

viewpoint



CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

WELCOME! Last Viewpoint I refrained from mentioning new members, but now I think I can honestly say that I hope you like us and that you will enjoy being one of the Group. Come hostelling when you can; you are always welcome.

The Group programme is planned at Committee meetings, held once a month on the first Thursday of each month. If you have any ideas, criticism or are just interested, come along. Visitors are welcome as long as they bring a cup for tea at half-time. Just recently we have had some changes in the Social Programme on Tuesdays, but these things happen. Trevor being ill did not help. The answer to the problem is to try and support the programme by offering to help if you can. Let's have a little quiet during announcements please - it makes things a lot easier.

Pete Robertson will soon require help in running the Weald Walkers Wander. This rally has now become a real success because of its unusual flavour. Many local Groups and individuals enter and this event can be great fun for both marshals and entrants. Want to help? - see Pete.

Just one point about hostelling. Please think of others, especially at bed time. Not too much noise after lights out please or the Group will get a bad name. I know this applies to me as well as anybody, so therefore please pretend that I am wearing sackcloth and ashes. On a serious note then, let's cut out the excessive antics at hostels.

So ends the second Epistle,

Bone

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PUBLICITY ANNOUNCEMENT

Sunday 9th July is National Open Day. In the area controlled by South-Eastern Publicity Committee, the following hostels are open:- Canterbury, Ewhurst Green, Kensing, Streatley, Winchester, Patcham, Burley, Alfriston, Ivinghoe, Blaxhall, Sheringham, Saffron Walden, Houghton Mill.

The Group will be manning Ewhurst Green Hostel, and Pete Wynn will be in charge.

There will be a great deal of work to be done, both on the day itself and also for prior publicity. So please, let's have your wholehearted support for this date.

Mick

INDOOR PROGRAMME

- March 7th ... Easter Equipment.
14th ... Hostelling in Germany. Slides by Clive Blackmore.
21st ... Trampoline.
28th ... Pennine Way.
- April 4th ... Jug Band & Folksong Evening.
11th ... Talk on Drama Production.
18th ... Swimming.
25th ... Photographic Competition.
- May 2nd ... Treasure Hunt.
9th ... Mock Trial.
16th ... Rounders on Duppas Hill.
23rd ... Penny Auction.
30th ... Dance

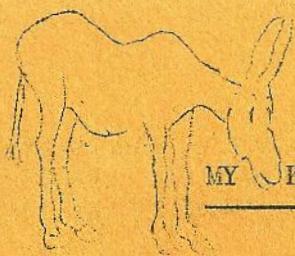
OUTDOOR PROGRAMME

- March 19th ... Ramble and cycle run
- 24th/27th EASTER. Walkers to the Lakes, - Highclose, Longthwaite & Helvellyn Hostels. Cyclists to Cornwall - Lostwithiel, Trevarnon & Boscastle. A second cycling trip arranged to visit the hostels at Winchester, Marnhull and Overton.

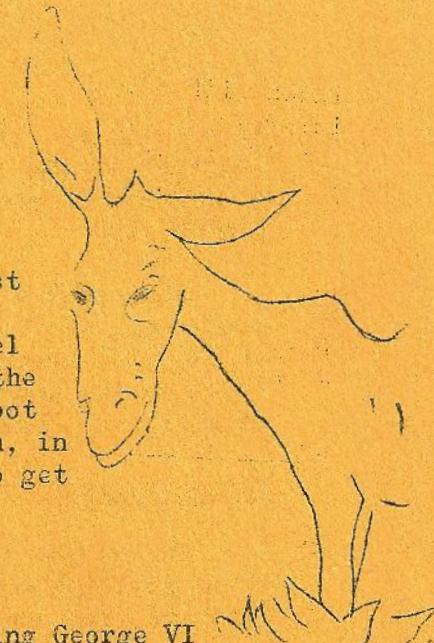
Rockhoppers to Cornwall.

OUTDOOR PROGRAMME CONT.

APRIL	1st/ 2nd	...	Milford Ramble and cycle run Goudhurst North Wales. Group trip to Cwm Silyn
	2nd	...	
	8th/9th	...	
	15th/16th	...	Windsor Caving in Mendips
	16th	...	East Surrey C.T.C. "100" reliability trial Six Shropshire Peaks, with Epsom & Ewell group
	22nd/23rd	...	Rockhoppers to Ogwen East Marden
	29th/30th	...	Patcham
MAY	6th/ 7th	...	Bradenham Ridgeway Walk: Marlborough - Streatley Mid-Wales Marathon
	13th/14th	...	Crockham Hill - working party National Local Groups Conference, Ilam Hall
			B.C.T.C. Cycle competition heats
	20th/21st	...	Dartford night cycle rally - Crockham Hill Barbecue and night ramble
	27th/29th	...	Boating, Wallingford Forest of Dean - Charlbury and St. Brival's Castle Rockhoppers to Borrowdale Caving in Yorkshire and Devon
JUNE	3rd/ 4th	...	Doddington West Kent C.T.C. "250" reliability trial Ramble
	4th	...	
	10th/11th	...	Goodings Tanners Hatch
	17th/18th	...	Isle of Wight The Ten Tors Walk
	24th/25th	...	Alfriston Rockhoppers to Swanage Caving in South Wales West of London groups rally



MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE



When I returned to Capel-y-ffin during the first two weeks of July 1961, the weather was beautifully hot. I had climbed the narrow lane from Llanvihangel Crucorney to the Youth Hostel sheltered halfway up the mountainside, and toiled up the steep gradient on foot up to the hostel, as I thought that the 1935 Hillman, in which I had driven from London, would not be able to get up the slope.

Converted farmhouse

The Capel-y-ffin Youth Hostel, a memorial to King George VI was the finest I have ever stayed at. Once the property of Marlborough College, now - a pleasantly converted farmhouse with its own water reservoir, and a diesel electric generator which, with its staccato exhaust note, guides the benighted traveller to this luxury hostel.

