

**SCHOOLS  
HEBRIDEAN  
SOCIETY**



**1973**

*Chris Hood.*

SCHOOLS HEBRIDEAN SOCIETY  
ANNUAL REPORT 1973

Directors of the Schools Hebridean Company Limited

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EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

<i>Conference</i> .....	P. Forsaith
<i>Report</i> ... ..	J.G. Firth
<i>Equipment</i> .....,, .	P. Tatham
<i>Travel</i> .....	M. Rayne
<i>Boats</i> . ... ..	J. Round
<i>Newsletter</i> .....	P. Carlile

EXPEDITION LEADERS 1973

<i>South Uist Archaeology</i> . . .	A.K. Fowler
<i>Harris Officer Training</i> . . .	P.N. Renold
<i>South Rona</i> .....	J. Turner
<i>Rhum</i> .....	M. Rayne
<i>Jura</i> .....	D.C. Bradshaw
<i>Colonsay</i> .....	R.A. Howard

EXPEDITION LEADERS 1974

<i>Outer Isles</i> .....	) to be appointed by the
<i>Mingulay</i> .....	) Conference
<i>South Uist</i> .....	)
<i>Harris</i> .....	)
<i>North Uist</i> .....	)
<i>Raasay</i> .....	)

C O N T E N T S

*Page*

<b>Editorial</b> ... ..	<b>4</b>
Chairman's Report ... ..	4
PART I - The Expeditions :	
South Uist 1973 .....	6
Harris 1973 ... ..	12
South Rona 1973 ... ..	16
Rhum 1973 . ... ..	22
Jura 1973 . ... ..	31
Colonsay 1973 .. ... ..	38
PART II - Project Work :	
Ornithology .....	43
Boats .....	55
Climbing . ... ..	59
Entomology ... ..	62
Pollution ... ..	63
Geology... ... ..	64
Ecology . . ... ..	65
Archaeology .....	66
Botany .....	72
Harris Transect Work .....	74
Book Review ... ..	82
Plans for 1974 .....	84
Past Expeditions ... ..	86

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Every year the Society receives help from so many people, firms and organisations that it would be impossible to mention them all by name. We would, however, like to express our very sincere thanks to all those people without whose help our activities would not have been possible.

## EDITORIAL

Once again the Report has a new editor although no other major changes have been made. We have a book review, the first for a long time – but then it's not often that someone writes a book which must be of interest to all members of the Society. In addition, we have a Chairman's Report for the first time within my memory.

I must apologise to all the people whose work has been omitted or abbreviated, but the quantity of material has again exceeded the available space. I should point out, however, that there will be an enlarged display at the Conference this year, to give an 'airing' to some more of the project material.

Peter Smith has recently announced his retirement from the Board. He has moved to a new job at Nottingham University and feels that he no longer has enough time to continue his work as Director in charge of Public Relations. We offer our thanks for all the excellent work which he has done. Alan Fowler has taken charge of PR, and Alistair Philips has taken over Projects. Mark Rayne has agreed to take charge of Travel.

During the year the Society has enlisted the help of a secretary – Mary Jones. My thanks go especially to Mary, Andrew, Alan, David, Mark, Jim, Phil and Alan, for all the help that they have given me.

A \* \*

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As I set here typing this article for the Society's 1973 Report and look at the pile of letters awaiting reply, it is difficult to remember back a couple of months or so to this summer's expeditions. When I do remember, what sticks in my mind is walking through the driving rain and suffering from buckling knees whilst carrying a calor-gas cylinder on my back.

Much more important, I remember the people I met, the things we did and the pleasure and enjoyment which I gained from the expeditions. It is often all too easy to forget these things when faced with mountains of work. Too easy to forget why we are involved in the Society at all. Equally, it is all too easy, as an ordinary Society member, to forget just how much work has been done behind the scenes in order to get your expedition off the ground.

In 1973, thanks to all the work done by the Directors,

Executive Officers, Leaders, Officers and Boys, we had six highly successful expeditions. Despite very mediocre weather and a number of organisational problems and last minute crises, the expeditions themselves went without a hitch. When I say that I pay tribute to the expedition which had to evacuate a member with appendicitis by helicopter, to the expedition advance party which had two lorries breaking down on them- It says a great deal for the people in the Society that such events are taken almost as a matter of course and dealt with accordingly.

During this year we had much greater success with recruitment in that most of the expeditions were full by the end of April, This was due to the effort of members who went out and spread the word to their schools and friends. Please do the same for 1974, We also purchased two inflatable dinghies and one Wayfarer sailing dinghy, christened "HARVEY WALLBANGER' by the Jura expedition, these as the result of a generous grant from the King George Jubilee Trust. To them, may I say 'Thank-you' on behalf of the Society, Also, during the year, we have taken on Mrs Mary Jones as a part-time secretary. She has lightened the load on some of the Directors very considerably.

For the future we are working on a number of ideas, first and foremost being the reorganisation of the structure of the Board of Director and Executive Officers to spread the load better. In order to try and involve Society members we are going to publish a newsletter, the first edition of which you should get at about the same time as this Report. This newsletter is designed both to inform and to allow members to air their views, whether critical or otherwise. It is up to Society members to make it work.

The 1974 Conference, to be held at Reading in January, will include much more for the ordinary members and should provide a far greater opportunity for you to air your views verbally to Directors,

And finally, we are again running six expeditions in 1974. The two senior expeditions to Mingulay and the Outer Isles are, to some extent, new departures in that whilst they will both be Officer Training Expeditions in a sense, ' the former will be project-oriented and the latter outdoor pursuit oriented and possible mobile.

I look forward to seeing you at the Conference.

PHIL RENOLD

# P A R T I

## SOUTH UIST 1973

### Members

Alan Fowler, Geoff David, Nick Deeley, Tony Bryan,  
Sally Fowler, Craig Roscoe, Jim Brierley and  
Jonathan Seville.

### LEADER'S REPORT

The Society is experimenting with the idea of organising a small expedition each year for members of the senior age group and upwards to pursue one project in depth at their campsite. This is partly as a result of the successful expedition of South Uist 1970, where seven members continued the excavation of the archaeological site at Usinish Bay under the guidance of Geoff David, and the Mingulay expedition of 1971, which undertook an ambitious ecological transect of Mingulay under Hugh Williams.

It is also a result of the awareness of the Board of the need for an outlet within the activities of the Society for members who couple a growing skill and competence in a field science with the ability to become deeply interested in a scientific problem. For these members the intensive study of one project for three weeks can add a lot of satisfaction to the expedition experience.

The 1973 expedition to South Uist organised its own travel to and from the site, but was otherwise administrated in the usual way by the Society. Our main purpose was to bring the archaeological work at Usinish Bay to a point where the site could be left by us after the completion of a satisfactory cycle of digging. We could not hope to excavate the entire site, which is some twenty metres in diameter and buried in peat up to two-and-a-half metres deep, but we were able to complete two cross-sections of the site at right angles to one another, and to uncover large parts of the site along the line of the cross-sections.

A subsidiary purpose of the expedition was to gather photographs for an article which *might* get published in the *GEOGRAPHICAL MAGAZINE*.

Such a serious expedition as this can be expected to get results. There is no need to repeat the results of the work of 1970, and I cannot better Geoff David's admirable description

of the work in that year's magazine. Our work this year emphasised the similarity of the opposing (Uphill) quadrant of the site.

Two trenches two metres wide and ten metres long were excavated from the centre of the site, aligned on the north and east directions respectively. The sections taken from the trench walls lying along the centre lines of the site are thus complementary to those of 1970's work. The original intention of excavating the entire quadrant was abandoned because of the great depth of the peat and shortage of time.

These excavations confirmed the evidence of 1970's resistivity survey, showing the structure of unshaped boulders and stones to be roughly in the shape of a shallow cone about two-and-a-half metres high and nineteen metres across, and very roughly circular. In 1970 a steeper gradient on a part of the west side of the cone was reminiscent of the edge of a platform, but this year a vertical wall was uncovered in the east trench, and this was aligned across rather than around the site. More signs of structure appeared this year, and I think cynics were convinced that the site is more than just a large pile of stones!

More pottery of a coarse consistency and dark brown to black colour was found, including some larger pieces than were discovered in 1970. Again, however, these were retrieved exclusively from layers close to the base of the structure, which stands on a fairly smooth and deeply weathered rock surface. From the condition of the rock beneath and the depth of the peat above the structure, it is clear that the site is very old, but just how old cannot yet be said. The pottery itself can be assessed by experts with wide experience of pottery of known age from other parts of Scotland and the Hebrides, and so far I understand it is probably from the Scottish Iron Age. An accurate date for the pottery could be found by means of a 'thermo-luminescence' test, but museums and universities are already besieged by demands for this sort of assessment and our place in the queue is very far down. Similarly, a single piece of wood found deep in the peat could be accurately dated by 'radio-carbon dating' methods, but this is very expensive. The pollen-analysis undertaken from the 1970 work gave interesting results, but the dating which can be obtained from this method depends on the appearance of certain identifiable patterns, which just did not appear - which is negative evidence, and not significant. We did, however, obtain a picture of a South Uist once forested with mixed woodlands (probably rather short and wind-blasted trees!) including birch, willow, pine



and alder, which gradually gave way to grasses, heather and ling and mosses as man burnt and felled to provide grazing and farming land.

