

## Glip's Log

## Inverness Summer Camp

Note: Additional comments or modifications are coloured blue. Also, certain passages have been omitted or modified as this was a personal log that included confidential information. Omitted sections are indicated by '....'.

### The Patrols

<b>Stud</b> (Curlew)	PL	Billy Forbes	....
	APL	Brian McCready (Ted)	....
		Craig Griffin (Griff)	....
		Alan Bowes (Bosy)	....
<b>Ferret</b> (Falcon)	PL	Douglas Haldane (Mongul Doogy)	....
	APL	Douglas MacEwan (Muggy)	....
		Alistair McCready (Micro)	....
		Kenneth Hyde (Jekyll)	....
		Philip Clark	....
<b>Cosmic Cowboys</b> (Tiger)	PL	Guy Grant	....
	APL	Kenneth Kerr	....
		Sandy Thomson	....
		Robert Lawrie (Bod)	....
		Gordon R. Brabender (Gordie, Pucker)	....
<b>Butch</b> (Fox)	PL	Murray Brabender (Pucker)	....
	APL	Tommy Boag (Bommy)	....
		Alan Bannister	....
		Andrew Davies	....
<b>Hop Heads</b>	PL	Colin Terris (Shug)	....
	APL	David Eadie (Deedy)	....
		Malcolm Arnott (Talcum)	....
		Donald Lamond	....
		David McEwing (Small Mus)	....
<b>Heidbangers:</b>	PL	William Grant (Dome)	....
	APL	Robbie Mochrie	....
		Andrew Wilson (Ralj)	....
		Graham Bolster (Rivet)	....
		Kevin Byng	....
		Robert Wright	....
<b>Scouters:</b>		Alistair B. Cram (Skipper)	
		Graham L. Patrick (Glip) (Expeditions / Treasurer)	
		Kenneth W. Paton (QM food and transport)	
		David McIlroy (First Aid)	
		Alistair Bennett (Notice board)	
		David McCready	

**Venture Scouts**

Stuart L. Patrick  
David Griffin

**Other Leaders**  
(Part of the time)

Ronnie Thomson (canoeing)  
Akela (Cub Scouts)

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> July**

**Advance party advance**

**Day 1**

Arrangements regarding the advance party were altered frequently as D-Day approached. Benny and Ted departed in Benny's Magic Mini on Friday night and reached the campsite about midnight. Skipper and I drove the two minibii\*. Skipper was to drive the Calaidh House minibus which we had just acquired for a bargain of £100. I was to drive the red district minibus and canoe trailer. Kenny, David, Slip, and D. Griff were coming up with the troop on Monday by train. I didn't envy them that task.

\* [A new word which I think ABC invented](#)

Since it was the start of the Paisley fortnight, I was keen to start off early since I wasn't keen on driving a canoe trailer up a packed Loch Lomond road. Therefore, I met my passengers (Guy Grant, Murray Brabender, Billy Forbes, and Douglas Haldane) at the headquarters at 6:30 AM! Unfortunately, the canoes were not loaded, so we wasted a fair bit of time tying them up, then trying to tie on the back lights (which were detachable) to the trailer. Alistair arrived to help with Colin Terris and Dome. However, as soon as the rain started, ABC and I had to start coercing most of the PLs, who were scared of getting wet.

Of course, the minibus was virtually empty of petrol as well, which was very annoying since there aren't many petrol station open at this hour. We set off hoping the Port Glasgow one would be open. It wasn't and things were getting slightly worrying. I detoured into Bishopton and, fortunately, Peter's garage was open. However I now had to do a U-turn so that I could get to the Erskine Bridge. This resulted in one of the canoes denting the minibus. As will be seen, far worse things were to happen to the minibus. The canoe survived.

I was surprised how easy it was to drive to canoe trailer and there was no real need to take corners all that widely, which is just as well considering the Loch Lomond Road.\* At Tarbet we stopped for a break and the PLs disappeared longer than they were supposed to.

\* [The Loch Lomond road in 1979 was a narrow twisty road from Balloch to Crianlarich and it was considered an achievement to average 40mph over the distance. The only surviving sections of it are the few miles just north of Tarbet, and the Luss coastal road.](#)

Soon after we restarted, the heavens opened and it lashed down. It had been pelting down earlier and the River Falloch was in spate – an awesome sight. When we halted at road works near Inverarnan we got a splendid view of it.

Since the road was extremely wet and the canoe trailer had no mudguards, we were sending up a spectacular spray of water several feet high behind us, which must have annoyed following cars. We, in turn, were annoyed by a car pulling a heavy boat and trailer in front of us. He was quite slow and we couldn't overtake. Also, the chap wasn't in very good control and frequently snaked.

Traffic proved to be light until we were approaching Tyndrum. Here, we got caught up in a traffic jam. The road became clear after the Oban turn off. We heard later that the rain had been so heavy that landslides on Ben Cruachan had blocked both the railway and the road to Oban.

