

A person with a large backpack is climbing a steep, snow-covered mountain slope. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the scene. The person is wearing a dark jacket and blue pants, and is using an ice axe to ascend. The background shows more snow-covered mountain ridges under a clear sky.

SUMMIT

ISSUE 24 - WINTER 2001

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Festival Of Climbing

Are You Ready For It ?

All Tooled Up

Ice Axe Development

Going In

The John Muir Trust

ACT COMPETITION
SOUTH AMERICA
AVALANCHE TRANSCIVERS

BMC CHANGES

EXPEDITIONS

MOUNTAIN TRAVEL

MALLORY



(LEFT) The UIAA Summit Charter.
(TOP) Roger Payne contemplating global summits.

At first sight it may seem strange to suggest the Cuillins of Skye as a possible peace park. However, Skye has been the scene of clan battles, and the Glen Brittle Memorial Hut was erected in memory of all those who fell during the second world war. Also, following the failure of the disputed sale of the Cuillins perhaps John MacLeod of MacLeod will be prepared to renounce any ownership claim. What a fantastic gesture that would be as a commitment to peace and freedom in the International Year of Mountains.

At the launch of the UIAA Summit Charter Robert Pelousek the deputy education minister for Austria was in the mood to make gestures. In an excellent speech in which he highlighted the many benefits of climbing and mountaineering he announced that Austria would like to see indoor climbing as a component of sports education for all 6 to 11 year olds. He amusingly pointed out that anyone who can learn to climb and walk in mountains when they are young "...will have no problem moving around on the slippery flatlands later in life!"

There is lots happening to celebrate the International Year of Mountains with various launch events at the Festival of Climbing on 7 to 9 December including the launch of the Access and Conservation Trust with Alan Michael MP, the Minister for Rural Affairs. You can keep up to date with the various events and initiatives via the BMC web site and by visiting iyam.org.uk (see Festival of Climbing programme for more information) but high profile events include The Outdoors Show at the NEC in Birmingham on 15 - 17 March 2002 (which will include the final of the British Bouldering Championship) and the National Outdoor Welcome being co-ordinated by the Outdoor Industries Association (which will feature many activity opportunities next Spring).

Make sure everyone knows 2002 is the International Year of Mountains, support and, or, take part in some of the events being organised, join the celebration at the UK launch of the Summit Charter at the Festival of Climbing and make sure anyone you know in a position of influence knows why it is important to protect the freedom to enjoy climbing, hill walking and mountaineering and the opportunity to experience these activities.

Roger Payne
General Secretary

So, what does it mean that the United Nations has designated 2002 as the International Year of Mountains? Will mountains get bigger during the year? Or perhaps gravity will be reduced to make them easier to climb? Anyway, isn't the UN busy solving global problems?

The response that the mountaineering federations have taken to the International Year of Mountains (IYM2002) is to agree a 'Summit Charter' which was adopted by the UIAA and launched at the recent General Assembly in Austria. The charter is to remind everyone (but in particular Governments and international organisations) why climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are valuable and worthwhile activities with many health, social, educational and economic benefits. Other key themes in the charter include all the obvious issues concerning access, conservation, risks, youth, equal opportunities, and so on. But one of the less obvious themes is urging commitments to repair war damage in mountain areas and the resolution of mountain border disputes through new agreements.

In the past various people have put forward ideas about 'peace parks' in mountain areas where there have been border disputes. Veteran Indian mountaineer and author Harish Kapadia would like such a scheme for the Siachen Glacier in the Karakoram where the armies of India and Pakistan face each other in the long-standing Kashmir border dispute. Recently and closer to home a suggestion has been put forward for a peace park in the mountains of Albania. But what about making a commitment to such a concept here in the UK? There has been recent dramatic progress with the peace process in Northern Ireland, so why not?

Welcome to issue 24 of
BMC
 Summit

Summit is the membership magazine of the British Mountaineering Council. The BMC promotes the interests of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers and the freedom to enjoy their activities. The primary work of the BMC is to:

Negotiate access improvements and promote cliff and mountain conservation.

Promote and advise on good practice, facilities, training and equipment.

Support events and specialist programmes including youth and excellence.

Provide services and information for members.

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RISK & RESPONSIBILITY

Readers of Summit are reminded that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement. The BMC publishes a wide range of safety and good practice advice and provides training opportunities for members.

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Cover: Esk Pike from Great End,
 Credit: John Beatty

CLOSE YOUR HUTS!

It is really encouraging to see the BMC trying to find ways of supporting the rural economy. But may I suggest that the policy of helping to support and develop club huts is reconsidered? The clubs might be better off spending the cash used to develop remote properties on local accommodation instead. There are many excellent bunkhouses scattered throughout the mountainous areas of the British Isles that are crying out for business. In this way the clubs will be supporting the local economy of the areas they gain so much enjoyment from and ridding themselves of maintenance bills for distant properties in their ownership. For anyone interested in finding out more try: www.hostel-scotland.co.uk and www.highland-hostels.co.uk.

Alan Kimber, Fort William

THE WHITE STUFF

As the temperatures drop, with a bit of luck most of us will have a chance to get out on the white stuff this winter. Which brings me to the question: why don't more winter mountaineers use avalanche transceivers? I work as a ski professional in the French alps, and any time I go out to play, on goes the transceiver (along with shovel and probe in the pack), and more importantly I make sure whoever I'm with has the same kit. It's just second nature now - why hasn't this caught on in the plank-less winter sports?

Get out there, let rip, drop big cliffs, crank hard and steep, go fast and take chances, but ask yourself: Is my life really not worth £200?

Simon Christy, Scotland

- Thanks Simon, spookily enough we've got an article on transceivers on p. 31.

ROPE BELOW

Thanks for an interesting and thought-provoking article on Risk, Freedom and the Law. I only hope it was read by the idiot I came across at Avon Gorge's Main Area on September 16th. I was on my second-ever multi-pitch lead at the time, and as you can imagine, with 200 ft of air below me, I was concentrating pretty hard on making my moves and placing my protection. I was somewhat surprised, therefore, when approximately 100 metres of coiled climbing rope suddenly came sailing over the lip of the cliff towards me. Luckily I saw it coming, and was braced for the impact - it hit me on the head, hard enough even through my shiny new helmet, then proceeded to snag on my gear and finished tangled in my rope. I got more gear in fast and managed to free the rogue rope before its owner, who'd decided to ab down rather than take the easier walk back

to the car park, appeared. He sailed past without a word of apology.

The incident left me angry but has not frightened me off. I'll be back on the rock, leading, as soon as commitments allow. But it could have been very different. If I was of a more nervous disposition I could have been put off for a long time. If I'd actually fallen any distance, I may well have been having serious thoughts about whether this person had been negligent, in failing to check whether there was anyone climbing directly below the point where he chucked his rope over the edge. Surely if we want to keep the US-style 'litigation mentality' out of climbing, it's imperative that we don't put others at risk through sheer stupidity.

John Ripley, Warwickshire

CAMP RAGE

A recent visit to friends staying at Camping Les Chosalets, Argentiere, has been enough to persuade me never to consider staying there myself - the behaviour of the proprietor, a Monsieur Bernard, was too unusual to ignore. We arrived by car from Chamonix for a quiet barbecue, but just after 10.30pm we discovered that front gate was locked, trapping our car. We were reluctant to walk all the way back to Chamonix, and though our friends warned us that he was renowned for being bad tempered we set out to find Monsieur Bernard's house round the corner, reasoning that it was still fairly early. How angry could he be? Unexpectedly disgruntled, it turned out; before I got halfway through a polite request for our car to be let out (in French!) he literally exploded in my face, throwing two of us down several steps and launching into an abusive tirade. Slightly confused, we left him to it.

Back at Les Chosalets we'd just decided to try hitching when Monsieur Bernard stormed up, still ranting, and now armed with a metal bar. He grabbed me by the neck and gave me a hefty shove. I offered no resistance on account of the metal bar, which he looked like he might use until a female friend intervened. Still toting the bar he then proceeded to yell at us and to imply that we'd been causing a disturbance. Needless to say we scurried as soon as he'd opened the gate, leaving our unfortunate friends to placate the madman as best they could.

By all accounts this isn't an unusual Monsieur Bernard story. Though such behaviour might be acceptable from a sergeant in the Foreign Legion, it implies that the man is not best suited to a job in the tourist industry, or indeed anywhere he might mix with the general public. Though many British climbers habitually use Les Chosalets I would urge everyone to avoid it. To give him your business is to implicitly en-

courage his outrageous behaviour. At some point a camper, or even Monsieur Bernard himself, may be seriously hurt. You're on holiday; why put up with an unpleasant landlord? There are nicer places to camp in any case.

Dan Bailey, London

FMD THANKS

I am writing in response to a letter written by Mr Alan Brown in Summit 23 regarding access during the FMD crisis. I can understand his anger about access but I feel that I should support the BMC on its decision to consider farmers in the way it has. I am a climber and being up here in Scotland I too was inconvenienced by the closure of most of its countryside. However, I am also a Veterinary student and so I understand the impact that FMD has had, not only on the farming industry throughout Europe, but on the British economy as well.

If closure of most of the countryside had not occurred, the risk of spreading FMD would have been greatly increased. As a climber I consider this an inconvenient but fair measure; as a Veterinary student I consider it essential. I can understand the hardship incurred by those working in the outdoors this year and some of the actions taken by the Government must have seemed a little strange to everyone to begin with. But had FMD been allowed to spread nationwide, which it surely would have done had people not been so patient and had not stayed away, then these hardships would have been endured for many more years to come. Therefore, I think we should be thanking the BMC for taking such a responsible stance and advising its members to remain patient. As well as protecting farmers and the economy, the BMC is protecting our interests as mountaineers by ensuring that these closures are in place for a minimum amount of time. Mr Brown must surely agree that a six months closure is better than five or six years.

Andrew Price, Glasgow

WRITE A LETTER AND WIN THIS BERGHAUS EXTREM SAC!

Come on, write in to Summit, with any news, views, or comments on the issue, and you could win this great Berghaus Extrem Climb 32l sac. This issue, the prize goes to Dan Bailey - it'll come in handy next time he tries to hitch back to Chamonix. Next issue...it could be you.





Salavat Rachmetov (RUS),
Credit: Avery-Cunliffe

BMC & Entre-Prises Festival of Climbing 7-9th December @ the NIA

The biggest event of the year is getting closer.

The BMC & Entre-Prises Festival of Climbing, is being held at the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham, 7-9th December. This major event has something for everyone, whether you're an avid competition fan or a keen hill walker. On the competition side, there's the **World Bouldering Championships**, the European Youth Cup, and the International Open – so it's safe to say that most of the world's best climbers will be turning up to try their hand. But that's not all, there's the "Festival Village" – every spare inch of the arena floor will be packed with retail stands, from the likes of **Snow and Rock**, and **Outside**. This is the place to pick up **bargain gear**; these retailers do not want to take anything home with them! If you're planning to buy anything this year, from waterproofs to boots, harnesses to friends, make sure you do it here.

But it's not just competition and shopping action, once again we have a fantastic line up of **lectures**, **seminars**, and **films**, this time taking place in two purpose built lecture theatres. An eclectic mix of Britain's leading activists will take you from the boulders of the

Pass to the peaks of the Himalaya via everywhere else in between. In addition we'll have the best films from the **Kendal festival**, a selection of the best videos around, and advice workshops and training seminars. There's also a greatly expanded art and photographic exhibition, featuring work from all the **best artists** and **photographers**.

Bring the kids along to help create a "Freedom Mural", then wear them out on the five public **"Have a Go" walls**, or try your luck in the **public bouldering competition**, the dyno challenge, and more.

It's shaping up to be the best event so far – can you afford to miss it? Call the ticket hotline on **0870 909 4144** to reserve your places.

Turn to pages 26-28 for full details!

Weather & Conditions information: the easy way

Free winter climbing and walking condition reports on the Northern Cairngorms are available straight to your inbox. To subscribe, just send an email to info@scotmountain.co.uk, and once the season gets going, midweek reports will give you all the info.

The Volunteer Leader Conference – 7th Dec, NIA, Birmingham

Safety, training and liability for programme and facility managers and volunteer leaders.

Climbing, hill walking and other outdoor activities give young people a very healthy and rewarding sporting challenge. But how can we manage the risks of participation when a visit to an indoor climbing wall or simple countryside walk can end in tragedy? Sport and youth organisations have a duty of care for the management of their activities including the safety of participants; and programme and facility managers need guidance and support to manage the risks without losing the essential adventure and benefits of those activities. Recent trends towards litigation and criminal prosecution remind us of the need for care; but – if a serious accident occurs - will the man or woman on the 'Clapham Omnibus' think your activity is well managed with adequate safety procedures.

The conference will consider safety, the needs of young participants, volunteer support and training, and liability. The latest views

on risk management for organisations and volunteer leaders will be reviewed; in particular concerning climbing, hill walking and mountaineering. The conference includes keynote expert speakers, specialist discussion workshops and practical skills workshops.

The conference is aimed at senior post holders, programme and facility managers and volunteer leaders. The conference coincides with the first day of the Entre-Prises and BMC Festival of Climbing which includes a programme of practical skills workshops for volunteer leaders plus many others. The conference and festival are a must for everyone involved in managing or delivering outdoor activity programmes.

If you would like to attend, contact the BMC office immediately for a booking form. And if your centre or organisation would like to display information highlighting your work at the conference please contact Graeme Alderson here at the office.



Leaders be aware! Credit: Morning

Vodafone UK (8638) or BT Cellnet (2638). Within a few minutes you'll receive a six-hour weather forecast summary, with hour-by-hour detail, for the exact location you requested. The service costs from just 25p a message, and is just added onto your bill.

A Moment for Mallory

When George Mallory and Sandy Irvine disappeared into the mist as they struggled towards (or away from) the summit of Everest in 1924, the most enduring enigma in climbing history was born. The debate rages on as to whether they had the skill and equipment necessary to summit the world's highest mountain and we may never know. If they did, then history would have to rewrite itself. The only certainty is that these two pioneering climbers lost their lives in pursuit of a dream. Mallory's body was found in 1999 and a selection of items from that find, including Mallory's altimeter, watch, goggles and one leather hobnailed boot, are



now on exclusive loan to the Helly Hansen National Mountaineering Exhibition. The most poignant item is the fragment of rope found still tied around Mallory's waist. The end is frayed where it snapped in the disaster that ended their lives. You are unlikely to see these unique items on display in the UK again, so a visit to the Exhibition is a must. The Helly Hansen National Mountaineering Exhibition is based at Rheged, Penrith, Cumbria. Tel: 01768 868000. www.mountain-exhibition.co.uk

Congratulatory back-slapping all round!

