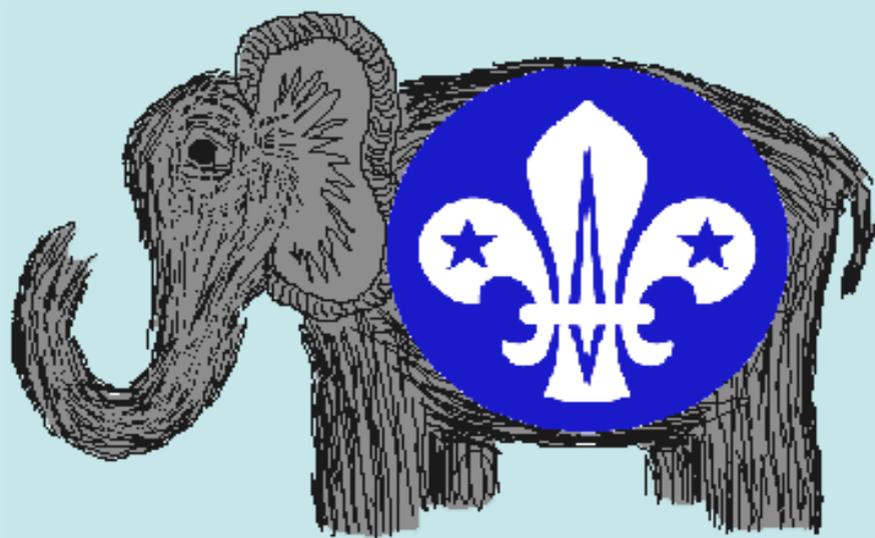


V44



MAGAZINE



Edition 85



Venture 44

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

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This summer's expedition plans are well underway as I write. Destination NORWAY - that land of fjord, mountains, and conifers. Mention Norway to most people and the first reactions might well be The Vikings, The Heroes of Telemark, Kirk Douglas, Nobel Peace Prize, "Null Point" Eurovision Songs, Grieg's Peer Gynt, skiing - some may even have heard of Trolls.

But what do we know about the Norway of today? Here are a few facts and figures:

Norway, officially called the Kingdom of Norway, occupies the western and northern portions of the Scandinavian peninsula. Norway's deeply indented and glaciated coastline measures about 21,925km including all the fjords and more than 150,000 off-shore islands.

Norway has an area of 323877 square km. It is an extremely mountainous land, nearly one third of which lies north of the Arctic Circle. Its coastline is, in proportion to its area, longer than that of any other major country in the world.

Oslo is the principal and industrial centre as well as the national capital. It is also the largest city with a population of about half a million. Nearly 25% of Norway's population lives in the vicinity of Oslo.

Two forms of the Norwegian language are recognised as equal. The older form Bokmal or "Book language" is used by about 80% of children in schools; 20% use Nynorsk or "New Norse". Saami or Lappish is spoken by the nomadic Saami people in the far north.

HUT WORKING PARTIES

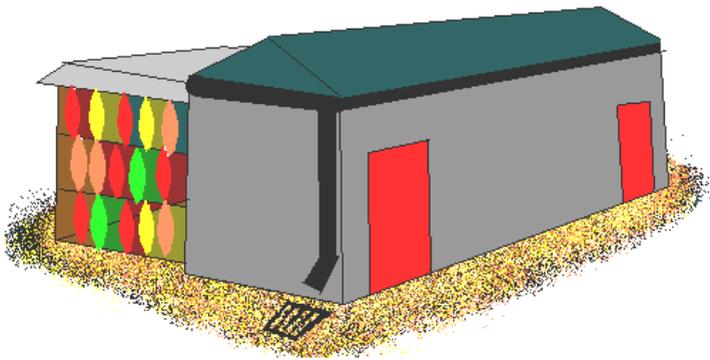
The beginning of the summer heralded the start of a new season of working parties. These activities have become traditional over the years. As the days get longer we are able to tackle the various problems that have arisen over the winter with new found energy (?) and enthusiasm(?).