I hope further details will be known by the time of the Conference, as the observations and collections made have to be studied after the expedition itself is over.

It should not be thought that the expedition did not experience the usual challenges of living in the Hebrides. The weather was somewhat worse than average, with several periods of very heavy rain, and couple of squally days. The diggings on-site became flooded and the peat in them turned to the consistency of thick soup. On the other hand, we had some brilliant sunny days when the sea became dazzling and the miles of hills and crags along the coast were emerald green and black. Midges were not nearly so bad as usual, and we had in their place a species of large black fly. Fortunately, the sunniest days were also windy enough to clear these away.

We had a croft to live in and no marquee to worry about in the strong winds. Every evening we sat beside a good fire and dried ourselves out. Some articles of clothing got very close to the fire indeed, and a pair of shoes and a pair of trousers were deliberately burnt, and one pair of boots accidentally burnt. A very sleek brown rat sat on the window one supper-time and watched us eat, and on another occasion made off with a whole packet of Abbey Crunch biscuits and a pound bar of chocolate, leaving us the wrappers and a sticky gnawed mess. Tony built a magnificent suspended larder with anti-rat devices to protect our supplies from further deprivation.

Tony went fishing, without much success. A boat seems to be necessary for successful line-fishing. We also chased rabbits with stones, as they were extremely tame and would allow one within easy throwing distance - it was unlucky that we never managed to catch one, for we had some very near misses.

The camp was supplied in a different manner to most, and by a method that proved successful in practice. All our equipment and food was brought by boat to a point two miles from the campsite at the beginning of the expedition. No black boxes or large crates were used. A cache was constructed with the aid of polythene sheets and stones, and essential supplies carried in to the campsite in our rucksacks. After the first carry-in, a visit was made to the cache every other day by about three members to collect any food and equipment required. At the end of the expedition surplus items of food and equipment remained at the cache, and these were simply put back on the boat which

came to take us off. We thus avoided carrying any boxes or packaging, a dozen loaves which had gone mouldy, a pick-axe, and about five bottles of Calor gas which were not required. What carrying we did do was all done with rucksacks, and the awkward situation that arose at the end of the last expedition to camp at the Usinish site was avoided. We found ourselves wondering about those black boxes and comparing them with rucksacks ...

The expedition was notable for good humour – not sparkling wit, but general cheerfulness – which enabled the eight of us to live together for three weeks without getting on each other's nerves. What might have been the hardest task of the expedition, that of filling in the excavations, thus presented a strange scene. Eight dirty people stood in a line across a black and trampled patch of ground high on the hillside in the late afternoon sunshine. At one end of the line, someone grovelled in a large heap of peat sods, and extracted one at a time to pass down the line. The sods, sometimes very heavy and sometimes very light, were then tossed from one to another along the line, to be thrown by the last member onto a rapidly vanishing pile of stones that marked the site. Now the sods were often wet and greasy, and people were not always ready for the next, so for some time this small group became racked with laughter. In this manner we must have shifted perhaps two tons of wet peat, and we all agreed that the method was very effective^

I hope that the success of this expedition, although not unqualified, encourages more of the same sort. There are essential ingredients, however, without which such an expedition would definitely fail. At least one really knowledgeable person is needed to put in a lot of painstaking preparation of the projected work before the expedition, and then to organise and supervise it on the expedition. We are grateful to Geoff David for doing exactly this this year. In addition the members of the expedition must be prepared to do this project and nothing else, even if they become bored with it or it becomes difficult. This year, although the work was certainly difficult, no one let on if they were bored, and no one started a rival piece of work or took to hill-walking! It all comes down to members of the expedition being prepared to give of their good humour, patience, effort and ability. When all the members do this, a very good time is had by all – as I think it was this year on South Uist.

## THE BOG MAN OF SOUTH UIST

(from article by PETE DIGGER in the Archaeologist's Magazine 'RUBBLE')

Following Professor Glob's discovery we have news of a sensational new find in the Outer Hebrides. The Bog Man of South Uist, as he is now known, was found, completely undisturbed, under about six feet of peat. His scrawny body was enclosed in a loose green shroud, opening down the front, and enscribed with the name of the maker 'Blacks'. Inside the shroud were four metal poles presumably intended as supports for the deceased in after-life. Also contained inside the shroud was a large cylindrical metal bin with a curious lid, intended to contain the possessions of the deceased. The bin was empty, probably having been raided at an earlier date. The bog man himself was of average height, and fairly well preserved (all things considered), apart from the growth of a brown fungus on the chin. He was of peculiar gnome-like appearance and was evidently a man of some importance, for he was found holding his badges of office: in the right hand a metal cylinder inscribed with the name 'Zal', and in the left a roll of paper in a plastic bag intended, I suspect, for the man to write on if he became bored during his journey to heaven (?). The man's clothes were conventional early Iron Age, their unusual feature being a pair of boots with ingenious metal toe-caps designed to frighten off predators by reflecting their expressions back at them.

Judging by the look on his face, the bog man appears to be distinctly worried, as though afflicted by '*syndrus domini*' or '*leader syndrome*', a common disease of the time. The cause of death is thought to be an overdose of SPAM.

To conclude this article, I consider it appropriate to quote an old Hebridean non-rhyming proverb found among the contents of the man's pockets:

*'The rain falls -in the Hebrides;  
Falls mainly everywhere, And  
especially on us. '*

- ANONYMOUS

## THE PEBBLE

A pebble,  
One of millions,  
Catches my eye.

Stretching far ahead is the great horseshoe beach,  
But one pebble catches my eye.  
It dances swiftly through the water,  
Sketching zig-zags in the shallows.  
Gingerly, my finger and thumb enter its transparent world,  
Turn it this way and that,  
Streaking the water with red,  
No, green,  
No, blue,  
Brighter than diamond,  
Glowing with the water's warmth,  
The sun plays on its myriad facets.  
I must pass on, before this richness fades.

- ANONYMOUS

## HARRIS EXPEDITION (OFFICER TRAINING) 1973

*Leader:* Phil RenoId

*Officer:* Paul Caffery

*Members:* Nigel de Berker, Ian Gough, Mike Hayward,  
Steve Kane, Bob Marchment, Dave Martin,  
Andrew Pope, William Warin

### LEADER'S REPORT

This expedition was unusual in a number of respects. It was the Society's first attempt at running one specifically to train future officers. It was organised entirely by expedition members who provided all of the equipment themselves, including a canoe and sailing dinghy. Transport was by hired minibus from London. Finally, the site was in an extremely comfortable cottage in the middle of a"n inhabited, if remote, village. Altogether, very unusual.

More usual was the weather – rain almost continuously for the first two weeks! However, despite this handicap, we went a fair way towards achieving our objectives which were to carry out training in the basic skills and safety factors involved in hill-walking, climbing, canoeing, sailing and Egyptian P.T. In addition, we were able to carry out a considerable amount of project work.

The site itself was at Rhenigidale, an isolated village to the north-east of Tarbert, where five families live. Access was by sea from Scalpay or by a long and arduous footpath around the coast. We were fortunate to have the use of a cottage in the village which had a large and very efficient stove and a clockwork record-player with a supply of 78's, in addition to ample space for cooking, eating, storing equipment, writing up project work and, most important of all, for drying out.

The weather seriously curtailed our activities to the extent that very little canoeing was done. With only one canoe i was not much fun standing in the water, soaked to the skin whilst a fresh breeze did its utmost to give me exposure and, a the same time,try and explain the intricacies of the 'slap-support' stroke.

For the same reason, Paul's climbing was rarely practised despite the discovery of an excellent practice crag. It was usually too wet and/or cold to stay there long. The main amusement was boulder trundling from the top into the quaking bog at the foot of the climb which had just been completed!

As far as sailing was concerned, Willian and Ian put Paul and I to shame. The dinghy, transported north at great cost to my car, was used extensively. Everyone save the two elderly members of the expedition went out at least once, and learnt both how cold and how exhilarating sailing can be.

Ian also organised a score orienteering event for us. This was greatly enjoyed by everyone, although I managed to lose my control card and was thus disqualified despite the fact that I really had visited all the checkpoints. Unfortunately, nobody would believe me!

Everyone managed to get at least one full day hill-walking in addition to many wearisome trudges to Tarbert for bread, calor-g<sub>as</sub> or chocolate. Most of us, climber Clisham and everyone, went on one of the two 'bivis' to the Standing Stones of Callernish, using my car to get there. I gather that despite the enthusiasm of Paul and Bob to see the sunrise, the other members of the party were less than keen to get up at five in the morning.

As you will see elsewhere in this report, our main efforts were directed towards project work. Considering that none of us were experts before we got to the site I feel that we achieved very good results. Nigel and Andy spent many hours trying to identify wild flowers. Paul investigated the mysteries of sedges. Mike analysed the Ph value of the soil, whilst Steve studied the composition of the soil and, with the aid of John Hutchison (who visited us for a weekend), surveyed the transect line. Finally, Dave did some excellent work on ornithology for the R.S.P.B. man in Stornoway.

