

JURA EXPEDITION 1971

Leader: Charles Hooper

Officers: Chris Lumsden, Chris Hague-Smith, David Vale, David Mark, Eddie Stuart.

Boys: Anthony Carnwarth, Stephen Arnold, Simon Barker, Timothy Jeans, Julian Garrish, Andrew Lambert, Anthony Bowker, Alan Beany, Adam Courlander, Richard Ritter, Charles Runaces, Stephen Morgan, Mark Creamer, Paul Dinkenor, Rodney Fawcett, Jonathan Lord, Tim Thompson, Martin Turff, Richard Friend, Paul Cowland, James Doyle, Mark Hall, Jonathan Shirley, Jeremy Stock, Richard Green, John Parrott, Stephen Hedley, Nicholas Hanson, Howard Lucas, Jeremy Turff.

LEADER'S REPORT

Cruib Lodge, tucked below Beinn Cruib, with a fine view across Loch Tarbert to the Paps, proved, despite its somewhat difficult access, to be an excellent site for our diverse and relaxed Expedition. We are greatly indebted to Commander Walkey, the British Military Attache in Bangkok, and to Iain MacInnes and his colleagues for shipping our multitudinous gear from the head of the loch to Cruib on the first evening of the Expedition. (Eddie, despite his bland assurances, might, I think, have been under pressure to match this feat in the unpredictable *ROCK BOTTOM*).

Although there were almost forty members of the Expedition, we often had only about half that number in camp, the rest being away on various bivouacs ... to the East Coast, searching for cup marks with Dave Mark, or to the Coire Vrechan (the renowned whirlpool) with Chris Hague-Smith ... to the West to unearth the Stone Age with John Mercer ... and I must not forget the four birdmen who took to a wee isle in the loch for a couple of days.

The first plan of these ornithologists was to carry out a comprehensive survey of one hundred square kilometres of Jura. Then a sudden modesty changed the survey area to an island of only a few square metres. Only when they were persuaded that this island would be covered by high spring tides did they move on to a larger island where their presence would

not cause a total emigration of the entire bird community.

Poor weather, and a more than slightly leaking tent, discouraged Chris Lumsden from his planned bivouac to the Paps, but these splendid three peaks were scaled one morning by five of the more energetic amongst us, whilst those least energetic in camp were writing rude songs about climbers getting lost in the mist - which, of course, was inconceivable.

For those who have yet to realise the art of Shoubling, which I mentioned in the pre-Expedition circular, it is surely the ability to find joy in that which is seemingly unpleasant, such as the long trek back from the Island Sports at Ardlussa, when it was wet and late and we were very tired. Unfortunately, despite the evening practices, we were unable to relieve Mrs Nelson of her cup by winning the Tug o' War, the apex of the Sports.

In the evenings, too, when the campfire was lit, we sang with Chris Lumsden or joined in the action songs of Chris Hague-Smith. Occasionally, we listened to the idiosyncratic Dave Mark reading from '*Winnie the Pooh*'. Late on the last night, a witness is supposed to have observed a mob of unruly boys chanting

"Grigola, Grigaloo!

Come out and fight, yer cowardly crew." etc.

as they surrounded the loft in which their respected leader was sleeping. A ladder is said to have disappeared, but all intelligent readers will, I am sure, doubt the integrity of any person to tell such an unlikely story!

I was very happy about the way in which the Expedition developed, believing it was enjoyed by most (if not all) of its members. We rock-climbed, we canoed, we searched for plants and antlers, birds and pollutants; we bailed out *ROCK BOTTOM*, we rolled barrels and won football matches; we learnt songs and sketched And played instruments; we drank tea with friendly islanders; we mistook the word 'venison'¹ for 'vermin'¹.

And, to complete a happy Expedition, we gave a tremendous concert in Craighouse Hall, with the hope that in a small way we could repay the very great hospitality we received from Jura and its people.

- CHARLES HOOPER

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MEGALITHIC MADNESS

In a cheerful mood after an unexpected 3-0 Win at Football over the Islanders, James Doyle (Sam), Stephen Arnold (Tizer), Julian Garrish (Julie), Martin Turff, Dave Vale and myself, walked from the football pitch for a good 500 yards in the direction of Craighouse, and pitched our tents on the outskirts of Knockromr, severely hampered by a swarm of midges..

It was by popular vote that we all agreed that no work should be done on the first afternoon and evening, en the latter way spent eating a tasty meal cooked by the Camp Administrator himself, the Right Dishonourable David Vale, Mr. Megalithics 1971.

Next morning, the party awoke at the respectable hour of 12 o'clock to a glorious day of hot sun and a cool breeze. To our horror, Stephen Arnold and I found that our two-man tent had turned overnight into a five-star swimming pool, and that we were rapidly sinking at the deep-end!

After brunch at 12.30, we strolled into Craighouse. Due to an enormous meal the night before, and an equally enormous brunch, we found we were running short of food, and Jimmy Doyle (driven to spend money by his hunger) and Dave Vale (determined not to spend a halfpenny if he could help it) and Paul Dinkenor were forced to buy bread, bacon, coffee, and a pack of Penguins.

Much to our surprise, Dave Vale then said that work was to be done, so we set about looking round Knockrome for some Standing Stones. Even Dave however, eventually gave in, and it was generally agreed that the only use for Standing Stones was as something to lean on when tired out by strenuous work under the blazing Jura sun.

Next morning we were awake by the reasonable hour of ten o'clock, and after breakfast, set off back for camp, ten miles' walk away, having at least gained the knowledge that a Standing Stone was one which stood up in the ground (unlike others, which didn't!)

- PAUL DINKENOR

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MEGALITHICS

Many people will have been to Stonehenge, and wondered for what purpose it was built. Few people, however, have visited the thousands of stone circles and standing stones that are scattered throughout Britain, mostly off the beaten track in fields and on the moors. Whilst circles seem to attract the most attention, there are also ellipses, egg shapes, flattened circles and many more complicated designs. The period during which we believe most of the megalithic sites were erected was between 2000 B.C. and 1500 B.C.

It is believed by some that these sites were used to indicate the rising of the stars in the sky, along with the sun and the moon. Only brighter stars can be observed to rise above the horizon, and during the period we are interested in, only ten or twelve stars would fall into this category.

If we think of the long winter nights, if anything longer than now, it is evident that throughout the greater part of the twenty-four hours, stars were the only indicators of time available. There remain many indicators of the rising and setting points of the first magnitude (bright) stars.

We can assume that in highly-organised communications such as must have existed, it would often have been necessary to know the exact time, either for ritualistic or more practical purposes.

Over 150 circles have been accurately surveyed, and it has been possible to calculate their diameters to ± 0.06 feet. It was discovered that all the diameters were made up of a common unit, the megalithic yard, which is 2.75 feet. This unit never varied by more than ± 0.003 feet. From this sort of result we can presume that there must have been a central point from which standard rods of 1 megalithic yard were sent out. The length of rods in England cannot have differed from that in Scotland by more than 0.03 inch; otherwise the difference would have shown up in the length of the megalithic yard. Only from these results have we been able to discover the extent of mathematical knowledge possessed by megalithic Man.

It may have been that in the absence of paper and pen early Man found it necessary to record in stone his mathematical and geometrical discoveries. Such of these as is known are of no mean order, and there is no reason to suppose that our knowledge is complete.

It is remarkable that 1,000 years before the earliest mathematicians of classical Greece, people in these islands not only had a practical knowledge of geometry and were capable of setting out elaborate geometrical designs, but also set out ellipses based on Pythagorean triangles. We need not be surprised to find out that their calendar was a highly developed arrangement involving an exact knowledge of the length of the year, or that Man had set up many stations for observing the eighteen-year cycle of the revolution of the lunar nodes.

The following table lists some of the information gained from sites on Jura

Site	Grid Ref.	Description	Type	Azimuth Declination	Body
Camus an Stacca	465647	1 Menhir	-	340.6° Az 213.7° +36.6° De -24.2°	Dereb & Sun
Strone	508638	Alignment	-	298.3° +21.6°	Sun
Knockrome	548715	3 Menhirs	3 stones in line	73.7° Az 203.4° +10.4° De -30.4°	Spica & Moon
Tarbert	609822	2 Menhirs	2 stones	96.7° -8.1°	Sun
Carragh a Chlinne	573665	Alignment	-	228.0° -20.0°	Moon

-DAVID VALE

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THE SOUND OF JURA

It was splendid to observe, amongst the sticky jam and hobnailed boots, such more dulcet camping equipment as one flute, one clarinet, two recorders, four guitars and thirty choristers. Jim, for some reason unknown, had nut brought his cello

The tradition of music in folk culture is essentially threefold: firstly, functional songs for domestic, land and boat work; secondly, narrative ballads for entertainment, dancing and banqueting; and thirdly songs of expression, generally in the form of a love-lilt or nostalgic lament. The Western Isles have a wealth of such music. If this was not actually sung as we tramped over the heather or bailed out *ROCK BOTTOM* then they were certainly given full justice around camp-fires at night below the echoing rock-faces on the shores of Loch Tarbert.



The climax, on our last night before sailing, was a happy one, for the people of Jura (previously warned by our splendidly painted posters) filled the Craighouse Hall for our Concert, and their very obvious enjoyment equalled that of the stage party.

The performance ranged from Hebridean work songs to recorder duos; from clarinet blues to contemporary guitar songs and hilarious action songs. Immense applause went to Chris Hague-Smith for his explanation and demonstration of 'The Music Man' and 'Heads and Shoulders'.