One such problem has been the drainage of rain water from the edges of the hut. To combat this we have dug drainage ditches surrounding the hut. However, we were still getting a sodden floor in the store room following heavy rain. We have put up a gutter and so far the damp and any resultant mushrooms have stayed away.

Other projects have included the laying of paving slabs along the edge of the hut and the replacement of the ceiling tiles which make up the false ceiling in our hut.

Most of the projects are nearing completion but I am sure many new problems will materialise before next year's season of working parties!

W. Godwin



Annual Report of 44th Gloucester (STRS) Venture Scout Unit

Looking back over the year one thing strikes me above all else - the way in which the intervening time has just whizzed by. They say time flies when you are enjoying yourself and I think that can truly be said of the unit and it's members.

So what has the 44th Gloucester (STRS) Venture Scout Unit been up to these past 12 months or so?

In spite of the Citizen's attempts to rechristen everyone, reschedule major District events and decrease the VSL's age by 25 years (I could easily pass for 21, honest!!) we have achieved successes in the Wye Raft Race (1st and 3rd), in partnership with the 38th VSU we were Junior Champions at the South Cerney Dragon Boat Racing Meet and in the Cotswold Marathon we returned overall fastest individual times as well as teams claiming second place and a creditable finish time in the Novice section of the full 38 mile event.

We have been involved with 2 main fund-raising events - the 5 Valleys Walk in aid of the Meningitis Trust and sponsorship of our Cotswold Marathon runners yielded a major part of the £425 raised for the Cobalt Appeal Crack Cancer Campaign.

In addition to our ongoing service to the school in running the Tuck Shop, we have provided refreshment services at several sporting and social functions - the modest profits from which have boosted our summer expedition funds.

Special congratulations are due to Jody Ballard and Tim Andrews who received their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards at Buckingham Palace in July.

Duke of Edinburgh Bronze awards have been earned by Will Godwin, Nick Wright, Dave Clifford and Adam Griffiths.

Venture Awards have been presented to Dave Clifford, Chris Smith, Will Godwin, Adam Griffiths, Perran Spear, Nick Wright, Andrew Norman and Ben Panting.

Several members of the Executive were selected by the school to attend a leadership course at the Wilderness Centre.

New members admitted this year (so far) are Giles Moorhead, Phil Kenchington, Geoff Coombs, Ollie Bain, Rich Clark, Lucy Payne. The more astute reader will have noticed the last name is of the female variety! Yes the 44th Executive (after much debate!!) has rejigged the unit policy and welcomed its first female member to the unit.

The hut continues to make demand on time and finances. Heavy rains in February found several holes at floor level which were not discovered until the chipboard flooring and carpeting in the store area had been well and truly soaked and were rampant with mould. New guttering and paint for the exterior is planned. Waterproofing operations around both doors need to be finished too.

Speaking of rain and all things wet, last summer's expedition to Scotland can best be summed up as damp! Talk about Scotch Mist!! But we didn't let the fine Scottish summer weather dampen our spirits and still managed to find plenty of active and cultural things to occupy our bodies and minds! Trips to the isles of Mull, Iona, Staffa, Kerrera, Seil, were interspersed with fishing and cycle treks. We ended our stay with an ascent into surprisingly cold mists to notch up the highest Munro Ben Nevis and later

celebrated in style at a traditional ceileidh - 600+ people and musicians crammed into a small stone barn lit with candles and still smelling vaguely of its previous occupants. It was a question of everyone doh-cee-doh-ing together or not at all. Given the increasingly vigorous nature of the Celtic dancing (aided no doubt by the influence and frequency of the local waters being imbibed) we wriggled out before any fatalities ensued!

