

The Professional Mountaineer

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NEXT ISSUE

Autumn 2018 The Mountains of Macadonia, Sports Climbing and The Leadership Clinic solving your problems.

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Our front cover

Dan McManus climbing perfect limestone on *Les Yeux Dans le Bleu* 7c+ 450m, on the Paroi d'Anterne face of the Fiz in the Haute Savoie region of the Alps.
© Callum Muskett.

EDITORIAL



PHOTO Steve Long on the Gosainkund trail, Langtang, Nepal. © Anne Arran, BAIML President.

In recent years there has been a lot of research into the causes and effects of post-traumatic stress.

Tribe, by Sebastian Junger is typical of this genre, seeking to explain why people from “Western” society appear to be find it harder to adapt back to normal living after harrowing experiences. It is suggested that the antidote to this phenomenon is a feeling of self-determination: the three intrinsic factors required for contentment are held to be competence, authenticity and connection to others.

This winter I spent several weeks living and working with villagers in a remote corner of Zaskar. It struck me that mountain communities are brought together by the rigours of survival in the harsh environment. Despite the harsh environment there are many records of longevity in mountain communities such as Zaskar.

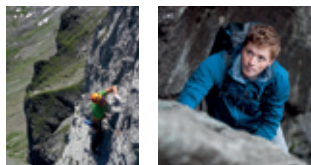
George Mallory’s famously enigmatic riposte about his motivation for climbing Everest “Because it is there” is a classic response to the incredulous public who fail to understand the attraction of the activities that underpin our associations.

But mountaineering activities can deliver all three pillars of self-determination intensely: surely this is something that we need to recognise, celebrate and articulate for our potential clientele. This was perhaps what Sir Jack Longland, the central character in the new “Our Heritage” section of the magazine had in mind when he led the creation of the first true Outdoor Education Centre and spear-headed the formation of the British Mountaineering Council; not to foster any claimed “character training” but because he believed that mountain experiences are valuable in their own right.

This edition of *The Professional Mountaineer* brings together the diversity of our interests and knowledge, providing an exceptional range of knowledge and advice. I am confident that every reader will find some degree of enlightenment and enjoyment within these pages – what more could one wish for?!

Steve Long
Technical editor

OUR COVER

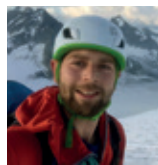


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Callum Muskett

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Sara Lodge

Sara lives in Conwy, North Wales, and fits writing and illustrating around her day job as director of Beehive, an organisational development consultancy.



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Simon is the Executive Officer for Mountain Training Cymru. He began instructing at Tollymore Mountain Centre in Northern Ireland and holds the Mountaineering Instructor Certificate and several paddlesport and underground qualifications.



Matt Woodfield

Matt is a Mountaineering Instructor who runs a small outdoor business offering skills courses, training and technical advice from his base in Swansea, between the mountains and the sea.

IN THIS ISSUE



8



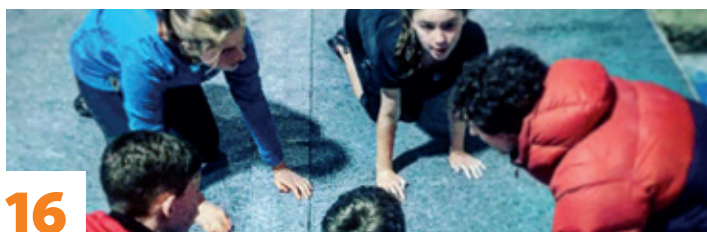
14



10



22



16



18

DESTINATIONS

8 Youth expeditions and altitude destination guide Ladakh
Will Blackshaw

10 Rockaneering (AKA Approach shoe alpinism)
Dan Wilkinson

TECHNICAL SKILLS

14 Managing an assistant
Guy Jarvis

16 Session planning
Joby Maw Davis

18 Outdoor climbing – part 2
Trevor Massiah

22 Sea cliffs and the rock climbing instructor
Matt Woodfield

BUSINESS SENSE

24 Package travel and linked travel arrangements regulations 2018
Matt Davies

OUR PLANET

26 Above the summits
Ron Holt

28 Rewilding in the UK
Lucy Dunn

30 The 'Beast from the North East'
Sara Lodge

32 The multiple journeys of the Langdale Axes
Iain McIntyre

GUIDANCE

35 'Not over the hill'
Phil Skinner

38 Evidence versus eminence coaching
Mark Reeves

OUR HERITAGE

40 Outdoor education across the decades
Tim Jepson

41 The amazing Professor Heddle
Hamish H. Johnston

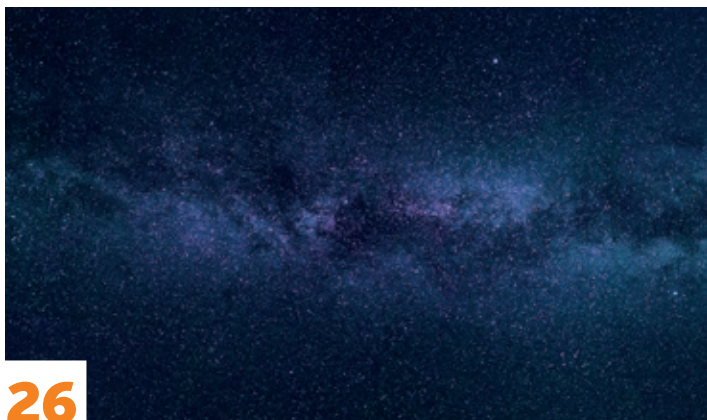
OUR REGULARS

43 Book review
• *Child of Time* by John Proctor
• *Teaching Navigation* by Nigel Williams

44 Book review continued
• *Unknown Pleasures* by Andrea Wulf
• *Kinder Scout* by Ed Douglas and John Beatty

Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018

24



26



28



30



32



35



38



40



41

Feeling inspired?

If you would like to contribute to the next issue, please contact **Belinda Buckingham** at belinda@mountain-training.org

Fancy advertising?

If you would like to advertise in the next issue, please contact **Caroline Davenport** at caroline@media-solution.co.uk

NEWS



THE ASSOCIATION OF MOUNTAINEERING INSTRUCTORS (AMI)

It has been a great first quarter of the year for AMI, helped by the bumper conditions in Scotland which led to many low-lying classics becoming available to climb. As we look forward, by the time the magazine comes out, the Membership and Naming Review Working Group under Paul Platt will have sat for the first time and we will expect to start seeing membership engagement within the near future.

In other news, we are pleased to announce our successful collaboration with Mountaineering Scotland. AMI members are now providing regional courses along similar lines to our arrangement with the BMC. We have also hosted our first MIA mentor's workshop at Plas y Brenin so this service will be rolling out in the near future. On a personal note, I will be on expedition for most of May and June with Rob Pugh and Sandy Paterson holding the reigns until my return.

Guy Buckingham (Chairman)



AMI is the representative body for professionally qualified Mountaineering Instructors in the UK and Ireland and is committed to promoting good practice in all mountaineering instruction. Full members hold the Mountaineering Instructor Award (MIA) or higher award the Mountaineering Instructor Certificate (MIC).

T 01690 720123
www.ami.org.uk



BRITISH MOUNTAIN GUIDES (BMG)

The winter/spring season have both been true to their names this year, giving great snow and ice conditions in the Alps and a great start to rock climbing in the UK. Quite a bit of judgement and caution have been needed to deal with the elevated avalanche conditions that the volumes of snow brought.

The training and assessment courses ran well, with many candidates progressing through the scheme and John Orr becoming a full Guide – congratulation John!

The summer has gotten off to a good start with hot sunny weather for the Arc'teryx Big Weekend, held in Langdale over the bank holiday. Workshops were hosted by BMG members and attendance was high – long may it continue.

The IFMGA spring assembly and Guides ski race was held in Saumnaun Switzerland, with some interesting discussions on future directions of avalanches education. More information will become available after the autumn IFMGA assembly in the autumn.

A strategic plan is underway and will help the BMG develop its future direction. With the volume of winter snow fall, the summer season in the alpine areas is looking to be a good one and busy for many members. The seventh Arc'teryx Alpine Academy will take place in Chamonix this July and promises to be a great success again:

chamonix.arcteryxacademy.com

Thanks to all the committee members for their hard work.

Mark Charlton (President)



The BMG is a member of the International Federation of Mountain Guides (IFMGA), currently comprising 24 nations worldwide, with growing membership, it is the professional organisation that trains and assesses Mountain Guides in all disciplines. A British Mountain Guide operates to the highest recognised level throughout the world, in all terrain and in diverse roles.

T 01690 720386
www.bmg.org.uk



THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN LEADERS (BAIML)

The new BAIML equal opportunity and diversity policy has been approved by the BAIML Board and will be going out to members in the next newsletter, as well as being available online to members along with the BAIML strategic plan.

The new BAIML logo has been launched, but we are of course retaining our UIMLA connection. Only full members or active life members of BAIML can use the BAIML logo and there is advice on how companies may use it too. When using BAIML and UIMLA logos together there is an accepted format, so please do check the guidelines.

A 100% CPD check for 2018 membership has been in operation and some members have been given support to reach the required standard and record items on CMS. Thanks to all those who have contributed to this process.

I have been in Nepal at the latest UIAA Management Committee meeting and had the opportunity to trek in the Helambu region which was heavily hit by the earthquake in 2015, discussing expedition access, environmental sustainability and sustainable tourism with international attendees and local stakeholders.

Anne Arran (President)



BAIML is the professional association for International Mountain Leaders (IMLs) in the UK. It represents the UK at UIMLA, the Union of International Mountain Leader Associations, which is the international governing body for IMLs. Full members hold the IML award and are committed to a dedicated CPD programme.

T 01690 720272
www.baiml.org



THE MOUNTAIN TRAINING ASSOCIATION (MTA)

The Mountain Training Association has been eagerly recruiting volunteers to increase the number of regional groups and provide our regional coordinators with support volunteers to increase the reach and number of regional activities. We are pleased to have established brand new regional groups in Yorkshire and the Scotland Central Belt and we have appointed new regional coordinators to the North West, Central England and Midlands regions.

We are also running a trial volunteer mentoring programme focused in the North West of England and will be running our first training event on the 8th June. Thanks to all our members who stepped forward to support both of these initiatives.

MTA will be running some "bridging the gap" workshops to bring our members up to date with the new Rock Climbing Instructor qualification; this will include elements of coaching and supervising an assistant and will also be a great CPD refresher workshop.

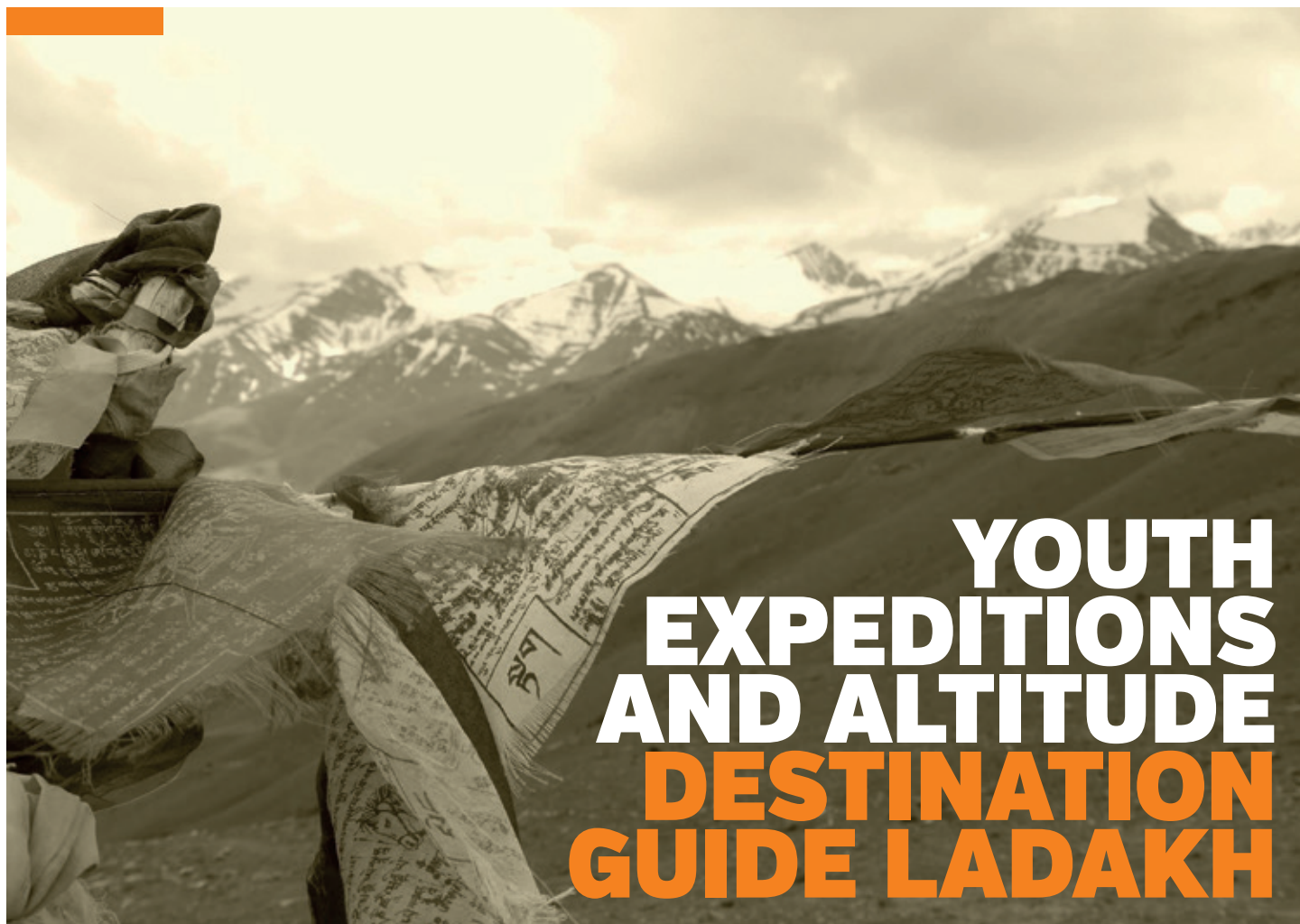
We will be teaming up with AMI in the autumn to run a coaching and teaching conference, the first of its kind and we hope to have more information and details of the workshop on the website soon.

Belinda Buckingham (Development Officer)



The MTA is a membership organisation providing support and development opportunities for all candidates of Mountain Training. Promoting good practice and providing continued personal development opportunities as part of a UK-wide community of outdoor leaders. Full members hold one or more of the Mountain Training Awards.

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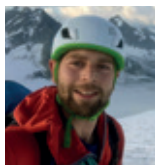


ABOVE No article on the Himalayas would be complete without the obligatory prayer flag shot! PHOTO Will Blackshaw.

