



The Munro Society

NEWSLETTER

No. 66, April 2026



Starting the descent of Beinn an Dòthaidh above Bridge of Orchy on a sparkling day in mid-February

© Norman McNab

President's Report

Oliver Bartrum



I feel more like a foreign correspondent than the President of TMS while writing this report. Catherine and I had been looking forward to escaping the endless rain and cloud in favour of blue skies, new scenery and historical sites with a trip to Jordan. It exceeded our expectations in all respects. The highlight was a four-day 60km walk from Dana to Petra, staying in desert camps overnight. Cold winds accompanied glorious sunshine in the daytime. Every item of clothing was required at night when the temperature plummeted. The ancient Nabataean city of Petra (ca 400BC-106AD) is a UNESCO world heritage site renowned for its rock-cut architecture. Arriving at these ancient remains after four days of walking through an astonishing landscape was very special. Like all other visitors to

Petra, we were left wondering how these Nabataeans achieved such architectural and engineering feats so long ago and, seemingly, with so little.

We went on to Wadi Rum, an area of extraordinary contrasts: rather like a 'younger' (500m years) desert version of Sutherland (3bn years) with dramatic sandstone outcrops and cliffs, narrow gorges and stone arches rising out of huge sand dunes. Suilven and Stac Pollaidh would not look out of place in such surroundings.

Unfortunately our return to Amman on 28th February coincided with the latest Israeli/US attacks on Iran. All flights were cancelled so I am filing this report from the Middle East via the Secretary - uncertain as to when we will get back to the UK. Our thoughts are very much with the Jordanian people, an incredibly friendly and welcoming nation, who are already

suffering the fallout of these hostilities as the tourist trade collapses. It is obviously worse for those



directly under attack, but it was clear how quickly and how severely neighbouring countries are either drawn into the conflict and/or suffer harsh economic consequences. Our local Jordanian guide had already been stood down from his next trip due to its immediate

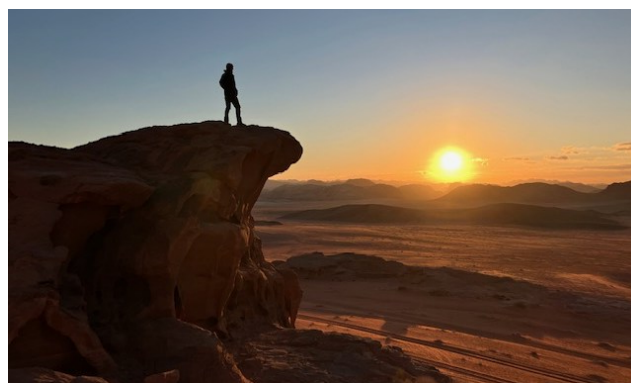
cancellation by the organisers.

Caught on the periphery of hostilities, one realises how powerless many of those directly involved must feel and how fortunate we are to live in a country untroubled by such disputes and foreign interventions. On which note, I look forward to returning home soon and to Scottish trips that I have planned this spring. First to the Loch Tay area in March and then to the Isle of Rùm in April. Some repeat Munros and Corbetts plus unclimbed Grahams are on my hill lists.

Turning to Society matters, over the last three months, the committee has been busy with promotion of the Society at the 41st Dundee Mountain Film Festival (DMFF) in early December and again at Mountain Aid's 'Skills for the Hills Day' held in Stirling on 7th March. Our Vice President, Shona Marshall gave the Irvine Butterfield Lecture at DMFF in the presence of Betty, her remarkable four-legged companion, on the Full House that they completed in just four years; 'A Dogged Full House' it certainly was. Mention should also be made of Past President Alf Barnard, who is now on the organising committee for the DMFF, and to the Society members, especially Keith Mathieson, who helped set up and man the TMS display over the two days. Anne Butler, in her capacity as President of Mountaineering Scotland, was also speaking at the Fort William Mountain Festival in February with her talk 'Time Well Spent'. Hopefully Anne will give this same talk at a future Robin Campbell Memorial Lecture to TMS members.

The Society's programme of meets for this year was published in the December Newsletter. We have received comments from a few members about the

cost of some of these meets; Corran in July in particular. For those who might feel that paying over £200 is excessive, it should be known that this was in response to requests from the majority of regular meet attendees who stated that they would prefer to pay more for accommodation that offered better and more spacious facilities. Many older members remain dedicated to climbing the hills with dodgy or replacement joints and assorted ailments, but would prefer not to tackle upper bunks if possible. Meet venues this year reflect this change, and the locations are based, as usual, on the preferences of those polled - the regular attendees. There is no intention to make meets beyond the price of any member. We will continue to provide a range of meets to appeal to as many members as possible. I would encourage any member who hasn't attended a meet to come along and, if you are wavering, please do email me or the Meet Secretary with suggestions as to what would persuade you to attend. Work continues on the new TMS website which we hope to launch soon. The site will include a members' section for the booking of Society meets and events and a facility for new members to join online rather than download and post or email an application form. Further details will be sent out to members electronically so, as always, please notify the Secretary of any change to your contact email address. For the small number of members without email, postal correspondence will continue. As spring arrives and we return to the hills, let's spare a thought for those who are not so fortunate and who are unable to enjoy the wilderness and mountains of their own home countries. For us more fortunate, I look forward to seeing as many members as possible at the meets (Glencoe in June, Corran in July and Ullapool in September) or at the AGM and Annual Dinner on 24th October.



Photos by kind permission Catherine Bartrum

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April 2026

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Welcome to the spring newsletter. Lots of news as usual, although we start with some fond memories. We remember past President Eleanore Hunter, who sadly passed away last October, with an obituary written by her close friend, Irene Leckie. We also remember Dave Hewitt, who was very well known in the hillwalking community, although not a TMS member, and his sudden death in November came as a real shock. Moving on to happier times, Phil Massey records Dave Chapman’s Full House in Glen Affric, and Mike Weedon goes back a few years (to 1980) for Part 4 of his Cairngorms adventures. Then Robert H MacDonlad muses over why people get lost in the hills, and Roger Drye visits the Flow Country and the North-west Highlands. It’s always great to hear from new members, and Neville Wiseman recalls his early days in the hills, illustrated with some superb old photos. Phil Massey’s back again with an account of Irish hills washed down with pints of Guinness, and Julian Foot writes of his delight at being able to summit Kilimanjaro last summer. Meantime, Andrew Fraser has been doing some reading and tells us of his favourite mountain literature, while Alan Rowan finds connections with Vikings and punk rockers on a walk to a bothy hidden behind Macleod’s Tables. It’s all rounded off with the Lindertis Diary, the Postbag, and a review of *The Corbetts* book by Anne Butler. Please send material for the August issue **by 30th June 2026** to simed44.ds@gmail.com (max. 1,500 words). As always, the earlier an item is received, the better the chance of it appearing in the next Newsletter. Photos should be sent as separate jpg files (**max. 2MB per photo**), with suitable captions (preferably in the file name) and not as embedded files. Also, why not drop a line to the Postbag section – we like to hear from you!

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