The Warden, Jack Evans, was a cheerful kindly man, ex-Cavalry, and what he did not know about horses and ponies was not worth knowing.

Mustachioed Welshman

Our guide was a mustachioed Welshman with a wonderful sense of humour and an endless assortment of local legends of the places that we visited; his name - Dai Griffiths - and he was introduced to us on Sunday morning.

The novice pony trekkers, who form about half the group, were shown how to saddle up, and to put the bridle and bit on the pony that they have been allocated by the guide. The rest of the morning was spent in a neighbouring field in getting accustomed to the movement of the pony.

The pony is well aware when an inexperienced rider is astride and has to be shown who is master, i.e. with the heels, or for the first day only, with a stick. The following day, a tap with the heels on his lower ribs will produce all the response that most people will desire.

Short ride

On Sunday afternoon Dai Griffiths took the whole party, consisting of a dozen riders, out for a short ride over the mountains until about five o'clock.

Monday and Tuesday were spent on longer rides, taking a packed

lunch with us, which was eaten at lonely and beautiful places of interest in the surrounding area of the Black Mountains. Usually a half day is passed at a local smithy in getting some of the ponies shod.

Wednesday was the day of the great trek from the little settlement of Capel-y-ffin to the town of Crickhowell, a distance of 20 miles across the rugged Welsh mountains. We stopped for lunch on the outskirts of a National Forest beside a stream for an hour and a half before continuing the trek.

White Stallion

On the journey we saw many wild horses including a dappled white stallion worth £350. We also saw long tailed Welsh sheep, birds of prey and the mountain near journey's end called "The Sugarloaf" because of its shape.

Crickhowell nestles in the Usk valley. The Warden - a homely lady - greeted us warmly on our arrival.

The luggage was brought, by Bedford van, by Mary Griffiths, Dai's charming petite wife.

Thursday was declared a rest day, for rider and pony alike.....

On the first Thursday I toured Brecon, including, of course, the Cathedral, and the second rest day I went to Cardiff with some of the party. We toured the Castle, the various arcades, and the museum.

Last trek

Friday was the day of the last trek for most of the riders, and this was the ride back to Capel-y-ffin by a different route, on which we saw a stone marking the spot that a journeying Bishop had been robbed and murdered. The evening was devoted to lighting a bonfire in the valley or a journey of four miles to the nearest inn.

Saturday was not a very cheerful day as everybody wished that they could stay another week, or at least slip "their" pony in with their luggage. Most of the party had already decided that they would return the following year.

Flamenco dancer

The parties I have been with have usually included a foreigner or two. In 1960 there were two German boys, and in 1961 I rode with a 23-year old American cabaret and Flamenco dancer who had come from New York.

Casualties are infrequent, but a First Aid bag is carried at all times on one of the ponies. Falls too, are rare. I fell only once in two weeks, and that was only when my pony stumbled in the heather. No damage done, but loss of prestige!

Worth remembering

Taken all in all, this holiday, at 11 guineas a week inclusive, was a holiday worth remembering, and is equally suitable for the absolute beginner or the experienced rider. No special riding kit was required, and the only essential was that you had to be at least sixteen years old. The holidays start at the end of May and finish for the year in the last week in September.

Since this article was written in 1962, there have been several changes which I think are worth mentioning.

The diesel electric generator has been removed following the connection of the hostel to the national electricity supply, so now the men can use their electric shavers at any time, and not have to wait until evening when the generator was switched on.

Dai Griffiths has left to run his own Pony Trekking Tours from his home, a mile away down the valley. His place has been admirably filled by a younger man named Ted Page, who, when I met him last year, had his hair shoulder length. He's a great character, and a fine horseman. If you ever go to Capel-y-ffin, ask him to show you how to catch trout in the Honddu river, just a few hundred yards from the hostel.

The ponies used now all belong to the Y.H.A. At first they were hired for the season from a farmer in a neighbouring valley, but as this proved to be rather an expensive matter, the Y.H.A. finally agreed to purchase their own ponies and a fine selection they now have.

In conclusion, I would just like to say that the many weeks I have spent Pony Trekking from this hostel have been some of the happiest holiday weeks in my life.

Anthony Green

LAND OF FIRE AND ICE

I left England for Reykjavik, the capital of Iceland, in July of last year, for a most unusual holiday - an expedition into the uninhabited interior of Iceland. On landing at Reykjavik I felt as though I had landed on the moon, the scenery around the town was one of plains of lava and huge craters caused by volcanoes. I met the group and spent the first night at Reykjavik Youth Hostel.

The next day we left by mountain bus on our long journey into the interior. We passed deserts of lava, which had pushed the land three miles into the sea, and saw in the distance Surtsey, an island which had erupted in the sea over three years ago. It was still smoking. There are no roads in Iceland, only deep ruts, and the further we went the harder it became to proceed until eventually we all had to push the bus up onto a ridge, only to find a river which had completely flooded the valley. So we camped the night and the next morning started our long trek across the interior.

The first part was in the lowlands, sleeping in tents or in mountain huts - the cattle below and you on top. We all had to get used to the continual daylight. I completely lost track of time as at 2 o'clock in the morning there were blue skies and sunshine. After four days we reached Landmannalaigar and this is where the hot springs and sulphur steam starts. We crossed an extremely cold river at one point and then crossed a scalding hot one. As we were all shivering with cold we just jumped into this hot river fully clothed. We camped the night here and it was real luxury to have hot water a few feet away from the tents.

It was now that the gruelling trek began among the rough stone mountains and rubble. We passed small mountains of pastel colours - pinks, greens and blues - then huge piles of volcanic rock with jets of steam shooting forth. We gradually got higher and higher, climbing up narrow ridges with sheer drops either side until we reached the snow line, and we had to plod through waist-high snow drifts. That night we camped next to a sulphur pile which uttered "Frankenstein" noises every few minutes. There were pools of steaming hot water everywhere, and you had to watch where you trod because of the boiling mud. We cooked tins of meat and steamed pudding in the mud. It only took ten minutes, but by then the labels had all come off so we had steamed pudding for the first course and meat for the second.