On the lighter side we met the local people, whose kindness and help was incredible. I only hope that our singing (poor) and playing of the tin whistle (even worse) did not drive them to distraction. In gratitude, we entertained them to a ceildh at the end of the expedition, highlighted by the singing of 'Sam Hall'<sup>1</sup> which without the stronger words and without rehearsal was hilarious. My compliments to Paul for being quick witted enough to save us from disaster.

Apart from the weather we had few problems. Thanks must go to Findlay Cunningham for landing us on a very rough day (I have never found out who broke my bottle of whisky, leaving my sleeping bag with an interesting aroma) and for taking us off so promptly despite Andy and Paul falling into the sea whilst loading. Especial thanks to Roddy Macinnes for arranging for us to use the cottage; to Duncan Macinnes for delivering our letters three times a week and for always giving us a helping

hand; and to Mrs Macinnes for her hospitality and for showing us how to use her spinning wheel.

Beyond any doubt the expedition was a success due entirely to the hard work and enthusiasm of the members. Thank you.

- PHIL RENOLD

### LOBSTEROLOGY

The idea of attempting to catch and consume some lobsters whilst on Harris was conceived at very short notice when one of the local fishermen, displaying typical Hebridean generosity, offered to lend us one of his lobster-pots. The offer was enthusiastically taken up and 'lobsterology' was born. The following morning, the pot, after a thorough overhaul, was cunningly baited with three pollack-heads, another gift from the local people. We then rowed out to a convenient headland, and the pot was ceremoniously consigned to the deep - where it remains to this day since the first attempt to lift it resulted in the rope breaking! From that time on, over the rest of the expedition, several hours were spent trying to hook up the pot, invisible from the surface, by means of an ingenious hooked contrivance created from three bent six-inch nails, a lot of string and weighted with old torch batteries. Our attempts, alas, were unsuccessful.

- WILLIAM WARIN

\* \* \*

### ORIENTEERING

When first asked to organise an orienteering event in such open country as the Outer Hebrides, one thinks of all the problems that might be encountered, but on reflection one realises that it could be great fun, especially if one has sadistic tendencies - the organiser doesn't actually have to run round the course!

The basic problem with the vast open space and lack of woodland, is to stop the event from turning into one great mothers' meeting. Unfortunately, a night event was out of the question due to the rough terrain, and so it was decided that a score event would be the most suitable. (This is where each control has a certain value and the controls can be visited in any order. A time limit is imposed with a penalty for late-comers.) Empty coke tins painted in the traditional red and white colours made adequate markers.

Since everybody had moaned about having to do the event

for the previous two days, I thought I'd better give them plenty of time so that they could at least get most of the markers. Then, on the appointed afternoon, everyone felt very athletic (especially when they saw the person who had set off five minutes later than they had ahead of them). Consequently most people finished with time to spare, though not necessarily having bothered to find all the markers.

The anti-cheating device proved not to have been a waste of time; next time I shall have to invest in a set of punches so that Paul ... (*deep sigh*) MacCaffery can't almost convince me that a 'K<sup>1</sup>' really does look like an 'R'. Phil managed to 'lose' his control card and spent the rest of the evening trying to convince the rest of the party that he really had visited all the controls. But my decision was final, and he was duly disqualified.

First prize to Dave for managing to score 175 out of a possible 180 points, despite the fact that he had been the biggest moaner about having to do the course; and second prize to Nige and Andy for managing to avoid the event altogether.

The main thing was that everyone seemed to have enjoyed themselves, judging by the '*apres event talk*' that took place over supper.

- MIKE HAYWARD

A \* \*

CHILD of the air,  
Sky scythe,  
Carefree scribe  
Of wordless phrases  
On a paper clean sky.  
Surf rider  
On waterless waves;  
Cry that mourns unfelt losses.  
Painter of houses,  
Diner on dustbins,  
Son of silence:  
Seagull.

- STEPHEN KANE



## SOUTH RONA EXPEDITION

Leader: Jim Turner  
Officers: Chris Hood (*Camp Administrator*),  
Robin Illingworth, Dave Jackson,  
Peter Jackson, Jonathan Rake,  
Tony White.

Boys: Richard Barclay, Dave Barney, Mark Creamer,  
Paul Chick, Piers Dyer, Mike Forrest, Paul Gowland,  
Peter Harness, Timothy Harness, Richard Hellier, Bob  
Hemmings, Peter Jeffries, Jim Loring, Mark  
Outhwaite, Chris Parsons, Raymond Snook, Mike  
Standage, Tim Thompson, Philip Todd, Jeremy Turff,  
Martin Turff, David Warren, Norman Watson, Geoffrey  
Horton.

LEADER'S REPORT " Seen from a distance, South Rona is undoubtedly a desolate place. Its bare hulk of scarred and scratched rock projects defiantly from the sea-bed and contrasts with the gentle and verdant mainland. On approaching the island, the scars and crevices grow, to reveal small valleys with peat bogs and rowan trees. The largest valley of all, however, partly occupied by Loch Braig, is completely hidden from the sea.

The journey to Scotland and South Rona was, as ever, tedious; arriving at this supposedly uninhabited island, we found a party from the Applecross School of Adventure and their intrepid leader, Fred, camped above Big Harbour. Luckily for us, they helped to transport some of our equipment over to our campsite at Dry Harbour. The first couple of days were spent in setting up the campsite and making exploratory trips around the island, just to get used to the place. It was a strange experience for one used to commuting to London every day.

Then things started in earnest; during the expedition there were a total of six bivvies away from the main camp, including a canoe bivvy to the northern end of Raasay to collect an expedition member who could not travel with the main party. There were a total of nine fieldwork projects, including an extension of the 1971 expedition's settlement survey. A selection of the reports and other articles which were written follows in this Report, and will give an idea of our activities which concerned not only fieldwork but also climbing, diving and canoeing, not to mention hydraulic engineering. This last



"OUR LEADER"

activity brought us very much into contact with the lighthouse keepers at the northern end of the island, who were always willing to help us and provide us with such valuables as cups of tea and, on one occasion, hot baths!

The most dramatic incident was the evacuation of an appendicitis case by a BEA Sea King helicopter! (Photographic evidence of this will be on display at the Conference).

Of the thirty-one members of the expedition about half were old members of the Society. As leader, I found that this proportion maintained the happy medium between the valuable SHS tradition and exhilarating new ideas and approaches; I can honestly say that the expedition had no hangers-on, everyone being anxious to make the most of their time on South Rona. This, I believe, was the prime reason for our success. I think it significant that the two expedition members who had 'never done anything like this' previously, probably got more out of the expedition than anyone else.

Finally, my sincere thanks to the Pipers of Wivenhoe, where I lived for a month before the expedition, for their support and encouragement.

JIM TURNER

## VIEW OVER DRY HARBOUR

Dear teacher Jon Rake had brought millions of books along to try to educate all the rabble. We decided to read the thinnest, with the biggest print, and with the most pictures. It was entitled 'THE VIEW OVER ATLANTIS'. The author, John Mitchell, pointed out the fact that most prehistoric constructions lay on straight lines, or 'ley lines' as they were called by their discoverer Watkins.

The ley lines were supposed to be lines of the 'dragon current', amongst other forces, which our ancestors tapped to provide the energy for their civilisation.

The book suggested that such lines were present on almost all O.S. maps. This was too much to stomach for a physicist and a couple of religious cynics – so out came the O.S. map of Portree. "Let's see if anything aligns with the temple at the bottom of the island." Out came the rulers – and, lo and behold! – the old building of Brochel Castle (SHS expedition 1972); the trig point Beinn na n'lolaire; the trig point on North Raasay; the Chapel Cave on South Rona; St. Molna's Chapel at the southern end of Raasay; and the peak A Cauleach on Skye all fell on one straight line,

We became a little less cynical.

- DAVE JACKSON : TONY WHITE

\* \* \*

## THE RESCUE

Gastro-enteritis, back-door trot, and other abdominal pains are often put down to camp food, and such was the popular opinion of Mark Outhwaite's vomiting, especially after having had 'Rona's Everlasting Rice' the evening before. Due to similar cases earlier during the expedition, no special attention was paid until after The Doc's early morning visit. Robin, the expedition's medical officer, was almost certain it was a case of appendicitis. Chris Hood immediately jumped into action and sprinted down to Big Harbour where he hoped to find a boat with a radio on board capable of calling for help.

Help arrived in the form of two small ketches belonging to two girls on the Outward Bound course at Applecross. They lowered a rubber dinghy and rowed to the shore to pick up Mark. Whilst they were rowing back to the ketches, a motor-boat from the yacht in Big Harbour arrived and powered towards the dinghy under expert manipulation with the intention of whisking

Mark to Portree as soon as possible. Robin did his own little bit by rowing our semi-inflated dinghy to the scene of the rescue.

