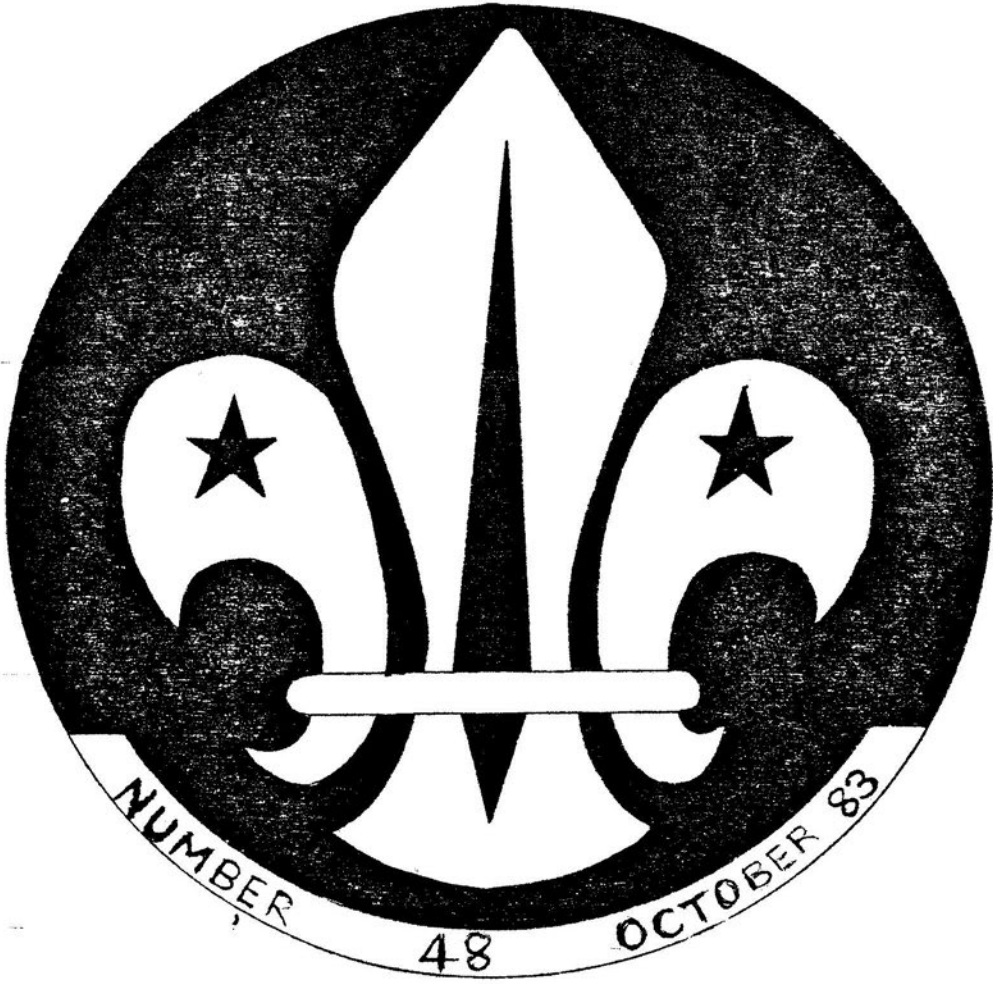


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VENTURE

44



VENTURE 44 The magazine of the 44th Gloucester
Sir Thomas Rich's School Venture Scout Unit

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COMMENT

The usual wide selection of activities is reflected in this issue together with some mind-blowing puzzles from our resident genius. Several noteworthy events did not make the hallowed pages namely the retirement of our chairman Rob Holford. Rob's efforts in stirring up and organising us apathetic scouts has been unceasing and genuinely appreciated by us all- Thanks. Continuing in the same vein, the old oak tree, the subject of many a long hour of toil by the VSL and various helpers, has at last been put to the chain saw and finally chopped up.

Another fairly major event was the Sun Race from Cleeve Hill to the Malverns in which a team of unsuspecting scouts was entered. We negotiated the open-air food and music with little difficulty but on the first stage of the actual walk we took the scenic route down towards Whinchcombe over Cleeve Hill. The object of the exercise was to walk the 25 miles to the Malverns, starting when the sun set and finishing at dawn. Allowing for the detour we completed the distance, but didn't quite get to the Malverns, but decided to claim a moral victory.