The next day started off really fine and clear and we could see

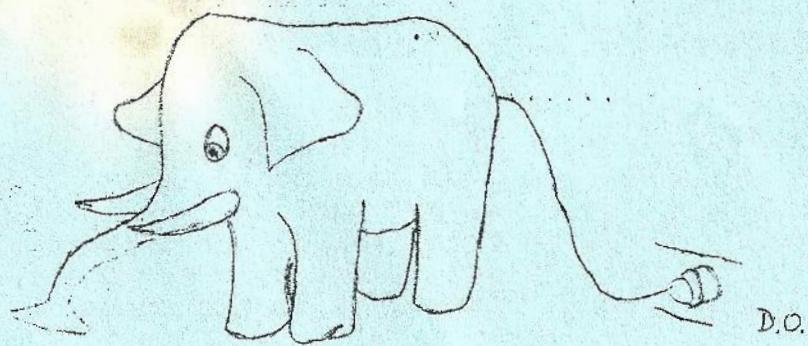
four ice caps in the distance. We went through caverns of thick ice with waterfalls of hot water tumbling through. By the end of the day the weather had changed into a blizzard and the desolation of not seeing a single person outside the group or any farm house for eight days began to hit us.

The next night we slept in a cave, which as you can imagine was great fun. We were now much lower and the ground gave way to bogs of slime and ground that looked firm but when you trod on it you found yourself knee deep in yellow mud. We passed our last steam vent and once more the rocks changed colour to jet black and shimmering silver.

After two more days we reached civilization, if you can call Fljotsdalur Youth Hostel civilization - a tin hut in the middle of a lava plain. We spent the next day there, recovering from our 150 mile trek in 9 days.

While I was on the expedition I wondered what the dickens I was doing this for, but it was not until I got back home that I realized what a wonderful holiday I had had - this was certainly my holiday of a lifetime.

MARION NEWMAN



We understand that elephants
have been domesticated in
India.

"Memories of Light in The Black Forest"

The days are warm and lingering, recalling the lost days of childhood when it seemed that the sun shone for a year in one single day. Lazy days like a soft white pillow filled with bright sunlight and poppies dancing in cornfields. Breezes carrying the scent of pine. Pines, that darken the forest with hushed liquid shadows. The sky, chinked, a lattice-work of blue, ever changing as the rough knotty branches nod obeying the breezes. Pine needles, brown and flaxen, carpet the meandering paths that disappear through soft gold green woods that have never been swept. Paths trodden by unknown pilgrims spreading the gospel of life. Paths leading to ancient forest villages, arteries of life for the wood-carving forest folk, sewing their lives with delicate threads. Shrines, couched in sleepy forests and attended by woodland wet anemones, standing in silent witness as the wayfarer passes by. Shrines that know the cold swish of wind and the pattered drip of rain. Lonely sentinels in dark green forests where the wind whispers about them in the night. The forest like a dark curtain hiding them from the chaste caresses of the moon and the white cataract of stars.

One such pilgrim stumbles from the shadowy paths into a forest clearing that is bathed in sunlight and alive with tall blue-green grass, glistening, swaying. There stands amongst a profusion of flowers a shrine that has been lovingly erected. It invites the traveller, no matter what his race or creed, to tarry and read the faint Gothic writing on a weathered board that has cracked with age and is nailed beneath a figure of Christ.

Its message.....

My friend,
If you want to know the science of God
Then look to the trees and the sky,
If you want to know the beauty of God
Then look at the flowers about you,
And if you want to know the love of God
Then look at the cross.....

The wayfarer stands for a solitary moment, in silent tribute, whilst the distant pines sway as they are kissed by the breeze and then he walks away into the forest and its cool calm gallery of trees, reminded of the strange inquietude of its hidden life, where, away from wind tossed valleys time has no meaning.

MANDYROS.

SABRINA

Her massive hulk rose starkly from the inky black canal as I stumbled along the dangerously slippery bank. This was Sabrina, the first floating Youth Hostel. It was, however, difficult to tell this in the dark and I began to wonder if I was on the wrong boat as I walked round and round the deck trying to find a door. At last I detected a black hatch cover and the bellow of certain raucous voices announced the presence of Croydon Group.

The actual hostel is situated in the hold of the converted barge, with dormitories and a galley-cum-common room. No gas, only electricity, which means a long wait for coffee but otherwise is very good for toast.

After a curious mishap by which Dave Parker mislaid his clothes and alarmed passing motorists by his state of undress as he pranced around the deck, we spent a very good evening in the pub. With three guitars and voices full blast, the locals soon gave up their original idea of a quiet chat with their darts, and ended up singing louder than we were.

By 11.15 p.m. the warden decided that Dave had had enough 'curious' mishaps for one day and suggested that it was time for bed. By midnight all was dark and silent in the girls' dormitory when suddenly loud strains of "Happy Birthday" assailed our ears. Disappointingly, 21 thuds did not accompany it, nor even a single splash!

Next morning Sabrina was afloat and some time was spent attempting to cast her adrift and shift her moorings. During this yet another mishap befell Dave. Surely it is possible to climb down two feet of rope without losing one's grip and falling into the canal? We then watched the Group canoes being put to good use by a group from Pontefract who, after a few minutes, agreed with us that they leaked. After half an hour they had their first capsizal.

The rest of the morning was spent in taking York by surprise (although there was no-one around to be surprised!) and storming the ramparts of the castle remains. By extremely clever strategic planning this was carried out under the very nose of a notice saying "Keep off the bank."

My room at the university was then besieged; my room mate is still suffering from shock. It was perhaps slightly unfortunate that the University possesses a large lake and rather grand fountains. Certain people got rather wet and damaged.

Anyway it was very nice to see you all, and I hope Dave Parker suffered no more mishaps on the way home, likewise Tim no more flat tyres!