Ladakh, or *land of the high passes* in Tibetan, is a region in Northern India, nestled high in the Himalayas in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Since being opened to tourists in 1974, it has become an increasingly popular destination for trekkers and mountaineers, offering a much quieter and in many ways more unexplored and wild alternative to Nepal.

WORDS BY WILL BLACKSHAW

Its appeal is even greater during the summer months as its location in the rain shadow of the Himalaya protects it from the monsoons, making it an especially fitting destination for youth expeditions wishing to take advantage of a long summer holiday. This article will provide practical advice for those wishing to travel with groups to Ladakh, and also attempt to discuss some of the issues around appropriate levels of adventure for school and youth groups when it comes to going to altitude.



Will Blackshaw is a Mountain Leader and aspirant International Mountain Leader. He is a Geography teacher and Director of Outdoor Education at Highgate school. Most of his time is spent on DofE trips with his school or leading overseas expeditions.

Travel and access

Most travellers to Ladakh will transit through Delhi and get a flight into Leh. At 3500 metres it can certainly be a shock to the system for anyone coming in straight from sea level, even for those who are seasoned veterans of altitude! It is important that any itinerary plans some time in Leh to begin the acclimatisation process. Leh is also a fascinating town with much to do and see, including historic Buddhist monasteries and the famous, if unlikely, multitude of German bakeries!

It is also worth factoring in a spare day on the return journey; flights in and out of Leh are only scheduled for early in the morning, and any delays could soon become a cancellation, so ensure your onward flight back home is scheduled for the afternoon of the following day at the earliest.

Onward journeys from Leh will almost always be by road – those travelling north towards the Nubra Valley will travel over the Khardung La. Whether or not you believe it to be the world's highest motorable road, at just under 5400m it will certainly leave you short of breath. Those undertaking the peaks of the Hemis National Park, such as Stok Kangri or Kang Yatse, will travel westward on the Srinagar-Leh highway or Eastward on the Leh Menali highway.

Whilst the majority of main roads in Ladakh are very good (most of them were installed and are maintained by the Indian military to ensure that the significant military presence in Ladakh has access across the region), as in any country with a mountainous topography, care should always be taken when you find yourself off the main



1. Prayer flags and peaks viewed from Leh Palace. 2. The Japanese chorten on the edge of Leh town. 3. Leh town viewed from the palace. PHOTOS Steve Long.

roads and journeying into the wild. The roads are under constant modification, often by unregulated groups from the villages. Work is ongoing, and it is not uncommon to find sections of road buried by debris from recent dynamite blasting, as my group and I discovered there last summer! There are also frequent landslides throughout the year, so up to date intel on your route is vital before you embark.

As with any travel in more remote and lower income countries, check the quality of all vehicles before you allow your group to set off in them. Ensure that they all have working seatbelts (usually not an issue in Ladakh) and the tyres all have plenty of tread left (more of an issue!). Ensure that you ride in the lead vehicle and if you are travelling with students and aim for one adult leader per car.

Accommodation

Leh is very well set up for tourism and there are a large number of accommodation options available to groups, from basic hostel style places to luxurious hotels. With a group it is advisable to book accommodation towards the centre of town as it makes sightseeing on foot easier. Last summer the walk from our hotel to the main part of town took the best part of 40 minutes (uphill!)

Youth groups and altitude

When I proposed taking a group of students to climb Stok Kangri (6137m) there were some who were surprised at the adventurousness of what I had planned! However, I am a firm believer that we should not discount adventure and challenge for student groups, as to do so would be doing them a disservice. With the correct preparation and support they are more than capable of taking on significant challenges, sometimes more so than adults. All 14 of my students made it to 6000m on the Stok summit ridge free of issues; in the end we turned around just shy of the summit owing to the snow

conditions which had made progress incredibly slow and hard going.

In May 2018, UIAA published some guidance on 'Children at Altitude' based on a 2008 study by Meijer and Dean that had been published by the UIAA medical commission (<http://www.theuiaa.org/uiiaa/children-at-altitude-essential-advice/>). Whilst it acknowledges that taking children and young adults to altitude will require more planning, preparation and subsequent monitoring whilst on expedition, there is no scientific evidence to suggest that children are more prone to altitude issues than adults.

As with any adult group going to altitude, prior preparation and education about the risks is paramount, as is ensuring a culture of honesty and sharing with all aspects of health on the expedition. My experience has found that teenagers are actually far better at sharing their feelings and symptoms than the adults on the trip, as they have no agenda towards having to hide symptoms for whatever reason.

Students particularly enjoy an active involvement in things such as daily Lake Louise scores and measuring their pulse and O₂ saturation levels (if you can take a pulse oximeter with you on a trip this is a great aid and really involves and engages the group).

Conclusion

Ladakh is a perfect destination for youth expeditions; it is well set up for tourists, provides a wealth of itineraries to suit all levels of adventure and gives a sense of wilderness and mystery that is hard to replicate. The usual caveats of parental briefing apply, but the altitudes of peaks and passes in Ladakh are accessible for suitably acclimatised youth groups. ■

Note – I have always used RIMO expeditions as the ground handler in Ladakh, and they offer a very professional and high quality service. There are other operators in Ladakh but a lot of people will recommend RIMO.

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ABOVE Ostgrat, Kate Wilkinson climbing. PHOTO Dan Wilkinson.

Rockaneering

[AKA Approach Shoe Alpinism]

The prize for our efforts was a vista of Alpine peaks stretching as far as the eye could see in all directions.

WORDS BY DAN WILKINSON

It had taken 17 pitches of climbing up to 5c, 700m of technical ascent and beating the crowds out of the hut, but the prize of being first (that day!) to balance on the summit needle of the Salbitschen was reward indeed for the effort. And we hadn't had to carry huge heavy sacks with tons of technical equipment to allow us to access the mountain, or aid our safety on the descent; we just had a pair of approach shoes each to walk down in.

Alpine mountaineering is a many faceted beast, from ascents of the famous North Faces of the Eiger and Matterhorn, through to the classic routes that involve glacial travel and mixed terrain, and then there are the many excellent rock routes that require a less complex approach. I remember being hugely intimidated by the Alps as a destination, with stories of benightment, snow bridge collapse, crevasse rescue, sudden storms and a multitude of other epic stories to frighten and scare me from visiting. I'm really very glad I didn't allow myself to be put off by these stories; I've had some of my most rewarding and involved days in the mountains in the Alps. By far and away my most favourite aspect of Alpinism is training shoe alpinism, where the approaches and descents require nothing more than a good pair of approach shoes and the technical equipment required for the route.

All of the routes below are well equipped and frequently travelled. As always in the Alps it is worth carrying a small rack to supplement the fixed protection. Whilst the guidebooks give a lot of information (with the best ones being the Plaisir series) you should be moving well at the grade and be comfortable moving together whilst roped up over the easier ground, in order to ensure you have an enjoyable, rather than stressful, day out.

Ostgrat (5b) on the Wiwannihorn

Worth climbing for the name alone, this beautiful summit has long been a well-guarded secret, with easy access from Visp and the Valais Alps. It is ideal for an acclimatisation peak or as an alternative option when the high peaks are stormbound. The approach to the hut itself feels like a minor adventure, with a permit needed to drive up to the higher parking (and brave the world's most exciting turning circle...). From here a gentle hour and a half stroll leads to the Wiwannahut, with a wide variety of routes to choose from 30 minutes further on. Steinadleroute (5a) is another popular classic which also finishes at the summit; a very easy descent (just keep your eye out for the abseil rings) allows a degree of flexibility with your timings.

On my most recent visit to the mountain we ended up walking up into the mist that was shrouding the mountains, heading up to climb the Steinadleroute. It was very early in the season and we were following a very stormy spring which meant that there was still a lot of snow on the approaches to the routes. Following a series of wondering footsteps through the white room, with nothing more than a topo and a vague idea of the shape of the buttresses from the brief lifting of the clouds, we managed to double the approach time from 25 to 50 minutes. Fortunately the European attitude to painting route names onto the mountains at the start of the routes meant that we were saved from vaguely questing up the first line of bolts that we eventually came across. The plethora of snow in the bowl on the descent helped us to glissade back to the hut in time for a well-earned dinner.



1. Ostgrat 4 Dan Wilkinson climbing. © Kate Wilkinson.
2. Ostgrat, Dan climbing. © Kate Wilkinson.
3. Sudgrat, Kate. © Dan Wilkinson.
4. Piz Badile North Ridge, Kate climbing. © Dan Wilkinson.
5. Sudgrat, Luke Kemp and Kate approach. © Dan Wilkinson.
6. The Fiamma and Albigna dam. © Will Brant.
7. Ostgrat, Wiwannahorn from the Wiwanni Hut. © Dan Wilkinson.
8. Sudgrat and the Salbitschen. © Dan Wilkinson.
9. Sudgrat, Dan and Luke. © Kate Wilkinson.

The Fiamma [5c+] Spazzacaldera

The Spazzacaldera has an iconic spire overlooking Val Bregaglia, with a plethora of excellent 'rockaneering' in the area. There are a few options to approach the spire itself, with either the North-East Ridge (4c) or Via Felicia (6a) being highly recommended. The start of the routes themselves are a pleasant ten minute wander from the top of a telecabin, and no matter which route you choose you are sure of excellent views and solid rock.

The Fiamma itself is an adventurous 5c+ pitch that also forms the high point of the summit of Spazzacaldera.

There are many other adventures to be had in the valley, so a couple of nights in the excellent Albigna Hut are highly recommended!

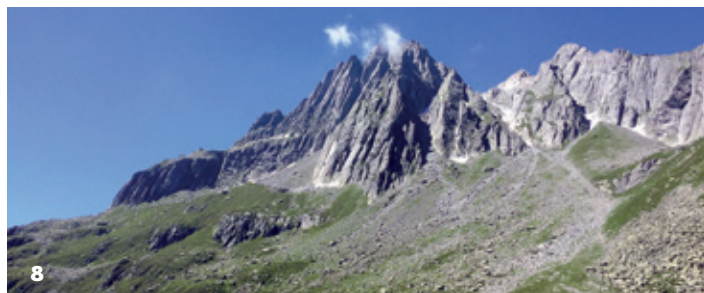
The first time I climbed this we approached the spire by climbing Via Felicia, an exceptional rock climb, which is only partially equipped. In order to avoid hot aches in my feet I was seconding in my approach shoes, and casually set off for my lead in them without paying much attention to what I was doing. About a third of the way up the crux pitch I realised that I hadn't swapped my shoes, and was trying to pad up glacier smoothed granite slabs in a set of approach shoes more suited to muddy trail running in Snowdonia. This led to a fixation on a ledge about ten feet above me where I knew I'd be able to swap shoes, and some clever use of our two cams to ensure that I always had a rope above my head whilst I slipped and slapped my feet up the slab to the relative safety of the ledge and sticky rubber once again.

North Ridge of Piz Badile

Perhaps one of the most iconic rock ridges in the entirety of the Alps, and on a mountain steeped in history; this is a must for any aspiring Rockaneer. The whole route goes in the majority on ground around the French 4, with two pitches of 5a to give climbing interest aplenty. The situations you find yourself in are amazing, with views onto the inspiring North Face, where you can pick out the line of one of Cassins' most celebrated climbs. The only detraction from the excellent ascent is the descent, which is something of a faff no matter how you go about it (the standard descent may require crampons to be carried until much later in the season!).

We climbed this last summer on a perfect day, with no wind and perfect blue skies above us. Unfortunately we weren't the only ones who had managed to read the forecast that well, and a crowded hut lead to a bunched start at the base of the mountain (the approach up to the start of the real climbing is a little complex and requires some route finding through very slabby ground). Kate (my girlfriend) and I had decided that we were going to move together over most of the route, and pitch just a couple of the harder sections. We'd been beaten to the start of the route by a couple of parties, and so settled in to see how we were going to fare speedwise against the parties ahead. We had about 15 metres of rope out between us, allowing us to keep a couple of bolts clipped between us, and were just switching the lead when the back person had gathered all of the kit. This meant that we were moving much faster than the two parties in front of us, allowing us to pass them after the first few belays and keep moving up the mountain.

We had made such good progress that we decided to complete the round trip (from the summit, descend into another valley, then walk



back to the start of the route crossing two cols) rather than spend the night in the Gianetti Hut, as most parties do. We optimistically decided that we would be down well in time for popping over the border into Italy from Switzerland for a Pizza... after all we'd been on the summit at 10 am, and the guidebook time for the descent was 7 hours. Needless to say we still don't know where the time went, but we got back to the van at 9pm, ravenous!

Sudgrat on the Salbitschen

This is my favourite route in the Alps, and for many reasons. Excellent climbing on well-equipped granite, views of the Westgrat (a harder more committing ridge on the same mountain) and the descent takes under an hour... what's not to love? The climbing is always interesting, never gets harder than 5a (plus a cheeky pull on a quickdraw if you need – this is the Alps after all!) and has just enough rope faffery to keep you on your toes!

We'd planned to climb the Sudgrat over a weekend in August. Our friend Luke was going to join us and we'd have an early start, head up and do the route on Saturday, spend the night in the hut and enjoy some more climbing on Sunday, before he headed back to work. The forecast looked perfect and we had a hut booking confirmed. Saturday morning we woke up to rain and drizzle, wishing we'd enjoyed a few more gins the previous evening, as we obviously weren't going to climb today. We drank a few cups of tea and had a lazy brunch before heading up to the hut. The warden told us that they were fully booked for that evening – they even had people sleeping in the storeroom), so we chose to walk up to the base of the route and stash our ropes and harnesses there, to allow

us to get to the base of the route as quickly as possible the following morning and hopefully get a head start on the route.

A sneaky start (going for breakfast 20 minutes before the guardian says it's being served isn't guaranteed to endear you to them, but ensures that you get a head start on the crowds) and a light and fast walk to the base of the route meant that we had 17 pitches of immaculate and well protected granite ahead of us, no pressure from teams behind us, and time to enjoy our surroundings and the view across to the Westgrat (another classic rockaneering route climbing five towers on its way to the summit). Sharing the route with Kate and Luke, swinging leads as we kept our momentum up the mountain, and balancing one at a time on the summit needle before strolling back to the hut in our trainers reinforced once again why rockaneering is my favourite version of Alpinism.

It is worth noting that early in the season crampons, appropriate boots and good movement skills on snow are all to be expected, especially after a heavy snow season. If you have any doubts, a quick phone call to the closest hut guardian will let you know exactly what conditions are like in their area. If it's your first time in the Alps then it may help to look at this list as a progressive hit list. Enjoy! ■



Dan Wilkinson [formerly Butler] holds the Mountain-eering Instructor Certificate and is a member of AMI. Dan has just moved to the Lakes, where he works for himself half time, and for Joint Services the other half of his life. Dan also holds the British Canoe Level 5 kayak award. You can find out more about him at www.danwilkinson.org



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MANAGING AN ASSISTANT

ABOVE Range rope traverse. © Marle Hall.

The updated Rock Climbing Instructor and Climbing Wall Instructor schemes have syllabus sections on managing an assistant.

