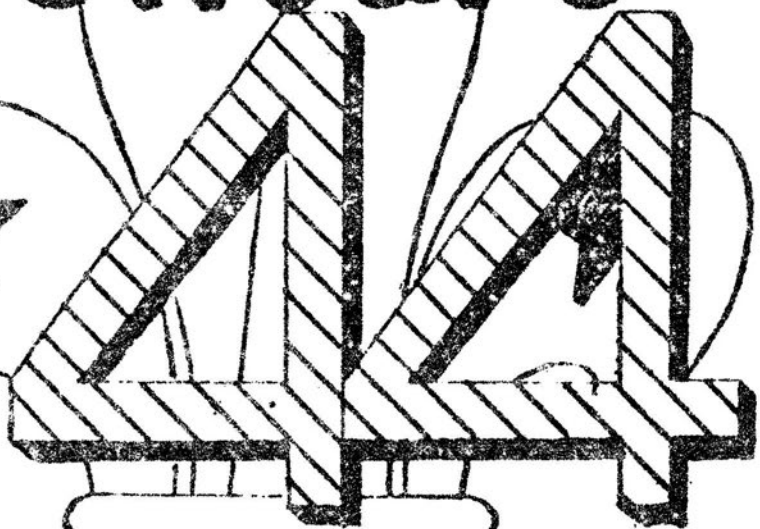


Venture



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

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On behalf of all the Unit we wish all our readers and
supporters a very happy Christmas and a peaceful and
successful New Year

J.R.H. & F.H.

I would like to start by thanking members, associate members and friends of the Unit who ensured the smooth running of this year's Barn Dance which was held on the 20th of November. A lot of hard work was put in before after, and during the event which enabled Rich Kerswell to bank £135.- so the function was a financial success, not quite the social success that last year's was.

The Unit is very grateful to Mrs Winstanley and also to several "mums" who are currently engaged in "running up" some curtains for the hut - valuable items in that they should provide more privacy during lunch time, so thank you all ladies!

There has been an increase in membership since the last issue with SIMON HAWKINS, BRIAN HERBERT, DOM MILLS JON WRIGHT and DAVID WILSON filling some of the places vacated during the summer. I am sure that all of these young men will continue to partake in activities with the same enthusiasm that they have already shown.

It is a little known fact that the last edition of this excellent periodical was entered into a competition for Unit publications run by "Scouting" magazine. We are now waiting to learn whether we have been among the winners - needless to say we are quietly confident!

Events that have recently occurred include a Slide show, held in the Bowls Pavilion at which slides of the Scottish expedition were shown and plans for 1982 were considered. A car mechanics course has produced several amusing incidents, and I'd like to thank Messers Barnes and Lloyd who have given of their valuable time in order to initiate the uninitiated in the workings of the motor car, albeit a right old banger.

It seems to me that editors of Venture 44 hardly, if ever keep a promise! Why, you may ask? Seriously, sorry not to have included reports on the Scottish expedition, but it will feature prominently in the next issue which should be out next month. However, turn through this one and to your surprise and amazement you may see, at last,the solution to THAT crossword!

Jer Hobbs

IDRIS WILLIAMS

Most of the readers of this magazine will have already heard of the death several weeks ago of Idris Williams. Although he retired from full time teaching as long ago as 1967, he continued to teach chemistry part time for eight more years, and must have taught a considerable number of our ex-members. He was by any standards an outstanding and genuinely well-loved teacher with his own very personal way of getting across the principles of that mysterious subject he dealt with.

Although never involved with scouting, after he had retired Idris found through the Venture Scouts one way of maintaining links with young people and the school that he loved. Over the past few years quite a number of our members have been round to Heathville Road where there were always trees to cut down or prune, a large garden to dig, or firewood to chop up. The work was never hard and was usually a mere prelude to the real purpose of the visit, to sit in the sun sipping beer or lemonade, to talk about the goings on at school, to reminisce, advise question and discuss politics (a subject over which he and I argued in good humour for nearly twenty years!) He greatly enjoyed his contact with those who went round and he earned the respect and affection of all. We will miss him - they don't make teachers like that any more!

F.H.

