



Dear Member,

April 2004

Welcome to the start of a new year in the life of the Kirkintilloch Mountaineering Club! I say, new start, because the AGM was held on 18 March and the subscriptions for 2004 are now due for payment.

The Committee:

Chairman	George Wood
Secretary/Newsletter Editor	Steve Turnbull
Treasurer	John Berry
Equipment Officer	Iain Keddie
M Cof S Liaison Officer	Helen Wood
Day Outings Co-ordinator	Jim Bunney

Break and Kidney (Editorial!)

I thought I'd kick off this newsletter by including a short editorial. I cannot guarantee that I will include this every time, but thought it appropriate that I mention some of the recent activities of the club, and remind everyone (not that you need to be reminded) of the potential for accidents!

The Club has enjoyed two well attended weekend trips in 2004, the first to the Pottery Bunkhouse at Laggan in January, and a trip in late March to the Nethy Bridge Station bunkhouse. The weekend excursions are always full of humour and friendly banter and the communal Saturday night meal is never a dull moment. Besides which, the food is first class! Unfortunately, accidents do happen and we had two to contend with, involving Peter and Charmian in separate incidents! Peter's accident occurred inside the bunkhouse while Charmian at least waited until she was outdoors before slipping awkwardly while walking on Bynack Mor on Sunday! The result was a broken ankle! (see Cedric's article below). Naturally, our sympathies go out to both our friends.

Efforts were put into preparing an exhibition to promote the club and a four board display was exhibited in the Kirkintilloch public library for three weeks between February and March. We now plan to show the display in the Bishopbriggs and Lennoxton libraries and, if possible, in the Bishopbriggs sports centre. The purpose of the display is to attract potential new members into the club. It has become apparent over the last year or two that the number of active members is beginning to dwindle a little, particularly on the regular Sunday walks. The Club has been approached by a handful of people and we extend a warm welcome to Paul and Moira Chapman of Kirkintilloch, who joined us as a result of seeing the display and picking up one of the information leaflets. Consideration will also be given to setting up the Club's own website on which to post information.

2004 will prove to be another active year for the club, with six more weekend trips in the diary, and a foreign excursion planned to Majorca in November. The Committee is now busy organising the weekend programme for 2005. These will be posted in the next newsletter. Glen Feshie is booked and there may be another clue in the old sea shanty "Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of...".

Finally, I encourage you all to keep your eyes open for amusing quips and anecdotes, as well as jotting down tales of your own excursions (past and present) and send them to me for publication in the newsletter.

2004

KIRKINTILLOCH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

Weekend Trips:

30 April, 1&2 May: Cannich (Glen Affric Bunkhouse) (Steve)

14/15/16 May: Ratagan SYHA (Richard)

9/10 July: Inchnadamph Hostel (Richard)

Note: The Ratagan and Inchnadamph trips are both fully subscribed but Richard has opened a reserve list.

Payment due to Richard a month prior to each trip taking place.

16-21 May: Skye Cuillin Ridge (Steve)

Note: Employing a guide. There may be a place available for one additional person. Please contact Steve for details.

28-30 May: Loch Coruisk Hut, Skye (George)

24-27 September: Snowdonia, North Wales (Steve)

26/27 November: Inchree, near Corran Ferry (Heather)

Bookings for weekend trips should be accompanied by a £5.00 deposit to the organiser.

Day Outings

The details of day outings will be finalised at the Thursday evening meeting at Lenzie Rugby Club, Viewfield, prior to the date. Please contact Jim Bunney (Co-ordinator) as early as possible, and by 6pm on Saturday at the latest.

18 April: Spittal of Glenshee

20 June: Aonach Eagach Ridge, Glencoe

25 July: Ben Starav, Glen Etive

29 August: Ben Cruachan

REPORTS

Nethy Bridge Weekend (Reporter: Cedric Davies)

On Friday afternoon, Steve and I, followed by Charmian (who had driven up earlier from Doncaster), drove north to Nethy Bridge in glorious sunshine setting up lots of false hopes for a nice fine weekend. Since we were first to arrive, Steve and I made a mad dash to claim bottom bunks. Soon afterwards, Peter and Heather arrived, having spent the day looking for pylons. Alastair, and Iain and Jean arrived soon afterwards having sought out obscure Corbetts on the Tomintoul road. Eunice, Sandra and John arrived late, the latter two suffering from the blight of full time employment.

