

THE TEXT OF THE FIRST INVITATION LETTER TO C.H.A. MEMBERS
DEEMED INTERESTED IN FORMING A C.H.A. MOUNTAINEERING CLUB:-

A MOUNTAINEERING CLUB FOR THE C.H.A.

11, Endsleigh Gardens,
Ilford,
Essex.

Dear Fellow Member,

Knowing that you are interested in the more strenuous forms of holidays organised by the C.H.A. I am writing to engage your interest in a proposal to form a C.H.A. mountaineering Club.

A number of our members have felt the urge to request that the C.H.A. should take the lead in this matter and so cater for many fine men and women who will drift away unless their interests are served. I believe that the General Committee will give this question fair consideration if a proposal is laid before them.

It is proposed to hold a preliminary meeting of C.H.A. members interested in the matter at "Birchfields" Hope Derbyshire on Saturday and Sunday, November 16th and 17th 1929. Among those who have been invited are as follows:

Miss A.M. Adam, Burnley; Miss F. Hindle, Church; Miss I. Horrocks, Accrington; Miss B. Marsden, Brighton; Misses A. & I. Nutt, Southport; Miss K. Musgrave, Bradford; Miss K. O'Brien, London; Mr. J.M.L. Beaumont, Liverpool; Mr. A.F. Barnard, London; Mr. T. Barlow, Manchester; Mr. C. Deakin, Preston; Mr. A.J. Hope, Preston; Mr. R. Fildes, Carlisle; Mr. F. Moyle, Rishton; Mr. L. Heap, Nelson; Mr. E.W. Hodge, Southport; Mr. J.J. Mills, Sheffield; Mr. H. Eccles, Accrington; Mr. Rees, Manchester; Mr. Sherwood, Manchester;

Mr. J.E.B. Wright of Keswick has kindly consented to take the chair and offer his advice at these preliminary discussions.

Will you please do your utmost to spend the week-end with us at Hope. I would be greatly obliged if you would notify me as soon as possible whether you will require a bed for Saturday and Sunday nights or for Saturday only. All arrangements will be made through me at the Birchfields Guest House.

I enclose a copy of the Items for discussion and also proposed set of rules for a C.H.A. Mountaineering Club.

Sincerely yours,
GEO. STARKEY,
Host at Eskdale 1929.

P.S.

Should you know of anyone else likely to be interested please let me know their names and addresses and I will forward copies of these documents to them.

THE TEXT OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME

PROGRAMME FOR THE HOPE DISCUSSIONS:

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16th.

7.30 p.m. First Meeting.

1. General outline of the proposals and decision on whether the meeting is in favour an attempt being made to form a C.H.A. Mountaineering Club.
2. Discussion on the prospective draft constitution and rules.
3. Steps to be taken to approach the General Committee of the C.H.A. Upon the matter.

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 17th

9.30 a.m. Walk: route to be decided later. 1. 0 p.m. Lunch

2.15 p.m. Continuation of discussions (if necessary)

Note: Book to Hope Station L.M.S. Rly (cheap week-end tickets)

“Birchfields” is situated about one mile from the station and is on the slopes of Win Hill. Endeavour to reach the Guest House in time for 6 p.m. meal.

THE TEXT OF THE LETTER INFORMING MEMBERS OF THE C.H.A. GENERAL COMMITTEE'S DECISION TO SANCTION THE FORMATION OF THE MOUNTAINEERING CLUB.

11, Endsleigh Gardens,

Ilford, Essex.

January, 1930.

C.H.A. Mountaineering Club.

As you may be aware the General Committee of the C.H.A. has given its sanction to the formation of a Mountaineering Club, on the lines drawn up at the Hope Conference, as an experiment reserving to itself the right to determine the project at the end of the year if in their opinion it is desirable that this should be done.

As a start, the Club will probably operate from the guest houses in Eskdale and at Onich. The Club will hold "meets" lasting for periods of one or two weeks and the number of the meets is, of course, dependent upon the demand.

Now I want to lay before you very seriously this question of demand. The Hope Conference was held in an atmosphere of great enthusiasm and as a result of the Conference, the Club has been formed. It is now up to all strenuous C.H.A. members to back up the movement in order that the Club may thoroughly justify its existence.

It is necessary to have an early idea of the approximate dates for "meets", which will suit the majority, and I shall be glad if you will let me know roughly what time would be best for you personally. This will give me the necessary data upon which to base arrangements.

Yours sincerely,

GEO. STARKEY,

Provisional Secretary.

C.H.A. MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

Secretary's Report on the year ending October 31st, 1930.

At the outset of this Report on the activities of the first year of the Club's existence I think it well that, for purposes of record, a short formal account of the conception and formation of the Club should be given.