The recent slide evening attended by many guests including the District Commissioner, was a great success. The evening consisted of a display of photographs and the slides (accompanied by a characteristic commentary from the VSL) of recent hikes and the summer expedition to Norway.

Next years summer expedition is to be to Iceland by popular assent. For those interested the estimated cost is about £240. More details available soon.

Yosh Cowmeadow.

VENTURE 44 Number 49 will be devoted to an account of the Unit in Norway this summer. We are hoping to get a contribution from each ember, and the publication date is, hopefully, November 8th. Contributions are required as soon as possible.

NORTH WALES, WHITSUN

We arrived at our destination, somewhere halfway up a mountain in Wales, checked in at the cottage and cleared a campsite in a nearby sheepfield. We soon had a meal cooked up in what was to have been a wedding present for an A.V.S.L., a new pressure cooker. It was the V.S.L.s new toy and was used to cook some quite good meals in the four days, well it was better than packet food, anyway.

On the first full day we walked along Cader Idris, a pretty wicked walk for us inexperienced members of the party. There seemed to be a never ending supply of summits, all of which we climbed, and at the end of the day we were glad of the hot meal and the rest.

The next day - as a special treat - we went on another mountain walk, which we were told involved only one peak. True enough it was, but it was virtually a mountain and a half as you got up one part, thinking you were there only to find that you had to walk over a rather marshy area to get to the other part of the mountain. On the last part of the climb there were two basic routes - the easy way, and the vertical route. You can guess which one we took. By the way, the mountain was called Rhinog Fawr.

The next day the VSL and Bri went on another walk on which they had a rather hair raising experience with the tremendous thunder storm that occurred in the afternoon. Stewart James and I were thankfully left behind so that we could explore the local towns (Barmouth and Dolgellau) and waste some money.

The final day was spent visiting a gold-mine and then came the journey home, finishing a very enjoyable four days.

Graham Dalby

-o-

Footnote. A lurid account of lightening and thunder over Llawlech was to have been published here, but was deemed to be too horrendous for the average reader.....

NORTH WALES, AUGUST

Once agin the 44th ruled the roost at Bodesi for a week in August, with a large party of both old and new members. The visit was of a walking, working and touring nature, with visits being made to Llanrwst and also to Caernarfon. An ascent of Tryfan was undertaken (where only Bri defied death by jumping from Adam to Eve) also Snowdon was scaled as well as some lesser peaks. Naturally the infamous path was again the source of our martyrdom, but this time we used it to carry 64 fence posts up to Llyn Idwal.

This particular visit was remarkable for the lack of low-flying aircraft/sheep, although chaos did prevail when the VSL had to rescue a stranded Ian Fletch and Co. from Corwen. We were also buzzed by the RAF/Mountain Rescue helicopter as we were leaving to sample the local spring water one evening.

Although the weather was not fantastic everyone had a good time, and we returned via Porthmadog and Corwen leaving the Bank Holiday traffic to sweat it out on the A5. Many thanks to the VSL for his labours, and to Simon Lapington for his continued hospitality.

Rob Holford.

Still in North Wales...

FOURTEEN

It is either the gods or the mountain statisticians who have a fetish about the number fourteen; the 14 '3s' (3000 ft peaks) in North Wales, and the 14 '8s' (8000m) in the Himalayas.

Unfortunately for North Wales and fortunately for the Himalayas droves of us have to content ourselves with the fouteen '3s'!

Us being unwilling (or incapable) of doing the round in 24 hours a la Fairbank, we contented ourselves with the 14 in four days during our stay at Bodesi during the summer.

DAY ONE

The whole party of eleven including one novice went to warm up on Elidir Fawr, the forgotten mountain, and Y Garn, the impressive endpiece to Llyn Ogwen. Quite a normal day in typical welsh conditions, the only really outstanding feature being the rainbow seen protruding from Tryfan's north ridge during the descent.

DAY TWO

Some of the merry band are feeling tired and want to go to the seaside! Four go leaving seven behind to climb Tryfan and the Glyders. Up Tryfan the usual way from the car-park, leaving the track a few times for some very enjoyable scrambling. Four decide not to climb up to the Glyders and retire through Bwlch Tryfan.