We had lunch at Fort William car park and carried on when there was no sign of ABC. He was visiting the Glasgow Scout shop in any case en route, and would have to wait till it opened. Up till Fort William, I had been criticized for never moving out of third gear, so the sceptics were answered on the next bit of road where I was able to get a fair speed going and actually overtake one or two slow moving objects like tractors.

About 3.15, we arrived at the campsite and I introduced myself to the farmer. Now he's a character if ever there was one. On a previous camp, the 70<sup>th</sup> had set the gorse bushes on fire which actually pleased him no end since he had been trying to persuade the landowner to get rid of them without success. He was dead keen on Scouting and had received a Thanks Badge, and had been visited by the Chief Scout (a photograph adorned his room). He could knock back the whisky and had a fine collection of stories and jokes which he churned out whenever he was tippily. You were never sure when he was serious. The man showed me our pioneering wood and asked us to clear a bit of the canal path as a service project.

I drove the bus down to the site and soon afterwards Skipper arrived. The rest of the afternoon was spent pitching tents, the Bell, the Wendy House\* etc. Benny and I spent ages trying to get the Bell up. I eventually cracked it when I found that pulling guy lines had a different effect on a Bell than on a normal tent! The Wendy house, a present from Jack Lockhart\*\*, gave hours of endless fun as well with its dozens of different colour-coded poles.

\*The Wendy House was a frame tent and was so called as it was not very Scout like.

\*\* If I remember correctly, Jack Lockhart was a Greenock Academy teacher? Feedback on this would be welcome.

In the evening, we visited Inverness where ABC, Benny, Ted and I had our meal, and ABC muttered dissatisfaction in very audible tones\*.

\*It's not noted whether this concerned the quality of the meal or not.

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> July**

**Reconnaissance**

**Day 2**

It wasn't a very nice day so I was quite relieved to make my exit in Benny's Magic mini, radio blaring, to go hike route searching\*. First of all, I searched out the police station which turned out to be on the eastern outskirts of Inverness. I got the address of the DC here and asked advice about a good hike route. The sergeant in charge of mountain rescue wasn't on duty and I was advised to go to Strathpeffer. Before going there, I visited the DC who was friendly enough but a rather unknown quantity. He wasn't happy about my more adventurous routes and I thought he was a wee bit overprotective in that respect. He did, however, use the Tomatin route for his Scouts. As I left, he advised me to keep Scouts away from the farmer\*\* because his language was sometimes rather strong. I thought of Chris but kept quiet.

\*In the days before computers and the internet, it was difficult to gain information or useful contacts about a local area, other than by going there.

\*\* Presumably the farmer at the troop campsite

My next step was Strathpeffer where it was nice and sunny. The police station was shut, unfortunately, so I bought some grub for a snack lunch then set out to investigate possible campsite areas and local knowledge.

Everybody I spoke to was very helpful. At one place, a man told me what paths were like in the vicinity. I was also directed to a forestry officer, but he could not help with campsites and directed me to a gamekeeper. He was extremely helpful and was prepared to let our Scouts camp although he did not normally allow camping. With that out the way, the last part of this particular hike route was OK.

To check the first bit, I drove a long way round to the start, getting lost on the way. I was surprised to find that the area was protected by a National Conservancy Council. The road is blocked by a locked gate but you can get a key at the lodge nearby. There are certain times when you can get the key but I no longer have that information.

The weather had been reasonably good, but as soon as I approached Inverness again, the heavens opened and it pounded down viciously when I got petrol.

Back at camp, I learnt that it had rained all day and everybody was retreating to Inverness. Ironically, it cleared up during the evening and, since I had stayed to make my tea, I took advantage of the weather to canoe on the canal with the red glow of Inverness in the distance as darkness fell.

## Monday 30<sup>th</sup> July Arrival of the Troop

## Day 3

During the morning, I took the mini to investigate the Tomatin route again. The bit I was doubtful over was at grid reference 834356 where one had to paddle or climb the hillock. I thought paddling might be too hazardous. As I drove down, I picked up a hitchhiker who turned out to be an ex-Royal Navy submariner invalided out of the service and going down to Aviemore. He conned me into driving all the way. The new road had been completed since the winter and I was completely confused by the change.

On the way back, I traced the road up the Glen formed by the River Findhorn and parked at the derelict farmhouse Shenachie. It was here, during the winter, I had sucked my orange feeling quite shattered having slogged my way through snowdrifts. It didn't take long to trek round to the bend in the river. I checked that the hill crossing was feasible (as it was), then met up with a Canadian Air Force gentleman and his two sons who had just come round by the river and showed that it was also feasible.

Satisfied, I returned to camp for lunch but was met instead with mild agitation. There was no time for lunch, they said. ABC thought the train might be arriving one hour sooner than he thought and had already departed in the Calaidh House minibus. Firewood was removed from the minibus with haste and I drove back into Inverness, parking at the car park round by the goods area of the station, just off the A9 (GR 670454).

.... I traced ABC in the station and discovered that the train had been delayed and was due at the original hour expected anyway. I took the opportunity to visit the police station to chat about routes. Unfortunately, they were also cool about the route I wanted, so with the police and DC both unenthusiastic, I found myself in a difficult and awkward position. If I went ahead and something went wrong, I could be slammed. I decided to wait and see what the weather would do.