In common with many other people I noticed that, owing to the very necessary limitations placed on the scope of the ordinary excursions of the strenuous C.H.A. centres, the Association was losing a steady stream of strenuously inclined young men and women who were ambitious to try their hands at the higher branches of mountaineering sport. It was, therefore, through a desire, on the one hand, to cater for these ambitious spirits and, on the other hand, to save them from leaving the C.H.A. that the idea of a Mountaineering Club within the C.H.A. organisation was conceived.

It is now a matter of well-known history that, with great assistance from Mr. J. E. B. Wright of the Lakeland Mountain Guides, I called a conference of Members of the C.H.A. at Birchfields, Hope, on 16th November, 1930, to discuss a scheme for forming a Club. The conference was attended by fifty C.H.A. Members and by Mr. H. P. Weston, the General Secretary of the Association. At the conference the matter was very thoroughly discussed, a provisional set of rules was drawn up and provisional Club officers were elected.

After the conference Mr. Weston received a formal deputation and promised to lay the completed scheme before the General Committee of the C.H.A. for consideration. Anxiously the verdict was awaited and, on January 10th, 1930, the eve of the Annual Conference of the C.H.A., it became known that the General Committee had sanctioned the formation of the Club for one year as an experiment.

It had been intended to hold Club meets for two weeks from the Eskdale Centre and for two weeks from the Onich Centre. When, however, the Club Committee met to discuss the climbing arrangements it was considered that a meet at Onich presented too many difficulties to be tackled in the Club's first year and, therefore, four weeks at Eskdale, commencing on August 16th, were arranged.

At the first meeting of the Club Committee in March, 1930, forty-three Members were elected. Such has been the progress of the Club that now the Membership is only just short of one hundred.

With regard to the actual meets there were 13 Members present during the first week, 16 during the second, 17 during the third and 13 during the fourth week, and I can say from personal knowledge that many more would have been with us, but were unable to fix their holidays at the times set apart for the meets.

The climbing was, by the terms of the General Committee's sanction, in charge of the Lakeland Mountain Guides and all the climbs were led by these guides, ably assisted by a few qualified amateurs from among the Club Members.

Mr. Wright has submitted to the Club Committee a very full Report of the "meets," which includes a detailed list of every climb undertaken, but it will not be out of place formally to record here the names of the climbs accomplished. They are as follows :—

GREAT GABLE.

The Needle, the Needle Arete, Eagle's Nest West Chimney, the Arrowhead Ridge (Easy Way), the Arrowhead (Direct) and Kerns Knott Chimney.

GREAT END.

South East Gully.

LANGDALE.

Middlefell Buttress, Great Gully, Pavey Ark and Oliverson's Variation on Gimmer Crag.

SCAFELL CRAG.

Slingsby's Route up the Pinnacle, Easy way down, and Broad Stand.

PILLAR ROCK.

Slab and Notch, the Arete, the Pendlebury Traverse, the North Climb and the New West Climb.

A notable feature of the "meets" was the number of Members who were found who had the makings of leaders and the Club has now 17 Members who are, in Mr. Wright's opinion, fit to take the lead.

Reviewing the past year I think it may fairly be claimed that the Club has not only justified its existence, but has also clearly demonstrated that, if carried out with due circumspection, rock-climbing does not merit the appellation of a madcap gamble with fate, but that it is worthy of a place in the list of justifiable sports.

Those of us who have had in our hands the teaching of the less experienced Club Members have felt that a great responsibility was laid upon us and while we cannot, perhaps, claim to have created a band of brilliant rock gymnasts we can, however, assert that we have instilled in every mind the fact that, while mountains are treated with respect, they are the finest playground ever created, yet they often exact terrible penalties for disrespect and carelessness.

From a financial point of view the Club is in a flourishing condition, as will be seen from the Statement of Accounts furnished by the Treasurer.

So much for the past, but what of the future ?

It is to be hoped that the General Committee will agree that the Club is justifying its existence and will continue to give their blessing to its activities.

We hope in due course to hold meets, not only in the Lake District but also in North Wales, in Scotland and possibly at some future date we may even be able to hold one in Switzerland.

I would like to impress upon each Club Member the necessity for everyone to do his best to help the Club. This may be done in many ways. The present officers have worked hard in the service of the Club, but their collective knowledge is necessarily limited and one of the first essentials to holding meets in Scotland or in North Wales is to have in the parties individuals who know the climbs. Knowledge of a climb does not necessarily imply ability to lead it but, if there are individuals in a party who can say "I know where this, that or the other climb starts and where it goes" it is usually possible for a good leader to make something of it once he is started at the right place. It will, therefore, be of great service to the Club if Members who have practical knowledge of climbs outside the Lake District will send to the Secretary precise details, so that he may keep a record for future reference.

This Report would be incomplete without a reference to the many people to whom the Club is indebted for help in the past year.

In the first place we undoubtedly have to thank Mr. Weston for the fact that the Club ever came into existence at all- and I would formally ask him to accept the thanks of the Club for all his help and advice.