But then the ultimate in rescue operations occurred. From over the skyline appeared a BEA helicopter, much to the delight of the gathered assembly. The helicopter was on a flight from Aberdeen to St.Kilda to pick up another case of appendicitis when it heard the emergency call. It circled a few times and dropped a smoke canister to discover wind speed and direction before hovering at a suitable height to pick up Mark. The noise and force of the wind were incredible, and succeeded in blowing away a rubber dinghy which Dave Jackson was trying to hold down. It wasn't long before Mark was hoisted into the helicopter, with Pete Jackson to accompany him, and taken off to Stornoway where he was operated on successfully later that afternoon. The time taken between Robin's decision that he should be taken to hospital and his arrival was only fifty minutes, which is faster than might happen in any large town or city -

MICK FORREST

\* \* \*

#### WATER DAM! GOOD IDEA

Our first meal on South Rona, supper on the day of our arrival, was cooked easily, using *fairly* dirty water from a stream near Dry Harbour. Health hazards were discussed, and Tim Thompson came up with the idea of building a dam which would also serve to provide a constant, steady flow of water to replace the pathetic trickle of the stream. So it was the next day that 'TIM & TAFFY ENTERPRISES' (Taffy = Yours truly) in conjunction with Jim (Poole Navvi) 'LORING CONSTRUCTIONS' with assistance from smaller, private operators, swung into action.

A great deal of muck, including paper, polythene and other gumff, was cleaned out from the upper reaches of the stream, and various rocks removed to increase the rate of water flow. A large square-shaped pit was dug to serve as a settling tank and gravel was placed at the entrance of this to filter incoming water. The settling tank and filter were connected by a pipe. Another pipe was laid at the opposite side of the tank at such a depth that a steady flow of water ran into a smaller pit, at either side of which a step was constructed. Mud and slate were used for lining the walls of the whole construction. The smaller pit was used for both easy filling of water containers and general washing. Several hours after completion

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deposits from water in the settling tank had drifted to the bottom and 'clean' water flowed from the outlet pipe to everyone's delight, 'TAFF'S PATH CONSTRUCTIONS' then took over and a large area around the outlet pit was reinforced and gravelled. Most people failed to see the reason for this and their initial comments shall go unrecorded, but its true purpose was revealed as the area surrounding the construction became very mucky after rain.

- NORMAN R. WATSON

\* \* \*

#### A RARE FIND

On Thursday, July 28th, a lizard was found at the north end of the island GR.628599. At the time of discovery it was sunning itself on a tuft of grass and was, surprisingly, easily caught, and taken back to camp where it was subsequently photographed by Chris Hood and identified as a common lizard - *lacerta vivipara*, The specimen was particularly interesting as it was a pregnant female. It is believed to be the first reptile to be recorded as being present on South Rona.

- NORMAN R. WATSON

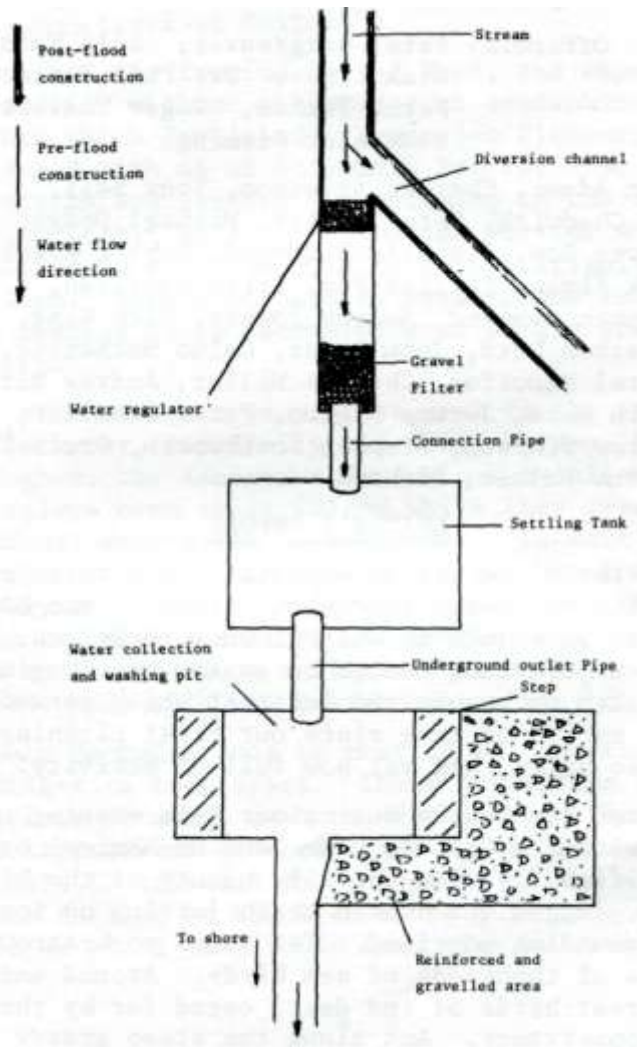
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#### SOUTH RONA SUB-AQUA CLUB

In all, twenty members of the expedition tried some diving in my wet-suit. Apart from the sheer fun of swimming and floating apparently thirty feet above the ground, and playing with the smaller fish and jellyfish, some useful work was completed, and some projects, notably Bob Hemming's and Jeremy Turff's, were extended by underwater observations.

Instead of just picking sea-urchins off the rocks and cleaning them out as happened at first, we decided to be more constructive, and so we built an aquarium. It was quite small, 4' x 3' x 2', and was erected by the wall in Dry Harbour. We lined the inner walls with polythene, and all went well until a rather large crab cut a hole in the bottom!

Obviously our studies - and enjoyment - would have been extended by the use of air tanks, but this would have involved a much higher degree of caution and more complex safety procedures. Teaching someone to snorkel-dive safely is possible in a few lessons; tank-diving, on the other hand, takes weeks of preparation. However, we were somewhat restricted in our diving by our choice of site. We had to dive from easily accessible rocks close to Dry Harbour, since a long and difficult



scramble or walk back to camp after a day's diving is very tiring and potentially dangerous. Had the boat been in service earlier we could have dived from rocks further from the campsite. It is a great pity that we did not have an underwater camera with us to capture all the superb sights.

- TONY WHITE

## RHUM EXPEDITION 1973

*LEADER:* Mark Rayne Camp

*Administrator:* Peter Forsaith

*Officers:* Peter Hargreaves, Bill Hattersley,  
Dick Light, Dr. Phil Masters, Peter  
Tatham, Roger Weatherly, Launcelot  
Fleming.

*Boys:* John Adams, Charles Anderson, Tony Bell,  
Tim Chadwick, Peter Cowley, Michael Dodge, Oliver Dow,  
Alasdair Drummond, Robert Ensich, Nick Figes, Patrick  
Fox, Brian Harrison, Stephen Johnson, Andrew Jowers,  
Nick King, Jonathan Lord, John Lowes, Calum MacKenzie,  
Darrel McDuffus, Charles Millar, Andrew Mitchell,  
Colin Moss, Jerome Ripton, Peter Schuller, Andrew  
Simpson, Stephen Southworth, Bruin Thompson, Andrew  
Walker, Richard Watson.

### LEADER'S REPORT

What better place for an expedition can there be than Rhum? Watching the peaks slowly dwindling on the horizon I realised it is an island to which I want to return. Our two weeks had been just long enough to awaken our imaginations to the great wealth of beauty and interest which pervades the island. The period of time since our first pitching of the camp seemed so brief, and yet how full of activity!

We visited the Castle during our last evening on Rhum. The luxury, with its Chinese vases and mechanical organ, contrasted magnificently with the wild beauty of the hills around our campsite, jagged and broken teeth jutting up into the sky from the surrounding moorland. Yet these rock-strewn hills are the homes of thousands of sea birds. Around and across the hills roam great herds of red deer, cared for by the staff of the Nature Conservancy. And along the steep grassy ledges, between mountain and sea, we found wild goats; the billies are shaggy beasts with trailing beards and curling horns, accompanied by families of nannies with young kids, butting one another playfully with their horns. Around the same cliff ledges golden eagles soar. If you are lucky, as were Roger and Calum, they may thunder past only twenty feet distant, their wings beating powerful gusts of swirling air, before spiralling up into the sky.

In our two weeks camped at Salisbury Dam, we left only the North Side unexplored. The rest of the island we walked around, climbed over, or bivvied at. We slept out nearly two thousand feet up Hallival watching the Manx Shearwaters sail in at midnight, collected bloodstone from the beach at Bloodstone.Bay, and weeded young trees at Guirdik.

But for all the fascination of Rhum, the expedition would have been nothing without the wonderful atmosphere and sense of fellowship which developed. Launcelot Fleming, Dean of Windsor, camped with us at Salisbury Dam for five days, joining in with projects and leading the swimming in the cold mountain water of Long Loch. He led a Communion Service and a more general service in which we considered Christianity as part of our expedition. Launcelot held us spell-bound for an hour and a half one evening as he recounted some of his adventures in the Antarctic.

Above all, we owe a very great deal to the staff of the Nature Conservancy, especially the Chief Warden, Mr McNaughton, and Mike Hughes, the Assistant Warden. They allowed us to spread ourselves over their island while they were engaged with the annual deer-stalking programme. We made daily contact with them to avoid disturbing the deer in the areas involved. They went out of their way to help us, shifting our gear to the campsite and back, not complaining when we bought the shop's entire stock of toilet rolls, and allowing us to spend our last night in the boat-house at Kinloch.

It would be unfair not to mention our constant companions, the Rhum midges, a race apart. Their activities are recounted in the writings of other members of the expedition. Fortunately, the irritations of their evening visits were temporary, and did little to diminish the enjoyment of the expedition. We left Rhum feeling we had been there just long enough to decide what we would like to do next time we visit Rhum.