Earlier this year the newer members of the unit accompanied by some of the "old-stagers" spent a very cold couple of days on Dartmoor practising navigational skills and experiencing winter hiking conditions. We were accompanied by a local guide - one Lee Rounce a previous 44th-er himself and now teaching in the Plympton area just south of Dartmoor. The third day we climbed the highest Tor on the moor (Yes Tor) and found out just how easy it is to get totally disorientated in the mist!! South became North and it was only by some very careful comparison of some of the larger boulders on the Tor ridge which were shown on the map that we were able to confirm that somehow we had completely reversed our bearings in the mist as we climbed to the summit. It was quite eerie in fact as the mists slowly swirled around the top of the Tor. The ancient boulders and weathered rock outcrops seemed to move in and out of the mist. It prompted one of the younger members to report sighting some gorillas trailing us - and for a moment we all thought we saw them too!

Most of the activities mentioned above are the sort indulged in by many other Venture Scout Units, although there may well be a few significant ways in which our programme and outlook vary from what many would regard as the traditional view of Scouting.

I believe that it is inevitable that our approach is rather different to other units because of the limitations imposed and the very real advantages gained by our being a so-called "Sponsored Closed Unit". We have loyalties and ties with the school as well as to the Scout organisation as a whole. One advantage is that we have a ready communications system which cuts down on much of the formal business that is necessary in a unit that can only meet once a week. A disadvantage is that if we are not careful we can forget we are part of the much broader national and international brotherhood of Scouting.

The major difference however and the single factor that makes our Unit unique, at least in this part of the country, is that nearly all of our members join the unit without having previously been members of scout troops. Under these circumstances some experienced leaders may argue that we cannot run a "proper" unit as our members lack the necessary scouting skills and background. Experience has shown and I believe too that this is not the case and that despite our sometimes unconventional outlook towards some aspects of the "traditional scouting package" we nevertheless are doing Venture Scouting, and doing it well. There is a world of difference between the attitudes and needs of a group of articulate and discerning active young adults and the average group of scouts or cubs and consequently this must be reflected in the organisation of our Unit. The proof of the pudding is in the eating as the old saying goes and by sampling what we have had to offer over the years a reasonable number of young men have developed skills, broadened their outlooks, met and overcome challenges, given service to many and enjoyed themselves by partaking in Venture Scouting as done in the 44th style!

In concluding this report I must pay tribute to all those people

without whose support and help, direct or indirect, the Unit would not be able to function: past members for help with leading activities, parents, the Executive, the ever helpful school caretaker "Jock", who turns a blind eye to much of our comings and goings, Mr Kellie the school Headmaster for his continuing and enthusiastic support of the unit, Mr Byrne-Burns the Bursar, for the considerable amount of time he readily gives up to manage and oversee our finances and last but certainly not least my wife Celia for her long suffering patience and for giving up her solitude on vacation as family holiday merges yet again with summer Venture Scout expedition!

PB



DID YOU KNOW...?

Norway Fact File

Education is free and compulsory in all districts of Norway for children between the ages of 7 and 16. Norway has almost no illiteracy. For their primary education children attend a six year lower school and a three year upper school. Three years of secondary school are then available. Norway has about 3400 primary schools and some 780 secondary and vocational schools. Norway has four universities and ten colleges of university standing. The principal university is the University of Oslo.

The Venture Scout Trip to Dartmoor - February Half Term 1999

The Dartmoor trip was my first scout trip and is probably one I will never forget. There were bogs, harsh winds and extremely low temperatures as well as a whole host of other uncomfortable features, not to mention getting hundreds of tonnes of Bean Feast through my system. Despite these difficulties it was still great fun.

Having loaded on all the gear and everyone's bags we finally set off at about 1pm on the Sunday afternoon and after a very long road journey of 31 hours we finally arrived at Perran's house in Harlyn Bay, a small bungalow opening out onto the bay behind.

The kit was swiftly unloaded and my tent group were given the dubious honour of setting up the Equinox (we had it done in about an hour!). After an evening meal and some last minute TV we went back to our tents.