The hostel itself is the old railway station complete with a platform but no trains. It is also in the village and conveniently near the pubs. Inside were two dormitories equipped with three high bunks. Fortunately, none of us found it necessary or desirable to retire to the top level (in the stratosphere). There was, of course, the usual kitchen, washing and toilet facilities and plenty of parking space by the platform.

That evening, there was plenty of good tale-telling and a lot of pylons, with me also being challenged about my ability to fall out of bed, both at Laggan and in Morocco. But I was to get my own back! Steve, Charmian and I retreated to the pub for our evening meal while those more dedicated to domestic matters stayed in to dine. As the evening wore on, with the help of the usual lubrication, plans were set for the morrow and finally members started to drift off to their bunks. This left Peter, Iain and myself to enjoy a quiet nightcap before retiring. We finally crept off to our bunks mindful of the other sleeping souls in the room with Peter gently mounting the ladder to the bunk above me in silence. Then, while I was stripping off below, a large half clad and horizontally disposed body came crashing vertically downwards past my nose, bounced off the chest of drawers and hit the floor with a mighty crash. Not a soul stirred! After coming too, and along with a few groans, he got up and made his way gingerly back up the ladder to bed, all the while being watched over by a very considerate Iain. He actually seemed to sleep very well, producing a fine symphonic snore in the process. There is a view that had he not had a decent night cap, he may well have come to more harm. One thing is quite clear, this time **it wisnae me!**

The following morning, the weekends tigers (John, Eunice, Charmian and Steve) were up at some ungodly hour and away at 7.30 with the object of racing round as many Cairngorm peaks as they could find. Those of

KIRKINTILLOCH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

a more senior disposition stayed in bed. Just a little longer, I would hasten to add. Peter, Alastair, and Sandra headed for Bynack More. Finally Iain, Jean, Heather and myself disappeared into the distance to climb more Corbetts, our first being Ben Rinnes which was wet and invisible. However, by the time we came off the mountain, the cloud was lifting and we were beginning to see what we had been on. Lunch in the car and a couple of miles down the road to a fresh parking space. Having divested ourselves of waterproofs, we set off up Corryhabbie Hill, an unremarkable tract of moorland which just happens to have the right attributes to qualify as a Corbett. Across the other side of the valley Ben Rinnes presented itself as a much more obvious and elegant mountain. However, we did have fine weather all afternoon and had it been a little warmer we could have taken a nap on the rather soft heathery summit. It seems that the other parties didn't fare nearly so well, having almost been washed off their hills in foul weather. (Ed - the tigers (!) tramped from the ski area car park to Ben Macdui in deep soft snow, cloud and rain. The wind was howling at the summit and thoughts of continuing to Ben Mheadhoin were washed away. We retraced steps, and using compass and GPS, continued warily over the plateau to Cairngorm in a dreamlike grey mist where snow, cloud, horizon and cornice blended into a oneness. By the time we reached Cairngorm, the snow was slushy and we emerged off the hills like four wet miserable cubs!). That evening, we had our communal meal during which we were treated to a fine soup, stewed venison with red cabbage and mash, followed by fruit and meringue, finishing with a selection of excellent cheeses. As one would expect, it was all accompanied by a good selection of wines. Then came plans for Sunday. John, Eunice and Charmian were aiming for Bynack More. Peter, Heather, Sandra and Alastair were driving down the road taking in Ben Vrackie on the way, and possibly a few more pylons. I was informed that I was doing another Corbett, Creag Mhor, along with Iain, Jean and Steve. Although Sunday saw the start of BST, strict orders were agreed that no watches were to be moved forward until the morning, thus allowing us to rise at a civilized hour.

After breakfast, cleaning up, checking for barrack room damages and collecting our empty bottles, we left for our various destinations. Charmian, however, had planned to stay on at the hostel with the object of spending a few more days on the hills hereabouts. More to say on this later!

