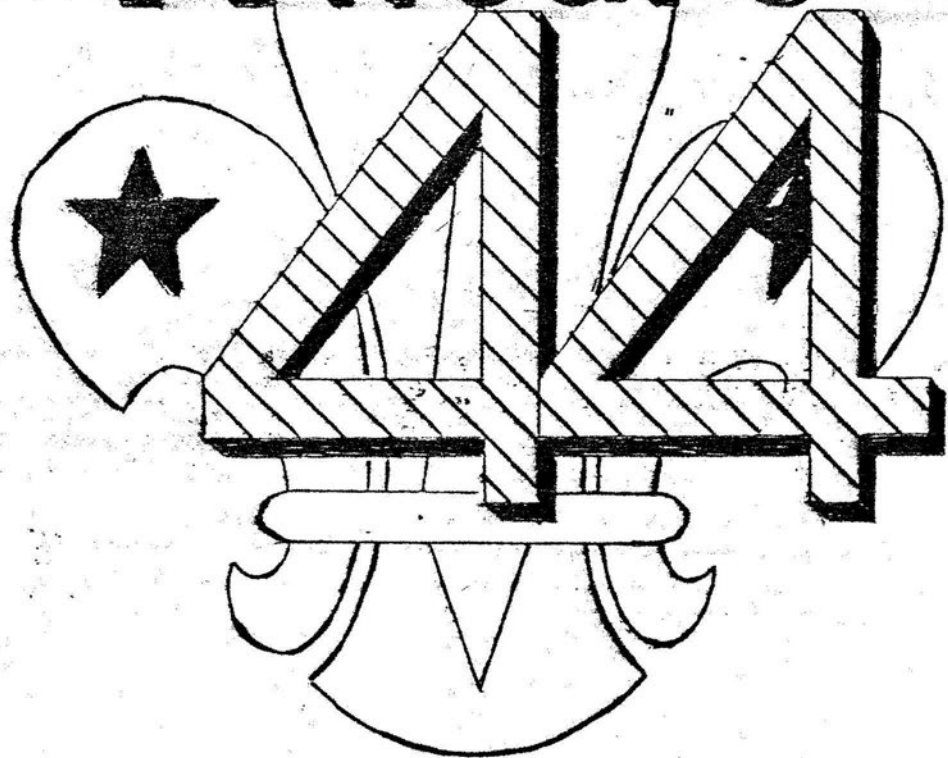


Venture



Number 36

Venture 44



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

Editor Mark Simmons

Number 36

July 80

UNIT OFFICERS

Leaders	F. Henderson W.R. Spear C.C.R. Pashley
Chairman	Pat Phillips
Secretary	Nigel Brewster
Treasurer	Iain Weir
Sports Sec	Stuart Bishop
Exec member	Mark Simmons

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NOTES and NEWS

This edition of Venture 44 sees us move into the new space-age technology, namely a Toshibafax duplicator acquired by the school. This gives a more professional appearance to the magazine, and is giving the editorial staff whole new fields to explore. This edition has increased graphics and the future could even see photographic reproductions.

Membership is booming with five new members welcomed into the Unit, Rich Kerswell, Kev Manley, Keith Nuttall, Rob Holford and Simon Williams.

Unfortunately with exams the Unit has been slowed down in its activities, but with their end the pace is again picking up. The tennis tournament is reaching the semifinal stage, and the Pitch and Pitt tournament was recently contested. Various jobs have been done, and one hike was held along the southern part of Offa's Dyke one weekend, with two different groups travelling the Chepstow Redbrook section.

We have some more sponsors for the Norway expedition, and some members recently visited the Mayor at the Guild-hall, who presented us with a tankard to take to Lesjaskog. Full report next issue.

A visitor to the Unit recently was Rob Guest, a leader with the 38th (Longlevens) who came along to find out how our Unit was run.

By the time most readers receive this magazine a group, largely of our younger members will be in Snowdonia on our annual conservation project.

Comments on the new style magazine, suggestions for improvements, and of course articles are always welcome!

Mark Simmons.

Published and printed by 44th Gloucester Venture Scout Unit. Sir Thomas Rich's School, Oakleaze, Gloucester.