The next morning we woke up early and set off to meet Lee at Postbridge at about 11am. When we had met up with Lee we set off on a "proposed" 13km hike. However after encountering some very difficult and boggy terrain, freezing winds and with the continuous staggering up and down of Tors, everyone gave up after about 8km and Ben Panting, Phil Kenchington and I got to put our tent up in tearing winds. Later, too cold to care, we mixed up some rice, meat and vegetables and heated them up, served and ate them very quickly and with our torches failing gave up and sat in the dark talking till we fell asleep.

Sleep didn't last long though as our tent collapsed in on us in the middle of the night.

Waking up the following morning with morale swiftly falling we walked back to Postbridge via a different route and from there we drove to Norm's place.

Setting up camp at Norm's we found we had a few more of the home comforts we craved, a barn to eat in and a toilet and a sink, although no-one seemed to want to use the tap because they were getting electric shocks off it!

Having had breakfast the following morning, we set off to climb Yes Tor, which I am told is the second highest peak on Dartmoor. The climb was quite steep and the weather was as "pleasant" as ever but the walk was good fun.

Afterwards we said goodbye to Lee and made our way back to Perran's. Here we spent a relaxing evening watching TV, eating oven cooked food and playing cards.

The following morning the VSL took us on a pre-breakfast "stroll" around the headlands, taking in Kate Winslet's Cornish retreat. After breakfast and surfing for some, watching for others, we packed the minibus, cleaned the bungalow and headed home via the fishing town of Padstow.

On the final leg we were able to travel home to the strains of Billy Connelly courtesy of Owen.

Everyone had (or seemed to have) a great time and special thanks must go the VSL for organising the trip and to all my fellow travellers for making it so much fun.

Geoff Coombs



ONE ARMED ASCENT OF YES TOR

I arrived half way through the trip. I met up with the rest of the unit at the edge of Dartmoor at a farm owned by my auntie and uncle. I wondered whether they'd remembered to come as it had reached dusk and they still hadn't arrived. Fortunately I heard the unhealthy rumble of the minibus coming up the hill. They pitched the tents in the half light with the outline of Dartmoor disappearing as night approached. Dinner was the next highlight (!). It was the famous camp food of Beanfeast, famous mainly because of the speed it goes through your body. Eventually, we settled down and tried to get to sleep in between visits to the toilet and trying not to breathe due to the high "gas" content in the air!

The next morning we packed up the tents and said goodbye and headed for the foot of Yes Tor. We met up with former Venture Scout Lee and tried to see what challenge lay ahead. This was not possible due to the mist and low cloud that completely covered the Tor. Not discouraged by the mist we set off up the Tor with a rather dubious leader in the form of Matt.

The first part of the journey took us over a large dam which for some reason set off everyone's bravado and remarks were heard such as "I'd ride down that - I'd canoe and skateboard down that". We then hit the first steep part, this is when we realised it was not going to be all that easy. We went straight up the slope which eventually levelled out. Here we found a sign that said "Warning - when the red flag shows, Keep Out" or something to that effect. Basically it was an army firing range as most of Dartmoor is. This is where we discovered that if you think you're walking in a straight line up a hill, you are probably not. The group did get split up for a brief moment and as we looked back to see the others, we all commented that we could see two Gorillas holding hands! It was actually just Lucy and perran emerging from the mist! (as easy mistake to make). We carried on upwards and reached a point that Matt was convinced was the top of Yes Tor, however he was wrong. We had drifted off our course due to the mist. We worked out where we were and plotted a new course. We soon arrived at the

summit which was a relief for me as having a broken collarbone does not make hill walking that easy.

The wind had picked up so had the rain. We ate our lunch briefly and then set off for home back to the bus with Matthew leading us again. He turned out to have the skills to get us down, even if there was an argument as to which way to go round the reservoir. Also, Matt had decided he was only going to wear a fleece and under no circumstances put on a waterproof. We soon reached the dam again and found that if we shouted loudly onto it, it echoed down the valley. What we didn't bank on is the couple standing on the other side who probably thought we were on our yearly trip from the hospital. We arrived back at the bus and said Goodbye to Lee. We then headed off, not to Gloucester, but to Cornwall. We stayed at Perran's holiday house in Harlin Bay.