WORDS BY GUY JARVIS
CASE STUDY BY SIMON PATTON

At the beginning of 2019 an entirely new scheme, the Indoor Climbing Assistant will be launched across the UK and Ireland for the first time. So what is an assistant, how should you manage them and what does this mean for qualified instructors?

Assistants could be trainees, parents, teachers, experienced youth, carers, disabled enthusiasts, volunteers or apprentices.



Guy Jarvis is the Executive Officer for Mountain Training England. Previously to this he was Director of Training at Undercover Rock in Bristol where he founded the National Indoor Climbing Award Scheme. He holds the Mountaineering Instructor Award and the International Mountain Leader qualification.

They have been part of the outdoor sector for decades. I started my instructing career as an assistant at a busy LEA centre and it became an apprenticeship that shaped the rest of my life. Later on as a qualified instructor I worked in centres with excellent young assistants recruited from schools, and when running a climbing wall we had many trainee assistants working towards their qualifications. It's so much nicer and more effective than working on your own.

The updated climbing schemes recognise this relationship and introduce some good practice for instructors to be aware of if they choose to work with assistants. There are three main reasons why working with an assistant could be a good thing:

- 1 You can run a more efficient and effective session.
- 2 You can inspire and mentor the next generation of instructors.
- 3 They can improve your own instructing by helping you reflect on your own performance. (Don't forget that assistants may have certain skills that are more developed than your own!)

Remember that you, the instructor, are always responsible (and liable) for the actions of any assistants with your group. If they mess up, it will be because you put them in that situation without proper controls. Therefore you need to supervise them appropriately and manage their responsibilities in a carefully progressive way, checking for understanding and competency all the while. An assistant is not someone you send to the other side of the crag or climbing centre. They work with you and in communication with you. You need to be able to intervene if necessary.

The ability to assess and manage another person in this role takes some experience, but most importantly of all – preparation. I would always interview a prospective assistant before engaging them, to assess their experience and skills. Although they are there to follow your directions they should be fully inducted with a clear brief as



1. Spot the assistant. © Guy Jarvis. 2. Backing up a belayer. © Guy Jarvis. 3. Assistant Instructor managing a bottom rope at Conwy Slab. © Marle Hall.

to their role and your expectations. They should also be inducted into any relevant procedures such as for emergencies and safeguarding. What should they do if something were to happen to you?

If assistants are not prepared well they could become a nightmare with participants not knowing who to follow, creating miscommunication and allowing poor practice to occur. However if this role is set up well you will get excellent team teaching, more vigilance, more action and more quality interaction on your session.

Here is a simple checklist of things you should consider when planning how to use an assistant.

Think **HELPERS**:

H-humility. Are they teachable and able to accept direction/instruction? Will they respect me? I need to listen to them and respect them. Can I trust them?

E-experience. Do they have previous experience/prior knowledge? Can they apply it and can I utilise it?

L-line of sight. Do I need to see them at all times? Can I afford not to?

P-present. Are they present and engaged with the activity? Are they switched on?

E-emotion. Are they confident in the activity? Are they nervous? Will they have a positive or negative effect on the activity?

R-relationship. Do I know them? How long have I known them? Have I just met them?

S-same. Aims and objectives need to match yours. Avoid conflicts of interest and agendas which can confuse and undermine.

CASE STUDY: Marle Hall OEC

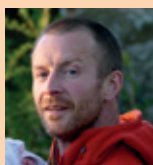
At Marle Hall, we use assistants on a daily basis across a whole range of activities and environments.

Our instructors, both permanent and freelance, will always have an adult assistant and up to 12 young people. These assistants could be the Head Teacher, a teacher, a teaching assistant, a parent, a member of the board of governors or anyone else associated with the school. They come with a range of competencies so we have to be very careful about when and how to give them responsibilities. We encourage our instructors to use the visiting staff as much as possible and usually give several reasons why. Here are the main ones...

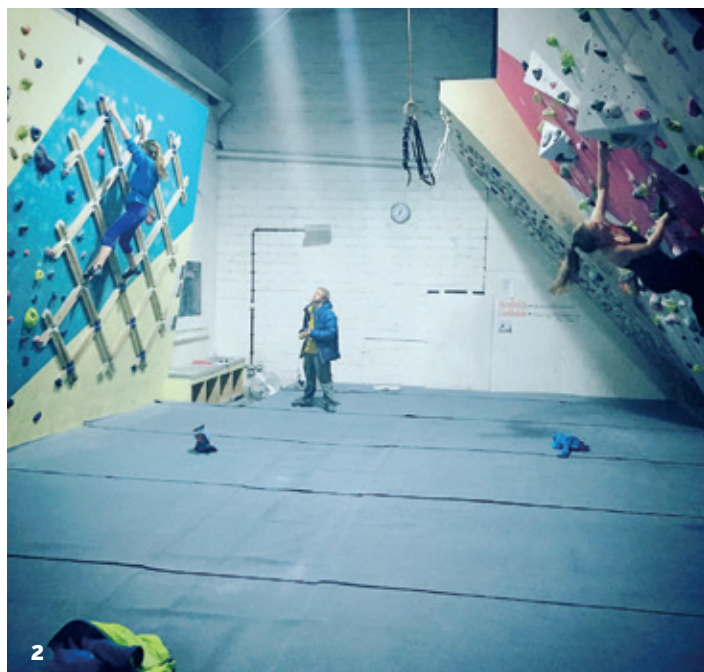
- 1 It means more can be achieved in the time available, resulting in the participants probably experiencing more success e.g. three bottom ropes instead of two.
- 2 It helps the young people develop a better relationship with that particular staff member. Pupils like to see their teacher go through what they are going through – to feel scared when they are abseiling or about to commit to a zipline off a sea cliff. It helps them relate to one another. The benefits of this cannot be underestimated!
- 3 When the teacher interacts with the young people, outside of the formal classroom environment, they see the pupils in a different way. They see hidden talents never revealed in a classroom. They see a new way to engage with them which can help them reach those difficult pupils and the low achievers. We hear this in feedback time and time again.

When we choose to use visiting staff as assistants we have to exercise a lot of judgement. As the level of risk increases, more and more questions must be considered before deciding on an appropriate decision. Based on my answers to these questions I will decide on the best way forward although the plan may change depending on factors such as time, weather, increasing competence etc. This decision sometimes happens very quickly! Clearly, as the instructor/assistant relationship develops over the week, I am able to use them more effectively.

When we decide it is appropriate to use assistants they may be deployed to tail ropes when rock climbing, operate belay devices, spot people as they negotiate rock steps in gorges, clip and unclip students on traverse lines and zip lines. The list goes on! ■



Simon Patton is the Executive Officer for Mountain Training Cymru. He began instructing at Tollymore Mountain Centre in Northern Ireland and up until very recently, he was the Deputy Head at Marle Hall Outdoor Education Centre. He holds the Mountaineering Instructor Certificate and several paddlesport and underground qualifications.



SESSION PLANNING FOR COACHES PART 2

WORKING WITH IMPROVERS

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY JOBY MAW DAVIS

In previous articles in this series we have examined a number of topics, such as using games to help progressive learning, delivery strategies, and some basic planning skills. In this piece we are going to look at dealing with 'improvers', and how their requirements will differ from those of a beginner, forcing you to develop and refine your planning and facilitation skills.

Working with improvers

Having an understanding of your learners' individual requirements is a fundamental and underpinning factor for the coach when considering how to plan an effective and progressive session. You are now very much in the realm of *athlete or performer centred coaching*.

Managing an understanding of motivational factors can be make or break for the effectiveness of your sessions! In particular, understanding intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and how you can help your learners manage and embrace their own journey.

Intrinsic Motivation

Motivation from within, a desire to perform well and succeed! A feeling of pride and enjoyment whilst performing. Repeated goal setting to overcome problems and develop 'good' habits.

Extrinsic Motivation

Motivation from a source outside of the performer. This can encourage the learner to succeed.

A successful coach should be aware of both types of motivation and be able to identify factors which may influence a particular performer's preference. Both aspects have a place in our sport, but as a coach you should take time to explain and explore the pros and cons of each with the learner.

Extrinsic thoughts

Using *extrinsic motivation* to push learners towards wanting to achieve can be effective, but it can also be challenging. They can quickly lose interest, forcing the stakes to be raised. If the reward system is removed, learner motivation often declines as a result. Extrinsic factors could be tangible (a prize), or indeed intangible (praise and recognition from the coach).

Intrinsic thoughts

The best way to develop a learners' *intrinsic motivation* is to understand what the performer needs from their sport. Athletes and performers require four primary needs for participating in sport.

The four key factors:

- 1 Fun and Stimulation
- 2 Acceptance and Belonging
- 3 Control and Autonomy
- 4 Competence and Success



1. Using questioning to help with feedback. 2. Ensuring useful and unhindered positioning for observation is critical for a coach. 3. Simple no verbal extrinsic feedback from the coach. 4. Thoughtful use of questions in a wide ranging ability group to generate feedback.



Activity idea

In your group, squad or academy, involve them in developing their own code of practice or rules. Your group is far more likely to be able to follow a set of guidelines where they have had an element of autonomy in their creation.

As an example of how you as a coach may fulfil *key factor two*, you need to consider how to develop and include strategies of choice in your plan:

Building in elements of flexibility into your sessions is also critical for a number of factors; firstly, it is likely that you will now be dealing with a wide range of skill and level requirements. Your learners are also likely to spend time away from you as a coach (and let's face it, this is when the 'real' learning takes place). Differing amounts of available time to follow your guidance, training regime or plan will result in different rates of progression.

Session delivery is often the point at which a coach struggles to help their learners with self-critique and evaluation, essential skills for progressive improvers. For example, developing coaches are often good at obtaining a basic response from a climber of their performance, but frequently find difficulty in getting to a point of analysis and beyond. Educationalists will be familiar with Bloom's Taxonomy, and its variants. The goal of this model is to encourage higher order thinking by building on lower level cognitive skills (see previous articles re. *Skill Acquisition*).

Example questions

- Explain how you may have handled that attempt in a competition situation?
- Can you tell me what may have been different if you had made clip 4 from the lower hold?
- Can you apply the excellent rests you took on your last route to this attempt, what's your plan?
- What can you recall from your last onsight?

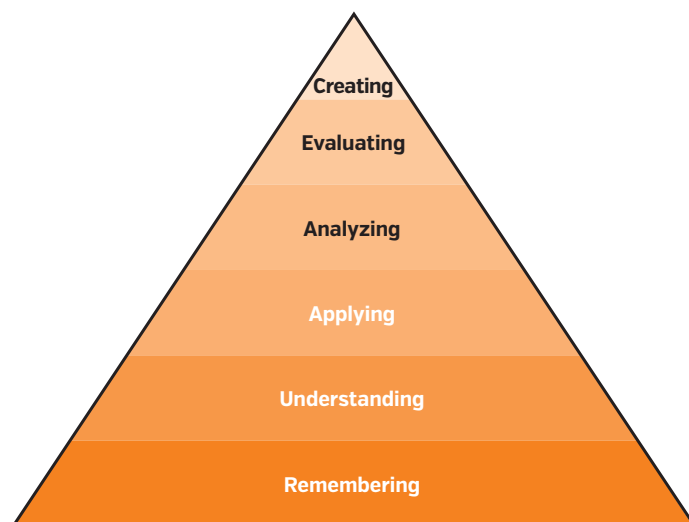


DIAGRAM Blooms Taxonomy – Revised.

As coaches, our task (and one of the most challenging) is how we can help our learners achieve 'higher level' or 'critical thinking'. Effective questioning and encouraging questioning from your learners has to be one of the most powerful tools to achieving this.

Higher order questions are those that cannot simply be answered by recollection. Higher order questions encourage critical thinking as they require the learner to apply, analyse and synthesise information. Your task as a coach of improvers is to take them on a journey of content (who, what, when), through to process (how and why). Bear in mind, 'this can be a bumpy journey, as there is not going to be a 'correct answer' – a concept that learners can find frustrating to adopt! ■



Joby Maw Davis is a Mountaineering Instructor Certificate holder and climbing wall specialist. He works throughout the UK as a technical adviser, provider of the Climbing Wall Instructor, Climbing Wall Development Instructor and Rock Climbing Instructor schemes, as well as the Coaching scheme. He is also a Technical Expert of the NICAS schemes.



1. Desiree Verbeek adopting a wide stance for clipping but note the centre of gravity can still be shifted over either foot. X-site 2 Koh Lao Liang Thailand. © Alun Richardson.
2. Maren Shroder practicing good footwork on: Sul dorso del drago 6a, Sardinia. © Ben Armstrong.
3. Transference of weight not an option when bridging. Alexandra McLeod on: A man can tell a 1000 lies 6a, Thailand. © Alun Richardson.
4. Desiree Verbeek making good use of push downs while taking on Humanity Thailand. © Alun Richardson.
5. Paul Cooke resting in a wide stance. Remembering to move a foot back under the body before moving up can be important here. Chasing fish 6a+, Koh Lao Liang Thailand. © Alun Richardson.
6. Keeping her feet under her on tiny holds, Desiree Verbeek. Ciao Alex 6a, Sardinia. © Ben Armstrong.

PART 2

Outdoor coaching

Analysing a climber's movement pattern on artificial walls can be difficult. The climber needs to be able to move freely and not be dictated by spaced holds.

Much of this might be down to the way we as humans naturally move on natural rock but it's also possible that the nature of artificial climbing is playing a large part in developing a pattern of movement that is at odds with the way you would ideally want to move on rock.

Filming climbers on easy routes, slabby or no more than vertical grade 3 to 5 (even if they normally climb upwards of 7b) allows you to see how they naturally move when given a choice. If training mostly indoors and climbing the routes or problems as they are set, there is a risk of training our bodies to seek out the hard moves and overlook the easy ones. If we accept that climbing efficiently is important as a climber then we need to naturally seek out the easiest option. Of course, being able to execute hard moves is important but if our body naturally falls into familiar but unnecessary positions when on easy ground then we are wasting valuable energy. Climbing is a technical, balanced-based activity and executing moves when out of balance using the arms instead of the legs should be a last resort, not the norm. I've coached many climbers in recent years who almost only do difficult moves, not seeing or considering an easier option as this would feel unfamiliar to them.

Once we understand what efficient movement is, we can choose to do a much greater percentage of climbing where we are not being dictated by the configuration of the holds. For example, if 80% of our climbing allowed us to move in a way of our choosing and we saw this as practice, we would have some quality control over how we move. If mostly practicing indoors this might involve climbing on sections of wall with many holds and using any colour for feet.

Based on efficient movement, what are we trying to observe?

I find it useful to start with transference of weight.

Is the climber fully moving the hips/centre of gravity over the leading foot? If not, why not?

Is the climber trailing the back foot as they move upward (climbers often arrive with a hole or wear mark on top of their shoes, this can be

a giveaway), pushing from one leg rather than two?

Are they pulling on their arms or pushing from their legs?