Not only is Rheged the largest earth covered building in Europe, it has also just won the prestigious British Airways Tourism for Tomorrow Award for the Built Environment, beating off stiff competition from around the globe. The National Mountaineering Exhibition is managed by the Mountain Heritage Trust. Establishing the Trust was a complex task and thanks go to Bolton based accounting firm Bentleys for their contribution to the project. The job was made easier by the fact that partner and primary contact for the BMC at Bentleys',

John Shaw, is a keen climber. John works closely with the BMC as a volunteer and played a key role in setting up the Mountain Training Trust to run Plas y Brenin several years ago. To complete a hat-trick of Trusts John is currently overseeing the establishment of the joint mountaineering councils' new charity the Access & Conservation Trust. Constant evolution seems to be the norm for mountaineering so watch out John, who knows what you'll be doing in 2002!

Scout Death Judgment

The case resulting from the fatal accident to a ten year old Scout on the East Ridge of Snowdon, 16th October 1999, has just been concluded. Scout Leader Peter Finlay was found not guilty of the manslaughter of Jonathan Atwell after Jonathan died in a fall from the East Ridge of Snowdon, which he was descending as part of a group led by Finlay. Peter Finlay had been a volunteer for the Scout Association since 1986 and had been to Snowdonia and the Lake District several times. Although the Judge described him as an experienced hill walker he later noted that Finlay had 10 'quality moun-

tain days' (ML assessment requires a minimum of 40). And aside from the time he devoted to his troop, Finlay had taken time off work to attend a ML training course. The judge observed that a national qualification was not central to this case but it did provide a very useful reference point. It was clearly recognised that Training was not Assessment and that Finlay, like any other candidate may or may not have absorbed the content of this course. This case provides a valuable case study for use on Training Board courses.

ACT to conserve mountain freedom

The BMC and the Mountaineering Councils of Scotland and Ireland are launching a new Access and Conservation Trust - ACT. The purpose of ACT is to provide a focus for sustainable access to cliffs, mountains and open countryside in order to: support rural access and conservation projects that protect access and promote sustainability; educate and raise awareness and understanding of nature conservation and environmental good practice; research the benefits and impacts of mountain recreation and tourism, and train and sup-



port access volunteers. ACT will be officially launched at the BMC and Entre-Prises Festival of Climbing by the Rt Hon Alun Michael MP Minister of State (Rural Affairs) - find out more about this, and the ACT Art & Photographic competition on page 16.

Wall News

What's white outside and rocky inside, has 300 routes, 10,000 holds, 1,800 square metres of climb and lives underneath one of the busiest road junctions in London? The answer is the dramatically revamped Westway Sports Centre. The centre is beneath the A40 Westway roundabout and construction of the walls is by Entre-Prises UK, with a mix of free-form and panel build, Westway is the biggest British project Entre-Prises have worked on. The climbing centre is housed within a unique steel-framed fab-



Part of the new Westway wall

ric shell, roofed quite literally by the Westway flyover itself – and anyone driving around the roundabout will be able to see the centre and the outdoor climbs on Westway's original walls which have been moved alongside the new indoor centre.

Student Seminar

The annual BMC Student Seminar has just taken place at Plas y Brenin, and was attended by representatives of nearly 50 University Clubs. The weekend event again proved to be a great success, being a mixture of personal skills enhancement, and looking after other members of the club. With increasing numbers of clubs coming under pressure from their Student Unions, this event becomes more valuable each year. All

those attending came away with increased personal skills, and a good base of knowledge to help defend themselves against any restrictive policies. Many thanks to Plas y Brenin, Cotswold Essential Outdoor, and all the volunteers, without whom this event wouldn't be possible. If you have any questions regarding Student Clubs, do get in touch with the Training Officer Anne Arran at the BMC office.



Newstones: The scene of some recent rock vandalism. Credit: MacNae.

Walking areas closed

For many the Foot and Mouth crisis that brought outdoor recreation to its knees earlier in the year may thankfully seem like a distant nightmare. Some of you however must live in or regularly visit those areas which are still seeing continued outbreaks, where the talk is of no access until sometime in 2002! Yes its true, the Brecon Beacons, parts of Cumbria and North Yorkshire are still seeing continued and systematic FMD cases. Walking areas that had re-opened once have now re-closed. Recent re-closures include footpaths up Whernside and access to Penyghent from Horton in Ribblesdale. Information on footpath closures in North Yorkshire can be found on www.northyorks.gov.uk. For information on the Brecon Beacons try www.breconbeacons.org and for Cumbria www.lake-district.gov.uk. The BMC is still working to encourage responsible access openings in these areas.

Devastating damage

Some of you may have read OTE's Letter of the Month for October. For those that didn't the letter highlights the selfish action of an individual or individuals (yes, climbers) at Woodhouse Scar in Halifax. OK so this may not be a wild big mountain experience crag environment, but the fact that it's a piece of green on the edge of an urban setting makes it all the more important to local residents and climbers. The oak woodland beneath

the crag took a long time to grow and is enjoyed by many. The fact that branches have been twisted and snapped and that a chain-saw has been taken to others is quite astounding and the mess has been left for all to enjoy - or more likely draw their own conclusion from. The local council are proactive and encourage recreational use of the site. They are open to ideas, and after a 'delicate' site visit are willing to spend £3,500 clearing up the mess and properly removing some other trees that will create better conditions for climbing. Please do not jeopardise this good relationship, the council are getting bored with climbing vandals and they are not the only ones.

Climbing sites threatened

Access to Craig-y-Longridge is currently under threat due to a change in ownership and planned development of the site. The BMC is corresponding with the land agent for the new owner in an attempt to re-establish informal access for climbers to this great North West venue. In the Peak District the owner of Willersley Crag is attempting to ban climbing. The situation appears to have arisen over some mis-information and confusion. Local BMC access reps and the Peak Area Chair are busy trying to regain access to this popular crag.

Markfield Quarry

A successful opening meeting was held in the Midlands to discuss the potential purchase of Markfield Quarry by the local council for use as a conservation and recreation site. The meeting was chaired by Colin Knowles and attended by more than 30 people including representatives from the local council. The open meeting set up a Markfield Quarry Coordination Group to negotiate and develop an agreement with the council with regard to climbing access at Markfield. The group will report its progress to the Midlands Area committee.

Sculpting in Staffordshire

No unfortunately this is not about a new art workshop, but what most climbers would call desecration of the environment we love and in particular our climbing raw material rock. Those of you who have recently spent a pleasant evening at Ramshaw or Newstones may have noticed the suspicious bright orange patches which mark holds, grooves and ledges that weren't there last time you visited. Holds you could previously only get a finger on are now jugs, unprotected routes suddenly have gear placements - what is going on? The orange patches are scars where the surface of the grit has been removed by harsh wire brushing, to the extent that holds have been sculpted

in the rock leaving the current surface so fragile that grit comes off in your hand. As Dave Bishop (Staff's area access rep) writes in 'Visionaries or vandals?':

'there are 'climbers' out there who are members of the Wire-brush and Chisel Branch of the Outdoor Climbing Wall Constructors Guild'.

Unfortunately it would appear that Dave's words are true. Dave will open the debate fully in the next issue of Summit where his article 'Visionaries or vandals?' will feature, but in the meantime if you want to write in with your views, or more importantly if you see someone with a wire brush near your favourite problem....it may be time to remind them of some of the ethics behind our sport.

CRoW Act - Mapping

The first Draft Maps of open country are due to be published on 16 November. The maps will cover the South East of England and an area covering the Peak District and parts of Staffordshire, Lancashire, Yorkshire and Cheshire. The Countryside Agency is staging a series of 'road show' events in each region (13 in the South East and 16 in the Northern area) to explain the mapping process and to allow the public to comment of the Draft Maps - dates and venues will be shown on www.thebmc.co.uk. Draft maps will also be available for viewing in local authority offices, the BMC office and on www.countryside.gov.uk/access/mapping. The BMC reminds all climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers that the CRoW Act does not give a blanket right to roam over all areas of mountain, moor, heath and down land in England and Wales. Whilst the majority of areas of interest to mountaineers have existing access there are still pockets of mountain and moorland (in mid-Wales and northern England, for example) which do not have 'formal' access arrangements and where the new 'right' under the CRoW Act will only come into force when the land has been mapped and the Act fully implemented.

Stanage Forum

The main issues of contention for climbers have been parking and a potential ban on bouldering in the Cowperstone area. A site visit has now been arranged with English Nature to discuss the bouldering issue, and a draft management plan has been sent to the National Park Authority committee for comment. Their comments will be taken into consideration at the final forum in the new year - watch this space.

For the latest access info on more than 600 crags in England and Wales - check out the Regional Access Database (RAD) on www.thebmc.co.uk

ALL TOOLED UP

From alpenstock to extreme ice, Stu Ingram takes a tour through the history of ice tools.

How many times have you watched a farmer striding across the hills calling his dogs herding the sheep, measuring out the paces with his crook, or leaning on it whilst chatting to a companion or taking in the view? OK, not that many in these days of quad bike shepherding and intensive farming, but you've seen the image a thousand times. And it has more to do with ice tools than you might think.

The Early Days

Many people will have heard of the *alpenstock*, a long wooden pole of around six feet fitted with a spike at the end, utilised by Alpine herdsmen for balance on the rough ground of the high pastures. What you may not know is that there was a commonly used British equivalent – the fell pole – and that the great WP Haskett-Smith's groundbreaking ascent of Napes Needle (considered by many as the first “proper” rock climb in Britain) was nearly prevented by an epic tussle with his when it became firmly lodged in a crack! So, we mountaineers have the farming community to thank for much more than just access to some of their land – we borrowed from them a tool which formed the origins of one of the most important items of equipment at our disposal, one without which countless landmark climbs would have been impossible – the ice tool.

Having made use of the shepherds' alpenstock for “third-leg” stability on their early ascents of glaciers and snowfields, Alpine mountaineering pioneers now found that they needed something more from this adopted piece of equipment as they began to venture onto more technically demanding terrain. In the second half of the 19th century, somebody had the bright idea of sticking a sharpened blade (the *pick*) on the top of the alpenstock, opposed by a broader, flattened blade (the *adze*) on the other side – and thus invented the first true “ice-axe”. These modifications allowed the climber to use the pick dagger-like to give purchase on steep sections, and the adze could chop steps in ice for the feet. A leap in climbing standards resulted, and this development was without doubt the most important in the history of ice tools as the basic design remains unchanged to this day!



Working it out

Throughout this time mountaineering was rapidly gaining popularity, with pioneers like Whymper, Mummery and Lily Bristow making daring ascents of technically difficult peaks like the Matterhorn, Aig. Du Grepon and the Petit Dru. They rapidly realised that their axes (which were often still four or five feet in length) were impossibly unwieldy on very steep ice or constricted ground such as chimneys and fissures, and the next step forward was taken when climbers began carrying two tools - one standard long axe and one shortened to around two feet – to cope with the more difficult climbing they were now capable of. In this way, what we now think of as two different categories of ice tool were born – the “walking” or mountaineering axe (long-shafted to facilitate use for balance and chopping of steps) and the “technical” or climbing axe (short-shafted to allow swinging over the head and use in confined spaces).

Throughout the first half of the 20th Century, this system of shortened axes was embraced as the accepted practice for mountaineering and winter climbing, and a number of impressive and difficult climbs were made in the Alps and greater ranges. Despite this, and a spate of activity by a small hard core of Scottish climbers from the 1930's onwards, there were no major technical or design advances until after the Second World War.

The first true “technical” tools

Along with Yvon Choinard of the US, Scotland's own Hamish MacInnes is most credited for producing the first technical ice tool designed purely for steep climbing with the innovative drooped pick and short (~45cm) shaft of his famous “Terrordactyl”. Until the 1970's, axe picks had been straight or curved with a radius the same as the arc that the head of the axe made when swung at arms length (an *alpine* pick - as in a modern walking axe). Picks of this style could only be used to chop holds for the hands and feet, which were then climbed in a long, laborious and horribly cold process! The new drooped picks allowed the climber to place the tool securely anywhere in the ice and pull directly down on it - thus saving energy and time and making steeper, harder and longer climbs possible. An additional benefit was that the axes now penetrated and could be removed from the ice much more easily than the older designs when used in this overhead fashion.

This breakthrough revolutionised the style of winter climbing then being practised in Scotland and around the world, and also brought about the birth of modern mixed climbing - the drooped pick was much better suited to techniques such as hooking and torquing on rock. This is where the retaining leash often employed on classic axes as a means of not losing the tool if it was dropped really came into it's own. The leash now formed a major part of the system of attachment of the tool to the climbers' hand, providing significant support and allowing a much more relaxed “squeeze” grip on the shaft of the axe than would otherwise have been possible.

As a result of the significant technological advances in made during and after World War Two, climbers now had significantly better materials available from which to fashion their tools. This contributed further to the rise in climbing standards of the era by increasing the longevity of equipment, and reducing the number of breakages in use. Wooden axe shafts of hickory or ash were giving way to hollow steel alloy (or aluminium) shafts, which were much lighter and stronger, whilst the head units were now manufactured from a suitable steel alloy instead of heavy wrought iron!

The advent of modular technical tools in the late 70's with interchangeable components did not make any real impact on the way ice tools looked or were used, but it did give a huge increase in versatility. Climbers could now discard and replace a broken pick rather than a whole tool, fit alpine



Mallory (left) and Norton climbed without oxygen, and with basic axes to just below 8230m on 21st May 1922. Credit: RGS / T. Howard Somerville.

picks to technical tools (meaning it was not necessary to buy separate walking and climbing axes) and carry out field maintenance on their equipment. Manufacturers embraced this new technology with a brace of specific products - alpine, drooped, banana or tubular picks, hollow or scooped adzes, over-wide or delicately shaped hammerheads – giving climbers numerous options to tailor their tools according to their specific end use.

Latest developments

Nowadays, there are a vast variety of designs on offer in a wide range of materials to suit many different purposes. Development of tools used for walking and scrambling has been largely in the field of materials – they are stronger and lighter than ever whilst retaining the basic “classic” shape that would

ICE TOOLS: THE CUTTING EDGE

- **Curved, cranked or s-shaped shafts make reaching around corners or ice pillars easier, give greater clearance for the climbers knuckles (ouch!!) and allow a more efficient swing radius.**
- **Thin, aggressively toothed picks for pure ice to penetrate better and reduce dinner plating of the ice.**
- **Thicker, stubbier, mixed picks and specially shaped hammerheads and adze blades designed to last longer when subjected to the abnormal stresses and loading that hooking and torquing in rock cracks causes.**
- **Computer modelled engineering and weighting of the axe head to provide the optimum swing and penetration, and reduce the energy needed to place the axe.**
- **Cutting edge materials like carbon fibre and Kevlar take strength and weight reduction to new levels.**
- **Quick-release leashes to facilitate speed in placing protection in ice or rock.**



still be recognised by climbers of the 1870's! However, technical tools now exist in many different shapes and forms, and have a myriad of specific features designed for different types of climbing, some of which are listed overleaf.