Back at the station, I learnt the train would be 80 minutes late which was just as well since I had returned late. Ronnie Thompson had arrived and was going to help with transport.

The train arrived and the hordes emerged. We realised that our peace and quiet was now over and summer camp was beginning in all seriousness. Kenny arrived looking well considering the worries involved in a change of train in Glasgow and loading of equipment. The equipment was loaded onto trolleys and pushed by the Scouts to a BR parcels van. This created a great deal of amusement for station staff as all sorts of weird objects like bamboo poles passed by.

With the arrival of the Troop, the weather immediately turned nasty. We rushed to the buses and managed to transport everybody in one go. The driver of the BR lorry was very friendly and helpful, and drove right into the campsite for us.



Douglas MacEwan had brought a very impressive wood carving of the camp badge, which he and his dad had made. It was destined for the flagpole. Kenny moaned about Deedie who had blocked a toilet in the train. Stuart and D. Griff set up their tent.

Patrol kitchens were set up and dinner of soup, hamburgers and beans, then rice and fruit was consumed. Deedie was sick which probably pleased Kenny. After supper of hot chocolate, everybody went to Pit.

Note. Due to a lack of trees, the kitchen shelters ended up in a row, following a narrow row of trees, except for self-supporting shelters like Murray's and Doogie's. The Scouters, at last, made their own kitchen shelter after years of talking about it. [Big Mus](#) was the chief architect and did extremely well.

As far as the other shelters are concerned, Dome's was the ideal type set up in the ideal situation. Shug had a good site and shelter. Guy had a good shelter as did Billy ..... Doogie and Murray had old tents and were forced to pitch them as self-supporting units. They were reasonable shelters, but, of course, could not possibly look as good as [the proper kitchen shelters](#).

[My favourite shelter for the camp was Dome's.](#)

**Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> July**

**Day 4**

It rained rather hard in the morning, but fortunately eased off by mid morning. Work on kitchen shelters and camp items continued. Slip and D. Griff took a party to dig the pits. David ([Big Mus](#)) took APLs to chop up a tree for firewood.



At lunchtime, when Kenny was about to issue stores, Benny played a classic trick on him. Benny had one of those fearsome masks of an old man. Kenny almost collapsed in fright when he saw this apparition approaching the store tent\*.

\* It is possible that this event occurred on a later day.

During the afternoon we had activities. Benny took canoeing and Skipper started to organize a chute into the canal. Archery was also held. Once I had finished with my hikers, not that that took very long, I started building a croquet pitch. This was to be the innovation this year. 1976 was the year of the golf while 1978 was the year of the bike. 1979 was to be the year of the croquet! It was immediately successful. Scouts flocked to see what was happening, which was slightly unfortunate since it left Skipper building the chute by himself, virtually.

In the evening, the PL's visited Inverness. I saw the Explorer hikers, Kenny Kerr, Tommy Boag, Robbie Mochrie, Brian McCready and described the various hike routes to them.





## Wednesday 1st August    Pony Trekking Day 5

Since pony trekking was to be held several miles away, there was an early rise. I was volunteered into driving the 15 adventurous pony trekkers in the district minibus, and took along a bundle of money as well. It was quite reasonable weather when they started. Andrew Davies found problems when his pony started chewing a hedge and ignored him altogether.

Once they had set off - the pony trekking chief lady having dashed around all over the place in a great commotion - I drove into somewhere or other to while away two hours (10.30-12.30) reading the paper, doing the crossword, eating Smarties and plums, and writing postcards to the lab etc. A rather heavy burst of rain came down and I silently tittered.

I picked up the pony trekkers and discovered that the next group were due much later than we had been led to believe. In the afternoon, the second group departed assuming that the original time was right, but, indeed, had to wait two hours. Even then, they did not go because the rain pelted down. A bit of a disaster for them.

The morning pony trekkers could go into Inverness if they wished in the afternoon, but one or two stayed in camp. I spent the afternoon constructing seven golf holes since I had been pressed by the golfers in the troop to do so.

After that, Kenny Kerr and I started to play a pentathlon, which was never finished as it turned out. It started in mid evening and consisted of badminton and golf, with honours even. Croquet, archery and one other sport were meant to be played at a later date. It was quite a needle contest and honour was at stake.

The evening finished off with a campfire attended by a guest – the Rev. David Mill, who had come to visit us and camped overnight. The ‘Small Town in Germany’ was reintroduced to campfire and he also sang the ‘Darkie Sunday School’ which embarrassed Kenny, but I’m not sure how it affected the minister.

**Thursday 2nd August Explorer Hike**

**Day 6**

I got up early at 7:30 AM in order to get the Explorer hikers away as quickly as possible (K.Kerr, R.Mochrie, T.Boag, B.McCready). Unfortunately, I had failed to acquire food from Kenny well in advance and, also, Kenny made their breakfast if I remember correctly. As a result, there was total chaos and a lot of dithering.