- Bent or straight arms?
- Climbing dynamically or statically?
- Making more hand movements/changes to foot changes?

WORDS BY TREVOR MASSIAH

There are many things that we can choose to look at when assessing how efficiently someone may be climbing. It's best to keep it simple. It's important to have the basics wired before moving on to anything more complicated.

Most, if not all inefficient movement will be due to poor choice of foot and hand holds. As good footwork is harder to develop it makes sense to concentrate more attention here.

The higher and/or wider the leading foot is in relation to the back foot the harder it becomes to transfer weight onto it. Once the foot is above the opposite knee the leg is not strong enough to push the body up alone, so the arms need to help by pulling or pushing. For this reason, I begin with foot choices. If they are high, wide or both, I try to identify what techniques (if any) are being used to make upward movement as efficient as possible. This video link will help explain what is meant by this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMq6QAGCtAM>

People are often surprised when they look nothing like they imagined on the screen. For most people it will be the first time they see themselves climbing. The fact that they are not flowing up the route with the grace of one of climbing's greats can come as a bit of a shock!

It's useful to have some positives to throw in with the analysis, which can feel like a negative process if we are not careful (looking for things that the climber might be doing incorrectly or inefficiently). I must admit I'm pretty rubbish at this bit! I've learned that referring to how I know I used to climb before I took more of an interest in movement can help. But also looking at techniques the climber is using to compensate for being out

of balance can help, as they are useful skills to have when climbing harder routes or features that require certain techniques. Watching how most climbers around them at the wall or crag are moving with the same pattern is also useful.

From watching the video, it should be clear that if it is possible to take small steps and keep our feet close together the climbing is naturally easier. Once the feet are outside the width of the body, sideways movement is necessary to move efficiently. The following link shows two climbers on the same route. The second climber is making good choices with the feet and displaying excellent technique. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iULJLbQiDPw>

How to make high or wide steps efficient

It is important to consider if poor footwork is the cause of us making poor choices with our feet in the first place. Often the inability to smear or stand on small edges is at play. When we must take our feet out of position, there are surprisingly few techniques that we might choose from:

- Bringing our feet closer by stepping down with the high foot, bringing the back foot up a little before going back to the same highest foothold. Not really a technique; more a way of avoiding the high step and remembering that this option often gets overlooked.
- Cross over or through with the foot when going sideways.
- Palming off or pushing down with the same hand as the foot we are going to move.
- Dynamic rock over by bouncing off the back foot, generating movement from the legs to limit pulling on the arms.
- Bringing the back foot up incrementally rather than in one big movement.

These options (apart from the dynamic rock over) should be made without upward movement of the body/hips.

Climbing is a discipline

Climbing is a discipline, and like any discipline, practice is necessary. Most climbers are self-taught and judge their expertise by the grade they climb, not necessarily by the quality of their movement. Most climbers just climb hoping or assuming they will get better! However, once we understand what efficient movement is, it becomes possible to self-coach. If we are present in the moment with each move we make and are prepared to fail seeking out the technical solution, rather than just pulling even if we know that we could, then we are practicing, and will make progress. Practice can only be done on routes easy enough to have both mental and physical space to consider each move. ■



Trevor Massiah is a Mountaineering Instructor based in Spain and is the owner operator of Rock and Sun which runs climbing and bouldering courses and holidays in many parts of the world. He has been working in the outdoors for 33 years and has climbed extensively around the world. His favourite crags are Pembroke, Taipan wall and the Needles California. He has put up many new routes – both trad and sport – in the UK, Thailand, Australia, China and India, and is currently involved in rebolting existing routes and developing new routes in Thailand and Costa Blanca.

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Ben Bransby taming 'Inhibitor' (5.11a) with a Dragon
Cam 8, Red River Gorge, USA. Photo: Ray Wood

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1. Bottom Access, a sandy walk in to climb at Tor Bay. 2. Top Access, abseiling above the blue before their first climb. 3. Tide returning to the base of the crag. 4. Box Bay with the tide out on the AMI regional workshop. 5. Top Access, only one way back to the top now.

SEA CLIFFS AND THE ROCK CLIMBING INSTRUCTOR

In June last year Atlantic College hosted the first meeting of the AMI South Wales regional group.

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY MATT WOODFIELD

This focused on the region's "elephant in the room"; the regular use of tidal venues with groups that are led by a Rock Climbing Instructor (RCI).

Discussion was centred around the following questions:

- What **knowledge** do climbing instructors need to use these venues safely?
- Can venues be **categorised** in terms of the skills required to problem solve there?
- Can a **syllabus** be created that allows a standardised approach to site specific training run by a technical advisor for a Rock Climbing Instructor working at tidal venues in the region? Would this help Technical Advisors to support their clients when running site-specific training?

After a morning of talk and an afternoon on the coast putting it all together, we'd like to share with you the answers that we proposed for these questions.

Knowledge

Tides and how they move, including Range/Pace (rules of 12ths), Neaps/Springs and other influences like weather and swell.

Awareness of the dynamic environment of tidal sea cliffs and **planning** (following the Avalanche Awareness Model):

- **Planning** your session – check tide times, weather and swell forecasts. What will conditions look like when you arrive? When will the doors "open" and "close" on your venue?
- **Journey** to your crag – are conditions as expected? Have your plan B and fillers on hand.
- **Key places/times** during your session – monitor the sea state and tide level, know when to go.

Escape Routes and rescue techniques for the venues you will be using, including walking, climbing and hoisting, as well as the risks posed by entry to the water in this environment.

Categorisation

A wide range of tidal venues are used by climbing instructors across South and West Wales and each of these crags can be divided into one of two categories:

- **Bottom access** – Where you can approach from the bottom once the tidal door "opens" and use it like any other single pitch venue until the tidal door "closes" (*see photo 1*).
- **Top access** – Where you must approach and retreat from the top of the crag, as water or terrain prevent other options (*see photos 2 and 5*).

Some venues will change from one category to another as the tide moves and they are best defined by the methods used by the instructor at the time (*see photos 3 and 4*).

Syllabus

For sessions on bottom access venues, like Three Cliffs on Gower, the technical skills for the leader remain the same as for the Rock Climbing Instructor, but a sound understanding of tides, awareness, planning and escape routes is required.

For top access venues, like Porth Clais in Pembroke, in addition to the knowledge outlined above, instructors also require technical skills including assisted and unassisted hoists and also descending and re-ascending a fixed line.

It was noted that the RLSS National Water Safety management Program (www.rlss.org.uk/professional-qualifications/nwsmpl/) would greatly benefit the instructor when working at a range of venues that are in and around the water margins on the coast as well as in the mountains. ■



Matt Woodfield is a Mountaineering Instructor who runs a small outdoor business offering skills courses, training and technical advice from his base in Swansea, between the mountains and the sea.
www.outdoor-matters.co.uk



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Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018

WORDS BY MATT DAVIES

There are likely to be three responses to this headline:

- 1 Never heard of it. What are the Package Travel Regulations?**
- 2 I'm on top of it and have been since the new draft directive was published – I'm just waiting for the final draft of the new UK law.**
- 3 I'm aware of it in some way but I have no detail – HELP!**

This is an awareness note (hopefully in accessible terms and language); a heads up to focus the mind, rather than a fulsome article.

Sadly, as with the 1992 Package Travel Regulations, there is no substitute for reading the draft regulation. Now is the time to do that. The relevant government department will be issuing guidance notes nearer implementation time (when the final draft is out) and have promised to work closely with the various sectors to whom the regulations apply.

Between now and then, the associations will be publishing links to the guidance along with links to learned articles to assist outdoor practitioners, and MTA are also contemplating hosting a webinar for members.

In the legal world, there is a flurry of activity, articles, lectures and conferences as the legal sector and clients prepare for the implementation of the changes and provide advice. This advice will be impacted by additional guidance from the government in due course.

What are the existing Package Travel Regulations?

Simply put, the existing regulations already in force cover those that are offering two out of three of the following:

- Transport
- Accommodation
- Other Tourist Services

Importantly, these need to be offered as a prearranged package, at an inclusive price (albeit that rendering separate invoices for separate elements would not prevent it becoming a package). A summer camp with tented accommodation and instruction would also likely be a package. You can see how an overseas expedition, adventure travel and guided ascent with, say transport or accommodation can amount to a package.

Why is it important?

The existing Package Travel Regulations require financial protection for customers' money – whether by a bond, insurance or trust route. Failure to comply with this and other requirements (regarding provision of information to customers prior to concluding the contract and provision of accurate information) attracts both Civil and Criminal Liability.

Importantly, the existing Regulation 15 also makes the organiser of the package liable for the improper performance of the contract by their service providers (the coach crashes, the accommodation burns down or services are delivered poorly) – and you end up getting sued.

It is important to review as to whether the regulations apply to you. This shouldn't be news to any of you...

Why are the Regulations changing?

Simply put, times have changed and customers are now booking elements of travel, accommodation and other services online in formats that do not satisfy the old definition of a Package under the Regulations. Therefore, consumer protection is not afforded.

The changes are not retrospective.



Matthew Davies FRGS is a Director at Remote Area Risk International. The organisation trains and advises organisations on remote area safety and Travel Risk Management. Matthew is also a drafting Committee Member for BS:8848 – the standard for overseas expeditions, fieldwork and visits. Whilst in private practice as a Solicitor, he acted for adventure travel, expedition, outdoor activity and released companies. Matthew delivers the Royal Geographical Society Off Site Safety Management course which covers amongst other things, legal aspects of off site visits and activities, including the Package Travel Regulations.
www.R2RIinternational.com

Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018

The new definition of Package in reg. 2[5]:

A 'package' means a combination of at least two different types of travel services for the purpose of the same trip or holiday, if –

- (a) those services are combined by one trader, including at the request of or in accordance with the selection of the traveller, before a single contract on all services is concluded; or
- (b) those services are –
 - (i) purchased from a single point of sale and selected before the traveller agrees to pay;
 - (ii) offered, sold or charged at an inclusive or total price;
 - (iii) advertised or sold under the term "package" or under a similar term;
 - (iv) combined after the conclusion of a contract by which a trader entitles the traveller to choose among a selection of different types of travel services, or
 - (v) purchased from separate traders through linked online booking processes where

- the traveller's name, payment details and email address are transmitted from the trader with whom the first contract is concluded to another trader or traders, and
- a contract with the latter trader or traders is concluded at the latest 24 hours after the confirmation of the booking of the first travel service, irrespective of whether the traveller concludes separate contracts with one or more travel service providers in respect of the services.

Travel Services – what are they? – reg 2[1]:

- (a) the carriage of passengers;
- (b) accommodation which is not intrinsically part of carriage of passengers and is not for residential purposes;

- (c) the rental of –
 - (i) cars;
 - (ii) other motor vehicles within the meaning of Article 3[11] of Directive 2007/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the approval of motor vehicles and their trailers, and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles[a]; or
 - (iii) motorcycles requiring a Category A driving licence in accordance with point (c) of Article 4[3] of Directive 2006/126/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on driving licences [b];
- (d) any other tourist service not intrinsically part of a travel service within the meaning of paragraph (a), [b] or [c].

Other Tourist Services [recital 18] include:

concerts, sport events, excursions or event parks, guided tours, ski passes and rental of sports equipment such as skiing equipment, or spa treatments.

What is NOT a Package?

Reg. 2[6]:

A combination of travel services where not more than one type of travel service listed in paragraph (a), [b] or [c] of point 1 is combined with one or more tourist services of the kind listed in paragraph (d) of that definition is not a package if the latter services –

- (a) do not account for a significant proportion of the value of the combination and are not advertised as and do not otherwise represent an essential feature of the combination; or
- (b) are selected and purchased only after the performance of a travel service of the kind listed in [a], [b] or [c] or the definition of "travel service" has started.



What you need to do now

If you haven't already been looking at this or have not previously complied with the existing regulations, you need to implement the following:

- Read the draft new Package Travel Regulations (Google the title and it will take you to the legislation.gov.uk website).
- Read the guidance from the relevant department – <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/updating-consumer-protection-in-the-package-travel-sector>
- Consider if they apply to you.
- Read the further guidance once published.
- Seek legal advice regarding compliance and terms and conditions (there are also conferences run by ABTA and others).

Further articles, items and links will be provided on the association Facebook groups and future editions of this publication as developments occur. ■



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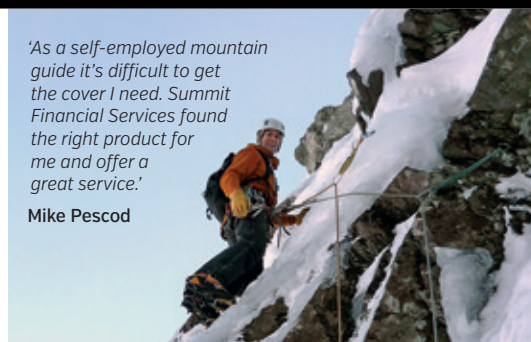
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ABOVE THE SUMMITS

WORDS BY RON HOLT



Ron Holt is a member of BAIML and a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society. He was for many years a research physicist before becoming actively involved in leading low and high-altitude mountaineering expeditions. He is also a teacher and author who now runs his own navigation courses within the Peak District National Park (www.outside-education.co.uk) and is currently writing an astronomy guide for outdoor enthusiasts.

We will flex our toes in those unforgiving boots and adjust our crampons for the final time before treading out the crisp sharp crunching snow and ice. With final checks almost complete we fiddle with our head torch, adjusting the beam to give us the best illumination of the ground ahead. Our eyes slowly become accustomed to the sharp pencil beam and whatever is outside that cone becomes dark and mysterious. What we do however, is destroy any possibility of observing the magical heavens above us. You may not at that time be thinking about the glorious sight of the myriad of stars, galaxies and planets directly above you but once that torch beam is lit it will be difficult for your eyes to go back and view the night sky without a good twenty or more minutes of being in total darkness.

Light pollution is an astronomer's nightmare. It is obviously most prevalent in cities and large towns where road, street and shop lights cause most of the pollution. On average with the naked eye it should be possible to observe around 6,000 stars on a very clear night, but this is dramatically reduced where light pollution is strongest to perhaps only a few tens or perhaps even less. Moving away into more rural areas extends this range to several hundred and perhaps thousands but the real 'full monty' is only ever realised high up in the mountain regions where light pollution is minimal and the air is crystal clear: mountains and stars share a wonderful relationship.

As any good astronomer will tell you, the best view of the heavens is found when light and air pollution are minimal and there is no moon or limited reflected light from the moon. Every visible star belongs to one and only one group

or constellation of which there are 89 covering the entire sky. Astronomical objects within a constellation are at widely different distances and not physically connected with any other object. The entire backdrop of constellations is 'painted' on the surface of a sphere called the celestial sphere with the celestial equator an extension of Earth's equator. The problem with constellations is that they move across the sky and as they move they also change orientation. In fact, the heavens appear to rotate around two points called the celestial poles and the elevation of the pole above your horizon is equal to your latitude. Stars that are close to the north celestial pole will therefore circle the pole without ever going below the horizon (called circumpolar stars). Conversely stars in a region around the southern celestial pole will never rise. In between are stars that rise and set. To add a further complication, constellations also change position (and orientation) depending on your latitude and time of year due to the Earth's rotation around the Sun.