Ski mountaineers can purchase featherweight axes for ultra-light use, made entirely of lightweight aluminium and weighing as little as 300 grams. Hill walkers can buy specially adapted picks to fit on walking poles for emergency use. And in one of the most recent developments, competitors in recent ice climbing competitions have disposed of the leashes traditionally used on climbing tools, replacing them with radical shaft-grips and thumb bars to allow efficient use by the climber.

So, we are currently experiencing another jump in ice/mixed climbing standards as a direct result of the latest development of the equipment used. Standards are being pushed every season and with ever-accelerating advances in materials technology and the imagination of equipment designers and climbers, the future is certainly looking bright, white, and spiky.

Who knows where things will go next?

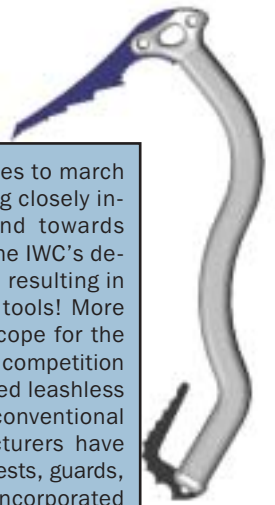
LEASHLESS TOOLS

The development of extreme ice tools continues to march on with a large number of manufacturers being closely involved with competition climbing. The trend towards leashless climbing arrived hand in hand with the IWC's decision to ban leashes from their competitions, resulting in the appearance of some very radical looking tools! More importantly a few leading climbers saw the scope for the application of this style of climbing outside the competition arena, given that the grip/handle of the modified leashless axes offered considerably more support than conventional axes. Following on from this some manufacturers have looked very closely at the possibilities of finger rests, guards, and handle shapes and profiles which can be incorporated into more conventional shaped ice tools.

At the moment, leashless climbing is generally confined to the domain of competition climbing and a few highly competent individuals, with manufacturers producing a very few cutting edge tools for sponsored climbers. However, it would seem unlikely that it will remain so when the advantages it presents to the modern mixed climber are examined. The obvious benefit is that the tools can be freely and quickly swapped between hands, giving much increased versatility in the way in which they can be used (just don't drop them, that's all!). In fact many of the moves on some modern mixed testpieces actually require this versatility and would be impossible with regular leashed axes!

- With thanks to Chris @ DMM.

(TOP RIGHT) - The Emmitator, prototype extreme leashless tool from DMM. Credit: DMM



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GOING IN

The work of the John Muir Trust

In the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, Britain possesses a wild land resource unsurpassed in Europe. Yet even in this apparently unspoilt and natural landscape, the impact of a long human occupation can be seen, most notably in the loss of most of the great Caledonian Pines - Britain's share of the northern forests that once encircled the globe. The process of degradation has accelerated in recent times, with overgrazing and blanket forestry, tracks bulldozed onto fragile mountain summits, and hydro schemes drowning beautiful glens. Positive action was called for in the face of this erosion and destruction, and one response has been the formation of a Trust representing the values that John Muir pioneered worldwide.

John Muir was a young man when he first visited Yosemite Valley in 1886, and spent his first summer there working as a shepherd, before running a sawmill near the base of Yosemite Falls. But all the time he was working, he was studying nature, the great truths that he said were written in "magnificent capitals" - the awesome stones of the Sierra Nevada. He became a guide for some of the most famous of Yosemite's visitors, including one of his idols, Ralph Waldo Emerson. Emerson tried to entice Muir away from Yosemite,

telling him the world was waiting to hear him teach the lessons he had learned, but he stayed in his mountains, working, studying and learning. His political and literary awakenings began after meeting Robert Underwood Johnson, editor of *Century*, one of the most prominent magazines in the country a hundred years ago. Muir wrote two long articles on Yosemite, advocating a National Park to surround what was then the state-run Yosemite Valley. Johnson published the articles and lobbied energetically. Congress complied with this emotional and literary onslaught, creating the first Yosemite National Park. Another fruit of this budding friendship was the creation of the Sierra Club in 1892, with Muir as President, apostle, guide, and inspiration. The purpose of the Club was to preserve and make accessible the Sierra Nevada. Since then the Sierra Club has been politically involved in environmental issues and lobbyists for the preservation of all American wilderness including native forests, fragile geological and bio-diverse habitats, from the highest mountains to seashores, swamps, tundra and grasslands.

Muir's legacy is as a visionary, an inspirational founding father of conservation. Today the John Muir Trust is committed to practical action to conserve Britain's remaining wild places; for their own sake, for the wildlife that depends on them, for the benefit of the local communities, and for the enjoyment of future generations. The Trust has an integral approach to management, aiming to take account all aspects of the landscape - ecological, historical, cultural and social, and to cooperate with the many groups and individuals who have an interest in wild land. By concentrating on sufficiently large areas, whole hill ranges or watersheds can be retained or restored to their natural processes, and can provide the spiritual qualities which humans value so highly; freedom, tranquility and solitude.





“I only went out for a walk, and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found was really going in” - John Muir, Journal 1913

The Trust is international in its outlook, having close links with the Sierra Club, but its work lies in practical action within the United Kingdom. The first area in which the Trust became involved was the remote peninsula of Knoydart in the west highlands of Scotland, buying 3000 acres from the sea to the top of Ladhar Bheinn in 1987. Here it carried out a variety of environmental work, including regeneration of the pine and oak woods. It is also a partner in the Knoydart Foundation, which recently succeeded in buying a 17,000 acre core of the peninsula including the village area and its mountain hinterland.

The Trust also owns the greater part of the magnificently rugged Cuillin range on Skye. The need to conserve sustainable communities alongside wild places is being increasingly recognised worldwide, and the John Muir Trust has always been an enthusiastic supporter of this view. The Trust manages its properties on Skye through local management committees for each crofting community, much like the Trust's other crofting property, the spectacular coastal estate of Sandwood in NW Sutherland.

Most recently, the Trust has bought two of Scotland's most popular areas, Schiehallion, and the Ben Nevis estate. Schiehallion due to its isolation and symmetrical shape was the site of 1774 experiment that first measured the mass of the Earth, while The Ben Nevis estate includes three 4000 foot peaks and the 'Himalayan' gorge of Glen Nevis. Their popularity has caused erosion, but fortunately active and involved Trust members willingly participate in practical conservation work. With only a small professional staff, the Trust is crucially dependent on the enthusiasm and expertise of its 10,000 members. Volunteers carry out most of the vital work including footpath repair, tree planting, seed collection, and ecological or archeological surveys.

But perhaps the greatest tribute ever given to John Muir took place in a private conversation between two great contemporary mountaineers. Galen Rowell once asked Reinhold Messner why the greatest mountains and valleys of the Alps are so highly developed, why they have hotels,



funicular railways, and veritable cities washing up against sites that, in America, are maintained relatively unencumbered by development. Messner explained the difference in three words. He said, "You had Muir."

If you are interested in learning more about the John Muir Trust about its membership, activities or award schemes, call 0131-554-0114 or visit www.jmt.org

(CLOCKWISE) Just some of the great images in this year's John Muir Trust Yearbook. **Strathspey forest** - the most extensive surviving Caledonian Forest in Scotland: Mark Hamblin. **The Grey Wolf** - *canis lupus*: John Beatty. **Ben Nevis summit** - midwinter sunset: John Beatty. **The rockrose** - *Helianthemum chamaecistus* - whose flowers fully open only in bright sunlight, Slugg Island, British Columbia: John Beatty. **Mopane trees at dawn** - Okavango Delata of Botswana: John Beatty. **Pasque flower** - *Pulsatilla vulgaris* grows only occasionally in Britain: Mark Hamblin.



The Yearbook

The seventh edition of the John Muir Trust's Wild Nature Yearbook is now available featuring contributions from many of Britain's highly acclaimed nature and landscape photographers. To order a copy of the new John Muir Trust Wild Nature Yearbook 2002 write to: The John Muir Trust, 41, Commercial Street, Edinburgh EH6 6JD enclosing a cheque for £11.95 plus £1.50 postage.

ACT to conserve mountain freedom



The BMC and the Mountaineering Councils of Scotland and Ireland are launching a new Access and Conservation Trust – ACT.

The purpose of ACT is to provide a focus for sustainable access to cliffs, mountains and open countryside in order to:

Support rural access and conservation projects that protect access and promote sustainability. Educate and raise awareness and understanding of conservation and responsible conduct issues. Research the benefits and impacts of mountain recreation and tourism. Train and support access volunteers.

ACT is based on experience from the successful Access Fund of the BMC. However, ACT will be on a larger scale, cover a broader geographical area and have charitable status - enabling it to receive tax efficient donations. The broader geographical coverage will allow money to be channelled into the areas that are in most need of support, be they in England, Wales, Scotland or Ireland. With greater support and sponsorship ACT will be able to fund larger projects increasing its effectiveness to ensure sustainable use and conservation of our outdoor environment.

ACT will be officially launched to the public at the Entreprises and BMC Festival of Climbing. The launch of ACT will

focus on a celebration of the natural environment and the importance of our freedom to enjoy it. During the Festival of Climbing visitors will be invited to draw and write on the ACT freedom mural, recording their vision of the natural environment and its importance to personal freedom. The best contributions to the mural will be announced on the last day of the festival and will form, along with entries to a concurrently running art and photography exhibition, the basis of a book 'Freedom Tomorrow'. 'Freedom Tomorrow' will be published in the new year, bringing together the launch of ACT with the United Nations International Year of the Mountains 2002; to highlight the importance of sustainable use of our natural environment for 'Freedom Tomorrow'.

Contributions to the ACT art and photography competition will also be displayed at the Festival of Climbing alongside exhibitions from famous landscape, mountain and climbing artists and photographers including Shelly Hocknell and John Beatty. See below for details.

Finally, help support ACT by bringing along your old European currency to the Festival of Climbing. With the Euro becoming legal tender in many European countries this January, this is a good opportunity to give your old currency to help ensure sustainable access to the countryside for the future.

THE ACT ART & PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Celebrate the launch of ACT - Take part in the Access and Conservation Trust Art and Photography Competition and give yourself the opportunity to win gear and cash prizes and have your work published in the new book 'Freedom Tomorrow'.

The theme for the book 'Freedom Tomorrow' is based on the importance of good practice and sustainable use of the environment to protect our freedom to enjoy the outdoors. Send in a photograph or piece of art that represents your vision and enjoyment of the natural environment in England, Wales, Scotland or Ireland and why it is worth conserving for tomorrow. The competition has the following 4 categories: Photographic, Art, Junior photographic (16 or younger) and Junior art (16 or younger).

Send your entries marked with your name and post code to ACT Art and Photography Competition at the BMC. The closing date for entries is 10 February 2002.

Rules of Entry

Entry is open to all members of the BMC the MCofS and the MCI. Only one entry to each category of the competition per member. An entry to a category comprises of one photograph or piece of art, art can be up to A2 in size, photographs can be slides, prints, or digital images, but digital images must be entered on CD and accompanied by a print out. Entries must be posted to The BMC, Art and Photography Competition, 177-179 Burton Road, Manchester, M20 2BB - no email entries accepted. Only entries with a stamp addressed envelope will be returned. All entries (including slides) must be marked with your name and postcode. The BMC and ACT reserve the right to use entries in publications and on the www. Entrants to the junior competition must be 16 or under on the last day of entry. Every care will be taken with entries, but the BMC and ACT cannot accept liability for any loss or damage to entries. Any entries received after the closing date will not be accepted. The prizes are being finalised and will be announced as soon as possible. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

(RIGHT) Think you can do better - send it in! - Torres del Paine, Credit: John Beatty





AS THE CROW FLIES

As the CRoW Act takes shape and proposals for statutory access exclusions and restrictions on cliffs and mountains begin to emerge, Dave Turnbull assesses the benefits offered by the existing system of seasonal access restrictions and examines the positive contribution made by climbers and mountaineers to nature conservation projects over the years.

The well-being of the cliff and mountain environment and the wildlife it supports has always been a fundamental concern of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers and the BMC has long recognised the need to balance demands for access with the protection of sensitive habitats and endangered species. Climbers have a long history of supporting nature conservation work (see below) and since the early 1970s, the BMC has worked in partnership with conservation bodies and countryside managers all over England and Wales to agreed literally 100s of seasonal access restrictions to protect important species of cliff nesting birds; several longer-term restrictions to protect rare or endangered cliff flora have also been agreed. The resulting 'system' of site-specific restrictions has proved extremely successful and has been widely quoted as an example of good practice in managing access for a specialist activity. At a meeting of ornitholo-

gists arranged by the BMC in 1998, for example, CCW, English Nature, RSPB and other organisations present concluded that 'the current restrictions system should be maintained ...and...that there is no need for legislation...'.
The success of the existing system owes itself to two important factors:

- A sense of trust, understanding and goodwill between climbers and conservation managers: i.e. climbers accept restrictions which are agreed by mutual consent whilst conservation managers agree to review restrictions on an ongoing basis.

- The co-operation of climbing guidebook editors, outdoor shops, climbing walls, web editors and the BMC in publicising information about agreed seasonal access arrangements.

The CRoW Act presents new challenges for those responsible for deciding how best to manage access in areas of importance for wild birds. Whilst

much scientific work remains to be done, a recent document produced by Government conservation advisors suggests that statutory restrictions/exclusions will be applied in areas of mountain, moorland and cliffs used by chough, peregrine and important ground nesting birds. This would include year round restrictions for chough and up to seven month long restrictions for peregrine (current arrangements in the Lake District apply for only four months). The BMC firmly believes that the existing system offers the most effective and efficient means of protecting wild birds from recreational disturbance and is following the matter up with Government conservation advisors.

Ultimately the question has to be asked - if the current system works well and is widely respected - why replace it with a more restrictive, less flexible alternative?

CLIMBERS AND MOUNTAINEERS: WORKING FOR WILDLIFE

Peregrine ringing, North West England

Since the early 1990s climbers have assisted the RSPB's regional peregrine co-ordinator with ringing young peregrine at sites with difficult access in Yorkshire and Lancashire. Data built up over the years has been important in monitoring the recovery and distribution of the peregrine population in the North West.