It wasn't until 9.30 that we managed to get away. We drove up the A96, turned right along the B9090, and stopped at the post office in Cawdor so that Kenny Kerr could get milk, matches, and, most importantly, a newspaper! From Cawdor, we meandered along minor roads until I dropped them at the junction just north of Dulsie. I bade them farewell and sped back to camp arriving at 12:40, returning via Culloden.

After lunch, I spoke to the ASS\* hikers and told them to pass a few tests before the hike. As a result of that, I trained Andy Davies on Mapping and Alan Bannister on Adventure Precautions.

\* At the time, the progressive training system consisted of the Scout Standard, Advanced Scout Standard (ASS) and Chief Scouts Award (CSA) – having replaced Second Class, First Class and Queen Scout's Award.

In the evening, I drove four PL's and Andrew Davies into town ----. Andy phoned his Mum and then the two of us returned to camp meeting Dome and Pucker 'trailing' it through the mud and lakes formed as a result of the bad weather we had experienced. This mad duo had acquired quite an expertise on the bikes, especially since they didn't have brakes! Dome had already driven off the road and crashed at full speed into a bank. Every accident was, of course, treated with total disregard for personal safety and with hoots of laughter.



Our two nutters had also constructed a ramp over which they jumped the bikes issuing forth loud war cries as they leaped record distances. Murray and Dome became so proficient at it, that ..... they started to leap bodies – brave Scouts who volunteered to lie on the ground beyond the ramp. Five bodies were cleared eventually. It became quite a craze and everybody had a go including, inevitably, Deedie. However, needless to say, the bikes suffered somewhat and our self-appointed bike engineers and redesigners (Pucker and Dome) were constantly at work.

I was challenged that night to have a go at the ramp and foolishly I accepted the dare. Dome and Pucker very carefully told me how to approach the ramp, avoiding slippery bits etc. Pucker even acted as a pacer and guide in front of me,

sheering off just at the ramp. It all felt so exhilarating and I was convinced I would shatter the record. The ramp approached at speed. I hit the ramp doing at least 25 mph. My pedal also hit the ramp. Time froze and my mind dulled as I flew through the air, parting company with my bike. I was soon reunited with my beast as we both hurtled to earth in a mass of wheel spokes, arms and legs. The record remained unshattered, but my pride suffered ever so slightly. Pucker and Dome, in fits of laughter, remonstrated with me for pedaling as I went over the ramp. Kenny Paton clucked worried enquiries after my health. My ankle hurt like blazes and at one point I thought I had broken something. At least, I was assured, it looked spectacular, and it certainly clinched ramp jumping as a popular event with all the Scouts. It was now obviously dangerous and had to be tried. I retired to the Bell to recover while Kenny yattered to the troop.

At least, I wasn't the only cropper that day. While I had been out dropping PL's, an Australian couple, standing on the wrong bank of the canal, were offered a canoe across by our canoeists. Unfortunately, the man fell in, rucksack and all. Apparently, Deedie was very impressive and raced up to his rescue. Anyhow, the wet gent was now drying out in the hut.

There was supposed to be a wide game at night, but this had to be cancelled since it was wet.

**Friday, 3rd August**

**'A Good Day'**

**Day 7**

As soon as I woke up, I sensed that this would be a good day whether the day liked it or not. It was a good start since it was dry. I jumped out of pit and lit the fire (unheard of). I was really quite chuffed by my efforts and then Kenny declared that he would never cook scrambled eggs on a wood fire. Skipper and I joined forces to persuade him otherwise, but he complained throughout about lack of heat control. He then declared, once he had cooked it, that he had not had any intention of eating any of it anyway, which capped everything.

Feeling efficient, I watched my clothes and hair in full view of the motor launches, since I used the canal. In mid wash (10.30), flag break occurred and I had to break off a few minutes. I finished off while Benny ran a game of football which ended up as a game of rugby.

During T & T\*, I did Compass work with Andrew Davies, Alan Bannister, Micro, Bod and Rivet.

#### \* Training and Testing



Once that was over, the grand croquet match to end all croquet matches began. The contestants were D. Haldane, D. Eadie, D. MacEwan and me. There was a sizeable audience who cheered, booed and clapped when required. The game was played in a very gentlemanly fashion with the players addressing each other in a perfect pukka English. For example, "I say, Mr Haldane. I'm terribly sorry old chap, but I feel I must croquet you." Etc

The game built up to a nerve-tingling climax which even a communal salad lunch couldn't interrupt. Douglas Haldane looked certain to win despite being thwarted several times by Glip's croquets on him. Glip had no chance of winning at all. Douglas had a simple 9' to 10' shot to win the match. However, contestants and audience piled on the tension.

"Don't miss out on the left, Doogy."

"Watch the slope, Doogy." Etc etc

Grass was tufted up. All sorts of tricks were tried. However, the killer blow to Doogy's chances was when everybody held their breath in a most exaggerated fashion. A strained silence fell. Doogy played – and missed! The crowds cheered. Glip croqueted Doogy and sent him back up the pitch again.

This continued for quite a while and Doogie was almost getting angry. Out of the blue came Douglas and Deedie, and, against all the odds, Deedie won! Douglas H fumed and blamed me of course. Perfectly right too.