SPORTS REPORT

Sporting competition between the Units of the district has been nil since the last Venture 44. Last Friday however the Annual Unit Pitch and Putt tournament was held.

More than a dozen players, all inspired by the 109th Open being played at the time, grouped at the "Club-house" in the early evening. Two rounds were played (18 holes) and the winner decided on a stroke play basis.

After the first round the tension and excitement of the occasion was evident as scores of considerably more than 30 were returned. I found myself with a 4 stroke lead over Iain who turned in a 33, despite a superb hole in one on the ninth.

The second round produced the best round of the tournament - Pat with 26. His 35 for the first round proved all the more costly as I approached the final tee, in the lead by 7 strokes. After struggling to a 6 (make 'em sweat a bit, I thought!) I finished on 60 and took the trophy from last year's winner, Paul Venn.

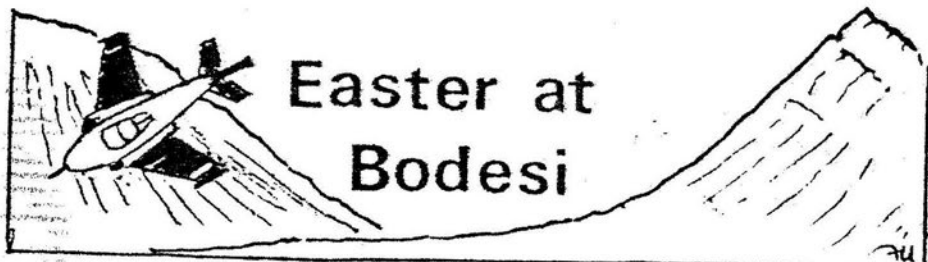
There were many scores in the 60s and 70s, with a few breaking the century for the two rounds.

Stu Bishop.

RESULTS

60	S. Bishop
61	P. Phillips
64	N. Brewster, I. Weir
67	N. Poulton
68	F. Henderson
70	R. Watson
77	D. Jerrard
79	N. Holden
80	T. Smith, R. Kerswell, S. Williams
82	R. Holford
102	M. Barton
105	K. Nuttall
110	K. Manley





Yet another article starting off "We left Gloucester one Sunday dinner time".. This time we were four Venture Scouts and one V.S.L. chugging off in the new van to some place called Wales (a small bumpy place stuck on the left hand side of England) or to be more precise, to Bodesi in Snowdonia. The journey did not take long, the new van being capable of many warp factors!

When we arrived it was raining and misty, there also tended to be a lot of over large hills just standing all around getting in the way of the roads and the scenery.

We were staying in the farm out-buildings, which was not heaven, but much tidier than the Scout Hut.

The first few days were spent climbing up over tall mountains with strange names - names that no-one remembers but the V.S.L. who took great pleasure in standing a top the hill and pointing out every visible peak whilst spouting it's own peculiar name.

The two things you are most likely to see on the Welsh mountains are sheep and low flying aircraft. They can be distinguished by the fact that the planes usually are less woolly than the sheep, but I don't know how you know which is which after shearing time. Unfortunately the two don't mix, the sheep usually collapsing at the very sight of the metal bird, a performance which leaves the shepherd in a state of mild shock as he has to administer the kiss of life to his entire flock at the same time.

The remaining days were not spent hiking, but visiting the local attractions. One day in particular was spent at Llandudno and Great Orme's Head. At the later various quarries were visited by the geological department whilst lesser mortals went bird-spotting, and throw

-ing stones at each other.

In the evenings the V.S.L. would oft disappear, where he went remains a mystery. Something about a sheepdog he said.

Radio Wales was a great contributor to the entertainment of the party. The main thing we learned from the station was to avoid Welshmen with ear-rings.

Once, whilst climbing a mountain, we noticed a shiny gold thing on the ground. On further inspection it was seen to be an ear-ring. It must have been "MOUNTAINEAR-RING!"