In the UK, perhaps the best known constellation is Ursa Major (or the Great Bear, The Big Dipper or The Plough). The two end stars can be used as pointers to locate the Polaris (also called the Pole Star or North Star) which is (by chance) close to the North Celestial Pole (there is no corresponding South Star in the southern hemisphere). Distances (strictly angles) between stars can be estimated using your arm fully outstretched with your small finger representing 1°, three fingers 5° and a closed fist 10°. From Polaris you can then identify the constellation Ursa Minor; or use the bright star Mizar as a pointer

We often set out on our summit bid in the middle of the night, full of apprehension, focussing on the steep terrain that awaits us, fully equipped with all the latest down gear to keep out the cold until the sun casts its first rays above the distant mountain peaks.

through Polaris to locate another recognisable 'W' constellation Cassiopeia (three fists away from Polaris). Using such knowledge and stars as pointers or guides it is possible to begin identifying more of the constellations that lie above your head. This takes time but there are now numerous apps that are available on mobile devices that will help you identify the brightest stars in the night sky wherever you are on the Earth's surface.

Some of these apps allow ready identification and naming of stars but also planets and the many hundreds of satellites that orbit the Earth including the famous International Space Station (ISS) which is easily seen as a bright for fast moving 'star'. Another prominent feature of the night sky is the Milky Way, a band of densely populated light that contains billions of stars and traverses the night sky. This is simply looking towards the centre of our own galaxy (which is very similar to images of the Andromeda galaxy). The irregularity of the density of stars seen within the Milky Way helps us to determine that our own Solar System sits somewhat out from the galactic centre along one of the Spiral Arms (in fact roughly two thirds away from the galactic centre).

Although some apps will provide information that will help you identify various astronomical bodies others allow you to look at the night sky in 'time-travel' mode i.e. you can view the sky as it looked in the past and the future. You may need to input your position on Earth (latitude and longitude) and perhaps your altitude but the software does the rest. This is very useful if you want to investigate the constellations ahead of your night walk, trek or expedition.

However, with increasing urbanisation the amount of dark sky regions is slowly being diminished.

ABOVE Milky Way.

In a recent survey it was reported that over two thirds of the human population now live under light polluted skies that are not dark enough to allow stars to be visible let alone the glorious Milky Way.

The International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) has identified key sites and attempts to preserve and protect these pollution-free areas. Within the UK this includes the dark sky communities of Coll and Moffett in Scotland and the Island of Sark in the Channel Isles; dark-sky parks include the Elan Valley, the Galloway Forest and the Northumberland National Park, and reserves include the Brecon Beacons, Snowdonia and Exmoor National Parks. Recent satellite images detailing the UK concluded that only 22% of England has pristine skies completely free of light pollution. The campaign report "Night Blight 2016" recommended action in several key areas in which local authorities can act to protect and enlarge our own dark sky areas. So, when undertaking a future walk, trek or mountaineering expedition take some time to view and wonder at the heavens above and give thought to those who may never see the cosmos in all of its glory as you do now.

Authors note There are numerous apps available to look at the night sky and these depend on your mobile device. Search the internet for the best astronomy apps for further and more detailed information and costs. ■

REWILDING IN THE UK

WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

Rewilding is quietly gathering pace in the UK and it needs to. The State of Nature Report 2016 highlights that we cannot continue as we currently are.

WORDS BY LUCY DUNN

In the introduction to the report Sir David Attenborough highlights that with increasing pressure from modern day living, farming and climate change, nature needs all the help it can get. The report findings illustrate there is a long term decline in biodiversity and that England is one of the most species-depleted countries on a global scale (State of Nature 2016).

But there is hope. England, Scotland and Wales have all demonstrated successful rewilding projects. There have been some high profile and initially controversial reintroductions such as the trial beaver reintroduction in Scotland, but also a number of lower profile conservation projects, such as Wild Ennerdale in the Lake District.

There are discussions around how wild is “wild”? In short, rewilding can be described as the reintroduction of a species and the restoration of ecological systems. This can mean restoration of a landscape to a time before any alteration by man, but how far back do we go? Initially rewilding was the term applied to projects that involved reintroducing a top predator that would result in top-down control over prey, and the ecosystem would eventually become self-regulating. There has also been the restoration of ecosystems through the correct grazing regimes. Another angle is more about encouraging natural processes with little interference from man (Nogués-Bravo et al 2016). One of the modern

definitions of rewilding includes not only the restoration of landscapes but the inclusion of people and communities thriving and living sustainably as a part of the landscape (Rewilding Britain 2018).

Under the EU Habitats and Species Directive 1992, Article 22 the Government is required to consider the reintroduction of native species, but it is not under any obligation to take it any further than this consideration stage. To reintroduce a species such as the Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) into England an application for a licence must be made to Natural England, the government’s adviser responsible for the natural environment in England. The application process is complex and time consuming with international guidance setting out the requirements (IUCN 2013). With the licence application there must be evidence of a feasibility study, cost-benefit analysis, a risk assessment, an exit strategy and public consultation with stakeholders. The consultation with and involvement of people is probably one of the most important parts to a project.

There is a good reason though for Guidelines to be followed. Not all rewilding projects have been a success, so caution must be employed. There is no point reintroducing a species into a habitat that is not in good enough condition for the species to survive. There must be sufficient food for the reintroduced species and no risk of disease and pathogens. Ultimately there also must be sufficient support from local communities as they are what can make a project a success.

An application for a licence for the trial reintroduction of Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) into Kielder Forest in Northumberland was



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MAIN PHOTO Hay Meadows – a great place to start for biodiversity to thrive. © Arthur Jones. 1. Eurasian Lynx – they may be reintroduced to our forests. 2. The wolf – will it ever roam the mountains of Scotland? 3. Back from extinction in Scotland – the beaver. PHOTOS 1-3 © Lucy Dunn.



made by the Lynx UK trust in July 2017. A consultation took place with both local and national stakeholders over a period of two years. The response was positive with 92% in favour of a trial reintroduction. Natural England is still considering the application and so we are yet to see what the outcome will be (Lynx UK Trust 2017).

The trial Beaver (*Castor fiber*) reintroduction into Knapdale Forest in Scotland is one of the success stories for rewilding as demonstrated in the 2014 Final Report. There was initial opposition from some parties, including fishermen that were concerned about the effects on fish populations. Beavers can alter ecosystems, through their feeding and denning behaviours (Rosel et al 2005). However, most of the effects are positive such as increased biodiversity, reduction in flooding, increased income from ecotourism and education (Parker 1986) (Campbell et al 2007). An additional benefit is that the beaver is a charismatic species and not seen as threatening, so has the power to excite and enthuse people about nature (Scottish Beaver Trial Final Report 2014).

Other success stories include the reintroduction of White Tailed Eagles (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) to Mull and the reinforcement of Pine Martens (*Martes martes*) to Scotland and Wales. Wild Ennerdale is a project in the Lake District that began in 2003 to restore some naturalness to the large Sitka Spruce forestry plantation. Gradually native broadleaves

have been reintroduced and the extensive sheep grazing has been reduced and replaced by Galloway cattle. The Marsh Fritillary Butterfly (*Euphydryas aurinia*) has been successfully reintroduced and the landscape is slowly becoming wilder (Rewilding Britain 2018).

All around us there are many projects taking place through organisations such as the Wildlife Trusts, the Woodland Trusts and the RSPB. These involve getting back the core and restoring habitats such as hay meadows and woodlands.

Rewilding and species reintroductions is therefore not just about big wild open spaces with large mammals roaming. It is about working with what we have, connecting wildlife patches through corridors and preventing further decline. Rewilding is not just about the possibility of having Lynx in the forests and wolves in the mountains, it is much more than that! Rewilding is about restoring our connection to nature and decreasing the distance gap from nature. We rely on our ecosystems not only for food and water but for health and well-being. It is not just about moral obligations to restore wildlife that we have extirpated and habitats that we have destroyed. It is about looking deep inside ourselves and asking what is important to us. Society can make changes, but it depends on what is of value to the society. For many years we have been involved with economic growth and have not nurtured nature as much as we should. In his book

“Rewilding our Hearts” Marc Bekoff advocates the compassion to reconnect with our landscapes. This may be possible for some at the individual level, but those living in cities may be harder to convince. One of the best things we can do is ask ourselves how we can make a difference and how we can educate the generations to come after us about what is valuable. It is down to us as individuals to think about our choices and how we can look after our ecosystems – our life support systems. ■

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THE 'BEAST FROM THE NORTH EAST'

Respecting the Helm Wind



ABOVE The Helm Bar, Melmerby, March 2018.

Just when the 'Beast from the East' hit the UK in March this year we were due to spend some time at a generous friend's house in Melmerby in the Eden Valley. This lovely village, sitting just under Cross Fell in the North Pennines, is notable in that it's affected by the only named wind in the UK – the Helm.

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY SARA LODGE



Sara Lodge lives in Conwy, North Wales, and fits writing and illustrating around her day job as director of Beehive, an organisational development consultancy. Previously a keen mountain biker, since being diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome in 2004 she has had to indulge her love of the mountains in more moderate ways.

The Helm is a north-easterly that in the right conditions barrels down the fell, scouring the hillside before hitting the valley floor and the villages below, before rolling into a standing wave of cloud, a phenomenon called the Helm Bar. The Helm is the stuff of legend, said to blow with the roar of a freight train. There are stories of it blowing sheep off the hillside.

I'd been told of the Helm but treated the stories with scepticism – growing up around sheep I'd often seen them hunkered down, rear to the wind and covered in snow, as apparently immovable as the rocks around them. It seemed farfetched to imagine a wind that could blow them away. This was to change. We only just managed to get to Melmerby before The Beast hit, thanks to snow tyres and Mark's skilful driving. Once we'd arrived the weather set in with true ferocity; in excitement we set off to walk the nearby track that led to Melmerby Fell.

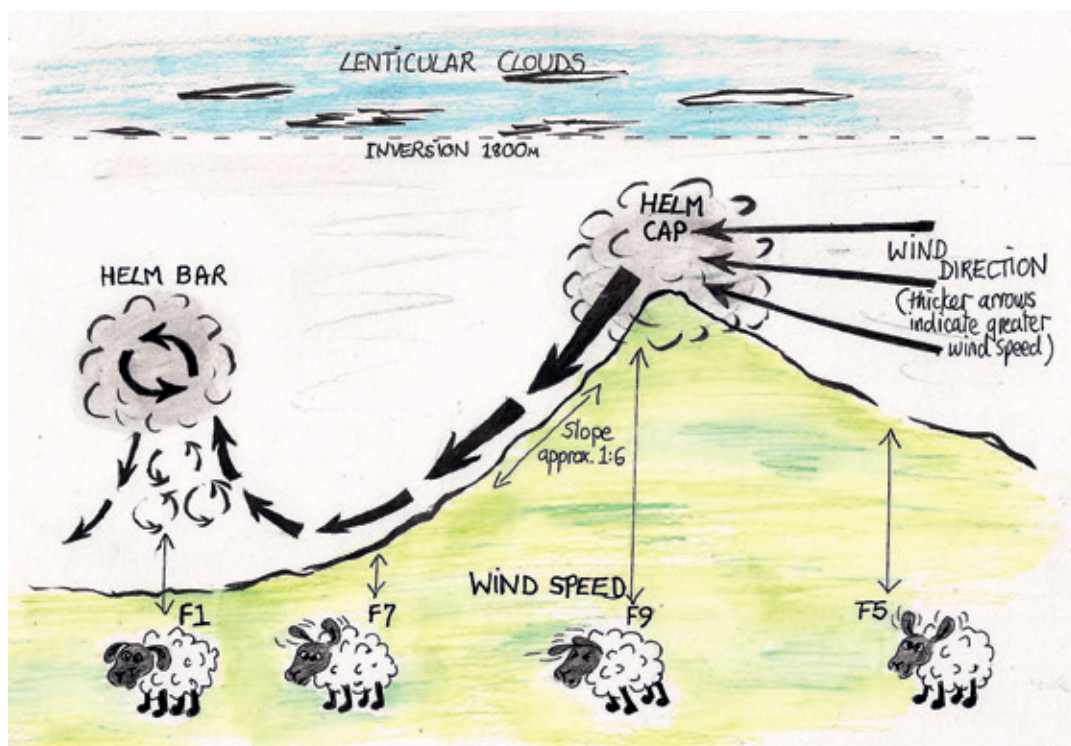
Wholly unprepared, not realising a Helm was blowing, the biting cold, strength of wind, and brutality of stabbing snow hitting unprotected faces made it impossible even to face the fell. We turned a cold shoulder and struggled along the sheltered lane into the village – there was so much snow. Houses were plastered with it, drifts covered doors, icicles a metre long hung from gutters – and

the wind! Beyond exhilarating, the Helm was truly terrifying, the force justifying warnings of danger to life, perfectly capable of blowing an unwary adult off their feet in the village never mind sheep higher up the fell.

All that night the freight train roared overhead, making sleep difficult and setting each door in the house clicking and banging. In the morning the power was cut so we huddled around the stove, heating soup and tea. In the afternoon we ventured out again to find a new hazard – glassed ice hidden under compacted snow. When the brutal gusts of wind hit, boots simply could not find grip.

To me, crampons are imbued with a super power, turning a flat footed human into a clawed force of nature, like a cat, capable of climbing waterfalls. It's rare that conditions warrant crampons from the door, but this was one of them. We set out up the lane, able now to turn our faces to the fell.

Sheep had been blown off the fell side – not literally but the dreadful conditions on the upper slopes had forced even those hardy mountaineers to find shelter between the high walls of the lane where they pawed for grass in the lighter snow. We passed one woolly corpse, stiff and cold, snow clotting its fleece. The wind had carved snow into corridors, curves and blades and, blowing through



LEFT Genesis of the Helm Wind. DIAGRAM David Uttley. 1 Swiss cheese, Melmerby, March 2018. 2 The Helm Cap, Melmerby, March 2018.

each hole and crack, had created Swiss cheese from drifts against dry stone walls. The fell ahead of us was capped with dense grey cloud, its sides mottled; piebald with wind scoured grass and deep drifted gullies. Once a little way above the village we turned.

And there was the Helm Bar. A great, fat roll of boiling grey, turning and turning in the widening gyre while the Helm itself unleashed anarchy beneath. The lenticular clouds above and scalloped edge seemed incongruous, too delicate for the sheer size and force of it. It was magnificent, awesome, and touching the cap of cloud on the fell, created a storm eye of blue sky and sunlight that we stood in, speechless. We watched until we became too cold and then returned to the cosy house.

