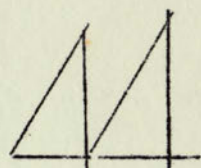


Venture



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

NUMBER TWENTY SIX

NOVEMBER 1977

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## EDITORIAL

Welcome to Number 26 of Venture 44. Much has changed in the Unit since the last issue came out in August, not the least being the departure of some valuable members.

The Unit has been fairly busy of late, and we expect that this will continue, though the next few months will prove a testing time membership-wise. Our tenth Anniversary is not far off now, and it would be a shame if the Unit were "in recession" at this point in time.

What has happened lately? Well, the Boston Marathon has come and gone yet again and the Cotswold Marathon is already being prepared for. Two summer events and a half-term trip have passed (almost) without incident. Various projects and schemes have been thought up and started, and the ever needed waste paper is still coming in, but we could still do with some more, please!

I find my job as Editor becoming increasingly more involved (this time I did most of the initial typing) & therefore more interesting. With some help I might have a go at doing some stencil typing for the next edition, expected out around Christmas time.

For the moment however, ignore the mistakes and read on....

R.D.

## NOTES AND NEWS

The Unit is now significantly smaller than usual at the moment. This is largely due to the exodus of school leavers in July, coupled with an apparent lack of potential members from the present fifth form. This is undoubtedly a novel situation for us, as in the past we have never found a lack of suitable applicants to join in our activities. The executive has considered the matter, and a few ideas will be tried out in the next few months in the hope that the problem may be solved. In many ways it may well be a blessing in disguise as it will make us examine critically the way we do things, and this could result in some fresh approaches to our Venture Scouting.

We were all delighted to learn recently that our County Commissioner, Robin Stayt, has been appointed to the position of Chief Commissioner for England, and I am sure the whole Unit will join me in offering congratulations and wishing Robin all good fortune in his new and exacting task.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

Wedding bells have been ringing recently, and our best wishes go to Tim and Jane Holford who are now settled in Cambridge. Whilst not actively involved in his veterinary studies, Tim has been working as a dustman. An article from our embryonic James Heriot appears in our next issue.

Three other ex-members who have decided to end their carefree batchelor days, and have become engaged to unsuspecting young ladies are John Barnes, Andy Messam and Paul Dyer. Congratulations to all concerned.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

A serious outbreak of an insidious oriental disease has been afflicting the Unit of late. Known to the medical profession as Hondamania, symptoms are readily recognisable and include wild babblings about camshafts ignition timing, and chain tension. Early sufferers were Chris Pashley and Steve Davies, followed by the V.S.L., Mark Evans and Julian Williams, and others may yet succumb. Apart from the obvious physical manifestation of this seemingly incurable ailment, side effects include a big hole in the pocket or bank balance and in some cases bruising and abrasions on the legs etc. Hopes of holding the epidemic at bay were shattered a few weeks ago when the Unit came into the possession of an elderly CD 175 - code name for one of the offending bacilli - which is at present being torn apart for eventually reconstruction, and will doubtless spread the infection further afield. (As this is being written news has come in that Steve Davies has now contracted one of the worst of all of the strains, the dreaded CB 400 F....)

F.H.

BRYN BOETH VISIT 1977

At first I was undecided whether or not to go on the Unit's third visit to Bryn Boeth, but (fairly) early on Sunday July 24th the V.S.L., Mark Bennett, Chris Dee, Dave Brown, Ian Fletcher, Ben Emerson and myself set off in the faithful white van from S.T.R.S. Bryn Boeth is a National Trust owned cottage near Llyn Ogwen, about four miles north-west of Capel Curig, which is situated at the side of the busy A5 in the middle of some of Britain's most impressive mountain scenery. The object of the visit at the invitation of ex-Richian Simon Lapington, warden of the National Trust Carneddau Estate, was partly doing construction work on the Llyn Idwal path, helping Simon and his assistant Andy, and partly exploring the nearby countryside. Looking back I'm glad that I did go. There were many high spots in a very enjoyable week away, such as the majestic sight of Tryfan just across the A5 road towering above or humble cottage, the rugged beauty of the region's mountains, lakes, waterfalls, the Hunters and Phantoms from RAF Valley, Anglesey, passing directly overhead on high-speed training flights down the narrow valley, and the free Mars Bars and Coca-Cola (if we worked hard)



At the end of last Summer term, rumours of a visit to North Wales merged into the trip itself. The idea was that we should work on the mountain path to Llyn Idwal and the Idwal Slabs. This work involved carrying buckets of slate waste up a mountain (exaggeration) to mark out the path. We started work on the Monday, the day after we arrived, and it rained in the morning (just to prove it could), but the weather improved in the afternoon.

