



COSMIC BULLSHEET

The Bulletin News-Sheet
of Cosmic Hillbashers

ISSUE No 31
QUARTER 3 - 2002

Editorial

Phill Thompson

Are rather thin edition of the Bullsheet this time , due to time constraints and holidays on my part and a lack of material from all but "my regulars" Elaine and Ewen. So if you want a thicker Bullsheet get writing up some of the tales of daring do that Cosmics get up to in the summer. There are lots of activities going on out there that I know of .

At the time of writing we are approaching the longest day, traditional time for those heroic attempts at mountain journeys so hopefully we will have some reports in the next edition. Me, I'm just concentrating on fighting off the ageing process as every year another personal worst is achieved in some event or other, this time an over 40 mins for 10k recently. Sigh, how quickly the cockiness of youth disappears !

Some of Ewen's email links can be a bit disconcerting with lots of advice on what to do to slow down the ageing process but very rarely anything good and practical. "Go to bed earlier and you'll live longer" Naw, not worth it! . In the past 15 months I've found I now go to bed on average 11/2 hours later. Now add all this up over 365 days , assume a "useful" day of 16 hours and I've actually gained 34 days per year! Therefore every 11 years I live I gain an additional year of active life by not going to bed early !! Wish I had realised this years ago , but still got time to get in an extra 3 years or so !

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Jerry Hadwin is now living in sunny Muscat and is claiming "associate membership" of Cosmics on the basis of free accommodation for people who want to have a fun holiday with lots of mountains, rocks and deserted coastline . Jerry's email is Jerry@tracsint.com

The Grey Corries by Moonlight Part 2.

Continuing Glyn Jones' account of his epic journey.

The light is now almost gone. Binnein Mor towers against a sky rich as honeysuckle blossom, with a star pricking brightly about the summit, where light grades to blackness. I have an idea where the path should be but don't find it until it drops over the shoulder turning south towards the Coire a Bhinnein. As a path, it's useless – in several places it is treacherous with ice where seeping water has frozen during many days and I might have been safer on the open hillside. After crossing the burn, I lose the zig-zag path and am on the open hillside anyway, on a bearing for Sgurr Eilde Mor.

Up to now, it's been hard but not insuperable. Now I'm beginning to wonder I've been climbing the loose snow for ages, bits of crust breaking off to cascade down at every step; sometimes several steps get me nowhere. I must be three quarters of the way up because it's got very steep, yet the total darkness won't allow me to judge how far and I struggle onwards, tacking from side to side. Eventually, I can make it across to the ridge on my right, where I find footprints from last weekend and snow firm enough to make some headway. Can't be far now many minutes go by before the slope at last eases. I feel exhausted, having expended enough energy on this hill tonight to climb it three times in summer.

Within the inner reality a shard of memory nudges my mind . A wee boy of 9 at Pen y Pass, Easter time; going to climb Snowdon with his daddy and another man who has a son of 14 – a big boy. Half way up, in much snow and mist, the wee boy is afraid for his father, who is old, tired and cold. He pretends to be cold and tired himself, so the climb is abandoned – they will come back another time. But they never do. My subconscious must be searching for a way out. I've done the best bit – the quality of snow-covered Mamores cannot be surpassed. Surely, I want an excuse to 'come back another time' How easy it is to make excuses for not doing what you have to do' I wrestle inwardly on the direct line from Sgurr Eilde Mor to Luilbeilt. It takes me 2 ½ hours. Admittedly, this includes a stop of 45 minutes to eat and debate the sense and worth of continuing this trip but there is also much foundering through deep drifts in the complex geography of this area. I'm going to the bothy to put a message in the book as a safety measure because if conditions had been good, I would have had a crack at Charlie Ramsay's round. The weather is perfect but in

such snow as this, that would take me more than 36 hours and then there is the ice, which has made all tracks unusable, except with extreme caution.

Great plates of ice cover half the river, making me doubt the sanity of using the usual fording place beside the ruined lodge, so I walk upstream for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in hope There is no easy place to cross, so it is back to Luibeilt and the 6ft iron fence to use as a fording aid. Off with socks and roll up 2 pairs of tracksters and into the dark swirling water. Then, on to the ice with water flowing beneath, testing and stabilising with the post. A bit further and I jab it in too hard, resulting in an ominous cracking. As a lump of ice the size of a dining table floats gracefully towards Loch Treig, I leap ... and land mercifully without damage, although wetter than I'd hoped to get away with. Breaking off the rest of the ice in my path, I complete the crossing by wading, legs almost numb but panic held at bay. Then run to the bothy, where I cause consternation to the inmates, who haven't ever seen anybody with no socks on at -6° . Even more surprise when I leave as soon as my message is written - well, my attempt is supposed to be 'unsupported', isn't it?