Feeling adventurous the pioneers try a different route up the Bristles, only to return defeated and shaking from about 100 feet above the bottom and everything we touch falls away. I have never been so frightened (gold mines excepted) as I was 20 feet above a lower ledge with everything I put my weight on coming down and crashing down below me.

Reach top, shoulders ache, mist everywhere. Arrive at Glyder Fach, donate sac to John with glee and bounce along to Glyder Fawr, only to turn around to find a way to avoid the Devil's Kitchen. We find it by a masterpiece of navigation (or was it luck?), climb down out of the mist to the new tea shack.

A good day - the others don't know what they missed.

DAY THREE

(..and the remains of day two..)

Only the VSL and myself decide to do the '3s' so we are driven to Aber Falls car park at 7 pm by Ian and Mark who plan to climb Yr Elen from Bodesi over Carnedd Llewelyn the next day.

We trudge with heavy packs towards the falls and up the scree in the twilight and stop at the top to check for spare boulders in our packs. At the top we look down the not very impressive falls (very dry) and then troll along the side of the stream until we find a suitable pitch. Brewing up we are discovered by a marauding squad of midges. Drink our tea running about the hillside then retire early to escape the heavy mob.

6.00 am, alarm goes. 6.30 am, tea brewing. 7.00 am, eating a beans and sausage concoction, pacing backwards and forwards trying to avoid the rearguard. 7.30 am away not forgetting water for a brew up on Foel Grach.

Very hard work up Foel fras, even though it's cold - I wonder why I bother. We find the top as it begins to clear, troll across to Foel grach watching the clouds build up from the north. We find the refuge hut, brew up and take out the Fortnum and Mason hamper. After a good rest we continue on to Carnedd Llewelyn, still enshrouded in mist. On the summit we talk of Mark and Ian only to hear "Hello Frank!" shouted. We look round, we see Mark and Ian.

We walk to Yr Elen together, leave rucksacs at the bottom and climb to the top and have difficulty deciding which lump is the top! Take photo and congratulate Mark on his 14th.

Beginning to get tired now. We go back to find the sacs- easier said than done. Say goodbye to Mark and Ian Now very tired. Meet first strangers on Dafydd, devour a tin of pineapple and a can of something, walk to Pen-yr-Oleu-wen. Rain begins and continues forever. Reach the top and climb down some very slippery rocks. Down at lake level we ignore map and compass and just follow our noses into the mist. Finally we get below the mist and see Bryn Poeth with Simon standing outside, and get back, tea was brewed - thanks, and sit outside drying in glorious sunshine.

DAY FOUR

Misty again. THE day. The horseshoe; F.H., R.Watson, B.Symcox, R.Kerswell, J.Pepperell brave or fool enough to do it. The rest walk up the miners track.

The Pyg drags then onto rock. This is enjoyable. Reach Crib Goch in mist having passed countless other parties. Now in traffic jam to Crib-y-Ddysgl though. Mist still thick. Very exposed with frightening drop on either side of a one foot wide ridge. Walk upright along the top. Have to do this properly. Eventually reach Crib-y-Ddysgl - one to go, and the highest and worst of the lot, Y Wyddfa with the 'hotel'. Walk to the top - no hands on any rock from now on.

Celebratory pint in the hotel (it has one use after all) after topping the fourteen. Meet up with the others - hear that Dave has been sick. Dave bundled onto train. We continue the horseshoe in weather that has suddenly cleared, now down and then up onto Lliwedd. Bomb down to the van - halfway down a man in shorts runs past, followed by Russ. I follow, as do the rest of us, and we overtake him. He catches me up and we run, talking. He has done the trip in $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours so far! I can't keep up, finish 100 m behind him, 300m behind Russ, John and Ian. They were pleased at beating him till they hear what he'd done.

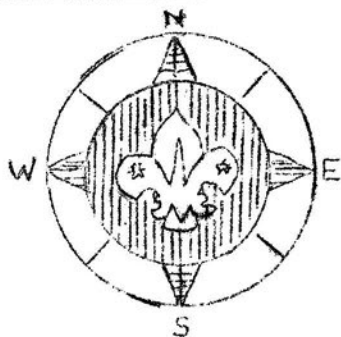
Rappy. Down to Llanberis to pick up Dave. Back to the cottage. Job done.