Andrew Norman (the 'One Armed Bandit')



Surfing - NSA

During our trip to Cornwall and Dartmoor we stayed a couple of nights at Perran Spear's grandparents' place. This was a cottage that was on the very edge of the coast, right by long golden sands and ten foot surf. We only stayed a couple of nights to regain our bearings but Matt Ward was determined to tackle the raging surf.

On the morning of the last day we woke to find a storming two foot surf. Undeterred, Matt and Ben Panting climbed into some wet suits and set off along the sand. Unfortunately by the time they got to the water the two feet surf had been reduced to a half foot ripple. Nevertheless, they continued attempting to surf. After a couple of minutes vigorous surfing, Ben had an asthma attack and returned, wet cold and humiliated to the cottage accompanied by his band of supporters, leaving Matt to tackle the waves on his own. After this lack of attention Matt quickly gave up "due to the lack of waves" and returned unvictorious to the cottage.

P. Kenchington



SIXTH FORM LEADERSHIP COURSE

Each year the school arranges a leadership course with The Adventure Centre in the Forest of Dean for a selected number of 6th form students - 16 to be exact. From these sixteen people, the school captain, vice captain and six observers are chosen for the following year. It just so happened that five of the Venture Scouts were chosen, David Clifford, Chris Smith, Adam Griffiths, Will Godwin and Nick Wright - almost a third of the group to go on the course. Quite a compliment for the Venture Scout Unit.

The course lasted for four days and the activities in which we took part were very varied, ranging from climbing to caving and gorge walking.

The aim of the four days was to make a successful group of people able to work as a team with everyone having a chance to voice their own opinions.

The group of 16 split into two groups of 8 and did the activities separately. The first activities were a traverse and an abseil. The traverse across a large crater proved quite interesting with some people dreading their turn at crossing. Everyone managed it with no problems and most were actually smiling! The abseil down through the roof of a cave was very different to what most people had done.

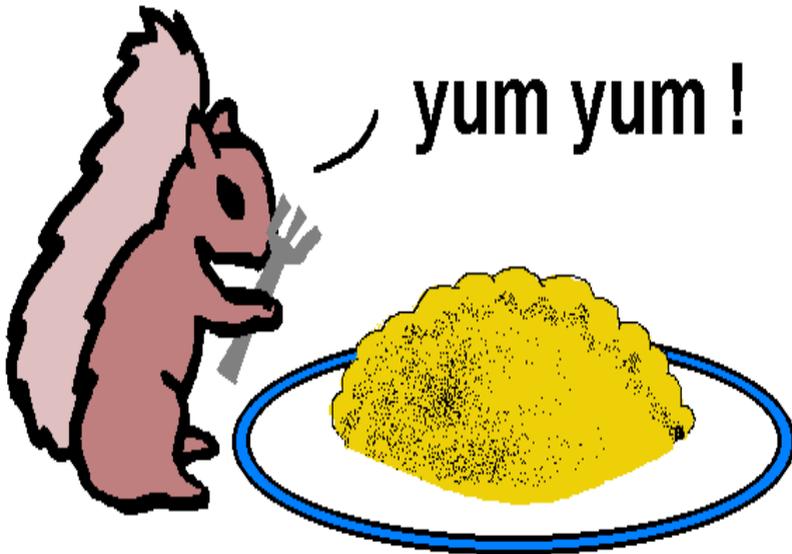
The following day was climbing and canoeing. Many of my group of 8 had never climbed before so it seemed quite daunting to them. Each person completed the two routes which were set up at Symonds Yat which even the more experienced climbers found tricky in places. The canoeing on the river Wye was very exciting as we negotiated rapids - luckily none of our group capsized, whereas the other group had three or four dripping wet people.

The other activities such as caving and gorge walking all needed group communication, meaning everyone got to know one another's strengths and weaknesses.