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Paddle '81 Part the Second

Readers of the last issue may recall the article on an event called "Paddle 81", and the involvement of F.H Row Lloyd and myself in its haphazard progress across Sweden. I unwittingly mentioned to the editor that our adventures could by no means be bounded within a single article. I should have kept my mouth shut! Anyhow, here is a further extract from "the diary of a Journeyman in Sweden.".....

"Our arrival at Stockholm Central in a white Bedford laden with canoes, and plastered with PADDLE 81 stickers had the desired effect - we were ignored! Where were the expected crowds, abuzz with excitement over the arrival of a contingent of the international trans-Scandinavian canoe expedition? Shouldn't they be pushing forward - eager to buy a souvenir tee-shirt, 400 of which had been concealed in every available nook and cranny of the van? (concealed "to avoid any unnecessary complications with the Swedish customs")

Too tired after two days of hectic travel to ponder over the absence of advanced publicity - something sadly lacking over the next two weeks - contact was made with a Dutch group who, like us, were joining the expedition at Stockholm. We headed for a campsite, but this was only a temporary measure before we transferred to the premises of a Paddle club, whose boathouse and surrounds were put at our disposal. Here we eventually met up with the main party, who had been delayed by bad weather in the Baltic. The clubhouse soon took on the appearance and air of a refugee camp as wet kit was spread to dry in the warm summer sun, canoes were repaired and fresh supplies brought in, sorted and repacked in the support boats and the two vans.

Everyone made full use of the splendid facilities available, for there was no guarantee that during the next few weeks regular campsites could be found. It was here that yours truly was introduced to the delights of the sauna in true Scandinavian style!!

Those 2½ days of almost party atmosphere, where the canoeists and support groups were all together in one place did much to create the spirit of camaraderie that was valuable in conquering the trials and tribulations which beset the expedition when we eventually set off on the ill fated first leg to Sodertalje. This was the most frustrating and unco-ordinated part of the journey, but even this part still brings back amusing memories when viewed in retrospect.... but more later...

Phil Brown

FROM ALL POINTS

There seems to be quite a large amount of news about many ex-members at the moment, the last edition of this magazine having stirred people all over Britain into both putting pen to paper, and their hands into their pockets to pay associate subscriptions - the Treasurer reporting that over £50 has come in during the last four weeks. The money is much appreciated, but the continued contact with so many old friends of the Unit is much more valuable.

A number of ex members have recently completed degree courses; STEVE PRESTON, having left Cambridge is now trying to get a job in the Field Centre world, and is at present in temporary employment in Gloucester. CHRIS PASHLEY has his degree from St Pauls but has not yet got himself into permanent employment either. MARK EVANS, who was present at this years A.G.M. has gone back to finish his course at Aberystwyth after a year of travelling around Europe and the Near East. Nearer home, BRENDAN NOONAN can still be found at Sandfords in Cheltenham - they do a nice line in garden fences there!

Fairly regular visitors to the hut are PAUL DYER (who has moved house and is now living in Little Normans) and KEITH FRANKLIN, who has moved from Lincolnshire to R.A.F Crediton in Devon. The elusive PHIL CHAMPION has also moved house yet again. There can be very few houses now in Leeds that he has not lived in!

It was good to get a visit the other day from JOHN SWEET who has joined the two wheel brigade by purchasing the ubiquitous Honda motorcycle. Like so many of our ex members, John has just moved.... it does make distribution of Venture 44 an interesting, all this moving about but perhaps when the records go onto the computer we may be able to keep up with all the changes.

During the summer GARETH BEAMISH was sighted in the Double G. prior to his going off to a mining engineer's job in Southern Africa. Yet another move has been made by TIM HOLFORD. Tim and Jane are now in the Uxbridge

area, back with a "Small animal" practice, but they are keeping on their Welsh cottage, and hoping doubtless th -at the nationalist incendiaries don't hear about it.

Other ex members at the A.G.M. included CHRIS CCLLINS and PAUL JENNINGS. Chris, now in his final year reading Geology at Cardiff, has been travelling around recently. He spent some time mapping in Norway, discovering a top secret military base in his allotted area, and latterly in the Pyrennees. Paul, after a year at Loughborough has transferred to the University of Warwick. Of the same vintage as those two, sightings of DAVE BROWN have been made on several occasions, usually in the company of " a friend", and JON MAY has joined us several times recently on the five a side pitch. IAN FLETCHER has also made welcomed visits to the Liesure Centre, and has lost none of his footballing skills. Another regular on the pitch is KEVIN NEELY, who is celebrating his 21st birthday as this is being typed.