On Tuesday we decided to walk to Aber Falls, 3 miles over the hills from the town of Bethesda. Aber Falls are the highest waterfalls in Wales and they are well worth a visit. Walking back to the van, the V.S.L. insisted that we should all walk up into the clouds that were hiding the top of a large stony hill called Gym. Later on that same day, we went to Caernarvon - the hole with a (Royal) mint in it. (I don't get that one)

The following day was work on the path again, but this time in sunny weather, with in-flight entertainment from low-flying RAF jet aircraft passing directly overhead at frequent intervals. Afterwards we drove to the nearest village, Capel Curig, to buy provisions and "The Sun" - including "Total Loving: The Series That Could (maybe) Revolutionise Your Married Life, Part Three" with a few naughty pictures.

Thursday was another free day, so the keener people walked up Tryfan, which is 917 metres high, and mostly slabs of rock. In the afternoon, we went to Llyn Dinas, a lake near Snowdon, where Ben Emerson performed a swimming ritual called indecent exposure, then on to Beddgelert for ice-creams. Later on that night we were expecting to be given a talk on conservati<sup>o</sup>n from some visiting conservators, but for some reason it didn't materialise, so we all played a game outside on the grass with a ball and some rocks (it was that sort of night.)

The final day was Friday, and we were expecting to work all day, but were let off after doing three lots of carrying in the morning. This meant that we left early in the afternoon arriving home to Total Loving Part Five at about 7.15 p.m.

Chris Dee

# THE BOSTON MARATHON

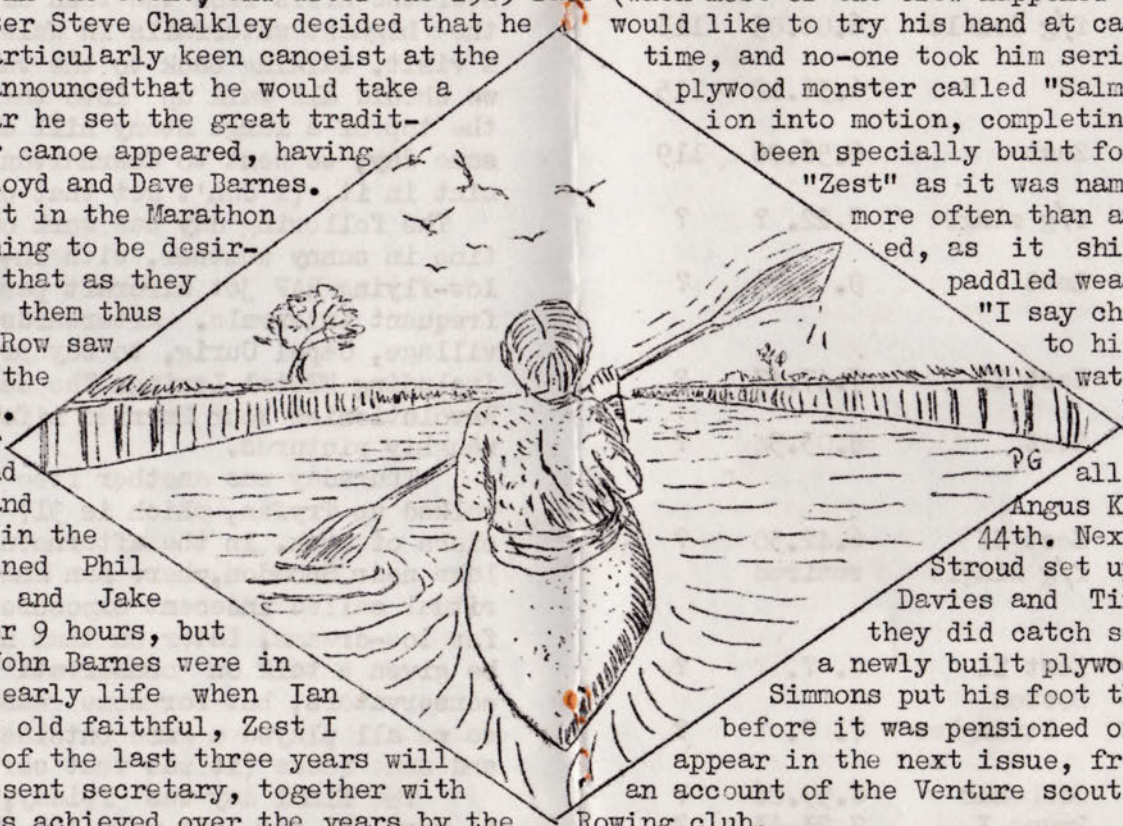
The name of Boston may conjure up for some a vision of the Pilgrim Fathers setting out on their long perilous journey across the Atlantic to the New World, but to the 44th it means a long and exhausting journey of another kind. It evokes the smell of liniment, the curses of coarse anglers, and the demoralising sight of racing eights flashing past on the long straight to Langrick Bridge, and long hours of grinding monotony. So what is it all about?