Mick Barton

Cotswold Marathon

For years I have been a mere spectator, albeit a deeply involved one, in the Cotswold Marathon, and perhaps there was a certain inevitability that I would one year decide to join the ever increasing band of intrepid walkers - and runners - that start off each February on the punishing 36 mile route. I found myself with our assistant leaders at Murray Hall one Saturday evening, ready at the start together with three other teams from the 44th. We were first off, but made a false start and were soon back collecting gear that we had left behind! Worse to follow, we got lost on Robinswood Hill! However, when we had overcome the embarrassment of this we settled in to our stride, and the miles and minutes ticked by.

Chosen Hill was muddy, and as we slithered crab-like to the top the panting forms of Dave, Wally and Jon appeared from the gloom. They were going very fast. Shortly after Mark, Russ and Tim cheerfully marched past, but it was not long before disaster struck. Just before Badge-worth we saw them again, going back to Churchdown having missed the checkpoint. It is a credit to their determination that they did not give up at that point!

Greenway - the climb on to the Cotswolds proper, sorting out the men from the boys, and we were passing tired scouts who were to drop out at Ullenwood. We were at

that point within our 12 hour schedule. Near Coberley we met Phil Brown and Ian Fletcher, tracking the racers and I was delighted as we walked down into Cowley, to turn to see Iain, Stu and Pat going very well. They had completed the first 15 miles in an hour and a half less than us, and we were not strolling. Past the Green Dragon and then the long haul up to Elkstone, where over past years our teams have suffered set-backs. Alas this year was to see the same old story. Jon had been forced to retire so the chances of another win for the Unit were dashed. The others who had passed us earlier were also at the checkpoint, and before we left, Russ appeared, shortly followed by Tim and Mark.

As we left Elkstone some of the edge was going from our spirits, and the long drag through Winstone and down into Edgeworth was telling. The twisting 1 in 6 down to Edgeworth Bottom was sheer hell, and at the next checkpoint Chris decided that he had had enough. The remaining pair of us joined with another group and we set off into trouble. I lost the route. Furious with myself, I eschewed map and compass, and using the moon as my direction-finder, I struck out across country, trying all the while to persuade my very sceptical companions that we had not really gone far astray. At the next checkpoint most of them decided that retirement was better than being delayed by me, and painful blisters caused Bill to stop.

I found myself leader of a polyglot team, mainly lads from the Stroud area. The clear night had gone, and now it was cold, clammy and misty. I found myself urging and cajoling - not far now, only another nine miles! At last Edge, and the final descent in pitch darkness. Despite a chorus of pleas for a short rest, I drove my group on relentlessly. Somehow we got to Brookthorpe. As we arrived I saw a team leaving. I selfishly dumped my charges and joined the group about to start out across the great muddy field that was the last obstacle before the final road walk. Flashing torches and wails of despair indicated the presence of other teams trying to find their way across the deep drainage ditch bisecting the field - we found the bridge! Dawn was breaking when I almost tripped

44th GLOUCESTER VENTURE SCOUT UNIT

Summary of Income and Expenditure for period April 1st 1979 to March 31st 1980

Expenditure	£	Income	£
Expedition subsidies	27.91	Donations	24.00
Equipment purchases	251.10 $\frac{1}{2}$	Equipment sales	90.00
Capitation fees	59.50	Subscriptions	57.00
Hut maintenance	44.79	Associate subs	29.00
Entry fees, etc	46.00	North Wales course fees	18.00
Lottery licence	5.00	Sale of waste paper	54.80
British Waterways licences	27.00	Sale of Scrap metal	3.15 $\frac{1}{2}$
Norway payments	53.50	Norway deposits	160.00
To S.T.R.S. Cricket Club	57.00	District Raffle	27.00
Sports and Social	26.72	Tuck Shop	149.94
Canoe expenses	22.22	Insurance repayment	55.00
Initiative Test	15.00	Tree Felling	40.00
Purchase of confectionary, Film Soc, etc.	59.70	Sales of confectionary, etc	65.86
Subsidy to Conservation project	200.00	Grant from Jubilee Fund	200.00
Sweat Shirt purchase	30.00	Sale of uniform, sweat shirts	32.50
Christmas Reunion	24.17	Barn Dance profit	123.00
Maps etc	11.21	Jumble Sale	100.00
Interest to bank	1.08	Interest on Deposit Account	14.34
Venture 44	11.55		
Gratuities	5.00		
Glos Dist Scout Council	12.30		
Sundries	20.70		
		Total	1248.17$\frac{1}{2}$
Total	1011.45$\frac{1}{2}$	Carried forward from 78/79	<u>167.82$\frac{1}{2}$</u>
		Less expenditure	<u>1416.00</u>
			<u>1011.45$\frac{1}{2}$</u>
		Balance carried forward 80/81	<u>404.54$\frac{1}{2}$</u>

