

Another month, another year.....

One of the unsung successes of the MBA is how it attracts decent, competent and hardworking outdoors folk to organise and undertake bothy projects and bothy maintenance. It's no easy task to



Faindourain, 1988 calendar by Angus Kirk

organise the renovation of a remote bothy like the Tarf Hotel or Strathchailleach, nor to undertake the maintenance at any bothy, but particularly those that are popular - Shenavall and Corroul come to mind. But add to the actual work the nature of the location, wild and lonely, and the difficulty of getting volunteers, supplies, tools & materials to site, and the size of the task increases significantly. The MBA is truly blessed with the calibre of volunteers who step forward to meet the task.

But many of these people would not step forward if the organisation itself were shambolic. The MBA's administrators and bureaucrats must be every bit as good as the project organisers and workparty

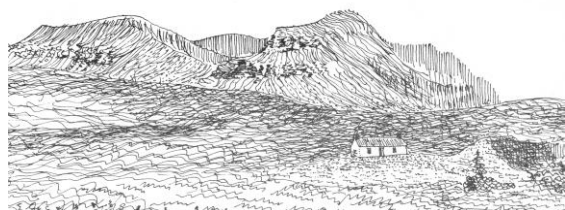


Coire Fionnaraich, 1989 by Nicki Orton

volunteers. The MBA is also blessed with the quality of administrator and bureaucrat that it attracts to turn the necessary wheels of paperwork.



Kearvaig 1988, by Denis Mollison



Maol Bhuidhe, 1985 by Crispin Worthington

In fact, the MBA attracts competent and skilled people all round. This article unashamedly celebrates the skills and capability of a group of members whose eyes, mind and fingers contributed to another area of MBA success - the black & white, 7 illustrations per year **MBA Calendar** produced from 1980 until 2006. 2007 saw a refresh of the format, with high quality digital colour photography enabling the MBA Calendar to move into the 21st century, and to a 13 colour picture format - it is now produced (at a still value-for-money price) in a page per month format from a variety of excellent photographs submitted for the Calendar Editor to ponder over.

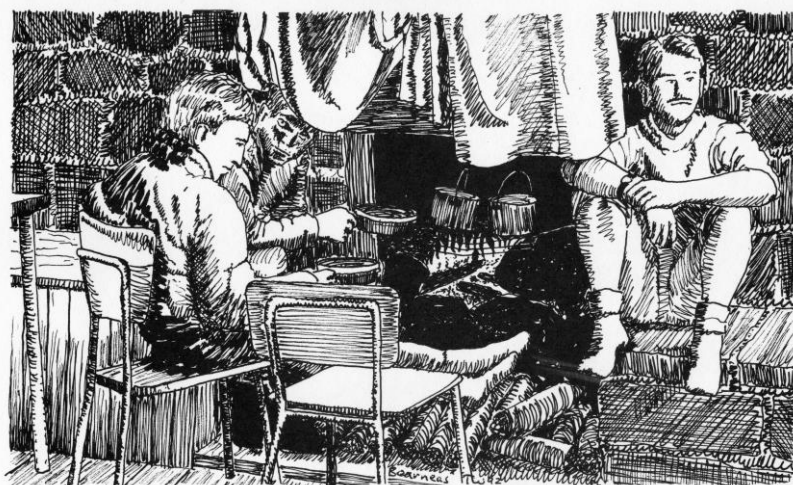


Kettleton Byre, 1994 by Kevin Borman

In its B&W format, each bothy drawing graced 400 or more walls for two months before the months and then the year moved on. No doubt as December became January, some calendars were filed away, other found their way to recycling or landfill; to me it is a shame that such wonderful artwork only has a

two month life. Some drawings do get a second airing, Andy Mayhew and his predecessor Journal Editors have used some of the drawings to illustrate our quarterly publication, and some drawings have added interest to our Annual Report and other publications. One or two drawings have appeared elsewhere - Colin Brash, an activist in our South of Scotland Area, had connections with Millrace Publishing, and at least one of his calendar drawings (of an anonymous but characterful bothy fireplace) graced one of the fliers and one of the book markers that this (sadly now defunct) publishing house distributed. This article attempts to give other drawings a second airing.

There is not a lot that can be said about the B&W calendar, it was a simple but effective format, the drawings speak for themselves. Inevitably, there are obviously a few statistics that can trotted out - the fact that the Railway Pension Scheme provides my income gives me the opportunity, the rain blowing against the window on this grey, stormy February day gives me the incentive, and an Excel spreadsheet gives me the easy means to generate these statistics, so here goes:



Inside Bearnais bothy, 1983 by Tim White

185 drawings were included in 27 years of calendars, contributed by 29 artists. Most prolific of the contributors were David Arthur, Peter Bailey, Colin Brash, Alistair Dickson, John Mitchell and Crispin Worthington (who all made it into double figures), and the most 'artist-friendly' bothies, each

illustrated four times over the years, were Bearnais (including the Bearnais fireplace drawing above), Peanmeanach, Staoineag, Suardalen and the now closed bothy of Alladale. Over the years the calendar has contributed healthily to the MBA's income, although I do not have sufficient copies of back accounts to compile that particularly boring statistic. But long may its success continue in the new format.



White Laggan, 1983 by Arthur Mathews

Finally thanks must be recorded to the Calendar Editors over the years – Eric Dickson, Stuart Letford, Andy Mayhew, Denis Mollison and Tim White, and to the Calendar Distributors Tony Blackburn, David and Christine Martin, Paul Osborne and Eric Pow (hopefully this is a complete list of calendar volunteers)

Richard Genner, February 2016

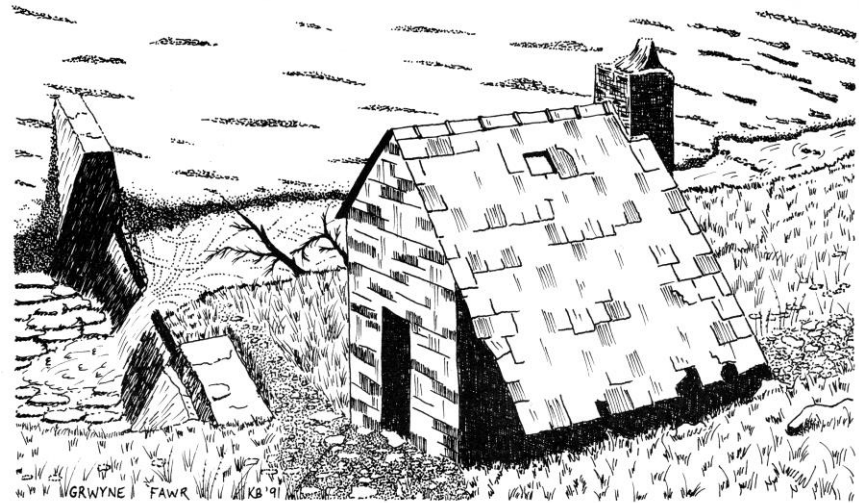
Another airing for a few of the other calendar drawings:



Resourie, 1988 by Arthur Mathews



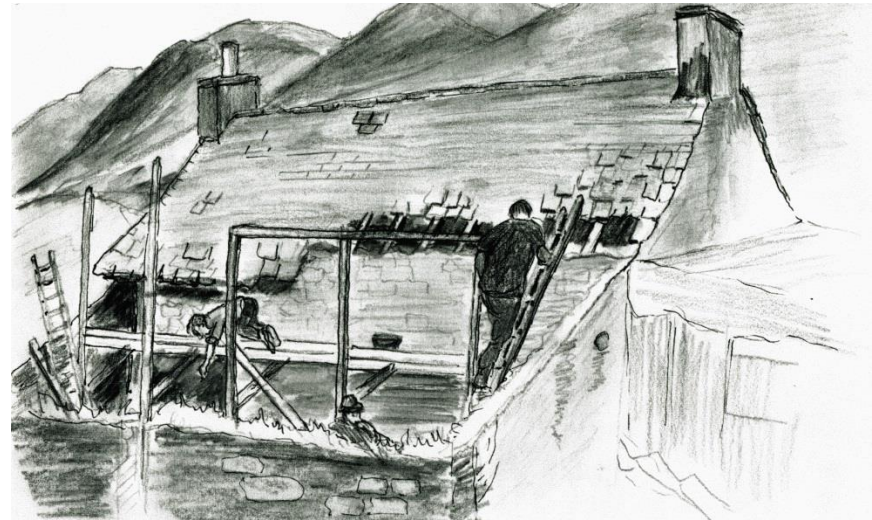
A rare drawing of bothying at night, Guirdil, 1996 by Nicki Orton



Grwyne Fawr, 1992 by Kevin Borman



Greg's Hut, Cross Fell, 2000 by Colin Brash



An infrequent calendar illustration of a workparty : A'Chuil, 2006 by Doreen Heffer