I jog for 10 minutes in an attempt to drain water from my shoes, then stop to put on socks and eat. The moon rises $\frac{3}{4}$ and waning but quite bright enough to reveal the glory of this landscape. Another mile and I have to sit down for a moment in the shelter of my bag-cape.... 'Close that bloody kitchen door to keep the heat in' Barbara is shrieking at me. 55 minutes after sitting down, the 'slamming door' jerks me back into consciousness and I am surprised to find myself lying on a bank of frozen heather in the Coire na Cabaig, my shimmering breath the only sign of warm-blooded life up here. The rucksack has fallen off my feet and a breeze flaps the polythene cape against my legs. This won't do at all! Its excruciatingly cold and I need to get moving up Stob Ban. I plod up in the deep snow, gradually regaining heat. From this side, it's a barren beauty. The Grey Corries gleam in shades of silver and grey; in shadow, whilst burns gash the opposite hillside with harsh black lines. It's a surreal world and very empty, yet I have the uneasy feeling that I've been aiming for this night all my life. Why? Am I close to a particularly porous interface with another world? Am I about to leave this one? I must practice care and patience.

The descent of Stob Ban into those shadows is a hair-raising, running, stumbling slide which quite exhausts me. When I look back, its steep North face appears Alpine. I can find no water around the Lochan an Coire Rath and succumb to fatigue for 20 minutes behind a knoll on the complicated col Then it's the long slow ascent of Stob Choire Claurigh, made more wearisome by following my slithering glove down 100 hard won feet of hillside but at the top a frisson sparks rejuvenation through my body as I gaze at the ultimate moonlit journey; the Grey Corries ridge. I feel like the defiant child who sneaks from his bed to the fairground at dead of night to ride the helter skelter without a mat. This isn't the adrenalin rush of a hill race or even the prolonged excitement of adventure racing. This is just pure adventure and I'm going to push my luck to the limit tonight.

The words 'solo and unsupported' point like a signpost along the Grey Corries to where Ben Nevis and his acolytes stand in sombre array, at the gateway back to another world. I'm poised at the brink of something so majestic that it's beyond my tiny comprehension. Here is the face of my God, my Truth. The savage frontal view, not the receding back as He floats away or even His profile which I've glimpsed occasionally before, through veils of cloud. Words I learned in blinkered youth erupt: 'The power and the glory for ever and ever, amen' I feel apprehensive, awed, wanting to become part of such eternal energy, yet not quite willing to sacrifice myself on this altar tonight. Dangerous!. Very dangerous trains of thought, conveying me towards that land where the dark rises higher and higher on her bursting song of victory.

There are moments of Being (or maybe Believing). Moments when you understand praise when you know you are one of the cells through which God is perceiving the beauty and wonder of the universe. You feel a presence. Call it God, call it what you will - the presence is undeniably there. And the Grey Corries by moonlight is an aesthetic experience without equal. As I fly down from Stob Choire Claurigh along the ridge, a plume of spindrift whirls out over the corrie and the experience is absolutely brilliant. This is one of those moments of Being when outside distractions shrivel away to absolute silence. For a few miles on this perfect winter's night my spirit escapes the physical realm of bad knees and fatigue and the journey becomes mystical.

Cosmic Social Events – Quarter 3 Year 2002
Social Secretary – Elaine Stewart

Social Retrospective

April

Tuesday 2nd

Thanks to Ian Searle who gave a very interesting slide show of his round the world Cutty Sark yacht race.

Thursday 4th

Thanks to Helen Mackie for organising this one, pizza at Carmines then on to the theatre to see Dancing in the Streets. Maybe you're all too young to remember Edwin Starr, Freda Payne (Band of Gold) and Martha Reeves?

Friday 19th

A few cosemics went along to 'strutt their stuff' at the disco in Stonehaven. The event was to help raise funds for the Stonehaven half marathon. It was certainly obvious that Dennis and Gary had not wasted their time by giving up Tuesday nights at the pub with their fellow cosemics by going to Ceroc dance classes, these boys really know how to put a girl through a few spins.