The Helm was quite literally breathtaking, and I was, forgive the pun, blown away by my experience. As conditions improved and people emerged, blinking, from their houses, new myths were made. Residents of 50 years had never known The Helm and such deep snow together in this way. A neighbour's anemometer measured sustained winds of 104 mph on his house; a neighbour was blown over in her garden feeding livestock. Next day, crossing the stream up on Melmerby Fell we passed corpses of thirsty and desperate sheep frozen in time and ice, and in a forest wind tunnel a swathe of trees were uprooted – blown over as if a freight train had actually ploughed through. Suddenly I understood the Helm.

I got the sense that living with it was like neighbouring a maniac, whose periodic rampages, though not malicious, were frightening and destructive nonetheless. People and wind seem to have an uneasy but respectful relationship; part pride, part exasperation. The Helm is a phenomenon, unique in the UK – it has not got a name for nothing. It's certainly something to take into account when planning a foray into the High Pennines. Understanding it might make the difference between success, failure or worse and may explain why, when there are Zephyrs blowing west of Eden, the only way to summit Cross Fell is on hands and knees.

There are those who talk casually about a Helm blowing in the north Lakes; they are wrong, for two reasons. The precise nature of the topography and conditions that generate the Helm means it cannot be experienced west of the Eden River. Also, once you've experienced the real thing you don't talk about it casually – in the same way that people who have had Influenza never call a heavy cold the 'flu, anyone who has experienced the actual Helm doesn't give that name to a mere stiff north-easterly – in both cases they know

that the real thing knocks you flat.

The following is summarised from David Uttley's excellent book, *The Anatomy of The Helm Wind*.

Crucial topographical elements

- A ridge (so air cannot escape around it) over 600m high, and ramp shaped, with a steeper section to the western, leeward side.
- Lee slope with 1:6 angle (any steeper and wind and mountain separate; shallower and eddies form) which is smooth and without major obstacles like rocky outcrops.

These elements are present in the High Pennines, on either side of Cross Fell. The Helm is generally felt from Renwick to Coupland beck.

Crucial meteorological conditions

- Stable high pressure over the North Sea with an inversion at 1800m.
- Wind direction NNE to E, strength more than Force 4 in the Upper Teesdale Valley.

What you see

- The 'Helm Cap', an apparently static cap of cloud on the top of the fell, white or darker grey.
- The 'Helm bar', a band of cloud of varying lengths and thickness, rolling along its long axis, that appears with the helm Cap about 3-6 miles south-west of the fells (sometimes has scalloped edges).
- Sunshine and lenticular clouds between the two.

What you experience

- Stiff breeze on the eastern side of the ridge with a windless zone at the summit.
- Dramatic and consistently strong winds on the western side of the ridge, up to force 9 in higher areas, strong enough to blow nostrils shut making breathing difficult, and presenting a real danger of being blown over.
- Consistent loud roaring noise.
- Wind dropping on lower slopes and at the foot of the fells.
- Zone of calm air under the Helm bar with gusty north-easterlies further west. ■



ABOVE Great Langdale and the rock art at Copt Howe, looking northwest.

© Mark S. Jobling (2005) via

Wikimedia Commons.

THE MULTIPLE JOURNEYS OF THE LANGDALE AXES

The smoothness of its polished surface is almost silken. The stone pulls all the heat from your fingers. The shape, long and elegantly curved in profile, widens to the unmistakeable, gently curved cutting edge, the bulk of its weight being just behind this point.

WORDS BY IAIN MCINTYRE

From its shape you know this is an axe head, but its function? Hafted to an oak shaft it could have felled trees. Yet, if you hold one, you will know that something about it betrays a greater significance.

“Getting blades required a journey. When a certain age was reached or when the time and company was right. It meant taking particular trails, encounters with place and with other stories. Orientation to past and present.” Mark Edmonds. *The Langdales*, p. 131.



Iain McIntyre is an independent archaeological researcher and aspiring Mountain Leader. He offers CPD workshops on the Archaeology of Upland Landscapes and is the Yorkshire MTA Regional Coordinator.

Landscape and People

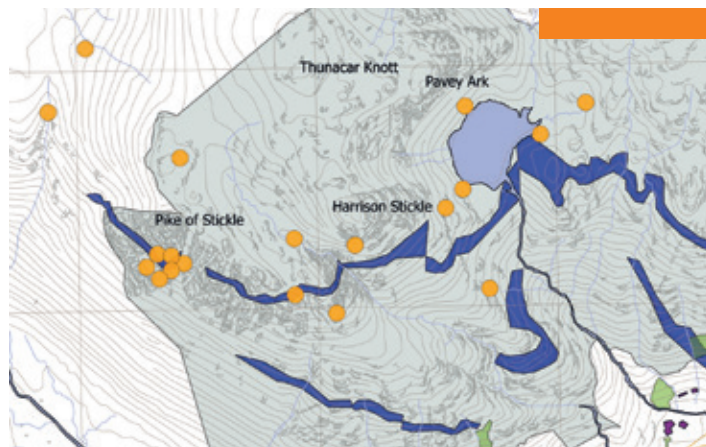
Six thousand years ago, during the time of this axe's construction the inland forests of Britain would have been dominated by oak, pine, hazel and birch, providing a mosaic of density and cover. This landscape had spread from the south after the end of the last Ice Age, eleven thousand years ago; a slow movement through the seasons and the years as the climate improved. The lakes would have been fringed by reeds, fens and willow thickets. Wetter areas would likely have been covered by extensive blanket bogs, with woodland on the drier knolls, ridges and beck-sides. The tree line itself was much higher than now, potentially covering all the Lake District hills, with the only

areas of natural alpine-like grassland, or even moss-covered rock, being areas on the higher mountains of Scafell, Helvellyn and Skiddaw.

Known as the Neolithic (from 6000 to 4500 years before the present), this period is largely categorised by the introduction of farming into Britain from continental Europe. Prior to this, the island's inhabitants had been hunter gatherers. The inhabitants of the Neolithic were likely to be pastoralists and practitioners of shifting cultivation; moving from site to site within the island-forest. This necessitated the removal of trees and plants to create clearings. From this arose a necessity for new types of stone tools requiring more skill and new technologies such as polishing.

Location and Process

The stone used to make these axe heads is the fine-grained Lingmell volcanic tuff, a green material with a grey hue, sometimes pale, sometimes dark. It is found outcropping around the central plateau of the Lake District but is most notably below the distinctive dome of Pike o' Stickle, Loft Crag, Harrison Stickle and



ABOVE LEFT A pale grey-green Langdale Axe Head found in North Lincolnshire, its curving cutting edge is now asymmetrical; it remains sharp. © North Lincolnshire Museum via Portable Antiquities Scheme. ABOVE RIGHT Axe factory locations [brown] shown against the outcropping of the Lingmell tuff (dark blue), within the Langdale SSSI (light blue). © Axe Working Sites on Path Renewal Schemes, Oxford Archaeology North [2009]. British Geological Survey materials copyright NERC [2018], Natural England Survey materials copyright DEFRA [2018], OS data © Crown copyright and database right [2018], licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Glamara. Multiple sites of extraction or processing have also been identified at Scafell Pike and Thunacar Knott. Archaeologists have noted that the extraction sites for Langdale axes are situated in challenging, even dangerous locations, when stone of equal quality is available in far more accessible locations. Regardless of the perceived or actual dangers, the paths followed from the lowland settlements to the high places would have been well known in the minds of the people, being a physical reminder of the history of the journey. Certain trees, boulders or manmade monuments may have lined the route – indications of the correct way.

At each site the stone would have to be quarried from the outcrop. This was most likely achieved using fire and wedges of stone, wood or bone of roe or red deer, to crack and fracture the rock in order to create large blocks of the desired material. The creation of a roughout – the first form identifiable as an axe head – appears to have taken place at the same quarrying sites. Initial splitting of the larger pieces into smaller pieces, from which many roughouts would have been produced, would have been done using hard stone hammers. These smaller pieces were in turn broken up by further knapping, with the roughout being produced by careful removal of flakes using other hard or soft bone hammers.

The roughouts were then taken down from the slopes to the paths, along the trackways and eventually to the settlements. Roughouts were then ground and polished using sandstone grinding slabs and fine-grained sand; small little circles, hours upon hours of work. Polished stone axes (one hafted), polishing slabs and roughout axes, along with querns, wooden artefacts, cattle and deer bones, nuts and hearths were all recovered from the now drained Ehenside tarn (Whitehaven).

Experimental work and microanalysis has shown that polishing the rough surfaces will have improved the mechanical strength of the axe as well as lowering friction when used against wood. Fractures occur more easily in brittle materials like stone when rough, owing to the stress concentrations present at sharp corners. Polishing makes the axe much stronger and able to withstand impact and shock loads from use.

Journeys and Symbols

Many other types of axe are known from the Neolithic but the Langdale axes are the most numerous, with over 2,400 finds in variable sizes and conditions; fully-polished, part-polished or flaked roughouts, used or unused, broken fragments or whole tools. They are also the most widely distributed Neolithic axes found in the British Isles, with concentrations in northwest England, the western lowlands of Scotland, eastern England, the midlands and along the

Thames valley. Neolithic forest clearance has been suggested as the primary driver for axe production, with well organised long distance trade accessing distant markets.

Axes may have been used to help navigate social relationships, for example through gifting (with associated ties and obligations) or as displays of prestige, status and control by dominant individuals or by groups in alliances. Axes were also possibly viewed as tokens of identity, made by individuals at key thresholds in their lives, carried with their creators and recognised within communities. After death they were circulated by kinship groups and finally buried or deposited in special places. The symbolism of the axes would have lent themselves to transportation over greater spans of time; even generations. Recently though, the concept of pilgrimage in the Neolithic has been gaining currency.

The siting of monuments along major rivers or at passes through high ground, plus evidence for long-distance movement of cattle, indicate that mobility was a fundamental aspect of the Neolithic. It has been suggested that long distance journeys to locations associated with ritual practices (such as perilous collection of source materials) forged social identities and accelerated transformations within cultures during the Neolithic.

Interestingly, the axes themselves might not have been the only symbol. The aim of pilgrimage might well have been the Pike o' Stickle itself. The peak is highly visible from the east and south due to the mountain's position at the margin of the central Cumbrian massif and lower-lying land. However, the peak is also seen in extensive viewsheds from the north, and even to the west Pike o' Stickle can be seen well beyond the limit of the valley.

In the end, the journey that some of the Langdale axes took during their lives seems to reflect characteristic commonalities of spiritualism. The journey up a high symmetrically shaped mountain top with limited accessibility, the subsequent point of attainment (be it a rough axe or a challenge accomplished), the investment of great care and effort in transportation back to the lowlands, the stories told afterwards. This is a potent combination of values, linked to reverential aspects of the mountains within Neolithic societies.

This is, I believe, a feeling experienced by many who journey through the mountains today. A feeling manifested when you gaze up. A feeling that helps us orientate ourselves to our place in time and the landscapes that we now journey through. ■

References

Mark Edmunds' *The Langdales* (Tempus Publishing) is a wonderfully lyrical book about the entire valley, going beyond just the Langdale axe heads.
Axes can be viewed at Kendal Museum and Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery, Carlisle, and in collections at the British Museum.

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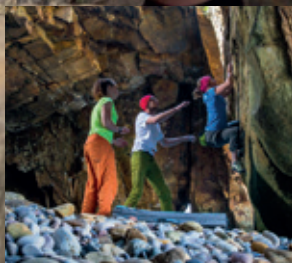
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“NOT OVER THE HILL”



“Why not do the Mountain Leader qualification?” I asked myself soon after I had retired. Many times I asked this question and many times I found plenty of reasons not to go ahead.

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY PHIL SKINNER

Eventually all these reasons turned out to be excuses as I gradually came to realise that it was not only possible, but likely to be a wonderfully rewarding experience too.

After a career as a GP, spending large amounts of time talking to people about the benefits of outdoor activity to improve their health, I now saw the opportunity to put into practice what I had been preaching. However, I didn't know anyone who had achieved a Mountain Leader qualification (ML) at my stage of life. In many ways this was the biggest barrier to overcome. Everyone I knew that held the qualification had gained it either when much younger or at least during their working life, and often as part of their career development.

Walking has always been an important part of my life, and with family and friends it has taken me to many places in the UK and abroad. So I had plenty of experience of mountain, moor and lowland walking and some international trekking. I had even started to climb when I was fifty – something I had wanted to do for a long time. For my general health I have always attached great importance to keeping physically fit.

Reaching a decision like this depends a huge amount on your motivation. What's in it for you? Well, for me there were a number of things that mattered. One was the satisfaction of being able to pull together in a more systematic way the skills I had gained from

personal experience over the years. There is a tendency to keep within comfort zones and not address weaknesses and the Mountain Leader scheme forces you to fill in those gaps as well as developing existing skills, making you a better leader. While it is possible to improve skills without taking a qualification I found it more likely to happen by having a goal.

I had another, more practical, reason too. After retirement I had started work as a walking leader for a holiday company and was authorised to lead walks in lowland and moorland terrain but not in the mountains. Gaining the Mountain Leader qualification would permit me to do this.

I had the motivation, but why was I holding back? I realised that I first had to overcome a number of barriers, some practical and others more psychological.

As I live in Somerset, the distance to the nearest mountains suitable for logging Quality Mountain Days (QMDs) is quite far, making day trips difficult. Absence from home and partner and other commitments were issues to overcome. Preparation takes time, so I negotiated with my partner about spending days away to attend courses and go on trips to the mountains. We found we were able to do some of this together by fitting QMDs into holidays and short breaks.

The psychological barriers were more difficult. These were mainly related to age (I was 63 when I started). I worried about the age



1. Ascending the Llech Ddhu Spur.
2. ML training group out training.

difference between myself and the other younger candidates, fearing that I would be unable to keep up with them (particularly during the expedition), and how they might view me. I also thought my lifetime experience of work and achievement might make it difficult for me to fit in with group training in a new discipline. In fact all these fears were groundless and disappeared when I started training, but they felt real at the time.

Talking with friends was very helpful – they pointed out the level of persistence needed, and that I already had plenty of experience, skills and QMDs. Others I met were very enthusiastic and simply said “go for it”.

And so I did. I signed up for a Mountain Leader training course at Plas y Brenin.

Doing this was great experience and taught me that age difference was far less important than I had thought. Among the participants there was so much knowledge and skills to share and at the end of the course I was much clearer on what I needed to do before the assessment.

The consolidation period between training and assessment took me a year, and it was during this time that the biggest change took place. Until this point, I had been preparing for the qualification on my own. My aim was to make sure that I had prepared well enough to pass the assessment properly – I didn't want to just scrape through. The danger of this is that you carry on getting more and more experience and put off the assessment indefinitely. Fortunately this changed when I joined the Mountain Training Association and met a group preparing for assessment, and within a week we had fixed a date for it! This concentrated my mind on what we needed to do. And it became more fun!



Phil Skinner is a Mountain Leader and member of MTA, Phil is a retired Doctor who works for a holiday company and has a real interest in climbing and mountaineering as a way of improving health.

