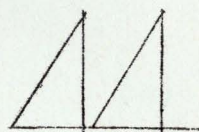


Venture



DECEMBER	1978
NUMBER	31

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

NUMBER THIRTY ONE

DECEMBER 1978

EDITOR Rob Dalton.

UNIT OFFICERS

Leaders	F.Henderson W.R.Spear
Chairman	Ian Fletcher
Secretary	Chris Collins
Treasurer	Dave Brown
Recorder	Jon May
Executive	Rob Dalton Iain Weir Mark Simmons

CONTENTS

Editor's Notes . . . Rob Dalton.	2
Impressions from the New World Part Two. . . .Kevin Neely.	3
2500ft, Going Down John Barnes	4
Knebworth. Ian Fletcher	5
WargamingIain Weir	8
From All Points. . . V.S.L.	11
Letter from India .Steve Chalkley.	11

We would like to take this opportunity to wish to all
our regular readers a happy and peaceful Christmas and
a challenging and successful New Year!

NOTES AND NEWS

Those of you who actually read the list of contents on the previous page may note that this page is not as advertised. As the editor has had all his time taken up during the last week or so with the collecting and distribution of food parcels and firewood to old folk, his role here has been usurped by me in order to get this issue ready before Christmas. Many other members of the Unit have been helping out on this project which has resulted in 90 + parcels being given away.

The Unit has been busy over the past few months in converting the remains of the old Bowls Club Pavilion into firewood, and over 50 boxes have been filled. It is hoped to distribute more early in the new year.

We have three new members, two of whom came on the half term visit to North Wales, and we welcome Andrew Daymond, Andrew Weir and Mark Walker to the Unit.

Recent activities have included a joint meeting with the Hucclecote Ranger Guides, hopefully the first of many; a cave safety course in the Forest of Dean, organised by our new A.D.C.(V.S.) Paul Gait; District 5-a side soccer tournament, which we organised. This last event attracted 11 teams in all, and was a great success, although we did lose the trophy that we have held for three years to teams from the 38th, Longlevens.

We are getting "feed-back" on our last publishing effort, the Iceland Special edition of Venture 44. In general comment has been favourable, although at least one of our ex-editors pointed out a few things which would not have occurred in his day! Unfortunately, the venture has proved a financial disaster, and there are a great many unsold copies lying in the hut, so if any of you have not yet bought a copy, or think you may be able to sell some more, please get in contact soon!

Finally, a reminder of a forthcoming event. We are combining with the School cricket club to run a jumble sale on SATURDAY, JANUARY 27th at Longlevens Church Hall. Start collecting Jumble now. Help from parents & friends on the day is needed.

F.H.

IMPRESSIONS FROM THE NEW WORLD
PART TWO

There are 7500 restaurants in the Province of Ontario alone. You can be sure that nearly all of these serve hamburgers. In fact, there is a gigantic chain of restaurants called Macdonalds who deal entirely in hamburgers and suchlike. This American firm has served over 25 billion meals throughout the world! You can virtually be guaranteed of finding a Macdonalds in most towns both in the States and Canada. In fact they have just opened a new outlet in the USSR - yet another breakthrough in the saga of Soviet-American relationships.

I have previously mentioned the warmth of a Canadian summer. You can be certain of temperatures ranging from the mid 80's to mid 90's °F. However when temperatures are high and it is cloudy the humidity can be unbearable since the air is very 'thin' and it gives you a feeling of being at a very high altitude. In the middle of the city of London most of the main shopping areas are in specially air-conditioned malls, similar to our new arcades, but on a larger scale. Coming out of one of these you are suddenly hit by the stifling air, and I can tell you it is very uncomfortable. One moment you are breathing quite naturally and then suddenly you have to strain to breathe. Since however this area is on the same latitude as Northern California, I guess the heat is to be expected.