Charles retold the spine-chilling fable of 'The Witch of Jura', illustrated with marvellously improvised *leitmotive* by Richard Green (clarinet) and Elspeth (flute). Equally topical was a Dave (cup) Mark rendering of that famous expedition to the North Pole as discovered by Winnie the Pooh. It is cheering to find other expeditions who also devour their lunch-packs before setting out and who want desperately to rest upon every patch of grass encountered.

Chris Lumsden, chief guitarist, sang and played two of his own compositions; I sang Jura's seemingly sole indigenous song - an old lament; and the audience joined in the chorus of a reaping song from Islay. The Officers' Song (all lies!) brought the concert to a raucous conclusion, and was followed by an entertaining ceilidh in which the S.H.S. excelled itself in choreographic invention!

- J.A.

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WEATHER REPORT

The weather station was made on August 1st and readings taken for the first time next day, five days after the Expedition arrived at Cruib Lodge. The station consisted of a wet and dry thermometer, a rain gauge and an anemometer. Our maximum and minimum thermometer was out of use for lack of a magnet! We also had a whirling-arm thermometer. Readings were taken twice a day: at 10 am. and 10 pm. and the results obtained are tabulated below:

Average Temperature ...	14.3 C (58 F)
Maximum ...	20.0 C (68 F) (August 9)
Minimum " ...	7.0 C (45 F) (August 7)
Total Rainfall.....	1.3 ins.
Number of dry days....	... 8
Maximum Wind 5 gusting 6 (Beaufort Scale)
Maximum daily Rainfall . .	. 0.5 ins. (August 8)

- PAUL GOWLAND

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THE ARDLUSSA SPORTS

These sports are held every year at Ardlussa in the grounds of the Nelsons who made the sports well worth going to.

Many types of event were held including 100 and 200 yards, high jump, long jump, putting the shot, throwing the hammer, and rolling the barrel. The latter proved very popular, the idea being to stand on the barrel and roll it along.

The sack race was also very popular. The two Chrises both had a hard race - Chris Hague-Smith managing twenty-five yards of bumping into a girl in a mini-skirt, whilst Chris Lumsden managed only twenty yards.



A family called the Apprentices, obviously athletic, won practically every race, except the 100 yards, which was won by the one and only Mick Hanson. One prize-winner was announced as 'Charles Hopper'!

Beer, soft drinks and sandwiches were sold.
.....How about a vermin sandwich?

- ADAM COURLANDER

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CLIMBING ON JURA

The climbing near Cruib was mostly restricted to short and easy climbs on the nearby cliffs, and because of this nearly all the boys managed to go climbing at least once.

There was plenty of opportunity for the teaching of different techniques. Some of us had a chance to abseil, and there were several climbs where beginners could practise the 'bridging action'. Although the climbing near Cruib was good for the beginner, we had to go further afield to find the more difficult climbs. One party went up to the King's Cave and spent a very

enjoyable day climbing in that area. The hardest climbs were graded as 'Very Difficult' and would probably have been 'Severe' had they been a bit longer.

Most of the climbs however, were too short to be classified; nevertheless some very good experience and practice was gained by us all.

- HOWARD LUCAS

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THE OFFICERS' SONG

(to be sung with much expression to the tune of 'WALTZING MATILDA')

Thirty jolly schoolboys, bursting with the joys of youth,
Bounding off the Ferry so eagerleeee,
But their groans may be heard as they stagger under heavy loads:
Who'll come a-camping on Jura with me?

Camping on Jura! Camping on Jura!
Who'll come a-camping on Jura with me?
And their groans may be heard as they stagger under heavy loads.
Who'll come a-camping on Jura with me?

The first jolly officer collapsed by the Cruib Lodge,
Under the shade of the cool marqueeeee,
And he's walked and he's climbed, and he's waiting till his blisters heal:
Who'll come a-hiking on Jura with me?

The second jolly officer looked for megalithic stones,
Working to the south conscientiousleeee,
Mistakenly he led his party to the Public House,
Who'll come a-drinking on Jura with me?

The third jolly officer drifted into Cruib Bay,
Captain of the good ship *ROCK BOTTOM* he,
And he bailed and he sank and he waited for the tide to turn,
Who'll come a-sailing on Jura with me?

The fourth jolly officer frog-marched his weary men,
Merely to study geologeeeee,
Through the mire and the muck for a view of Coire Vrechan,
Who'll come a-tramping on Jura with me?

The fifth jolly officer slept near the storage tent:
Always a-guarding the food was he!
And he scrimped and he saved and he distributed the minimum:
Who'll come a-starving on Jura with me?

The sixth jolly officer, from the University,
Studying seashore ecologeeeee,
And he waited and he waited and he waited for the tide to turn:
Who'll play a rubber of bridge with me?

The last jolly officer led the Expedition,
Always a-bounding up the Paps was he,
And he bounced through the mist and forgot about his fellow men:
Who'll come a-climbing on Jura with me?

Thirty jolly schoolboys, All the jolly officers,
Thoroughly drained of their energeeeee,
And their ghosts may be heard as they sail away from Craighouse,
Who'd come a-camping on Jura with me?

- THE OFFICERS' MESS

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SHORE POLLUTION ON JURA

Although there was evidence of pollution of the beaches from crude oil and similar substances, this was not altogether surprising in view of the fuss made over it in recent years. What was surprising was the quantity of plastic containers, toys, bottles, tins and trawler floats that had been washed ashore. We found, among other tings, a plastic toy car, a mutilated doll, and the hand piece of a child's telephone, along with a French milk carton, a German beer bottle - *'Ex und hopp!..-* and an American 'aerosol' can which sprayed liquid cheese. What also struck me was the enormous quantity of driftwood on some of the beaches which, though useful for fires and make-shift furniture, make the beaches an eyesore.

Though we can do a certain amount towards clearing up the mess when it reaches the coasts, it is important that action should be taken at the other end to ensure that the otherwise beautiful Hebridean beaches, along with many others, are freed from the menace of pollution.

- ANDREW LAMBERT

EXPEDITION TO THE PAPS

After a delayed start due to the weather, the Expedition to the Paps started a day later than planned.

At six o'clock, five sleepy, but intrepid, explorers crept out of their sleeping bags. After a small breakfast, the party, which consisted of Alan Beaney, Richard Green, Jonathan Shirley, and Jeremy Turff, was led down to *ROCK BOTTOM* by Charles Hooper.

By 7.30 we had reached Charles' car after a rough boat journey. At 8.22 Charles parked his car off the road about three miles from Beinn Siantaidh (2,477 ft), the first Pap we were going to climb. It was not easy because of swirling cloud, high wind and steep scree, but we reached the top at 10.30 and rested there whilst signing our names in the log and putting some stones on the cairn.

After the climb to the summit, the descent was relaxing, and we sighted a herd of deer in the valley below. It was a pity we had to come down so far before climbing the second Pap, Beinn an Oir (2,571 ft).

The first section of this climb was steep and we stopped to have some sandwiches before continuing by a relatively easy route to the summit, where the stone shelters that were used for the original experiment to determine the temperature at which water boils at altitude were to be seen. At 12 noon the summit was reached, and the whole party signed the log and ate Kendal Mint Cake (as recommended for Everest). Unfortunately, the cloud was low and visibility down to a few feet.

The descent was hair-raising because any deviation from the route was highly dangerous. However, we all got down safely. After climbing a short way up the last Pap, Beinn a Choalais (2,407 ft), the party stopped to eat oranges. We reached the summit at 13.45, and Charles congratulated us on our feat. (Feet? - Ed.)

The descent and journey back seemed long, and we were glad when the car came into view. Charles drove us to Tarbert, and by this time we had recovered sufficiently for the last three-mile walk back to camp. Needless to say we were all ready for our spaghetti Bolognese and a good night's sleep.

- ALAN BEANEY and RICHARD GREEN

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REPORT OF A WALK TO RUANTALLAIN

On the second to last day of the Expedition, Chris Hague-Smith and I set out for Ruantallain, the former site of a very small community at the west end of Loch Tarbert. Eddie Stuart took us in *ROCK BOTTOM* to King's Cave, where John Mercer was engaged in an archaeological dig. John happened to be leaving temporarily as we arrived, but Elizabeth, who was helping him, was staying. King's Cave was almost certainly used by the Druids as they made their way to Iona where their dead were buried. White crosses marking the visits of later mourners and missionaries are scattered on the walls of the cave. We were only shown a minute portion of all the finds, as John Mercer had locked the others away, but even in this collection there were the jaws of small rodents and the backbones of fish.

After talking to Elizabeth we walked over to Ruantallain about a mile away. From there we could see Islay and Colonsay very clearly. There was a herd of thirty red deer on a nearby hill and they appeared far less timid than those on the east side of the island. In the distance we could see a herd of wild goat which, like the red deer, are common on Jura.

The path gave us a view of many splendid raised beaches, some a hundred feet above sea-level. On the south side of the loch, running west from Glenpatrick, there was a series of very pronounced raised beaches, and it is a pity that these could not be investigated. Beyond Ruantallain, we found a fascinating set of cliffs, riddled with small caves, one of which contained the complete skeleton of a deer.

There were many other coastal features, such as stacks and arches, but the most interesting find was an exposed area of what Chris believes was boulder clay between two raised beaches. Methods of dating raised beaches are not too accurate, and the boulder clay would help. If it was indeed boulder clay, then the beach above it was at sea-level in pre-Ice Age times.

Moving towards the shore, we found that it was a beachcomber's paradise. There were numerous large fishing floats in perfect order. Four bales of crude rubber were scattered here and there, and when we lifted the layers apart the heat of the sun was enough to start the rubber smoking. Two sparkling, white-washed antlers lay on some dry seaweed. We even found a half-full aerosol can of processed cheese made in America, of course.

