

Spring 2002

The unseasonably mild "winter" may be affecting the soon to bloom spring flowers, but it's certainly limited winter mountaineering exploits for me so far. I've certainly not had cause to use my ice axe in anger this year. I even had to travel to the French Alps to try out my Christmas present (short mini skis), and very limited snowfall abroad made this look a risky and unlikely option! Thankfully the Alps had a snowfall just before we arrived which was a huge relief. With further snowfall forecast now for Scotland maybe the ice axe will get a late outing over Easter - keep your fingers crossed!

Mind you, the TV has been entertaining, Sky coverage of the NIA Bouldering Competition, Winter Olympic Coverage, The Six Nations together with the epic saga of Shackleton's journey have kept my appetite for sport and adventure somewhat satisfied. Still it's not the same as participating is it? However, after a recent orienteering event, I wished I had stayed at home watching the TV! An unprecedented long walk to and from the start (3 miles in total) was interspersed with a particularly awful run. I made a huge error picking up the wrong map for the course I should've been running. Consequently my navigating failed to match the controls I was supposed to be locating, and I ended up retiring from my run, having completed a greater distance getting to the start and back than I managed to run on the course. I'd even driven to near Corby and paid my course fee for the privilege! Maybe I should stick to hillwalking.... Alison.

Chairman's Report

We ended last year with a very enjoyable slide evening kindly hosted by Elvyn and Mary, a well attended Quiz Night and another of John T's annual Xmas Pud Walks. The New Year has started equally well for the Club, with two meets under our belts already, and we've got a full programme of hut meets to tempt you out during 2002. Following last year's successful President's Meet the Committee has agreed to book the Snowdon Ranger Youth Hostel again for 2002. We've also arranged the now very imminent **Lecture evening on 28th Feb** which we hope you will all support. Tickets cost a mere **£5** so please contact me if you are interested. We really want to make this a success for the Club but need your support to help us do so. Maybe work colleagues, family or friends would be interested in coming along - they'll certainly be made very welcome! Please see contact me on (01455) 553752 for more information, cheques to be payable to "Hinckley Mountaineering Club". Hope to see you there. Dave G.

Xmas Pudding Walk

We had a good turn out for this annual event which was based around Hanbury (the new home of Lisa and Tim, formerly of the Black Horse Hinckley). Walkers were Brian G, Pete L, Bob J, Dave P, Kris B, Gary B, Jade and Jordan B and myself John T. We had a pleasant walk across fields to Draycott in the Clay, through Banktop Wood and Bullspark Wood, along the edge of Draycott in the Clay Foxholes then back to the Cock Inn where Lisa and Tim had organised a very welcome lunch for us all. John T.

Wet Wanderings on Ickniel Street

Nick B and I (Dave P) set off from Stow on the Wold on Sunday 25 November for a few days Mountain Biking in the Cotswolds. However swell was swell, and the ride down into Ickniel Street was good. On through Condicote we rode along to Guiting Hill. At Guiting Hill farm it began - you guessed it the rain which stuck with us for the rest of the day. The downhill to Dirty Bridge was great but Dirty Bridge lived up to its name and was very muddy. Although the ride to the mediaeval village of Pinnock was good, the ride out was a pig or should that be pinnock! At the end of the green lane there are two unusual stone statues of tortoises which unfortunately have been vandalised by some pinnocks! Leaving Barton the hill track proved to be a right pinnock too. Thankfully the route on through to Upper Slaughter was an enjoyable combination of track and road. Once through Slaughter we were off road again and heading for more trouble. This time some pinnock of a farmer had left electrified wire across the bridleway. On the way back to Stow we passed the rather excellently converted Hyde Mill, then headed back up another pinnock of a hill. After 27.5 wet miles. My comment to Nick was that I felt "Knackered, spelt f****d"! "Me too", said Nick summing up the day well as "Good ride, crap day". Dave P.

Slide Show at Elvyn & Mary's

Firstly a huge "Thank you" to our kind hosts for suffering the intrusion of over 25 people into their home (and bar!!) in December - you must be mad! During the evening there was a wide range of topics and presentations including slides and PowerPoint productions, accompanied by a veritable feast of festive nibbles. There were tales of Winter Walking in the Peak, Cycling from Lands End to John O'Groats, Mountain Wildlife and much more! It was a great evening which certainly got folks talking of plans for trips in 2002. Just the tonic on a dreary winter's eve!

Quistmas Quiz & Nibbles Night

Once again there was a large turnout for this now annual event. The Local Press representative confirmed sightings of Santa and his two fetching assistants Mary Christmas and her cousin Sam Taz-Littlehelper who distributed the raffle prizes and orchestrated the quiz. After a series of competitive quiz rounds Teeth (aka Andy T) was revealed to be the winner scoring a mighty 51 points on the 50 question quiz!? Congratulations Teeth - but Mark will be down next year to score his quiz rather than delegating to Sam Taz (and Mark's) - Littlehelper!