London Ontario is Canada's tenth largest city and even though its population is only two and a half times that of Gloucester, the city itself is much bigger by proportion. It is known as the Forest City, since if you look at it from a high vantage spot around the city, the immediate impression that you get is the great number of trees. It seems to be more trees than people! It is very easy to find some roads in complete shade. London itself is a very modern city yet it has definitely retained its beauty. There are three radio stations - CJBK, CKSL, and CPFL, and several television stations. It is also possible to pick up television broadcasts from as far away

as Detroit, U.S.A.

Not far from London is Stratford. As you might expect Stratford is on the River Avon! The town has become very famous in the literary world and the reason is quite obvious really - it holds a summer-long Shakespearean festival! The Stratford Theatre is of modern design, whilst the Avon Theatre has a traditional proscenium arch stage layout. This festival has often been rated above any of the many other such Shakespearean celebrations the world over, including that of our own Stratford.

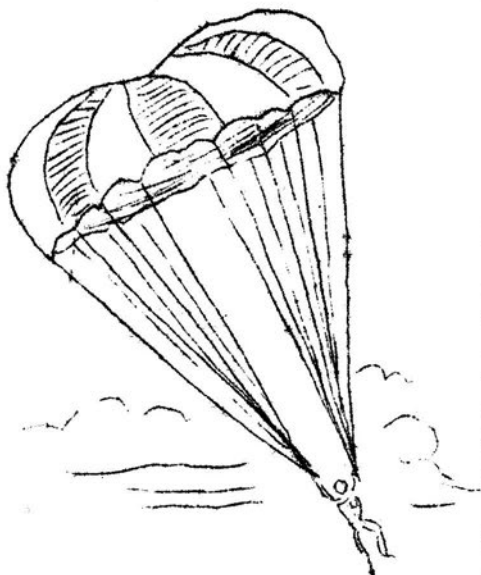
I also visited some of the traditional tourist attractions, such as Niagara Falls, and these were really impressive.

All in all, my stay in Canada had been very enjoyable and had proved to be a most enlightening comparison with life in 'down town' Gloucester.

Kevin Neely

—o—

2500ft - GOING DOWN!



There seemed to have been more than the usual number of news items in the press concerning parachuting, and these revitalised my lifelong ambition to jump. I suggested the idea to a friend, and he called my bluff! The Gloucestershire Cobalt Unit's appeal for funds for a new 3-D body-scanner to revolutionise the treatment of cancer has introduced sponsored jumps as a novel means of raising the £98,000 they need.

A contact was made and we learned that a group of from 8 to 15 volunteers was needed, and although there was no official re

Continued page 9

"I KNOW, 'COS I WAS THERE".... Knebworth June 78.

Prologue My first thought on dragging myself up at 7.30 a.m. on Saturday morning was 'Not even Genesis are worth this!' However, after numerous mugs of tea, I arrived at Gloucester Leisure Centre at 9.00a.m. Here I met members of the Upper Sixth from Rich's, Crypt, and Beaufort, all suitably emblazoned with badges, emblems, etc. What was the object of this? - to catch a coach which would take us to Knebworth Park near Stevenage, to see 'Genesis' in concert with full supporting programme. We set off 5 minutes later.

After 3 hours discussing 'Genesis', we arrived at Stevenage amid a massive traffic jam. A phenomenal number of people usually use the M1 - 90,000 extra didn't help! However when the police gave priority to the concert traffic we eventually found space to park, but still had to trek $\frac{1}{4}$ mile through mud and woods to the actual site, 'The Arena'

The Concert The first group that we saw was 'The Atlanta Rhythm Section' who had a lot of depth and power to the music that they played, their performance lasting over an hour. After a standing ovation they departed, leaving us waiting for the next group (this meant changing stage equipment, instruments, etc, a lengthy process). We were able to reflect on the sheer size of Knebworth. The huge stage was fully 600 yards downhill in front of us, and yet the area between the stage and the entrance was carpeted with people and ringed with food-stalls, badge-stalls etc. (In one corner was the lavatory - no segregation, no amenities - just red faces!)

