

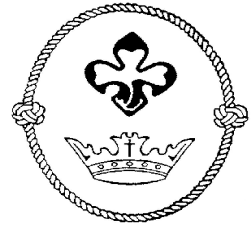


POSTSCRIPT

360: 8th Week, Michaelmas 2004



THE
CHRISTMAS
SPECIAL!



Haute Cuisine!



Dining in style at the Freshers' Camp

Plus:

Winter Walking

Your last chance to sign up

Mountain Leadership

David Ball shows us how it's done

Postscript



Issue 360 – Third of Michaelmas 2004

An OUSGG publication

Editor: Alistair Green (St Hugh's)

Chair: Sarah Berman (Queen's)

Chair-elect: Gail Hedley (Magdalen)

Treasurer: Sam Snelson (Wadham)

Secretary: Catherine Blake (St Anne's)

N'n'N organiser: Michael Ramsden (St Peter's)

Winter Walking organiser: Mark Hawkins (Queen's)
Internet Officer: Caroline Berry (Ex-Keble)

Membership: Jonathan Harvey (Brookes University)

SSAGO Rep.: Mark Hawkins (Queen's)

Scout & Guide Liaison: Katherine Butler (Queen's)
Quartermaster: Michael Ramsden (St Peter's)

Old Members' Rep.: Chris Seward (ex-Jesus)

Senior Member: Gavin Williams

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Any items received will be presumed to be for publication unless otherwise notified. The editor reserves the right to modify contributions.

Views expressed in *Postscript* are those of their authors, and might not correspond to those of OUSGG or associated bodies. Or indeed those of any sane person.

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Cover photo courtesy of Sarah Berman. That's supposed to be custard in the pan, by the way.

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Editorial

“Postscript? Bah, humbug!” I thought, as I sat down to write yet another editorial. After all, it's not as if there's ever anything to actually *say* in an editorial; it just has to be the requisite length. In fact, it must be rather like being an arts student – you simply fill the page and don't worry about whether your long and rambling sentences have any actual information content. The only difference is, I still have to get up for nine o'clock lectures.

“But,” I hear you cry, “I came to the AGM just to get my hands on a copy of *Postscript!* Surely you can do better than that?”

Oh, all right then, here goes...

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Alistair Green (St. Hugh's) – Editor

Chair's Report

Well, my term as OUSGG term has reached its conclusion... phew! No, seriously, I have actually enjoyed myself and am really pleased with how everything has gone. There was faff, there was a little panic, but there have also been seven enjoyable and well-attended Monday meetings plus a very successful (if extremely cold) Freshers' Camp, where we enjoyed a bonfire and air rifle shooting and I discovered quite how appalling I am at orienteering! (Remember this before you pass me the map at Winter Walking!)

The turnout has been excellent throughout the term, peaking (unsurprisingly!) with the fair trade wine and chocolate evening, and I've been delighted by the number of freshers who've joined, and their enthusiasm. These last three weeks we've been to see Jesus Christ Superstar and were singing all the way to the following week's meeting, at which Alison led us in indoor climbing at Brookes, and finally last week we had a go at dark age re-enactment and stick fighting. Michael was both alarmingly keen and alarmingly good at this, be warned!

I hope you've all had fun this term; thank you all for coming and special thanks to Mark and Alison who've helped me out a great deal. All that remains to be said is best of luck to Gail and her six assistants next term!

Sarah Berman (Queen's) – Chair

Letters To The Editor

Sir,

Whilst devouring the latest issues of my favourite Oxford publication, I was shocked to discover that I am still the secretary. This was news to me, given the hash I made of it last time.

Yours, I-don't-want-a-committee-post-edly,

Phil

Sorry about that. It's now been corrected, along with the senior member's name. – Ed.

Dear Sir,

It is generally widely known that writing articles for your esteemed publication is an effective way of avoiding academic work. However, whilst reading Mr. Harvey's article on Star Trek, I noticed that he did, in fact, become confused with the two ideas. Surely '*sanctimonious, touchy-feely twaddle, and deeply improbable...*' is actually the introduction to another second year nursing essay? I feel clarification is needed.

Yours etc.,

A Confused Reader.

WINTER WALKING™

It's the 29th of December; you had fun on Christmas day receiving new socks, eating turkey and watching the Queen's speech; Boxing Day wasn't too bad either, but now you're sick to the back teeth of turkey soup, turkey sandwiches and turkey curry. It needn't be like this any more, though, because you're heading off to Winter Walking™ for a week of walking, games and a fantastic New Year's Eve with OUSGG! But the question still remains as you pack your rucksack – should you risk taking that jumper Auntie Ethel knitted you for Christmas?