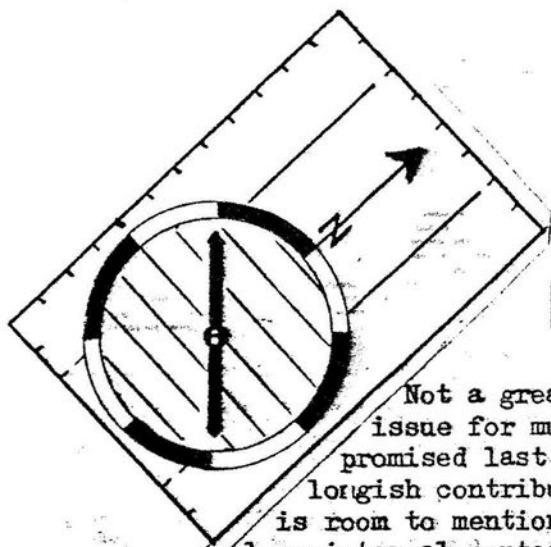
Treasurer

I. D. Weir.

Audited and found correct in accordance with vouchers etc.

7 May 80

J. D. Holdaway.



FROM ALL POINTS

Not a great deal of room this issue for much news because, as promised last edition, we have two longish contributions. However there is room to mention that after quite a long interval contact has been re-established with GEORGE SANCHEZ, who is teaching Science at a comprehensive school in Bethnal Green. His present address is 43 Hackworth Point, Rainhill Way, Bow London E3

News is also filtering through of a number of ex-members who have completed successfully their higher education, and we offer our congratulations to all those who have recently gained degrees, diplomas, etc.

WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT UNIVERSITY LIFE,
BUT NEVER DARED TO ASK. PART II

"The things we do for Rag - or A Cove in a Cave"...

At most universities and colleges students are often distracted from the normal hard work involved in staying in college and their attention focuses on "Rag". This is perhaps more so at Aberystwyth than elsewhere because of the incentives offered to students to collect money for charity. The charities who benefit are undoubtedly grateful, but I wonder if they realise that before the large cheques are handed over, a term-long rivalry has gone on to determine the winners of the 'liquid incentives'. This

scheme is the secret of success of Aber Rag.

The start of the second term is marked by students missing lectures wholesale. Driving off to far-away bits of the country (and where isn't far from Aber?) students persuade innocent passers-by to drop a few coins into a rattling tin. Students also miss the end-of-term work as they are enjoying their rewards for aiding charity. The rewards are 80 pints for each £1000 collected per Hall, for the Hall with the highest total collected, etc...

However, various other (sponsored) events also take place either traditional or spontaneous e.g. last year's 24 hour listening to Tony Blackburn's name! One this year that would appeal to Venture Scouts was a 48 hour underground event. In this novel idea four of us decided to spend 48 hours in a deserted lead mine in the River Ystwyth valley, some 18 miles from Aber - an area which was to produce much lead and zinc from Roman times up to about 1930. On a January afternoon, four^s of us - armed with candles and a crate of refreshment entered the old mine.

The entrance was a crawl under some rusty donkey-carts and a 50 yard walk through waist-high water. In a drier section of the mine we set up our temporary home. Our provisions included a couple of gallons of water, as the surrounding streams had a very high lead content. We changed into wet-suits and set off to explore, and soon found a near vertical shaft of about 90 ft. depth with a further 150-200 feet that was completely flooded. Taking turns to abseil down the shaft, we used our headlamps to peer into the gloomy still waters - an eerie experience! Walking around the mine's tunnels we were very aware of the few feet of rock that often separated us from a drop of 200 ft into the black water.