Club Kit & Navigation Training

I've been asked to remind all members that there is some club kit for loan. Currently this is stored by Mark H. There's a small selection of walking crampons, two walking ice axes, four climbing harnesses, and two helmets. Mark is also in possession of a BMC video and accompanying booklet "Safety on the Hills" which covers safety across a range of weather conditions and mountainous terrain. It's sound information for those new to the outdoors, but is also a useful refresher for the more experienced. There is also a limited selection of maps. Also, there appears to be interest in some Navigation work which Mark H has offered to provide. Initially he proposes to cover basics inside, and then follow this up with consolidation outside. If you're interested please contact Mark ASAP so that a date can be arranged. Not a bad idea for those heading to Skye perhaps, particularly as the old compasses won't be reliable on the Cuillins?

Coppermines Jan 2002

There was a full hut for this the first meet of 2002, and birthday celebrations for Cheryl H and Kev T! With a mixed forecast promised, and hopes of true winter conditions the group split into two main parties. With low cloud and poor visibility several members headed off along the Walna Scar and tested their (somewhat rusty?) navigational prowess on the return journey through the woods.

Elsewhere, the other party was enjoying rather better luck with the weather. Having traversed an extensive ice covered section of track (still no need to put on the crampons being carried!), the group rose above the cloud to enjoy a cloud inversion and the chance to experience a broken spectre en route to the summit of the Old Man of Coniston. After the respectively tiring days, the party split again - some enjoying the offering of the Black Bull whilst others preferred the strange delights of Whisky-boot-sampling! A good start to the season, check out the list of meets on the back page to plan your weekends!

Wales Meet Feb '02

Despite a rearrangement of the date to avoid half term holidays, there was only a small turn out for the meet at Pete's hut. To compound the difficulties the previously wet weather had left the bridge to the hut under several feet of water. Despite this, those who did attend enjoyed a sociable weekend, and an outing for some to the Beacon climbing wall offered a little welcome exercise.

A Charming Day in the Charnwood Forest

On Sunday 18 November I led a walk in Charnwood accompanied by new members Kris and Pete who felt they need to strengthen their walking techniques for forthcoming hut meets. They had previously visited Beacon Hill briefly so they readily accepted the invitation of a taster walk in the

Charnwood Forest. Having parked at the Newton Linford end of Bradgate Park we set off across the park passing Tyburn, the War Memorial, Old John and Hunts Hill. Leaving the park we crossed the golf course to the edge of Woodhouse Eaves, where we then picked up a lane to Windmill Hill. Here we enjoyed a coffee stop and a chance for a photo or two of the tower, although its sails have now long gone.

Pressing on, we entered the slopes of Beacon Hill where a steady plod brought us up to the summit from where we had great views. Descending the hill we joined the road into Woodhouse Eaves for lunch at the Pear Tree Inn. Our return to Newton Linford was via Swithland Woods, visiting the flooded slate quarries en route. Finally, from Hallsgate a high level traverse took us back across Bradgate Park with superb views over Cropston Reservoir.

We'd had a very enjoyable walk in fine albeit overcast weather, and had a good 12 miles under our boots. John T.

NIA Climbing Competition - Dec '01

Several club members attended the weekend's activities at the NIA. There were gear sales at very competitive prices, plus representatives from a host of allied organisations. In use was a main lead climbing wall and a number of boulder problems for the competitors over the weekend. Visitors were able to experience climbing on the "come-&-try-walls" which seemed very popular. My own interest was the series of lectures which rang alongside (more literally than expected) with the climbing competition. Unfortunately, unlike previous similar events the lectures were not held in a separate lecture room. Instead, they tried to take part in a curtained off area within the main arena. Whilst the tiered seats improved visibility, the regular air horn and tanyed commentary for the climbing in the arena completely wrecked any chance of following the lecturer. However, it was an enjoyable weekend, which I'd recommend to others if it's held again. Alison.

The Outdoors Show, NEC 15-17 March 2002

Billed as the "first ever show for walkers, climbers and outdoor enthusiasts, packed full of ideas, advice, stuff to do and things to buy" we have acquired a small number of complimentary tickets for interested club members. Please contact Alison/Mark for further details.

Forthcoming Events

To book a place on a meet contact me (Lee L) with a payment please. I'm normally at the Railway on Thursdays.

Month	Dates	Meet details
Feb '02	28th	North & South Pole Lecture - Fiona & Mike Thornewill. William Bradford College, Earl Shilton. Tickets £5 from Dave G.
'02	22nd	Perth-y-Pia, Brecon Beacons
April '02	12th	Interhostel weekend - Kettlewell/Malham Yorks
April '02	20 th - 27 th	Glen Brittle Hut, Skye - Priority to club members.
May '02	24th	Fylde Hut, Little Langdale
June '02	21 st (20 th)	Count House, Cornwall (extra night may be poss - see Lee)
July '02	12th	Tan-yr-Wyddfa, Rhyd Ddu
Aug '02	9th	Don Whillans Hut, The Roaches
Sept '02	13th	George Starkey, Patterdale
Oct '02	4th	President's Meet, Youth Hostel Rhydd Ddu, North Wales
Nov '02	15th	K Fellfarers, Seathwaite

And Finally

Outside Now via the Internet - we're continuing to experiment with e-mailing the newsletter. So if you've had a change of e-mail or alternatively just got an address let me know and I'll add you to the address list. Please note, if you're e-mailed you won't get a postal copy so let me know if your e-mail address changes! Alison.