On the way back to camp we observed more herds of red deer and more goats. We went by a fairly high route which is shorter than following the coast so there were marvellous views of Islay, Colonsay, the Mainland and even Mull, twenty-five miles away. As we dropped down into camp we had the first rain of an otherwise glorious day.

- SIMON BARKER

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KING'S CAVE

Whilst we were on Jura the archaeologist, John Mercer, was carrying out a dig at King's Cave. Mr Mercer has lived on the island for eight years, during which time he has excavated a number of Stone Age sites, so those of us who went to help him had excellent instruction.

At the cave the work was very hard. We had to carry buckets of earth from the trench in the cave down to where it was sieved. If there were no buckets of earth to be carried, one could always refill the water-tubs which were used for sieving. If you managed to stick these tasks for a day or two, you graduated to the rank of siever. It was in the sieves that the smaller articles of interest were found and it was quite an honour to have the chance of finding something important.

Meanwhile back in the cave, John Mercer kept us supplied in soil from the trench, which was 40 ft. long, 8 ft. wide and, by the time we left, 5 ft. deep. There were also two small trenches just outside the cave, and as Mr Mercer did almost all the digging himself it was quite a mammoth task!

The soil was being taken away in layers, each layer representing a past occupation of the site. The top one was probably nineteenth century, whereas by the time we had got down to the bottom, we had reached the Stone Age. The thing we found most of was bone, ranging in size from parts of a cow down to the jaws of shrews and mice. Most of the bones were those of deer, and we found quite a few antler tips which had obviously been cut off from the main antler stem, and probably used for tools of some sort. We also found bones which had been worked (pointed and polished) to use as implements for such things as piercing leather.

There was also a coin and a dice. These were probably pretty recent objects and they were both found in the little trenches along with a copper pin and some metal rivets. Pieces of coarse pot emerged from the bottom

of the trench; they are probably early Iron Age. However, perhaps the most interesting and exciting item found was a part of a lignite arm-ring, also perhaps early Iron Age. A similar ring has been found in Tiree and dated to early First Century A.D. This arm-ring, and other objects, will no doubt find their way to on« of the main Scottish museums.

- JOHN PARRETT

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PEAT ON JURA

In a pre-Expedition letter Charles told us that Dave Vale saw himself as an expert on peat. Thus it was no surprise when, on the last Sunday, Dave Vale asked for volunteers to carry out one of his projects.

Dave Vale, Paul Dinkenor, James Doyle and myself set out on a very wet afternoon to take some samples that could be examined for moisture content and pH value. We took four samples from near the camp-site at varying heights above sea-level, although the depths at which the samples were taken were a constant 18 inches below the surface. Some sites were exposed to sea air, others more sheltered, but all had sparse vegetation. We let Jimmy Doyle do the tough work with the pick-axe, and we concentrated on the much more technical task of sealing the peat in polythene bags.

The next day we took some samples at Ruantallian, on the West Coast of the island. The first sample taken was from a similar site to those of the day before, but the second sample was from an old peat cutting.

Dave is now hoping to carry out tests on the peat in the laboratory and compare its properties with other types of peat and other types of soil: the object being to find out why certain plants grow better in some situations than in others.

- STEPHEN ARNOLD

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ORNITHOLOGICAL REPORT

This year's ornithological study was centred mainly around Loch Tarbert and the islands in Loch Tarbert. A bivouac was made to one of these islands which was found to house a gull colony.



On the first day we studied the bird life along the north shores of Loch Tarbert. Our results included the usual inhabitants of lochs of this kind: Herring Gulls, Rock Pipits and Arctic Terns. There were also a large number of Eider Ducks. The most interesting observation was the sighting of a Whimbrel, a new species to the island. Two White Wagtails were reported, but these may have been in fact their almost identical relation, the Pied Wagtail. A Cormorant, a Wheatear and three Black-legged Grouse were seen, and a slow and graceful Heron winged its way across the loch.

The next three days were spent on Eilean Ard, a tiny island off Cruib Lodge, which has a permanent population of 250 Gulls - Black-backed, Lesser Black-backed and Herring Gulls.

On Friday, 6th August, we surveyed the moors just above the north shores of Loch Tarbert. On reaching the summit of Beinn Cruib, a good view of the surrounding country could be seen. From here we saw a Buzzard and a Golden Eagle. As we descended we saw a Carrion Crow and a solitary Fulmar. Skylarks and Grey Wagtails were seen on the lower slopes of Beinn Cruib.

Other sightings during the Expedition included Robin, Blackbird and Song Thrush at Inverlussa, together with Swallow, Woodpigeon and Great Skua; Curlews and Oystercatchers at Tarbert; and Starlings and Hedge Sparrow, Hooded Crows and Shags around Craighouse.

GULLS' NESTS ON EILEAN ARD

A thorough search for nests was made over the whole of the island. The bracken on the top of the island has no nests in it, and on the east coast, where the rocks slope down steeply to the sea with few crevices, there are no nests to be found. Also, there are no nests on the actual cliff-faces. As humans very rarely come to the island and it is too small to support animal life, the gulls can safely build their nests by the beach.

Most nests are four feet and more above the spring tide level, and venture only a foot or two into the bracken. The ideal site seems to be where the bracken meets the beach boulders. The rocks provide shelter from the prevailing winds and the bracken gives shelter from the rain and from marauders looking for eggs and young. Exceptions were found, and of the thirty-five gulls' nests found two were dangerously close to high tide level and very exposed.

The nests themselves are typically crude, composed only of a flat platform of dried bracken amongst the rocks. They are usually in a small cluster and near these clusters there is often a large boulder covered in excretions. There were streaks of excretions on the cliff-faces, but most of these were found to be merely resting-places and not nests. Another notable feature was the piles of crab shells. The breaking of shells is probably a gradual process as near-complete shells were found in many nests. The shells always have a small hole on the underside, the weakest point.

- SIMON BARKER

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THINGS BOTANICAL

Immense variation in quality of soil and climatic exposure makes Jura far more diverse in its flowers and vegetation than one might initially suppose, each area of ground - bog, elevated rock, seashore, burn, meadow, arboreal east coast - producing its peculiar species. Nothing of rarity was found and I was unlucky in my searchings for the rare Spring Gentian whose British distribution is thought to be limited to Teesdale and Jura.

Botanical observations were limited to three areas of the island: around Cruib Lodge, the lanes around Craighouse, and the craggy heights above the King's Cave at Ruantallian.

In the second area, apart from a cluster of tropical palms facing seaward and an inordinately copious CABBAGE filling the garden of Miss Katie Darragh, nothing unpredictable was found beyond some very fragrant Honeysuckle.

Foxgloves were plentiful beside the waterfalls above the camp, also Eyebrights, Stonecrops, Creeping Buttercup, Bog Cotton, Myrtle and white Bell Heather. Thrift, Trefoils and Red Hemp Nettle grew amongst the stones of the raised beaches nearby.

Across the high moist ground to the west were Harebells, White Avens, Spotted Orchis and the exquisite Grass of Parnassus. Higher up, in the still pools where the deer drink, were Water Lilies and Reeds and the remains of Yellow Flag. Here, too, were many Dragonflies, Lizards, Frogs, Cockchafers and the toy like Caterpillars of the Emperor Moth. And Black Adders haunted the warm smooth stones of the raised beaches. Hidden below tall Ferns and Grasses were many ripe Bilberries; also Bell Heather - purple and white, and Purple Heather and the more common species of the Gentian family.

Ragged Robin, Thrift, Grass of Parnassus, huge Scottish Thistles and the much-sought White Heather flourished on the cliffs above Ruantallian. Here are scores of brown Rabbits and Deer and large herds of piebald Goats which wander for miles across hilly peatland.

I was unsuccessful in my search for Thyme, but there is much Comfrey and Mignonette and, in the north of the island, Watercresses grow in the woodland burns. George Orwell's Daffodils and 'Pheasant-Eye' Narcissus still flower at Barnhill.

Jura is conspicuously an island of mosses and lichens. Much glistening Black Moss hangs like moleskins on rock faces and dry stone walls. Use is made of Lichens in the dyeing of yarn and fleeces at Lealt, as is also Gorse, Dock and berries. Heather-bells were used in the XIX Century to flavour the water in private beer-brewing.

A small-scale scavenger hunt was organised, plants forming a considerable part of the list which ranged from snake-skins and antlers to hawks and skylarks. The prize-winner of John Mercer's book *THE CORMORANT AND THE STRANGER* was Andrew Lambert.

- J .A.

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CUP-MARKS

Archaeology on Jura had two aspects: the King's Cave excavation and a completely original survey of a stretch of coast on the east side of the island for Bronze Age (1800 to 200 B.C.) rock carvings called 'Cup-marks'¹.

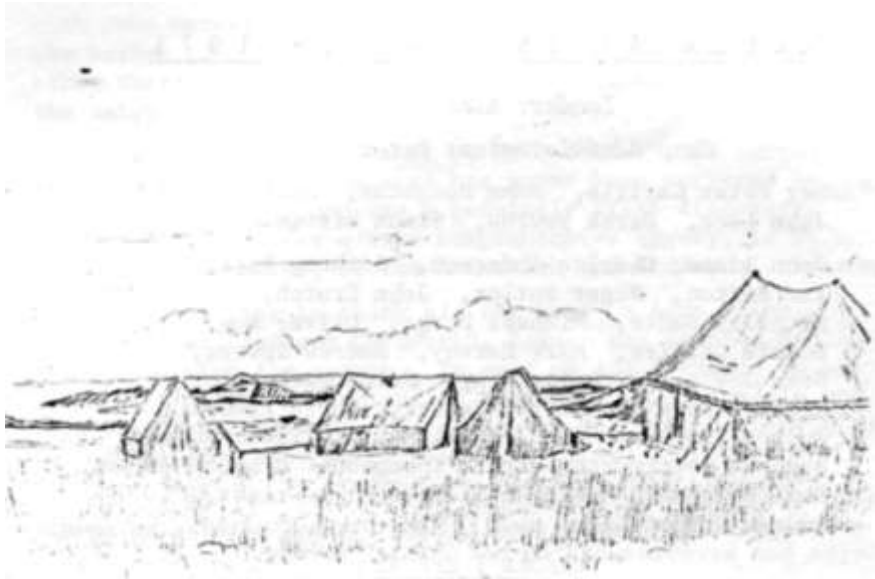
These marks are found in several forms, the most basic consisting of a cup-shaped hollow up to 3 inches across and one inch deep. Their purpose is not certain and it has been suggested that they were symbols to the sun, fertility, or had some astronomical, religious or even magical significance. They were made in one of four ways: chipping, rubbing, scratching or by carving a hard rock on to a softer one.