Chough ringing, South Pembrokeshire

Climbers have worked with CCW and the PCNPA on an annual basis since the early 1990s gathering information on the dispersal behaviour of juvenile chough in Pembrokeshire. Climbers have used rope access skills to retrieve young chicks from nest sites in overhanging cliffs for colour ringing by CCW ornithologists.

Raven rescues, Clwyd

In Clwyd, BMC representatives have assisted the RSPB with bird rescue work. On two occasions in recent years climbers abseiled down quarry faces to release raven young entangled in bailer string. Both birds flew the nest site immediately and would almost certainly have perished without assistance.

Bald Ibis conservation project, Morocco

In 1993, six British climbers visited the Souss Massa National Park, Morocco as part of a conservation project initiated by Birdlife International and the RSPB. The climbers used rope access skills to access steep sea cliffs and create new nest sites for an endangered colony of bald ibis. Nesting ledges were raked out of soft rock bands and monitored in subsequent seasons. In 2000 British climbers followed up this work by fitting model birds onto other potential nesting ledges to encourage more birds to nest.

Botanical surveys and habitat restoration.

Some recent partnership projects between climbers and conservationists include: rhododendron clearance, Lundy 1998 – BMC funded four climbers to assist a WWF project to improve the habitat of the Lundy Cabbage; BMC supported volunteer climbers in carrying out a botanical survey of cliffs at Vellan Head, Lizard peninsula for the National Trust; volunteer climbers assisted English Nature in 1997 by restocking denuded and species poor ledges in Avon Gorge with transplants from strong adjacent populations.



FEATURES:
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Rheged – the Village in the Hill, Near Penrith, Cumbria (Signposted from Junction 40 M6)



South African Offer!

The Mountain Club of South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal Section has invited keen and dedicated, or just plain adventurous British rock climbers and hikers/trekkers to visit the Drakensberg/Ukuhlamba mountains and the varied crags of KwaZulu-Natal province, the "Kingdom of the Zulus". These will be official BMC/ KZN MCSA climbing and trekking meets, with the objective of fostering interest in climbing and forging new friendships, and the KZN section are keen to point out that this is not meant to be an elite visit but is aimed at 'average' climbers who may have missed out on previous opportunities.

Rock Climbing Meet (3-11 May 2002): The KwaZulu-Natal province, situated on the north-eastern seaboard of South Africa, has an abundance of sun kissed rock, and routes ranging from single to three pitch, with all grades up to UK 6b. The county's highest range of mountains, the Drakensberg will also be visited.

Trekking (6-14 September 2002): The trekking meet will take place in the northern Drakensberg, comprising of a 7 day trek, starting in the remote Mweni valley, then climbing up via a pass to the Lesotho/South Africa border. The trek will then travel, along the spectacular escarpment that divides the two countries before dropping down into

the Ndedema Gorge. This is a great opportunity to sample some South African hospitality, if you are interested please write to 'South Africa 2002' at the BMC office address, enclosing an activity CV and personal profile.

2002 International Meet 5-11th May, Plas y Brenin

Next year's BMC International Meet will be at Plas y Brenin in sunny North Wales. This year's theme is 'Breaking Barriers', part of the BMC's International Year of the Mountains programme. Once again the BMC is on the look out for meet hosts, and as the guests tend to be of all abilities you don't have to be climbing super hard to come along on this great week. What we are really looking for is a good knowledge of North Wales climbing and the willingness to make our guests feel welcome. After a good turn out on the last meet the BMC is particularly keen to see applications from female hosts.

With the 'Breaking Barriers' theme, we will also be discussing barriers facing climbers with disabilities, and it would be great to see some disabled climbers there as hosts. If you would like to host at the event please write, with a short description of yourself and your climbing background, to '2002 International Meet' at the BMC office.

MLTB Workshops

Details and booking forms can be obtained from the MLTB office (01690 720314) or by visiting www.mltb.org.

ML Holder Seminars (2 day)

Sat/Sun 24/25th November, PyB

Sat/Sun 6/7th April, PyB

SPA Holder Seminars

Sat 18th May, Thornbridge

Assessor Training Workshops

Sat/Sun 17/18th November, PyB

Thurs/Fri 16/17th May, PyB

Teaching & Coaching in the Mountains

Sat/Sun 3/4th November, PyB

Sat/Sun 16/17th March, PyB

Disability Awareness Workshops

Mon 25th March, Undercover Rock

Calling Voluntary Leaders!

The Voluntary Leader Conference is taking place at the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham, on the 7th December, alongside the Festival of Climbing. The conference is aimed at senior post holders, programme and facility managers and all volunteer leaders. This essential event will consider safety, the needs of young participants, volunteer support and training, and liability, featuring keynote speakers and workshops. Contact the BMC for a booking form now - Tel: 0161 445 4747, or visit www.thebmc.co.uk.

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Day 2, pitch 1 on Silence of the Seracs, Tupilak. Credit: Al Powell



Kantega South Ridge. Credit: Mick Fowler



Mick Fowler looking weathered on Kantega. Credit: Fowler Coll.



EXPEDITIONS 2001



It's been another eventful year for world mountaineering. Whilst those of us staying in Britain over the summer have grappled with FMD restrictions and the usual weather, the Brits abroad are as ever at the forefront of developments and exploration.

Many of this year's supported expeditions have now returned, and reports on their exploits are starting to trickle into the BMC office. In 2001 the BMC provided grants to a total of 38 expeditions from an allocated fund of over £45,000, with the MEF providing a further £30,000, thus allowing some unparalleled achievements and amazing adventures to take place:

Alaskan Fake Glacier 2001

First ascents of five peaks up to 1850m around Fake Glacier, in the Ruth Glacier region of Alaska. With additional first descents by plastic sledge, it could be said that the expedition fulfilled its exploratory role!

Anglo New Zealand Raksha Urai 2001

Currently away enjoying themselves.

Apex Bolivia 2001

A large medical expedition conducted useful research into the medical effects of altitude in Bolivia. Results are available for interested parties.

Arganglas 2001

Sir Chris Bonington's most recent foray achieved useful exploration plus the first ascent of Argan Eiger & two other peaks.

British 'Baroness'

Airlie Anderson and Lucy Creamer made the first ascent of this imposing and remote pillar by *Venus Envy* (E4/5 6a, 600m). Matt Dickinson, Tom Briggs, Niall Grimes and Ian Hay were also in action putting up high standard mixed aid and free new routes. Full topo available from BMC office.

British Broken Tooth

Geoff Hornby & Dave Wallis were prevented from attempting the first ascent of the South East face of the Broken Tooth by heavy snow on the Coffee Glacier, meaning that their air taxi could not land! Rapid re-assessment resulted in strong attempts on alternative routes but that pesky snow stopped these too.

British Chakula

No information received.

British Darwin Range 2001

Simon Yates and Andy Parkin combined some wild sailing with the first ascent of an unnamed peak off the Bové Glacier in Tierra del Fuego - "*Monte Ada*" NE face. Check out the lecture at the Entre-Prises and BMC Festival of Climbing in Dec.

British Female Bolivia Cordillera Real

An attempt at a new route on the North ridge of Chaerco stopped at 5630m by, you guessed it, bad weather. But that didn't prevent this all female team cranking off a number of quality alpine and rock lines in the area.

British Kantega South Ridge

"It snowed every day!" There were big avalanches and seracs as well, and Mick Fowler and Paul Ramsden did well

to get 5600m up Mera Norr in the Khumbu region of Nepal.

British Kun Lun Shan 2001

Julian-Freeman Attwood was due back on the 18th October.

British Nampula Towers (Mozambique)

Dave Turnbull and the hot youth team of Bransby, Houlding and Robins got up to all sorts of fun in Mozambique, mainly consisting of bushwhacking, "extreme" travelling and oh yes, a bit of climbing too. Look out for what is sure to be a stunning lecture at the Entre-Prises and BMC Festival of Climbing.

British Pik Dankova

Despite heavy snow and regular storms adding to the serious nature of peaks in the Western Kokshaal-Too of Kyrgyzstan, Paul Knott & Graham Holden managed to achieve the first British ascent of Pik Molodezhnyi ('Youth Peak' 5338m) by its NE Ridge.

British Solu Expedition 2001

Dave Wilkinsom's team was unsuccessful on its main objectives, but made the first British ascent of Pik Molodezhnyi (5338m).

British Western Kokshaal Too

David Gerrard's multi-national team explored two previously unvisited mountain ranges, achieving several first ascents.

Cathedral Mountains 2001

Brian Davison, Lindsay Griffin, Geoff Hornby and Dave Wallis completed a mammoth traverse of more than ten virgin peaks in this wild region of Alaska, despite the best efforts of Dave's dodgy knee to stop them.

Cochamó Big Wall & Alpine

Lucy Regan's team unfortunately had to abandon the big wall route due to time, weather and manky A3+ rock, but they did complete a traverse of the Mount Trinidad horseshoe (AD+) including some unclimbed peaks.

Cymru Bolivia Apolobamba 2001

First British ascents in the Pupuya Masif, Cordillera Apolobamba were unfortunately impossible due to political unrest in the region – but the team managed some useful GPS mapping in the Cordillera Real.

Eastern Buttress of Mount Hunter 2001

The successful first ascent of one of the buttresses on the East side of this renowned mountain - *The Prey* (900m+ Alaskan 5, Scottish V) – went to Mal Bass and Paul Figg.

Greenland 2001 – Tilman in a new Millennium (year 2)

The Rev. Bob Shepton continued his seabound odyssey and exploration whilst the rest of us looked on jealously.

Greenland Winter

Al Powell and team made the first ascent of the North face of Tupilak in the Schweizerland mountains. *Silence of the Seracs* (900m, ED2) went in 26 hours and involved technical mixed, rock and aid sections. This is the first winter expedition to climb at this high standard in Greenland. They also made the first ascent of the S Pillar of Rodebjerg via a 1100m TD line and did a load of skiing down amazing couloirs.

Lakeland Quimsa Cruz 2001

Ascents of several possibly unclimbed peaks to around 5300m and shorter rock routes (up to E2) in the Quimsa Cruz area, as well as some ironing out of the maps of the area by this small Cumbrian team led by Paul Platt.

Lanchester Greenland 2001

Exploration of the unvisited Lindbergh Mountains (c3000m), resulted in 25 (count 'em) first ascents and some exploratory skiing.

Lobuche/Ama Dablam 2001

Jules Cartwright and team have set their sights high and gnarly in Nepal and will be returning in December.

Llanberis 2001 Patagonia

This alpine-style attempt on Cerro Torre is not actually going till December.

North Wales Torres del Paine 2001

Twid Turner and Louise Thomas fought 350 metres up the Central Tower in typical Patagonian weather before giving up, but sneaked a new route on the Mascara. "No regret, only relief" said Louise on leaving the park in one piece.

British Greater Trango 2001

Avalanching approach gullies and hard climbing on the Norwegian Pillar of Great Trango limited Twid, Louise & Co to 5700m over 21 days on the wall. A seven day storm (sat out in portaledge) put paid to any summit attempt. They ain't having much luck with the weather this year.

Quitaraju SW Face 2001

The micro-expedition of Nick Bullock and Al Powell found a harder than expected new line (up to Scottish VII) up the Central Buttress on the S face of the beautiful Quitaraju, Cordillera Blanca, Peru.

Sail Greenland 2001

Andy White and his team sailed to Greenland and explored Sangmissoq Island, climbing 15 peaks, probably all first ascents

Scottish Cordillera Blanca 2001

Jason Currie and Guy Robertson seem to be one of the few expeditions that actually had good weather whilst making a new 400m route on Santa Cruz Chico (5800m).

Siruanch Glacier 2001

Diverted from their original objective of Tirsuli West by objective danger, Colin Knowles and his team instead made the first ascent of the unclimbed pk6160 to the North, and did some invaluable exploration for those who may follow.

SMoG in Greenland – Slough Mountaineering Group

The team led by Mark Lampard climbed pretty much everything in the Nunatakker area and then some! Many first ascents with a strong exploration aspect for future reference.

South Greenland 2001

Matt Heason and a strong UK rock team climbed 16 new routes up to E5 and 1000m on the granite faces of Prins Christian Sund, South Greenland. Greenland is still the place to be.

Tagne 2001

In mostly good weather, this young team visiting the Lahaul/Spoti region achieved the first ascent of their main objective, Tagne (6111m) via its S Ridge and also climbed a peak referred to as Sagar (6030m) via its E Ridge.



The 'Totally Forakered' Expedition

Ian Parnell and Kenton Cool were lucky enough to participate in the most awesome Alaskan season for years, climbing new routes at the highest level in punishing non-stop raids. These routes are some the hardest ever climbed in the range, and possibly worldwide within this style of climbing: *Kiss me where the sun don't shine* (2600m, ED2, Scottish VII) – *Mini Moonflower*, Hunter (18 hrs), *The Moonflower* – repeat - (1200m, ED3, Scottish VII) – *Moonflower Buttress*, Hunter (3 days), *Extra-Terrestrial Brothers* (2200m ED3, Scottish VII) – *Fathers & Sons Wall*, Hunter (46 hrs).

BMC & MEF FUNDING

The BMC administers UK Sport funding for expedition grants. To meet the criteria for consideration for an award, teams must be attempting first ascents, or first British ascents in remote mountainous environments. The UK Sport excellence fund is an additional pot from which awards are made to those expeditions that are felt to be of global significance, often allowing the expedition to operate at a very high standard, giving the best chance of success.

Applications for 2002 should be made to the Mount Everest Foundation (MEF), which also provides substantial grant opportunities to exploratory expeditions from New Zealand. Contact Bill Ruthven, Gowrie, Cardwell Close, Warton, Preston PR4 1SH or visit www.mef.org.uk for further details and application forms. The closing date for 2002 expeditions is 31 December 2001.

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GIVING BACK

Responsible mountain tourism. An excerpt from the new Mountain Traveller's Handbook by Paul Deegan, published by the BMC.

For all its negative effects, mountain tourism has the potential to bring money to impoverished areas. Used wisely, this cash can improve things like education, medical facilities, housing and water supplies for local people.

In 1960, Sir Edmund Hillary received a petition from the people of the Everest region in Nepal. It read, "Our children have eyes but cannot see, they have ears but cannot hear, can you help us to build a school in our village?" Over 40 years later and Sir Edmund Hillary's Himalayan Trust has built 28 schools, two hospitals and 15 health posts. Young people have been awarded educational scholarships, clean water systems have been installed and forestry work has been undertaken. Support for the region's monasteries has helped to strengthen the religious, cultural and community life of the local population. Together with a committee of Sherpas, Sir Edmund still tours the area every year to direct funding to the most needy projects. Local people are employed to carry out any work that is required.