Hazel

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REPORT ON THE LOCAL GROUPS CONFERENCE

This year's Local Group Conference was held at Earls Court Hostel on March 4th/5th, and was attended by representatives from 29 groups.

On Saturday evening very little was done except to discuss the proposed affiliation of the Y.H.A. to the National Trust. Following discussions at last year's conference it was hoped that the National Trust would agree to groups being able to pay a reduced affiliation fee of about £5, compared with the usual £15, in return for which they would be issued with passes for free entrance to all the National Trust properties. However the only result of the negotiations has been for the National Trust to agree to allow Y.H.A. members under 21 years to join for a reduced fee of 15/-. The conference decided that further efforts should be made to obtain a substantial reduction in the corporate affiliation fee.

There followed a discussion on the fact that 50% of travelling expenses of non-skilled voluntary labour workers are payable on application, with a 100% refund for skilled workers, and it transpired that painting is classified as non-skilled labour, whereas filling envelopes with Y.H.A. renewal notices is skilled!

It was proposed that the Annual Reunion should be held in conjunction with the Wardens' Entertainment, in order that group members might have a chance to meet the wardens socially. The date of next years reunion is

however, already fixed for Friday 2nd February, and many members expressed dismay at the fact that hostels might have to close on a Friday night, so it appears that both events will continue on a separate basis. The financing of the Warden's entertainment for next year is still in doubt, but it was proposed that any extra funds needed should be taken from the profit on the Reunion, which this year amounted to £37.

This ended the business part of the Conference for the Saturday and the rest of the evening was taken up with a 105 minute "Audioscope" slide show, which several Group members had already seen. This is a system by which a series of slides are shown using two projectors to merge one picture into the next, with coupled dialogue and music. It was therefore rather unfortunate that the sound broke down twice.

The open forum, lasting from 9.15 - 10.00 a.m. on Sunday morning proved interesting and useful. The first motion for discussion was that there should be a drying room at all hostels, and the proposal is to go forward to Eastern and Southern Legion that "wherever possible they improve or install adequate drying facilities". It was not thought practical to have a drying room at all hostels.

The next motion was that the Local Group Committee should organise a slide competition. The winning slide set showing local group activities to be kept by Regional Headquarters and loaned out to groups holding new members evenings and for publicity purposes. The conference however decided that most groups had their own slides and the motion was defeated.

A short discussion on whether the installation of electricity at Tanners Hatch is beneficial, and many points were put forward both for and against without any decision being made. In fact instructions have already been given for the work to be put in hand, so the days of the oil lamps at Tanners are numbered. I am sure that the next steps will be to install central heating, hot water and to make up the track-path to the hostel gate!

Diana Cunningham, the Y.E.A. Field Officer for Eastern and Southern Legion, then gave a talk on her work, which mainly involves visiting secondary schools, giving talks on the Y.E.A., and introducing school journey parties to hostels. It was suggested that there should be more liaison between her and local groups in order that groups may follow up a school visit by sending their programme to the school and possibly organising a special weekend.

The final business part of the Conference was to elect four members to serve on the Local Groups Committee for the coming year. Alan Johnson of Hornchurch Group and John Forrest of Bucks/Berks Border Group, were elected for Eastern Legion, and Frank and myself

were re-elected for Southern Region. It was decided that the next Conference should be held at the same place on March 2nd/3rd of next year.

The Conference finished with an interesting series of slides and a talk on Inland Waterways by Geoffrey Brown of the Inland Waterways Association.

Keith Wilkinson

the CAUOTCHOUCANASTICAL UNBREAKABLE REBOUNDING SQUEEGER-POWERED RUBBER DUCK

(PATENTS PENDING)

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The child takes the duck and throws it out of the perambulator.

As it strikes the ground the squeegee is compressed, a reflex action then occurs, the squeegee expands, and is forced off the ground into the air.

The duck being made of hardened caouæ heuc (India Rubber) is quite hard, and can stand up to hard blows.

The duck contains an acidic mixture which is attracted to an alkaline solution in the ptylin in the salivary glands of the mouth. This draws the airbourne duck toward the chin where it clunks up against the babies chin, and puts it out for a few hours during which time no troubles, (not even wet ones) will be given by the baby.

BUY NOW! TO GET YOUR FREE BABY SUPPLIED WITH EVERY:-

CAOUTCHOUCHANASTICALUNBREAKABLEREBOUNDINGSQUEEGERPOWEREDRUBBERDUCK

.....

And, in case you haven't already guessed, this appeared by courtesy of

JOHN DAY

FOUR GIRLS AND A CAR IN S. IRELAND

Dawn breaking over Rosslare harbour turned the sea from a black sound of pounding waves to a deceptively calm-looking expanse of cold turquoise frilled with white crests. Our sense of pride at being some of the very small minority aboard who had not been seasick during the Gale Force 9 night crossing, was slightly nulled by the chill of our damp clothes (the spray had penetrated our sleeping bags while we lay curled up on deck), offset by the tantalising warm smell of First Class breakfast. Our car, which we soon learnt was to have definite ideas of its own, was harbouring our food on another boat which was nowhere in sight. However, once it arrived, we had no trouble convincing the Customs that we were carrying neither ammunition nor tinned meat, and so were allowed to drive off into a hinterland that was just beginning to wake up wherever there was anyone or anything to wake.

Here we met our first indication of being in Ireland. On finding a garage, or more exactly, a petrol pump, we were told that owing to the replacement of hand pumping by electricity we should be unable to get petrol anywhere in that district - the new area transformer had broken! But with typical accommodating cheerfulness the man syphoned a couple of gallons from his car to tide us over till we got to Arthurstown, our first night destination.

