

# Reflections on a Presidency

## How it all began?

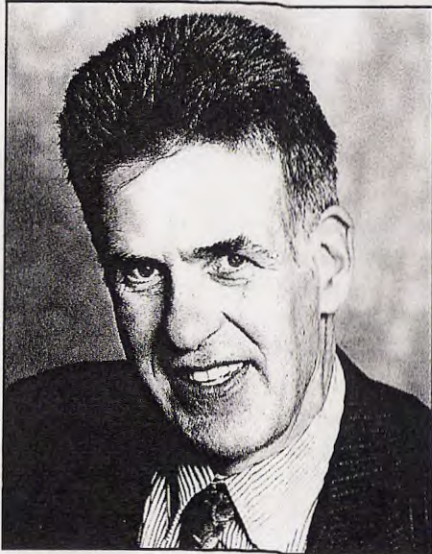
One afternoon, eating my lunch on the hill, Jean Kennedy mentioned she was giving up as Saturday Outings Secretary. Could I take over? I agreed. Subsequently, I was asked if I would agree to be proposed as Junior Vice President. Again, casually, I agreed.

## Second thoughts.

Six years on, now March 2001, and I was about to start my three year stint as President. This, unfortunately, coincided with the onset of the foot and mouth epidemic. I felt devastated. I had seen the damage caused by a previous epidemic to the health and activities of a walking club in England. Then came the detailed problems. One frustrating day I checked an alternative walk. All clear when I started, it was shut when I finished. However, the Club coped: we changed walks; we introduced the hotline for walking information and, above all, we demonstrated the core strength of the Club, which I believe to be the quality and number of leaders.

## The silver lining!

The Club found Dunkeld and Birnam. Relatively free from foot and mouth restrictions, the walking was pleasant, surprisingly quick to access and the refreshments enjoyable. We keep going back!



## Land reform.

However, it doesn't rain in the west of Scotland, it pours! During the foot and mouth problems we were beginning to debate the draft Bill on Access Rights. The first draft was severely flawed, and biased in favour of the **l a n d o w n e r s**. Fortunately the irresponsible antics of a small minority of landowners and farmers during the foot and mouth restrictions showed that this draft needed to be changed. This was helped by successful pressure on the Scottish Executive and Parliament by both the tourism industry and walkers. We have muscle and can write ten thousand letters.

We in HF did our bit towards that total.

## The team.

After that initiation, being President has had less high drama. People get on and do things. One illustration is Sunday buses. Struggling in 2001, they have gone from strength to strength. Thank you Stephen. Then again, there's the web site. We need new members and the web site is bringing interest from younger people, but that's also hard work for our membership secretary and others. Thank you Tom, Moya and Jean. All the Committee do their bit. Thank you. The key is that it's a team job.

By the way, we need a new Social Secretary. And I can guarantee that you will not be asked to be Junior Vice President for at least three years!

*Keith Moody*

## Jean Kennedy talks to Ian Pinkerton



- Q. Jean are you from Glasgow, how long are you a member of HF?  
 A. Yes - born and still living in the East End. Joined the club Easter 1982
- Q. Do you have any time for hobbies, between walking, cycling and dancing?  
 A. I am a keen a bowler and won my first singles competition last year. I also enjoy reading, poetry and dabble in bird watching. Love singing - not enjoyed by everyone!
- Q. What do you like on TV, any particular favourite programme?  
 A. I enjoy quiz programmes but my favourite was Watercolour Challenge.
- Q. Is there any singer you really like, what's your kind of music?  
 A. I like Jose Carreras. Classical music.
- Q. Best bit of advice that you ever had?  
 A. Never to let the sun go down on my wrath. To remember everything is not black and white -there are shades of grey!
- Q. What really annoys Jean Kennedy? 'Not silly questions I hope!'  
 A. People who drop litter on our streets and dog owners who do not clean up after their pets.
- Q. Would there be one thing you would like to change in our society?  
 A. Distribution of wealth to eradicate the terrible deprivation of children in the worlds' poorest areas.
- Q. Back to walking, where is the one hill or area you'd like to return to?  
 A. Many happy memories of holidays in the Glen Shiel area.
- Q. If someone asked you the best walk one hour from Glasgow, where would you say to go?  
 A. Any of the Luss Hills.
- Q. Is there a walk or trek that you have not done, that you would like to do?  
 A. I still have to climb Beinn Eighe.
- Q. Are you looking forward to being President?  
 A. The short answer is YES.
- Q. Has the club changed a lot over your time as a member?  
 A. I think the most changes are on Saturdays. In 1982 when I joined there were a fair number of interest visits. The term 'handbag' brigade was bandied around much to our annoyance. Gradually this has changed and we have a varied programme of flat walks and hills. I also think 'Munro bagging' spoiled the club week-ends but am glad the week-ends are now Club weekends having 'A', 'B' and 'C' walks. Tuesday evenings are still a good meeting point. We would like to see them better attended.
- Q. Describe Jean Kennedy in 3 words.  
 A. Enthusiastic, Alive, Impatient.
- Q. Is there a bit of advice you'd like to pass on to young walkers?  
 A. Carry a map and compass on all walks. Learn to use them. Don't take chances on our hills and mountains - enjoy them.

Thank you Jean and good luck in your Presidency.....*Ian Pinkerton*