

V44 MAGAZINE



Edition 87

Venture 44

The Official Magazine of the
44th Gloucester (Sir Thomas Rich's)
Venture Scout Unit

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Richard Holland - Treasurer
Giles Moorhead - Secretary
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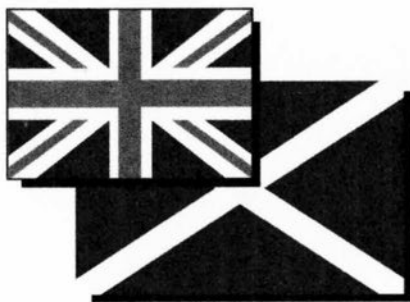
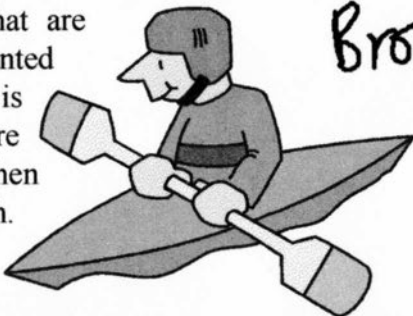
A Word from the Editor...

This term there has been a lack of articles despite the variety of activities recently undertaken by the unit. I shall put it down to the large amount of revision being done for the recent A-level and GCSE exams. Next term I expect a large flow of articles (from both current and past members!) or else I shall have to get the whip out!

Remember we are always pleased to hear from members new and old, no matter how trivial - so get scribbling!



If anyone is interested in buying/acquiring some old fibreglass kayaks then please contact us. The unit has several kayaks that are no longer wanted some repair work is needed, if you are interested then please get in touch. Addresses are on page 3.



Plans are well underway for the summer trip to Scotland. Look out for the Scottish poems and jokes (they're bad I know!) dotted throughout the magazine. Hopefully they will keep you entertained until the next V44 when you can hear tales of what we get up to in Scotland this summer.

Enjoy the magazine!

Rachael
Brown



Chairman's Note



Welcome to the first V44 of the new millennium, even if that phrase is slightly worn by now! Another phrase that has been in common use with this magazine is "the past term has been very busy" but this is always the case.

The 44th had great success in the Cotswold marathon, claiming both first and second place. Well done to all who took part, including a few old faces who came back to compete. Better start training for next year...

Another well done to all who completed and passed a nine week First Aid course run by St John's Ambulance. Not only did everyone learn a lot, it was actually quite fun! The type of activities we regularly get up to mean first aid knowledge is vital, even if only as a precaution.

Fortunately we were not able to use our newly found fountain of knowledge on our expedition to Dartmoor, although some secretly disagree. Little was to go wrong with the expert assistance given to us by Lee Rounce who some of you may know. Thanks to Lee for a great trip and of course, Phil who organised the whole thing. This year's summer expedition is to the Southern Uplands in Scotland and preparations have already begun.

Some more thanks; firstly to Mr Lloyd who has taken the brave step of filling in the venture scout assistant forms. Hopefully some of his athletic and organisational skills (from

being the PE and Careers teacher including the famous organisation of work experience week!) can be transferred to us. This is great news for the unit as it takes pressure off the overworked Phil!

Second thanks to the upper sixth, who leave very soon. Not only have they led the unit for however long, they have continued to help when it was our turn. Special thanks must go to William Godwin who seems to have kept, and still keeps the whole unit more than just ticking! It will be a great shock to lose such a valuable part of our unit but I wish them all the very best of luck in their exams, adventurous gap years, university and beyond! Please keep in contact (a hint to the rest of you out there as well) but most of all I hope you look back to your years here with a fondness - at least after the feeling of freedom has worn off!

That's enough from me, enjoy the magazine, respond and help out where possible. Some things never change!

MATTHEW KEY



There was a fat lady of Clyde
Whose shoelaces once came untied;
She feared that to bend
Would display her rear end,
So she cried and she cried and she cried.

