



Ian Pinkerton

The Editor Meets.....

- Q** Bob, you are a well-known face in the club, where do you come from and how long have you been a member?
- A** I was originally born at Bushbury, Wolverhampton to Scots parents from Baillieston. My father was then working with the Goodyear Tyre Co. until I was six when they moved back to Scotland. I've been a member of the H.F. since February 1983 after starting hill walking in 1975 with work mates.
- Q** You contribute frequently to Pack Chat with articles on wild flowers etc. Is this something you have always had an interest in, or did it just happen?
- A** I suppose I began to learn about flowers when I was in the Boy Scouts. I won a prize book, which I still have, when I was at Scout Camp in Guernsey 1948. However, it was walking with the club and listening to birdman MacCulloch and flower girls Laing and Galitzka that really started me off in recent years.
- Q** What sort of music do you listen to? Do you have a favourite piece of music or song?
- A** When listening to music my tastes vary between Classical Music and Trad Jazz. In the late '60's I was a great fan of Chris Barber's Jazz Band. I also like Scot's Songs and some Gaelic Songs. I don't really have any one favourite piece but might lean towards Tchaikovsky's Sympathetique.
- Q** As weekend secretary you have visited the Lakes on more than one occasion. Is there one place there that you like the most?
- A** Keswick is a good centre for a lot of things, or Ambleside as second choice.
- Q** What other interests do you have away from walking?
- A** My other interests away from walking is membership of The Old Glasgow Club, a Glasgow local history society which I joined in 1962. I was also a keen Club Cyclist at one time, though I don't go out much now. Before retiring I reawakened an early interest in making wooden model boats and since retiring have done a little watercolour painting.
- Q** Given a glorious summer's day, where in Scotland would you like to be? In other words your most loved place?
- A** I have two favourite places: Oban and Pitlochry, one for the sea and islands the other for its hills and lochs.
- Q** What do you watch on T.V.?
- A** I don't watch T.V. very much other than wildlife and walking programmes.
- Q** What is the best bit of advice you have ever had?
- A** Whatever it was, I've forgotten it now!
- Q** What would you like most to change about yourself?
- A** My unfitness to climb as I used to.
- Q** What is your pet hate?
- A** The least said about that, the better.
- Q** What worries you about the future in today's world?
- A** The great slide away from Scottish Heritage and Traditions. We are being ground under more so by Eurovisions than we ever were by an English based government.
- Q** Do you think the club has changed much since you first joined?
- A** Since I joined there has been a fair turnover in membership, but the biggest change has been the intensification of Sunday Walking to Munro Bagging. Once the 'B' walks were more like easy Saturday walks.

A It does, but on the other hand, "Ticking off Munros" takes the Munro bashers into parts of Scotland they would not otherwise have seen and surely something of the surroundings would rub off on them.

Q Have you a favourite mountain or area here in Scotland?

A Without a doubt Arnisdale On Loch Hourn, with Knoydart and Ladhar Bheinn across the loch and Beinn Sgritheall immediately behind Arnisdale.

Q Can you identify many or any changes in the H.E. Club since you joined?

A I think the main changes arise from the increase in the ownership of private cars. When I first joined the club, public transport was used for most rambles which limited the scope of the rambles, at the same time there were more special buses, but they too had their limitations. Gradually car rambles started to appear on the programmes and the number of special buses decreased, until we reached today's position. I think the club has lost something in the change. There was a more friendly spirit in the club when I first joined, the people who went on rambles and special buses were the same as those who attended club nights and everyone knew everybody else. The average age of club members, when I joined, was I think lower than it is today, perhaps we live longer now.

Q A lot of people enjoy a 'Jack Cowie Walk'. How do you select them - from maps, books, leaflets etc?

A Yes, maps, books and leaflets but also from previous experience of walks.

Q Do you think the club should do something to mark the millennium?

A Yes - just what - I do not know!

Q Would you like Scotland to become fully independent?

A No.

Q If you were starting all over again Jack, would it be even more walking or maybe something quite different?

A Definitely more walking!

When I was a boy in Scotland I was fond of everything that was wild. I loved to wander in the fields to hear the birds sing, and along the shore to gaze and wonder at the shells and seaweeds, eels and crabs in the pools when the tide was low—and best of all to watch the waves in awful storms thundering on the black headlands and craggy ruins of old Dunbar Castle.

John Muir 1838 - 1914

ALONG THE CORRIDOR AND..... UP THE STAIRS