- MARK RAYNE

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#### THE RIDGE WALK

*Leader:* Bill Hatters ley

Pat Fox, Pete Cowley, Brian Harrison, Jerome Ripton,  
Darrel McDuffus, Tim Chadwick

We set off from Salisbury Dam and followed the road to Harris. On arrival, we could see our first objective, Ruinsival. After a considerable time of wheezing and grumbling the cairn was at last reached, whereupon we had our lunch - a sumptuous



meal comprising an orange, half a bar of mint cake and four squares of chocolate, not forgetting the butties made from something purporting to bread, according to the 'Vicar'.

Thus satisfied, we continued our journey along the Cuillin, through ever-thickening mist to Ainshval via Sgurr Nan Gillean. Then we followed a truncated ridge and found, to our great surprise, that we were half-way into Glen Dibidil, at which point Tim observed that we were not in the desired position. Having marvelled at his powers of observation we consulted (insulted?) the compass and determined the correct direction. This made it necessary for us to retrace our steps a short way.

Then, continuing down the scree, between Ainshval and Trollval, a Mars-bar appeared from the depths of Bill 'The Hat' Hattersley's pocket, and was distributed between the intrepid seven. By now visibility had decreased to five yards and we groped our way up Askival (2,603 ft) from the very low col. After negotiating many false summits we finally attained the trig point (courtesy of the O.S.) as dusk was falling. The col that we now had to cross was extremely narrow and rocky and we had to descend slightly to find a safer route. By the time we reached Hallival darkness had set in and the shearwaters were in full cry. Although we were all now feeling slightly tired, the major part of the walk was completed with only the descent from Hallival and the walk along by Barkeval remaining.

Having stumbled our way off the ridge between Hallival and Barkeval we saw a light in the distance which we presumed to be a search party looking for us. When shouting and whistling had no effect we were slightly puzzled. In fact, as we later discovered, it was a Land Rover which was out looking for our party.

As it was so dark, we could not see the numerous streams which crossed our route – with unfortunate results! However, we successfully restrained Tim from falling into Long Loch and we finally arrived back at camp at 12.30 am. We were greeted by various people who had spent about three hours looking for us. Also present was the 'Catering Corps' who had prepared a meal consisting of steak and kidney pud, soup etc. All these efforts were greatly appreciated, and we would like to thank everyone concerned – Bill Hat included.

- PAT FOX and PETE COWLEY

### ISLE OF RHUM - 3-LEGGED RACE

Pre-match tension was mounting as the competitors put in some practice for the great event. What an honour it was to watch as pairs gracefully dived into the dust and to observe others careering off bridges into the piranha-infested stream!

The infamous 'Brayne' was to be seen lurking around the course with his lackey 'Tinkerbelle' obviously intent on sabotage.

At last they were all lined up on the starting grid. Suddenly they were off with a flurry of flaying fists. The competitors tore up to the first obstacle. Having climbed up the hill, they threw themselves over with apparent suicidal intent. The field by now was beginning to thin with 'Brayne' and 'Bell' running strongly at the head of the field. Over the first bridge they stormed - many were sent reeling off the bridge. 'Brayne' and 'Bell' were to be seen increasing their lead with Pete 'Hello Sailor' Tatham and Tim Kinloch 'Kiwi' Chadwick hot on the trail. Then to the second stream spanned by an edifice of improvisation and ingenuity - a magnificently constructed fruit box. And over they went. With a deft flick of the foot 'Kiwi' Tim managed to demolish the bridge. Undeterred, the agile throng leapt across the yawning 3ft chasm. Now Tim and 'Sailor\* Pete fell to the floor, two of the many victims of the punishing conditions.

A few yards further on there was a dam which had to be crossed. The competitors pounded across it and thence to the rope-trap (a sadistic contraption designed by the warped mind of the 'mad' Doctor). And here 'Brayne' and his henchman were seen to falter as your humble narrators drew level. Over the ropes and a dash to the 'finish'. At this point 'Brayne' and his partner dived headlong into a stream/bog. (This action was studied later by the noted psychiatrist, Dr P.Masters.) The fans roared and a dispute ensued as to who had won. Then it was revealed that the race was not yet finished for Launce- lot was to be seen down by the latrines madly waving the chequered flag. Another short burst and storming through to the finish were Pat and Pete (us). It was all over and the course was invaded by the capacity crowd of 3 billion midges. The Isle of Rhum 3-Legged Express was completed by the presentation of a silver-plated engraved bar of mint cake to the victors.

- PETE COWLEY and PAT FOX

## DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD - 30 mile EXPEDITION

### *Members:*

Peter Schuller, Patrick Fox, Andrew Jowers, Charles Anderson

We set off on the road to Kinloch - via the Post Office, and branched off onto the coastal route. By lunchtime we had done most of the hard walking and in the afternoon we merely followed the path to Glen Dibidil.

On arrival in the Glen we saw the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Party's tent. They had beaten us to the best campsite and appeared to have taken possession of the mountain bothy. Having chosen a decent site, we pitched camp and turned our attention towards the evening meal. All attempts at persuading the primus to work were completely futile, so we had to borrow the other party's stove which worked without any trouble. We put on the soup and watched for a short while until the midges became too bad for, as often happened, the air had become quite thick with them. On returning to the soup we could see that it was coming along quite well, even though the midges were continually diving into it. Unfortunately we didn't get a chance to eat it as the 'master stirrer', Andrew, accidentally sent the contents of the billy flying. Undeterred we set about the second course - beef curry. We did a little better this time, for the curry appeared edible, so we decided to eat while the going was good. Unfortunately we had no bull grips and had to improvise as best as possible. Once again the contents of the billy were to be seen dribbling away down, the rocks, hot on the trail of the soup. Thank God for cold rice pudding!

The next morning we made up for the previous night's disaster by having an ample and well-cooked breakfast, consisting of porridge, numerous sausages, eggs, etc, rounded off with a cup of cocoa. It was during this meal that the Bronze D. of E's came through the camp with their mascot, Pete Tatham. They were on their way back to camp at Salisbury Dam.

Having washed up the dishes and packed up the tents we were on our way out of the Glen, our next destination being Harris. Some considerable time later, after doing some of the hardest walking we had encountered, we clambered out of Dibidil through Bealach An Oir, and shortly afterwards had lunch. During that morning we saw a surprisingly large number of deer - more than we were likely to see again.

The rest of the day proved to be rather uneventful until

we arrived at Harris and pitched camp. Having done this we promptly changed our minds, deciding that the position we had chosen was too exposed by far, not liking the idea of chasing after runaway tents during the night. We decided on a new position and once again pitched camp, this time determined to move for NOTHING. Just as we were completing this operation a party from camp arrived, led (when he caught up) by Pete Forsaith. They had come to check that we had arrived without serious mishap.

Our evening meal proved to be a mild success for we were able to finish the large supply of soup we had been given, and also make some curry, our luck not quite lasting to enable us to make a drink. By the time we had finished it was quite dark so we decided to call it quits for the day.

The next morning our meals reverted to their original form; we found it impossible to get the primus working for any length of time and so we had to have a meal consisting solely of bread and uncooked sausages.

Disgusted with the primus we were quite happy to leave it at the cottage at Harris as previously arranged, along with the tents. With considerably lighter packs than usual we set off along the river from Harris, following it to the point just before entering between Ard - Nev and Orvall. Having past between these two mountains we became aware of the increasing concentration of mist. *It* had become so thick as to make our previously intended route impossible to navigate safely. We followed our emergency route which led us eventually onto a path taking us quite close to the camp at Salisbury Dam. We arrived at the camp, without incident, just in time for lunch.

Soon after lunch we set off, along with the group doing settlement studies, to Harris as we still needed some extra mileage to bring us up to our required total of thirty.

The two things we were most pleased about on returning to camp were (a) being able to eat, what seemed at the time, brilliant hot food, and (b) the feeling of walking on air, having disposed of those great rucksacks.

- PATRICK FOX

## WALKING PROJECT

I must begin by saying that the project need not involve any walking by the person supervising it; and I would recommend it to all Camp Administrators, as a fascinating mental exercise.

The object is to record the individual mileages of members of the expedition. Of necessity, certain rules must be introduced, to decide what is allowed as a measurable mile: we allowed anything outside the camp area, and to make things easy, gave up the idea of allowing extra for height climbed. There were several 'most used mileages' - Kinloch and back, 6, or, 7 for the pier; Harris and back, 9. I had hoped that the total mileage of the expedition would exceed 4,000 - this was ambitious, and I think that we did well to cover the distance that we did:

Officers ...	553 miles
Boys ... ..	<u>2816</u> "
	3369

Our average mileages thus were: Officers 87 (6 miles per day), and Boys 97 (6.75 miles per day). No comment. The officer who walked least was Peter Tatham, whose 50 miles were chiefly composed of the 'Tatham Special' - Long Loch and back, 1. On the occasion that he did attempt a strenuous walk, he limped back to camp with a cankerous fetlock or something. Dick Light and Colin Moss were our best for distances with 140 and 144 respectively, although there were some close followers. Jonathan Lord, despite his efforts on my bivvy, walked less than any other boy, with 57 miles.

Needless to say, Launcelot carried off the over 65's award with 6 miles in 4 days, a splendid achievement.