Later on we decided to get more value for our £5.00 tickets, i.e. move forward to where we could actually see the stage! After an hour of climbing and scrambling forward we got to within 60 yards of the stage... just in time to see DEVO. (To the uninformed, DEVO are - in my opinion - five very strange men who wear sunglasses, with orange helmets, white gowns and black boots. They play

DEVOLUTION music and generally bore people). Both their arrival and departure earned a barrage of rotten fruit and bottles - apart from some DEVOTEES shouting "We love you!"

Our new position was both claustrophobic and hard on the ears, so we retreated to the relative comfort of the 'Light Control Panel' structure 70 yards further back. Now appeared 'Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers' who really set the crowd 'alive' with their music. Pretty girls gave out Tom Petty badges and the crowd was happy. A further move back of 50 yards and we met some friends coming to the front. So, happily reunited, we awaited the 'stars' of the concert.

However, 'Jefferson Starship' came on first - without the lovely Grace Slik (shame). For the next two hours, we listened to a feast of superb songs, including the truly amazing 'Have you seen the Saucers?'. After an encore, the group depart, leaving us in a state of shock. Now only Genesis remain.....

Genesis in Concert We all knew that we faced the longest wait of the night because of the necessary changes in stage and lighting. The minutes pass, the crowd move up nearer the stage, sound tests come and go, lights fade, then...a single spotlight shines out, the crowd rises, and one man appears...nobody knows him! He tells us that we'll have to wait a bit longer...Tension rises and in the heat of the moment bottles fly in the direction of the stage. For one fan it's all too much. He runs forward naked, clutching a tambourine. Still we wait..10p.m., and then, it happens!

A solitary figure - looking remarkably like Bob 'OGWI' Harris - appears in the gleam of a white spotlight and over £400,000 worth of amplification he booms;

"This is musical perfection..THIS IS GENESIS

Ninety thousand people surged forward to greet their heroes, who stood bathed in blue light. They began with 'Eleventh Earl of Mar' The visual effects were stunning, 96 different light channels operating over 286 different lights each complete with 5 coloured filters. The almost

endless sequences brought gasps of admiration from the audience who sang, clapped, and cried through the sheer emotion of the performance. Genesis played through old and new songs, the resplendant trio of Collins, Banks & Rutherford milking the feelings from every note. Smoke appeared and the stage was transformed into a swirling rainbow of light. A green laser darted out 800 yards into the night sky. However, the final song was the greatest effect of them all 'Dance on a Volcano'. All 286 lights blazed forth white light, and the six lasers flashed on, the brilliance enabling you to see more than $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in the darkness of the night. Ninety thousand fans cried and sang their feelings into the night.

Then a curt 'good-night' and Genesis depart, but not for long. The encore was the favourite 'I know what I like' and Collins did his tambourine dance. So, after 12 more minutes of a dream that we had paid £5 to realise, it was all over.

Genesis had played for over 2 hours which had passed in a twinkling of an eye. The time was now 12.15am. on a Sunday morning. Genesis were (and are) brilliant, fine examples of how to put on a concert. Quite literally, we did not believe what we had just witnessed.

Epilogue When the concert finally ended, it took us 3hrs to get out of Knebworth Park. The journey home was spent vainly trying to get some sleep. I eventually crawled into my bed at 7.00 a.m. Sunday morning.

Whether or not you like Genesis, you cannot help admiring the technique of three people who managed to exert such a magnetism over not only Knebworth Park, but the Record Market in general.

Genesis are doing a British Tour next year: do yourself a favour and see them somewhere. It will be a truly unforgettable experience.

Ian Fletcher

Genesis = Way Out = Exodus?



WAR GAMING

To most people wargaming conjures up the picture of old gentlemen in dress uniform re-enacting the battle of Waterloo with brightly painted lead figures on a large table. This is 'miniature wargaming', and no doubt some old generals do this with lead figures, or even "After Eights". However, 'Board wargaming' is more popular a pursuit. These games are designed for entertainment unlike their strictly military counterparts. This does not mean that board games do not try to make a sufficiently accurate parallel to real life to make the players feel that they are experiencing the problems of Napoleon or Rommel, or any other commander past, present or future! A board game attempts to simulate a particular battle or campaign, incorporating every aspect of the encounter up to a point after which the game would be so complex that it would lose its appeal.