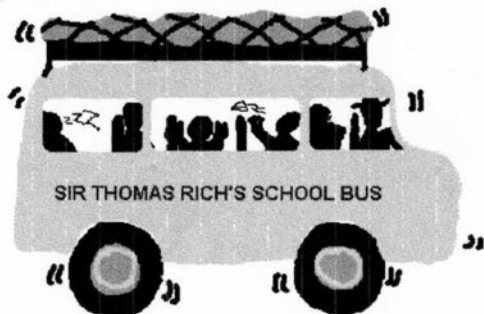
VSU HALF TERM TRIP TO: CORNWALL AND DARTMOOR

This was the first trip in the ventures for most people in our group. The upper 6th were away for "A" level mocks but despite this lack of participation (let them be warned!) we were a good-sized group.

Throughout the four days of our trip we climbed, hiked, ambled, orienteered and got totally soaked. The chance happening of a local pub near one campsite meant that we could take advantage of the warm atmosphere, bar snacks and very large television.

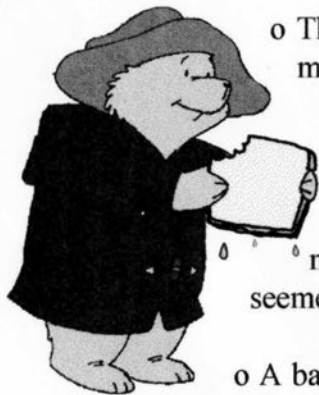
Thanks to our patient guide Lee Rounce and of course Phil who did most of the organisation and got us there.

MATTHEW KEY



Losing Things...

During the trip many things disappeared or got lost...

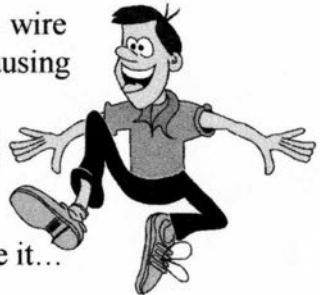


- o The most noticeable disappearance was the marmalade. Every morning there would be a considerable drop in the level in the jar, and no sign of bears...
- o John disappeared as he sank into the mud and when he finally got free, his boot seemed to have gone...
- o A bag full of chocolate went overnight...
- o The next morning a Frisbee was reported missing.
- o A book was generously sprayed to help it "lose" its pungent "book" smell...
- o The posts on an orienteering course sprouted legs and moved causing Matthew to be right (yet again!)...
- o Odd socks by the fire to dry got fed up of hanging around and upped and went...
- o Matthew lost his trousers and had to borrow a pair that were far too big for him and kept falling down...
- o The whole party got lost on the moor and had to use compass bearings to find our way out of the mist.
- o Owen lost his socks, keys, wallet... (*"O-WEN!!!"*)

o Phil lost his patience.

o Somebody had lost the answers to the wire puzzles we found lurking in a cupboard causing severe frustration.

o On the beach Richard lost control of the football and had to wade into the water fully clothed to retrieve it...



o Whilst climbing several people lost their grip and fell, (thankfully there was a rope to stop them hitting the ground)...

o I lost the will to cook when I saw that it was dehydrated "chicken supreme" for dinner again and when everybody else saw that it was chicken supreme they lost their appetites and went to the pub for chips...

o When they returned there was definitely a lack of volunteers when it came to washing up.

o Watching an episode of Star Trek DS9: series 7 made us lose the plot...

o Alasdair went missing and was mysteriously replaced by a mole...

o By the end of the trip everyone had lost their sanity.

Overall it was an action packed adventure that everyone thoroughly enjoyed!



RACHAEL BROWN

The Hike...

After a hearty lunch and having paid our farewells to the minibus, we set off across the moor. Lee had intended to pursue a circular course around three tors, however, and for our own educational benefit, we were each allocated as being responsible for certain aspects of first aid and navigation. Because of this the course was not strictly adhered to. We did however enjoy the hike. Valuable practice at navigating by distinguishing landmarks, and after the descent of the thick mist, navigating solely by compass bearing was gained. Although the campsite chosen by the group was (eventually) identified as being a horses' latrine, the challenges presented by outdoor winter cuisine were readily accepted and appreciated, particularly by Richard Holland who learnt the true meaning of a sandwich - marmalade of course!

ALASDAIR BURCHILL



The Five Essential Rules of Orienteering: - Dartmoor 2000

Who would have expected that a day that had such a promising beginning could have turned out the way it did? I certainly didn't!