Back at our "home" we cooked a meal and tried to get some rest - but bats spit-roasted over a candle flame do prove to be fairly indigestible!

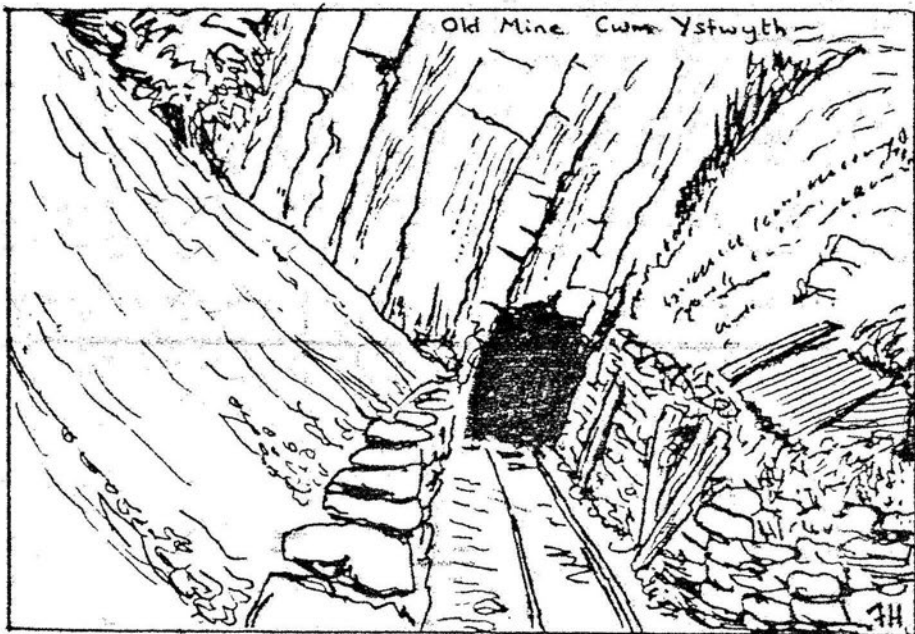
During the second "day" we explored upwards to some old Roman workings in a stopped up section of the mines where loose 'worked' rocks are used to fill the exhausted seams. These old workings differed greatly from the

more recent seams (where the ore was exposed through blasting). Instead these were very narrow channels, cut through individual seams in the rock. The walls are pock-marked from the action of the pickaxes used by the hard-worked Welsh slaves used by the Romans. In one small chamber there was a fresh breeze, a clear indication that the tunnel opened out onto the surface of the mountain a little way above us.

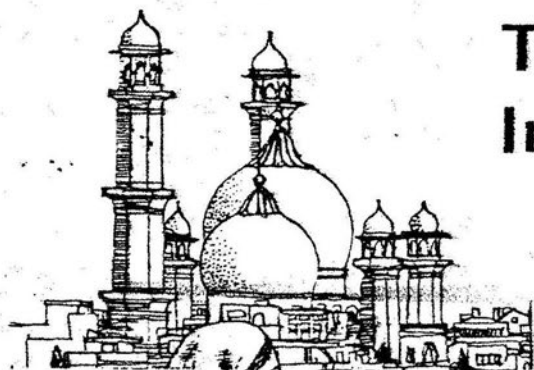
Returning to camp for a celebration bat-hunt, and our second night there, we emerged from the mine next morning after a tidy up of equipment and a celebration with the remaining bottles of supplies.

Next day, three of us took part in the Annual Tea-drinking contest, and thought of next year. The suggestion of a sewer crawl came up. Next year's Rag should be fun!

Julian Williams.



The Real India



How difficult it is to write something for Venture 44 when there are no hills for a thousand miles, and the rivers are dry, as are the state laws! Nevertheless, I suppose it is something of an endurance test to survive 100 degrees of heat (38°C - as all minds are metric - it still feels the same) in an air-conditioned bus (with windows, that is!) for hundreds of kilometers with just the occasional touch of Delhi-belly.