In the afternoon, Kenny organized a patrol craft competition involving pancakes, pyrography, plaster casting, sedan chairs etc). I decided to visit the bank and got

a lift in when Skipper collected the Cubs from the station. I wasn't quick enough to get a lift back and so I walked back in via the canal taking 45 minutes. By that time, it was time to collect the explorers, so Slip and I took the district bus and found our 4 adventurers waiting for us near Moy. They had finished early and had found the route too easy as I feared they might. It was a pity the weather forecast had not been better, then they could have tried the harder one instead.

We stopped just out of Inverness for goodies before carrying on to camp. I bought some grapes.

I played Slip at croquet next –a really ding dong battle ending up 3-2 for me. The game ended there when the dinner gong went at Guy Grant's. Their altar fire annoyed me somewhat since a lot of heat was wasted because the fire grid was too high. So I 'altered' it..... The meal was spent trying to get a smile out of the [visiting](#) cub. Kenny, Bod and Guy made valiant efforts. Guy also showed me a most peculiar American comic from where he had obtained his patrol name – 'Cosmic Cowboy'. The star was a hippy, comic-strip character who was generally the typical gum-chewing lefty. Tea was different – Kenny had described it as Battery Chicken soup, squid globules in blood, white spirits and orange octopus suckers.

In the evening, the Camp Olympics was held consisting of Welly Hurling, Caber Tossing, British Bulldog and Tug-o-War. I helped Benny who was in charge. The Eagles were supreme especially in the Tug o' War. A grand sweetie scramble also took place, slightly unplanned. (Benny threw them away in a slight panic when Rivet and co started pressing for extra rations).

After the sports, we opened the shop. I credited\* while Micro, Brian and Douglas MacEwan served the goods. They ran the show much better than I could have.

[\\*Presumably, we ran a tick list where Scouts paid later for purchases?](#)

Campfire including 'small town'\* was a great success. Micro and I competed to put each other off.

[\\* This was 'There once was a small town in Germany'.](#)

When the Scouts had retired, the leaders were treated to an excellent cheese and wine party served up by [Big Mus](#) and David McCready in the Wendy House.

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> August**

**Scouters Dinner**

**Day 8**

It was inevitable that today would prove a slight disaster considering how good Friday was. I woke up quite late at 8:30 and didn't get up till 9.40. I tidied up the kitchen on request from ABC, and found one of Kenny's milk dixies unwashed. Kenny was told off later and the affair became something of a running camp joke. At the time, I was slightly annoyed, but it was quite funny in the end. Kenny later retaliated and placed a milk saucepan in my sleeping bag!

However, my mood was not all that sweet as a result of this cleanup.....  
I calmed myself by testing and passing Andrew Davies on map and compass.....

Things brightened up at lunchtime. All through camp, I had threatened Tommy Boag with a dixie of water. Well, things came to a head with a superb water fight involving me, Tommy, Brian McCready, Micro, Kevin and Andy Davies. Kevin actually chased Andy over half the site, then Andy chased Kevin, then roles reversed again. It was quite hilarious.

In the afternoon, Skipper took the sailors to Loch Morlich (they ended up canoeing!) and the rest visited Inverness. Benny, Ted and I went canoeing instead down to the bridge and back. We strolled into town for 6 o'clock to meet Scouts, Cubs and sailors. The minibus arrived sounding very rough indeed. We seemed to be suffering a jinx since the other minibus and Benny's mini were also out of action.\*

*\*In general, cars and minibuses were far less reliable in the 1970s than they are now. Also, vehicles stayed on the roads which would be swiftly condemned nowadays. I think it was the Calaidh House minibus where the gear stick could come away in your hand when you changed gear.*

Money was given to the Scouts and I drove the leaders, bar Skipper and Kenny, to the hotel. We stopped at a caravan park firstly so that Douglas Haldane could find his parents. Mr. Haldane might be able to cure the bus. He wasn't in and Douglas did a break in entry to his caravan unintentionally.

We left him to face the music alone and retired to the hotel. Skipper and Kenny, looking very worried, arrived later and we had a rather poor meal. Big Mus sent the dessert back to get defrosted!

I walked back to meet the younger Scouts in the town centre. When I arrived, Kenny had also arrived having been given a lift by RKT. The minibus was definitely knackered, so RKT, Mr. Haldane and a friend of his, transported us in their estates.

Between runs, Micro, Alan Bannister and co. waved to cars passing and kept counts of the number of replies. Eventually, everybody was waving to the cars, which must have startled a few drivers. Unfortunately, a group of idiotic cyclists tried to buzz us and relations got a bit strained between Scouts and cyclists to say the least.

I brought up the rear guard and was aptly deposited into Mr Haldane's 'boot' back to camp.



We got up with no real idea how we would cope getting to church. Mr. Haldane had finally declared the District minibus dead and arrived this morning to try and cure the Calaidh House minibus (nicknamed Nijinsky). Benny and he worked hard for one or two hours, but prospects of success dimmed as time began to get dangerously short. Although rise and shine occurred at 7:30 AM, flag break took place at 9:45 – rather late. At 10 o'clock, we started to walk to church – a 4 mile journey with no time to spare.