The places at which they are found are not arbitrary. They are usually on naturally smooth rock-faces inclined within 10° of the horizontal; they are nearly always on arable or grasslands, never in grassless or heather areas; they usually have good views over the surrounding countryside, and are often in sight of the sea; and finally, they are usually 50 to 400 feet above sea-level.

Our aim was to explore five promising regions which satisfied the above conditions and showed signs of present or past habitation.

The first two sites, at Tarbert and Lagg Bay, proved fruitless, probably because there was little outcropping rock and because the rock was too hard. At the third however, at Ardmenish, we found one probably cup-mark and could well have found more had we had more time. In addition, we found a ring of stones, 10 feet in diameter, with another set of stones covering a quarter of a circle about 7 feet outside the complete circle. It is obviously artificial but at present, beyond that, one can only guess. At least, it could be a Bronze Age memorial, although it could be something more recent.

At the south end of the bay were two more villages -Knockrome and Ardfernal. We found nothing at Knockrome because there was a lack of suitable stone. Equally, we found nothing in the vicinity of the three Bronze Age Standing Stones in the Ardfernal area. But it was in the deserted village of Ardfernal itself that we made our major finds. In the north of the village we found three cup-marks roughly in line with each other on a nearly horizontal but smooth rock-face. The rocks were badly weathered and the marks were not as clear as one would have liked. Later, when I was re-visiting the site



And then, before we had realised it our time in the island was almost finished. Our last night in camp was the scene of an incredible event and, as a gesture of thanks to all the people on the island, we decided to have a barbecue 'open* night, inside the marquee we laid out all our project reports and maps, the stone rubbings from Oronsay, the endless bones from Kiloran. Outside we had the fire roasting a whole sheep, which we had been given by Peter from Balnahard, with sausages and ginger cakes by courtesy of the Strathconas, and jacket potatoes and more sausages and that memorable Forsaith fruit punch (What was in that, Peter?). The Laird and his family came, the doctor, the minister, an assize court judge, and many other people who had been so kind to us during our stay. An occasion never to be forgotten.

However, I did say that this was going to be a short report, but good memories have that knack of flooding back. There are many thanks to be given after the events of Colonsay. To the islanders of Colonsay who added so much to our enjoyment we must send our heartfelt thanks, and particularly to the Laird and his family for their kindness and generosity,

and also to Watty, and to Mrs McKinnon, to the doctor, the minister. The list could be endless and without them Colonsay 1971 would simpler never have been. And then there were the S.H.S. backroom boys - many thanks and congratulations on managing to decipher my letters. No expedition can be in any way a success without a good set of officers, and we were very lucky on Colonsay to have a hardworking team whose enthusiasm and energy never seemed to waver; Peter !. of the camp admin, working like a Trojan, delighting the vicar with his gift of more tea; John 11, only a week but memories for much longer, with that excellent furniture and goal-keeping heroics; John L, reject from the Bristol jet set, coming out of retirement in a blaze of glory to win the orienteering; Pete C. not only for his wit and music, but that excellent project in the caves and that 'spam' stew; Simon watched the birds, completed a project of great interest and chatted up guests at the barbecue, that is, when not cooking well and laughing at Lace; Derek, as a first-timer, with his geographical works, his organisation of the Colonwealth Games and that superb classical guitar playing; Andrew, with the boats and the meteorological readings, never seemed to be still for a moment. Many thanks to them all, and also to Roger Weatherley and Mark Rayne, those fugitives from South Rona, who helped so much with the setting up of camp in their two-day stay.

That's it. The Expedition is over. However, I have a feeling that the spirit of Colonsay 1971 lives on, and will continue to do so. Read on, and see if you agree.

- ALAN HOWARD

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GEOGRAPHICAL ACTIVITIES ON COLONSAY

Most of the geographical work done on the Expedition consisted of two full-day outings to the north and south of our camp-site respectively. The idea behind the first project was to perform a transect (painful) or cross-section of a stretch of country from the camp-site to Kiloran Bay on the west coast of Colonsay. The group and myself decided to split the section into five elements and to compare these from various geographical criteria.

The first stretch from the camp to a deserted chapel on the main road from camp to Kiloran took us through an extremely rocky valley by the side of a raised beach. The soil around here was thin and sandy and we concluded that it was mainly used as very poor sheep pasture. As we moved into the interior

of-the island however, the valley flattened out considerably and the slightly richer soil was able to support a certain amount of arable cultivation. The major feature of the area between Upper Kilchattan and Mullairidh was, in a word, Moss. Moss covered a large part of the hillside and reeds stretched all around the shores of Loch Fada. From the fairly veil-wooded area around Kiloran village, WE took a footpath up to the remote and beautiful Loch an Sgoltaire, and after John Williams and Mike Skinner had demonstrated their stone-skimming ability, we struck north-eastwards over a high ridge which overlooks Kiloran Bay. This area is largely a raised beach above the bay and forms a steep edge which we had to climb down.

It was at this point that we spotted two figures on the crest of the hill - one resembled a bedraggled and particularly hairy Ken Dodd Diddy Man, and the other was about a third of the size and resembled a small mascot. Yes, you've guessed it ... Pete Carlile and Oliver Dow. These two characters joined us and we carried on towards the Kiloran Bay sands and caves. The caves were particularly interesting both from a physical point of view as well as a human one. In other words, the caves are wave-eroded and collapsed, and contain numerous fine examples of stalactites, animal bones and limpets.

On our second main outing we attempted to measure the speed and associated characteristics of the Abhuinn a Chlinne, a stream which flows south-westwards from Milbuie to the Traigh nam Bare. However, because of low rainfall and heavy moss growth, the stream was barely visible, and even where visible it was virtually stagnant. Nevertheless keeping the geographical objective foremost, we studied the rocks, found some pheasant feathers and discovered a rare flower species. The outing ended with a mid-afternoon session of drizzle, but everyone was in good spirits, especially pleasing since our success had not been great.

- DEREK NEWTON

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ORNITHOLOGICAL REPORT 1971

Before leaving home, which I did much to our leader's amusement a day early, I was sent a list of birds previously seen on this wonderful island and a request to do a project which included finding nesting-places and counting numbers. Unfortunately a project of this size could not be

satisfactorily done unless one had at least two months to do it. However, I feel that we have made quite a good contribution to the cause.

I have made out a map on a scale of 2J inches to the mile with all the sightings of the more unusual birds. In .ill, we have had nearly 60 sightings for logging, and quite a number of other, more common birds. The commonest bird on the island seems to be the Lapwing; also quite a common bird (and this surprised me) is the Buzzard, with six birds being sighted at one time over Sliabh Riabach, and four birds over the hills behind Upper Kilchattan. Other birds were seen in ones and twos elsewhere. Also a fairly common bird has been the Sparrowhawk which is encouraging as it is unusual to see many of them in Britain. The Golden Eagle was also spotted twice in the same place, on the cliffs of Beinn Bhreac.

I was very much helped by many of the boys, who were extremely keen, and one or two of them quite knowledgeable. I should like to thank all the boys who helped with the project, John Houghton for all his help whilst he was with us, and also many of the islanders and visitors to the island who gave us word of some sightings. In spite of the limited time it was, I think, quite a successful project.

I was asked to check with the islanders for any possible sights for Puffins nesting. In face, due to the nature of the cliffs-tops, i.e. the unsuitable soil and lack of burrows, Puffins do not breed on the island, and only one pair has been sighted by the islanders this year, and this was probably a pair 'in transit*.

As regards nesting plans of other sea-birds, the only colony I was able to confirm was a colony of Fulmars breeding round the coast from Kiloran Bay (map ref.386986). It seems likely that the Cormorants sighted on the west coast breed around the Sguide an Leanha (map ref.342915), as this is where most birds were seen. Other future expeditions will have to follow this up.

- SIMON RITTER

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KILORAN CAVE PROJECT

It was very heartening to find so many people willing to help in both the mapping and the minor excavations which we carried out in the caves this summer. Those who visited the caves, and I believe it was everyone, invariably brought back

'finds' which they had dug out and were constantly forming theories and asking questions. Peter's store-tent soon began to look like a crematorium, with bones of all shapes, sizes, ages gradually piling up. All proved to be quite interesting, apart from Howard's six-month-old sheep's skull, and in time more definite theories took shape.

It became puzzling as to why there were large and definitely isolated limpet beds within each and every cave. Derek and Alan pointed out that the obvious explanation would be that at one time the caves were submerged under the sea. But then evidence was unearthed to indicate in a different direction. In cave A (which was christened 'Bats Paradise' after two bivouacs had spent the night there), a foot under the surface there were empty limpet shells piled one on top of each other. This was the most important evidence to support a theory that whoever inhabited the caves, at whatever time in history, made use of the limpets which are the most common shell creature around Kiloran. The limpet shells, neatly piled, could not have been deposited that way by the elements.