Winter Walking will be held between the 29th of December and the 4th of January on the edge of the Peak District. We will be staying in the Gibson Building at Consall Camp Site, which is situated between Leek and Cheadle. For more details on the site see <http://www.consallscoutcamp.co.uk> on the web. The nearest train station for is Blythe Bridge. It is anticipated that the cost will be no more than £10 per night.

If you want to join OUSGG on Winter Walking for any of the time between the 29th of December and the 4th of January please email Winterwalking@ousgg.org.uk or give me a ring (07984193840) with dates.

Mark Hawkins – *Winter Walking Organiser*

Oxford Gang Show 2005

28th February – 5th March 2005 at the New Theatre, Oxford.

Yes, it's that time again, the Gang Show is coming to town. So because Alistair will be forced to publish the minutes of some random 'do we need rope'* meeting, and I've been given a prod by the publicity people, find a few inches of text below. For those of you that don't know, the Gang Show is a long-standing tradition within the Scout and Guide Association and is an amateur singing, dancing, acting, general entertainment type of show. Each year, districts, or counties, join together and the results are often very good. In Oxford the show is put on at the New Theatre, often to full crowds and the atmosphere is great. It's a great opportunity for all the participants, both performing and behind the scenes and all the members really enjoy themselves. I have worked selling programmes for two years now and this will be my final year (maybe!). There can never be too many people involved with the Gang Show and all help is gratefully received, especially with publicity and advertising. If you are interested in helping, please see the website <http://www.oxfordgangshow.org.uk> for more details. Even if you don't want to sell programmes, please put the above dates in your diaries and come and watch a show that will make you proud to be associated with the two movements.

Hayley Thompson

* No!

Minutes of the 132nd meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

There is no escape! But at least Catherine Blake is no longer a fresher...

Present:

Sarah Berman (Chair), Cat Blake (Secretary), Gail Hedley (Chair Elect), Michael Ramsden, Caroline Berry, Jacqui Bradley

Apologies:

Sam Snelson, Mark Hawkins, Alison Parker, Phil Alderton

Meeting started at 18:37.

Approval of Minutes

Everyone agreed on the facts, but not on the spellings. Sarah wondered why her surname is repeatedly spelled wrongly.

Matters Arising

- The stores have successfully been moved out of Bevington Road and into Littlegate House, St Ebbe's. The Clubs Committee are currently not sure which room our cupboards will be placed in, and have yet to decide on rental. Our stuff remains, therefore, in cardboard boxes, although access is possible. Michael needs to go and get the key. Rob needs to be contacted about the location of the second key, and another permanent Oxford person needs to be found to hold the second key.
- Sarah to speak to Director of Sport about the storage of gas cylinders.
- Insurance has been sorted out.
- We have new mugs – and very fine mugs they are too.
- Mark to check if OUSU website has a link to our website on it.

Officers' Reports

Chair: – Term has gone well overall, although disappointing fresher turn out for 2nd week, but has improved since. Three freshers have so far signed up for freshers' camp. Twenty people are coming to the theatre, including seven freshers. Freshers' camp organisation is still ongoing – I need help with the food in particular (everyone nominated Phil for this). TGM meeting room has been booked.

Chair-elect: – Not much to report. Still waiting for six

Quotes of the Term

Keith: "Michael's got a long dangly one!"

Jenny: "Am I cohe... err, no, I'm not!"

volunteers to run a meeting each next term. (Gail is running weeks 1 and 8).

Treasurer: – Current Account (31/09/04)
Balance: £291.26

Events Account (31/08/04)
Balance: £450.63

Ex-Members' Account (31/08/04)
Balance: £149.40

N.B. Sam points out that these figures are taken from Maddy's accounts and he may have misinterpreted them. Also Sarah and Caroline are happy to be signatories if needed. Sarah says that there has been a small loss so far this term.

Secretary: – We are registered. We are having the F&GPC meeting – which is going successfully so far. So a good term so far. Thanks to Phil for answering all of my many questions.

- SSAGO Rep:** –
1. There was a Midlands activity evening on Wednesday but no one from attended from Oxford.
 2. The SSAGO rally is in Southampton in 2 weeks time and the theme is 'James Bond'. Please let me know if you are planning to go and I will sign you up on the web.
 3. CRB checks will need to be carried out for people going on the rally (I am not sure if these can be done on the rally or not), and for everyone else before the SSAGO form is due in (at the end of the year).

Any Other Business

Senior Member – Gavin Williams has agreed to be our senior member. We should thank Dr Katherine Blundell for her support over the last two years. Cat to write her a letter.

Stores and Freshers' Camp – We have two 2-man tents (perhaps) and one 'suspicious' 2-man tent. The camp site has no cooking equipment, but we probably have enough to make sure none of the freshers starve. Phil to type up stores inventory this term.