Mr. Haldane started a transport service, but ABC had already sent me on to warn the church. I was accompanied by Talcolm and Rivet, until Rivet dropped his belt. Typical Rivet. Talcolm and I arrived at the church just as the first Haldane group arrived.

The colours were paraded in during the first hymn since they had been transported first. The troop arrived in dribs and drabs and tiptoed in after the first hymn. Poor Philip Clark looked quite ill since the walkers had to jog the final distance. It must have looked very strange to the general public. The congregation must have thought it odd as well. Of course, the minister explained all, and ABC was overwhelmed with offers of transport after the service. The service itself was boring except for the children's address which had a Scouting theme.....

.....On our trek back to the site, RKT pulled up and give us a lift in to camp since he was going there himself to arrange a canoe expedition for the PLs. The parents were about of course and pulling offspring away for feedings etc.

In the afternoon, the PLs went away on their canoe trip leaving APLs to cook the evening meal. I ate with Douglas MacEwan's lot. He and Micro worked very well together and served up a splendid portion of pork chops. It was a splendid meal - made all the better by the high-class of company.

While there was still light, we played the Loony Wide game. All Scouters, bar Kenny of course, acted as loonies and 'escaped' into the whin bushes. The Scouts acted as the search parties. Skipper got caught very quickly and I did after a while, when I was spotted by Tommy and Brian. I think Robert Wright caught me!

The evening campfire was an incredible success – one of the best ever. Every song was blasted out with enthusiasm - The Tramp, Small town in Germany, etc



were all done to perfection. I sat beside Micro and my actions tended to 'collide' quite spectacularly with his.

Goodies (i.e. Mrs Morris's cakes) were hungrily consumed.

**Monday 6th August**

**ASS Hike**

**Day 10**

This time, I would defeat Kenny and get away at a reasonable time. This time, I would overwhelm him with organization and depart the campsite before he could wrap his time-consuming tentacles round our arrangements. This time, I was defeated yet again. I got up at 7 o'clock and found my ASS hikers mostly up and ready to go. At the Scouters shelter, I made them their meal then hurried them away to get kits etc. So far so good. But wait – horror. Their supplies are incomplete – we'll have to visit Inverness. Time-consuming, yes, but not a disaster. Well, our pleasant frame of mind didn't last long for Kenny soon declared that he needed to get supplies and, therefore, needed the minibus to put the supplies in since all the cars etc were dead. Aghhh! Efficient, well organized Glip retreats utterly defeated, a quivering, snivelling wreck of a being. Kenny wins again. Kenny would come in with us to Inverness and buy his supplies, load them on the bus and walk back. Simple enough, but we know Kenny.

It was no surprise, therefore, when we discovered the supermarket on the outskirts to be shut. This meant stopping in the centre. Finally at 10:30, I was ready to depart with the hikers. They would do the same route as the explorers so I drove out the same way. When we were nearly there, we were blocked by a hole in the road! The workmen put two planks of wood over for us, but it seemed pretty narrow as we crossed. Visions of half submerged minibuses flashed before the eyes.



At the start of the hike, there was a further delay when I suddenly decided to inspect rucksack contents. A. Davies was guilty of carrying the most silly things – large torches, cans, books, blankets, shoe polish etc all appeared and got 'confiscated' into the bus. As a result, the hikers left at 11:50. The group consisted of A. Davies, A. Wilson, G. Bolster, A. Banister and S. Thomson.

I rushed back to the campsite for lunch and then the Cubs were transported away. While Skipper was away transporting them and collecting Moira, Benny, Mus and I cleaned up our shelter. Our work was interrupted by a strange weak plea for help. At first, I thought it was a 'come on' but it sounded too **emotional for that**....I walked over without too much hurry and discovered **Wee Mus** lying on the ground and weakly pleading for help. I must admit I got quite a shock because

- it was the only time I've ever seen Wee Mus not smiling and the transformation to an injured Wee Mus is dramatic and
- he had obviously hurt himself badly and had lain there totally alone and scared for several minutes.

He had fallen out of the tree and banged his head on the altar fire or the ground. I was first on the scene followed quickly by Mus, Benny, Robbie and Kenny. Kenny shot off at speed to the farmhouse for an ambulance. Wee Mus was complaining of a sore back and so I checked as far as I could for spinal injuries..... **Big Mus**

went up to the road to direct the ambulance which drove right into the campsite and up to the kitchen shelter - much to our surprise. The ambulancemen checked the patient extremely thoroughly before moving him onto the stretcher because, as I learnt later, one can have a damaged back but still have feelings in the leg. No one test can be used to show that back damage has not occurred.

Anyway, [Wee](#) Mus was put into the ambulance and [Big](#) Mus went with him. The ambulance, light flashing, then shot off leaving bits of the exhaust behind on the campsite. [Big](#) Mus told us later it speeded into town once it got onto the road with sirens blaring. Skipper must have had a heart attack because it passed him going out, as he came into the campsite. One final touch of macabre humour – the registration letters of the ambulance were MUS!