The Marathon is the longest rowing race in the world, rowed over a 31 mile stretch of the River Witham from Lincoln to Boston. Each year on the third weekend in September well over a hundred racing boats and a handfull of canoes set off at minute intervals for their distant goal. The Unit involvement began back in 1970. For several years the school rowing club had entered eights in the event, and after the 1969 race (when most of the crew happened to be Venture Scouts) that ever adventurous character Steve Chalkley decided that he would like to try his hand at canoeing the course the next time. Steve was not a particularly keen canoeist at the time, and no-one took him seriously until the week prior to the big day when he announced that he would take a plywood monster called "Salmagundi" to Boston. Despite the hot weather that year he set the great tradition into motion, completing the course in over eight hours. Next year another canoe appeared, having been specially built for the job, and crewed by that doughty pair Row Lloyd and Dave Barnes. "Zest" as it was named, must have some sort of record for finishing last in the Marathon more often than any other craft! The finish of the canoe left something to be desired, as it shipped water throughout the race! Row still recalls that as they paddled wearily up to Bardney lock "I say chaps, did you know you were sinking!" Turning round Row saw to his horror that the entire stern section was under the water! They finished eventual

ly in just over 7 hours. Next year was in many ways the finest as far as our canoeists were concerned. Three canoes competed and all broke the 7 hour barrier, with George Sanchez and Angus King setting a time as yet unbeaten by anyone else in the 44th. Next year saw an interesting contrast when a determined Phil Stroud set up a new "record" in a home made fibreglass single, and Jake Davies and Tim Holford must have set an all time slow with over 9 hours, but they did catch some eels on the way.... In 1974 John Sweet and John Barnes were in a newly built plywood craft, "Zest II" which had suffered during its early life when Ian Simmons put his foot through it! That year also saw the final run of the old faithful, Zest I before it was pensioned off.

The detailed story of the last three years will appear in the next issue, from the pen of our most dogged competitor, our present secretary, together with an account of the Venture scout involvement in the tremendous record of successes achieved over the years by the Rowing club.

A summary of the canoe results is given overleaf. Some of the details of times and positions are missing, and I am sure that some of you who have sat through the long painful experience will be able to remember your times, and if so, I would be grateful if you could let me know so that the records can be completed.





Summary of Boston Canoe Performances.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CREW</u>	<u>CRAFT</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>POS</u>
1970	Steve Chalkley	Salmagundi	8.20. ?	?
1971	Row Lloyd Dave Barnes	Zest	7.10.12	102
1972	Angus King <u>George Sanchez</u> Tim Holford <u>Paul Hodges</u> Ed Badham Nick Pearce	f/g double " " Zest	6.08.05 6.36.12 6.56.06	113 115 119
1973	<u>Phil Stroud</u> Tim Holford Jake Davies	f/g single Zest	7.22. ? 9. ? . ?	? ?
1974	John Sweet <u>John Barnes</u> Julian Williams Geoff Parker	Zest II Zest	7.47.47 8.03.34	? ?
1975	Phil Champion <u>Mark Calver</u> Julian Williams	Zest II f/g single	6.42.30 retired	? ?
1976	Greg Bennett <u>Ben Emerson</u> Phil Champion Simon Weston	Zest II Boston Strangler	7. ? . ? 7. ? . ?	? ?
1977	<u>Phil Champion</u> <u>Dave Brown</u> <u>Jon May</u> Pete Green	Odobenus Prune I Safka f/g single	6.59.26 7.23.43 7.43.01 8.27.57	? ? ? ?

A CREATIVE PURSUIT is one of the sections of the Venture Scout Award, and when Dave Brown recently gained his award, the pursuit he submitted was constructing a fibre glass canoe. However, this is not without its risks and sticky problems, as Dave discovered....

### THE HAZARDS OF CANOE BUILDING

When one day last summer a County Youth Service canoe mould appeared in the Scout Hut, I decided to build my own fibreglass canoe, prompted by vivid recollections of my first outing in a canoe. I had occupied the front seat of a wooden double, a sad mistake, with Rob Dalton in the seat behind. Unfortunately Rob seemed to have been in a dilemma as to which use to put his paddle: in the end he settled on a compromise. The blades passed from the canal water to my head, giving me a slap on the ear, before returning to the murky depths of the canal. With these memories fresh in my mind, I satisfied myself that the canoe mould was for a single seater.

Before starting the building of a canoe, the interior of the mould had to be polished and covered with a releasing agent. After I had done this I had to decide on a colour for the outside gel coat. An image of an exotic multi-coloured canoe faded when the V.S.L. announced "We've got a drum of white gel, and a little bit of green dye." I made a quick decision, settling for a green and white canoe. With this imaginative colour mixture, I set to work, applying the gel coat and placing over it a layer of fibreglass matting. I then poured in an evil - smelling liquid mixture of resin, catalyst, and a few other oddments onto this. The matting was then flattened out with old paint brushes by willing helpers. Due to the revolting smell of the resin, we could tolerate only short periods of this work before turning rather pale and rushing out from the Scout Hut. To work outside meant odd additions to the canoe, e.g. flies, dust, grass etc.