One of the most serious issues of the four days was Chris Smith's Cheese and Onion pasty. He was saving this especially for after a strenuous activity. Getting back to the lodge after climbing he found his pasty half eaten and spread all over the floor. The local squirrels renowned for scavenging in the lodge had had a splendid feast on the pasty - obviously one of their favourite flavours.

Everyone had an enjoyable and tiring four days and Chris has even started speaking to people again (a couple of weeks after the course - it takes a long time to recover from the loss of a pasty).

David Clifford



Year Seven Activities In The Forest Of Dean.

The School approached the Venture Scout Unit and asked us to arrange an Activities Week for the new year sevens. The idea behind it was to help build their self esteem, team work and leadership skills. However the idea was still to have fun.

We camped at Bracelands campsite in the Forest of Dean for the four day activity. Each day one of the four year seven forms would arrive at Symonds Yat where we would take them out for the day, hiking and carrying out various activities.



They were given tasks which they had solve and carry out as a team. We did this to test their team skills and to try and make them realise that working together as a team can be very useful and rewarding.

On one of the days we had to work as a team just to make the day a success. The problem was that there had been torrential rainfall which had caused the river to burst it's banks and flood one of the roads which we took the year sevens along to get to the activities which we'd planned for them.

We had to wade through waist high ice cold waters with year sevens on our backs just to get them to the other side, there was no other way through. Thankfully though the water level had dropped by the end of the day so we didn't have to get our feet wet once again.

By Adam Griffiths

ON THE PISTE

One of my life-long ambitions has been to visit Canada and at Easter I was given the chance to go as part of a ski trip.

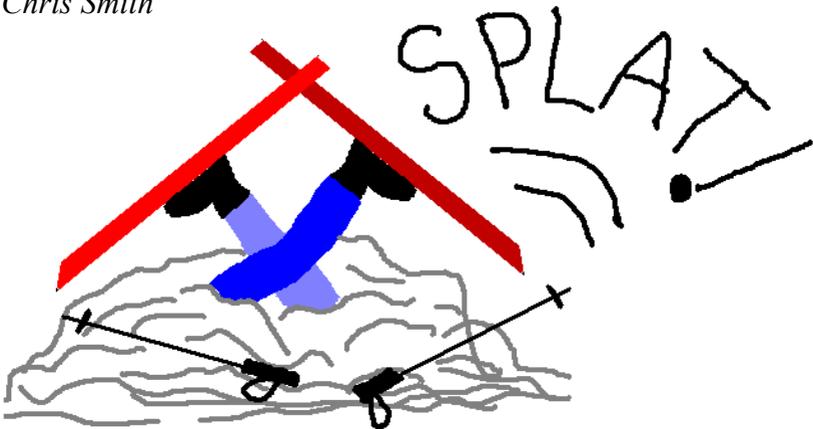
I am already an Olympic standard skier but I thought I would still have lessons on the dry ski slope so I could laugh at the others. After falling over for the 52nd time I decided it MUST be easier on snow.

Once in Canada in the Quebec region I found the skiing was easier but I still fell over loads as did everyone else.

The evening entertainment was varied with shopping (very cheap clothes and CD's) ice hockey matches and more shopping. Apart from the skiing one of the best bits was visiting Niagara Falls, an amazing and breathtaking experience I would strongly recommend to anyone for an idea for a holiday.

Canada is an amazing place and I am really looking forward to going back next time to the west and the Rockies.

Chris Smith





FROM ALL POINTS

News of Past Unit Members -- Where are they now??

With last month's magazine we sent out a form for all you past members to fill out with some information about what you are getting up to these days. Thanks to the few who took the trouble to reply - as for the rest of you I hope reading this makes you feel sufficiently guilty that you get your pens out and drop us a line forthwith! Don't forget you can e-mail us now (although you can't send cheques via e-mail!!)

Meanwhile here's a round up of news from those who did reply.

