

MAGAZINES

Many of the articles mentioned here are referred to in more detail in other chapters.

Number One

Every club likes to have a magazine of some kind: it charts the club's progress and also emphasises the sense of community. The GMC's first effort came six and a half years after its formation, in September 1973. A few extracts from the editorial:

"A great deal of water has passed under the bridge since our first meeting in March 1967....the Club now has nearly forty paid-up members and a disused chapel and a cottage at Capel Curig...a great challenge now faces the Club...over three thousand pounds is needed by the end of 1974 to complete the conversion work on what must be an extremely promising mountaineering centre...requires an effort by all concerned to raise the necessary funds by every possible means at their disposal."

And:

"Conversion work on the chapel is a major undertaking involving the installation of services (i.e. electricity, drainage etc.), the construction of a mezzanine floor to form an upstairs sleeping area, and extending the rear of the property (to provide toilets) and will take a number of years to complete...financial considerations are of prime importance and the Club has already received part payment of a Sports Council grant towards the project."

This was heady stuff and represented a complete victory by the "Pro-Chapel" wing against the opposition of those who posed the question "Do we want to become a chapel renovation society?". Time proved that it was possible to mountaineer *and* work on the property.

Other articles were: a summary of activities during the year; Alpine notes; the "Letter to a Subtle Festerer" by a certain lady member; an account of climbing on the east face of Tryfan; and a *very* intellectual crossword from Fowles. One across was: "I leave Kiev and join Les in the ditch on a mountain-side in Snowdonia". The answer? The Devil's Kitchen, of course! The prize was 50p worth of ale, to be supplied by the joint editors and consumed in their presence; Ken Clowes got closest but was stumped by the anagram in two down: "Ice axe rot causing loss of skin perhaps" giving the word "excoriate" which Clowes thought was highly obscure!

Number Two

Hard on the heels of the first effort, Number Two came out in January 1974 and covered climbing in the Avon Gorge (The Avon Gorge Sunshine Club); The Wasdale Show; Camping in Northwest Scotland; two articles on the Alps by Gill Beamer, one of them on French loos; and another impenetrable crossword and the offer of more ale from Mr Fowles.

Number Three

This appeared in February 1975 and was the third to be printed out on the amazing "Banda" duplicating machine in the offices of Guild Appleton, where Roger Hughes had a proprietorial interest. Once the magazines were complete the practice was to proceed to the Poste House in Cumberland Street, just round the corner from Hughes' Liverpool office, for a scoop or two. These occasions could get rather prolonged and after one such session they all trooped home, Fowles clutching the precious magazines. The following morning, a number of members

received agonised phone-calls from Fowles: he could not find the magazines! They turned up later, being discovered in the bottom of a wardrobe where he had drunkenly thrown them on his return from the Poste House.

The articles this time were: an ascent of the Old Man of Stoer; diving off Cayman (Kenny Clowes had gone offshore banking in the Caribbean); the year's meets programme; climbing on Lundy; an account of the Pennine Way by Rob Payne (of 14 Peaks Cup fame); White Slab on Cloggy by the aptly-named Chris Craggs; and sadly, no crossword this time, Mr Fowles having presumably given up on the intellectually shallow waters in which he found himself.

Number Four

To mark the Club's 10th Anniversary, Number Four came out on March 4th 1977. This was the first magazine since the "Banda" era and was photocopied after being typed. After a brief editorial the magazine began with an epic article by Fred Heywood on rock-climbing since the beginning; then an evocative poem by Heather Huxley on Scottish mountaineering; the classic Bens & Drams survey by Gilly B.; a matrix showing the major events of the past ten years; trekking in the High Atlas (Lin Jensen); off the beaten track (J.Hall); "Bunty" Hughes' account of 1976 rock activities; and yes, a Fowles crossword, still offering a prize of 50p!

The magazine then entered the "occasional series" phase, and it was over four years before the next issue:

Number Five

This came out in May 1981. The editorial referred to "the current very welcome resurgence on all fronts" and expressed the hope that "it will not be another four years before the next magazine comes out". Oh, pious hope! It was nearly seven years (see below). This time the contributions included: an amusing poem by Kathryn Penney and Lynette Thornton - the Tale of Judith Mills; the Climbing Report; the "English and Welsh Munros" by Simon Glover; Torridon report by Gilly B.; the Hard Man's Climbing Report; "A walk in the Kaimanawas", New Zealand report from Rob Payne; an atmospheric poem on Arch Gully, Stob Coire nam Beith; and, you've guessed it, a Fowles crossword with a splendid prize of £1.

Number Six

All credit to the Gilberts who brought out Number Six in March 1988. Entitled "GWYDYR 21", it marked the Club's coming-of-age. This splendid publication had a strong mountaineering flavour in recognition of the forthcoming Silver Jubilee Expedition in 1992. The areas covered included the Alps, Africa, and the Karakoram and mixed in with these were a number of articles from previous magazines including Early Climbing and Bens & Drams.