Web officer – Caroline wants to resign. Sarah is happy to take over when she finishes her term as chair – as long as it's not too hard.

The Mountain Leader Award

David Ball *on learning to take charge in the hills*

I have for some time been intending to write an article for Postscript on life after OUSGG, as a Scout Leader. However, since it is all somewhat depressing, I thought instead that I would respond to Alistair's plea for articles by telling you all about the Mountain Leader Award (ML).

So what is the ML, and what does it have to do with OUSGG? The ML is a nationally recognised award for people who want to lead others in the hills and mountains of the UK, and is awarded by the UK Mountain Training Board (UKMTB). It is the qualification you legally have to have if you want to take under-18s into the hills and get paid for it, and it is a very good idea to have it if you lead any groups in the hills, since it proves you are competent to do so. To get a Scouting authorisation for Terrain 2 (which covers areas above 800m or involving any scrambling), you have to hold ML or be assessed to the same standard.

In groups like OUSGG, there is rarely a designated party leader - but there's normally someone (or several people) who are more experienced, who decide where to go, who navigate through the day and who to some extent look after everyone else. Those people are leading people in the hills, even if they're not explicitly designated as such. If that sounds like you, then ML is something you might like to consider.

The award itself follows several stages, starting with personal experience. That means going out walking with others – either as a group of peers or as a member of a party with a leader. Obviously, it is important to keep a record of this experience – this is normally done in the form of a log which records what area of the country you were in, exactly where you went, whom you went with, what the weather was like, and anything interesting that happened along the way.

In fact, it is a good idea to keep a log even if you don't currently intend going for ML – you never know when you might want to apply for an authorisation, or you might do ML in the future. In either case, you will need a log to prove your prior experience, and the further back it goes, the

better.

The second stage of the award is to complete a six day training course. This covers all aspects of the ML syllabus, which roughly contains the following areas:

- Navigation
- Party management
- Leader's equipment
- Security on steep ground
- Wild Camping
- Hazards: river crossings, emergency rope work, dealing with accidents, etc.
- Access to and conservation of the upland environment
- Legalities of leading groups in the mountains.

By far the biggest area is on navigation – and this is the area where practice is the best way to learn. Unlike some other parts of the syllabus, you cannot learn how to navigate by reading it in a book – you have to actually go and do it. If you're one of those people who normally lets someone else think about where you're going when you go out walking, then next time, try looking at the map yourself. You never know when you might need your navigation skills in an emergency, and by developing them you will gain the confidence to go out on your own, or as a leader yourself.

After the training course, you have to spend a period of time in 'consolidation'. This basically means practising and gaining experience – both personal walking experience and experience in leading groups, perhaps as an assistant leader. People spend varying amounts of time in consolidation, from a few months to several years – the average is probably 1 or 2 years.

At the end of the consolidation period comes the last step: assessment. This is the scary part! The assessment normally takes 5 days, which includes a 3-day expedition. Some of the syllabus is covered by a written paper, but most of it is practical – in other words, you go out walking as a group of candidates with an assessor.

Most of the time on the assessment is spent on navigation. You have to be ready to say exactly

where you are at any time - even when it's not your turn to lead the group. This is not too hard during the day, but an important part of the assessment is your ability to navigate in low visibility or at night.

Apart from navigation, the practical part of the assessment also covers security on steep ground (i.e. managing a party on a scramble), emergency rope work, party management and wild camping skills. Your knowledge of flora, fauna, geology, access and conservation is also assessed.

Another part of the assessment is your log book. You have to have at least 40 days' walking and 4 nights' wild camp in order to go for assessment, but really they like to see 60 or 70 days. They also look for experience in a wide range of areas, and in different weather conditions. They are looking for both personally challenging experience and experience in leading groups. (Obviously these two categories should not overlap!).

At the end of the assessment comes the most nerve-wracking part: waiting for the result. There are three possible outcomes: Pass, Fail and

Defer.

If the assessors decide you have met the standard, then you pass. If you were below the required standard in several areas, you will fail. If you are mostly OK, but have fallen short in just one area, then they can defer you. This means you must do a further period of consolidation, followed by a one-day re-assessment in the area in which you were deferred. Typically, people are deferred on navigation (especially low-visibility navigation).

If you pass, what comes next? You have shown you are competent to lead groups anywhere in the UK in summer conditions (i.e. whenever it's not snowing). However, the ML is just the first rung on the ladder: there is the Winter ML for leading groups in Winter conditions; the Single Pitch Award, for leading groups in single pitch climbing; the European ML, for leading groups in European mountains; and the Mountain Instructor scheme, which includes summer and winter multi-pitch climbing. At the very top, you can become a Mountain Guide, qualified to lead groups anywhere in the world in any conditions – and as you might imagine, there are not many of these around!