Steve and I had to search a few parking places (Ed - my fault!) before meeting up with Iain and Jean near the Glenmore Lodge. The long walk-in started, 11 kilometres I'm told, at first on a well manicured track which, after the Bynack stable, started to degenerate. Then a long pull up onto the high moor at the foot of Bynack More, which from this point looked a pretty straight forward ascent. Indeed, I half thought Steve was about to race up and down while we plodded our way round the base to the east. However, on we went for yet more kilometers with the track degenerating further, much of it being a partly snowed-up burn. Then, quite suddenly, we were at the foot of our hill with a mere 500 feet plus to climb. After that long walk in it was a bit of a doddle.

On the way in, there had been a few comments about Bynack More being "only" another 300 metres and I was conscious of a devious plan being hatched which would neatly avoid us having to walk the whole of that damned track out again.

So, after a break for food, down off the mountain we came, crossed the burn and stopped, with Iain posing the rather stupid question "well, are we?". There was, of course, no real choice, so off we went straight up the side of Bynack More through steep heather and the odd stretch of snow. He did have the graciousness to stop half way and say "whose stupid idea was this?". Too late!, we were half way up. A brief stop on the summit for photos and then down to regain the track and a not quite so long walk out, during which time we could hear but not see, a helicopter rescue in progress. Little did we know that this was Charmian being shipped off the hill with a broken ankle! This club seems to have an uncanny relationship with helicopters and we have had to acknowledge that a problem exists. There is a curious magnetic attraction between John and the big yellow machines. However, we are now hoping like mad that since he has now had a ride in one the problem might just recede.

So we came to the end of another great weekend with good hills, mixed weather, embellished with stylish and polished company and all in spite of an unfortunate date with a helicopter. To Charmian I would say that we really do try our best to avoid arranging such trips for our members and we sincerely hope that this little event does not dissuade you from coming out with us again. Meantime, look after that ankle.

Wasdale, Lake District (April 2000)(Reporter: Steve Turnbull)

A week's free use of a time share mustn't be sniffed at particularly if there is the possibility of a day in the hills on offer. This one was a stone cottage near Newby Bridge. It provided the opportunity to follow up a trip into Wasdale the potential of which was spotted from the summits of Scafell/Scafell Pike the previous summer. Leaving at 6.30am, I entered Wasdale in sunshine after a lengthy and twisting drive from South Lakeland to be greeted by a picture postcard view of the Wastwater framed by a snow capped Great Gable and other

KIRKINTILLOCH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

hills. The day looked promising. A National Trust Landrover parked in the Wasdale car park was attended by the chatty warden I'd spoken to at Seatoller in 1999. He'd given me some useful tips about the Scafells on that occasion and said I'd have to go some to do them in under 7 hours. In the event, they were completed in six and a half hours in hot weather on account of having to meet 'the wife' at Glasgow Central station at 8pm sharp! Having left Seatoller at 5.45, I somehow managed to be dutifully waiting at the station on time (dripping) after 'burning rubber' up the motorway.

I had decided on an anti-clockwise traverse of the Mosedale Horseshoe and stepped along between the stone dykes bordering the fields to the farm. Turn left at the farm for the footpath to Styhead. My first effort ended in a maze of walls, sheep and sh... At Styhead, the path turns left for Great Gable, up a manicured stairway to the summit. The first snow was encountered half way up, patchy but deep in places. The panorama from the summit included the Isle of Man and the Solway shores. The western drop from Great Gable (899m) was tricky in deep snow with path finding a problem. Kirk Fell (802m) was straight forward and it also had a sharp drop to Black Sail Pass. I had read Wainwright's description of the route around the northern side of Pillar to Robinson's Cairn, and then to the summit via a steep gully. I decided the gully would be too tricky in snow. The ridge was followed to the summit (892m) and I continued down to Wind Gap and around the horseshoe to Scoat Fell (841m), over the narrow neck to Steeple, then back to Red Pike (821m) where some southerners approached me, baffled that they had lost the path off the mountain. I was followed down to Dore Head like the pied piper and suggested they traverse the west side of Yewbarrow rather than stumble down the knee jarring path off Dore Head. I was glad they took my advice. I had Yewbarrow in sight though and could see there was some scrambling ahead if I were to finish the day on this hill (627m). The scramble up Stirrup Crag isn't difficult but is slightly exposed in a couple of places. The final push of the day (albeit descent) was the relentlessly steep slope from the summit to the road. A great day out in good weather and a fine ridge walk (8.5 hours).

Two at a Time!