We had planned a very flexible route, confirming our ideas to Southern Ireland. Our only booked nights were at Arthurstown and at Allihies, right out on one of the South Western peninsulas. This, though chosen rather arbitrarily as a nice-looking situation on a map, proved to be one of the best hostels we visited. It is a square white ex-farmhouse, very well kept by a first-rate warden who was extremely friendly... he even voluntarily dried a pair of my socks in his oven, not I hope, too much to the detriment of the next meal! The welcoming atmosphere was enhanced by the rigours of getting there; we had come to a junction where we had the choice of either going three miles across the neck of a peninsula or fifteen miles round the coast, and had opted for the latter as it promised a beautiful sunset with the light turning the mountains reflected in the sea from red through gold to silver. It was the most literally "coastal" road imaginable, sheer unguarded drops to the water, and heading often straight down as if to land one in the sea, only to turn sharp inland round a jutting cliff. Suddenly, about half-way round, the foot-brake packed up completely. Five minutes later, the silvery dusk that we had just been enthusing over was swallowed up by an utterly unoonlit night, and three cows fast asleep in the middle of the road on a blind corner only escaped with their lives owing to them being on the "up"-slope. When we had moved them bodily, we calculated we were still 40 miles from Allihies and it was now raining quite heavily. Since with Irish Y.H.A. is not Irish for nothing, the

An Oige handbook was merely "one mile from the village", the choice of an infinite number of directions being left to the imagination. We resorted to an estimated rough average of instructions obtained at various pubs which landed us at one point with our front wheels overhanging a potato-field with the driver quietly muttering 'perhaps that wasn't where they meant us to turn right!' It was with some sense of relief that we saw the Y.H.A. triangle at about 10.30 p.m. The sunset had been superb.

We had come right round the south of the Ring of Kerry from Valentia Is. and Ballinskelligs, through some of the loveliest and most varied coastal scenery. Broad, sandy bays with rocks, and unexpected little sheltered coves give way to heather and broom-covered foothills running practically to the sea; then the sea itself seems to thrust inland among fir trees and bracken, or glances through the tropical type of foliage around Parknasilla; in places the road is flanked with prolific fuchsia hedges and fiery orange sprays of montbretia. It would be hard to find a route that concentrated so many whole vistas, and almost more striking glimpses of mountain and seascape. But this variety was one of the most attractive features of all S. Ireland. The almost desolate character of the mountains round Black Valley (outside Killarney) with panoramic views over the lakes, had an appeal quite different from Galtimore, where we stayed in the Mountain Lodge Hostel on our way across. The beauty of this area is its subtlety, the mountains are hospitable and crossed with waterfalls forming lush green dips with minutely detailed ferns and rowan trees glowing against heather. The falls were only slightly disenchanting when we found that a supposed "short-cut" from the Hostel necessitated taking off boots and socks and scrambling across trying to keep our gear as dry as possible! The Galty Mountains form a background to a broad agricultural plain, a real "Emerald Isle" valley, which is commanded by the Knockmealdown Mountain Pass, from which there is a marvellous run down the zig-zagging 'V'-road. This view could, I think, claim to rival the Vale of Tipperary, which we saw to great advantage from the tower of Cashel Abbey, a lovely ancient ruin which constituted about the only bit of sight-seeing we did on the holiday.

We altered our plan to stay at Killarney Hostel, in favour of the much more isolated Black Valley. We had originally thought of staying in Killarney to get a bath, but after a week in Ireland, that seemed a very trivial consideration. Running water was quite a luxury, and Black Valley did provide an outside tap, although we had to go to bed by candlelight. The window of our room, lacking glass, was boarded up against a gale that was blowing the night we arrived, but during the night the board blew in, bounced across the beds onto the landing. As the room was such that the beds were exactly jig-sawed in, to return the board from my position in the far top corner meant taking a deep breath and jumping for the doorway. I therefore decided that I wouldn't wake the others by attempting it - though if they could sleep with a

board jumping on them perhaps I wouldn't have made much difference.) Anyhow, the result was that in the morning, we found ourselves huddled under little heaps of blankets blown up against the wall at the heads of the beds. The fact that the cottage's function as a Youth Hostel is really subsidiary to that of a croft was indicated by the presence in the kitchen of dogs, kittens, hens, and, at one point, even the front half of a cow. However, the atmosphere and situation were terrific and justified our staying a second night there, even though we just failed in our attempt to climb Carrauntoohil, the highest mountain in S. Ireland.

Having found that these more off-the-beaten track hostels tended to have the most friendly atmosphere we decided to spend our last night at Foulksrath Castle which turned out to be as good as we'd hoped, providing the last of a number of evenings of (mainly Irish) folk singing. It was at least 60 miles out of our way, but that was symptomatic of the effect the country has. Distance, and to an even greater extent, time, really do seem irrelevant when there's nothing on the roads, and shops and pubs (usually the same thing) don't open and close, but just supply on demand. In fact we became so used to being able to walk in anywhere at virtually any time of the day or night, that we felt quite hard-done-by when we arrived back in England and found all the cafes and garages saying CLOSED. Ireland seemed very far away when we eventually sat down in a cafe in Cheltenham and instead of the friendly greetings we had come to expect, we found our scruffy looks were attracting disapproving stares. We had to console ourselves with our only momentos of a most enjoyable holiday - a handful of Irish folk records and a genuine Irish flea!

Clare Davies-Jones

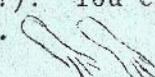
* CHAMBERS definition of BROKEN SPECTRE:

The name given to a striking appearance seen by an observer in an elevated position when his shadow falls on a cloud or fog bank below him. Owing to the difficulty of estimating the position of the cloud he instinctively assumes his shadow to be thrown at a great distance and thus receives the impression of great size; and, if the cloud is only a few yards below a group of people each imagines his own shadow to be immense while the others appear to cast no shadow at all. Moreover whether the others appear to cast shadows or not, each sees the shadow of his own head (but never of the other heads) surrounded by one or more coloured rings of light called 'glories', formed by diffraction of light. Five such rings have occasionally been observed. The outermost ring which is colourless and has an angular diameter of 67° is called the fog bow or ULLOAS RING, after Antonio de Ulloas, who was the first to observe it (Peru 1740). The spectre receives its name from the Brocken in the Hartz Mountains, where it is reputed to occur especially frequently.

