



THE ULYSSES TRUST

Winter 2022 Newsletter



INSIDE THIS EDITION

30TH ANNIVERSARY - CADOGAN HALL CELEBRATION EVENT
BRISTOL UAS VISIT NORWAY TO RETRACE OP. GUNNERSIDE
CADETS FROM SIKH ACADEMY CCF EXPLORE SNOWDONIA
RESERVISTS FROM 156 RLC REG CLIMB MOUNT KENYA



SINCE 1992 WE HAVE SUPPORTED OVER 40,000 CADETS AND RESERVISTS TO UNDERTAKE EXPEDITIONS AND ADVENTUROUS TRAINING THROUGHOUT THE WORLD



THE ULYSSES TRUST

Chairman's Comment

I was delighted that the charity had the opportunity to celebrate its 30th Anniversary in style at Cadogan Hall in London earlier this year; the Trust is most grateful to Vice Patron Viscount Chelsea who hosted the event. It was great to see many members of the charity team who do so much to make The Ulysses Trust such a success. You will note from the pictures on the front cover of this newsletter our volunteers wearing their newly-issued Trust badges at the event with pride! Additionally, it was great to meet and catch up with a range of our supporters. As always, the cadets who attended the event stole the show - thank you 282 (East Ham) and 56 (Woolwich) ATC Squadrons for making it such a brilliant evening. Moreover, I was very pleased that the Trust was able to present the 2021 HRH The Prince of Wales Expedition Award to 2344 (Longbenton) ATC Squadron at the event; many thanks to Vice Patron Air Chief Marshal Sir Simon Bryant for presenting the award.

Looking at the Trust's operations, the Reserves and university cadets have now returned to pre-pandemic levels of expedition activity. Indeed, a gold star goes to the university cadets who seem to be making up for lost time! I am delighted that this is the case. On the cadet side, activity has picked up but it is still short of pre-pandemic levels. Additionally, most of the cadet expeditions are still UK-bound. It is clear that cadet infrastructure has really suffered during the pandemic and will take time to regenerate.



The Chair enjoying the Haute Route (Chamonix to Zernatt), having just descended from the Col du Chardonnet.

Moreover, families' straitened circumstances are clearly having an impact. The Trust is doing all it can to ameliorate the position, with the Grant Applications Committee taking a very generous interpretation of the grant guidelines for cadets and awarding larger grants than previously.

The New Horizons fundraising campaign is going well and will run into the Spring next year. Over £1.7M has been secured in donations and pledges. The Trust has now an 'umbrella relationship' with Team Forces and an arrangement is in place with Microsoft Defence (UK), who now support the charity; this is covered further on page 7 of this newsletter. Other corporate organisations are also interested in assisting the Trust's cadet support, noting the potential for generating social value (ie improving lives).

My engagement with Ride London 100 this year seems a distant memory but I was delighted that completing the event on three occasions brought in over £10,000 for the Trust in sponsorship. Have you thought about doing something similar for the Trust or your expedition? The charity has pulled together some ideas for raising money and these are shown on the Trust's website in the 'Support Us' section. Do please consider taking on such a challenge in 2023 in support of the Trust - the charity would love to hear from you if you do.

To conclude, on behalf of the Trustees, I should like to wish you and your families a great Christmas and best wishes for 2023.

AVM Nick Kurth CBE FRGS
Chair of Trustees

Northern Lenana Masters 2022

In July 2022, 16 Army Reservists from 156 Regiment RLC deployed to Kenya to summit Point Lenana (4,985m), Mount Kenya.



The summer of 2022 saw a welcome return to overseas activities for Reservists. Ex: Northern Lenana Masters was considered ‘High Risk and Remote’ and at high altitude— a suitably challenging experience!

Following two training weekends in Snowdonia and the Lake District, the group felt ready for what was to come. The journey to Kenya was particularly eventful involving a missed connection, a surprise journey to Saudi, a stolen wallet and two lost hold bags.

Despite these hiccups, they eventually arrived in Nairobi and, following acclimatisation, the group drove to the Chogoria Gate (2,950m) to begin its expedition.