Brian Symcox

FOOTNOTE (Sorry!)

For readers who like statistics, the fourteen 3000 ft mountains referred to in the article above are, in order of height.

Y Wyddfa (snowdon) 3560'; Crib-y-ddysgl 3496'; Carnedd Llywelyn 3485'; Carnedd Dafydd 3424'; Glyder Fawr 3279'; Glyder Fach 3262'; Pen-yr-oleu-wen 3211'; Foel-grach 3196'; Yr Elen 3152'; Y Garn 3104'; Foel-fras 3092'; Elidir Fawr 3030'; Crib-goch 3026'; Tryfan 3010'.

FROM ALL POINTS

Usually at this stage in the year we are reporting on the exodus from Gloucester to all corners of Britain of recent school leavers. Sadly this year the annual dispersion has been very limited, and at present five out of eight leavers have not gained their hoped-for places in higher education. Nor, it is sad to say, have they any real prospect of gaining any permanent job in the City. It must be cause for concern when a group of well motivated and well educated young men seem to be handed the message by society - "Sorry, we don't have any use for you!"

However, we can report some positive news...

ROB HOLFORD, erstwhile chairman who did such a great job last year is still in the area and is working in a bank at Brockworth. Rob plans to remain an active member and his experience and enthusiasm should prove to be a valuable asset to the Unit this year.

JOHN PEPPERELL, after nearly four years in the Unit has gone to Huddersfield Poly to study engineering, so we lose a loyal and seasoned campaigner.

SIMON WILLIAMS is another unit stalwart who will be greatly missed. Simon has just started a course in Maths and Geology at the West London College (that's in West London, I guess). Simon, together with HUGO ASHBY left Bodesi early this summer to try parachuting. After their keen anticipation it was a bit of a come down, I believe.

News of the futures of the other recent leavers will be given in later issues of Venture 44.

From further down the corridors of time, news of old friends....

ROW LLOYD, after his travels in darkest South America has ventured into darkest South Wales and has got a post

teaching in Aberdare.

IAN FLETCHER has now qualified as a nurse and is in the Cardiothoracic ward at Charing Cross hospital. Ian's undoubted skill at caring for people is not matched by his skill at caring for gearboxes, as we discovered this summer.....

JON MAY has completed his degree at Bath and is now working at Smiths Industries at Bishops Cleeve.

CHRIS COLLINS is now working as a Geological assistant to the Leicestershire Museum Service and will be a neighbour of MARK SIMMONS, who was up at Bodesi with the Unit this summer. Brother IAN SIMMONS has been in touch recently, and there is news of his contemporary, ANGUS KING, who is now teaching in up-country Malawi.

IAIN WEIR has spent the summer at Butlins at Barry Island. He gravitated to the bar, of course, where he is dispensing drinks to the thirsty campers. Hi de hi.....

News of TONY JONES - mark 1 - Big Tony has recently qualified as a doctor and at present is a houseman at Bridgend Hospital, whilst TONY (A.V.) JONES has been at the University of Bath where he is studying Landscape Gardening.

NIGEL BREWSTER, after a long search has found a job for the rest of the year in Banbury where he is "reviewing" the accounts of a "large manufacturer".

KEITH FRANKLIN will be off in a few weeks for a tour of duty with the R.A.F. in the Falklands. Still, I suppose it will be summer when he gets there.

Finally, MARK EVANS has returned to Gloucester and is now working as a lorry driver for a local biscuit factory. His transport manager is none other than our own PAT PHILLIPS. If that doesn't take the biscuit.. Mark has penned a short article for this issue.

F.H.

TO ALL ASSOCIATE MEMBERS AND EX-MEMBERS. IF YOU WISH TO GET YOUR "VENTURE 44" DELIVERED PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT WE HAVE GOT YOUR LATEST ADDRESS!!!

JUST ANOTHER CYNIC

Summer 1982, heady student days over, I found myself required to fulfil the great protestant work ethic. A vocational degree in agriculture and extensive practical farming experience gave me quiet optimism about my job prospects. How naive that assumption has proved to be.

My first post graduate job was a builder's pre-clean in Gloucesters latest hypermarket. The principal contractors had a "hire-em/fire-em" man-management system. The pitiful wages made a student grant seem wonderful!

