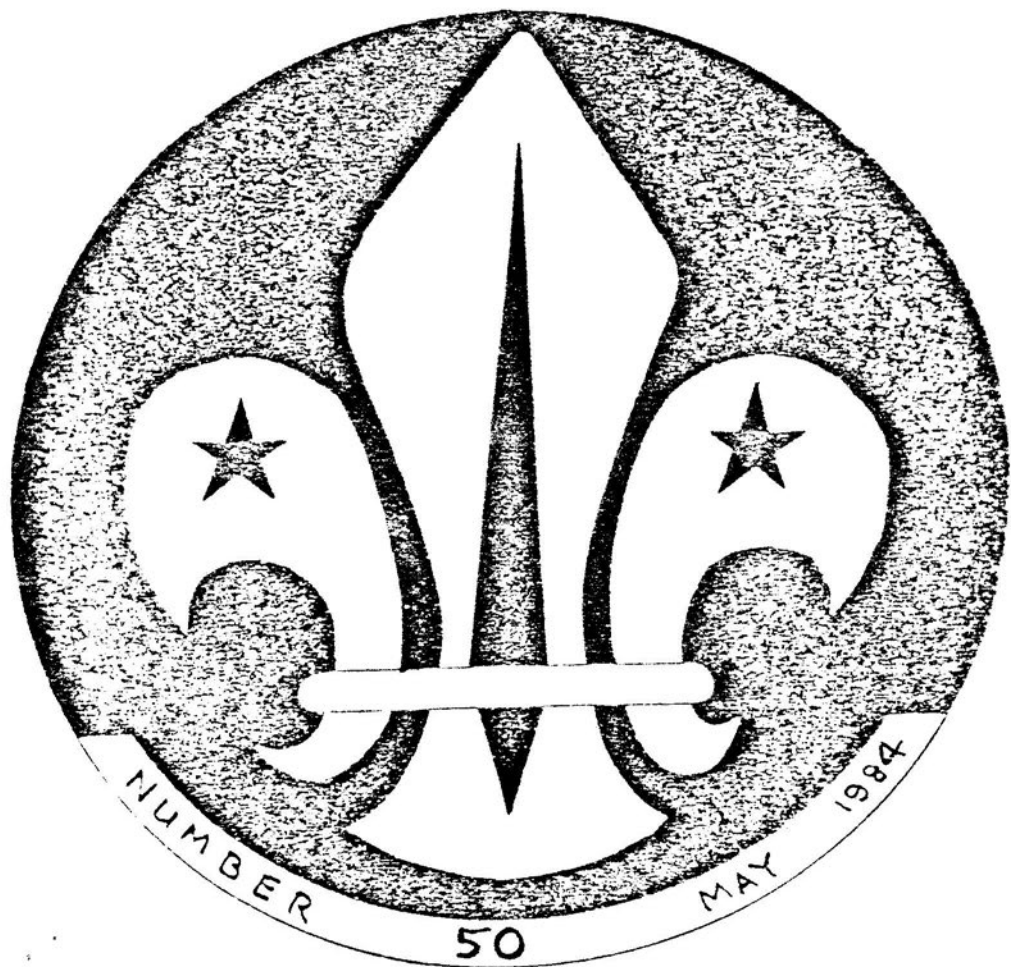


VENTURE⁵⁰

44



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

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EDITOR Yosha Cowmeadow.

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Leaders	F.Henderson P.J.Brown
Chairman	Rich Kerswell
Secretary	Brian Symcox
Treasurer	Paddy Smith
Recorder	Yosh Cowmeadow
Social Sec	Simon Hawkins
Quartermaster	Dave Wilson
Executive members	Steve Catchick Stewart James

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VENTURE 44 Number 1 was produced just over fifteen years ago, in April 1969 to be exact. A slim eight side effort it contained, amongst other things, reference to the annual capitation fee of 13/- (65p), and the fact that a cheque for £9.15s had to be sent to the district treasurer. In 1984 we have paid £118.80, with the sum per head being £5.40. An 830% increase.....

Other increases since then have been in the size and scope of the magazine, and its circulation.

Up to the present we have published

639 Pages,
with over 250 Articles, etc
by 93 contributors.

Articles have come from members and ex-members all over the world, from

AFGHANISTAN ARGENTINA AUSTRALIA AUSTRIA BOLIVIA
BELGIUM CANADA CHILE COLUMBIA CZECHOSLOVAKIA EGYPT
EQUADOR FINLAND FRANCE GERMANY ICELAND IRELAND
INDIA ISRAEL KENYA NEPAL NORWAY PERU SWITZERLAND
SWEDEN U.S.A. U.S.S.R. VENEZUALA.