GRUNTLE IN EXCELSIS (What Ron did next!)

The journey to Cader Idris was uneventful and by 4 a.m., on a very dark night we were asleep at the camp-site.

The peace was shattered early on Saturday morning with the beginning of the longest stream of abuse I have had the good fortune to hear. Without resort to actual profanity he produced the most fascinating monologue without apparently drawing breath.

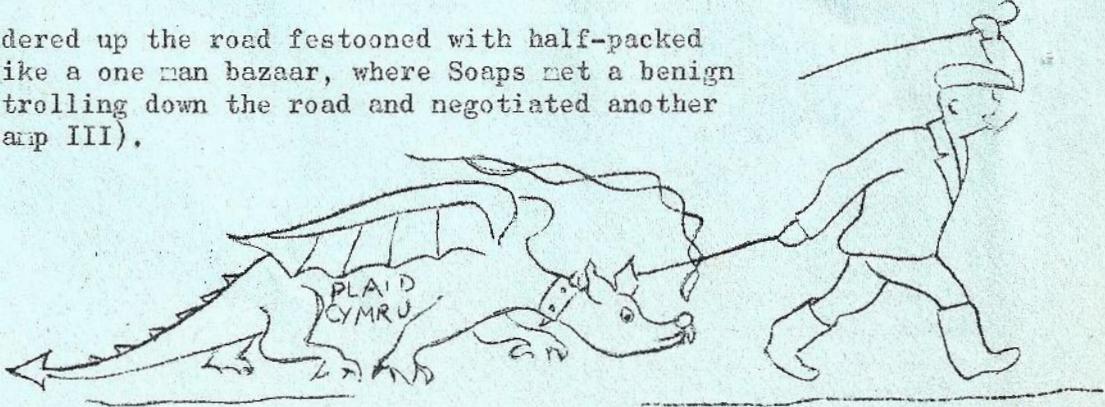
 What the devil is the meaning of this? Who told you to camp here? This is private land, this is my farm, > I live here, this is my field. Who the devil do you think you are, get off my land, what the devil is this? < Get off my land, the wife and myself were up until 2 o'clock, why didn't you ask permission? If you're not off my land in ten minutes I'll send for the policeman from the town. You're all from London I suppose you do this everywhere, you can't get away with it here though, this is my land. (f) How would you like it if I came and camped on your land in London (?). You come here disturbing my sleep, breaking down my fences..... 

"But", said Ron, "there seems to be some misunderstanding. This is Llanarmon-Dyffryn-Ceiriog Farm" (shows Welsh letter with map).

 To the devil with you, this is my farm. What is this paper, you can't camp here. Ll etc Farm is down the valley. I wake up this morning and there you are - what the devil is this I say. 

He retreated to the gate as postman arrived, waving stick. We, some of us, packed up. Meanwhile diatribe continued from the front door of the farmhouse some 50 yards away, with wife joining in. Note rose as Chris George and Soaps plod across the field, away from the gate. Man says, "that isn't the way, come back to the gate, you can't get out that way." They carry on walking across the field having more recent knowledge of another way in, i.e. the way we entered the field the previous night.

We wandered up the road festooned with half-packed equipment like a one man bazaar, where Soaps met a benign gentleman strolling down the road and negotiated another campsite (Camp III).

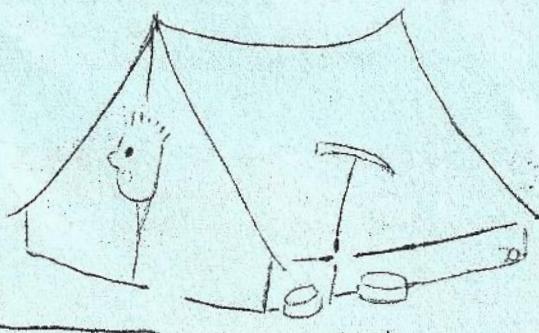


It was then 9.30 a.m. Cader Idris is a legend already and a small Welsh hill farmer has become immortal.

The morning was overcast but dry as we ascended the steep grassy slopes of Craig Las and into the cloud. We quickly gained the ridge and continued across the undulating top of Craig Las with the clarray fingers of mist wreathing silently around. It was quiet save for a jobbernowl, who shall be nameless, tooting on a tooter. It was becoming noticeably brighter as we progressed, with patches of blue sky appearing. Then suddenly a revelation as the clouds fell away. A dazzling, silently boiling sea of clouds further than the eye could see. An island in the sun with distant, snow flecked surmits away to the north being the only other reality on earth. No words can describe moments such as these since the dull physical exertion on a dreary day was so much a preparation. You are a microcosm facing the majesty of the world but also ten feet tall and exultant because we think and feel. The minutia and trivia of life are gone, sunk under the heaving blanket, and the new man emerged bubbling across the slopes to Penygadir. Over the steep northern slopes lay a white blanket of cloud and on it the haloed figure of yourself, the wonderful phenomena of the brocken spectre. * A spindly marionette figure with coloured rings around the head and a large white bow surrounding the whole group. Cavorting figures making a very strange spectacle leaping up and down as they progressed to the summit. Penygadir was magnificent and we sat there for a considerable time enjoying the rare spectacle that lay around us.

Our way back lay across to Mynydd Moel down past Llyn Aran and across the bogs to the campsite. The evening was spent in the usual manner with some diversion supplied by Strad who supplied an open air shuttle service to the pub, and a truly Welsh gathering who spent the evening singing. Sunday was almost a repitition of Saturday but leavened by two delightful but destructive pastimes. The first, known as 'trundling' is very much frowned upon in the best mountaineering circles, but we found a delightful site aimed at Llyn A Gadair. There are no rules to the game which consists of rolling stones down the hill-side. It sounds very tame but choose a very steep slope with a profusion of very large stones. Do make absolutely sure that no-one is in the way! The second diversion was the frozen surface of Llyn Gadir which was excellent sport (see Ex-Chairman's Memos, Age, the acting of section III, ice-breaking). Then we went home.