This may be a good point to consider chess - a war game of sorts, but too abstract and stylised. One of the reasons for the popularity of chess is that there is not an element of chance which is introduced in wargaming, normally in the form of a die roll - for the simple reason that there is an element of chance in real life.

The differences need to be examined. A Wargame board is normally about 22" x 34", with a map that shows different types of terrain and obstacles. Superimposed on to this is a grid, normally hexagonal, which facilitates movements and fire. Units are represented by printed cardboard counters, and there are detailed rules for the particular battle being simulated. With miniature war gaming models of men, tanks, etc may move over contoured terrain with movements controlled by a ruler. Miniature wargames date back to 1780, an important date in the history of the pastime. The first board wargame was designed in 1959.

The main advantage of miniatures is the wonderful visual effect. There is much satisfaction in seeing painstakingly painted figures blending into your realistic terrain. The disadvantage is that once you have embarked on building up an army you are more or less restricted to fighting in one period because of the cost - at 15 or more pence per figure it is unlikely that you will have the resources to build up two armies. There is no such problem with board games. As one company (SPI) say in their adverts, "We have over 100 titles covering every period of history from 3000 BC to the far future". With three friends and myself we have 36 games, and it is possible to fight the battle of Waterloo, Air combat in the '70s, actions between the Dreadnoughts of World War I, or even Tolkien's 'Middle Earth' fantasies.

Another advantage of the board game is the scale of the campaign that can be battled. A game covering the whole of the Soviet/German front in the second World War would require a fantastic number of miniatures, but it would be easy on a board, where the scale and size of the Units involved can be adjusted to fit the context.

"The most attractive feature of board wargaming is the real test of skill, enhanced by detailed rules, which is comparable to Chess or Go, without the need to memorize lengthy opening gambits." Nicholas Palmer.

Iain Weir.

-o-

Continued from page 4

-quest for volunteers at Wall's, the grapevine did its usual good job, and soon there were 25 on the list. This was whittled down to 10, and sponsors were sought far and wide. Two 4 hour training sessions later and we were all ready to go, though none of us had jumped before.

Wednesday 22nd November came...and went! Jump cancelled because of bad weather! The tension ebbed away. A new time was set, but low cloud stopped us. An admin cock-up led on to the 4th time, and we struck it lucky!

I climbed into the plane, and took my position as 3rd out. The chutes would open automatically as we jumped. They had a 'static line' attached to a point behind the

pilot's seat... we all tugged at our lines to check that they were firm! There were 5 of us crouched uncomfortably in the 2 seater plane, and I had never flown before.

The plane screwed itself up into the sky, and I stared at the altimeter, anticipating the moment we were to reach 2500ft, and we would perform! We levelled out, and after a few runs to check wind speed, we were above the Drop Zone for real!

The Jumpmaster hurriedly shouted the last instructions to the pilot. "10 degrees right..5 left.." Then "Cut!"

The engine cut. Number one sat half in and half out of the plane. Then the command.."Go!" Number one disappeared. I tried to see if his chute had opened, but saw nothing. The engine started again, and the plane banked steeply and turned. Cut... "Go!"... Me next!

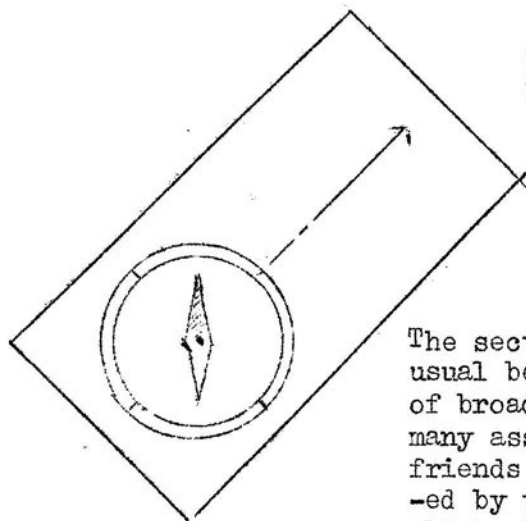
For a moment I was on the edge, then gone. Spreadeagled I flew like a brick. 1001, 1002..a slight tug on my shoulder...1003, 1004...I looked up and felt a great sense first of relief and then exhilaration as I saw the multi-coloured canopy fully opened in all its glory. The instructors hadn't lied - it did open!

