

Berkshire Orienteers Newsletter

March 2021

**Lockdown 3
Special**



For 2020, CompassSport has again selected Berkshire Orienteers Newsletter as one of the UK's top orienteering newsletters. Here are some of the Editor's highlights from 8 years of award-winning Newsletters.

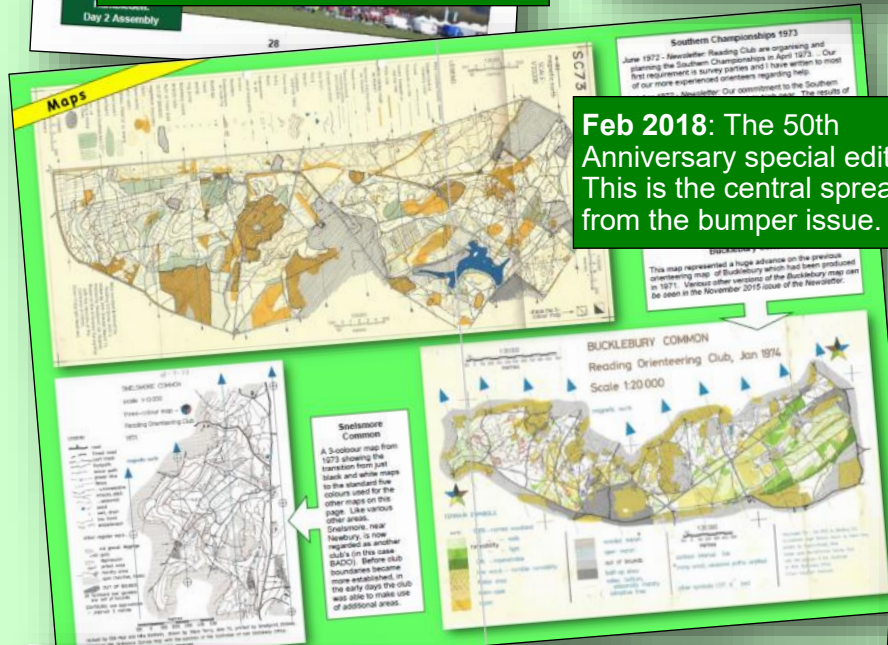


2013 to 2020: Eight years of recognition by CompassSport magazine

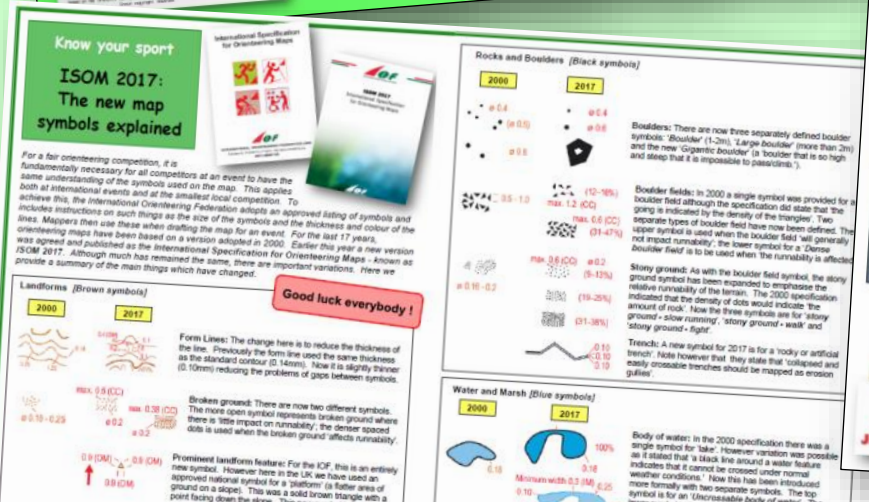
Nov 2013 and Jan 2019: Two of my favourite covers using my own photos



May 2013: A bumper issue containing lots of details from the JK - staged in the SCOA region with plenty of BKO involvement.



Feb 2018: The 50th Anniversary special edition. This is the central spread from the bumper issue.



Sept 2017: The new map symbols explained. A link to the pdf of this was included in the details for the 2018 British Championships. This was just one of 33 'Know Your Sport' features. The final one, on 'MapRun' is in this issue.



May 2017: Photographs providing names for JK relay team members.