After I had overcome these largely self-created barriers, preparation was more straight-forward. With my group I went to Snowdonia, bagged some QMDs, completed a trial expedition, and practiced my ropework and navigation. I attended night navigation CPD workshops organised by the MTA on Dartmoor, a contour navigation “masterclass”, a seminar on the mountain



environment, and a ropework session with the assessment group. I went out to practice navigation and other skills on my own and with qualified colleagues. By looking at the Mountain Leader syllabus and checklist it was possible to track my progress as the assessment date approached. The assessment in Snowdonia threw up few surprises, largely thanks to this preparation. In fact I was pleasantly surprised. By training well it felt less strenuous than I expected.

What difference did achieving my Mountain Leader qualification make to me? My experience is that it definitely enhances your knowledge and skills and makes you a better leader. It is an achievement in its own right and it makes you more confident in your own abilities – the feeling of credibility and confidence is more than I expected and well worth having. If you hold the Mountain Leader qualification it counts for something in the eyes of your peer group. It can lead to many opportunities including paid and voluntary employment, and to higher qualifications such as the International Mountain Leader award.

What suggestions can I make in addition to the advice given by Mountain Training and their experienced trainers and assessors, particularly for older people? For me it was that age is an issue to be considered but that your contribution as an older member of a group can be a very positive one. Physically you need to keep fit, and you need to be well organised and equipped. Get plenty of recent QMDs so that you are confident of passing and do not just rely on those that you have gained in the past. Join a group preparing for the qualification and make full use of all the MTA benefits and resources. And don't forget that you may have very useful transferable skills to bring with you.

In short, qualifying as a Mountain Leader is a brilliant way of opening up new opportunities in life – friends, a peer group with common interests, a gateway to work and recreation, the satisfaction that comes from personal achievement, and, keeping fit, healthy and fulfilled in the process!

So finally, if and when you come to ask yourself the question “Can I become a Mountain Leader?” maybe the answer should be “Yes, I can!” ■

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EVIDENCE VERSUS EMINENCE COACHING

ABOVE Training data.

Coaches are in a far better position today than the ad hoc situation we faced as little as ten years ago. The level of performance in young climbers – the main beneficiaries of that coaching – is improving rapidly.

WORDS AND PHOTO BY MARK REEVES

However, if we want to continue that rise in performance both in our students and in ourselves as coaches, questioning the status quo is vital. It is also challenging, since we are questioning at times the very foundations on which the coaching establishment has been built.

I wish to offer up an argument of evidence over eminence-based coaching at all levels. Evidence-based coaching is the use of scientific method to collect data on a training intervention and analyse that data to yield significant results upon which we can increase the effectiveness of our coaching and instructional interventions. It is loosely based on the model of modern medicine.

Eminence-based coaching is to a greater or lesser extent where we are today, save for a few notable exceptions where for instance climbing has been used as a task to test something that is not generally specific to climbing, like the effectiveness of imagery. More often than not the interventions we use have been observed to work, but they have not been rigorously tested to find out why, how and when they work ie the devil in the details. Coaching practice it seems to me is often overlooked: what training regimes do we promote, who they are best for, and what energy system of climbing do they best address? We have a massive opportunity here to become better at what we do—the question is how we can go about it?

Mindfulness is an example of what rigorous testing does when a group of researchers effectively looked at Buddhism and took out all the Eastern mysticism that was not proved to be “effective” and kept the bits that empirically demonstrated significant effect.

This to me is what evidence-based coaching is about, it is the refining of already existing ideas. On the question of eminence versus

evidence, top climber, coach and sport science professional Dave Macleod says: *“There is really next to no meaningful evidence if by evidence you mean peer-reviewed research. However, it’s important not to look at practical coaching or personal experience as ‘not evidence’. The term ‘evidence-based’, at least in biomedical science was always historically recognised as a combination of peer-reviewed research and practical/clinical experience. The so-called ‘father’ of evidence-based medicine David Sackett always argued against dismissing clinical experience as has become the fashion in recent years.”*

What Dave is suggesting is that we need a combination of visionary coaches and the more objective side of sports science to help us move forward. We do not need to throw the baby out with the bath water, rather an evolutionary approach is required.

What are the issues with eminence coaching? Well the eminence side of coaching is more than a high performing climber or coach offering coaching programmes. Eminence can also be anyone with the necessary resources shouting from a tallest building because they have the money to do so, or they are linked to a company be it financially or through sponsorship.

This in medicine has led to a series of what are called medical reversals, whereby reviewing the clinical rather than research outcomes reveals a treatment is in fact not effective. In climbing, an example would be the decision to make climbers and coaches aware that campus boarding is not suitable for children. Given that many training regimes are those based on adults simply applied to kids it does make you wonder whether we will see more reversals of advice if we actually tested our training protocols.

A question then I would like to pose is how we can start to shift towards evidence-based coaching. The answer is data, its collection and analysis and most importantly its dissemination to the coaches that will use it.

As Dave Macleod says, *“Data is brilliant as long as it’s good data. But basing decisions on poor data can be worse than having no data and can actually introduce more error, or at least serve as a distraction from straightforward observational data-gathering that coaches do.”*

What are we measuring, and how? There are few scientific measures to see if local muscle endurance has improved, however there is potential hope from a private enterprise that would at first sight would seem eminence-based given the involvement of professional climber Tom Randal. Tom comes from a city background, so he has experience of gathering and using data. He and his partner Ollie Tor (an up and coming coach) have been making and starting to promote the Lattice board to help quantify climbing fitness, with particular interest in breaking down the climbing energy systems. This may help the measurement side of the problem as a simple evaluation can ascertain a person’s local muscle endurance in the three areas measured. With this more objective scale we could potentially remove efficiency of movement as a variable; although “learning” the test will certainly have an effect, clever experimental design and statistics can control for this.

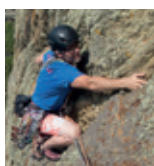
Climb grades theoretically provide data about a climber’s physical performance (onsight or worked) however this does not account for the subjectiveness of grading, style of climb, degrees of “beta” and increases in climbing efficiency. The Lattice Board or something similar would need to be a partner of the research, but given their leaning toward data collection perhaps they would be willing to come on board. Issues of data ownership would need to be addressed and if possible the data when “anonymised” should be open source.

If we can overcome the way we monitor any increase in performance from a coaching intervention then we need a way to collect that data on a large scale. The larger the data set the better. Given that online coaching and recording of training is becoming more prolific, perhaps in the future everyone can be “citizen researchers” by joining in online.

The design of any research would need to account for differences in age, sex and climbing ability. These three variables often show difference between effect on a training solution, and can be used to gauge what training protocol would best fit a given client – after all no two climbers are the same.

Finally and most importantly is what to do with the results, legislation around data protection notwithstanding. Hopefully publishing them as an open source for all (both coaches and individual climbers alike) so they can compare and choose a training regime based on their age, ability and sex would redefine training for climbing. Surely this is what Tim Burnes-Lee had in mind when he established the internet: an open-source resource for all to share ideas.

PS This article is based loosely around arguments that have troubled the medical professional. If you want to journey deeper into the issues of eminence versus evidence and how data might help, search online *Freakonomics* radio *Bad Medicine* episodes 1 to 3. ■



Mark Reeves is a Mountaineering Instructor living in North Wales. He is one of the nine new AMI mentors for the Mountaineering Instructor Award scheme and splits his time between coaching climbing, scrambling and writing. He is currently working on the new Llanberis Slate guide for Rockfax and writes for *Climber Magazine*. He also holds an MSc in Applied Sport Science with Effect Coaching, Sport Psychology and Performance Physiology. <http://snowdoniamountainguides.com>



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Outdoor Education across the decades

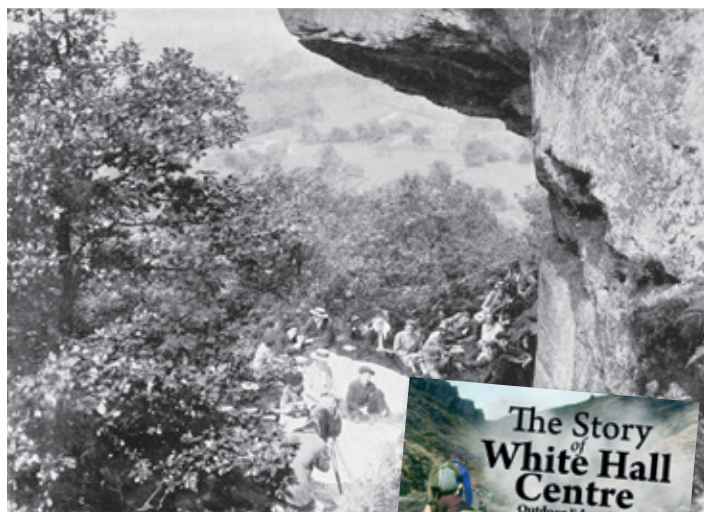
***The Story of White Hall Centre – Outdoor Education across the Decades* is a monumental work of research and record, a chronicle which skilfully weaves together the themes of historical fact, influential personality and enduring controversy all of which combined to shape the development of Britain's first local authority owned, outdoor residential centre.**

WORDS BY TIM JEPSON

The form and content of the book is anticipated in its title. Pete McDonald hasn't just written a history, he has created a story, a story which leads the reader through each carefully constructed chapter to a point where you want to know what happens next, and how it is all going to end. However, *The Story of White Hall Centre* is long, 700+ pages long, dealing comprehensively with complex issues in forensic detail, using frequent references to key publications and lecture transcripts of their time. Indeed, I could not identify one event of relevance to outdoor education in Britain that had been omitted or skimmed over as part of the White Hall story. This level of detail must categorise *The Story of White Hall Centre* as a specialist publication and only those with a special interest will want to read it cover to cover, but many others will want to dip into it as a work of reference. There are appendices and a full index included at the back, as would be expected of any quality reference work.

Anyone who has read Pete McDonald's first book, *Climbing Lessons*, an irreverent, humorous exposé of life as an outdoor instructor, will be surprised at the serious, almost formal tone adopted in *The Story of White Hall Centre*. 'Climbing Lessons' was a frolicking romp, built on personal observation, opinion and reflection of the good and the bad experiences of working with young people outdoors, whereas *The Story of White Hall Centre* only touches in very general terms on the experience of young people and it conscientiously avoids any temptation to be judgemental as White Hall bosses struggle to steer the centre through turbulent times of financial crisis, tragic accidents, political confusion and ill-defined objectives.

So much factual input could weigh heavily on the reader, but this book is not a difficult read and Pete McDonald's resolve to set everything in its correct social, economic and political context brings some really useful insights to the text as well as some light hearted moments, such as speculating on the possibility that Sir Jack Longland could have taken time out from an important educational lecture to watch England win the World Cup in 1966. As Director of Education for Derbyshire, Sir Jack Longland played a pivotal role in White Hall's early story and later in the development of mountain training in the UK, it is therefore entirely appropriate that his life becomes the central core around which much of the book revolves



ABOVE Abbotsholme c1893.



and it thus also serves as a mini biography of an extraordinary, determined man whose vision has impacted on the lives of most, if not all, outdoor educators ever since.

It is almost certainly the case that had White Hall never existed, outdoor education in the UK would still have developed elsewhere on our islands, reaching similar outcomes by a parallel path. But as the book clearly testifies, it was the White Hall Centre which pioneered the child-centred approach to outdoor education which has now served schools and pupils so well for nearly seventy years.

This is a story which needed to be written down, not just for its own sake, but to celebrate all those centres, many now closed, and all those teachers who have devoted time, energy and enthusiasm to giving young people opportunities to experience living adventurously in natural environments.

I suspect that Pete McDonald felt a responsibility to step up to the task, as he knew he could do a good job, leaving readers with a balanced view of the past, and an optimistic vision of the future.

The Story of White Hall Centre is published on a 'print-on-demand' basis in hardback, expensive at £49, but ideal for libraries. Ebook versions at £10 will be the more likely option for individuals and at that price anyone with an interest in how outdoor education got to where it is today, who was involved in the process, and the difficulties that had to be overcome along the way, will find it very good value.

I have worked all my professional life in outdoor education, covering over half of White Hall's 70 years of existence and becoming acquainted with many of the characters mentioned in the book, but I now realise how much I didn't know, the books I should have read, and the questions I should have asked to properly understand the underpinnings of my own outdoor values. ■



Tim Jepson is a British Mountain Guide and was a Senior Lecturer of Outdoor Education, training teachers of Outdoor Activities at Bangor University. Over several decades, the Bangor PGCE course trained many teachers who worked at The White Hall Centre.



THE AMAZING PROFESSOR HEDDLE

ABOVE Professor M. Forster Heddle c1883. © Private Collection.

When we pursue our mountaineering interests in Scotland today, we can go practically anywhere we like thanks to 'right to roam' legislation.

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY HAMISH H. JOHNSTON

Good roads and a reliable car get us to where we want to start. We have access to excellent weather forecasts. All the peaks and ranges are meticulously mapped in several scales, and countless routes are documented and photographed in guide books and journals. We wear and carry high tech, lightweight gear. GPS navigation makes route finding a doddle. Should disaster strike, a call from our mobile phone will thankfully get us a mountain rescue team with helicopter backup. When we get home we feel pretty satisfied about our achievements.

But how would we manage without all the aids that we take for granted? What about the people back in the 19th century who did just that? Today their achievements have been, and are, regularly surpassed by many mountaineers, but those of a reflective nature will not think themselves superior.

One such pioneer whose achievements are slowly becoming more recognised is Matthew Forster Heddle (1828-1897). Heddle, a native

of Orkney, was first a medical doctor, then Professor of Chemistry at St Andrews University from 1862 until 1884, but his true vocation was mineralogy. His encyclopaedic *The Mineralogy of Scotland* (1901) is still regarded as the classic work on its subject, and his great collection is held by National Museums Scotland. Over a period of 60 years Heddle visited every part of Scotland, both mainland and islands, and was personally responsible for the discovery of one third of all mineral species known in Scotland in 1901.

Heddle's scientific work was matched by his great love of the Scottish mountains for their own sake. One person who revered Heddle was (Sir) Hugh Munro, who, aged 27, first met him in 1883. After Heddle died in 1897 Munro wrote "There can be little doubt that Professor Heddle had climbed far more Scottish mountains than any man who has yet lived... No district was unknown to him, and scarcely any high mountain unclimbed by him..."

Heddle created and followed his own list of Scottish 3000ers

1. Coire Lagan from ascent of Sg Sgumain. 2. Thormaid and Ghreadhaidh from Banachdich ridge.



(sadly now lost), before Munro published his *Tables of the 3000-Foot Mountains of Scotland* in September 1891. Heddle had 409, in contrast to Munro's 538 (i.e. 283 separate mountains and 255 tops). Recent research by Robin Campbell, Archivist of the Scottish Mountaineering Club (SMC), suggests that to be able to produce his *Tables* so quickly, Munro must have had access to Heddle's list. He certainly acknowledged use of some of Heddle's height measurements. As for the ascent of these peaks, Heddle had climbed 357 by the time age and infirmity (and some access problems) ended his hillwalking career in 1891/2. This total did not include five identified Munros, but Heddle must have climbed the very great majority of the separate mountains. In contrast, A.E. Robertson, the first Munroist in 1901, had then climbed but a handful. Heddle had a competitive streak, and there can be little doubt that, had Munro published his *Tables* a couple of years earlier, Heddle would have been the first Munroist.