Whilst trekkers and mountaineers who head into the mountains for the first time often think only about the famous peaks that they will see, it is not unusual for the local people who they meet to leave a stronger imprint in their memories. Like Sir Edmund, many climbers and trekkers feel a compulsion to assist these mountain people, many of whom remain cheerful and indefatigable despite little or no education, sanitation or medical facilities.

The Himalayan Trust is one of the better known mountain charities. It is a shining example of how indigenous populations can improve their situation whilst retaining ancient customs and traditions. Other aid organisations have similar goals in different mountain regions around the world; making a financial donation to such a charity is one way that the visitor returning from the mountains can make a difference. With a little forethought, it may prove possible to make additional positive contributions as the following examples illustrate.

USE LOCALLY-RUN SERVICES

In 1994 a women's co-operative was established in the Greek village of Dadia, which lies within the boundary of the Dadia Forest Reserve in the Rhodope Mountains. The women give illustrated talks, guide tours, provide environmental information, make and

sell handicrafts and cook traditional dishes for visitors. This has generated a much-needed source of supplementary income for their families. It has also helped to change local people's initial hostility towards the forest reserve which was caused by the limitations placed upon logging activities. Many young people in Dadia now feel that they have a future in the area and are electing to stay rather than head for work in the cities.

Increasingly, mountain tourism is being viewed as one way and sometimes the only way to prevent migration from rural areas. If you so wish, every drachma, pound, rupee, peso and dollar that you spend can be used as a vote. You can choose to travel with a local or foreign trekking operator that invests in training for local people to become guides. You can stay in a lodge built and run by local people. You can even drink locally-brewed beer and enjoy local food, rather than eating something that looks and tastes like something you could buy at home. By voting with your wallet, you can do much to improve the lives of people in the regions that you visit.

BUYING HANDICRAFTS

In 1993, a non-governmental organisation called "Handmade in America" was founded by local citizens. Its aim was to explore ways in which the Appalachian region could use its reputation as a home for some of the USA's longest-established craft organisations, to increase sales of artefacts directly to tourists. With guidance from local citizens, Handmade produced a driver's guidebook to the Blue Ridge range of mountains. The guidebook had two aims: to direct people off the highway and towards local craft centres and to steer visitors away from sacred community places in order to help retain the cultural integrity of the region. Over 20,000 copies of the first edition were sold, and average sales have increased by 30% since publication. It is always worth asking where attractive souvenirs come from. Are they produced in the local area? Buying locally-made handicrafts for a fair price directly from the people who made them rather than from someone at the end of a chain that began in a factory in the lowlands or a different country is just one more way to support people who are keeping mountain traditions alive.



Will today's mountain children leave for the cities? Credit: Deegan

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO GO?

Uluru, otherwise known as Ayers Rock, is one of the most famous mountains in the world. Climbing to its summit is for many visitors the highlight of their stay in Australia. Yet Uluru is a sacred mountain to the Anangu people. Because of the many injuries and deaths that occur to climbers who ascend the rock, park wardens have fixed a hand-rail to the summit, even though the route of ascent and the summit are regarded by the Anangu as places where their secret knowledge is discussed or stored. Now a tourist centre has been established to explain to visitors the cultural significance of Uluru. People are requested not to make the ascent. This approach seems to be working; whilst the volume of visitors remains unchanged, the number of recorded ascents is declining.

As an increasing number of people head for the mountain regions of the world, some tourists are beginning to wonder whether they should avoid certain sacred places altogether. For example, pilgrims outnumber tourists in Gangotri, in the Indian Himalaya, by 100-1: if relatively wealthy visitors continue to visit then more infrastructure is likely to be built. This in turn will further erode what remains of these important religious sites.

If you're planning a trek or expedition, get hold of the new Mountain Traveller's Handbook. This full colour, pocket size book spills the beans on every aspect of the perfect trip. From essential equipment tips and medical advice to mountain photography, it's all here. Priced just £13, it's one thing you can't afford to leave behind! Phone 0161 445 4747 to order now, visit www.thebmc.co.uk, or look out for it in all good shops.



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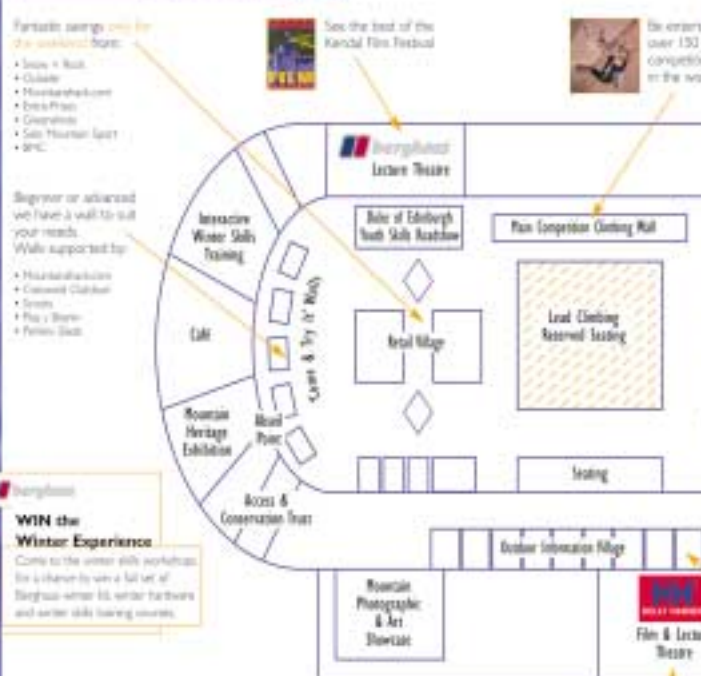
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The biggest and best celebration of climbing, mountaineering and adventure is about to take place. If you want the best of everything, then sit back, and let Graeme Alderson introduce you to the event of the year.



(TOP) Rachmetov will be there - will you? Credit: Avery. (LEFT) Jon Bracey, find out what happened to Jon and Al Powell in the Greenland winter. Credit: Powell (ABOVE) Have a go!(BELOW) Bargain madness!

Your Quick Event Guide



Your Quick Weekend Guide to the competitions

	FRI	SAT	SUN
Men's open 1100	11:00	11:00	11:00
Men's open 1200	12:00	12:00	12:00
Men's open 1300	13:00	13:00	13:00
Men's open 1400	14:00	14:00	14:00
Men's open 1500	15:00	15:00	15:00
International Masters			Route 1, Route 2
World Bouldering Cup	Qualifying	Final	
European Youth Cup		Qualifying	Final



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ANDY KIRKPATRICK :: IAN PARNELL :: DOUG SCOTT :: JERRY GORE ::
AL POWELL :: AIRLIE ANDERSON :: JOHN DUNNE :: MEF SEVEN CONTINENTS

OF CLIMBING

Many years ago the BMC hit upon the idea of having a big climbing, hill walking and mountaineering extravaganza where everyone could come along and meet their mates, buy a bit of kit, watch some lectures and attend some seminars. The BMC decided that the extravaganza should be named after the blue cat in the Magic Roundabout, and the Buxton Festival was born.

Some other bright sparks in the BMC also thought that they needed to get involved with the emerging competition scene and hosted the world's first World Cup, the Leeds Grand Prix in 1989. For a while, all was tickety boo. The

World Cup events moved to the NIA in Birmingham and progressed nicely. But then audiences began to diminish. The Buxton conference finally died a death in 1993 when by coincidence there was also a bouldering competition organised. Coincidence or a taste of the future, who knows?

Realising that the World Cups could not survive purely as a competitive event, missing the camaraderie and drinking that was all part and parcel of the Buxton scene, it was decided in 1997 to try and start combining the two events. The result was Climb'97, a World Cup, some lectures and a little bit of retail therapy. In '99 things started to get ambitious. The UIAA-ICC Entre-Prises World Championships, a broader range of retail therapy and a full lecture and seminar programme, including the likes of Sir Chris Bonnington chairing lectures for the Mt Everest Foundation, Alex Huber, Alan Hinkes and Jerry Gore.

The Competitions

We started planning Climb'01 about a day after Climb'99 had finished, well to be honest after the Christmas holidays but you get the picture. Right, what should we do for the competition bits? The key was doing something where we stood a chance of getting Brits into the finals, right well, we are good at bouldering, hence the birth of the UIAA-ICC Snow + Rock World Bouldering Cup. We've got a couple of boulderers who we know make the grade. There's Claire Murphy who was a fantastic third in the Greek round of the 2000 World Cup and has beaten all of the main players on various occasions. And then there's Malcolm. Malcolm Smith is capable of beating anyone; after all he is the world's strongest man.

So Brits in the final was looking good. But why stop at just one international event, no let's have a leading event as well. Okay we've got some talented juniors with world class potential so let's have a round of the UIAA-ICC European Youth Cup. Since that decision Adam Dewhurst and Jemma Powell have both achieved podium places in other rounds of the EYC, and we've had a few



Enter the public bouldering challenge, and win great prizes.

other junior finalist contenders, so the possibility of British victories is a realistic one. We also thought that the senior 'lead' climbers might feel a bit left out, so hey presto the Snow + Rock International Masters was developed. The Masters is also a brilliant way of guaranteeing Brits in the final. This is due to the invite only system, and competition rules. Everybody in this event has to do both routes and an average is taken to find the qualification rankings. Then everyone qualifies for the final!, not that that would actually have proven a problem as Chris Cubitt has been playing a blinder this year on the circuit, last time finishing equal to a certain Mr Legrand. That Steve McClure bloke is by all accounts fairly strong and handy on the competition scene as well.

So who will actually be climbing in these various events. Well the likes of Malcolm, Claire, Gaz Parry (recent World Champs finalist) and Naomi Guy who will all be representing Blighty in the Bouldering event. And they are all up against the current World Champs Mauro Calibani (ITA) and Myriam Motteau (FRA). The current World Cup Champions Pedro Pons (ESP, remember him from FIBO'94) and Sandrinne Levet (FRA) will also be competing. Other names will include the likes of Elena Choumilova (RUS), Natalia Perlova (UKR), Daniel Andrada (ESP), all names that have competed at the various Foundry International comps over the years. You won't have heard of the youths, I've not heard of many of them but the standard will be incredibly high – the current senior World Champion is someone called Jerome Povureau who is still actually a junior. The Masters event, held on two routes with the aggregate score system determining the winner, has seen invitations sent out to some of the biggest names in the climbing world; Francois Legrand and Steve McClure are looking forward to finding out who's the best.

Come and Have a Go!

The competition elements would not have been possible without the support of Entre-prises, who year after year provide awe-inspiring surfaces. And, once again they have provided all of the climbing surfaces for the whole event. This year you'll even get a chance to try some of them out. Not only are we once more having the 'Come and Try It' walls, where newcomers to the sport can get their first taste of climbing. But the Sunday also sees public competitions on the World Cup boulders. We'll leave up a lot of the



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JOHN BEATTY :: GORDON STAINFORTH :: FREEDOM MURAL :: AND MUCH
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problems from the World Cup but also add stacks more including special junior problems so don't forget your boots and chalk bag (please note that these boulders will be steep so problems will be starting at about Eng. 5a). Also what would the art of bouldering be without a bit of dynoing. Well, we've got the first ever-international dyno competition to be held in the UK. If you reckon that you can dyno 2.6m on a 20° overhanging board, or just have a bit of fun flinging yourself around then this is the event for you (by the way the dyno is on a 45° diagonal and 2.6m is the unofficial world record set by some lanky Canadian called Dan). And finally, if you fancy yourself as a bit of a strong man/woman you could try out the 'Pull-Up' challenge, as many pull-ups in 60 seconds as you can manage, I reckon that anything above 10 is a good effort, but then I never was any good at training.

Inspiring Lectures

The non-competitive bits have this year been collectively called Outdoor Live. The scope and range of this side of the Festival has developed far beyond our wildest ideas at that initial planning stage in '99. The lecture and seminar programme associated with the festival is set to be the biggest audio-visual extravaganza of the 2001 outdoor lecture circuit, bar none. A widespread mix of Britain's leading activists will take you from the boulders of the Pass to the peaks of the Himalaya via as many other places in between as possible. In addition we'll have a selection of the best films from the Kendal festival, and some of the coolest videos around.

Already in the line-up top mountaineer Alan Hinkes is sure to pack 'em in on Friday evening by telling of his dream to climb all the eight-thousand metre peaks, and Niall Grimes will delight us (!) with bouldering anecdotes and wacky tales afterwards. Jamie Andrew will also tell his inspirational story on Saturday morning, and Jo George takes a light-hearted look at Scottish climbing. Whilst in the afternoon, Andy Kirkpatrick and Ian Parnell delve deep into the outrageous world of extreme alpine style climbing on some of the worlds' toughest faces. The venerable Doug Scott will be sharing his latest exploits in Asia as a part of a series of lectures from the Mount Everest Foundation, which will also include Jerry Gore and Al Powell. And don't forget to check out what Dave Turnbull and Leo Houlding have been up to in Mozambique (Saturday night), and catch a bit of drumming from the lively Alistair Lee. The final Sunday finds some of the biggest names on the scene in action; Leo Houlding, Andy Kirkpatrick, Alan Hinkes, Airlie Anderson, Jerry Gore and John Dunne will all be giving lectures, which are not to be missed. Your only problem will be fitting it all in!

Practical Advice

And for those wanting practical advice, then welcome to the seminar programme. If you're gearing up for the winter, check out the winter skills workshops, sponsored by Plas y Brenin, Berghaus and Scarpa. Try out all the latest kit, and get the best advice around. And don't forget to enter the prize draw. One lucky winner will be winning a full winter outfit. From boots to hat, crampons to ice axes, and a course at Plas y Brenin to learn how to use it all. Nutrition, Mountain Medicine, Mountain Photography, Travel, and Performance Climbing will also be covered – pick up a lifetime's worth of tips and tricks in one afternoon.

Lasting throughout the festival and hosted in both the purpose built tiered Berghaus lecture theatre behind the competition-climbing wall, and in the NIA Olympia suite, these lectures and seminars offer a perfect way to relax and enjoy some spectacular tales.

Shopping Bargains

Shop until you drop. The one silver lining that has come out of this year's Foot and Mouth disaster, are the warehouses full of unsold stock of premier mountaineering and hill walk-

ing brands that Snow + Rock, Mountain Shack and Outside are going to try and flog to you for ludicrously low prices.