Shell beds were found in every cave and they were always found together and not scattered. Only limpet and periwinkle shells were found, and it all pointed towards the fact that they had been left there a very long time ago. The soil around the limpet beds was collected and is at present being analysed at Durham University; it would be useful if these samples showed high carbon content for we could then deduce that the areas were possibly cooking and eating areas.

Probably the best supported item on the agenda was the bone-collecting. Everybody helped dig, to try and find something different which might unearth more evidence, but in particular Dickie Needler and Sean Joyce did some really valuable and dirty digging. There were many places in which my larger frame would not fit, but these two did not care about the surroundings and really got involved in the project. The most interesting bones were two human bones, a pelvis joint and an ulna (inner bone of the forearm) which were found together in cave B. No other human bones were found and, as yet, I do not know the age of the human bones. A large number of the bones had been split down the middle, too many for it to be a coincidence, and it is quite possible that the marrow from the bones was used for some purpose or other.

We have three large maps of the caves and a tray and a half of specimens. Tests are being made on soil samples and at present a chemist is dating some of the bones; all of these will be displayed at the Conference.

A lot of work was completed at Kiloran, and I would like to thank everyone for making the project such a huge success.

- PETER CARLILE

* * *

ORIENTEERING

I had always hoped that we would be able to organise an orienteering course. Before the Expedition I had even bought myself *'TEACH YOURSELF ORIENTEERING'*, although I must confess partly as an excuse to stop doing any academic work. However, we did it and what is more important we enjoyed it.

The idea for the course came suddenly one morning of unsettled weather. The officers agreed that it seemed a good idea to try to organise an activity which would keep the interest of everyone for the rest of the day. As a result Peter Carlile and myself left camp at 1.30 to set the course. When we returned at 3.00 considerably more tired, Simon and Derek had selected the teams of three and all was ready for the start. The teams, setting off at roughly 5-minute intervals, were given 3 clues and would pick up a further two on the way. It was difficult to estimate who was leading because of the staggered starts, but it soon became apparent that among the early leaders was that well-known mountain goat John (Silva Compass) Lace, aided and abetted by John Crutch and Andrew Jovers, followed closely by a hard-worked team led by Oliver Dow (from behind?). However, the final team of Peter Forsaith, Nicholas Dance and Nigel Parker had still to be reckoned with.

The Lace combination returned the incredible time of 94 mins. — a full quarter of an hour ahead of the Dow team. All eyes now were focused on whether the ageing Forsaith, careful but clever, would prove too great a handicap for the dynamic duo of Dance and Parker. At last they were in sight, but alas.¹ too late and their final time was 110 mins, securing for them third place. All that remained was for the judges to severely reprimand the Lace team and impose a time penalty of 10 mins. for accepting a lift from Watty on their route. Cheerful John, with his first win in this class of competition under his substantial belt, was heard to comment - "I'm going to bed". The man who was supposed to prefer heterosexual holidays had finally proved himself.

- ALAN HOWARD

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ORONSAY PRIORY PROJECT

The Fourteenth-Century Austin Priory on Oronsay was a 'must' for a visit during the Expedition, and on the occasion that we went down we completed some very interesting work. John Houghton, Oliver Dow and Tinkerbell under the guidance of the former, completed some very professional stone-rubbings from the headstones of men of 600 years ago. These were very good, took hours of patience and great skill! They will, I hope, be on display at the Conference.

Meanwhile our resident undertaker, Richard Needier, helped me to map the remains of the Priory, which took even more skill. The Priory itself was obviously at one time a very beautiful and well-designed building but over the years it has decayed somewhat. Mapping it was more difficult than I expected as it contained many small and unidentifiable rooms. But we managed to draw up a very accurate map in the short space of time that we were there and all will be on view in January.

- PETER CARLILE

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HUNT THE STREAM or COLONSAY BOG-CRAWLING

On Monday, 23 August, at 9.30 am. we left in search of a stream. The purpose of our expedition was to measure the flow of the stream in fluid ounces per year, or some smaller more convenient unit.

At length we arrived at a likely-looking bog which Derek insisted was the spring of Abhuinn a Ghlinne, the largest stream(?) on the island (so says Derek). We followed the imaginary line that the stream was supposed to take and the bog went on and on and on and in and in and into our boots.

We stopped shortly after the road and John hit a rock with his hammer and it turned out pink underneath. From the top of the rock we could see another mile or so of bog and also a promising bright green line. Unfortunately we were seen (or smelt) by about ten thousand midges who did not leave until a wind got up when we were nearly in camp. After a brilliant brainwave we headed for a pool which was seen near the road. John decided it was a good time for a bath but emerged after finding the going slightly muddy. We followed this pool of evil-smelling, quagmiring gunge for a 1-mile where it became a narrowed channel. Derek found that it flowed too slowly to be measured. We struggled on beside the 'stream' fighting our

way through stumps of bog myrtle, heather, marsh cinquefoil, thistles, sundew and other moisture-loving plants.

Then we took to the hills to escape from the terrible midges and the bog. By now it was raining and we had no further ideas on measuring the stagnancy of the water as a method has not yet been devised. On the way back to camp we found a marvellous raised beach and John swung his hammer a few more times and came away with some ignition ... igneous rock. We found a dead tractor and a dead cow or two and John found a plant called Grass of Parnassus which he says is rare.

We arrived at camp bitten and streamless but none the less pleased with the day's events.

- JOHN ADAMS, STEPHEN SOUTHWORTH, NIGEL PARKER
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THE EXPEDITION SONG

CHORUS:

Down on Colonsay, the officers are funny,
If you want to see them you'll have to pay some money,
Derek half-a-crown, Pete Forsaith a guinea,
Alan Howard, what a coward, and John Lace a penny.

Our leader's kind, Camp Admin, is tight,
Our leader's gentle, Camp Admin, is lazy,
Our leader's brave, Camp Admin, can't write,
But our leader's mental. *Chorus* And his memory is hazy.*Chorus*
Down on Colonsay, Pete Carlile is bold,
Things are rather funny, Pete Carlile is hairy,
We do all the bloody work, Pete Carlile ain't old,
And Derek takes our money. *Chorus* But prances like a fairy.

Chorus

BUTTERFLIES

Although not many individual butterflies were seen on Colonsay this year a larger number of species were recorded than expected. The two most common and widespread species were the Large and Green-veined Whites which could be seen all over the island. Small Whites were also seen but they were not as common as the other Whites. The next most common species was the Grayling which was commonly seen around and near Beinn nan Caochran and other hills to the south-east of the camp. Among the Grayling colonies one small copper and a number of wall butterflies were seen.

In the north of the island, around and near Colonsay House four species of butterflies were seen which were not seen in the south of the island. They were the Dark Green Fritillary, Small Heath, Small Tortoiseshell and Peacock., and were all seen in small numbers.

Although the Meadow and Hedge Browns were seen all over the island they were mainly in the south of Colonsay and on Colonsay

CHARLES ANDERSON

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A RAFT CALLED 'SPAM'

On Friday, 20 August, Steve Southworth, Calum Mackenzie and John Adams departed in search of driftwood to make into furniture. After awhile we came across a heap of wood, net and cans entwined with seaweed. We went to investigate and found this mouldering heap of junk was a collapsible raft. Unfortunately it was low tide and after attempting to lift it we decided to wait for high tide and the arrival of an ambulance to treat our double hernias! Later the same day Calum, Steve and John returned and heaped the collapsed raft into the water whereupon all the barrels slid out of the net. We pushed barrels and raft back to camp separately whilst John went back to camp over the rocks. We all decided that a rebuild was necessary.

That night the problem of a name arose. Various arrangements of our surname initials produced S.P.A.M., which stuck as the name. Rebuilding by the Upper Colonsay Shipbuilders commenced and the net was removed from the wooden top of the raft. The oil drums were nailed and strung on to wooden struts projecting from the bottom of the raft. Parker hit his finger with the hammer and a scream of "Oh dear!" escaped his lips, (actually that part was censored by Alan Howard). The launching proceeded at high tide in the morning, but after being crushed by overturning rafts, being in a set of ever decreasing circles because SPAM was hard to manoeuvre, and being utterly frozen into the bargain, we abandoned our acquisition and it eventually met its final death on the barbecue fire at the end of camp.

- JOHN ADAMS, STEPHEN SOUTHWORTH NIGEL PARKER,
CALUM MACKENZIE

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COLONWEALTH GAMES 1971

A rather shortened version of the Games was held on the beach in front of camp, but despite the limited time available it proved to be a very enjoyable exhibition of athletic prowess. The theme of the Games had been set in the early afternoon when the noble officers showed their strength, or lack of it, trying to move the Lifting Stone.

The Games consisted of two field and one track event. When it came to putting the shot (or large stone as it was in this case), we had a series of eliminating rounds to cut down the numbers, but when it came to the final round John (call me Goliath) Adams clinched the title with a massive heave of 25ft.11 ins. He also very nearly claimed four right toes from our expedition leader in the process! Mike Skinner was the runner-up and Stephen Southworth, together with Charles Anderson, were fairly close behind.

No less than 18 enthusiasts entered the long jump contest and all but eight of these cleared eleven feet. The final winner was none other than Roger (show-me-your-springs) Butler with a jump of 12ft.5ins, and Charles Anderson was second and Stephen Southworth third. The prize for the most unorthodox method went to Mike Skinner who delighted us all when he hit the take-off board with both feet at once and successfully executed a 12 ft. rugby dive into the sand. Our quest for a new 100-yards sprint champion threw up four finalists. David Rivers had won his semi-final in real form, despite a slow start, and his speed in the last 50 yards could only be compared to that of the 15.30 hours Glasgow to Euston express. Tension mounted in the final itself and the winner was Mike (catch-me-if-you-can) Skinner, though Charles (I've-done-it-again) Anderson was a very close second. David (I'm-puffed-but-I'm-chuffed) Rivers took third place.