Above me number 4 appeared, and below, the airfield. I seemed to hang motionless. I noted the local sewage farm below, so I pulled one of the steering toggles to avoid ending up to my neck in sweet violets. The chute veered and the target moved in below me, and I held steady till I thought I was 200ft up. In less than 10secs I would be down, as the parachute descends at 22ft/sec. The ground seemed to rush up at me, but I resisted the temptation to curl up. Legs straight, but not locked, chin on chest elbows tucked in - Whack! In a split second I was on my feet and waving to indicate I was O.K. I'm not sure if I rolled as I landed.

It was over! We were all safe, and although there were mutters of "Never again", for me, it was fantastic! few people can claim they have achieved their greatest ambition, but I can. Now I must think of something else. Actually, I have decided- I'm going to qualify as a free fall parachutist!

John Barnes

FROM ALL POINTS



The section is shorter than usual because it's function of broadcasting news of our many associate members and friends is soon to be usurped by the Annual Reunion, which will be on December

21st this year in the new Bowls Club Pavilion. Make a note of the date, and try to come along!

Last issue featured a letter from Andy Chalkley in Australia, and not long ago another airmail letter arrived, this time from brother Steve, in India! Much of the letter is reproduced below, and it is hoped that in our next issue another view of India will be expressed by another indefatigable traveller, John Price.

-o-

"Did you know that we were in India? We were both of us fed up with nine to five jobs, so applied the principle 'Why should we pay if we do the work' we organised a trek over land - 7 passengers paying £200 each gave us a bit of cash to play with. Our passengers have left us now, and here we are with a very reliable Austin/Morris J4 'go anywhere' van! After yesterday I am inclined to think it will go anywhere - we crossed the Rhotang Pass 13,000ft, into Lahul and Spiti. The roads here make the Norwegian roads look like the M1! Deep ruts - but I have a protected sump (lucky fellow!), five inches of snow an everpresent avalanche danger. It is stop and start all of the way, moving rocks, testing the depth of the ruts and

trying hard to keep up speed. You lose about 40% engine power at 13,000ft.

The journey out was interesting, but compared with last time cluttered up with too many overlanders, tourists, drop-outs etc, but still full of surprises and adventures, like the bank that gave me 3200 Afgans instead of 2300, or the lorry that hit me yesterday. As you probably know the tactics for driving in the mountains when meeting oncoming traffic is to park up on the side away from the drop (sometimes over 1000 ft). I did this, but the b***** just drove straight into the side of me and carried on!

We don't know what our immediate plans are - a nice feeling - except to do some walking when the rain stops. The monsoon is late in leaving, but the Indian Met Office says it will stop on the 20th - I think they've got a hot line to Buddha! It is like Glencoe here at the moment with sheep, low clouds, rain and drizzle, and cold, but the comparison stops when the cloud rises to reveal the magnificent array of peaks, and there is NO ONE here except for a few Tibetans. No crowds, no orange cagoules mountain rescue helicopters, or any of that stuff - just the hills and us, and that is what it is all about. I am planning to do just about the same next year, except we plan two or three vehicles, driven by friends, brothers or sisters etc., so it you know anyone interested in a Himalayan Trek (Kulu, or Lahul and Spiti, or even Karakoram) at about £250, get them to send me a SAE to my home address, and I'll send details.

Well, I think the rain has finally stopped so we're off for a walk to a high altitude temple! Hope I haven't made you envious (still you used to do the same to me on your trips to Norway!). See the Head and get a term off school, it would be worth it!

Steve and Denise.

-o-

A piece of news that has just arrived. TED BADHAM is now teaching in Guildford, and he has become assistant scout leader with the troop at his school.