Of our more recent leavers, news from Uxbridge that NIGEL BREWSTER has been playing for Brunel University at Badminton. IAIN WEIR, at present sampling the joys of a South Wales winter in Swansea, has surprised us all by announcing his engagement - thats what we mean by being mercurial...

Another surprise recently was a visitor from East Anglia in the form of STEVE DAVIES, erstwhile editor of this magazine. He did not come empty handed but handed over an article which is printed below.....

MOTORBIKE RACING....The story so far.

Quite why I first got the idea of going racing, I can't imagine. Perhaps it dates back to '78, spectating at Brands Hatch whilst the real stars did their stuff... Anyway, having spent three years at the University of East Anglia not far from Snetterton Race track I decided towards the end of my final year to have a go on my road bike of the time, a Kawasaki Z650, bought at very great expense two years beforehand.

Now racing is a funny game. Any ideas of grandeur (works contract, international fame, etc.) were quickly shattered after a few uncertain laps during which I managed to run out of road three times at Sears Corner, and nearly knocked a seasoned campaigner off in the pit lane. But somehow I was bitten by the bug and soon after I entered my first race. Before the big nerve-wracking occasion I felt the need for a little more practice, and then the real problems started.

Accelerating out of the hairpin I gave it a bit too much welly and crunched into the armco barrier. It hurt! I'd torn the ligaments in my right knee, and even after having excess fluid syringed off walking was still a problem. In a silly sort of way I was rather proud of my first racing injury, although most of my friends seemed to feel that what they had taken for temporary madness had mushroomed into total insanity.

I won't bore you all with too many details of my debut itself, suffice to say that I managed a best over all position of 19th in 3 races. At one point I was hanging on to seventh place until both tyres "let go" on one particular bend - I haven't mentioned that it was pouring with rain all the day. Soon after this I found myself out of work, and this, coupled with the number of letters from my bank manager persuaded me to give up for the rest of the 1980 season.

I spent over half the winter in the Queen's Head at Wymondham, Norfolk, drinking large quantities of Real Ale and the other part in a freezing garage trying to make good the damage to the bike. There was much to be done! I cleaned it completely, fitted a borrowed exhaust and new gaskets. A lot of time was spent in breakers yards. The timing plate and condensers were renewed, and a new steering damper added. By now I was working at Coleman Foods Limited, and eagerly awaited the 1981 season, but disaster lurked behind the next bend.

On a cold March day I arrived at the circuit with my long suffering pit man and went out for a gentle wobble

on the revamped bike. I soon returned with my visor flapping open. I was lapping at 1.58 compared with last season's best 1.35. Stupidly I began to worry, and set off, against my better judgement to power round, not thinking, but riding with "the wrist". The result was inevitable. Leaning into the long, fast right hander at Coram's I was hopelessly off line, and started to drift across the track. I could do nothing, and parted company with the bike at around 100 m.p.h. and somersaulted into the straw bales. I walked off with minor injuries, but the bike was a write off. All the work for nothing!

So where do we go from here? It is over six months since the crash, and despite what my brain tells me, I'm feeling the urge for another go - I think that my bank balance will stand at least one crash next year, but I'm 24 now, and my mum says I'm too old to race, "leave that to the young ones." Perhaps she is right - mothers often are.... See you in the paddock!

Steve Davies

PRIZE CROSSWORD SOLUTION

The key to the crossword printed in issue number 39 lay in the clues to 3 and 16 down - solution Executive Committee. The names of the seven members, which were of course printed on page one, featured in 7 of the clues.

ACROSS: 1. True. 2. Babylon. 10. Deplete. 11. Simmons. 12. Concussion. 14. Suspired. 15. Screwy. 18. Bajree. 20. Chemists. 24. Rare. 25. Real dismay. 27. Opaline. 28. Introit. 29. Drivers. 30. Easy.

DOWN. 2. Repents. 3. Executive. 4. Brewster. 5. Bishop. 6. Lime. 7. Neogene. 8. Edicts. 9. Astray. 16. Committee. 17. Phillips. 18. Barton. 19. Jerrard. 21. Summons. 22. Sky sty. 23. Severe. 26. Mimi.