- PETER S.FORSAITH

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## KINLOCH CASTLE

For some strange reason, no one has yet written anything for the SHS Report about that remarkable edifice which we were privileged to see on our last night on Rhum - Kinloch Castle.

Before we look at the place itself, let us examine its history. Rhum was bought in the 1880's by John Bullough, a successful manufacturer of agricultural machinery from Accrington, Lancashire. He bought the island from Lord Salisbury as a

sporting estate, in the days when it was fashionable for the gentry to take themselves off to Scotland for several months in the summer. In the 1890's, planning and construction of a 'lodge' at Kinloch was undertaken and, in 1900, Kinloch Castle was completed. In 1909 John died, and the island passed to his son, George Builough, who received a baronetcy in the Great War. He died in 1939 and his wife, Lady Monica, sold the island to the Nature Conservancy in 1957 for £25,000. All three are buried at the mausoleum at Harris, a drawing of which may be found in the 1969 Report.

We started our tour at the back entrance, crowded around an Admiralty map showing the voyages of the RHOUMA. After taking off our heavy boots, we walked through a couple of doors, straight into the ballroom, with its polished wood floor, silk wallpaper, crystal chandelier and minstrels' gallery. Then into the library with its huge, life-size, Japanese bronze eagle. Upstairs, we saw about six of the bedrooms - there were huge brass beds, even larger oak four-posters, John Bullough's own Regency-style bed, and Sir George and Lady Bullough's huge room. Each room seemed vast, and each had its own washing set on a washstand. There was a bathroom, with one of those massive Victorian baths in a mahogany casing and huge brass taps. Long panelled corridors connected the rooms.

Coming downstairs again, we saw the dining room, with the sort of long dining table of which one dreams; from there we passed into the smoking room. The first to enter it declared that a smell of cigars still lingered, and the atmosphere was most authentic; the full-size billiard table, the leather armchairs, red carpet and wood panelling gave the air of a London club.

We toured the rooms to the accompaniment of some most suitable piano music which seemed to be drifting along the corridors. Then we found its source: in the main hall of the castle, the concert grand Steinway was being played. What a hall! extending through two storeys of the house, with a ballustrated gallery at first-floor level, round three sides; great armchairs, a huge fireplace in the darkness, tiger-skin rugs (with heads) and a massive oak grandfather clock, all in half-gloom.

The greatest surprise was still to come. Suddenly, from down the corridor came the sound of the overture to Wagner's 'Die Meistersinger'. Under the stairs was a domesticated fair-ground organ, a Victorian Moog synthesiser. Words cannot describe our impression. It was just fantastic! All we could do was stand and gape. Next door was the 'white drawing room',

all white and gold, and brimful of priceless Japanese tea services in glass display cabinets.

Just to cap it all, what we saw was only the dross. After Lady Bullough died the really priceless pieces were removed to the National Museum in Edinburgh. Many of the furnishings and other accoutrements were collected on the various voyages of the RHOUMA, the Bullough's very handsome steam yacht, which toured the Mediterranean and Far East to acquire these pieces.

How does one conclude? It knocks the V & A into a cocked hat. The organ ended its repertoire by playing to us the march which is used as the theme tune to Monty Python's Flying Circus. That programme thrives on absurdities, and it was so fitting that, in the midst of this uninhabited Edwardian splendour, a totally incongruous musical instrument played a tune which to most of us meant 'and now for something completely different'.

- PETER S.FORSAITH

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#### THE GOAT COUNT -1973

In previous years the goat count has been done by two or four members of the Nature Conservancy, taking one or two whole days to complete. This method was slow and very inaccurate - some years it would be down to 80 or as high as 150. This year the method was changed. Mike, the leader of the goat count, decided to allow some of the Schools Hebridean Society members who were keen enough to help the Nature Conservancy with the task.

The coast where the goats live was split into 1 sections, stretching from Kilmory to Welshman's Rock, and two people were assigned to each section to look for and record the goats. We started directly after Sunday breakfast, the groups walking or being carried in a Land-Rover to their sections. Some people wearing colourful waterproofs had to take them off in case they were spotted by the goats. If goats were spotted the group would record the time, sex, describe the colour or deformities and put them into groups of Old Billies, Young Billies, Old Nannies, Young Nannies and Kids. After recording all the details the group would move around the goats so that if they were spotted the goats would not run into other sections and make counting more difficult. As soon as the section was completed the group would walk to Harris where the numbers of goats were collated, and refreshments given.

We found at the end of the count that the goats were only found between Guirdil and Dibidil, but that 160 were found, which was a very good total.

- NICHOLAS FIGG

## JURA EXPEDITION 1973

*Leader:* David C. Bradshaw *Camp*  
*Administrator:* Eddie Stuart *Officers:*  
Harry Hepburn, Mark Potter,  
Andy Rostron, Simon Stoye,  
David Woodall.

*Boys:* Jamie Bompfrey, Roger Butler, Malcolm Cobb, John Courtman, Ian Darlington, Hans Dobson, Graeme Dunlop, Nicholas Fletcher, Terance Geeson, Kingsley Hampton, Andrew Hayes, Timothy Hellier, Chris Jeffries, Quentin King, Richard Le Sueur, Richard Owen, Philip Parsons, Christopher Price, Graham Reeder, Huw Reynolds, Edward Rose, Glyn Savage, Tony Shaw, Nicholas Smith, Paul Spreadbury, Michael Thirkettle, Alan South, Patrick Thompson, Clive Tucker, Rhodri Wilson.

### LEADER'S REPORT

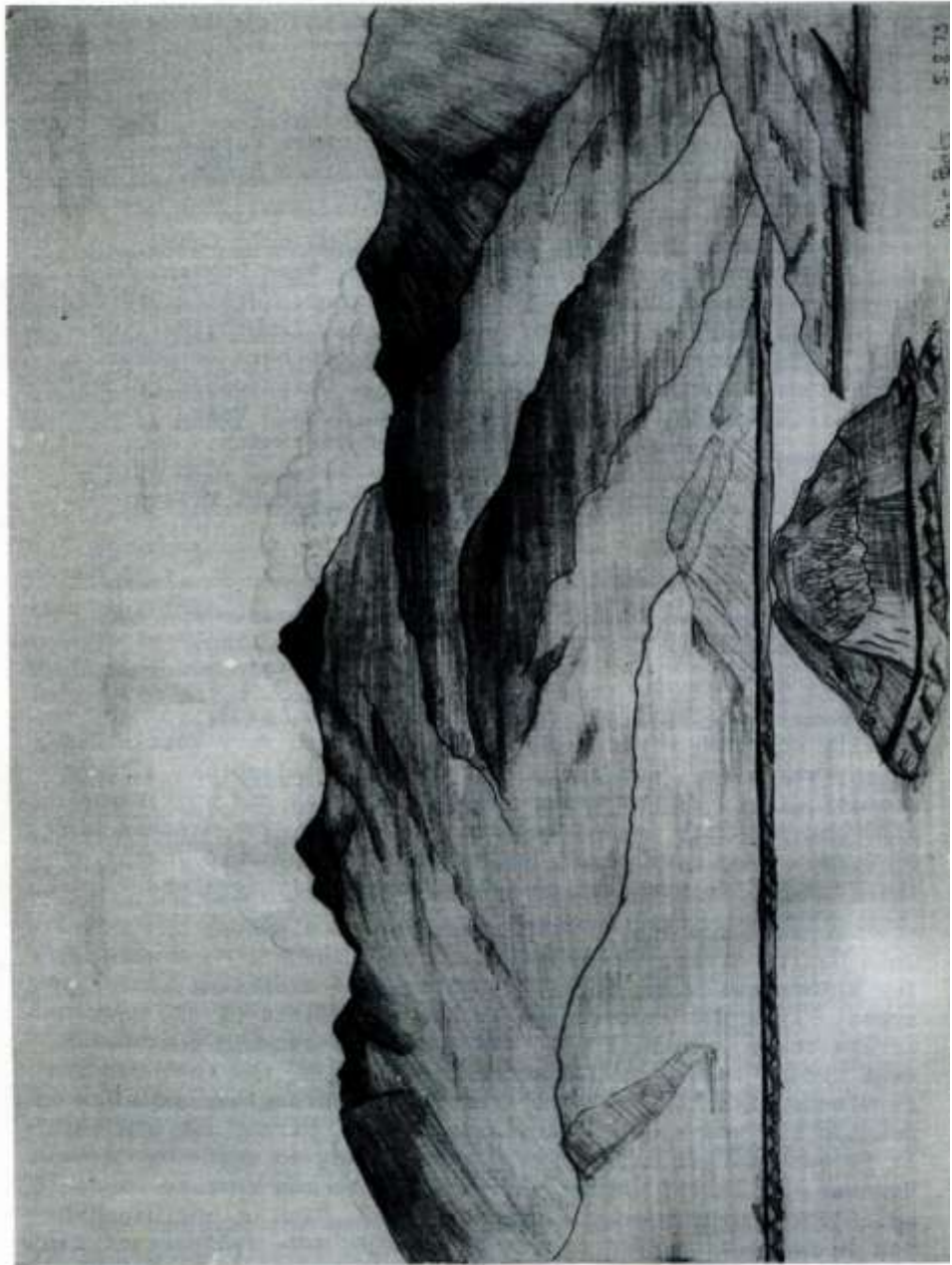
*'From Isla we boated over to Jura, a horride ile and a habitation fit for deere and wilde beastes.'*

*-Sir James Turner, 1632*

Most historical references to Jura are, sadly enough, equally scathing. Although Jura has changed very little since Turner was alive, our appreciation of the island has altered dramatically: we now value its wildernesses and solitude. And what a superb island we found it to be! The distant view of Jura's long grey shape dominated by the pyramid shapes of the Paps led to expectations which were fully realised.