The first two days saw the Reservists hike above the natural tree line past the Nithi Falls (pictured above) to reach Lake Ellis at 3,455m. Pte Ryan Culshaw picks up the story.

“The team left the shores of Lake Ellis early in the morning on day three and was faced with the longest trek of the expedition. After a rather strenuous walk, the Gorges Valley eventually came into view. As the mist blanketing the valley started to clear, the magnificent, glassy waters of Lake Michaelson could be seen surrounded by imposing red cliffs. We descended down a steep, treacherous path to Lake Michaelson in order to allow for recuperation at a lower altitude overnight.



“The next morning, we were joined by several hyraxes (large guinea pig-like creatures) which could be seen scrambling around the rock face near camp. As we ascended towards Simba Col Camp (4,620m) and the altitude increased, the flora and fauna became more specialised and giant Lobelias could be seen with thick stems and large flower heads. At the end of day four, at Simba Col Camp, the temperature dropped below freezing and sleep became difficult.

“On the morning of day five, the group started their ascent to the summit. The hike took everyone over a moon-like landscape, uninhabitable for flora and fauna, with jagged rock and ice. The group finally summited Point Lenana around midday after a precipitous, rocky climb. The sense of achievement everyone felt at accomplishing such a fulfilling goal won’t be something that is easily forgotten. After taking endless photographs in an attempt to capture the beauty of the mountain, the group started their long, challenging descent towards Old Moses Camp.

“Day six saw everyone walk down the southern side of Mount Kenya along the Sirimon Route towards the collection point at Old Moses Camp. With tired legs, everyone clambered into the minibus and said their farewells to a wonderful team of porters and guides who had made their dream a reality.

“Completion of the Mount Kenya expedition was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for me. It’s what I joined the Army Reserve to do, to challenge myself and get outside of my comfort zone. I got to spend the time with a great bunch of people and it’s inspired me to travel more and explore new places.”



Read the full report on our website at www.ulyssesrust.co.uk

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Pte Ryan Culshaw, 238 (Sefton) Squadron, 156 Regiment RLC

Telemark Express 2022

*Following in the footsteps of a daring WW2 Norwegian Commando mission
14 members of Bristol UAS trekked through the Hardangervidda National Park*



Arriving in Oslo, they stocked up on the rations and gas canisters that would sustain them for the next five days. From here they caught trains and buses to arrive at the trail's start point (Halne) at lunchtime. They set off immediately on an 18km hike arriving at their lakeside campsite at 22:00 where they could replenish their water supplies.

Following a difficult cold night, the students returned to the trail. A multitude of terrain types were covered, including undulating hills and wooden bridges spanning small streams and rivers. Inevitably the rain came, but spirits were kept high until they reached their destination and celebrated with a morale-boosting campfire.

CHALLENGING TIMES

The next day was challenging for several members of the group as they completed 27km and arrived at their evening campsite with sore feet and plenty of aches and pains—worse was to come. The penultimate day of the hike required covering 32.7km in order to avoid an early start in the pouring rain the following day. This required the OCdts to maintain an initial pace of 4km/hr. Completing their gruelling trek at 21:30 the OCdts had a quick meal and turned in for the night with the satisfaction of a job well done.

The final day was spent in waterproofs. The objective was to reach Rjukan (the site of the infamous heavy water factory in WW2) in time to catch the bus back to Oslo at around 11:00. As they approached Rjukan, the Vemork powerplant was visible on the hillside. This was a huge boost for morale, and the group took some time to reflect on the remarkable journey made by the Norwegian commandos in WW2 in support of Op Gunnerside. Following a ride in a cable car the group completed their trek by arriving in Rjukan in good time to catch the buses back to Oslo and eventually return home.

LESSONS LEARNED

A quote from the expedition that stands out is by A/Plt Off Pate, who said: *"I learnt to communicate my internal struggles, rather than suffering in silence. The group decided to put me at the front to set a pace I was comfortable with, which made me feel supported. This boosted my morale and made the following days easier, despite the fact we were walking much further."*



*Read the full report on our website
at www.ulyssestrust.co.uk*

The summer of 2022 saw a surge in overseas expeditions undertaken by university units following the disruption caused by COVID-19. During the summer months, Officer Cadets (OCdts) have travelled all over Europe to climb mountains, sail the seas and undertake challenging treks - experiences that have been made possible thanks to the support of The Ulysses Trust.

Students from Bristol University Air Squadron (Bristol UAS) decided to take on a particularly tough challenge to test their mettle. The plan was to follow in the footsteps of the 'Heroes of Telemark' with an ambitious trekking expedition.

12 students and two instructors deployed to Norway in August to navigate through some of the most stunning scenery and best hiking routes in Europe, the Hardangervidda National Park.

"Across four years in Bristol UAS, this expedition stretched me the most."

A/Plt Off Charlie Cole | Bristol University Air Squadron

Snowdonia – Outward Bound 2022



On Monday 18th July 2022 16 cadets and 4 adult volunteers from the Pioneer CCF Company (formerly known as Khalsa Academy CCF) travelled from Stoke Poges to Aberdovey to complete a 5-day residential Adventure Training course.



GETTING READY

Things got off to a shaky start when several cadets got lost as they struggled to use a map and compass properly during a navigation exercise. However, more activities followed including a camping trip to the Peak District with various Adventure Training exercises, a day canoeing on the Thames, and another weekend in the Chilterns where the cadets completed the expedition element of their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. It was during these build-up activities that the cadets learnt more about teamwork, leadership and building confidence to face new challenges.

By gradually increasing the level of challenge involved in these activities the cadets were well prepared for their expedition to Snowdon.

THE EXPEDITION BEGINS

On day one, the cadets engaged in multiple challenging activities which stretched them out of their comfort zones. These included jumping off a high jetty and swimming in the sea, and preparations for a two-day wild camping expedition. These activities were designed to build resilience, teamwork and autonomy in planning.

The following days (which included the hottest day the UK has ever experienced) saw the cadets gain altitude for their mountain camping expedition. A variety of navigation and signalling activities were undertaken. These were followed by a canoe journey down the estuary for an evening campfire on the beach. The finale was a wall-climbing exercise to showcase their teamwork skills before they returned home.



Cdt L Cpl Nicola Chumber summed up the experience beautifully, *"I have learnt not to be afraid of trying new things and to challenge myself further. I went out of my comfort zone and did things that I thought I would never do such as jumping in the water. I can't swim but still challenged myself and took my chance to complete every single opportunity that has been given to me.*

"I have gained skills such as self-commitment, confidence, willingness to try new things, taking risks, taking on different challenges and greater responsibility."

Read more about this expedition and photos from their preparation exercises at www.ulyssesstrust.co.uk

"I have learnt not to be afraid of trying new things and to challenge myself further. I went out of my comfort zone and did things that I thought I would never do."

Cdt L Cpl Nicola Chumber

30th Anniversary Celebration Event



On Thursday 30th July 2022, The Ulysses Trust celebrated 30 years of supporting adventurous activity for Reservists and cadets at Cadogan Hall.



Earlier this year the Trust welcomed special guests, supporters and members of its volunteer team to Cadogan Hall for an evening of entertainment and celebration. Guests were greeted by cadets from 282 (East Ham) ATC Sqn and 56 (Woolwich) ATC Sqn who provided musical accompaniment throughout the night. Following drinks and canapes our Chairman took to the stage to introduce the proceedings. The main item was the presentation of the 2021 Prince of Wales's Expeditionary Award presented by ACM Sir Simon Bryant.

BEST OF THE BEST

The expeditionary awards highlight the very best in leadership, challenge, courage and planning. These annual awards are selected each year from cadet and Reservist expeditions supported by The Ulysses Trust.

In 2021 expedition activity was heavily limited by pandemic restrictions. Therefore the Trustees decided to do things differently and make a single award. The aim was to recognise the unit that showed the most tenacity when conducting an expedition in the face of very demanding COVID-19-related guidelines.

The Trust team agreed unanimously that the winner of the 2021 Award should be No 2344 (Longbenton) Sqn ATC, for Exercise Artemis MMXXI. The unit showed an outstanding level of determination to ensure that the cadets had a great expedition, despite having to deal with a raft of post-pandemic restrictions.

Longbenton's Squadron Officer Commanding, Flight Lieutenant Gary Richardson, commented, "The young people showed grit, determination, and ambition to complete their expeditions. Getting outside again was so important to them for many reasons and their resilience is a testament to them."

Following the award presentation the audience was treated to an unscripted Q&A session where cadets posed tricky questions to Trust Ambassador, Tania Noakes, about her own expeditions. The finale was provided by the band of 56 (Woolwich) Sqn including some dazzling drum displays that ensured the evening ended on a high note and a bang!

"The young people showed grit, determination, and ambition to complete their expeditions."

Flt Lt Gary Richardson | 2344 (Longbenton) Sqn ATC

News

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION



In July we introduced a new Volunteer Recognition Scheme, to acknowledge the hard work undertaken by our team of volunteers to support the Trust.

Without their contribution, the Trust simply would not function. So it is important to recognise the work of our fantastic team.

A series of badges has been produced featuring our emblem in three different styles – bronze, silver and gold. These recognize the different levels of volunteer support. Bronze for all those who volunteer for the Trust, followed by silver and gold badges for five or 10 years of service.

We've published a list of all our badge holders on our website and we're encouraging all our volunteers to wear their badges at appropriate events and functions. So please keep your eyes open and if you spot someone wearing the badge, please say hello and find out more about the Trust!

NEW RECRUITS

A warm welcome to the new ACDS (R&C), Maj Gen Marc Overon, who has accepted an ex officio Vice Patron position. We also welcome Cdr Sara Collen, Maj Heather Sharp and Kate Hannaford who have joined our Grants Application Committee and Nicola Rowlands-Smith who is taking on the role of Awards Officer.

We say goodbye to our previous Awards Officer, Wg Cdr Paula Willmot OBE. Many thanks Paula for all your hard work!

EXPEDITION HIGHLIGHTS

Summer is always a busy season for deployment. We feature a small selection of the expeditions we support in each newsletter. However, our website contains reports from every expedition we have supported going all the way back to 2001.

You can read more adventurous tales in the 'Expedition Reports' section of our website www.ulyssesstrust.co.uk - a great source of ideas and tips. Here are some of the recent highlights:



Solent Challenger
Army cadets from across the UK go sailing in the Solent.



Gauntlet Challenge
Reservists from HQ RAC trek and climb in Nepal.



Dragon Slim Shady
Birmingham UOTC OCdts trek the GR20 in Corsica.



Dragon Ice EMU
East Midlands UOTC OCdts trek two trails in Iceland.

If you're planning a sponsored challenge in 2023, why not do it to raise money for the Trust? It's a great way of supporting the charity and helps provide young people with life-changing adventures! We've created a new section on our website dedicated to fundraising. Scan this QR code to find out more.



FUNDRAISING



TeamForces
FUNDING MILITARY SPORT & ADVENTURE

In August a new partnership was launched with Team Forces to generate more financial support for cadet units to undertake expeditions. Team Forces attracts sponsorship from organisations which share a passion for sport, challenge and adventure. Microsoft Defence (UK) is already on board. In addition, several other corporates have expressed an interest in supporting the Trust. We are also grateful to Ian Hannam, the Lord Faringdon Trust and Smith Brothers of Leicester for their recent donations. Many thanks to all our supporters!

BFBS RADIO INTERVIEW



We were featured on BFBS radio recently to showcase our partnership with the Veterans' Foundation and our cadet support.

You can listen to interviews with Major General David Shaw CBE (Veterans' Foundation) and Major John Stopford-Pickering (Norfolk ACF) by visiting this link: tinyurl.com/bfbs-2022

THANKS FOR CALLING

We've set up a new telephone number **0300 102 1992**. It includes an answerphone service too, so if we can't take your call, you can leave a message and we'll call you back.



Shop at smile.amazon and raise funds for us at no cost to you: ulysestrust.co.uk



Signing-up is
EASY!

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Help us
support young
people **when**
they need us
the most

Pledged
£1.7m

Total pledged
so far

£1,730,863