India; large, flat, hot, dry, smelly, crowded, poor, beautiful. That at least describes the northwest of the sub-continent in spring.

What strikes one on arriving in Delhi at 4.30 a.m. is the large number of people wandering in the fields. What can they be doing? But even more striking in travelling around are the contrasts that are evident: British and Indian; rich and poor; urban and rural; Punjab and elsewhere; Sikh, Muslim and Hindu; India and Pakistan.

New Delhi is a monument to Imperial planning; wide boulevards, long vistas, colonial architecture and the ubiquitous fans. Old Delhi is a concentration of all the worst stories people have ever heard about India: begging, overcrowding, maimed people, smells and that inadequate term poverty. Not that Old Delhi doesn't have charm and isn't a bustle of enterprise and a more rewarding place to visit than the shaded pavements of New Delhi where the people work nine to five in the appalling heat, only the British could bequeath that to anyone!

Off to Rajasthan a semi-desert area to the southwest of Dehli, home of elephant, camels, snake-charmers and of course the Taj Mahal (actually in U.P. - Uttar Pradesh, the Indians have a fetish for initials). Striking throughout India is the large number of birds and other animals, the mud hut villages, dung heaps and buffaloes together with the richness and variety of wildlife create impressions of the African savanna rather than the jewel of Empire.

Rajasthan is very poor compared with the Punjab to the northwest of Dehli. The former is brown, the people tribal and thin. The latter is green, prosperous, and the Sikhs at least fat and enterprising. In the Punjab brick houses (pakka) are much more common as are tube wells and irrigation canals. Small industries abound everywhere making it reminiscent of the Black Country. Capitalism is alive and thriving in India! A conversation with an Indian industrialist revealed that entrepreneurs from a British Business School were sent out to the Punjab to gain expertise in setting up and running small businesses

In India the rich are very rich and the poor very poor, both live side by side the former having little time for the latter and the latter little resentment for the former. Whoever it was that said that England was a nation of shopkeepers had also not been to India. Shops line the roads everywhere, small open fronts, often with craftsmen working at the back, and around the tourist traps the hard sell techniques of the youngsters extract precious rupees and considerable resentment from the westerners too liberal minded to barter.

India in four minutes reading, Pakistan in the fifth. More westernised - well at least there are Japanese cars everywhere whereas in India the protectionist laws prevent anything but 1950's Morris Ambassadors. The country seems less poor and the people physically more impressive. Mosques are prominent features in all the villages. The people still seem to wander in the fields early in the morning though.

Most of the people we met were from the English speaking educated classes who were to be admired for their

deep interest in ideas and current affairs and their religious devotion. They certainly made an impression on us as being great thinkers. In contrast I must add that there were times when I was too ashamed to take photographs of some of the things that I saw.

The purpose of it all was to further my understanding of Indian and Pakistani cultures. We (a group of 30 people interested in community relations) travelled more than two thousand miles staying in large cities and villages, some of the time with Indian families, played cricket with Pakistani villagers, drank tea on the lawn with the Governor of the Punjab and scotch with the British Ambassador in Islamabad. An arranged meeting with Mrs Gandhi had to be cancelled as she had to go to Zimbabwe for the independence celebrations but the purpose of the trip was to see and meet the people, not the politicians, and from that point of view it was highly successful and very enjoyable. I now know what goes on in the fields early in the morning.

Ian Simmons.

Continued from page 6

ed over Tim as I crossed a fence. The rest of his team materialised from the gloom, muddy and exhausted. It was now less than a mile to go, and I tramped cheerfully on to the finish, 12 hours and 42 minutes after I had started.

I have always had great admiration for those members of the Unit, and indeed everyone else who manage to finish the marathon each year, and now that I know how hard it really is, my appreciation of their efforts is even greater! And how did we finish? Well despite the loss of Jon, Dave and Phil joined up with Nigel Baggott of Churchdown, and shattered the existing record to finish with the incredible time of 7 hours 13 min. Iain, Stu and Pat were ninth over all in 10 hours 57 min., but first novice team, whilst Mark, Russ and Tim finished in 12 hours 34 mins, despite their detour.

P.H.