We were the fourth SHS expedition to discover how much Jura has to offer. An island full of contrasts – a walk of a few kilometres might pass through several different landscape types; from the exposed and broken coastlines of the west across rocky mountains with swift streams flowing peat-brown from hidden lochs, to the softer environs of the east and its farmlands with the hay part-ricked, its afforested expanses of Douglas fir and stunted woodlands of oak, birch, ash and hazel. –It is easy to get carried away when trying to describe Jura. However, it is not entirely divorced from the task in hand which is, in the words of the Editor, to "sum up the expedition"! for I feel that it was because we made full use of these splendid natural assets that the expedition was so enjoyable.





Canoeing, for example, was perfectly catered for in the protected waters of the middle loch. From the very first day, Andrew organised training sessions so that most people rapidly reached a standard of proficiency allowing them to go out without officer supervision. In addition to the three canoes, we were fortunate to have both a new Avon Redseal dinghy and the Society's new Wayfarer. Both contributed immeasurably to the expedition. The rubber dinghy was a vital 'runabout', being our most important link with the head of the loch and thus the outside world. During the time at the start of the expedition before Harry went back to Kennacraig to pick up the Wayfarer's forgotten sails, Simon made himself indispensable as a ferryman for parties going across the loch. We felt the loss when the sailing dinghy was ready for action and he could spend less time on this. Loch Tarbert provided good sailing, but the highlights for this activity were the sail to Colonsay, and the victory in the Jura Regatta. The cliffs around our campsite at Cruib were inadequate for anything other than practice climbs; however, the rock-climbers, inspired by Harry, were able to visit crags in other parts.

During our stay a good deal of project work was undertaken, perhaps the most popular being Ornithology. Most days saw new sightings added to the tally; the final count was seventy. I am certain that the ornithologists were the hardiest members of the expedition in that they rarely allowed poor weather to disrupt their project. This must surely account for the large numbers of ducks spotted. Geomorphology and a settlement survey existed, but didn't flourish as did ornithology.

An activity in which everyone was involved at some time was bivouacing; indeed, this was the only way to see much of what Jura offers. Bivvy parties trekked to the Corryvreakan whirlpool and up the Paps; sailing, canoeing, fishing and bird-watching bivvies were organised and enjoyed by all concerned.

One of our major problems was a lack of musical talent. However, Eddie and Dave tried to make up for this by leading the singing most evenings in the bothy.

The remoteness of the campsite limited the contact we had with the islanders somewhat, but whenever meetings did occur excellent impressions were left on both sides. In common with most expeditions we found that Hebridean hospitality is generously dispensed. At the Ardlussa Sports everybody seemed quite happy to see our party of thirty-eight arrive

from the far side of the island and carry off prize-money to the tune of several pounds I

At the end of an expedition like this, one is always left with a large number of favourable impressions, amongst which are one or two which in time will crystallise out of the rest, and will represent 'Jura 1973' in our memories. For my part, I shall never forget the prize-giving at the Ardlussa Sports where the restrained and civilised hand-clapping was smothered by deafening cheers from the expedition as members stepped forward to receive their prizes; or the pleasure with which the fishermen, after so many fruitless trips, announced their first - and, sadly, what was to be their only - catch. The expedition had a great spirit which is perhaps inevitable when such a superb group of people set out to enjoy themselves on an island fit 'for deere and other wilde beastes'.

Special thanks must go to Phil for his advice; Roger for his vast help at the start of the expedition; Mary for her efficient work, often at short notice; to Neil, Donald, Jock, Charlie and Mr Paton for help with our transport problems on Jura; and to the Nelsons, the Astors, and the Jura people for their hospitality.

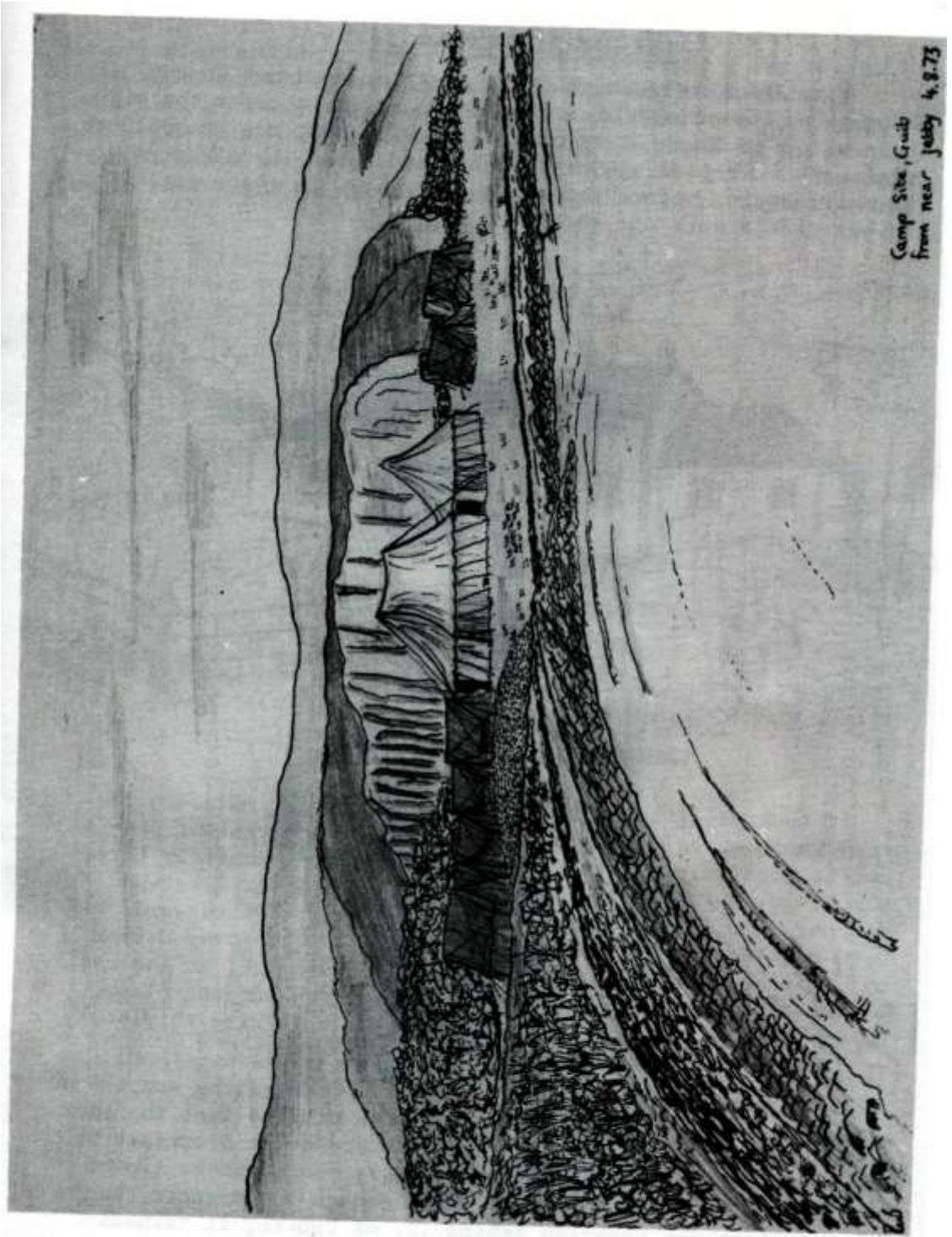
- DAVID C. BRADSHAW

#### A NOTE ON THE CHRISTENING OF THE 'HARVEY WALLBANGER'

If the Society's newly-acquired Wayfarer-Class sailing dinghy was christened at birth then its name had been forgotten by the time it reached Jura. The rare opportunity to provide a name occupied us for many a contemplative hour. 'The Tern' was an early suggestion, prompted by our inability to sail the dinghy in a straight line. Consequently, most people were taken by surprise when, on their triumphant return from the Jura Regatta, the sailing officers announced that they had named the dinghy. It transpired that when the victorious crew were asked what name was to be inscribed upon the trophy, the eye of one officer fell upon the other's American T-shirt which, as is the fashion nowadays, displayed the slogan... HARVEY WALLBANGER. The dinghy thus received its name.

P.S. The barmaid at the Jura Hotel informed me that a Harvey Wallbanger is a powerful cocktail. Slainte-a-bha!

\* \* \*



Camp Site, Grails  
from near Jetty 4.8.73

## THE CORRYVREAKAN BIVVY

Mike Thirkettle, Nick Smith and I started out on our 'Voyage of Discovery' at 1.30 pm. We hoped to cover the six teen miles to Barnhill by nightfall. The next day we hoped to visit the whirlpool at Corryvreakan and spend the night at Barnhill again, before returning to camp. In the event things didn't work out that way.