Editorial

There have been a total of 48 issues since my tenure as Editor restarted in January 2013. But the time has come to call a halt as my active participation in events has declined and I have taken up Trail-O instead. With that decline, my ability to maintain an informative and relevant Newsletter for members has been dropping and, with it, my enthusiasm for producing the regular issues.

Attending major events, being active in watching the national (and international) event calendar, scanning the ranking lists for the ups and downs of BKO members and participating in league events - whether SCOA or urban.

These have all provided useful material to give club members (whether new or old), an informative and, I hope, interesting starting point for the Newsletter.

Beyond that there have been contributions large and small from many different club members. Most members have responded positively to my suggestions for articles and I have been delighted when, out of the blue, unsolicited articles appeared. My enjoyment at photographing club members at events, both as participants and as helpers, gave the Newsletter a better visual appearance and, I hope, will have helped new members put some names to faces (despite my occasional incorrect allocation of names).

I have had many positive comments over the 8 years and I received recognition every year in the annual CompassSport 'Newsletter Awards'. What more could an Editor of a orienteering club newsletter desire?!

But I am stepping down now as it feels exactly the right time. I enjoyed the challenge of creating each issue and got satisfaction from the design, the layout and the provision of informative material. Perhaps that might be seen by potential future Editors as setting an impossible standard to follow. But the pandemic has created new challenges and there will be changes as the sport restarts in the coming months. Communications and social media have changed during the 8 years but the Newsletter has not. Perhaps a 'Club Communications Manager' should consider other options. Communicating to members is the key, not the appearance of a publication.

In the absence of a volunteer, the Committee will have to consider how to keep members informed. Without someone leading the activity, there will be fewer and poorer communications and club members will feel less attachment to BKO and some will be lost. The Committee has other tasks - just staging events is a major effort these days. So, as I end my final Editorial, I would ask that all members think about supporting the Committee, the Club and particularly the membership by considering whether they can take on the task. If asked (or even if not), I promise to write some articles (probably on Trail-O) and to continue to provide some photographs! Good luck to all.

David Jukes



Our Next Event ??

Bucklebury Common

~~Saturday 9 January~~ Sunday 11th April

This event had been in preparation with several provisional dates but each time, due to changes in restrictions, we have had to postpone it. We are once again ready to stage our first event since February 2020. We will need to ensure that we comply with the national guidance on the re-staging of orienteering events. We are awaiting updated guidance from BOF.

Please watch out for further emails and please also regularly check the BKO website.

Cover Picture: As a contribution to the Control Symbol Challenge set in the December 2020 Newsletter, several BKO members provided photos of potential control sites. Here, in a photo taken by **John Briggs**, we see **Jacqui Briggs** demonstrating the position of a potential control site. For more photos, details of the Challenge and the results, see page 15.

The contents of the Newsletter are the responsibility of the Editor and should not be regarded as a statement of club policy. Any comments on the content (or to contact the Editor on any matter), please in the first instance e-mail the Editor on newsletter@bko.org.uk

AGM February 2021

David Jukes provides a brief summary:

The club's Constitution demands that: *'The Club shall hold the Annual General Meeting (AGM) within two months of the end of the financial year'*. Not wishing to be declared unconstitutional, the Committee had agreed to go ahead before the end of February. However, as with so many things over the last year, this had to comply with national Lockdown restrictions. And so the meeting was held on Zoom on Thursday 25th February.

The standard agenda items appeared although the Committee, having discussed options, decided that there would be no awards for 2020. With practically no events organised or attended there was really no other option. Also, with no Club Championship event staged, there were no Club Champions to be recognised and awarded their prizes.

There was still the excitement of the nomination and election of the new Committee. The excitement is mostly to see who will get their names in the minutes as proposer and seconder. There were more limited options for this as, with all the main Committee members being willing to continue in their roles, their election was agreed *en masse*, perhaps disappointing some potential proposers and seconders (they were too polite to mention this though). There was a bit of additional excitement generated as, with the departure of your current Editor from the Committee, a vacancy existed. Would there be anyone willing to stand? **Trish Monks** was first to indicate a willingness to join the Committee and she was quickly voted on (without a vote). She has indicated that she might be able to help with some of our computing issues but she declined to become the next Newsletter Editor.

Both the Chairman and Treasurer presented their reports which are provided below. Membership fees for 2022 were held at their current rates.