Number Seven

Entitled "Gwydyr News number 1", this Mike Gilbert production came out in April 1990 and was dominated by articles to do with the forthcoming Silver Jubilee Expedition in 1992. Thus the editor outlined the options; Nuala Mulholland regaled us with the story of her Everest base-camp trek; Jim Metcalfe gave us "Great Expectations"; Andy Chapman wrote about his Kilimanjaro trip in 1989; Mal Lamb described his preparations for the trip; and the editor, Mike Gilbert, portrayed Mera Peak as a suitable target for 1992.

Number Eight

Mal Bonner produced "Gwydyr News number 2" in February 1991. Articles included "Defeat on Dolerite Dump by Bob Burton; information on reciprocal rights for Alpine huts; equipment information; Mike McEneaney's defence of his 1990 14 Peaks Veteran's title; and the Mera Trek, dates and details.

Number Nine

Number Nine was produced by the McEneaney's in March, 1992 to mark the GMC's Silver Jubilee and included Roger Hughes' dissertation on the history of the name Gwydyr; an interesting list of the Committees of the first 25 years; the 1989 Swiss Alps trip, by Ronnie Waters; events for the week commencing 2nd March, culminating in the Club Dinner; and Mal Lamb's account of the ascent of Gran Paradiso.

Number Ten

By the spring of 1995 John Huxley had acquired a computer (from his nephew, who had gone on to greater things) and plenty of spare time (courtesy of the NHS, who agreed to kick him out at 50), although, of course, he was also busy writing this history. It was the ideal opportunity to bring out a magazine on a regular basis. The intention was to produce a magazine in spring each year (to cover winter mountaineering, AGM and Club Dinner) and in autumn each year (to cover all summer activities). Number Ten came out in the Spring of 1995, featuring on the cover a dark and atmospheric picture of the Snowdon Horseshoe. Below this it said "Continuing a long tradition on a new basis". There was an article summarising climbing and walking activities for the year, "Where to next?" by Mike Gilbert giving details of trekking in the Rockies for the Thirtieth Anniversary trip, Bryn Roberts' amusing account of a Winter trip to the Alps, then Elbrus by Bill Sutherland, a personal account of the 14 Peaks by Helen Beddows, and Naya Kanga Diary by Mike Gilbert. Then there was Mike Dagley's epic story "From Kerry to Kilimanjaro", another Mike Gilbert article on the ascent of Mt Kenya by the Ice Window route and, to finish, one of Mr Fowles' crosswords and an even more impenetrable Wordsearch from Paul Jensen.

Number Eleven

Number Eleven came out, as scheduled, in the Autumn of 1995 and featured a splendid, semi-colour picture of Tryfan on the front cover. Among the articles were "A Sea Cliff Odyssey", by Bryn Roberts; Nuala Mulholland's "Hartley Firmbrun is Dave Gray"(see the Lakes chapter); "Girls on Tour", the story of the all-female Alps trip in summer '95; and accounts of trips to Skye and the Offa's Dyke Path.

Number Twelve

Number Twelve, in Spring 1996, was again on schedule. Ah, the benefits of having a full-time magazine editor. This time topics covered included two accidents, one on Tryfan and one on the Glyders; Autumn-Time in Wadi Rum, Bryn Roberts' poetic account of his and Chris Schiller's trip to Jordan; and articles on ice-climbing in North Wales, taking dogs up snow-covered mountains in Torrion and drinking tea in Nepal.

Number Thirteen

When Number Thirteen came out in Autumn 1996 the schedule was still being maintained, much to everyone's surprise and pleasure, we hope. This bumper edition ran to 74 pages with no less

than seventeen articles in addition to the usual editorial and climbing/walking reports. The articles covered trips all over Britain and in the Alps, Dolomites and South America. The first of Hilary Cooper's Club Profiles of members also appeared.

Number Fourteen

Due to the absence of the editor in the northeast for a considerable part of the year, Number Fourteen did not appear until Autumn 1997. There were eleven articles in addition to the regulars including three on America, one on New Zealand and three on Scotland. Colour pictures appeared for the first time.

Number Fifteen

Finally, Number Fifteen, diplomatically retitled Winter 1998, came out in January 1999, covering effectively the whole of 1998.

The Future

There will be an autumn magazine this year, after which it should be back to two magazines a year from next spring. The Club certainly produces enough material for this and it is important to continue to record the Club's activities as a sort of rolling history; as long as the editors keep badgering people to write articles (and produce them to a deadline) the magazine should continue to be an important feature of Club life.

[Return to Contents page](#)

[Go to next Chapter](#)