The World Scout Moot (Part 3)

Mark Hawkins on *Taiwan, Buddhism...and fish*

The buses left EC2 for Hualein – a long journey round the coast of the island. We kept ourselves entertained by mainly sleeping.

On the bus Yung Cheng and Lin Chen Chu taught me some Chinese. The scenery along the road was quite spectacular – very green and rugged. We stopped at the Taiwanese version of a service station en route where we met up with some of the buses from different expedition centres before

heading onwards to Dong Hwa University where we would be spending the rest of the Moot.

On arrival we pitched up our tents in our pre-

allocated areas, before exploring the site and meeting up with the rest of the UK contingent to find out what they had been up to for the past four days.



It was then time for opening ceremony number three, before we started on activities the next day.

My bus went on a cultural excursion for the first day. In the morning we visited a Buddhist Centre. You had to remove your shoes and carry them

around in a little bag with you. The centre had its own hospital, school and even university! They seemed to do all sorts of things from training

doctors to charity work! The centre itself was certainly very impressive with lots of marble floors and impressive doorways. They also had excellent air conditioning! We then headed to a fish museum of all places to eat lunch! It was an ‘interesting’ lunch box - but I won’t go into detail since I had a big rant about them in a previous article.

There’s only so much you can do at a fish museum, and it didn’t take long to find the beach which was a few hundred yards down the road.

The beach was a definite improvement on the fish museum and plenty of people took the opportunity to cool off in the sea.

After lunch we went cycling; so much for taking it easy in the heat of the day! All the bikes came in one size – small – and many of my patrol were disappointed that Rob, our IST, couldn’t find one big enough. (Well, he *is* literally seven feet tall)! The route was along the coast from one bike hire place to the next. I was quite close to the front, but no-one had told us where the route finished, so Kevin and I, along with a group of others, shot past the finish and then wondered where we were going as the path petered out. We did, however, find somewhere to get a drink before we worked out where the finish was – Kevin had to resort to asking a policeman. (In case you are wondering, Kevin is Taiwanese).

We were then let loose in Hualein town for a few hours before it was time to head back to site. I was walking round with Will and Thomas who were both looking for some boxer shorts – theirs were wet from going in the sea earlier and were getting uncomfortable! Most people headed straight for Pizza Hut or McDonald’s, but Thomas, Will, Delila, Brenda and I decided to head up to the temple on the other side of town to

take in some proper Chinese culture.

The next day it was an early start as we headed off for white water rafting. After watching the safety video in the bus, everyone fell asleep for the journey. Once we arrived it was a bit confusing as to what was going on, but we

eventually worked out that we need to get into teams for the boats. Once we had enough people, a boat, a life jacket, a paddle and a helmet each, it was time for the off – along with the 500 other people doing the rafting – at the same time.

Needless to say the river was

rather busy and my boat, being distracted with splashing a nearby boat as we went over the first rapid, forgot they needed to paddle. The result – I fell in at the first rapid! We got the hang of it better as the day went on with Fortini from Greece and me taking it in turns to steer the boat – which was made more difficult by having an odd number of people. There were lots of calm stretches where you just calmly paddled along and took in the scenery. Not that we didn’t have our share of excitement – getting stuck on a couple of rocks and flooding the boat once! There were lots of safety boats whizzing up and down the river all of the time and they rounded everyone up at the end to make sure that we had all made it to the finish. We then had a quick shower and dried off before lunch and the drive back to site. That evening there was an international market with stalls put on by each country’s contingent. I spent quite a bit of time at the Mexico stall where Brenda from my patrol showed me where she lived on some maps of Mexico and explained about her state. Later everyone had a big sing-off. Well, the Mexicans and the Brits did, but the Mexicans were definitely louder!



Out And About With EriX

Jacqui Bradley tests our knowledge of Oxford



EriX enjoyed his last walk so much that he decided he'd like to go on another one. And fortunately Jacqui was there to take another exciting photo. Once again, the bigger picture will be appearing in the next issue. For anybody out there who's still guessing, the previous walk was in the University Parks, where EriX posed by the new gate at the Keble entrance:



100 Postscripts ago...

“Big hole,” said the Editor, “as something deep is usually written in *Postscript* at the beginning of the year.” Most of the rest of the issue was dedicated to the Summer Trip in the Alps, and the Cambridge “Back To School” Rally. There was also the application form for Winter walking – “Delete where inexplicable: I hereby sign over all my worldly chattels to the organisers... I eat old socks...”