Saturday 20th

Thanks to everyone who made the effort to take along some home bakes for after The Clachnaben Hill Race and to Dan and Claire who sampled most of them! Tasty mmm.... Most appreciated.

May

Thursday 23rd

Good turn out of 10 Cosmic's for the curry, we all managed to devour a banquet of food. Stuart Hunter was not drinking though even after much encouragement, couldn't even tempt him with a cigarette, see... this is what you have to do to run faster. Some things you just have to give up !!

Forthcoming Features

June

Tuesday 25th

It's John Buchan's 5k charity run at Granholm, entry fee £3.00 all proceeds go to charity. Ladies race starts at 7pm, men at 7:30pm.

Then it's back to the John & Sue's new abode for food and refreshments, it would be appreciated if some people could take along some contribution to the food.

The address is Woodcroft Avenue, Bridge of Don, tel 703207.

July

Tuesday 16th

After the run on Forvie Sands there will be the usual BBQ, games and swim at Hackley Bay. Portable BBQ's will be provided but take along your own food and drink. Best to take along a rucksack with spare clothes, food, swimwear (it's pretty cold out there, but some have done it) if required as you will need to run with it to Hackley Bay first then carry on with the run.

Weekend 20th/21st

Cosmic jolly weekend away to Skye for the Glamaig Hill Race & the celebration of Liz Horton's 30th birthday party. Liz has already booked the Sligichan Bunkhouse and had reserved some places for us, so let me know ASAP to reserve you a bed.

The race starts at 3 o'clock is 4.5 miles, 2400ft and costs £3 to enter, and for this money you also get two free drinks of your choice and a hot meal. Best value for money hill race going!! There is usually a live band in the pub at night for those still able for a bit of dancing.

August

Thursday 8th

Some of you may want to think about doing the Ballater Highland Games hillrace, its short, sharp and you get £5 if you can do it in 25mins. You need to take the afternoon off, as the race is early afternoon, a good social event, you can be drinking in the hospitality tent by 3. This can be followed up by a night on the town, this is usually highly entertaining.

Weekend 24th/25th

Cosmic jolly weekend away mountain biking.
Route yet to be decided.

September

Thursday 12th

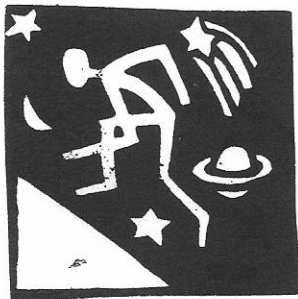
A night at the new refurbished Carmines for pizza or pasta, a three course meal will set you back £6.50. Remember and bring your own drink. Be there for 6pm or could be later as he's now open till late, but let me know.

DON'T FORGET..... TUESDAY NIGHT IS PUB NIGHT.

Late Summer Tuesdays

Meet at Hazlehead at 6-15pm or venue for 6-45pm approx.(depending on distance from Aberdeen). For Krunces go straight to venue (GR-NJ851055 -remember 50p)

2nd July	KRUNCE 4	GR-NJ851055	Bieldside Inn
9th July	CAIRN MON EARN Maryculter	GR -NO768924	Old Mill Inn,
16 th July	FORVIE SANDS	GR-NK003270	Barbecue at Hackley Bay
23rd July	CLACHNABEN	GR-NO649868	Feughside Inn
30th July -	MITHER TAP Arms, Monymusk	GR-NJ699217	Grant
6 th August	KRUNCE 5 Remember your 50p		Bieldside Inn
13 th August	DURRIS KELLY Maryculter	GR-N0762916	Old Mill Inn,
20th August	BALMEDIE	GR-NJ976181	Barbecue
27 th August	MILLSTONE Arms, Monymusk	GR-NJ672190	Grant
3rd Sept.	KRUNCE 6 Remember your 50p Bieldside Inn		Presentation -
10 th Sept.	DURRIS Maryculter	GR-N0762916	Old Mill Inn,
17 th Sept.	HILL of FARE	GR-NJ743039	Pub in Echt
24 th Sept.	NE KIRKHILL Manor	GR-NJ845116	Bucksburn
31 st Sept.	BRIMMOND Bucksburn Manor.	GR-NJ858101	



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