During the afternoon, once activities got back to normal, several Scouts started work clearing the canal paths. Others started work on various ASS tests. The Explorer hikers had to write up logs of course, and this included Kenny Kerr who had failed miserably to write up his previous ASS hike up Loch Lomond. I locked him in the hut to make sure the work got done, threatening dreadful fates if he failed to complete the task.

As the afternoon wore on, it got quite windy, despite being sunny, and Pucker's little mansion of a kitchen shelter, which consisted of the first two-room shelter ever seen at summer camp, could stand the strain no more. It collapsed in a heap causing complete chaos. Pucker and co spent the afternoon reconstructing.

As may be gathered, the PLs had returned from their canoe trip (GG was the only PL not to go). Their expedition had not been without incident either. They had left at 4:45 on Sunday and paddled down to the lock gates where they carried their canoes round the locks and past the weir. They were now on Loch Dochfour where it was quite choppy. Mr Haldane and his friends were on the shore to greet them, but whether it was by coincidence or design I do not know.

They camped in a sheltered bay and pitched Ronnie's Mark 5 Force 10 and had tea. After that, they lit a huge fire which must have attracted attention since they were disturbed early on by some old chap who wasn't chuffed about their fire and sent them packing. As a result, they had breakfast in Loch Ness. Loch Ness was very choppy compared with Loch Dochfour.

On the way back, Ronnie held his canoe over the weir - half suspended in space. Unfortunately, Douglas Haldane got too near to this same weir and ended up going over. He survived, but his canoe was holed quite badly. The paddle got stuck upright on the weir and Ronnie had to walk along the weir to retrieve it, then rescue Douglas. Ronnie patched up the canoe with tape, which sufficed, and Douglas's gear was shared amongst the other canoes.

During the walk around the weir, Pucker managed to fall and cut his leg. At last, totally shattered, they reached camp to see an ambulance speeding away. For the rest of the afternoon, the PLs were well out of action and lay like stranded fish on the beach, recovering from their ordeals!

Meanwhile, tea had to be made. Benny and I visited Guy Grant and the Cosmic Cowboys.

After tea, since Calaidh House was functioning again, I drove Skipper, Moira, Douglas MacEwan, Deedie, Brian McCready, Tommy Boag, Talcolm and Micro into Inverness.

The 4 APLs left us to go and see the film – James Bond in a space adventure the name of which eludes me (Moonraker). Skipper and I visited [Wee Mus](#) in hospital. He was in the children's ward and the normal wide, cheesy grin was back again, and he was obviously much better.

I dropped Skipper and wife at a hotel where they were eating out, then Micro, Talc and I drove on in order to check campers i.e. the hikers. It was a very nice evening and we sang campfire songs on the journey - especially 'the tramp' and 'small town'. The sun dipped low and blazed a glorious orange to contrast with the blue sky above. Lovely. As we drove along the track, we saw dozens of rabbits scurrying away. The hikers were already in pit when we arrived and had enjoyed their day so far. We didn't stay long and drove back, frightening the rabbits again. Talc insisted that we stop so that he could catch one, but he did not get his way.

Back at Inverness, we picked up the APLs although it took a while to trace them. Micro went searching and we then lost him. However, we all got united at last and we sped off as the APLs described the film, which had been a hoot apparently – a spoof on spy thrillers.

Back at camp, we found that the place had been invaded by French Scouts.

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> August**

**Day 11**

Yet again, Kenny was woken up by Kevin who wanted morning stores. Kevin .... was a great success this camp ..... During the morning, it was T & T.

In the afternoon, Kenny went off to collect the ASS hikers, and I spent the afternoon in a canoe up to the bridge and back. On my return, I found the ASS hikers returned, minus one compass.

I had my evening meal chez Haldane's.

After tea, Kenny Kerr retreated to his pit feeling rather ill with a sore throat. I was not really needed during the evening, so I yattered to Kenny in his tent about films mainly. By then, it was dark and, on my way back, I yattered quite a while with Brian McCready at D. Haldane's kitchen shelter, again about films..... I think next year's PL's will be superb.

Back at the Scouter's shelter, [Big Mus provided some disappointing news which was a bit of a damper on spirits.](#)

**Wednesday 8th August    Last Full Day**

**Day 12**

During breakfast, the Scouters received a surprise in the shape of one Rivet, fully fitted out in climbing gear and ready to go up a hill. The Eagles had 'tricked' him into thinking there was an Everest climb on. I had already heard about the trick since I had passed the Eagle's site earlier on. I gave Rivet a saucepan of water to get his revenge. Unfortunately, he didn't even get that right and returned rather wet. Typically, his rucksack stayed in our shelter for most of the day.

In the morning, Benny ran a France versus Scotland football match, which gradually developed into rugby, then into warfare. I was getting a lift into town with Kenny but, as usual, Kenny said he was ready then got distracted or remembered something else. I commuted between the 'game' and Kenny's series of 'Ready' calls. When we actually did get into Inverness, I visited the bank and Kenny shopped. We then collected [Wee](#) Mus from hospital. He seemed rather reluctant to leave the comforts of the children's ward.