Mike Cheshire writes - "Hi all, thanks very much for the magazine, it seems like everything is going as well as ever!! Norway again, eh? Aaah happy memories of that I can tell you!!" (Something to do with frogs wasn't it Mike?? - VSL) "The boys dun good winning the ole Raft Race at long last! In case you're wondering what I'm up to now, I'm working just outside London (and on Baker Street from next month) in public relations for various high-tech IT and telecoms companies. I finished my degree in Plymouth, temped it for a bit and then got this job - nicely paid it is too!"

Congratulation to Jason Stone who has managed to land a leaders position at the Outward Bound Centre for Wales. We still await some first hand news from Jason (nothing new about that!!).

Lee Rounce again helped out with navigation and expedition training during the February half term trip onto Dartmoor. He writes - "I really enjoyed having the unit down and hope that next year we can do a similar thing. As you can guess plans are

hotting up for our little trip to NZ. More importantly I've entered a team of Yr6 kids in a junior 10 Tors challenge which is taking up a lot of time but it's great to take what is a rum bunch and let them loose in a bog or two. I'll try and keep you informed as we travel the globe. I might be able to write an article or two while away and e-mail them to you."

We'll hold you to that one Lee! Lee and his wife Michelle are off to New Zealand for a long grand tour around, back packing for 4 or 5 months. Have a great time both of you!

Oli Scarff has returned from his adventure in Nepal. He has many a tale to tell and has been booked by Mr Seales (the new deputy head) to give a talk on his visit to the current sixth form. We also hope to squeeze a couple of articles out of him for future editions of Venture 44.

Ian Simmons has recently taken up a position in Kenya with The British High Commission.

Special congratulations are due to Tim Andrews and Jody Ballard who recently went to Buckingham Palace in July and received their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Well done to you both!

Tim is still an enthusiastic "rock hanger" and writes of his exploits since going to university

University of Bristol Mountaineering Club (UBMC).

When I went to Bristol University, I made it my first priority to join the University of Bristol Mountaineering Club (UBMC). I found the first few trips daunting as there were many more experienced climbers than me and I had hardly ever climbed outside before.

After a while I felt I belonged to the club as people made me feel welcome. We went to the Peak District a lot, to sea cliffs in Wales and also, more often, to the Avon Gorge as it was practically on our doorstep.

In the summer of my first year I got elected General Secretary of the club. I was basically the president's right hand man and did all the jobs he didn't have time for. My new position took up more of my time and although I found myself going on more trips, I was actually climbing less.

In the new year we organised a club trip to Scotland. We did some ice climbing, those who hadn't done it before got some tuition. It was very cold, but well worth it!

The rest of the year was full of highlights for the club. We won the BUSA (British Universities Sports Association) bouldering championship which was quite an achievement and best of all?! I was voted the President of the UBMC, which means more trips and even less climbing!

All in all, the last year has been a great year for the mountaineering club and our crowning glory was when we were voted 'Club of the Year' by the Athletic Union, beating the likes of the rugby and skiing club - a victory well deserved!

Tim Andrews

DID YOU KNOW...?

Norway Fact File

Reindeer, Arctic fox, Arctic hare, wolf, wolverine and lemming are common in the north and in the higher mountain areas of Norway. Lynx and bears are rarer sightings. Elk, deer, foxes, otters are found in the south and southeast.



The VSL's Norwegian Reflections

Looking back over some of the previous visits to this fantastic land of extremes has brought to mind some of the more memorable experiences enjoyed there in the company of FH and the 44th Gloucester VSU. Reading through the expedition journals I have reproduced here some of the accounts written by the party members themselves.

"We arrived at Lesjaverk railway station and after time to visit the local shop to sample the delights of 'Salt og Pepper' crisps were joined by the VSL and party who had travelled the 240 miles by road. We expected that the party would be together for the first time but it was not to be so as Chris, Paul and Wally were still in the south being trolls."

"Starting from a suburban house we were led, on a variety of bicycles, to some of the sights easily accessible from our guide's house. These included the local waterfall, an old farm in the middle of the city and a look at the Geology Department of Oslo University. The route took us along footpaths, one way streets, grass verges, people's back gardens, tram lines and across a playing field. Lights and brakes were optional extras and we deduced that some inhabitants of the city have a curious disregard for the rules of the road!"