It took us 7.5 hours to cover the first four miles to the road where we sat down to rest and to eat a packet of biscuits. Suddenly, a van came into sight, so we hastily threw the biscuits into a rucksack and hitched a lift. The van dropped us off 7 miles up the road, and shortly afterwards we were offered another lift, this time in a Land-Rover driven by Jamie Nelson from Ardlussa. He dropped us off at the end of the road and told us where to find a good camping place. On our way through the bogs to the site we saw the whirlpool – for the first and only time.

We pitched camp on a sandy beach before having supper and going to bed. In the morning we awoke to find that the tent had been invaded by midges. After a very quick breakfast we got out of the tent and decided to visit the northern tip of the island. Since no one was brave enough to re-enter the tent we left our cagoules behind ... of course, it rained!

Rather than sit around in wet clothes we set off in the direction of Ardlussa, arriving at 4.0 pm. after a fast walk. There we helped Mr Nelson to burn rhododendrons in exchange for a bottle of beer and permission to collect wood for a fire in the tea-room. After supper, Mr Nelson brought in some fresh milk and seven freshly caught and cooked trout. We went to bed that night in front of a roaring fire well content with our lot.

Next morning we thanked our hosts and set off on the easy walk back to camp, stopping off on the way at Hilda Smith's Pottery.

- PAUL SPREADBURY



## COLONSAY EXPEDITION 1973

*Leader:* Alan Howard

*Officers:* Alan Brindley, Bill Dickinson Ed  
Mitchell, Mike Sharp

*Boys:* Jeremy Bartlett, Michael Biddulph, Patrick Biddulph,  
Ian Bignell, Guy Bignell, Benny Buxton, John  
Cherrington, Gary Dunlop, Richard Evans, David  
Hallowes, Simon Hardy, Ian Johnson, Richard Lander,  
Gary Marshall, Nicholas Marshall, David Morris, Martin  
Frew, Simon Prew, Andrew Razell, Hugh Robinson, Neil  
Russell, Anthony Sandford, Michael Sandeman, Mark  
Taylor, Connor Wilkinson.

### LEADER'S REPORT

A leader's report on an expedition need not be long. It should attempt to convey a little of the atmosphere of an expedition rather than attempting to be a chronicle of every event on the expedition. What, then, of the atmosphere of Colonsay 1973 ?

We enjoyed ourselves. It is difficult to imagine anyone not enjoying a stay on the delightful island of Colonsay. We canoed, thought about sailing, projected, caved, walked, footballed, ceilidhed, bird-watched, fished, and many more things. The atmosphere of the expedition was a happy one. We mocked ourselves and each other. Our personalities reacted, sometimes profitably, sometimes not. We all had an experience which we will remember for quite a while, and have our personal memories to reflect on.

We must be grateful to the many people who made the whole thing possible: to Lord and Lady Strathcona for allowing us to camp on the island; to the many islanders for their wit and assistance, particularly to Watty, that great friend of the SHS; to the SHS backroom boys who, without my hindrance, would have been much happier; to a splendid group of officers who gave so much so often, and who had a marvellous sense of humour. Finally, the whole group gave so much. This combined effort and enthusiasm is the real story of Colonsay '73, and the reports that follow give a glimpse of the atmosphere. Read on, and discover and share some of that enjoyment.

- R.A.HOWARD

## ORONSAY

One of the first things you notice when looking at a map of Oronsay is that there is nothing there. Apart from the Priory, the farm and Seal Cottage, there are no signs of human habitation marked on the O.S. map.

Oronsay, however, has long been inhabited and its present population is probably its lowest ever. During the expedition we came in contact with a Sheffield University party studying the remains of settlements which date from 4000 B.C. The object of their study was to discover how these early inhabitants lived. It had been thought that they depended entirely on limpets and fish, but diggings near Seal Cottage (363882) suggest a more varied diet of seals and birds. Simple bone tools were also found. The sites on Oronsay are some of the best in the country because isostatic recovery of the land after the last Ice Age has made many sites accessible which elsewhere are thought to be submerged.

Oronsay lays claim to the most important event in the history of the two islands, It was here that St.Columba landed on his way to Iona from Ireland in the middle of the 6th Century. He landed in a large, square-sailed, coracle-like boat at Seal Cottage. Legend has it that he was searching for an island out of sight from Ireland, the place he so loved. However, climbing Ben Oronsay he saw Ireland, and so he left for Iona. (Apparently, the mountains of Donegal, which are a good 50 miles from Ben Oronsay, can only be seen in perfect conditions with a northerly wind)

Whether St.Columba came or not, there are undoubtedly very ancient relics of a monastic settlement. Masonry below the small cross set up on the east side of the Priory dates from the 6th Century. Between then and the 14th Century Oronsay suffered with the decline of the Celtic Church but was then re-founded as a Priory. The ruins now visible date from then. Most of the stone from the original buildings has been used to build the outhouses of Oronsay farm (the house of which was built just before the French Revolution). Stone for the Priory came from the free face of Ben Oronsay and the cement was locally made from sand and shells and looks as good as new although 600 years old.

About 200 yards south-east of the Priory is a hump in the ground thought to be the site of a granary. No cereal was grown on the island – the economy, as now, was a pastoral one – goats and cattle being kept rather than the sheep seen there today. As you might expect, the monks would have



depended heavily on shell foods and fish as did the earliest settlers thousands of years before them.

#### EXPEDITION TO ORONSAY

At 2.30 pm. on Monday, August 21st, Mark Taylor, Michael Biddulph, David Hallows and I set off with our faithful officer, Ed Mitchell, through the hills south of the campsite, to bivouac on Oronsay. Walls, barbed wire, steep bare rock, heather and heavy rucksacks didn't make walking conditions very pleasant, but we covered the two miles to the Strand in about 25 hours.

We then waded across a shallow channel, about 30 yards wide and 1 foot deep, only to find that we had reached Eileen Munguig, a tiny island in the middle of the Strand. There was another channel beyond, wider and deeper than the first, so we started to wade through. When we got about a third of the way across it became too deep to continue so we turned back and walked over the hard knobbly sand to the beginning of the road to Oronsay.

At about 6 o'clock we reached the farmhouse on Oronsay. A woman came out of the house nearby and offered us a drink, which we all accepted since the sun was so hot. Afterwards we went on to the S.W. part of the island where we pitched our tents. We had a large supper before going to bed and we didn't get up until 10.30 am. the following morning.

It was fine and warm again, so we left our packs and walked around the coast. The gleaming white sands reflected the sun brilliantly. We had lunch on a rocky beach on the S.E. coast and walked back onto the road and up to the farmhouse.

An old man who lived in the house showed us around the 14th Century Priory, then we took down the tents, packed up and walked back to the Strand. Our packs seemed even heavier than before, but luckily we were picked up by some people in cars, so we reached camp at 7 o'clock.

^ ^ ^

- BEN BUXTON

#### COLONSAY - ISLANDERS versus EXPEDITION

A goal in each half by the SHS gave them victory in a close fought game against Colonsay Islanders. Play was hampered by high winds and a hard ground which made ball control difficult.

The game kicked off at 6 o'clock with the crowd still coming in through the turnstiles of the Colonsay Stadium. The SHS were quickly on the attack, with Mike Sharp and Jerry Bartlett prominent. The Islanders' defence was tight but whenever they tried to break out, Ed Mitchell, a tower of strength in midfield, won the ball in the tackle every time.

SHS went ahead in the twentieth minute when Mike Sharp was put through by Jerry Bartlett. He picked his spot and left the Colonsay keeper helpless with a stunning shot from ten yards. The Islanders fought back but were harassed into mistakes by the running and team work of the SHS. The first half ended with the visitors holding their one goal lead.

Straight from the restart Garry Marshall raced down the right and crossed for Nick Marshall to blast the ball home from close range. The Islanders fought back from this setback and, as the SHS began to tire, the game became a one-way traffic towards their goal. Guts and luck kept them out, with Howard doing *great* work at the back, well supported by Ben Buxton and Simon Hardy.

Twenty minutes from time, Ed Mitchell went down with a severe attack of cramp and was carried off. This increased the pressure on the SHS defence and the goal had several narrow escapes before the ball was pushed in from a corner, ten minutes from time. The last ten minutes were hectic with the SHS repelling attack after attack. Ed Mitchell returned to add his weight to the defence but with the SHS living by the minute it was a relief to them to hear the final whistle and know that they had held on to their 2-1 lead.

#### BIVVY IN THE CAVES

We set out for the caves at Kiloran Bay on Sunday, Aug.26, We were going to bivvy in one of the caves for one night, then return to camp in the afternoon of the following day\*

When we arrived at Kiloran Bay we went about looking for driftwood for the fire. After getting the firewood we spent some time exploring the caves. Some of the stalagmites and stalactites were fantastic. One stalagmite had joined a stalactite and had formed a sheet of crystal. In the biggest cave we saw a large bat hanging from the roof.

We talked around the fire until around 11.30, but at 2.00 in the morning we had visitors - the officers with a loaf of bread and a serenade.

The following day a few of us went into one of the caves to dig up a limpet bed. We found part of what may be a human jaw bone. We spent an hour down there. Later we tidied the cave up, and arrived back at the camp in time for dinner.

- GARY DUNLOP