Then we have Mr. Wright. Apart from his great assistance at the inception of the Club, Mr. Wright did much and magnificent work at Eskdale, and the success of the meets is in a great measure due to his organisation and labour. Then there is Mrs. Topliss, the manageress of the Eskdale Centre. I am completely at a loss to find words sufficiently adequate to express the Club's thanks to Mrs. Topliss. Far from considering the Club Members a nuisance in the house for which she was responsible, this lady was, at all times ready and willing to assist in making the Club activities a success.

It is difficult to mention all names, but we have to thank the various Hosts and Hostesses for their kindly co-operation and many friends at Head Office who have lent us their aid in various ways.

Finally, a Club Reunion is to be held at Moorgate, Hope, on February 14th, 1931, and it is to be hoped that every Club Member will endeavour to be present.

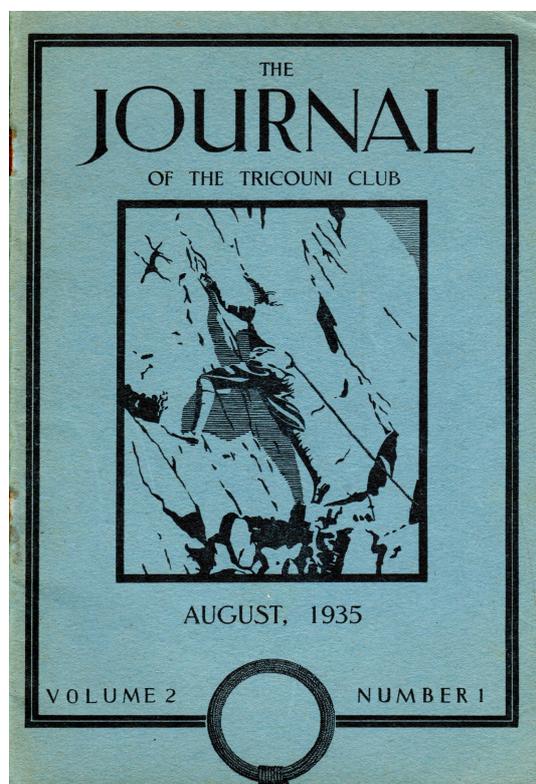
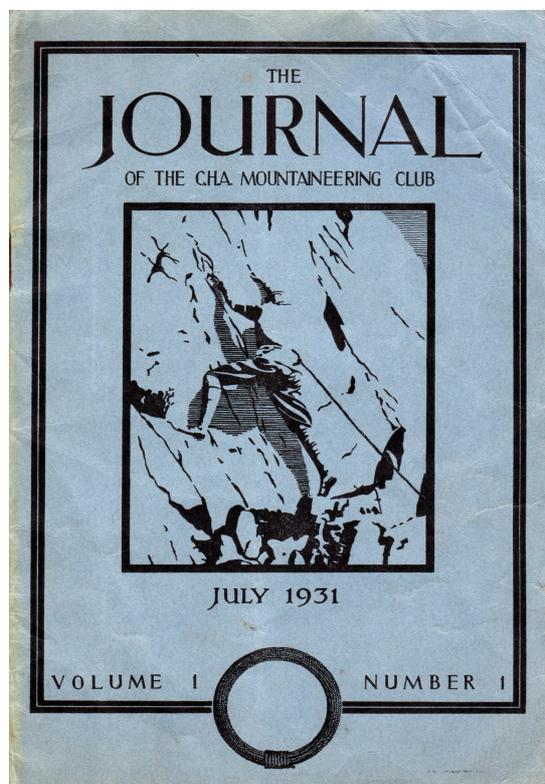
GEO. STARKEY.

November, 1930.

THE EARLY CLUB JOURNAL

Below is a scan of the cover of the very first Club Journal

The title of the Club, as depicted on the cover, remained 'the C.H.A. MOUNTAINEERING CLUB' until the Volume 2 Number 1 edition in August 1935. I'm assuming this was simply because of inertia in getting the printing block changed. And for Volume 2 Number 2, which was published in February 1937, the cover was changed entirely.



We have in the archive the following early C.H.A. M.C. / Tricouni Club Journals:-

Volume 1	Number 1	published July 1931
Volume 1	Number 2	published February 1933
Volume 1	Number 3	published February 1934
Volume 2	Number 1	published August 1935
Volume II	Number 2	published February 1937
Volume III	Number II	published February 1939

The logic of the numbering system eludes me !

Unsurprisingly, none was published through the war years. After the war the Journal format was abandoned and a newsletter system was adopted, similar to that used now. Apart from the odd missing sheet, records of Meets, AGM minutes etc., are complete from 1945 right through to 1989. 1990 through 1993 seem to have gone missing. Hopefully the gaps may be restored by members ? Also missing are Meet records from Easter 1994, Easter 1998, October 1999, October 2007 & Easter 2008. It may be that some of these were never published for one reason or another, but in the interests of completeness, all and any donations will be gratefully received, digital transmission preferred !

For the future, the archivist will be archiving all **new** data of this type digitally.