Art & Photography Exhibition

Last time we thought that a little bit of a photography exhibition would be a good idea, so we invited Ian Smith to display his portrait collection and very nice it was too. But going one better this time round, we've arranged a huge Art and Photographic exhibition. Filling the bar, and stretching the whole width of the NIA balcony, it will feature displays from most of this country's leading climbing and mountaineering artists - Shelly Hocknell, Ginger Cain, David Simmonite, and Gordon Stainforth, are just some of the big names lined up.

ACT Competition and Launch

This will all be linked to the launch of the mountaineering councils' new Access and Conservation Trust (ACT). ACT is already attracting significant sums from the outdoor trade for its work in protecting our freedom to do our things in the outdoors in a responsible and sustainable manner. There will be plenty of opportunities to contribute towards ACT, with special posters and calendars for sale. And to mark the introduction of the Euro we are asking you to bring all of your soon to be useless European currency along and donate it to ACT.

Whymper's Ice Axe!

And just in case you haven't had the chance to toddle off to the Lakes to catch the Helly Hansen National Mountaineering Exhibition at Reghed, then you're in luck. They are actually bringing a bit of it down to the Festival to give you a taster. Where else could you see the best boulderers in the world, and then check out Whymper's ice axe?

Listen to the lecture, check out the art, find out how to go there, and then buy the kit!



Back in '99 we asked if you were ready for Climb'99, this year we're not asking if you're ready - we just hope you can cope with so much happening over one weekend? It's going to blow all previous events off the map - miss it and miss out.



deep trouble

An introduction to the essential backcountry winter equipment that you hope you'll never need; by Tim Roebuck, TR Agencies.

All images Courtesy of Fridge Productions, except skier, Courtesy of Warren Smith Ski Academy.

As the nights lengthen and snow begins to fall, it's time for those dreams of a white Christmas to become reality. For some a season in the Alps, for others a few sneaky weekend breaks. But this time will you be ready for the unexpected?

For most people the preparation for a winter adventure just involves dusting off the board, ferreting skis out of the attic, finding a complete set of gloves, and wondering where that other crampon has gone in the last 12 months. But with increasing numbers of skiers, boarders, and backcountry explorers heading further from the beaten piste, perhaps it's time that you took these preparations a step further, giving you and your friends the best chance of living past the end of the winter.

Accidents and deaths occur with alarming regularity season after season, and there were over 60 snowsport related deaths in the Chamonix Valley last year. Some were human error; collisions with trees, other people, or taking that big air quest too far. But every year, burial by avalanche claims a steady stream of lives.

Slopes will avalanche - that's a fact of life. Obviously having a good level of avalanche awareness, taking note of forecasts, warnings, and signs is the key to a safer winter. But sometimes, especially when heading beyond resorts or to more exotic locations, even the most experienced can get into harms way. And only by carrying and knowing how to use the correct mountain safety equipment will you have a chance of both surviving an avalanche burial or locating a victim quickly.

When buried in an avalanche a victim without any other injury, generally has a 90% chance of survival if rescued within the first fifteen minutes. With the effects of cold, anxiety, exposure and oxygen starvation, this survival rate halves for every additional five minutes. After a meagre thirty minutes burial, the chances of survival are generally only 10%. Time is of the essence.

It is tempting to think that only ski-mountaineers or climbers are at risk, but with increasing numbers of snowboarders and snowshoers searching for off-piste excitement and fresh powder, more and more people are coming into contact with avalanche terrain each year. Sometimes there are warning signs, urging people to carry the correct equipment, but what exactly should you take?

Transceiver

First and foremost, an avalanche transceiver. This is a personal safety beacon that once switched on continuously emits a signal. If buried, other transceivers can be used to home in on this signal, quickly locating the victim. Several brands are available, but look for a large signal range and virtually foolproof operation in a stressful situation. The better units feature instant notification of multiple burials, and after an initial sweep literally point the way to the victim. There are two types currently on the market; digital and analogue. Don't be misled by the terms, the difference is purely in the type of signal output.

Digital transceivers emit a 90m x 70 x 30m 3D signal and have a 40-45m range, whereas analogue models have a greater range of 80m, giving out a 160m x 90 x 90m 3D signal the shape of a rugby ball. The units are best worn close to the body with an integral three point harness, preventing detachment at all times and weigh in the region of 250g. Batteries are usually AA or AAA, and will last up to 300 hours. Every transceiver operates on a 457kHz frequency, and are compatible with all current and previous models.

Avalanche reflector

Some jackets and other pieces of equipment have an "avalanche reflector" sewn in. Be warned this is for equipment location purposes only; it needs a sender unit to be found. If

you're not carrying a sender unit, the nearest one (if you're lucky) will be at the Guide HQ. This will usually take far longer than fifteen minutes to bring to the site of any accident, long after the rescue should have finished.

Shovel

A transceiver is only part of the solution. A victim cannot be dug out with skis, boards or snowshoes. A shovel is essential for quick, efficient excavation. Ensure it is lightweight, compact, preferably with an unbreakable blade. And looking on the brighter side, it's also great for building jumps.

Avalanche probe

Avalanche probes can be very useful. A probe consists of a number of tubes connected by a non-elasticated fixing system. They are designed to be easily assembled, lightweight, and swiftly extracted from avalanche debris.

Tent poles, although similar are not ideal - they are far more prone to snagging and damage. Use probes in prolonged searches for victims without transceivers, or locating equipment lost in powder or crevasses.





Radios & Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are in worldwide usage, and small walkie-talkies are becoming popular in resorts, but a word of caution should be given here. All electronic equipment and installations give out electronic signals whilst working. In the case of mobile phones, the signal interferes with the transceiver signal, with potentially disastrous consequences.

It's very unlikely you'll be able to use your phone whilst buried, so turn it off – it could save your life. However the flip side is of course, that a phone switched on later could be the best way to call for help.

The bottom line

So how much does all this stuff cost? Surprisingly little compared to the standard gear you take into the hills. You can kit yourself out with a full safety pack for around £350, and it will be with you for life. The bare minimum is a transceiver and shovel, cost-

ing around £250. Just how much is your, and your companions' life worth? And if you're not a regular winter explorer, remember that it's also possible to rent equipment in the more popular areas.

Further information

Carrying the correct equipment is just part of the jigsaw. Make sure you have good avalanche knowledge – prevention is always better than the cure! It is also a matter of common sense that a first aid kit should be carried by at least one member of each party. If in doubt, consider a training course. Both Plas y Brenin and Glenmore Lodge run short Avalanche Awareness courses, or enlist the help of a Mountain Guide for a day.

"Of course we all hope never to have to use a transceiver for real. I was one of those people until this May when I was caught in an avalanche in the Chugach mountains, Alaska. One of the first thoughts that went through my mind, shortly after "Oh fk" and "I can't believe this is happening to me" was "Thank god I've got my transceiver on".** " - *Simon Christy, in a recent letter to Summit.*

Books

A Chance in a Million, Bob Barton & Blyth Wright, SMC.

Handbook of Climbing, Allen Fyffe & Iain Peter, BMC.

Mountaineering and Leadership, Eric Langmuir, MLTB & SCC.

Avalanche Safety for skiers and climbers, Daffern, Diadem books.

All these books are available in the BMC online shop

Contacts

Plas y Brenin

01690 720214

www.pyb.co.uk

Glenmore Lodge

01479 861256

www.glenmorelodge.org.uk

British Mountain Guides

www.bmg.org.uk

TR Agencies

01785 840835

www.tragencies.co.uk

Importers of Ortovox equipment.

Scottish Avalanche Information Service

www.sais.gov.uk

Snow and Avalanche Centre

www.csac.org

Tim will be running workshops at the Festival of Climbing for those who'd like to find out more. Try out various transceivers, see which one suits you.



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SOUTH AMERICA

FROM PATAGONIA TO PERU

From the stormy Patagonian wilderness, to deepest, darkest Peru, South America is one of the world's most spectacular regions for adventure sports. Loretta Bayliss and Rob Thomas give a personal account of their odyssey through this continent.



The diversity is to die for, from isolated outreaches of civilization to the truly Latino big city beat; South America provides an unparalleled experience for the adventure traveller. There's the "World's Most Dangerous Road" for downhill mountain bike freaks, the Paine Circuit for masochists trekkers, and the pristine world of snow and ice for gnarly mountaineers.

Punta Arenas, Chile

Our adventure started in Punta Arenas, Chile. We arrived by plane from Santiago, a flight that took almost four hours and gave us an excellent view of the volcanoes in the Chilean Lake District. Punta Arenas is a cold, windswept place, and is theoretically the Southern-most town accessible by road, but actually driving there would be a different matter. For most people the only activity here would be the Penguin colonies, and after a half-day walk around town the best idea is to catch the first bus North to Torres del Paine.

Torres del Paine, Chile

Best reached by bus from the town of Puerto Natales, the Parque Nacional Torres del Paine is unmissable, and to fully appreciate the sheer beauty of this park, hike the full Paine circuit. Many parties only hike the "W" which gives a good view of the main tourist features, but fails to capture the

solitude and beauty of being out alone in one of the world's most spectacular natural landscapes. Allow an average of seven days for the full trek, although it is possible in five. As ever, the number one South American hiker's irritation is the amazing number of relentless mosquitos. The wind will provide short-lived relief, but can be a problem in itself. At times so strong that all but the very best tents are destroyed, spray from mountain pools lifted five meters into the air, and full concentration is required just to keep on the trail. Plan for roughly three days of mosquitos and four days of wind and rain, but don't be put off - the raw beauty of one of Chilean Patagonia's best treks more than compensates.

Los Glaciares, Argentina

Not as consistently spectacular as Torres del Paine, the park is less frequented than the Torres and is a pleasant break from hordes of day-trippers. Home of Fitzroy, one of the most infamous and distinctive climbing areas in South America, you'll need the patience of a saint to endure the microclimates experienced here. While the sun is shining everywhere else, this region can have record snowfall.

Parque Nacional Quelat, Chile

The area between Coihaique and the Argentinian border is one of the wildest and least populated we witnessed, and an excursion definitely worth making time for. Likened to Little Yosemite Valley, Parque Nacional Quelat is remote, difficult to get to and very, very wet.

(CLOCKWISE) Torres del Paine from the lookout above campamento Torres. Volcan Villarrica on a perfect morning, Chile Lake District. Overnight camp on Huayna Potosi, Cordillera Real. Loretta at the Torres del Paine lookout. Volcan Lannin. All credits: Loretta Bayliss & Rob Thomas.



Volcan Villarrica, Chile Lake District. Credit: Bayliss & Thomas

But wait for the skies to clear and reveal cascading glaciers, cliff bound fjords and deep green forests - the breath is physically sucked from your body. You need to take all supplies in (although fresh water is abundant) and an expectation to see few others for the entire time. Just further north (200kms - six hours drive, if you dare to take your own vehicle!) is Futalefu, famed home of world kayaking champion Chris Spelius. You can also try your hand at some serious white water rafting here - not for the faint hearted.

Lake District, Chile/Argentina

Both the Chilean and Argentinian Lakes District are truly beautiful to behold. Dotted intermittently with snow capped volcanoes and deep blue lakes the size of small seas, the lakes provide a welcome tourist break for those who have been hard at trekking, climbing, or kayaking. Small campgrounds are scattered around the edges of the lakes, with excellent although rudimentary facilities. You can soak in spas, wander up a volcano or three (the sulphur spewing Villarrica worries locals with small eruptions occasionally), dine in any of Pucon's scores of cafes and restaurants, relax on the beach, engage in any number of water sports ...the list is endless. There is little technical climbing in the area, but as a short stop enroute to greater adventure, the Lakes District is a scenic wonderland.

Aconcagua, Argentina

At 6960m this is the highest and most climbed mountain on the continent, and although one of only two "walk-up" mountains of the Seven Summits, is still a challenge in terms of scale, altitude and endurance. The popular normal route offers the most arduous scree slog you could ever attempt, whilst any of the more technical routes, from the Polish Glacier to the sheer walls of the South Face, required far greater experience and skill.

South West Bolivia

From the moment we entered Bolivia from Northern Chile and were charged the "unofficial US\$20 entry fee", we knew we were entering a different world. There is no comparison between the civilisation and prosperity of Argentina and Chile and the poverty and desolation of their northern

bordering Bolivia. The southwest is a maze of 4x4 tracks leading from high altitude geysir fields to flamingo filled lakes and weird desert moonscapes. The altitude remains over 3500m the entire time you are on the Altiplano, so taking it easy for the first few days is recommended. There are a number of +5000m volcanoes in the area, all of which are difficult to access but relatively easy to climb.

La Paz, Bolivia

Other than arriving on a clear day (the approach to La Paz is spectacular), the singularly most excellent thing about La Paz is its proximity to so many peaks of all size and difficulty. Illimani, Huayna Potosi and Illampu are but a few. Alternatively, there is a 60km downhill ride with an altitude change of +/- 3000m that will consume just a day and an awful lot of adrenalin - especially if you cut those corners just a bit too fine! For the true masochists, there is a sharp uphill at the very end that will keep your legs burning well into your third, fourth and fifth cool down-ales!

Huayna Potosi, Bolivia

Anyone wishing to climb Huayna Potosi will have no trouble. All over La Paz there are companies offering guided climbs to this plus other mountains in the area. According to some guides it can be climbed in a day but most people should expect to take equipment and supplies for at least one night on the mountain. The normal route is basically a slog with two interesting sections of roughly 45% ice. Not very difficult and no need to set belays but will prove interesting for the novice looking for an introduction to Alpine climbing. The best time to start is at about 3am with a round trip of between 4 and 6 hours, most of which is spent getting to the top. The decent offers amazing views of the Amazon basin plus other peaks in the area. The mountain is ready for climbing as early as May but is best climbed between June to Oct.

Condoriri, Bolivia

This peak is a classic ridge climb and is far more challenging than Huayna Potosi. It can be climbed as early as May but is very prone to avalanche and is not recommended until June. None of the guiding companies will encourage it but most will still be prepared to take parties out provided you pay regardless of success! Base camp is very remote and can only be reached by 4-wheel drive or a multi-day hike in from the highway. The camp itself is an amazing place and gives excellent views of the Condoriri Massif and Pequeño Alpamayo. It is worth visiting even as a trekking outing with a number of smaller peaks in the area providing great enjoyment.

Lake Titicaca, Bolivia/Peru

The highlight of Lake Titicaca, we believe, is Isla del Sol. It is a small, rocky island reached by boat from the mainland. The main port is a hive of activity when boats are arriving and departing, but this quickly thins out as you head straight up a steep set of stairs to reach the ridge leading down the centre of the island. There is little fresh water on the island, and few facilities. Camping is recommended, as wild camping is permitted anywhere on the island except in areas of historical value (i.e. the ruins). There is also a growing contingent of hostels and basic accommodations. There are stunning views over the lake to the panoramic Andes beyond and the walking is pleasant, sun-kissed and generally easy to medium grade.

