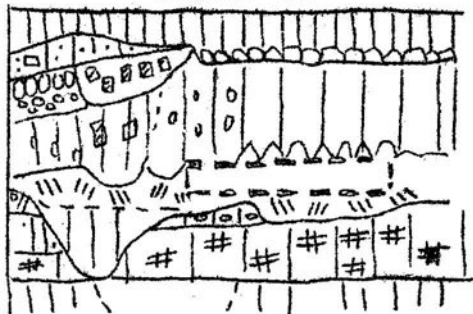
Mark Bennett.

Readers still waiting to read the definitive account of the last winter hike will have to go on waiting, as the manuscript has disappeared!

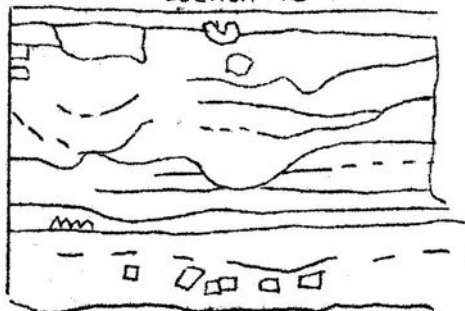
Section EF



Section CD



Section AB



- ||| Loam
- |||| Turf
- ||||| Clay
- ## Burned Clay
- Oolite
- ▣▣ Lias Limestone
- Gravel
- △△ Mortar
- ▧▧ Wall plaster
- ▣▣ Sandstone
- ==== Charcoal
- ||:| Black Ash

Drawing before
symbols added



A WALK IN THE BLACK MOUNTAINS continued from page 3.

Setting off from school early friday evening in an overheating Bedford, we stopped off at Staunton to collect Mark and Wally, who were helping on a field course, and eventually arrived at Cwrt-y-Gollen. We pitched our tents, underwent a kit check (for which we gained full marks) and a tent inspection - also marked, followed by a course briefing by the organisers. A hurried revision course on use of map and compass from the V.S.L., and so to bed, with I*n Fl*tch*r dreaming of a platinum blonde seen earlier in the evening wandering around the site in Venture Scout uniform.

Saturday; In spite of going down the wrong valley at one point, the seniors did very well in their 15 mile endurance hike, ending up in second position overall for the day. Our junior team was split into two groups, one going west and the other east along the same course. We didn't do too well on the 10 mile speed hike, due to missing checkpoints, getting slightly lost, and two people being ill. Ian had a disagreement with his Army "special issue stew", and Simon was suffering from an unmentionable disorder. After tea we were faced with the initiative test of a simulated rescue of two young injured climbers, a part which I think was testing, and a bit unfair in places. We ended up 8th out of 13 teams eventually. That night we were joined by Chris Pashley and we retired to a nearby inn to compare notes on the day.

Sunday; After an 8.00a.m. breakfast (all our meals were taken with soldiers in the canteen) - the seniors did the speed hike, centred on Sugar Loaf, and despite warm weather, they really got going - well enough in fact to win the Trophy for the second consecutive year. Well done! In our 12 mile endurance hike, I dropped out after 3 miles, exhausted from the day before, and was transported back to camp. Unhindered by me the other three raced on, doing the day's fastest time so that we finished 4th over all. After the the presentations we left for home. It was a weekend I'll never forget

Rob Dalton

SHIRLEY WILLIAMS, EDUCATION AND VENTURE SCOUTS

You may well ask yourself what these three topics have in common. The answer is quite simply the continued existence of the 44th Gloucester Venture Scout Unit as we now know it.

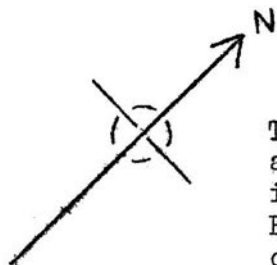
I personally find myself in a dilemma with regard to the controversial issue of how, if at all, Gloucester re-organises its secondary education, particularly for pupils of age sixteen plus. On the one hand I feel that there is a very substantial waste of teaching resources within small sixth-form A-level sets, that the sixth-form does little to discourage apathetic educational drifters and also that wearing compulsory school uniform beyond the age of sixteen is undesirable. All these problems and many others could be easily remedied by establishing colleges of further education for those students of 16 and over who wish to make a positive move and continue their studies in a mixed, mature and industrious environment.

However, having just completed two years in the sixth form of Sir Thomas Rich's Grammar School, and having reaped a great deal of benefit from it, especially through my membership of this Scout Unit, I find myself in a quandry. Although Venture Scout Units that are unattached to schools do exist, they are rarely as large or as unified as the 44th. If Sir Thomas Rich's School was to lose its sixth form, then along with it would also disappear almost ten years of 44th Venture Scouting and that would be a shame.

Obviously the issue is rather more involved than a simple question of preserving a grammar school to save a Venture Scout Unit. A whole nation's educational system is at stake, and unfortunately for the 44th, it is bound to suffer from any changes.

Mark Evans.