Heddle spent much time on Skye, and today modern research by Stuart Pedlar, who is writing the authoritative history of climbing in the Cuillin for the SMC, has concluded that it was Heddle who in 1871 made the first ascent of Sgurr a'Ghreadaidh, one of the Cuillin Munros.

But Heddle was no mere peak-bagger. His geological work involved exploring slopes, cliffs and corries, and walking transects many miles in length across the toughest terrain. He was a key member of the Boulder Committee set up by the Royal Society of Edinburgh to identify and explain the erratic boulders of Scotland. The work took ten years, about one of which the Chairman wrote "...these extracts give no idea of the enormous amount of labour which the Professor has undergone in his boulder researches. During the summer and autumn of 1880, he must have walked several hundred miles, over districts many of which are not accessible to ordinary pedestrians. This is shown by the tracks of his surveys laid down by him on the ordnance maps, and by the names given in his notes of the hills and valleys visited."



Hamish H. Johnston is the author of *Matthew Forster Heddle: Mineralogist and Mountaineer*, NMSE-Publishing, 2015. Hamish is also Heddle's great-great grandson.

Because Heddle was nearing the end of his career when the SMC was founded, most people were ignorant of his achievements. Responding to an ill-informed 1898 article

about the 'as yet unexplored' area between Glen Shiel and Strathcarron, which has some 36 peaks over 3,000 feet, Heddle declared that "*with scarce an exception I have been at the top of every 3,000 feet peak of the district named, and that in almost every case with a 4lb. hammer at my side, and a 14lb. one over my shoulder; and that in the district named I have found several new localities of minerals, and several interesting rocks, now in the Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh. This was done a considerable number of years ago, and I therefore hardly think that the district can be said to be 'as yet unexplored'.*"

Heddle loved Sutherland. He studied it intensively over several years and was much involved in the great Highlands controversy about the geology of north west Scotland that raged through the 1870s/80s, the eventual solution to which we now know as the Moine Thrust. Heddle knew all the participating geologists, published his own papers and, in 1882, his own geological map of the county.

There was more to Heddle's repertoire. A sailor since childhood, he explored the remotest Scottish islands, and went underground seeking minerals in the lead and other ore mines of such places as Strontian and Wanlockhead. Much of his work involved climbing sea cliffs and corrie walls. One of his students wrote that during his lectures Heddle would relate his "...*miraculous escapes from death which he more than once had when, suspended by ropes he was collecting minerals from the face of some beetling precipice.*" He once tried to reach minerals he could see in the roof of Fingal's Cave.

Heddle wore nailed boots and tweeds. He carried his hammers and heavy bags of rock samples in addition to the normal necessities. Until his later years his expeditions were done without the benefit of OS maps. Railways were just being developed, and nobody had thought of the internal combustion engine and tarmac roads. The sea was a much-frequented highway. These were indeed the days of genuine exploration.

As you depart for your next climbing or hillwalking trip, consider for a moment the advantages you enjoy over those who went before you. Wherever you have been, or plan to go, it is likely that Heddle was there 150 years before you, when the hills were pristine. ■

BOOK REVIEW

CHILD OF TIME – SANCTUARY IN THE EXTREME

by John Proctor

Reviewed by Stuart Smith

I have a confession to make. When I first started reading this book I was horrified. I was horrified not only by the fact the man I had been working with as an Outdoor Instructor had written a book (making him famous!) that was as open and honest as he was in real life, but that within the pages were parallels of my own experiences – albeit under a different set of extremes.

I put the book down...

A small face stared up at me from amidst what looked like a classic Nebula star system. I returned to the book (this time from the beginning) with an open mind. I was hooked, some books do that to you when you find the commonalities. I was still horrified by some of John's honesty and the experiences he had been through, the vernacular that he used in his native West Yorkshire twang and the speed of the rise of his passion.

Perhaps it's a familiar story now but bear with it. John went from a hard upbringing in the 1970's to a renaissance; along his journey as it winds its way he tells of an early life of beatings, drugs and self-denial. In a moment of epiphany he found that the hardship of the outdoors suited his nature better. The bonds of friendships that he found there were not based on ephemeral relationships but on hard-won gains. John took himself off to complete his education amid some of the tallest granite and limestone in the Alps and Americas. There was also an austerity in the mix and the growth of a passion shared by myself, learning a new craft, gaining from the experience and wanting to share it. Family, friends, foes and all added to John's intricate tales.

I have the pleasure of calling John a friend and a colleague. John gave me the book to



read and through the compulsion of a shared passion for the transformative power of outdoor education I was driven to write about it.

Have a horrified read and look to the levels of expression in the Extreme. ■

TEACHING NAVIGATION – PRACTICAL IDEAS FOR OUTDOOR TUTORS

by Nigel Williams

Reviewed by Steve Long

When I saw this title, I knew I had to get a copy. Many readers of this magazine will be familiar with the work of the author of this book: Nigel was an important figure for many years at Glenmore Lodge and has contributed several excellent articles on navigation for this magazine.

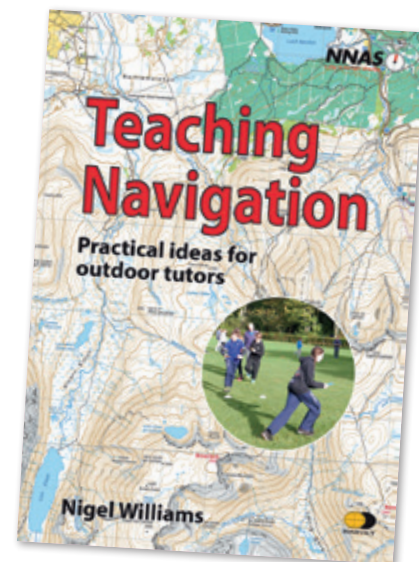
Back in the days when the Mountaineering Instructor Award (MIA) was still called the MIC (perhaps a surprise to any of you who think that MIA is a logical award title...!) Nigel and I were teamed up for our assessment course. Nigel is a big guy and I can still remember my pride at hauling him 10 metres up in the air to a belay at Huntley's Cave, only to be brought (metaphorically) to earth by my assessor, Martin Doyle: "Very impressive. But why didn't you just lower him to the ground?!" Even then – a lifetime ago – Nigel was fascinated by the art of teaching navigation, a craft that he has developed for decades, fusing the craft of orienteering with the mechanics of teaching navigation.

Over the years I have put a lot of thought into navigation and how to teach it. I have probably made more mistakes than most readers will ever manage in their careers

(I've been around the blocks), but I like to think that my methods have been tried and tested: – from designing the structure of the navigation section in the "Hillwalking" book through to delivering courses through translators for several federations. The main thing that I've learned from these assignments is that most navigation does not need to involve numbers, since these are really for communicating directions, and as a general principle the later they are introduced the better!

I was delighted to find that this book, written by a genuine guru, entirely matched my own observations about effective learning sequences. But this book goes far beyond that, breaking down the art of navigation into logical building blocks and suggesting cumulative exercises and positive reinforcement that practically guarantee success. I would whole-heartedly recommend this book to anybody who teaches navigation, whether as specific skills or as part of a leadership or instructional course.

This book represents the highest refinement of the profession of coaching navigation for summer hill walkers that was bread and butter for my generation.



It should be recommended reading for the next generation as well. However, in some ways it has arrived a few years too late. Not that the skills don't remain important, but they are now only part of the story, as digital maps and GPS systems become ever more accessible and user-friendly. Readers looking for tips on progressing navigation skills into snowy conditions or coping strategies for night navigation will be disappointed: as such this book is pitched firmly at training from Hill Skills through to Mountain Leader level. ■

BOOK REVIEW

UNKNOWN PLEASURES

by Andy Kirkpatrick

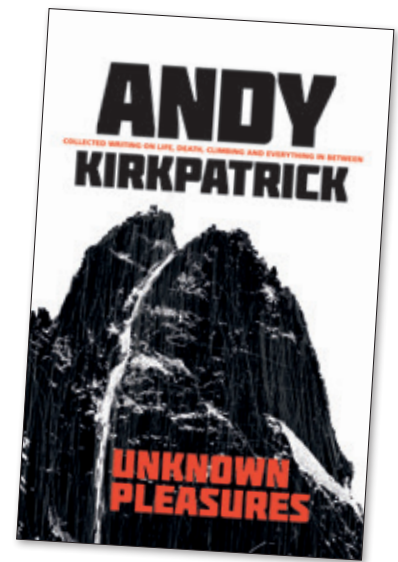
Reviewed by John Hall

Andy Kirkpatrick has produced another tour-de-force with this his latest book – *Unknown Pleasures*. After a revelatory introduction, exemplary writing draws the reader into Kirkpatrick's world. He breaks you in gently with twelve brilliant essays of the traditional 'heart –in-the mouth, sweaty fingertips' type prose beloved of us more vicarious climbers. Some of these essays have been in print or appeared on his blog before but in this compact form their impact seems all the greater. The stand-outs for me in this section are: Broken – an account of a winter ascent of the Frendo Spur with a rather 'unconvinced' second; and The Troll's Gift, a gripping tale of the extended role the Troll Wall has played in the author's life; but all are first class.

You get two books for the price of one here and Kirkpatrick is only just getting going. What follows the essays is a widely varied set of twenty short stories in four further

sections, some "Bad Poetry" (that is far from) and evocative scratch art frontispieces to each essay. These are not the fare of a traditional climbing book but all are written with characteristic eloquence and laser-like observations. Kirkpatrick blends personal experiences with other well researched tales to give a unique insight into issues such as relationships, loves gained and lost, mental health, commercialisation and that feeling of being 'outside the pack'.

It shows the strength of Kirkpatrick's writing that my top choices from these sections differ with my every reading or change of mood. The following give a flavour of the subjects encountered: 'Chongo by the Power' – a bittersweet essay based around a conversation with a "homeless big-walling quantum mechanic"; 'Rabbit Stories' will make you think again about some well-known children's tales and affirms the



life-changing power of words; and 'How Does a Clock Tick?' is a perfect parable for modern times.

Despite the book-jacket hype this book is rarely "laugh out loud". At times it is quite the opposite. However it is eminently readable, perfectly written, thought provoking, challenging and very current. Read every page, think about them, agree or disagree, but don't miss out on these superbly expressed cogent tales.

This book deserves to be read widely and not just by those who know Andy Kirkpatrick is "a bit of a climber"! ■

KINDER SCOUT – THE PEOPLE'S MOUNTAIN

by Ed Douglas and John Beatty

Reviewed by Peter Edgerton

Having lived in the shadow of Kinder Scout for over thirty years and having walked, climbed or run over much of the plateau I was interested to see how this book might provide a fresh insight into what was special about my local 'mountain'. I was not disappointed; Ed Douglas has done a superb job in researching the history, personalities and issues that constitute both the physical and cultural makeup of this area.

Together with magnificent photographs from John Beatty which capture moods and emotions that most people only retain as a faint memory, the book is a beautiful evocation of a part of the Dark Peak which has always polarised opinion as to its attractiveness and often been a scene of conflict between different factions.

The chapters are written as if on a journey across the plateau, the first setting the scene with an overview of the historical context together with quotes from early travellers to the region, the strong opinions of Ruskin and Wainwright especially vocal in decrying its beauty as unlike their beloved Lake District or Swiss Alps. A chapter on man's interaction with the land follows, with contrasting and fascinating accounts from

two prominent female writers, highlighting the differences in hardship suffered historically as determined by background and privilege. There are some harrowing tales of tragedy as well, such as the tale of the Lost Lad. The research into the early rock-climbers active initially in the Peak and then further afield, the founding of the influential Rucksack Club alongside other surprising personalities who stepped out from urban Manchester to spend leisure time on the hills is especially thorough in the third chapter, while the fourth gives a meticulous account of the background leading up to the famous 1932 trespass and its main protagonists. Musings on the effect of this on access legislation lead into the next chapter which looks at the damage done over centuries by man to the area with the impact of quarrying, the effect of industrial growth on the peatlands as well as the illegal killing of raptors, perceived as major predators on the commercially important grouse.

It is not all bad news as Douglas writes how the Moors For The Future programme has been pivotal in beginning the change for the better, with reseeded, gully blocking and planting of Sphagnum moss plugs. Local



residents like myself have seen how much new growth has taken place in the last few years as a result of proactive management of the land by all concerned and Douglas explains how this positive move will help.

Finally, he looks at the spiritual side of the mountain, from early man's impact in the form of burial barrows to the recreational user and the value they place on the freedom to roam over this wild and open moorland, with the mountain hare an especially potent symbol.

The photographs accompanying each chapter do not distract from the text and allow one to absorb the moment they capture. It is clearly the work of two people who not only have an intimate knowledge of the area but also possess a deep love of all its facets.

This is a fascinating and highly readable book for anyone interested in knowing more about this iconic mountain and its people. ■

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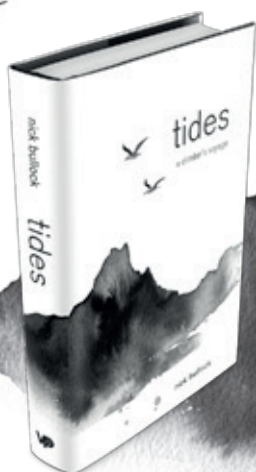


tides

a climber's voyage

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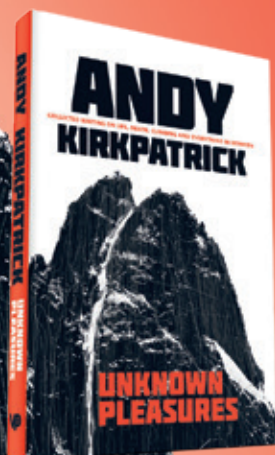
'WHEN I HEARD NICK WAS WRITING A SECOND AUTOBIOGRAPHY I WAS WORRIED HIS EGO WAS PACKING PUNCHES HIS BODY AND MIND COULDN'T HANDLE. BUT HAVING READ TIDES IT'S ANOTHER GREAT READ. IT GIVES A GOOD INSIGHT INTO WHAT IT TAKES TO DO SUPER SERIOUS HIGH-ALTITUDE MIXED PEAKS AND I WAS ALSO IMPRESSED WITH NICK'S OBSERVATIONS OF BOTH FLORA AND FAUNA AND THE CHARACTERS AND MOTIVATIONS OF SOME OF HIS FRIENDS. BE WARNED THOUGH, NICK IS ALMOST AS MORBID AS I AM.' **JAMES MCHAFFIE**



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