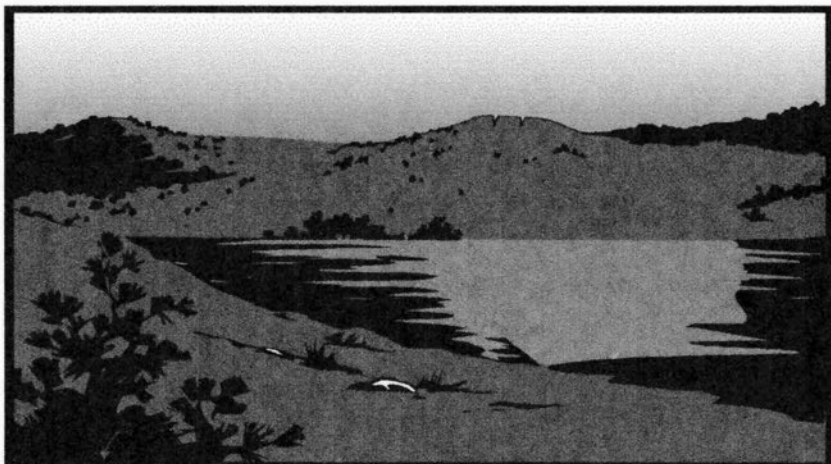
Having left Penrest (the house where we were based) in good time that morning in the mini-bus and having collected Lee and all necessary equipment (and some luscious currant buns!) we arrived finally on the outskirts of a dark sinister forest.

Rule 1: - Never follow the exact route marked on the map...

Despite the many years of use that our maps had received they were not aware of the boggy conditions inside the groves of trees where the marked route led and due to this myself and Rachael were able to over-take other groups who were 'stuck in the mud'.

Rule 2: - Never listen to the helpful advice of other members...

Orienteering is a sport, you play to win - or just have good fun. Both were achieved this day by sending others in the opposite direction to ourselves whilst we continued on the correct course. It was their own fault for not looking at the maps!



Rule 3: - Never expect it will keep going as well as it has done so far...

So far it had been easy but little did we realise in taking the next course we would be able to muck it up so badly yet still be able to pull it off. Having managed to get back on course after a slight deviation we found our way but lost our wax crayon - so much for taking rubbings of each check-point post!

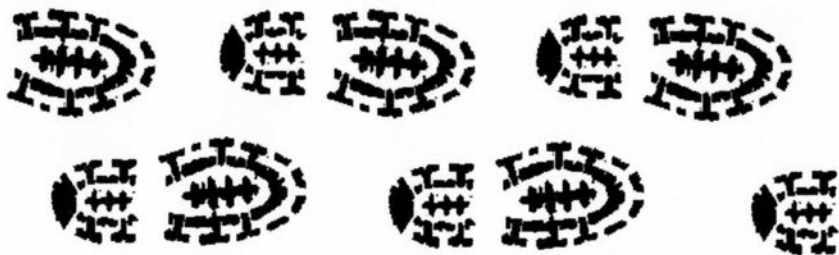
Rule 4: - Always check in your pockets...

Yes, you guessed it, the wax crayon was in our pockets!

Rule 5: - Some good always comes out of a bad situation...

Even if you have walked around searching for a crayon in your own pockets you are bound to find some kind of souvenir in the area. On our hunt we managed to find two discarded signs that had belonged to the Forestry Commission which now take pride of place inside the hut!

- Enquiries from Forestry Commission officials can be made to Mr. P. Brown!



Overall it was a wonderful experience and introduction to Venture Scouts at S.T.R.S and thanks of course to Lee & Mr. Brown.

JONATHAN ELLISON

The Venture Award

By the time Venture Scout age is reached, the desire to collect badges and other adornments which characterises the younger age range of the Scout Movement has usually abated, often together with the eagerness to pass tests and so on. Within the Venture Scout section there are but two progress markers of which the Queen's Scout Award is the highest and best known. The other one is the Venture Award that should be readily - but not easily - achieved by the average Venture Scout.