Reminder! The Unit Annual General Meeting is to be held on September 16th at . 7. 30 p.m.



FROM ALL POINTS.

There are certain times of the year, and this is one of them, when a visitor to the lounge bar of the King Edward the Seventh is bound to trip over the prone form of at least one ex-member of the Unit. I ventured in myself one night and by pronouncing the magic words, "This one's on me-" was soon surrounded by familiar faces.

ANDY BURNS, down from Leeds University for a few days seems to be enjoying himself in his post-graduate studies. He is doing a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering.

JOHN WILLIAMS has finished his course at Wolverhampton, and has gained an Honours degree in Mechanical Engineering. Lot of engineers about these days!

JAKE DAVIES has not finished anything yet, except his pint, and is asking for another....

JOHN PRICE, sitting in the corner discussing the relative merits of Bjorn Borg and Jimmy Connors. You didn't know John was a tennis enthusiast? Well, neither did he until he got this job in the press box at Wimbledon this year as an interpreter. He can now swear fluently in rum-anian.

DAVE BARNES has now finished his degree course, and is due back on the high seas next month. He might well bump into DARRALL JONES, who after a year's studies at Portsmouth is due to go to sea for the first time with the R.N. With those two loose on the ocean wave, Britons may sleep easy in their beds at night (unless they live within ramming distance of the coast!)

JOHN BARNES has bought a new car, well, not actually new, but it works, and he can afford to insure it, where as GEORGE SANCHEZ, working here part-time as barman, has problems in this department. Another man with car trouble recently is ROW LLOYD who had an unfortunate incident in Cardiff. Talking about Cardiff, our welsh correspondent, JOHN PENRY-WILLIAMS has been in touch - more about that next issue. John has been having quite an eventful first year at University, it appears!

MARK GOBLE is back from Reading, with his studies completed, and IAN SIMMONS has returned from Oxford sporting a Greg Chappell moustache, and our other Oxfordian, PETE IRVINE has just returned from America after representing the University in a series of athletic matches. Pete is soon to start teaching in Catford, in south London. Here in almost his own words is an account of his transatlantic adventures.

HOW THE WEST WASN'T WON

One of the best things about returning after three weeks in the states is the taste of your first pint of english ale. American beer is lager-like, very gassy and served very cold. It is also very expensive! I had the distincting of buying the most costly round, at 2.20 dollars a pint when four of my team-mates together with a rather inebriated crew of oarswomen from Wisconsin crashed a Jazz party on the 40th floor of the Philadelphia Hilton.

The beer was one of very few setbacks that we met on our trip, as all our travel, food, and accomodation expenses were paid by the American Ivy League Universities against whom we raced. Our team represented both Oxford and Cambridge, and we found our opponents rather too strong, losing all 3 of our fixtures by margins of about 5 events to 12. I ran in the mile and 5000m and finished 4th in all my races. Such was the standard that only our internationals won events. In one of my mile races I passed the $\frac{1}{2}$ mile mark in 1 min. 59secs, but I was still only fourth!

However in the equable affairs of eating and drinking and making merry we were more than a match for our hosts. They were amazed at our capacity for consuming large quantities of ale whilst remaining seemingly sober. We found also that Americans had much to learn about making speeches, telling jokes and singing raucous rugby songs.

Just to briefly outline the itinery, we landed in New York at dusk after being acclimatised on our trans-Atlantic flight by the film 'Bugsy Malone'. A day was spent at New Haven, before moving on to Cambridge (Mass)

to stay at Harvard. This was made more interesting by their 25th reunion, in which graduates from the "class of '52" returned with their families for the week to sample theatres, concerts, dinners, etc., and of course parties to which we were inevitably drawn.

It was in Boston that we first had an insight into the U.S. crime scene, as two armed robberies took place whilst our fixture was in progress.

From Harvard we moved on to the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia - where the Declaration of Independence was signed, and the Liberty Bell was cracked! We then stopped at Princeton for several days, where I learned to play "frisbie" american style (three at a time) and then went out to the West Point Military Academy in the Catskill Mountains, north west of New York City, on the west point of the Hudson. We had a great time there the highlight being a trip up the Hudson in a thunder storm. Apart from the six o'clock cannon, the other notable feature was the superb war museum, with weapons and re-creations of famous battles, and such items as moon walkers space suits and the "fat man" atomic bomb. Athletics facilities here, as everywhere else we went, were superb, with 3 indoor heated swimming pools, an indoor area with 7 floors, and many outdoor facilities such as a synthetic running track.

Our last 4 days were spent at Yale University's outdoor recreation centre. The setting was a lake about a mile long surrounded by coniferous trees, and artificial beaches near the six residential chalets. The last day was spent in New York City, touring the main sights, Central Park, Times Square, Manhattan skylines, and the Empire State Building. (My dizziness there was contributed to by the party the night before.) It brought home to all of us once again that the Americans often do things in an outrageously big way. Although I enjoyed my stay the scale of everything, and the resultant lack of quality, variety and culture in their life-style made me glad I did not have to live there!

Pete Irvine