Proceedings went well in spite of the fibreglass mat showing a tendency to slide down into the middle of the

mould leaving the sides bare. I soon discovered that wet fibreglass is very sticky. My hands suffered most getting covered with copious quantities of it and leaving a very irritating rash. Matters came to a head when I stuck the two halves of the mould together by leaning inside the cockpit and sticking strips of fibreglass along the join. Eventually, after a great deal of trouble, this job was finished, although I put nearly as much fibreglass on my hands etc. as on the canoe. After I had extricated the canoe from the mould I corrected the odd mistake (?) with a resin and calcium carbonate filler, leaving only the seat to be inserted. I managed this by putting my head and shoulders inside the cockpit, applying the filler from that rather awkward position.

To enhance the looks of the canoe, I put a strip of black tape along the side (also covering up the messy join). Two days after applying the finishing touches, it made a first trip by completing the Boston Marathon, and finished the course in 7 hours 23 minutes 43 seconds!

Dave Brown

## THE SOUTH OF SCOTLAND

The Unit's second summer camp of 1977 took place in Southern Scotland. As well as Unit members Chris Pashley Phil Champion, Ian Fletcher, Dave Brown, Paul Jennings & the V.S.L. Dave's brother Phil and Paul's Belgian friend Philippe also went along.

We set off on the Wednesday morning after hastily putting our rucksacks in the back of the van, with total disregard for the safety of our gear - except for Chris' golf clubs. We rapidly succumbed to the boredom of the journey and during rainy stops at service stations we accumulated a large number of magazines and books, all of which - with the exception of Philippe's punk rock book were read from cover to cover by everyone!

The weather deteriorated and we all got soaked when we made a stop at Dumfries to do some shopping. We eventually reached our chosen campsite at Glen Trool, where

the rain stopped long enough for us to put up our tents. Whilst doing this, we encountered the main hazard of the camp - man-eating midges! When a passer-by remarked "It is better the rain than the midges!" we all feared the worst. However, by spending the days away from the camp and the nights in the van, we all survived, but still we all got badly bitten, especially Wally!

On two of the days we went hillwalking, doing about twelve miles each day, and getting soaked to the skin both times. Chris claimed to have gone on a run one morning, but I didn't believe him. One evening, however, we embarked on a crazy  $2\frac{1}{2}$  mile run through the forest - and in semi-darkness! We visited various coastal towns, including Girvan, Wigtown, Stranraer, Creetown and Kirkcubright, playing football on beaches etc, and after five nights in Glen Trool we struck camp and thereafter didn't spend two nights at the same place.

One day we went canoeing at Castle Douglas. There an old lady phoned for the police when she saw Phil going bird watching on an old railway line. He was able to persuade the Pollis that he was not a vandal, although his hat did make him look a suspicious character! Enough incident for one day, but next day we were in the Lakes...

Wally, Philippe and I went canoeing while Ian, Chris and the V.S.L. climbed Skiddaw, and Dave and Phil walked round Derwentwater. The rain poured down, and coupled with the gusting wind controlling the canoes was not too easy. After a brief chat with Dave and Phil, I capsized, and Wally, coming to help me did so too. We dragged the canoes to the shore, but our spare clothes had got very wet. However, after a long walk, we came to the house of a very hospitable old lady, where we dried out and drank rum until we were discovered by the others!

The last, and most expensive night was spent besides Windermere, with flood water swilling outside the tents. Our final visit was to the railway museum at Carnforth - where we saw the Flying Scotsman. Then the long motorway journey back to Gloucester, and the end of an eventful & enjoyable trip.

Paul Jennings.

THE ETERNAL TRIANGLE

If I were a line, I would not

Choose

The lot

Of an hypot

enuse.

I've always thought it so unfair

It has to bear

A square

Equal to the sum of those

On the oppos

ing pair

Of sides

Which Fate provides

On all figures triangulate

(At any rate,

I think it's fate!)

Pythagoras (who did declare

The line to bear

The lion's share

Should be the poor hypotenuse)

Should change his views,

Or else his muse!

Refuse

To tolerate

This state

Of sad affairs,

And give the pairs

Of other sides far greater shares,

And greater squares

Triangles of the World, Unite!

Fight,

For equal right

s, and equal sides and angles choose!

Adjacent sides, you've naught to lose

Support your poor hypotenuse

Fair squares for all

Shall be our call,

And to resolve this matter all

Triangles shall be equilateral!