Copies at present are distributed to Unit members and to 71 friends and ex-members of the Unit, and on this occasion there will be exactly ONE HUNDRED copies distributed to readers in .

Aberdeen Bath Beckenham Birmingham Bristol
Brighton Bromley Cardiff Capel curig Cheltenham
Coventry Chudleigh Clackmanan Guildford Gerrards
Cross Huddersfield Hereford and many other places,
but we have run out of space!

EDITORIAL

Well, folks, here it is. The special, commemorative, 100% cholesterol-free 50th edition of the "Venture 44" magazine. The usual activities have been happening such as a night orienteering/hike over in the Forest of Dean which was mainly run as an introduction to this type of sophisticated and highly tuned activity for the newer members of the Unit. It proved quite a success, with, to everyones amazement, no one getting lost, as is the norm on these occasions. Usually at that time of the year an activity like that would be useful training for the Cots-wold Marathon. However this year we were unable to make improvements on some very creditable past performances - our entries apparently being received too late...

We are in the usual bed race however, and construction of two thematic beds, a Keystone cop bed to pursue a bed full of thieves, complete with swag bags, is under way, in a breach of the recent tradition of frenzied sawing and hammering late into the night the day before the event. Around £200 should be raised by the Unit for charity.

Congratulations must go to Rich Kerswell who recently won a scholarship to Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He is, incidentally the fourth Unit chairman who has gone to that college - could that prove something? Although he has left school he is still the chairman of the Unit, and our longest serving member.

We have recently welcomed a number of new members - Rich Booth, Derek Dalby, Duncan Jennings, Jason Stone, Lee Rounce, Kev Middleton and James Sargeant. They are already entering fully into the activities and spirit of the 44th, and we wish them all a long and happy stay.

Finally, in order to mark our 50th edition we have invited several distinguished past contributors to pick up their pens again, as you will see in the following pages

Yosh Cowmeadow.

FROM RICH'S TO RAGS

DALTON, Robert- a news reporter on "Evening Gazette" in Tees-side, after graduating(just) from Nottingham in 1982, in History.

University for me was not all the easy life and fun it is often made out to be. Then again, neither is being a journalist, but I wouldn't want to have missed either and would recommend both.

Although my actual degree really helped very little in getting a job as a reporter, the three years spent at Nottingham were invaluable preparation for full time work.

Twice I narrowly escaped being banned from taking vital degree exams after committing myself to work on the student newspaper, "Bias". However, during my two years as editor there I enjoyed such a wealth of experiences as few fellow "historians"- or any other undergraduates for that matter could ever hope to sample.

In my very first issue I had to confront sensitive and difficult stories involving three dead students, a suicide, and two killed in a Rag week car crash. Future editions covered a vicious rape, a tragic drowning, more road deaths and some violent muggings, as well as those more traditional student interests - education cuts and political wrangling. Not everything was so 'heavy', with campus visits to be covered by many famous people - such as the Queen, Tony Benn, David Steel and Edward Heath. On the more social side, there were concerts by many of the premier pop groups.

I could mention that under my editorship, Bias was voted runner-up in the "Guardian" competition for best college newspaper - but that would be boasting.....

My preference for extra-curricular 'education' can be traced back to S.T.R.S. The rot set in when I started to edit Venture 44, then the Richian, exasperating my 'A'

level teachers with my failure to produce homework (not that my magazine work was always on time either). But enough of my ego-trip, and back to today.

My attitudes have changed little, my interests have stayed the same, but at least I am getting paid for them now! The job is tiring, with long hours and little of the glamour that the public imagines makes up the usual routine of the journalist. In fact rooting is nearer the mark, for as well as the infinitive daily variety of the stories - happy or sad, bizarre or boring - every fact has to be checked, every piece must be worth reading, every deadline has to be met. Then there is the routine of the regular council meetings, hourly checking calls to the 999 services, the daily 'what's on' diary and much more.

Of course some cliches about the profession are true. The fast living, hard drinking, hard bitten attitude to life of many "hacks"; the enthusiastic but rampantly cynical approach to a good story - i.e. two newspaper mottos KISS (Keep it simple, stupid) and "Make it short, make it quick and make it up.

Five months in a Newcastle Journalism college got rid of any naive undergraduate illusions I still had of a newspaper's purpose - to make money of course!

At the time of writing this I'm working in the industrial department of the Middlesbrough-based "Evening Gazette", a bit like trying to run a residents' news letter in a cemetery. It is part of Cleveland, which has the highest unemployment rate in the U.K.

It doesn't bring you many close friends as everyone suspects a journalist's intent it seems, but despite this love-hate relationship people still buy the Gazette - thank goodness!