"That evening the Troll Party occurred. The three of us together with the local schoolmaster got into our troll costumes which consisted of large noses, long tweedy jackets, false beards (for the others!) tails and bobble hats with twigs stuck to them. At the given signal we all leapt out followed by the schoolmaster with his accordian. The children were totally mystified. We finished off with the troll

dance - a most peculiar sight - and the evening ended with hot chocolate and twists around the smouldering camp fire."

"Arrived back to burnt fish fingers, stodgy smash and bullet peas, accompanied by complaints from the cooks: 'Where the heck have you lot been? spent hours slaving over hot stove your fault if it's cold and all burnt up...' We said nothing and smilingly forced down the meal. We kept 'stumm' and fended off questions concerning our activities with winks and nudges and 'Mum's the word!' Rumours abound over the following days about our various and varied involvements with 3 blonde Norwegian girls and the sauna ... and the moonlit skinny-dipping ... and The imagination of some people!! Phew!!"

"Awoke 8:50am; arose 9am for breakfast. At 10am started work on trench for drainage pipes. Four and a half hours hard labour (with break for lunch) saw ditch well over two-thirds dug out along the whole of its 50 meter length. While Dave Wilson, Paddy, Yosh and Brian went for swim/canoe/walk, Tim, Dave Seed and myself continued for another hour straightening edges and taking depth to full metre required. After showers we collected food (fish, rice and mild curry liver stew) and spent remainder of evening around the camp enjoying the evening air and mosquito bites."

"Most evenings were spent in true 44th tradition playing cards, consuming Brigg and participating in a ritual about which Mark often made the comment 'Oh! Horrible!!' - but it certainly kept the mosquitoes away."

"The only fools, sorry, Venture Scouts remaining from the last Norway expedition were the VSL, Phil and myself. Very little had changed at Krattebol since my last visit : we still played

games on Ernest's porch in our hour long tea breaks during the national past-time of sawing and splitting logs for those long, hard winters. Our arrival there was to the usual goggle-eyed welcome from seemingly hundreds of kids surrounding the van. There was a choice of accommodation ranging from the rat infested barn - it was wasps this year not rats - to the gloomy WW2 tent with strategically placed holes. As the barn was occupied and the weather fine we opted for the tent; we being Brian H, Simon W, Mark C, Simon H and myself."

"It's 8 o'clock as I sit here writing up today's log : 'Dear Diary, etc'

The sun is just above the trees on the opposite side of the fjord and, glittering like polished silver, the water ebbs in the evening breeze. Birds call and feed in the nearby shallows and the smouldering camp fire sends out a haze of drifting wood smoke. The evening rays light up the emerald leaves of the smaller beeches while the firs stand darker sentry in their own shadows. All is calm and serene, save for the birds' bickering calls, the chattering rasp of crickets and an occasional distant motor-boat, its outboard buzzing like an angry insect."

"The Nigardsbreen Glacier - it was still as dirty and unimpressive as I remembered it from 1980."

"Simon obviously mis-read the orders for the day as he proceeded to split his leg open with a wedge."

"The girls in the kiosk told Adam to stop the Kongsberg bus by standing next to the road and shouting with their hands. We all waited to see if this shouting with the hands worked - in fact it worked too well - they stopped the wrong bus!"

"Around midday, Siv, a young lady forester came along, viewed

the forest, our work, spoke with Frank and Ernst, then tied red ribbons around several of the trees. I don't know what to signify but it looked pretty and cheered the place up a bit. Forest work hot and sticky. Phew!! Brad now in his element, wielding a felling axe! Everyone stand well back!!"

"Porridge again for brekkers! Another hot day in prospect. Dark blue knickers now apparent on washing line."

"We sat in the hot sunshine watching a single pair of ospreys on the island opposite and several pairs of naked tits on the beach around us. Took several dips to keep down temperatures and blood pressures."