DEREK NEWTON

MY FIRST DAY OF CLIMBING

Myself, Nigel Parker, Clifton Snaith, John Crutch, Richard Needler and David River went climbing on Ben na Caorach today in superb weather. Mark led the team while Roger and Alan helped. We all climbed to the top with only a few slips. We stayed out all day and managed to climb three different rock-faces. Alan was quite good. We had our lunch accompanied by ants, and the ants were even on ledges waiting to crawl over our hands and make us slip, or bite us, but we all enjoyed ourselves. I was first to the top of the lads, but Mark was first of the officers

-ANDREW WRIGHT

THE SINKING OF 'ROCK BOTTOM'

On Saturday 28 August, Andy Howard came to John Crutch and I and asked us if we would go and bale out '*ROCK BOTTOM*' (sorry, LEAKY BOTTOM) as she was very low in the water. After we had finished our section duties (washing-up) we boldly set forth for the store-tent and our life-jackets, and grabbing them we took off our shoes and socks and I stepped on a thistle! John was luckier and reached the sand without difficulty. Reaching the rocks a new difficulty arose as the rocks were sore on the feet. So, crawling and tottering along we moved across the rocks to some more sand. Confronting us was a wall of rock about 20 ft. high and in our bare feet it was like climbing Mt. Everest. I reached the top first and jumped down. My feet disappeared into some very soft sand. Pulling them out, I spotted a patch of blue and racing towards it we reached Pete's canoe. We pushed it into the water and got aboard, John showing me how to get in a canoe properly, nearly capsized us. We paddled forth and putting plenty of pressure on the paddles reached '*ROCK BOTTOM*' and overshot her. Again we tried to approach her and this time succeeded. I got into her and we debated what to do next. Then we started a heated argument in which I eventually won. John wanted to pull up the anchor which he thought was a light chunk of iron. When I pulled to try to get it aboard I nearly sank the boat. Then we found that the iron anchor was in the boat. So untying the rope and tying the rope to the buoy I threw it overboard upon which it promptly sank, as Andy Howard had forgotten (as usual) to screw on the cap (the twit!) I got out the oars and commenced to row, John giving orders from the canoe. John then proceeded to climb aboard, dipping the gun'l under in the process and filling the boat with more water. The (censored canoe kept getting in the way and John tried to turn it around so it would get towed. At that moment a wave came across and knocked it onto the top of the gun'l. I rushed over to help John push it off but the combined weight was too much for the boat and the water started to come in again, and this time it didn't stop. As she settled, like true Britons, we stood on the seat and saluted. Fortunately she was only in about 3 ft. of water and we jumped off, getting wet in the process. We unscrewed the engines and John proceeded to bale while I towed the canoe to the shore. About 1-minute later the crowd in the marquee had assembled to watch the stricken '*ROCK BOTTOM*' but then

dispersed as quickly after finding she had not sunk in deep water. We baled her out and about J-hour later she was empty, whilst we crawled back to the tents with sore arms and I for one, lay down on my lilo and relaxed.

- DONALD GILLIES

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THAT ORONSAY BIVVY

Billed as the 'Slackers Bivvy' the long-awaited Forsaith Expedition to Oronsay was composed of five specially-selected members, picked after countless interviews to find the most lethargic people in camp. Andrew Jowers (Hollywood extra -unemployed), Clifton Snaith (the Lincolnshire Loafer), Gregory Watson (1970 stock, left-over from Ulva), Oliver Dow (court jester and general peanut) accompanied myself (and most of the stores) for an easy night near the Priory. After a light supper of pate, smoked trout, roast pheasant, and crepes suzette, washed down with Dow-jokes, we went for a gentle promenade, resisting the temptation to ride off into the glorious sunset.

We spent the night in Blacks Hydro's carefree luxury and were called to a late breakfast of grilled kippers, after which we retired for an early siesta. We packed our trunks after a brief lunch of lobster bisque, steak, kidney and mushroom pie, orange sorbet and cheese and biscuits, washed down with further Dow-jokes, and completed our stay by a trip on the cable car to the summit of Beinn Oronsay (lo?351 ft) and a guided tour around the interesting and brilliantly-preserved Priory.

We had planned a route home to the Machrins Ritz by the coast road, hoping that the Rolls could negotiate some of the sharper hairpins, but 'twas not to be. On arrival at the Strand, we found that, instead of the tidal motorway we had expected, was a stretch of water. Inquiring from the natives we discovered that the neap tides had resulted in there being no low water. A quick piece of work found us two cramped rooms still free at Blacks Hydro, and a rummage through the refrigerator in the back of the limousine produced some rather tasty, though slightly stale, lobster salad. Next morning we rose early but, alas, the tide was no better, so we fitted the buoyancy bags under the mudguards and motored across in hubcap deep water. We knew that the coast road was liable to flood so we drove back in blinding rain to a very late breakfast that beggars description.

Actually, things were not quite this simple, and I have to tender grateful thanks to the four lads who bore up so well through a very difficult time and whose humour never failed

even to the point of walking back into the marquee after a six-mile trudge against driving rain and a strong wind, including a wade across the Strand, on very empty stomachs, and a wet sleepless night, to rapturous applause and announcing in unison "And now for something completely different."

PETER FORSAITH

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THE RUINED VILLAGE PROJECT

At 10.15 am. the three of us set out for the ruined village and after stopping at the shops we got there at about 11.30. We looked around for an hour or so before having lunch in front of the row of crofts looking out to a rather misty Jura. We were only at the village another couple of hours because the weather was not too good and because we saw a rabbit with myxamatois which we thought should be reported.

We ran down into Scalasaig and told a man we already knew about the rabbit but somehow we digressed into talking about RAISG BUIDHE (the name of the ruined village) and discovered the gardener at Colonsay House was born at the ruins. We decided to visit him on Tuesday. When we got back to camp that night we found out about some tombstones in the graveyard near the church. The next day it was decided to look for the church and graveyard. We set out from camp at 10.15 and on reaching Scalasaig decided to go along the coast to the ruined



village instead of going over the hills. To our luck we found two small stone buildings which we thought could have belonged to the village. In one of these houses was a very old boat-hook; this meant, maybe, the villagers went fishing. Also along the coast we found a small cave with 4 old boat-oars propped up against it. This walk along the coast Doomed to prove that the village was a fishing settlement.

When we reached the village we started the search for the church and graveyard. We noticed a large building on its own; when we explored it more closely we found that one of the walls was curved. In front of this building were four walls. This, we thought, was the church and graveyard but we could not be sure as with a lot of the other buildings.

After eating our packed lunch we set off on the road to Colonsay House. Soon we were face to face with the gardener who had spent his early days living in these houses. We asked him a lot of questions and discovered the villagers went fishing for lobsters. The two buildings we found on the coast turned out to be stores for the lobster fishing equipment. The building was the church and in front of the church was the graveyard with a larch tree. Under the larch tree were the graves. He told us that his ancestors had lived there since 1752. All the outhouses were used for keeping pigs etc.

Our next task for the following day was to find the gravestones and to measure the different buildings for a scale drawing of the village. We set out at 10.30 and by 11.45 had started the measuring of all the remains we could possibly find. After lunch we wandered around the graveyard to look for the tombstones. We started digging under the larch tree where we had been told the tombstones were. What we thought was an easy job turned out to be difficult. With the tombstones being un-inscribed we had to take care in finding stones that looked as though the shape had been curved. However, we managed to uncover four tombstones which we measured and drew.

The village itself consists of about 20 buildings, the larger crofts were lived in until about 1925 but many were evacuated during the period 1918-21 mainly because they thought it would be a more profitable life in Scalasaig. There were three wells in the village, all of which have now fallen in, and at the north of the village are two large gateposts where a track came from Kiloran.

A cross dating back to the 13-14th Centuries was once erected in the graveyard but is now at St.Oran's Well, Colonsay House.

- ROGER BUTLER, MARK HARVEY, BRUIN THOMPSON

TO THE RUINED CHURCH

The four of us - Andrew Howard, Philip Whyman, Nick King and myself - were going to see the ruined church at the north of the island. We set off at 9 am. and walked along the A870 (a proper road!) After stopping at the old mill we turned left at Colonsay House, then right up a cart track through a field full of sheep. After helping the farmer free a sheep from a string mesh wire fence we walked on past Kiloran Bay, Balnahard Farm to where the path ended, in an area which was full of rabbit holes and rabbits both dead and alive. We climbed over a hill and there we saw our objective - the ruined church. Having explored the church which consisted of four or five rooms, in one of which there was a dead sheep and in another 20 empty whisky bottles, we had lunch and Andrew claimed seeing a Golden Eagle. Looking around the church after lunch we found four bells of different sizes.

We set off back along the shore but due to hills, bogs and woods we ended up at Colonsay House where we took a road which led us to the AS71 where we turned left and down to Scalasaig where we had to deliver the mail and meet John Lace who was arriving by ferry. It so happened that most of the camp was also there and we started walking down the road to camp John Lace's rucksack getting a lift. We arrived back at camp quite exhausted after about 17 miles' walk.

GREG WATSON

* * *

A' CHLACH THOGALAICH (THE LIFTING STONE)

The Lifting Stone lies in the north-west corner of the old golf course, where our camp was. It is said to have been lifted by Donald Macfadyen on the shore near Dun Ghallen in 1780. The stone was taken by horse to its present resting-place. At one time no male on the island was considered a man unless he could lift the 2 1/2 cwt. stone. Many people injured themselves in attempts to lift it, and a man from Gigha died shortly after an attempt in which he ruptured himself.