I decided a heavy goods vehicle licence would be an astute investment. An approach to one of the four main clearing banks for a loan met with a KGB-style quizzing about my financial and personal resources. Of course an educational course or training is not a tangible asset which can be resold should the lender default. Yet many billions in credit are extended by this same high street cartel to Argentina, Mexico and Eastern Europe.

Having acquired the HGV I it puts the holder in a classic catch 22 situation, namely: How do you get road experience without a job? Haulage contractors are quite understandably reluctant to risk a new rig with any new driver, the only choice - join a relief agency. Lots of short term work, but rarely a full week's.

Over Christmas I spent a time in a large insurance office as messenger. An insight into this Magnolia world left me uninspired. Management policy was to only take on temporary staff and retain them if any good after 12 weeks probation. However, to leave voluntarily means unemployment benefit is with-held.

Throughout the preceding months I'd been regularly scanning farming journals for farmer's assistant posts. By March I decided to put in a situations wanted advert and got a single reply. The advert cost £15, two interviews a further £20 and all this on £26 dole. Norman Tabbitt's "Be flexible/travel anywhere" policy is rather unrealistic - still, I could have cycled.

A summer in Somerset working as a commodity broker

/gentleman farmer's dogsbody resulted in the inevitable personality clash. He insisted on me being self-employed negating any employment protection and giving no right to unemployment benefit. Returning to the victorian era was too much for my 20th century decadence.

Once again I'm back in Gloucester and driving for a large biscuit manufacturer and earning considerably more money without the worry of livestock and responsibility.

A reappraisal of my career objectives is now in order. I'm a young, healthy, white, caucasian male with a degree and HGVI. What happens to the older unskilled, black female in Maggie's Dickensian utopia of free market forces?

MARK EVANS.

* * * * *

27.9.83

Dear Sir,

I tend to think our intrepid trio would have been in BIG trouble, or would have had to suffer a starvation diet for about 5 days had you not come to our aid as you did. I must say for once we really felt privileged and pleased to be part of the Scout Association because it meant we could talk on common ground. Anyway I hope you enjoyed your expedition as much as we did ours, and I am pleased to say the lad who was ill when we met soon recovered with more help from fellow campers, this time Dutch and German. We were able to leave next day and eventually got back to Bergen. I hope we meet again, may-be in another country, and once more THANKS A LOT

Yours sincerely

Robin Jones, 19th Bolton V.S.U.

WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT? Well, if you want to know the story behind that letter, don't miss the next edition of VENTURE 44, when the authorized version of the account of the Norway expedition will be published. This will be issue Number 49. A special anniversary issue Number 50 should also be out before Christmas.

Brian (sorry BRAIN) Teasers

Answers to quiz in Number 46. Sorry we didn't have them last time, but no-one could work them out!

Two solutions to the matchstick question are (1) to move a match from the III to the VII (2) to move a match in the top V to make another X.

The hidden country was obviously CHINA

A suggested solution to the reef knot puzzle is REEF-REED-SEED-SLED-SLEW-SLOW-SNOW-KNOW-KNOT.

According to our resident mathematicians the answer to the bookworm problem is 40 cms, the worm would not go through volumes one or ten if the books were arranged as indicated.

* * * * *

AND NOW FOR SOME MORE, provided by RICH KERSWELL.

Egbert and Humphrey were cycling towards each other one day. Egbert was cycling at 10m/s towards Humphrey, who was heading towards his friend at 15m/s. They started 10 km from each other. A fly resting on Egbert's handlebars began to fly at a constant speed of 20m/s back and forth between the two cyclists. What was the total distance travelled by the fly?

A certain number is squared, and the product is squared again. The answer is multiplied by a "CERTAIN NUMBER". the result of all this is a seven digit number ending in a seven. What is the "Certain number"?

In a primitive eastern country a shepherd was counting his sheep into four separate pens. In the first were 75 sheep, so in his records he wrote $\square \gamma \triangle$ In the

second there were 255 so he wrote $\triangle \square \gamma$ In the

third, 183. He wrote $\gamma \triangle \square$ After counting sheep in

the fourth he wrote $\square \triangle \gamma$ How many sheep in pen 4?