The award scheme is in practice quite simple but surprisingly enough its implementation seems to create problems in some units - probably because of its extreme flexibility. To quote the training scheme handbook - "... to achieve the Venture Award a Venture Scout must have made personal progress and widened his/her experience and skill in each of the following areas of

personal growth: Activity, Community Involvement, Creativity, Independence, International Awareness, Leadership, Outdoors and Environment, Relationships, Values."



The policy of this unit is to try to arrange programmes whereby members can satisfy many of the requirements of the award simply by participating in normal activities but there are still areas which require a definite individual section. One such area is in the section titled creative pursuit. In discussing training progress with members this is often an apparent stumbling block. In fact when constructively approached most members can

find something within their interests and activities that can be used to satisfy this award requirement and I suspect that the biggest problem is modesty! As a rule people seem reluctant to admit to some of their interests but on probing into this "Forbidden territory" I have been favourably impressed by what unit members get up to in their spare time! The range of musical talent in the unit for instance is quite spectacular.



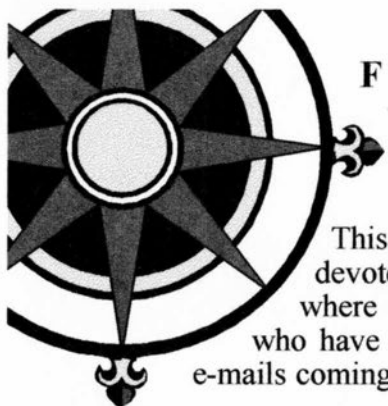
With the increasing popularity of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme we like many units now run Bronze, Silver and Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards in parallel with the Venture and Queen's Scout Awards. There is a real danger though of not considering properly the spirit and intentions behind the scouting awards (the Venture Award in particular) and allowing the

approach to qualifying for either to degenerate into a mere tick-list exercise. The spirit of the Scouting Movement is active participation in all aspects of the unit's day-to-day life and this can sometimes be forgotten if the onus is placed on gaining the more individual biased D of E award.

If you were to ask most past members of the unit what they did to gain their Venture Awards they will rarely mention any particular activity but the reply will most likely be "I just took part in the Unit's programme." This is the essence of the Training Scheme - it's about indirect assessment. Being a member of an active and (usually!) well organised Unit with an imaginative and well balanced programme, you cannot fail to attain these awards. Remember, the standards set are about a best personal effort, not an absolute measurable! It is all about personal growth.

VSL





F R O M A L L P O I N T S

This is the section of the magazine that is devoted to news of past unit members - where are they now?? Thank you to those who have contacted us - keep those letters and e-mails coming!

At the end of last year, Lee Rounce and wife Michelle travelled to various places around the world including Thailand, Australia and New Zealand. Lee writes of his travels...

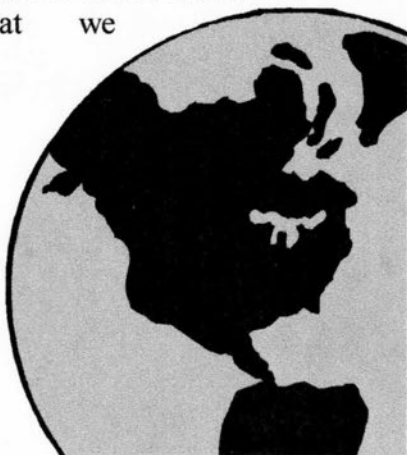
I know I promised to keep you up to speed with our travels but life is just so hectic (I mean, today I had to go to the beach, eat dinner and then go back to the beach!)

The extravagant note paper is probably a clue that we are in Thailand. In fact we've been here about three weeks and have just started to head south to the islands and Krabi (our next stop where I plan to climb for a week or two.)

Australia was very hectic and I guess we underestimated the distances up to Cairns and just how long the train took (4

days). The Barrier Reef was stunning and we got to watch humpback whales at very close quarters.

New Zealand was breathtaking - many mountains to climb, many beaches to relax on. We hired a camper van for two months which meant that we



weren't tied to the tourist trail or the public transport. We could park up by the coast or at the foot of Mt. Cook. This did have its price - the fridge would pack up halfway through the night and we had to read by candle light - but still...