Machu Picchu, Peru

Twenty million odd sized Inca steps (it's only a slight exaggeration, I assure you!). An equal number of spectacular, rocky ruins. Hundreds of pairs of porters' be-sandaled, gnarled feet wearing away at the paving stones. Hundreds more pairs of Nike, Reebok, Saloman and Hi-tech cushioned feet following slowly in their wake. Local women in



Glacier Grey, Parque Nacional Torres del Paine. Credit: Bayliss & Thomas

their bowler hats and bright skirts eyeing us suspiciously as we pass. The low drone of a dozen different languages as tours establish their camps. This is the Inca Trail at its contrasting best. The Inca Trail and the ruins of Machu Picchu are Peru's most popular tourist destinations. Over five hundred people, per day, embark on the three-day Inca Trail and twice that numbers visit the archeological wonder of Machu Picchu. Independent trail blazing is no longer allowed and tours range in price from US\$80-150. The trail itself is excellently maintained, although far too densely populated with hikers, walkers and dawdlers for the more rugged adventurers amongst us. The ruins are spectacular, and a historical wonder, although I would consider, next time, avoiding the crush and spending my days on the difficult and isolated Huayhuash Circuit instead.

When to go

The diverse area means that a visit in any season can be worthwhile, but try for: Punta Arenas to Aconcagua - Dec. through Apr., Aconcagua to Southern Bolivia - May through June, Southern Bolivia to Peru - July through Oct.

Travel

Travel within Chile and Argentina is easy. Fast, punctual and comfortable buses travel the main highways, and internal flights are reasonably priced; the railways, however, have been neglected since the 1970s. Competition has lowered domestic airfares, and regional airlines and air taxis traverse the country's long extent. Air passes are particularly attractive. If driving remember that the road infrastructure consists of mainly dirt tracks, which will shake even the most sturdy of vehicles. Allow plenty of time - rarely can you reach the speed limit. Maps in South America are an interesting phenomenon, rarely correct and only occasionally present. If you are planning a longer trip avoid the baptism by fire and learn some Spanish before you go. Common phrases like "Dos cervezas, por favor" (two beers please) never go astray.

Health and safety

Vaccinations are not required to enter the countries but hepatitis and typhoid are recommended. Cholera can also be useful. Check with your doctor prior to travel, and if travelling to altitude, familiarise yourself with the common symptoms and solutions to altitude sickness. Care should always be taken in large towns and cities. South America does experience a certain amount of problems with theft and corruption. The Foreign Office recommend to keep a low profile, travel in large groups and use reputable companies.

Contacts:

Argentinian Tourist Office

Email: info@turismo.gov.ar

Bolivian Tourist Office

Email: vturismo@mcei.gov.bo

Website: www.bolivia-travel.gov.bo

Chilean Tourist Office

Email: info@sernatur.cl

Website: www.sernatur.cl

Peruvian Tourist Office

Email: infoperu@promperu.gov.pe

Website: www.peru.org.pe

Medical Advisory Services for Travellers Abroad (MASTA)

Tel: 01276 685040

www.masta.org

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

King Charles Street, London, SW1A 2AH

Tel: 020 7270 1500

www.fco.gov.uk

Lonely Planet

www.lonelyplanet.com

South American Explorers Club

www.samexplo.org

The non-profit South American Explorers Club – a good overall source of travel information.

Andes

www.andes.org.uk

South America tour operator. Also publish Andes guides.

Books

South American Handbook 2002, Box, Footprint.

South America on a Shoestring, Lyon, Lonely Planet.

Argentina / Bolivia / Chile / Peru Handbooks, Footprint.

Argentina, Uruguay & Paraguay, Bernhardson, Lonely Planet.

Bolivia, Swaney, Lonely Planet.

Chile and Easter Island, Bernhardson, Lonely Planet.

The Andes: A Trekking Guide, Biggar(s), Andes.

Trekking in the Patagonian Andes, Lindenmeyer, Lonely Planet.

Trekking in Bolivia, Brain, The Mountaineers.

The Andes: A Guide for Climbers, Biggar(s), Andes.

Aconcagua: A Climbing Guide, Secor, The Mountaineers.

Bolivia: A Climbing Guide, Brain, The Mountaineers.

The Mountain Travel Handbook, Deegan, BMC.

Insurance

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The Mountain Travel Handbook

The BMC has just published the Mountain Travel handbook, by Paul Deegan. Essential reading before you go, see page 24 for more details.

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ALL CHANGE!

What exactly are these changes at the BMC, and how will it affect you as a member? Braving the world of committees, acronyms, and working groups, Andy MacNae explains what it's all about.

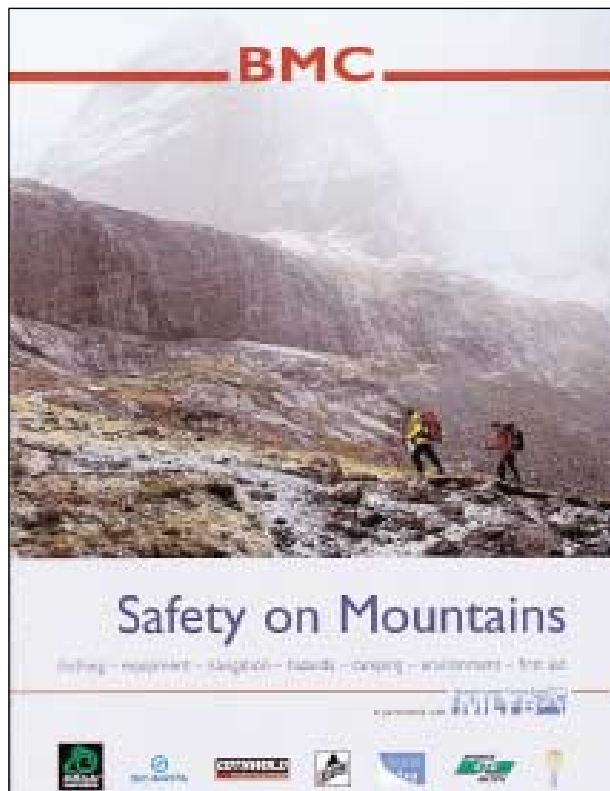
Just over two years ago the Mountain Co-ordination Group, which consists of representatives from the various British and Irish mountaineering councils and training boards, sat down and tried to do a bit of crystal ball gazing. The fight for meaningful Access legislation in England and Wales was all but won and it seemed a good time to ponder on what next. Those present could see demands on the boards and councils increasing rapidly, and they listed all the things that, in an ideal world, the organisations would like to achieve over the next five years. What could be done that would continue to make a real difference to climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers? The list was long; representation on regional access forums, involvement in access mapping, lobbying on Scottish Access legislation, conservation schemes, coastal access rights, support for young climbers, web based access database, monitoring of training, technical equipment research, an information database, English National Climbing Centre, podium places for the team, more funding for expeditions... and many more.

What was immediately clear was that there was no way that the councils and boards could achieve all of this with the resources that they had, or were likely to have if the status quo continued. Indeed the BMC was being forced to raise membership subs in order to keep up with the demands on its resources and all the bodies could see a severe financial crisis looming. It was clear that the old fall back, government grant, was not going to grow and if anything it would shrink. And it didn't seem reasonable to just keep asking the membership for more money until all other options had been explored.

So what to do? Should the organisations plan to do less or should a way be found to do more? Needless to say the latter option prevailed, discussions went further and so we come in a round about way to our theme - Mountain Services - and a simple idea. To do in one place many of the things that the boards and councils now do separately

(=greater efficiency) and to build a range of services that better meet the needs of all the members (=better members benefits), whilst raising additional funds to support the work of the boards and councils (=more effective councils and boards).

Mountain Services will administer the BMC Insurance scheme - look out for the 2002 package; greatly improved benefits and all prices held or lowered.



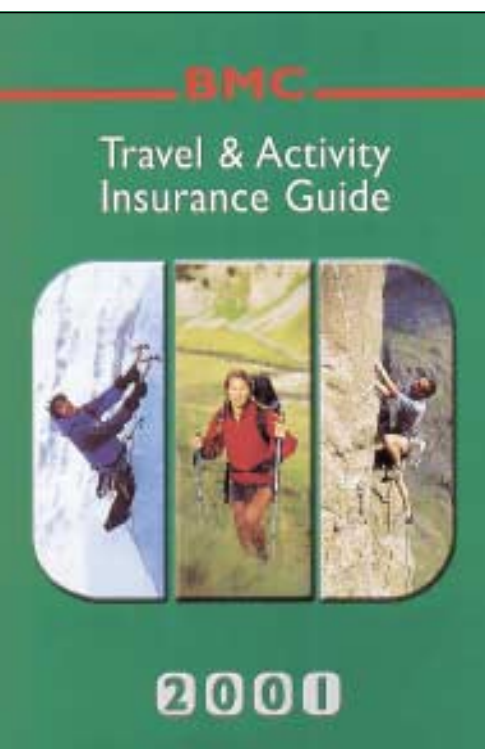
Mountain Services will make possible more joint projects like the BMC/MLTB Safety on Mountains video.

To put this concept into practice has taken over a year of discussions, negotiations and agreements but on 4 October 2001 the following bodies formed the Mountain Services Limited Liability Partnership (MSLLP):

- Mountain Leader Training Board
- Mountaineering Council of Scotland
- Northern Ireland Mountain Training Board,
- Scottish Mountain Leader Training Board,
- Wales Mountain Leader Training Board
- BMC
- United Kingdom Mountain Training Board

MSLLP is controlled by all these bodies on a one vote each basis, and as such it is a true partnership. It is expected that BMC Wales and the Mountaineering Council of Ireland will join shortly. From 1 January 2002 the BMC membership services and trading staff will move over to MSLLP and this new body will administer all BMC membership applications and MLTB registrations. MSLLP will also look after all trading activity on behalf of the BMC and MLTB. MSLLP is being set up ready to handle membership, registrations and trading for all the other boards and councils and where desirable a process of change over will take place during 2002.

This new structure will bring a real focus to the provision of membership services and all the partners believe that this



will result in greater efficiency and more resources for the key programmes.

Alongside this new services partnership there is also a new charity – the Access and Conservation Trust – established by the Mountaineering Councils to raise additional funds to directly support Access and Conservation programmes throughout Britain and Ireland. This is a highly significant step and ACT has set itself the ambitious target of raising £100,000 in its first year. It is already off to a great start, see page 16 for more details.

Very interesting, but what does this mean to me?

At one level members and award holders won't see a difference – membership and registration forms will look much the same. But when it comes to resources and services the changes will be more apparent – members and award holders will see their councils and boards offering a much wider range of services and products via Mountain Services. The idea here is that products and services should be tailored to meet the needs of members and so be better than anything available on the existing market. An example of this is the BMC Travel Insurance, which from January 2002 will be restructured to offer even higher value and flexibility. So as well as helping achieve all the objectives mentioned earlier MSLLP means:

More of your membership money will be free to be spent on things like access and safety work, and not get eaten up in administrative costs.

Membership rates are kept down.

More benefits and better rates for insurance cover.

A better information service.

More guidebooks and skills publications.

A wider range of other services – these might include health cover or equipment insurance tailored to climbers and walkers needs, or subsidised courses for certain groups.

And so what of the BMC? With the membership and trading team working for MSLLP the staff base will be much smaller and more clearly focused on delivering the access, conservation, training, technical, youth, heritage, huts, international, competition and climbing wall programme. The BMC has ambitious targets in all of these areas (see the box right) and if MSLLP can generate sufficient resources we can make some very significant progress during 2002. In July, BMC General Secretary Roger Payne

Mountain Services will administer the MLTB registrations and so make more funds available for core MLTB programmes.

announced his intention to step down at the end of the year and so in 2002 the BMC will have a new Chief Officer. Additionally, Derek Walker's Presidency comes to an end in April 2002 so it really will be 'all change' next year. The pair will leave behind a significant legacy in the form of a leaner, more focused and better resourced BMC. An organisation which is better able than ever to fight for the rights and freedoms of its members.

Mountain Services will be able to make new publications available to all the councils board members, at big discounts. Right is the new Mountain Travel Handbook published this month by the BMC at £13.



Some key BMC programme targets during 2002:

Improved communication of access and conservation issues to the mainstream and specialist media through appointment of a dedicated press/PR person.

Greater resources dedicated to supporting the BMC's regional access reps (and others) through appointment of a dedicated volunteer coordinator.

Pressing the importance of recreational access in the FMD public inquiries.

Research into the economic benefits of climbing, hill walking and mountaineering on rural economies.

Investigation into the effects of resin on sandstone stabilisation.

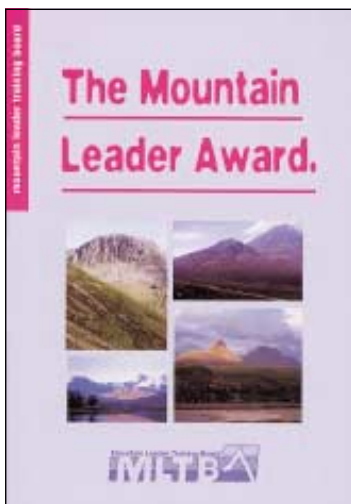
Increased use of web based technologies to inform and up-date members of access issues.

Lobbying conservation bodies to prevent statutory bird bans.