The meeting came to an end after just less than an hour and, with no Annual Dinner to follow, members were heard saying 'good luck' and 'hope to meet up again in the near future'. With that, members waved goodbye and logged off.



Chairman's review - Stefan Stasiuk

I hope you are all well and looking forward to the start of post COVID-19 Orienteering hopefully in April. I hope we can meet both socially and at orienteering events soon.

This year's AGM was a short affair as it was online and we have not been able to achieve much this year. No awards were presented for 2020 for obvious reasons. BKO only managed to put on 1 event since the last AGM at Burghfield Common on 22 Feb 2020 with around 60 competitors thanks to Steve Waite for organising.

We had planned to hold other events during the year but permissions from Country Parks, Army and Crown Estates were withheld due to COVID-19. We had arranged for an event on private land at Bucklebury but this was cancelled 3 times due to COVID-19. It is still ready to go and we plan to hold this as soon as we are allowed, I hope this will be early in April. We plan to hold an event in Bloom Wood on the 16th May and I hope everyone is able to attend as the wood should be in fantastic condition. It is one of my favourite spring time woods

We did manage to take part in 2 club competitions this past year

March 8th: Yvette Baker Trophy Heat near Bedford where the Juniors qualified for the final by winning the Shield event. Congratulations to the team and our thanks go **Martin Wilson**, our Club Captain, for organising it. Martin will be standing down as Club Captain in the Autumn and John Methvin will be taking over the role. Let us all thank Martin for all he has done in this role. I note Martin will be continuing supporting the club and has volunteered to plan the 2022 Concorde Chase if we can get permission to hold it in Hawley next January.

March 15th: Compass Sport Cup Heat on a very wet day near Gloucester. We did not qualify for the final but I certainly enjoyed competing but any social activity was washed out by the rain.

We had one notable performance on March 1st when **Adam Methven** represented England in the Interland international running in the M17 age class at Burnham Beeches.

We did have a return to orienteering in the Summer with the Army Wednesday events and a few weekend events but these quickly finished due to the further lockdowns.

During the period after the first lockdown, we saw a number of surrounding clubs put on MapRun courses or other courses for orienteers to turn up at their leisure. I know a number of you enjoyed these courses. The committee tried to set up similar cross-country courses - unfortunately permissions from the landowners were not forthcoming. In last year's early summer, the committee decided it was not appropriate to put on urban MapRun courses and encourage people to travel from far and wide into our urban areas.

MapRun is an excellent training tool and in December we revisited the decision on using it to set courses and decided that they were appropriate for individual training but only if you stay local. We now have a number of live MapRun courses in Berkshire, with more on the way. Thanks go to a number of you actively for preparing these. The Burnham village map run has now had 8 people try it out in a week, all of them are from the local running club and new to orienteering. It goes to show that MapRun is not only an excellent training tool for orienteers it is also excellent for promoting the sport and introducing the sport to new people. We must thank **Mark Foxwell** for this initiative. Please can you all try and produce a map run urban or open parkland course for your area.

Finally I would like to thank **David Jukes** for compiling the best club newsletter for a number of years. David is leaving this role after production of the March newsletter and we are looking for a volunteer to take it over for the club.

Let's hope the next 12 months will be more positive and we will finally return to the sport. And we can all get together for a social after the 2022 AGM.

Budget Summary

The following is a brief version of the report from Treasurer Peter Entwistle. All members should have received an e-mail containing both his written report and the more detailed accounts. There were however some members at the AGM who reported that they had not got the email. Please contact Peter (peterentwistle@btinternet.com) if you were missed out and you would like to take a look at the details.

2020 Summary

- The club accounts for 2020 are better than expected despite Covid cancelling nearly all our activities and so drastically reducing both Income & Expenditure compared to Budget and to 2019.

- Fortunately compared to Budget both Income & Expenditure fell by similar amounts so that there was still a cash surplus of £512 and after deducting depreciation a small Net Deficit of £-495 - both figures are close to budget and near break even.
- Furthermore this is a much better result than our cash deficit of -£1978 in 2019 in which the cancellation of the Concorde Chase played a major part.
- Although we only ran two fee paying events in 2020, fortunately one was the Concorde Chase Regional event on Star Posts, which earned a cash surplus of £1530 and exceeded its budget target.
- Bank balances started 2020 at £13,844 and ended at £14,278
- Our bank balances combined with the minimal overall deficit gave us a better year end position than may have been expected during the pandemic.