After lunch, most people visited Inverness for final present buying. I stayed in camp with a few others. Dome disappeared into his tent and slept most of the afternoon! Meanwhile, his kitchen shelter had collapsed due to torrential rain just after lunch. Robbie and I managed to get it up again by ourselves. The others in camp were Kenny Kerr, who was still ailing in pit, Tommy Boag, Douglas Haldane and Micro.

Micro and I visited Kenny to cheer him up. We talked about various things like chemistry, Scouting for Boys, etc. When I left, I found Tommy heating a large boiler of water ready for the great clean up, so we talked for a while. Robbie and Pucker joined us.

During tea, skipper composed the Scouters' song and I censored it!

The big tidy up started after tea. I checked the equipment as it came in and sent most of it back. Shug got quite annoyed at one stage and stormed down to confront me semi-seriously. In the background, Ronnie played martial music on his car cassette, and Mrs Thomson kept calling me a slave driver and hard taskmaster.

I was rather looking forward to final campfire since the standard of our campfires had been very good throughout camp. Unfortunately, the French invited us round to their campfire. I visited Kenny Kerr instead.

Strange things happened that night in the Bell. Kenny seemed to lose his airbed and sleeping bag. Very strange. Shaving cream was involved at one stage.

**Thursday, 9th August**

**Final Day**

**Day 13**

- 4.30 Kenny, who was now cold, dug Glip in the ribs and retrieved his sleeping bag.
- 8.30 Benny wakes up and tells Kenny it's 8.30. "Ha Ha," says Kenny. "Can't fool me. It's 7.30." Benny shrugs.
- 8.35 Glip tells Kenny it's 8.30. Kenny thinks a minute and checks watch.
- 8.40 Exit one horrified Kenny blowing three whistles and getting all flustered.

Thus, the final day started. Breakfast was communal, as is traditional, and afterwards the grand strike took place. All through the morning, Kenny got more pessimistic. "We'll never make it," he groaned.

After a communal lunch, the High School white minibus, which Kenny had summoned the previous night, appeared on the canal bank of all places. Obviously, it had missed the campsite. The driver decided to drive down the bank which was a 45° slope. I had visions of yet another knackered minibus, but amazingly the driver succeeded.

Camp awards were made. Micro got best camper, Mus got best novice, and ferrets won best patrol.



The BR lorry arrived to give Kenny a heart attack. The driver was a real fine fellow who was very helpful to us. Everything possible went into the van, including pioneering wood, two surviving bikes, and the Scouts! Remnants of bike now reside in the hut. **Big** Mus and I got in the front of the BR lorry. Ronnie took APLs?, Skipper drove Calaidh House, and Kenny and his pal drove the High School bus. ....

We drove through Inverness - the driver hoping the police wouldn't spot us, especially when somebody opened the back and waved to pedestrians. Our merry chauffeur drove us into the station and right up the platform, destroying platform signs en route.

With PLs straining muscles and vocal chords, we soon loaded the guards van and I went off to pay for the BR lorry. En route, I paused to rescue Deedie's Scout belt which had fallen between platform and train. An adjusted coat hanger sufficed perfectly.

The train left on time and I got the records up-to-date.

Halfway through our journey, Bod discovered some German Girl Scouts and swapped his neckerchief. This, of course, started off an epidemic, which is probably what we could of got off the German neckerchiefs. They were revolting and grotty. Before reaching Queen Street, I replaced the worst ones with Everest scarves.

The unloading of the guards van took longer than expected, but, once that was done, we led the Scouts through a deserted Glasgow and caught the 7:50 PM train. The troop was crammed out of the way into the back coach, and [Big Mus](#) and I sat in peace well away from the hordes.

At Gourock, ..... I waited until everybody had been collected by parents, Kevin being the last. Then we went up to headquarters where we found no minibuses or Robert Wright. After a visit home for tea, I returned to find both minibuses and Robert. Our bad luck with vehicles had continued to the final possible moment. The white minibus has lost its water hose during the journey and had delayed them.

Anyway, they had made it so I helped with the unloading.



## Conclusion

The camp had been very successful and a vast improvement on the previous year. On the debit side were the following. The weather was not particularly good and it was windy and chilly most of the time. The hike routes, as a result, turned out to be undemanding and rather tame. Also, the Everest climbs had to be cancelled.....

Apart from that, there were many good things to be said. The standard of patrol sites was a vast improvement from last year..... The PLs ..... acted responsibly on the whole. The APL's were mostly superb and I look forward to see how they function as PLs next year. The general camp atmosphere was good. Croquet and cycles proved a great success. Canoeing on the canal was also a great success. Golf, archery, badminton etc all had followings. There was nobody really objectionable at camp and the leaders didn't need to look over their shoulders all the time.

I certainly enjoyed camp. I got to know several Scouts quite well and have interesting talks with several. It was probably not a 'magic' camp as far as the Scouts were concerned, mainly because the weather was so-so. However, I may be wrong.