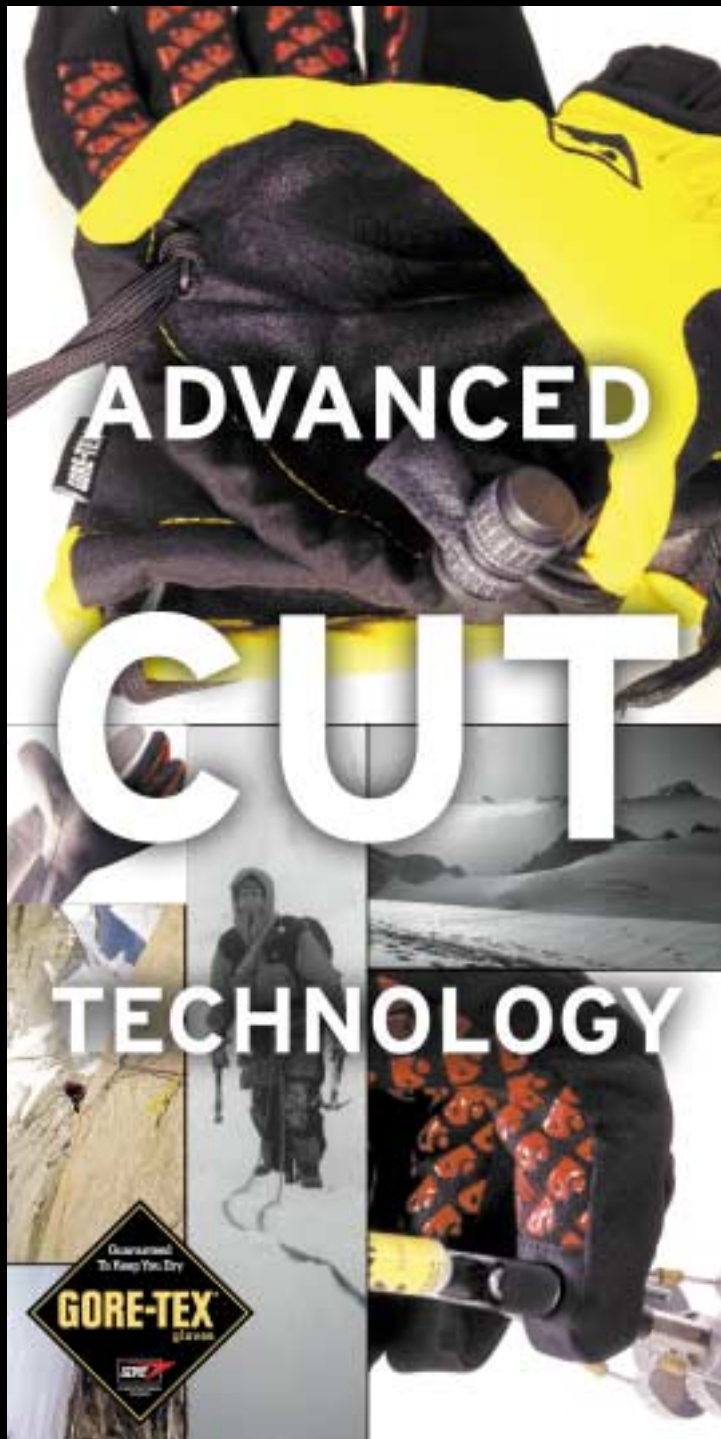
Climbing wall accreditation scheme.

University based research leading to a new helmet standard.

All the above remains aspirational and is dependent on MSLLP and ACT being able to generate sufficient funds during the year. One thing however is certain – MSLLP means that a greater proportion of your membership money than ever before will go directly support this work – which has got to be a good thing.



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Changes at the MLTB

After almost five years as Executive Secretary of the MLTB, Mike Rosser left at the beginning of September to manage Adventureworks, a subsidiary of Jagged Globe. Mike commented 'The past few years have been an exciting time for the MLTB. When I arrived the home nation Training Boards had just introduced the SPA; this was followed by the harmonisation process for the ML and latterly the Walking Group Leader scheme. One of my aims was to improve the service provided by the Board to candidates, Award holders and course Providers. We have achieved this by increasing the resource base and the number of workshops and seminars provided. I have considered it a privilege to work for the MLTB. and believe that we have taken the Board forward over the past four and a half years.'

The Board recently appointed Andy Say to replace Mike. Andy started climbing at 14 with a lead of Route 1 at Burbage North and never looked back. He moved north to Ilkley College some 22 years ago, stayed and took delight in ticking his way through over 1500 local routes. Eventually he discovered the Lakes and the MLTB trail, and completed his MIC in 1995. For the past 13 years he's been working at an FE College running Outdoor Education courses, and is looking forward to some work that will keep him on his toes (And get some inches off his middle!)

Walking Group Leader scheme finally takes off

As FMD access restrictions are lifted and areas of the countryside reopen, a growing number of MLTB Course Providers are able to begin running Walking Group Leader (WGL) training and assessment courses. The MLTB has registered over 300 candidates for the new WGL scheme since the beginning of February, despite the fact that only four courses were run before the Foot and Mouth restrictions were imposed. Some Providers are arranging additional dates for cancelled courses, and candidates are advised to check with their Course Provider or check the MLTB web-site. Experienced candidates seeking exemption from the training and consolidation parts of the WGL scheme can now do so at a cost of only £10. Candidates applying for exemption must match the minimum assessment pre-requirements at the time of their application. Note - candidates who have completed ML training but who wish to take an WGL assessment must first register with the WGL scheme and then if they match the WGL assessment pre-requirements they can go for assessment without having to apply for exemption.

Guinea pigs required

The MLTB is always looking for ML and SPA trainees to assist in the Mountain Assessor Workshops. If you are interested in a free opportunity to take part in a mock assessment as part of the preparation for your Award assessment please contact the MLTB Snowdonia office.

Mountain Training Logbook

The new style Mountain Training Logbooks are now in circulation, which makes it easier for candidates to log their experience across a variety of schemes. These are proving popular and we have had a number of requests from candidates with the old logbooks asking for a copy of the new one. A set of new inserts will cost £5.00 per scheme and a binder £4.00; including postage. Send a cheque made payable to MLTB to the Snowdonia office with your name, address, date of birth and candidate registration number.

Award Holder Workshops Links with the BCU/WCA

The BCU and WCA have recognised the MLTB Teaching and Coaching in the Mountains, Mountain Assessor workshops, Disability Awareness and Child Protection training as being acceptable as part of their cycle of revalidation. Candidates will need to present their MLTB course attendance certificate as evidence of having completed the training.

Management Committee Meeting 10 October 2001: Summary

Reports were given regarding the National Exhibition of Mountaineering which was opened in July. An update was given on the Guidebook Programme and the Working Group re-constituted to deal with a database rights dispute. The latest position on FMD and a report on the CRoW Act were noted. The latest position of the Mountain Services Partnership was reported: A board had been appointed and 7 partners had signed up. The deadline for applications for the Chief Executive of MSLP was 3 Oct, shortlisting took place on 4th Oct. and interviews took place on 17 Oct. It was reported that ACT was launched to the trade at 'Go Outdoors', to date £10K had been pledged. It was advised that there would be a public launch at the Festival of Climbing. Iain McCallum was voted Chair of HCAP. An update was given on the Competition Programme. A draft calendar of meetings for 2002 was circulated. Final arrangements for the 2002 Annual Gathering were noted. Bookings have now been made at Rheged and the Shap Wells Hotel on 6 April 2002. The recruitment of BMC Chief Officer was discussed. Over 80 requests for information for the post had been received. The draft budget for 2002 was discussed and a report was given on the status of grant funding. Recommendations for improved area representation were discussed, the ManCom were asked to endorse the paper and further discussions would take place. The Partnership Programme for 2002 was circulated. The next Management Committee meeting is on 12 December 2001 at the BMC office.

SW Area Meeting Rescheduled

The South West and Southern Area meeting, which was originally scheduled to take place on 10th November 2001, will now be on 12th January 2002 at The Charterhouse Centre in Bristol. The meeting will include a discussion on fixed gear in the Avon Gorge and will be followed by a lecture from Jonathan White on his trip to Greenland.

Don Whillans Memorial Hut Committee

Dave Brown recently stood down as Honorary Treasurer and Booking Secretary for the Don Whillans Memorial Hut Committee. The Management Committee thanks Dave for his hard work and support over the years. Suitably experienced members are invited to put themselves forward if they are interested in either of the positions of Honorary Treasurer or Booking Secretary. Anyone interested in offering volunteer support is encouraged to get in contact with lucy@thebmc.co.uk.

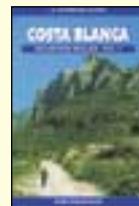
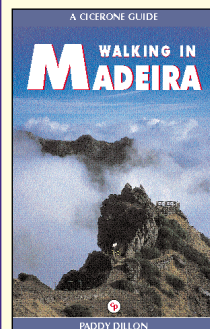
Area Meetings Calendar

	LAKE DISTRICT	NORTH WEST	LONDON & SE	MIDLANDS	NORTH EAST	PEAK DISTRICT	SW & SOUTHERN	WALES	YORKSHIRE & HUMBER
Nov	Friday 23rd 8.00pm AGM Golden Rule Anderside A Messenger			Thursday 22nd 7.00pm AGM Redditch Birmingham S. Atkinson	Monday 20th 8.00pm AGM T. Sims Stoncliffe Alex	Thursday 22nd 7.15pm AGM The Archer T. Bennett Crossroads D. T. Parnell		Saturday 24th 8.00pm AGM Plus 7 Rivers A. Aral	Monday 19th 7.00pm AGM Leeds Hill Delbert Trust C. Bost
Dec		Monday 10th 7.00pm AGM BMC Office Manchester G. Johnson	Thursday 4th 7.00pm AGM Francis House Francis St. London C. Bond						
Jan	Friday 25th The Golden Rule Anderside Ave	Monday 20th BMC Office Manchester 7.00pm		Thursday 24th Redditch Birmingham 7.00pm	Monday 21st Rutland Thornes (D.A.C.) Gateshead T. Sims	Thursday 21st The Archer T. Bennett Crossroads T. Sims	Sat 12th Chamberlain C. Bost Bristol Tom	Saturday 20th Plus 7 Rivers 8.00pm	Monday 25th Leeds Hill Delbert 7.00pm
Feb			Thursday 8th Francis House Francis St. London 7.00pm						

Dates and venues may be subject to change. Please check current on a regular basis.

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EXPLORE THE WORLD



JOURNEY'S ENDING

With the Mallory exhibit now in the National Mountaineering Exhibition, Colin Wells explores this now legendary man.

Born in 1886 into a well-to-do Cheshire church family Mallory attended a boarding school at Winchester where he was introduced to Alpine climbing by one of his masters. He displayed an aptitude for climbing, his natural athleticism compensating for a sometimes cavalier approach and a chronic absent-mindedness. His carelessness was legendary - climbing the Finsteraarhorn (4,274m) in Switzerland in 1909 he forgot to tie onto the climbing rope and only became aware of the fact when he was in a very exposed position with a thousand-foot fall threatening. Always cool under pressure he re-attached himself and carried on.

Mallory went up to Cambridge in 1905 where he moved in exalted circles. He joined the Fabian Society and the committee of the University Women's Suffrage Movement and developed influential mountaineering contacts that would lead to his automatic selection for the early Everest trips. Among his acquaintances were intellectual Bohemians including the literary critic and lascivious homosexual Lytton Strachey, who, instantly smitten by Mallory's handsome physique, wrote "Mon Dieu! - George Mallory! When

that's been written, what more need be said?" One of his key contacts was Geoffrey Winthrop Young whose 'Pen-y-Pass' parties in Snowdonia were a networking forum for climbers. Here Mallory honed his exceptional climbing skills and became well known amongst key players from the Alpine Club. His combination of climbing panache and carelessness made him a difficult character to forget. After Cambridge George considered following his father into the church but instead started teaching history at Charterhouse. He married in 1914 and his wife Ruth gave birth to their first child the following year. He joined up in 1916 and served in France as an artillery officer but an old ankle injury kept him away from the action for extended periods during the remainder of the war.

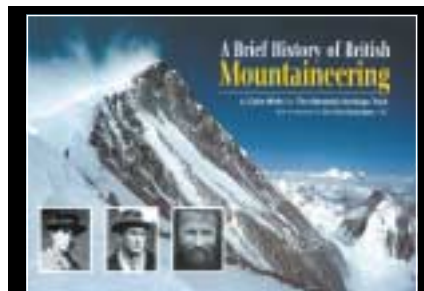
When plans to climb Everest were revived after the Great War, Mallory - one of a rare band of experienced mountaineers to survive without serious injury - was an automatic choice as a lead climber. Now with three children George felt pangs of guilt at going off on the adventure, but he was reassured by Geoffrey Winthrop Young. Young also helped to persuade Ruth Mallory that their future could be more secure if George achieved the celebrity status that would automatically fall to the first person to climb the world's highest peak.

During the expedition Mallory proved he was a potential winner. With fellow lead climber Guy Bullock he reached an altitude of over 6,700m and discovered a feasible route to the summit. The following year, he was back with the much larger follow-up expedition but they struggled against poor weather and illness. A near disaster was averted by Mallory's prompt ice-axe belay on snow slopes at 7,925m when three climbers slipped. That same luck did not hold two weeks later when a snow slope avalanched, killing seven porters. The loss of so many lives was a bitter blow, and many blamed Mallory directly for picking a route up clearly avalanche-prone slopes. There were mutterings about lack of mountaineering judgment and his continuing carelessness. Expedition member Tom Longstaff remarked that, "Mallory is a good, stouthearted baby, but quite unfit to be placed in charge of anything, including himself". Mallory himself was mortified by the accident and blamed himself, saying "If I had known more about snow conditions here, the accident would not have happened, and so one may say it was due to ignorance."

In between expeditions, Mallory gave lectures in Britain and North America and it was during the US tour in 1923 that in response to the question "Why climb Everest?" he is alleged to have made his famous reply "Because it is there." However, it seems likely that Mallory never actually uttered the phrase; instead there is strong circumstantial evidence that it was a form of pithy journalistic shorthand invented by the reporter or copy editor from the New York Times. Spending time away from his family was upsetting for Mallory, and when the inevitable invitation to join the fateful 1924 expedition arrived, he prevaricated before accepting. Eventually, aware that his financial security might rest on making his reputation as the conqueror of Everest, he succumbed to the powerful pull of the summit. Unfortunately, the mountain showed no respect for ambition. After expedition leader Edward Norton's valiant but unsuccessful 'oxygen-less' summit bid, most thought the expedition was finished. Mallory, however, perhaps driven by the knowledge that it might be his last chance to achieve mountaineering immortality, decided to have one last-ditch attempt to climb the summit with Sandy Irvine. The pair famously disappeared into the clouds, never to return.

Norton wrote that the expedition accepted the loss of the two climbers "in that rational spirit which all of our generation had learnt in the Great War... but the tragedy was very near; our friends' tents and vacant places at table were a constant reminder to us." Although he had penned it fifteen years earlier, the sentiments of an elegiac poem written by Geoffrey Winthrop Young seemed to reflect their sense of loss perfectly:

*"Brothers till death, and a wind-swept grave,
Joy of the journey's ending:
Ye who have climbed to the great white veil,
Hear ye the chant? Saw ye the Grail?"*



Find out more about Mallory, and how climbing has progressed through the ages in the new "A Brief History of Mountaineering". This full colour coffee table book is an ideal present for anyone interested in our sport. Priced just £10, and available from www.thebmc.co.uk, or 0161 445 4747.

(ABOVE) George and Ruth Mallory. Credit: Clare Millikan, Audrey Salkeld Collection.