DAFFY DAN



With my heart in my mouth and my hand on my heart, and therefore in my mouth, Your Man in Manchester once more rears its ugly head.

I have just found out that 500 tons of atmospheric pollution falls on one square mile of Manchester each year, so I don't worry about my dandruff any more; I just spend my time trying to find out the exact date and which square mile so that I can keep clear.

I have been told we have just had Rag Week, which illustrates the power of advertising.

My feet continue to grow, mother.

Weatherwise we have just had a bad attack of the fogs, which comes yellow and dripping.

They have tripe shops up here and don't think it's funny.

I have just discovered the time and place, so, standing as I do neck deep in atmospheric pollution, I waggle my finger and say, "chin chin", with a whistle on my lips and ever a song in my heart, and exit page left to have a complicated operation to remove a whistle from my lips.

(A small dripping, yellow object, with a recent scar on its lips, returns several months later and takes up the gripping tale.)

I believe in my heart that more cars go into Manchester in the morning than come out in the evening, and my imagination is full of horrible ideas. I shall not go in and find out the shocking truth.

All the doorhandles at college keep breaking off, which is very amusing. We found a fellow who'd been in a darkroom for three months. He was beginning to smell.

With infra-red film, one can be photographed by the light of an electric iron, which, I am sure, is something worth knowing.

An article in a local paper was extolling the virtues of a football team which has just become international champions of the Rusholme Sunday Football League, Industrial Section, Second Division; the article ended, and I quote, 'A great spur has been provided by the club's supporters who turn up in atrocious conditions both at home and away matches.'

In the next part of the programme, we hope to meet Douglas Blake, have a frank and honest interview with the Prime Minister's dog and see a film of porridge. All these articles are to be seen in the

colour supplement, which is given free with each magazine, unless of course, the hon. treasurer has eloped with the club funds, the new fly-over is to be pulled down to make way for multi-storey car parks and the Green Belt is being concreted over to ease maintenance. Naturally this will never happen, so just turn to your colour supplement, pretend it's Sunday, and read on.

From the pen of LAURIE TOWNSEND

TANNERS NOVICE

7.30 p.m. West Humble Street.

Innocent novice: "Am I going the right way for the hostel?"

Humorous ramblers: "Ho! Ho! A cyclist. Take a hint mate, go onto Holmbury."

Persistent cyclist: "But I don't want to go to Holmbury, I want to go to Tanners."

After numerous guffaws, and knowing looks at each other: "All right; up the road, through the gate, follow the track, you can't miss it . . ." snigger, snigger.

8.00 p.m. Frantic looks at a London S.W. with a sadly ailing cycle lamp.

Conclusion: "I've come too far and missed the gate."

8.15 p.m. After a painful encounter with a bank with nearly ends in disaster, "Eureka, the gate! Nearly there now."

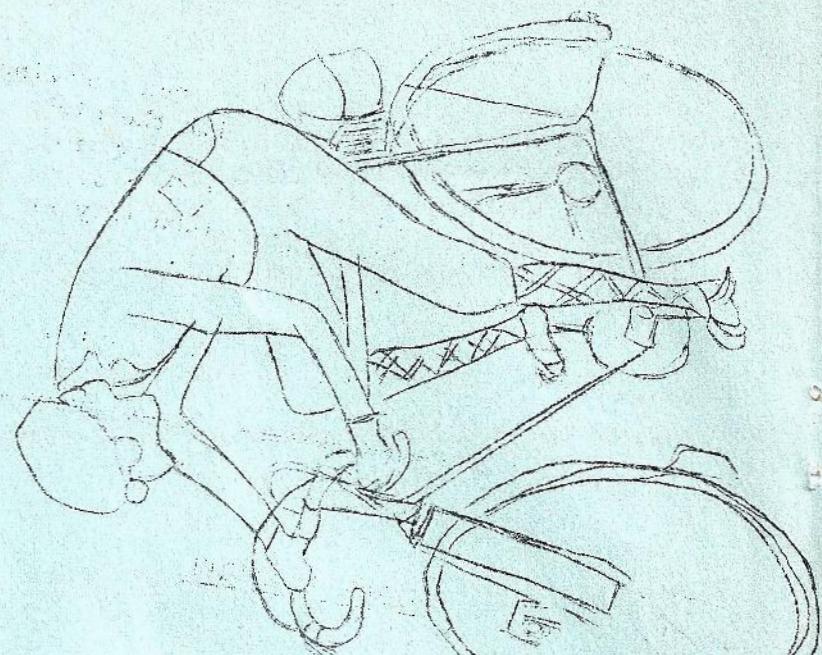
8.25 p.m. At last, a sign! The torch finally responding to repeated bashings, reveals a neatly painted board: POLESDEN LACEY
NO LITTER

After serious consideration I abandon the ideas of returning to the gate, pacing out 300 yards and turning left; and finally my paralytic lamp picks out a triangular sign, its black and white paint peeling: "Y.H.A."!
"I must be nearly there now."

8.45 p.m. A theory even the master himself would agree with; 'Perforated cycling shoes ain't no good in 4" puddles!"

8.55 p.m. "Ah! Made it."

STEVE PENFOLD

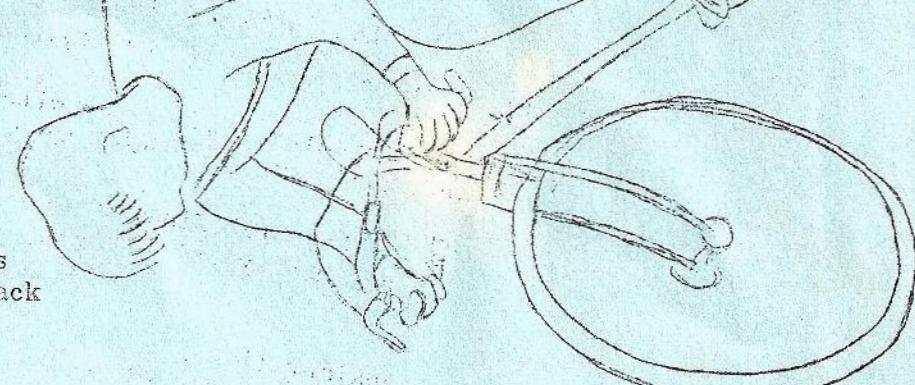


You have been
reading, or will
have just missed,
Viewpoint, the
sometimes monthly
magazine of Croydon
Y.H.A. Group.