As for outdoor adventures we walked some of the Kepler Track, kayaked/walked the Abel Tasman, I bungied off a suspension bridge, swam with dolphins and the best - a helihike on the glaciers on Mt. Tasman - stunning ice formations, caves and deep crevasses - and Michelle got to sit with the helicopter pilot twice!

It was a far more relaxed experience than Oz and infinitely more rewarding.

As for Thailand it is hot, humid and in the Gulf coast monsoon season. It's been a shock from the very rural life of N.Z. We stayed in a respectable hotel in Bangkok for three days and then went north into the hills

around Chiang Mai. This was not as hectic as China Town in Bangkok but still mad. Since then our standard of accommodation has dropped dramatically. We are in the south now on an unfortunately commercial island. Koh Samui, staying in a beach bungalow for about £1.60 each. Food is cheapish, beer much the same - but with an amazing ability to addle the brain and induce "great" hangovers.

We've got four weeks or so left and hope to venture as far as the Malaysian border. We've had to book an extortionate hotel in Phuket for the Christmas week, when hotels/guesthouses and any place touristy double or triple prices. Then it is back to Plymouth in winter (and work!)

LEE ROUNCE





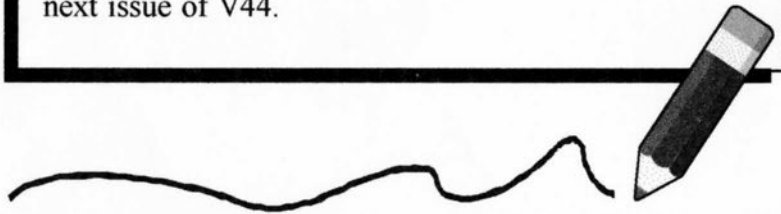
This next letter is from Paul Kingsbury who used to be in the unit between 1990-1993.

I have just received my copy of the V44 magazine about the summer expedition in Norway and I saw your e-mail address. I went on a Norway trip myself and met Ernst Davies so it was lovely to read that the links are still being made.

The raft story was great as well because I had the fortune to sink in the Wye on one - we never made it!

Well I am writing this from Lexington, Kentucky USA. I am doing my first year as a Ph.D. student in geography at the University of Kentucky (I finished my MA here after two years) and I'm about to do research for my dissertation on Jamaican tourism. You should consider an expedition out here in the US it's great fun.

A big hello to Phil and I look forward to receiving the next issue of V44.





Shortly after the Norway trip Lucy Payne travelled up to Scotland to start university. For those of you who do not know Lucy, she was the first official female member of the 44th. She writes...

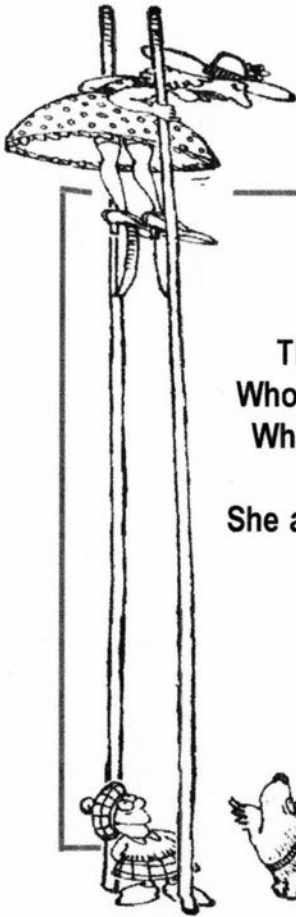
“Hi all. Uni is good, but there is a lot of hard work. I’ve joined the mountaineering club, D of E Society and OTC/TA. I go away with the TA most weekends - its cool! Scotland is freezing!!”



Two lady teachers from a remote part of Scotland went on holiday to London together. Whilst walking in the west end they saw a hot-dog stand. Feeling that they ought to try everything, they each ordered a hot-dog.

When she received hers, Miss Macphail looked doubtfully at it and asked Miss MacAlister, “Which part of the dog did you get, Hughina?”





There was a young lady of Wilts,
Who walked to the Highlands on stilts.
When they said, "Oh, how shocking,
To show so much stocking."
She answered, "Well, what about kilts?"

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Phil Reid on receiving his Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award at a ceremony in St James Palace and to Will Godwin and Rachael for attaining Silver.

VSL