Fired up by recent stories of climbing (well, sauntering up) two corbetts a day in the Cairngorms, with a leisurely stop at the car in between, the Sunday walkers a couple of weeks ago decided to put the Arrochar Alps to the test. Peter, Iain, Ross, Alan and Steve left the car at the Rest and Be Thankful car park at ten and were standing atop Beinn an Lochan by 11.25 after a direct assault. The tops were clear of cloud and revealed little in the way of snow on any of the surrounding peaks, Beinn Ime having the whitest summit. Nice views of the surrounding countryside but from the south and west, a threatening front was moving in quickly. All the nearby corbetts were bereft of snow. There was an icy wind and we sheltered for a leisurely cup of tea and sandwich. On the descent, however, the rain started and the waterproofs were donned for the remainder of the journey to the road. Earlier on, there had been the odd comment about doing a second hill, and, there being no dissent, that's what we proceeded to do. Off we marched up the track onto Ben Donich, waterproofs swishing away. It was quite pleasant really with a steady light drizzle at lower level! The surrounding hills disappeared in clag! As we climbed higher, the wind grew stronger and we passed others descending who informed us "it's very dangerous up there!". They hadn't reached the top which was now in thick cloud. On we went, taking heed of their comments, and sure enough, it was wild, with snow blowing in horizontally and thick and fast from the west. The hill, which had earlier been clear of snow, was now covered in several inches and it was building up, so fast in fact, that our footprints were being obliterated more or less as we strode forward. We reached the trig point, turned in our tracks and beat a hasty retreat off the hill, stopping only in a sheltered spot to eat the residue of the lunch box. I believe we all took at least one slip or tumble in the snow lower down and one of Peter's falls seemed to be in slow motion, rather like a footballer trying an overhead kick. Showing the sort of sympathy that is typical of the KMC, Ross and I laughed our heads off, whereupon I also lost my footing and performed the same trick! Back at the car, we peeled off sodden clothes and boots and changed into dry apparel. More wet garments to hang around the house for days. We stopped to pay our compliments to the staff at the Village Inn at Arrochar just as the weather improved and the sun shone, and the hills revealed a new white coat.

CANADA 2005!

The idea has been floated of a trip to the Rockies during the summer of next year. If this idea interests you, could you please contact Iain Keddie. As this is only in embryo stage at this time, there is no budgetary costing, locations or dates. All of these are open for discussion when I know if there is sufficient interest.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEER (McofS)

KIRKINTILLOCH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

It is generally acknowledged that Club members get good value from the MCofS, even though the larger part of our annual subscriptions go towards third party insurance. The 'Scottish Mountaineer' journal will become a quarterly publication and every member should automatically receive a copy when it is published. At the recent Committee meeting, George and Helen Wood stated that they had not received the journal for some time. Is anyone else in that position? Please contact Helen Wood if this is the case and, as the MCofS Liaison Officer, she will approach the organisation to rectify the position.

CLUB DISCOUNT NIGHTS – TUESDAY 20 APRIL (Buchanan Street Shop) and THURSDAY 29 APRIL (Couper Street store)

Tiso's have advised us of their discount Club nights to be held next Tuesday from 6.30 until 8.30pm at their shop in Buchanan Street, Glasgow, and the following week on Thursday at their Couper Street store. They are offering 15% discount off all products, 10% off books, maps, canoes and GPS systems, and other special 'club night bargains'. Members should bring their membership cards as proof!

BARBEQUE!

Pinned on the success of previous BBQ events, there will be a KMC BBQ at CKL (i.e. Chez Keddie in Lennoxton) on Thursday 20 June. Food will be supplied at a reasonable cost. Please BYOB. If you intend coming, please get in touch with Jean and Iain as soon as possible so that numbers for catering can be established.

GIANT PYLONS PROPOSED IN WILD COUNTRY!

The following e-mail was sent to a few members recently in connection with the consultation period on the proposal to intensify the power line which runs near the A9 road and proposes to divert it near Loch Garry in an area of wild land. Peter spoke to the issue at the AGM. The period for comments has now ended but I include the article for information and interest.

Power Line Shock for Tycoon (Scotland on Sunday 14/3/04)

It was supposed to be a Highland retreat from the stresses and strains of modern life. But transport tycoon, Ann Gloag, one of Britain's richest women, may find it harder in future to unwind in the historic and scenic surroundings of Beaufort Castle.