However, when I sit staring at a blank white sheet of paper in my typewriter, with the seconds to deadline ticking away, I know from experience there is at least a person worse off for copy - the editor of Venture 44!

Rob Dalton

The name Rowland Lloyd first appeared in Venture 44 Number 2, fifteen years ago. Since then he has been a regular contributor. In this article he continues the story of his travels in South America last year.

THE INCA TRAIL.

The whole of Peru and Bolivia is criss-crossed with trails, many of which were built by the Incas. However, the knowledge and experience of maintaining these stone paths died with them. The Spaniards found the paths of little use as they were too narrow for the conquistadors carts and pack mules - they were really designed for use by llamas and men on foot. The most famous of these Inca trails was one that the conquistadors did not find, and which remained hidden until 1915, when it was discovered by one Hiram Bingham. It follows the Urubamba river from Cusco, but due to the steep sided canyon it is forced to turn south-west into an adjacent valley, and hence into the dense jungle to the fabled lost city of the Incas - Machu Picchu.

The Inca Trail proper starts at a local stop called Km 88. The train is worked by a gang of very determined thieves who snatch or s;ash cameras or bags, so great care is required. At this "train stop" hikers have 30sec to get themselves and their gear off before the train carries on its way. Travelling by train in S.America is a story in itself. Suffice to say that it is possible to buy almost any sort of food, dead or alive, cooked or raw, maize beer, coffee, tea, and all guaranteed to give some form of gastric disorder unless strong stomachs and familiarity prevail.

Back to the trail, which immediately crosses a river where a slung seat is operated by an ingenious Peruvian. It then carries on through a grove of eucalyptus then up past two sets of Inca ruins, Q'ente and Llactapata. The stones wind upwards through thick forest, and in this a

campsite must be found. I will not dwell on the problem of lighting a stove at altitude, suffice to say that at this point my old primus burst into flames, so it was back to the traditional camp fire.

The trail continues upwards for about 3 hours of walking (height gain 1,700m), not a good way to start the second day. At the pass the view is breathtaking. It is also the highest point of the walk, at 4198m. The path then descends into a valley, where stream wading is necessary. The actual trail, though, leads up the flank of the valley to the second pass. A small circular ruin, Runkuracay is passed, the trail being clearly marked by the impressive stone steps and smooth walking surfaces. The descent is easy and leads to an Inca pucara called Sayacmarca, where a beautiful campsite can be made. I pitched a tent in the centre of the ruins which gave excellent protection from the wind. The pucara afforded a magnificent view and clearly commanded the old highway. The path can be clearly seen as it is made from a light coloured granite.

The trail continues onward to Machu Picchu, taking a contour on the hillsides until a small climb leads to the third pass, a snip at 3627m. At this point another Inca pucara is found - Phuyupatamarca, just below the pass. The trail continues, traversing and passing right through some tunnels which exploit natural weaknesses in the rock, with the trail at times seeming to hang in mid air with drops of thousands of feet to the Urubamba wind-ing below.

Eventually the trail drops sharply and all traces of stonework are lost, until one gets to the ruins which remain of Huinay Huayna. This was to be my third camp in the lush jungle growth beside a great waterfall.

The following day was a short walk through the thick jungle. I experienced an exhilarating thrill of expectancy as the trail steadily and deliberately climbed to an impressive flight of stairs hewn from the massive

granite leading upwads to Intipunku - the gates of the city. Ahead in the towering Andes the tall peak of Huayna Picchu framed the picture, and before me was spread the ruins of Machu Picchu - the lost city of the Incas.

Row Lloyd.

Another regular contributor is ex-editor Mark Simmons who, when asked to write something for this edition, disappeared abroad, not to see Inca ruins in Peru, but to find fossils in Europe.

"Splendid geology, awesome scenery, Varied women and pricey beer"- summarizes the Alpine Field trip last June on which two minibus loads of keen, hyperactive, dumb, English geology students created havoc amongst all and everything they encountered.

25/6/83

At University, pile into the blue minibus. Straight down to 'sunny' Norfolk, and on to Felixstowe, an eventful curry session and eventual rendezvous with the ferry to Zeebrugge - not, however, before yelling "fascists" at the customs men.

26/6/83

"Fun,fun,fun on the autobahn", "We're on our way to Tubingen, we shall not be moved." True enough, as we crawl at 0.2 mph (0.32 kph) in a two mile tail back, 32 km from Stuttgart, caused by 20 V.W. beetles cramming into a small tunnel to shelter from the pouring rain. Many hours later, and many hours late for the meagre Y.H.meal we arrive, and its over to Dr Seilacher's - (big in event stratigraphy, man!) for a knees up where spitting the stones out of cherries, feasting (it was a feast) and sober discussion about geology were the happenings.