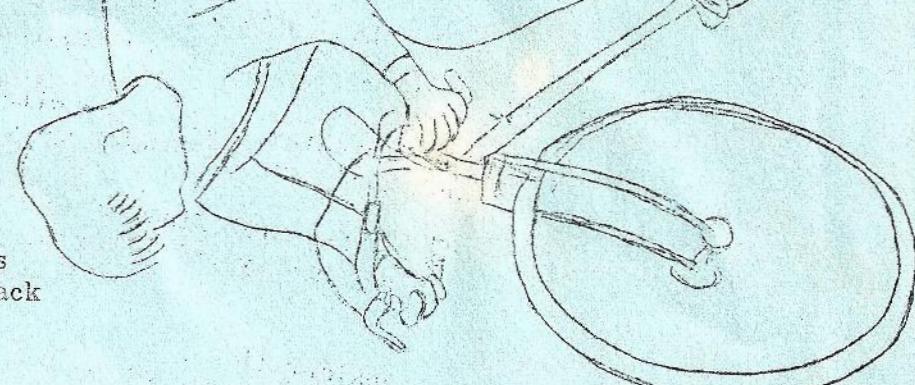
We'll call this one
MARCH 1967.



Congratulations to Ann
Alexander and hubby on
their wedding.



Shaun Norman's address
is British Antarctic
Survey,
Stanley,
Falkland Is.,
S. Atlantic.



Best wishes to
Diana Watch, who is
leaving us to go back
to Portsmouth.

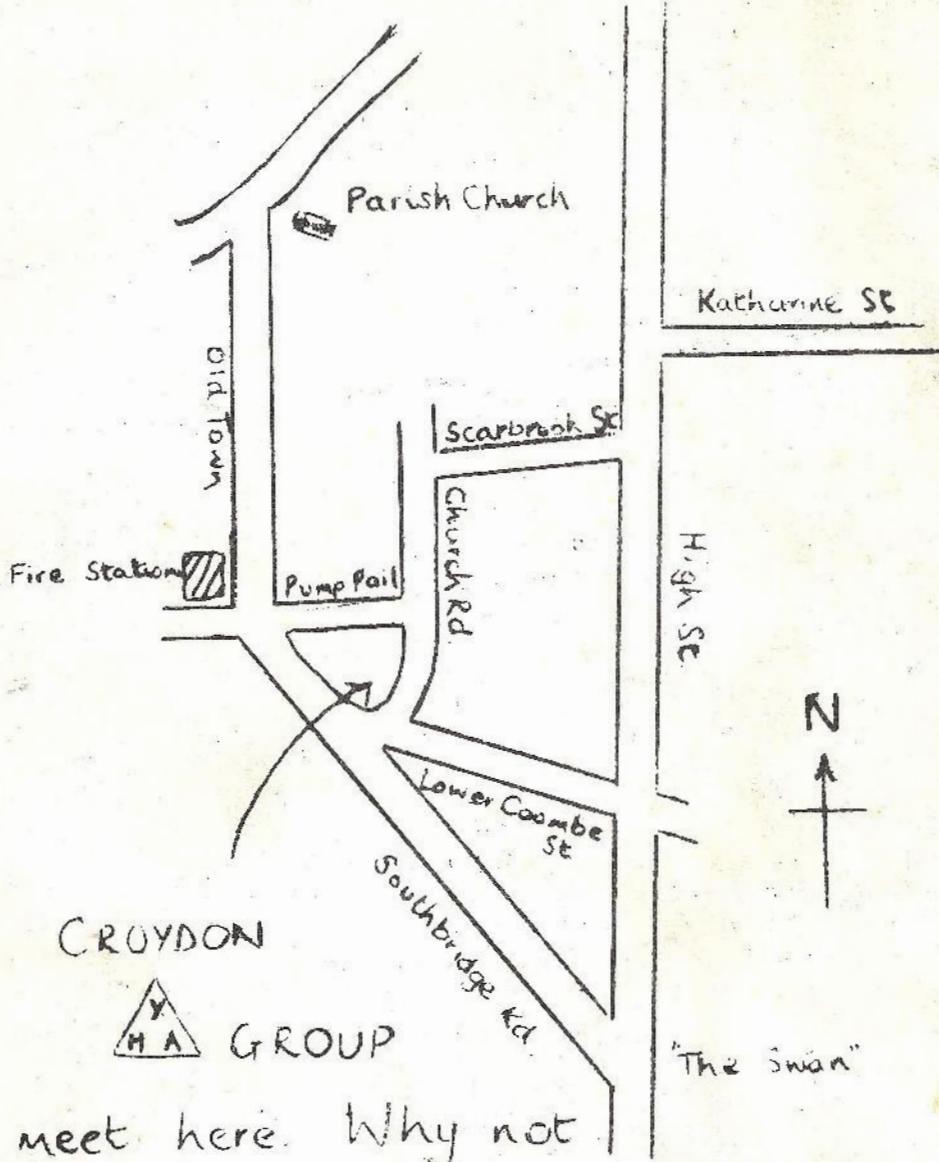
Welcome, Jean, to the Committee.

HAPPY EASTER EVERYONE

May all your blisters be
egg-shaped.







meet here. Why not come along. We meet every Tuesday, at 8 pm, in St. Andrews Small Hall, Pump Pail, Croydon.