As all these attempts took place many years ago it was decided that the officers should disturb the long rest which the stone had had. It was decided that for a lift to count the stone must be lifted in such a way as to allow a stick to be passed under it. So, on August 29 we all trooped over to the site of the stone. First the 'small fry' such as Alan Howard, Derek Newton and John Lace tried in vain to life the seemingly unconquerable rock. Pete Carlile was our last hope. The great hulking mass known as 'Carcus' stepped forward before

a hushed assembly. The stick was made ready and Pete's attempt began. With a great heave he gripped the stone and tugged. The stone just rolled, undefeated. Once again Pete tried, and again he was beaten. Then, on his last chance, 'Carcus' made a superhuman effort, straining every tendon on his body. The stone rose from the ground which had borne it for so long. A stick was passed underneath it and amid cheers the conqueror returned to the camp-site

-JOHN WILLIAMS

* * *

ROUND THE ISLAND OR BUST

The 'Round-the-Island' bivouac was an ambitious project to say the least. The idea was to walk around the island with full packs, plus two tents, and having an overnight stop along the east coast. Our happy band of pilgrims (SPAM + our worthy Leader) set out at 11.00 and made good progress to arrive up at Kiloran by 13.00. Here, we saw our first glimpse of the amazing Adams knee-wobble, as he staggered across the sands, claiming "I can't walk". After lunch and a good investigation of the caves, we toyed with the idea of returning that evening to haunt the group who would be bivouacing there that evening. However, we thought it better to leave the immediate area of Kiloran but keeping the idea of returning still in our minds.

Sherpa Howard, with the 15-ton Southworth pack, stood there Ten'sing his muscles as he reached new peaks of humour (notice mountaineering puns). Despite this, the peaks of the hills were loftier than those of our humour and we were tired when we reached Balnahard Farm. Just beyond this point, which proved to be our last point of contact with the outside world for four or five miles and hours, we disappeared into a tangled maelstrom of heather and bracken up to the waist which was mixed with half-dead birch woods, large hills and stream valleys and meant that we were all soon very tired. Amid the cries of "plough on, good life, only a mile to go and not to worry" (all from Alan) we decided not to go through another mile of heather and headed inland towards Loch Fada. Eventually, with broken backs etc. we set up camp and had a very good supper (Guess what ... spam and beans) on the shores of Loch Fada and turned in at 10 pm.

The next morning we awoke to the screams of blood-hungry midges which attacked us without mercy for at least two hours. We decided to get up and cook breakfast as we were all very hungry; or at least everyone except Alan got up (untrue!) After a large breakfast of sausage and beans and beans and sausage and beans and beans, Steve set fire to a primus and dissolved all the solder and all the legs fell off. (Do not tell Peter Forsaith, by the way).

We had now revised our plans for the completion of the bivouac and cut out a section of our journey around the south of the island. At about 10.30 we set off for camp via Scalsaig once more. The straps of our sacks agitated our old welts and bruises and the pace was slow despite the slope in our favour. The origins of our camp-song can be traced to this section of our walk. We collapsed outside the Scalasaig Post Office but were hurried along by a member of the defeated Colonsay XI who was driving a steam-roller.

We had our lunch by the roadside and ploughed on back to camp. We entered our tents and collapsed for the rest of the afternoon and were officially declared ill with high temperature

-STEPHEN SOUTHWORTH, NIGEL PARKER,
JOHN ADAMS, CALUM MACKENZIE - ALAN HOWARD
* * *

COLONSAY XI ..1 ; S.H.S. ALL STARS ..2

The teams arrived at the Colonsay stadium full of confidence but on the appearance of the Colonsay XI the SHS All Stars confidence seemed to waver. Colonsay were twice the size of the younger SHS XI. However, the teams kicked off to the sound of bagpipes and Colonsay immediately moved forward and the score-line was kept even only through some brilliant saves by John (the cat) Houghton. But shortly before half-time McFIlth hit a shot from the edge of the imaginary penalty area which slipped through John's paws. SHS held on for the remaining minutes and survived until Alan Ramsey's pep-talk during the interval. The team manager appeared to have had injected new vigour into his players. He substituted three players; Simon Ritter seemed well over the hill and the fresh-looking Mike Dodge was an obvious replacement. Mike Skinner and John Williams (reject from Cardiff RFC) although having shown obvious English class had taken unprecedented stick from the Gaelic back four in the first half and were replaced by Richard Needier and Andrew Wright.

Soon after the re-start, a fine groping tackle by the leader on the lady at outside right, brought the ball to the feet of Andrew ("I-can-take-them-all") Wright, who put a pinpoint pass to pugnacious Pete who blasted the ball from 25 yds, deflecting off a hairy highland knee and finding its resting-place in the back of the Celtic goal. This brought the scores level and the crowd to their feet and although no toilet-rolls were thrown (by special request) the pitch was invaded by hysterical fans.

When the pitch was finally cleared and the fans had

returned to their rabbit-holes, the by now anxious Islanders kicked off both ball and player. However, with Bobby Howard directing his team with obvious class from the midfield role that he plays so well, the All Stars rallied again and from a high clearing ball from Knee-cap Newton, the domineering Carcus, with his savaged shorts, forced a corner. Hip-swinging Dodge took the corner and the ball sailed over the heads of the defence where the head and hair of big Pete powered the ball into the goalkeeper's chest; but the ball rebounded and the figure of mole-face Cliff turning, jinking, pirouetting, slammed the ball past the amazed goalkeeper. Yet again the fans and the opposing team went wild, but with such a defence, including such stars as Andy ("They're-all-the-same-to-me") Simpson, the final score remained 2-1.

- ROD KNEE (PETE CARLILE)
DAVID COALHOUSE (CLIFTON SNAITH.)

* * *

MINGULAY EXPEDITION 1971

Leader: Hugh Williams

Bruno Cottin, Xavier Cottin, Stephen David, Duncan Davidson, Ian Deacon, Ralph Glenny, Ian Goddard, James Gowing, Andrew Marsden, Mike Osborne, Alistair Philips, Mark Potter, David Rust, Humphrey Southall.

LEADER'S REPORT

We all change. The Society changes, its ideals, members and administration change. Each individual grows older, matures and progresses. An island does not change, it retains its physical formation for ages beyond comprehension and its social structure for decades.

Mingulay is therefore still an island of superlatives. The schoolboys who visited the island in 1964 and 1967 are now teachers or scientists or engineers, their comments about Mingulay still hold true. About the island one can add little to Martin Child's comments of 1964 or Donald Campbell's of 1967: "*... the ruined village in the bay; the sheer cliffs and stacks towering to over 700 feet on the western coast; the sheep and the colonies of birds; and above all the lingering sense of its history of violence^ poverty and disease - of men fighting a losing battle against the elements*" and "*A green grazed bowl, sand-blown ruins and a single sheltered bay at the centre of a semi-circle of barren hills which soon end in superb, precipitous cliffs and the Atlantic: that is Mingulay.*" The praises are endless, magnificent, beautiful, barren, remote. Only the remoteness is changed, in summer one of the owners of the island runs a regular Sunday ferry service for tourists, but they do not stay long.

Mingulay, apart from Berneray, is the most southern of the Outer Isles. It is no more than 1) miles wide and 2) miles from north to south. From the east it rises to a height of 891 feet at Carnan, then steeply descends to the top of the cliffs which fall as far as 750 feet vertically to the Atlantic. The other heights of the island are MacPhees Hill in the north and Hecla in the south, these three peaks offer shelter to Mingulay Bay. The island is owned by a group of crofters on Barra, their main activity is the rearing of sheep on Berneray, Mingulay and Pabbay, about 600-700 are kept on Mingulay.

The Expedition really started on July 17th when we met at Alistair's house in London. Ten of the expedition members were able to attend the meeting and we had useful discussions on a number of topics.

It was not until a month later that we met again, this time on the train. The party was finally complete when we joined the advance party on Barra at 3.00 am. on Tuesday 17th August. Later that morning we left Barra for Mingulay.

Our camp-site was centred on the Priest's House and Chapel which occupies a site just north of the village proper. The building is a superbly solid structure of stone with a slate roof, though this is now beginning to break up. The downstairs rooms are now used as a sheep shelter, most of the doors and windows having been removed. Our first job on the island, after moving all our equipment the half-mile from the landing-place, was therefore to remove sheep from the house and to clean up the mess. We soon prepared a kitchen, making use of old doors and our tea-chests, a project-cum-store room, a dining and living room and a washing and drying room. In addition, we had an entrance hall and we used the Chapel on the first floor as extra storage space and a surgery. We pitched our eleven tents around the house, this gave us plenty of space in which to live, sleep, eat and work. Our water supply ran through the camp-site.

It is a great pity that any building should become derelict; it is an even greater pity that once deserted, a building is defaced. The walls of the Priest's House had been first written on, then drawn on and eventually names carved out in the plaster. The S.H.S., while not the major offender, has contributed to this process on Mingulay; we managed to leave the walls unmarked; I sincerely hope that other expeditions in other areas can do the same.

For the sake of convenience, we split up the expedition members into five duty sections with three people in each. There can be resistance to the idea of duty sections especially on senior camps, but this system seemed to work very well. Our overall camp administrator, Alistair, did an excellent job on the food and Ian D. organised the equipment. James helped with camp administration. Andrew 'Doc' provided disinfectant, good humour and an unsurpassed radio manner. Alistair was also our resident electronics wizard, doing things with radio and resistors that fooled all of us, especially me! Mike 'Baden-Powell' provided pockets from which everyone was able to borrow string, can-openers and cups of tea at any time of day or night but mainly morning.