Plans are well advanced to build gigantic electricity pylons within half a mile of her home on the banks of the River Beaully, Inverness-shire. The 150 ft pylons – the biggest to be built in the UK – are needed to carry electricity from renewable energy experiments with wind and waves in the north of Scotland to the Central Belt.

But Gloag is understood to be furious that the pylons and their crackling, high voltage cables will be unmissable from the ramparts of the castle. She is probably the richest and most influential of hundreds of people from Beaully to Bannockburn opposed to the £200m pylon plan, arguing it will destroy the beauty of vast swathes of rural Scotland.

Objectors want parts of the 140-mile line – from Beaully, eight miles west of Inverness, to Denny, near Falkirk – buried underground where it crosses new territory. The firm behind the plan, Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE), says that is far too expensive.

Community councils in Stirlingshire are holding emergency meetings amid fears that the height of the new pylons will blight homes and tourism in the area by destroying classic views from Stirling Castle and the Wallace Monument.

The power line will follow the course of an older line for three quarters of its length, but will cross untouched land for the remainder, bringing it much closer to Gloag's Beaufort Castle estate.

Giles Foster, who runs the neighbouring Lovat estate, over which the existing and proposed new lines run, said: "We granted wayleave to the electricity company to run the original line over land 60 years ago because, like everyone else, we appreciate that power lines have to go somewhere. But we take huge exception to the new line being constructed over virgin territory".

KIRKINTILLOCH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

The new line will run just 25 metres from the farm houses on Beaufort Castle estate and about 800 metres from the castle itself. It would also go very close to homes in the surrounding Kiltarlity area. Foster said: "We think we could live with it, even though the pylons are much bigger, if the new line followed the old route, but the new route is being foisted upon us with little consultation and with indecent haste".

The Pottery Bunkhouse at Laggan posted the following notice about the proposal:

NOTICE TO HILLWALKERS

You may be interested to know that Scottish and Southern Energy plc have announced plans for a new power line of 50m high pylons (twice the height of the present ones) to replace the existing line.

The proposed new route as it affects this area is to run from Kingussie on this side of the A9 road along the base of the hills (Sow of Atholl, Boar of Badenoch). New access roads will have to be made across the land to erect and service these pylons and the work will take 2-3 years to complete.

When the line reaches Dalnaspidal, the route is to veer away from the A9 and go along the west side of Loch Garry, cut across in front of the Duinish Bothy at the far end of the loch and follow a course through the middle of Auchleeks (by Carn Dearg), below Loch Con and on to Loch Errochty.

Scottish and Southern Energy say: "There is no technical reason why the new pylons cannot follow the existing route alongside the A9". Their main reason for proposing this new route is "to lessen the visual impact from the A9!".

The closing date for representations and objections was 19 March. No doubt, many observations have been received, including those referring to the impact on unspoilt wild land and countryside, were the scheme, in its proposed state, to proceed.

If any Club member hears of, or spots an issue affecting the countryside, please share it with other members through the e-mail. In matters such as the one highlighted above, comparatively little time is provided for making views known, therefore the sooner news is spread the better.

EQUIPMENT LIST UPDATE

Listed below is the equipment owned by the Club and who, at present, holds it:

Ropes

11mm x 50m Edelrid (poor condition)	Ron McBrearty
10mm x 50m Mammut Galaxy Superdry	Ron McBrearty
10mm x 50m Cairngorm	Iain Keddie

Slings

Short knotted green tape	Iain Keddie
Troll 8' Orange tape	Iain Keddie
Short knotted blue tape - marked red	Iain Keddie
Medium knotted blue tape - marked blue	Iain Keddie
Long knotted blue tape - marked black	Iain Keddie

Karabiners

3 of screw gate	Iain Keddie
1 of non screw gate	Iain Keddie
Heavy screw gate	Iain Keddie
HMS screw gate	Ron McBrearty
Figure of eight: Cassin	Iain Keddie
Figure of eight: Viking	Iain Keddie

Hexentrics

2 of No 8	Iain Keddie
No 7	Iain Keddie
No 6	Iain Keddie
No ? (yellow)	Iain Keddie

KIRKINTILLOCH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB