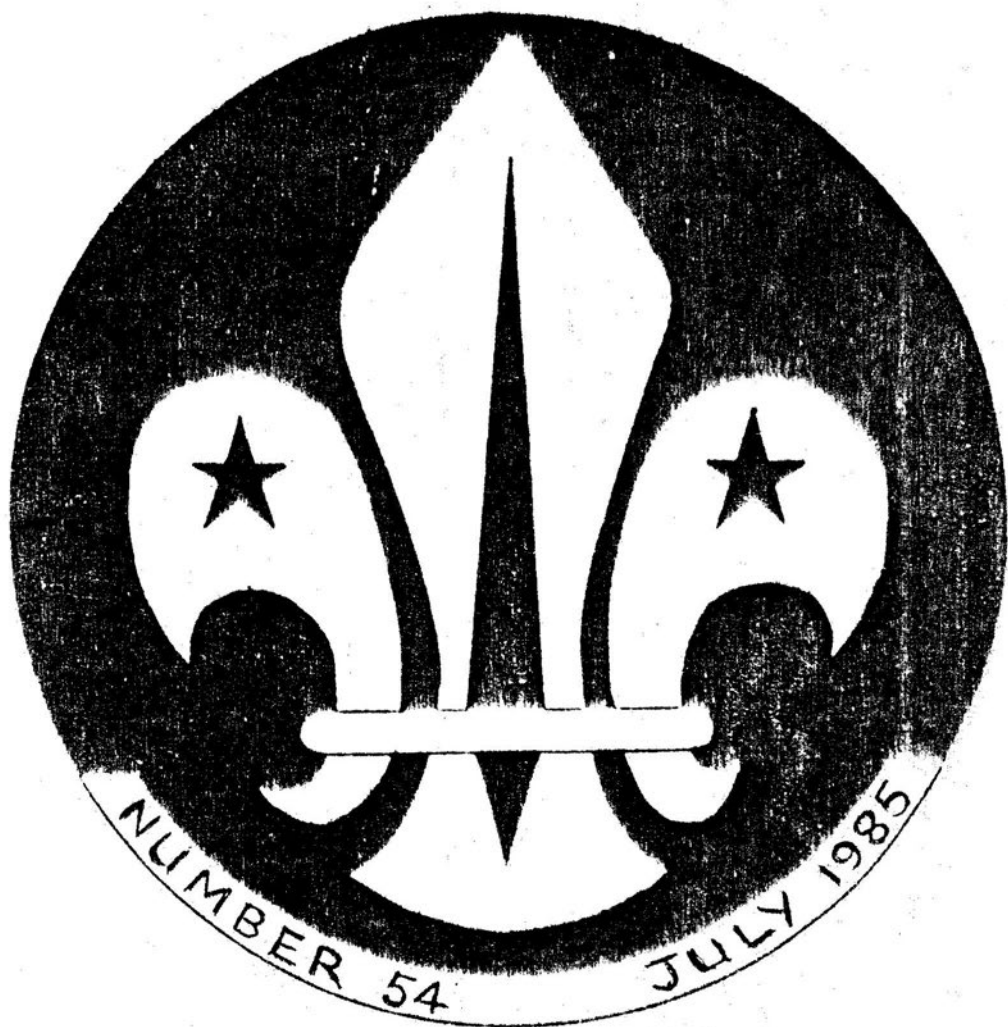


VENTURE

44



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

NUMBER 54

JULY 1985

EDITORS

Neil Hawkins
Steve Clutterbuck

UNIT OFFICERS

| | |
|-------------------|--|
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| Secretary | Jason Stone |
| Treasurer | Dave Wright |
| Recorder | Stewart James |
| Quartermaster | Dave Williams |
| Executive members | Rich Booth Iain Heathcock Derek Dalby Neil Hawkins Steve Clutterbuck |

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COMMENT

With the advent of the summer (at last!), after a long, damp spring the Unit is becoming more active. The longer evenings have seen us outdoors more, enabling us to go canoeing and climbing - scaling the heights of the Castle Rock on Cleeve Hill (actually not terribly high, but hard enough for us!). We have managed a few games of cricket and rounders to give us some exercise also. On a grander scale, we entered four teams in this years Sun Run, all of which did well. A week was spent in Snowdonia at Easter, and there was a cycle tour last half term - more of which later. A number of members successfully coped with a First Aid course, and seemingly a long time ago a large number turned out for the Bed race at Brockworth.

Five new members have joined the Unit and are all taking a very active part in Unit life; Joe Clyde, James and Adam Foster, Danny Mills (Dom's brother) and Ally Smith (Tim and Paddy's brother).

You may also have noticed that the magazine is now co-edited by Steve Clutterbuck and myself. Steve has offered his help with the work as we hope to increase the annual production with more varied and larger magazines, but this, of course will depend on contributions coming from our many readers, i.e. YOU.

The next standard edition will include the results of an interesting survey recently carried out among our members, plus several contributions from ex-members.

Neil Hawkins

SUBSCRIPTIONS 1985/6

At a recent general meeting it was agreed unanimously that the subscription should be raised to £20 per annum. In cases where there are two brothers the figure should be £16 each. Subs may be paid in two installments, first due on 30th September 1985, the second on Jan 31st 1986.

Whitsun 85; Pedal Power in Powys

During the half term holiday this summer a small party of cyclists embarked on a tour accompanied by the V.S.L. who carried kit and tents in the van. We decided to use this as a practice for the Ireland expedition.

Marcus Whitmore, Dave Williams and myself were driven to the Trumpet just outside of Ledbury and we set off at 3 p.m. Monday. Unfortunately, the rain was lashing down but this did not deter us, and despite flooding, we went around Hereford to Stretton Sugwas, and from there on to Bronydd near Hay on Wye. The weather detracted slightly from our enjoyment of the first day, but the rain failed to dampen our spirits. We camped on a farm where we shared a field with another group of scouts.

On Tuesday morning the weather had changed for the better, and we felt a good deal easier about our days ride. We stopped at Hay to stock up for the journey but unfortunately we didn't have enough time to browse round the profusion of second-hand bookshops in the town.

Then came what was perhaps the most enjoyable stretch of the tour, down the Golden Valley to Peterchurch. The sun shone and the countryside was a constant source of distraction from the road ahead! From there we made our way to Pontrilas and Grosmont Castle, where we had our lunch in the ruins. Then we cycled on to Skenfrith where we indulged in ices below the castle wall (now British!) After passing through Monmouth we faced perhaps the most arduous section of our route, a long, steep climb up to Trelleck and that night's camp. We had to walk a length of the incline, but to make up for this we had a delicious lamb stew that night. We were told by the farmer of the badgers that were not an uncommon sight where we had pitched our tents, but we were out of luck that night, although we saw plenty of rabbits.

On the next day we rode down to the River Wye and crossed by walking over a disused railway bridge at Red-

brook. From there we faced another steep climb up to Coleford followed by a pleasant ride through the Forest of Dean to Speech House, where we paused for a while. On to Minsterworth and the busy A48 for a lunch stop. We thought at that stage we were almost home and dry, but far from it! Somehow the cones on the back wheel of Dave's bike had come loose. We pulled into a garage and eventually got the machine road-worthy, and at last got back in one piece!

As always we would like to thank the V.S.L. for giving up his time to drive around with us, and helping to make it a most enjoyable three days.

Easter 85; Boot bashing at Bodesi

For the second time in this academic year, a party of Scouts ventured up to Bodesi, the cottage in North Wales which we frequently use. During many visits many activities have taken part, but the basic ones, as ever are mountain walking and conservation work.

We arrived at the cottage on Monday evening. After a particularly sleepless night, we set off to the mountain of Moel Siabod. This is not a particularly high peak, but nevertheless it provided a challenge, as when we began climbing there were clear skies, but about two thirds of the way up, we hit some mist which stayed with us to the summit.

The major walk of the week came on Wednesday. We were able to walk in a basic horse-shoe shape around the cottage, a distance of about 10 miles. The journey took in the two major peaks of Carnedd Dafydd and Carnedd Llewelyn, still snowclad, and two other peaks.

The walk proved rather tiring, and some people elected to go home to the cottage a little early, but for those who stayed to the end, it proved very enjoyable and the rather steep and difficult descent at the finish proved

(continued on page 10)

ANNUAL REPORT

The Unit has survived yet another year during which we have managed to increase our membership slightly despite the loss of a large number of members of longstanding to various seats of higher education last September.

The 1984 expedition was unusual in that we headed south and investigated the mountains, beaches campsites and cafes of Northern Spain after many years of heading to cooler climes. It proved a very pleasant change and a detailed account of the visit formed the basis of a Venture 44 special last autumn.

Since Spain the unit has continued in its usual way with a variety of activities covering a wide range of interests. The iron rule of the GCE exams in the summer and bad weather in winter tend to limit our scope at times but despite these and other factors, we have generally got twenty to two dozen Friday night regulars and recently there has been quite a spate of activity. Over the past few weeks, for example, the programme has included the following:- A cycle/camping expedition covering 100 miles through the Black Mountains, Wye Valley, and Forest of Dean

- A First Aid Course
- Climbing on Castle Rock, Cleeve Hill
- Canoeing on the Avon
- Clearing ground at District H.Q.
- Working parties on the Bowls green
- A piano recital at Fairford
- Acting as wine waiters at a dinner

All this plus the regular 5-a-side football at the Leisure Centre, and Friday night gatherings.

Two stays at Bodesi during the winter months introduced inexperienced members to the joys of

44th Gloucester Venture Scout Unit

Summary of Income and Expenditure for period April 30th 1984 to April 1st 1985

| <u>INCOME</u> | £ | £ | <u>EXPENDITURE</u> | £ | £ |
|---------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Membership | 220.50 | (305) | Capitation Fees | 156.00 | (125) |
| Associate subs | 128.00 | (55) | Equipment | 89.43 | (410) |
| Bed Race | 129.25 | | Bed Race | 220.54 | |
| Donations, payments etc | 35.50 | (120) | Donations to Charity etc | 43.00 | (120) |
| Sale of Sweat shirts | 37.50 | (57) | Purchase of Sweat Shirts | 80.00 | (90) |
| Share of Tuckshop profits | 333.55 | (605) | Hut repairs etc | 17.94 | (91) |
| Spain Expedition | 1529.48 | | Spain | 1487.30 | |
| North Wales visits | 274.00 | | North Wales | 233.96 | |
| Sundry items | 12.00 | | Transport costs, various activities | 147.27 | (5) |
| | | | Venture 44 | 9.82 | (55) |
| Total Income | <u>2699.78</u> | <u>(3916)</u> | Maps for Ireland | 24.30 | |
| | | | Entry fees, various events | 66.05 | (10) |
| Brought Forward | 607.91 | | Canoes, repairs, licences | 33.00 | (267) |
| Total | <u>3307.69</u> | | Annual Reunion | 52.80 | (15) |
| | | | Leisure Centre | 35.15 | (58) |
| | | | To Gloucester District | 6.99 | |
| Deficit exp over | | | Purchase of Pens | 70.00 | |
| income | <u>128.88</u> | <u>(187)</u> | Bank Charges, etc | 3.43 | (5) |
| | | | Postage | 5.75 | |
| | | | Sundry items | 45.93 | |
| | | | Total Expenditure | <u>2828.66</u> | <u>(4103)</u> |
| | | | Balance carried forward | <u>479.03</u> | |
| | | | | <u>3307.69</u> | |

N.B. These are provisional figures, as yet subject to full audit. It has been decided to rationalise our accounting, and in future commence our financial year on 1st September. This should enable the accounts to show a more balanced view of the years proceedings as many major payments (Capitation, Bed Race, Expedition fees) often fall just either side of April 1st. Also as our Treasurer is always elected early September it will prove much more convenient for both Treasurer and Auditor. A short financial statement as of 31st August will be included in the next edition.

Presented by D.A.Wright. 1.5.85.

North Wales - climbing mountains, digging ditches and getting very wet in the traditional style.

This summer sees a small group accepting the big challenge of cycling across the south of Ireland- our first visit to the Emerald Isle since 1972, and one has the feeling that Norway may prove to be a popular venue for 1986.

Two events which seem to be increasingly supported each year are the "Sun Run", in which teams proceed from Cleeve Hill at sunset to arrive at the Malverns before sunrise. Not difficult, you may think, but at midsummer nights are short. Four teams go this year. Then there is the bedrace, organised by the Stonehise Round Table. This year two teams completed the course and raised £230 for charity.

I have mentioned previously the loss of all of our senior members last summer. Rich Kerswell (chair-man), Bri Symcox (secretary) and Paddy Smith (treasur-er) had given outstanding service to the Unit for a long time, each gaining his Queen's Scout Award, as did Yosh Cowmeadow, Dave Wilson, Bri Herbert, Jon Wright, and Simon Hawkins. We have not had such a number of these awards in one year before, and it says much of enthusiasm, loyalty and interest of those who set the unit's standards in 1984.

When a new executive committee was elected in September, the main posts were filled by people of no executive experience. It was a gamble, but it proved to be a very successful one and the present group of officers are now doing an excellent job. We are very fortunate in the talents that always seem available when they are needed.

Finally I must thank all those outside the Unit without whose support we could not exist, notably Mr Heap and Glyn Jones, and of course all those parents ex-members and friends who help in so many ways. F.H.

Jail Break for Ethiopia

Saturday. 6.00 a.m. Roll call. Arrived at Gloucester Jail at 5.45 in my bright red prison outfit with blatant black arrows and rucksack in the driving snow. None to be seen except the local constabulary staring at me in a strange way. 6.05 and people start arriving in the true tech fashion i.e. very late. My co-conspirator, Tony Mouldsdale, an ex-Richian, arrived and falls about laughing due to my impeccable dress sense. (At this point we decide it would be a good idea to head for London). 6.20 and we are all set to go. The jail break commences. 18 hours to get as far away from Gloucester jail as possible, in order to raise lots of money for the Ethiopians. The idea for this event was inspired by my companion after he had just chauffeured St Bob himself around Cheltenham after a recent Rats gig. We were going to release a single - but that idea had been exhausted somewhat..

Approx 7.00 am we arrive at the Worcester service station, courtesy of Tony's dad, where we eventually get a lift off a man in a very large Volvo, who completely ignored the motorway speed limit (which was 50 mph due to bad weather.) and proceeded to take us to a service station at Knutsford at an average speed of 90 mph. Then we waited for three hours asking every unsuspecting motorist for a lift. Eventually a Scotsman took pity on us and offered to take us to his homeland. (By this time we had decided to go to Scotland, due to the fact that it seemed more convenient than London!)

We hit Scotland at 5.15 pm in a place called Stirling which, for the uneducated, is between Edinburgh and Glasgow. Here, we decided to head for Edinburgh, which would be no trouble because all the Scots are kind and considerate and would quickly offer us a lift. Well two and a half hours later, we thought it would be a nice idea to catch the bus to Edinburgh. In Edinburgh, I quickly remembered my Venture Scout survival tactics and

we hurried to the nearest pub. It was now 10 p.m. and we had nowhere to spend the night. On wandering the streets for half an hour we met up with three Scottish students, one of whom offered us the floor in her flat - how could we refuse?

Sunday morning and an early start. We caught the bus back to Stirling and headed for the motorway near Glasgow, and eventually made our way to Birmingham. Unfortunately, we missed the junction that we wanted and ended up near Coventry at a service station. It was now late in the evening and we were cold and penniless. Tony meanwhile had been asking motorists in the car park for a lift back to the motorway, and we eventually got some kids who offered, but I believe they had some trouble in the heating system of their car, anyway on the sight of the police, they made a rapid exit. We eventually got a lift back up the motorway to spaghetti junction, in a car that wasn't as "hot" as the last one.. It was now near 2.00 a.m., snowing, very dark, and as we stood beside the road, out of the blue came a man in a car going towards Gloucester. He was very kind and gave us a lift, and I arrived home at 4.00 a.m., very tired, very hungry and very happy to be back! I hope the Ethiopians appreciate it.

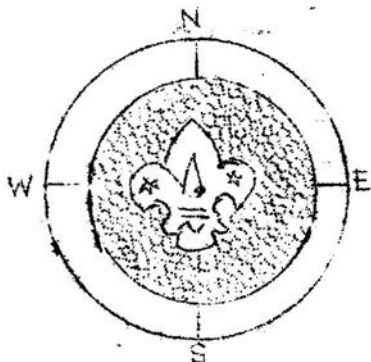
Simon Venn

Easter 85. Continued from page 4
a fitting finish to a good day.

Thursday saw very heavy rain and we went into Caer-narvon, which meant a tour of second hand bookshops, etc. In the afternoon we waded through bogs carrying the ubiquitous fence posts for Simon Lapington!

The few days spent in Wales provided a pleasant break for us from our school work, and **once** again, many thanks to the V.S.L.

Steve Clutterbuck

FROM ALL POINTS

Congratulations to Chris Collins, who was married on June 22nd. It was a typical Welsh summer day in Llanelli, cold, windy, and very wet!

We send our best wishes to Chris and the new Mrs C!

Two ex-members who have recently completed degree courses are Tim Smith, Food Science at Reading, and Nick Iliffe, in Architecture at Oxford Poly. More news of academic successes in next

issue. And now an article from our roving oil-man now in the South China Sea, Chris Pashley....

Chinese New Year - Hong Kong style

The guide books rather glibly state that "this is a family festival - a time for visiting ones friends and relatives. Public transport is widely used. Travellers can expect delays and some congestion.." There are 5.4 million people so when they all move you do tend to get a little bit of congestion!

This is the most important festival of the Chinese calendar and the only time of the year when the shops shut! Normally you can buy almost anything at any time in Hong Kong with the shops open from ten in the morning to ten at night, but practically everything shuts down for the three days at New Year. It certainly is the time for visiting and consequently all the ferries and trains are packed solid for days in advance and after the festival. Hong Kong is very much a stepping off point for gaining access to the Peoples Republic, with exit and

entry visas reasonably easy to obtain.

If you are into flowers there are enormous flower markets, and everywhere there is peach and plum blossom, chrysanthemums and daffodils. It is also the time of the year for orange trees.

Some of the large hotels arrange traditional "Lion dances" for their guests - there is usually little advance publicity, so I missed all these. However, this did not detract from the over all effect of the celebrations as I got the impression that these events were more for the western eye rather than in the true eastern spirit.

The focal point is a large firework display in the Victoria Harbour, which is a stretch of water between Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. The cost was HK \$3 million for a display lasting just over an hour - that is a lot of money to go up in smoke. Fortunately the skies remained clear, and there was no rain. It went off well and I landed on my feet in a junk in the middle of the harbour. The price of this included everything I could drink in just over an hour, so as you might imagine, the quality of my photos was not high!

It is hard when writing about a major Chinese festival to really convey the impression of the numbers of people involved. You need to experience the jostling, pushing crowds that pack all the public places, but yet you still feel out of place and uninvolved in what is a totally Chinese family affair. My lasting memory will be of complete families from aged grandparents down to teenagers and babes in arms still thronging the streets at 5 o'clock in the morning. (Don't ask me where I had been - that is another story!)

CHRIS PASHLEY.

(Foot(Bank)Note) Despite being a past treasurer of the Unit, and knowing how complicated that job is at the best of times, Chris has given our present treasurer a problem Associate subs in U.S. dollars, Singapore Bank....