27/6/83

Tubingen Museum in the morning. Wow! BIG WOW! Saw a camel and a llama at 4.30 p.m. - must lay off the schnapps.

28/6/83

Highlights of the day included a visit to the Reiss meteorite crater, the Solnhofen Limestone (devoid of fossils, unfortunately). Then to Eichstadt Y.H. - Lights out at 10 pm.

29/6/83

A real archeopteryx at the Eichstadt Museum, and then goodbye, Germany, hello Austria. Oh no, more of the border guards - shut up everyone - "FASCISTS!" Too late! On to Salzburg. Wow! Salzburg is very beautiful. We celebrate (to the strains of Brahms and Liszt) in the castle, also very beautiful.

30/6/83

On to Adnet. A very sunny day.

1/6/83

Spectacular cable car ride from Gausausee over to Gausaukamm, even if a bit cloudy and wet. A hard slog around a wet mountain. BLEAK. The reward was firewater at the top. Down to Bad Ischel.

2/7/83

Yet more mountains. Great, it's Halstatt Salt mine where they make you dress up like a concentration camp prisoner, send you via some very slippery slopes deep into the depths of the mine.

Late that evening went to the cinema to see some fairly international films, only to be locked out of the hostel and have to sleep in the van!

3/7/83

Today we had a mammoth drive over a mountain pass, with heart-stopping moments on the very steep way down, as the minibus kept jumping out of gear. Most people discovered religion today.

4/7/83

Extremely long trek up a mountain to see some rocks we didn't want to see anyway. (eclogites, man!)

In the evening we all went to the local swimming pool. At last, a wash.

5/7/83

Onward, lads, to Spittal. Funicular and then a two mile railway journey around the top of the mountain.

Everyone goes wild at the sight of snow and ice, great slides, yippee!!!

Excellent food (veal), Eighteen to a room, and I wish they'd all climb off the wardrobe.

6/7/83

On scout, onwards to the Italian border to get your passport stamped - only they wouldn't!

7/7/83

In the evening, back in Salzburg. Meet the locals. Down the pub, get drinks bought us, a great sing-a-long sang Austrian songs all night and I didn't even know any German. (What do they put in that bier?)

8/7/83

Back to Germany. Heidenheim - full of Americans.

9/7/83

Down to Brussels, to hear that Townsend-Thoresen are on strike!

Rapid dash to the boat, stopping to take on fuel at a Belgian service station, set Anglo-belgian relations back 400 years with our attempts at humour.

Lastly, we get a ferry to Dover, an earlier one than we should have.

10/7/83

Home to Leicester, via London. Feeling sad and blue. Goodbye second year, sob!.....

You have been following the adventures of Leicester University SS II Geology students, and their leaders. Also starring; Austria, Belgium and a good part of Germany. Who mentioned the war?...

Mark Simmons

SPORTS REPORT

Our sporting prowess (or in some cases lack of it) was again demonstrated in the recent Scout swimming Gala at the Barton Pool. Our team of Graham and Derek Dalby, Dave Wilson and myself coped without the aid of water wings, and Graham won his event against tough opposition and then went on to represent the District in the County gala.

The District darts tournament, held as usual in the Bowls Pavilion again attracted a big entry, but our domination of the event over recent years was broken by the team who have been the defeated finalists from time immemorial.

Another recent Unit success came with a challenge to a game of 5-a-side football at the Leisure Centre by a Hucclecote Youth Club. Both sides provided two teams, playing four games. We won all four convincingly, and another challenge from the 38th Glos Venture scouts gave us even more convincing victories.

Also on the sporting front, the vague beginnings of a snooker tournament have materialized, and a draw has actually been made. So far the first round has produced a few sensational upsets, notably the exit from the competition of both the V.S.L. and myself...

Yosh Cowmeadow

VENTURE SCOUT UNIFORM

The principle upheld by certain members of the Unit, that scout uniform should be worn whenever and wherever possible, seems to me to be putting scouting aside and trying to appeal to the general public. I feel that the only possible reason for having a uniform is to make scouts seem something better than the rest of society. This should not be the case. Anyway we are always scouts whether we are in uniform or not.

This unit undertakes many activities in which uniform is unsuitable dress... however there is one among us who thinks we should introduce special activities so that we can all dress up, and this seems to me a ludicrous idea.

I cannot believe that scout uniform is a necessity. I heard that at the last county leadership course, ours was the only unit dressed in the required uniform.... I conclude that Venture Scout uniform is to all intents and purposes a complete waste of money..

D.L.B.

The above article is a slightly shortened version of the original which was first published in Venture 44 in 1970.

The "uniform question" has been a bone of contention both within this unit, and the scout movement generally for some time. Perhaps in another 14 years the situation may be resolved...

F.H.