Mingulay was to have been the most project-orientated expedition yet run by the Society. Our experts were varied and numerous. James visited different corners of the island at frequent intervals looking at the geology and geomorphology and arguing about the position of dykes. Mike took soil samples from various points across the island then evaluated their acidity and related this to the botany.

Humph carried out a survey of the grasses and achieved excellent results for one who had known nothing of his subject a few months previously. Ian G. carried out a survey of lichens, mosses, liverworts and flowers - which obviously kept him busy. David seemed to spend all of every day digging up worms and spiders. Ian D. caught mice and thought about catching rabbits and shrews but was disappointed. Mark hunted birds all over the island, the crowning achievement being a Sea Eagle. Ralph went mushroom hunting, but more in the interests of his stomach than science. Duncan lay about on the beach plotting the paths of limpets and preparing a very good seashore ecology report. Alistair and Stephen made some dramatic archaeological discoveries which have been of great interest to the Ordnance Survey and the Scottish National Museum of Antiquities. Bruno helped with Duncan's tide work and Xavier kept the weather records. Andrew unfortunately had to work for exams, but gave great help to the ornithologists.

The point of all the above is that we had enough experts to cover nearly every aspect of natural history, so an overall project was planned and carried out. This was, perhaps, rather grandly put under the heading of 'ECOLOGY'¹, in actual fact it is a study of the relationships between the various aspects of natural history of the island. Our first job was to define an area in which to work. We took a 400m wide transect from east to west across the island, centred on the peak of Carnan. This was marked out by a series of flags at 100m intervals along both north and south lines. We then started our survey by placing 1m sq. quadrant frames at the base of each flag in turn and counting the plants and their cover in each frame, and by taking soil samples. The idea was that we should then do the same for points within the transect and at other intervals along the line.

In retrospect this was far too ambitious. We did not have the knowledge nor the time to carry out all the work involved. In actual fact we carried out a simplified line survey across the island. This is still a valuable piece of work since we were able to study all the animals and plants on the island in relation to this one line. The final report is not prepared at the time of writing, but it is hoped that this will be available before Christmas. The expedition report will include the final Ecology Report, reports on Archaeology, Seashore Ecology and Ornithology and will be available - at a modest price(!) - from the leader.

There were two main principles behind the Ecology Report, the most important of these was that up to this stage the Society has produced a number of very interesting and good reports on a variety of topics. The disadvantage of these has been that they have been of little value to anyone except those who are already interested in the particular field being studied. For example, there is an excellent report about Grasses on Raasay compiled in the early days of the Society which would be of great interest to botanists, especially one who wants to produce his own comparative study. To the vast majority of society members it has little significance. The Mingulay project is an attempt to bring all these fields of study together so that they will be of interest to far more people.

The second aim of the project was to justify the existence of the Society in terms of useful and scientific work. At the time of planning the project some justification along these lines seemed to be necessary. It now seems that this was not a particularly good idea. If the Society were to try and produce more scientific work it would have to take a far more professional outlook on its operations. It is precisely because we operate haphazardly and are run entirely voluntarily that the expeditions are what they are. Any scientific study demands a high degree of co-ordination and a great deal of hard work from those involved in it. In the case of the Society 'those involved'¹ are the members of expeditions and the administration, the co-ordination and work needed would drastically affect the atmosphere and spontaneity of the expeditions and therefore the enjoyment to be gained from them.

Mingulay could well have suffered from this, but because we were primarily concerned with enjoying ourselves by creating an atmosphere, we did not devote too much time to our work. We produced our survey which we hope will be of interest & value. Alistair and Stephen have produced excellent results from the archaeology survey; Duncan, Mark and James have done the same for seashore ecology, ornithology & geomorphology respectively. At the same time we had those incredibly silly Tilley jokes, the Spam bird, the Tiree Tels. song, the 'shargs' and the Laird MacSporran himself. We swam (occasionally), we walked, and we lay in the sun. In the evenings we talked or played cards or read poetry or sang. Our music was varied: we had Bruno and Xavier on guitar or mouth-organ, Andrew on piano accordion, Duncan's voice. We had Ralph's Mingulay Blues and the infamous Bread-and-Butter Pudding Blues; we had Humph's 'Puff and, of course, the Mingulay Boat Song. We had our gale - Severe Gale 9, in fact.

During it, all but four tents came down, several being severely damaged. The following day produced some memorable seas, 50 ft. or more swells were battering the west coast of the island and spray was reaching nearly 300 ft. All these things, natural or self-produced, helped us to thoroughly enjoy the experience.

Our thanks for all this must go to vast numbers of people: to Mr MacLean and the Barrahead Sheep Stock Company for allowing us to use the island and house; to John MacLeod and his helpers who ferried us under near-impossible conditions and who helped greatly by bringing in supplies essential to the smooth running of the expedition half-way through our stay; to Father MacQueen who helped so much with local information in the weeks before we went and to Mr Campbell who so kindly gave us floor space in Castlebay on the first night. Special thanks must go to the MATS for the loan of the radio equipment, and to Mr Graham in Tìree and the pilots who contacted us daily. Thanks, too, to Mrs Macpherson who received vast amounts of information on emergency procedure, luckily we did not need her help.

Finally, to all those who helped in so many ways to organise the Expedition; thank you all.

—HUGH WILLIAMS

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ARCHAEOLOGY 1971

Before the Expedition very little archaeological work had been done on Mingulay. The Ordnance Survey had recorded a few isolated finds, but apart from this we were exploring fresh ground. Among the items that the O.S. asked us to find so as to check their records was a stone setting, Crois An T-Suid-heachain. The original description (1885) said it consisted of a number of open rectangular chambers, but no trace of it was found during a subsequent survey in 1965. We did discover a site in the right position, but it did not coincide with any of the specifications given. The site showed a difference in vegetation from the surrounding land, and there were a few protruding rocks. A Resistivity Survey (*of*. South Uist 1970 Report) was carried out to determine the presence of rocks below ground level but results were not as conclusive as had been hoped.

One other find was made in connection with this search. Had the site not fitted the measurements given for the stone setting, one would have immediately concluded it was a recent dwelling.

Right alongside it was a rectangular area, 2jm x 3jm enclosed by large builders. Also investigated were a number of cairns, some of which pointed east/west suggesting some religious significance. These were to be found throughout the hillside behind the village. Various explanations were put forward for the existence of the cairns. One speculation, based on some cliff-top shielings in Rhum, is that they could be some kind of shieling used by early Christian missionaries; it was also pointed out that some of them could well be cleats, on which peat was laid out to dry as there was evidence of peat-cutting nearby. In any event, their positions were plotted on a 1:10,000 map. Near the summit of Carnan were two cairns, one of which resembled that at Usinish, South Uist, excavated by the S.H.S. in 1970. There was also stonework, covering extensive sites in Skipisdale and on the south-east of the island.

The *piece de resistance* however, was the finding of 230 Iron Age sherds at a site, already recorded by the Ordnance Survey, in sand by a mound 20m above sea-level. A small excavation was dug in the mound, where we found several pieces of pot, but little or no evidence of stonework. The sherds have been sent to the National Museum of Antiquities in Edinburgh. Most of the sherds were blackened on one or both sides and resembled those from Dun Cuier, Barra and A Cheardach Mhor, South Uist. They were found in several distinct, dark layers, separated by sand, which suggested successive occupations over a number of centuries, as was the case at other sites in the islands. Most of the pot has been dated 200-300 A.D. The sherds also had a fillet, a decoration pressed on by hand at the greatest girth of the vessel, which is a characteristic of Hebridean Iron Age pottery. One piece resembled finds from A Cheardach Mhor which were believed to be copies of Roman bronze vessels.

We concluded the excavation by drawing sections and taking photographs to reveal the layering. Finally, a plaque was laid in the hole, which was filled in. No doubt someone will find

- ALISTAIR PHILIPS and STEPHEN DAVID

* * *

RADIO MINGULAY

"Mingulay, this is Tìree Tels. How do you copy? Over" ... We were fortunate in having a daily radio link provided by the National Air Traffic Control Services in conjunction with BEA. On most days the Pilot of the BEA plane from Glasgow to Tìree gave us a call around 9.15 in the morning to check if we were still alive, and on Sundays when there was no flight Mr Graham drove up to one of the hill-top sites on Tìree and contacted us with the radio in his land-rover.

We had some trouble with the equipment for the first few days - so, much to the concern of Hugh, I decided to attack it with a hot soldering-iron. After nearly killing it I managed to cure it of its troubles, and we had successful contacts for the rest of the Expedition; the daily operating being done by Andrew and myself

ALISTAIR MacLEAN PHILIPS

PLANS FOR 1972

NORTH UIST EXPEDITION 15th August to 1st September
Group K (12 to 14 years)
Leader: Roger Weatherley

RAASAY EXPEDITION..... . 24th July to 10th August
Group J (14 to 15 years)
Leader: John Houghton

LEWIS EXPEDITION 14th August to 2nd September
Group I (15 to 16 years)
Leader: Hugh Williams

SOUTH UIST EXPEDITION 23rd July to 12th August
Group H (16 to 17 years)
Leader: Alan Fowler

MUCKLE ROE EXPEDITION 15th August to 4th September
Group G (17 years and over)
Leader:

All dates subject to revision on publication of relevant Time-tables.

Details and copies of the Prospectus may be obtained from
PETER SMITH,
Morgan Hall, The Lawns, Cottingham, Hull, Yorks.

The Society's Annual Conference will be held
at Lincoln Hall - University of Nottingham
7th to 9th JANUARY, 1972