2021 Year to Date

- The Income & Expenditure to date currently shows a net surplus of £854:
- But note that :
 1. The Spring event needs to be rescheduled and will incur more costs (incl toilets and levy) but hopefully will have more entries.
 2. The Club is receiving a refund of £467 for the cancelled 2020 BOC relays (included in 2020 accounts) - but the committee is planning to donate this sum in the near future.

Budget 2021 Estimate

- This is very much a rough first stab to give an order of magnitude indication in these uncertain times.

It is
on

and it
been
the

CATEGORY		£
Membership		616
Event - Spring	Net Surplus	200
Regional Event - Autumn	"	300
Saturday Events	"	200
Newsletter		-100
Software & equipment	Colour £120, OCAD £160, sundry £120	-400
Mapping		-150
Insurance		-330
Clothing discount		-100
Audit	donation	-70
BOF membership		-70
SCOA membership	Calc = £216 but not requested yet	0
Sundry & Website		-102
Donation	To BOF , Foundation etc	-467
CASH SURPLUS		-473

based solely
my
guesstimates ,
has not yet
discussed with
committee.

Your 2021-2022 Committee

Chairman:	Stefan Stasiuk	chairman@bko.org.uk
Secretary:	Derick Mercer	secretary@bko.org.uk
Treasurer:	Peter Entwistle	treasurer@bko.org.uk
Membership Secretary:	Ian Hudson	membership@bko.org.uk
Fixtures Secretary:	Bo Oqvist	fixtures@bko.org.uk
Development Officer:	James Wilkinson	development@bko.org.uk

4 Committee Members + 2 co-opted: Fiona Clough, Brian Sewell, Mark Foxwell, Simon Moore and Trish Monks

Membership Memo:

There have been no new members since the last Newsletter, however 102 national members and 7 local members/groups have renewed for 2021. Thank you.

Of course, there is the other side of the coin, 36 orienteers have not renewed their BKO membership this year. That is 26% of the 2020 membership which is a little more than the British Orienteering national average of 16%. They, of course, will not be reading this Newsletter.

My fingers are still crossed that orienteering returns fully in the coming year, here's to seeing you at an event soon.

Ian Hudson - Membership Secretary

Future Events

With government restrictions still in a state of flux, it is not appropriate to try and provide a listing of future events in this Newsletter. However there should soon be both events and activities taking place but subject to various different limitations on numbers, times and entry requirements. Members are advised to keep a close watch on relevant website including the following:

- [British Orienteering](#) - best to log in and then look at the 'Go Orienteering' section
- [Fabian4](#) - As the site used most frequently for pre-entries, this is a good place to see which events you may be able to enter. However, if you are too slow, an event may already be full!
- **Other Local Clubs** - For starters, try [Southern Navigators](#) (SN), [Thames Valley OC](#) (TVOC), [Southampton OC](#) (SOC), [South London Orienteers](#) (SLOW), [Sarum OC](#), [North Wiltshire Orienteers](#) (NWO) and [Guildford Orienteers](#) (GO).



Latest Update from British Orienteering

COVID-Secure Orienteering Update 22 February 2021

The Government published its roadmap on 22 February for the gradual and staged easing of lockdown restrictions in England. Restrictions will be eased across all areas of England at the same time.

British Orienteering welcomes the key message that from 29 March, formally organised outdoor sports – for adults and under 18s - can restart and will not be subject to the gathering limits, but should be compliant with guidance issued by national governing bodies.

British Orienteering will issue a further update once further Government guidance for sport has become available. In the meantime, you can visit our COVID-19 Safe Orienteering webpage for further information.

https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/COVID19_Safe_orienteering

Know your sport: Orienteering with MapRun

How do you combine the challenge of orienteering whilst on a training run? Some orienteering clubs had already started using the 'MapRun' App as a tool to help provide some simplified O-training. However the various pandemic lockdowns during 2020-21 stimulated an interest in the App. Here we look at how it works and how BKO is providing access to local areas linked to MapRun.

MapRun is a GPS application developed by Peter Effenev of Brisbane Australia. It can be run from a smartphone or a compatible garmin watch.

The Basics

This app has many attractive features for offering simple opportunities to participate in orienteering, including:

- No infrastructure is needed on the ground so there's no effort in putting out / collecting controls
- Courses can be completed at any time
- The app uses GPS in your smartphone and will automatically record each site you visit
- A results table allows comparison of performance and motivates participation

A Quick Guide to Get Started:

- Download the MapRun app on Google Play or the App Store to your GPS-enabled smartphone - this could be **MapRun F** or the more recent **MapRun 6**. Then enter your personal details.
- Check that your phone is correctly set up for MapRun. (See the *British Orienteering* link below for guidance on phone settings for the MapRun app.)
- Select the "event" you want to run. Navigate to the UK folder and then click on the area and event name to download the map. It is recommended that you download the map while you have access to wifi or a good mobile signal. Once downloaded, you'll be able to retrieve the map from local storage on your phone.
- Once you're ready to run, click on "Go To Start" (if necessary re-loading the event from local storage in the event list first).
- Walk towards the start. Your phone should beep and the clock start timing once you come within range of the start location. Run the course as normal. Your phone should beep when you reach each control point. Sometimes you may need to slow down and stop for a couple of seconds, or move a few paces until it registers.
- Once you have found all the points (or your time is up for a score course) head for the finish for the final beep. You should avoid running past the finish before the end of the course or you may accidentally stop the clock!
- The app may automatically attempt to save your results but if you don't have access to data this can be done later. Remember to save your results as it will help us know how many people are enjoying using the app! If you have a Strava account you can also synchronise your session directly.
- To view the results table for the event, select "Show Results" and select the event that you have just completed. You will also be able to view the "track" of your route and upload to Strava.



The text in this article is all based on material provided elsewhere. In particular on the British Orienteering website and from e-mails to BKO members by Mark Foxwell. See also:

<https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/vocs>

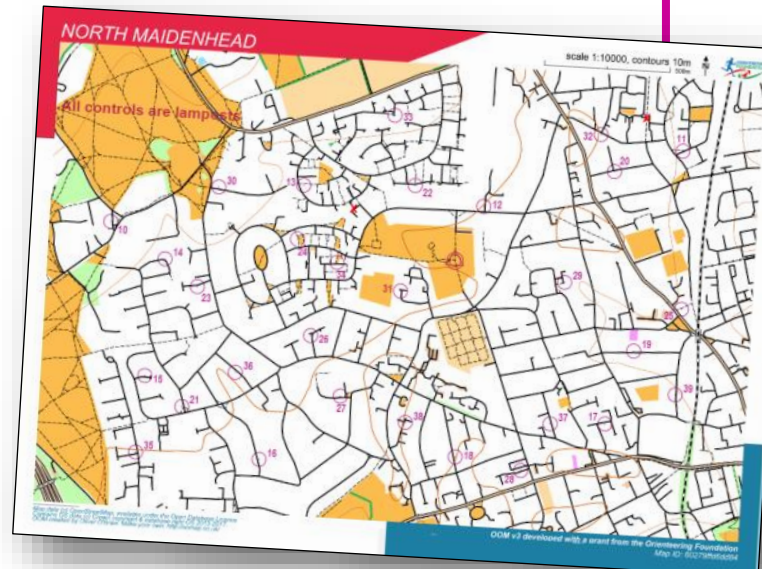
Note: The MapRun app is an independent app and is not part of British Orienteering or BKO.

MapRun with Berkshire Orienteers

Currently, the following areas in Berkshire are available with maps and controls for MapRun courses:

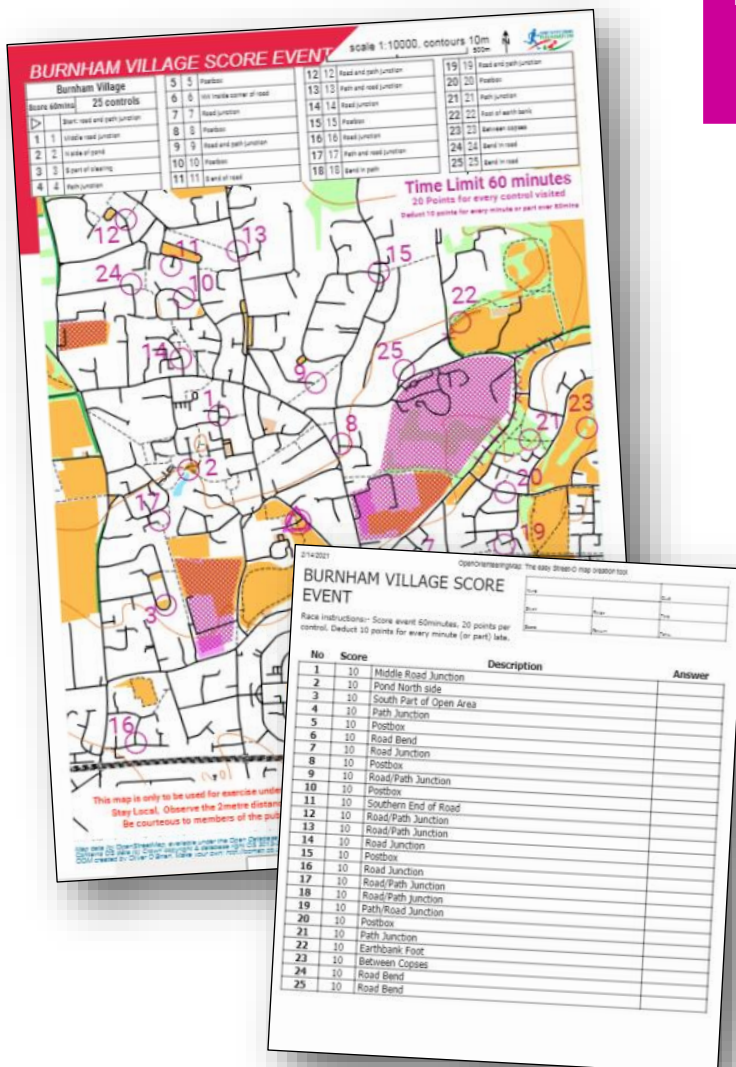
- Burnham Village
- Great Hollands, Bracknell
- Lower Earley
- Maidenhead SW
- Norcot, West Reading
- North Maidenhead
- Woodley East
- Woodley South

For the future, we hope to have further training courses on Star Posts, Black Park, Winnersh, Lower Earley and Twyford.



To access the BKO maps and event details, use this link:

[Berkshire MapRuns - Published](#)



Although our current courses use urban areas, we are intending to set up MapRun courses in some of our woods and parks as indicated in this example. In current circumstances, obtaining landowner permission is taking longer.

More resources

- To find out more about MapRun including why it exists and how to use it see: <http://maprunners.weebly.com/quick-guide.html>
- If you are interested in making your own 'MapRun course' a good starting point is Open Orienteering Map : OpenOrienteeringMap: The easy Street-O map creation tool (oomap.co.uk)
- If you get stuck or want to find out more contact one of the BKO GPS-orienteering interest group.

Reginald Edward Parker

22nd September 1931 - 25th November 2020

As reported in the December 2020 Newsletter, Reg Parker passed away in late November. Newer members will not be aware of the major support that Reg gave the club at events (he was a major instigator of the BKO Saturday Series in 2001) and on the Committee - most notably serving as Membership Secretary in the 1990s (jointly with Anne), Club Chairman (2000-2002) and later as Club Secretary (2005-2008). As his health progressively declined over the last 8 to 10 years, his participation waned. Here his daughter, Sue, looks back over his life and adds some unexpected details. Editor

On the 25th November 2020 Reginald Edward Parker died peacefully at Austen House Care Home in Reading. I was lucky enough to be there with him and can't commend highly enough the care home staff and paramedics who helped ensure his final hours were spent with dignity, gentleness, care, and love.

To help me with the process of writing this, I chose to use the BKO Newsletter format of "Know your Club Member", I hope I have done him justice.

We will have a commemorative event, when it is possible to have people together, so we can enjoy the many memories and parts of his life that I have not been able to include here.

Sue Parker



Reginald Parker – Know your Club Member

Age/Class

Reg was an active orienteer until dementia finally prevented any further participation. He last competed as an M80, just before his 80th birthday.

Family Circumstances

Reg was the third child born to Reginald and Susannah Parker, Eric was the oldest and then sister Doris. Three further siblings followed spread out over the next 13 years, John, Colin and Barbara. His father was a labourer at this time in his life, and his mother's family had some connection with the pub trade, although exactly what is unclear.

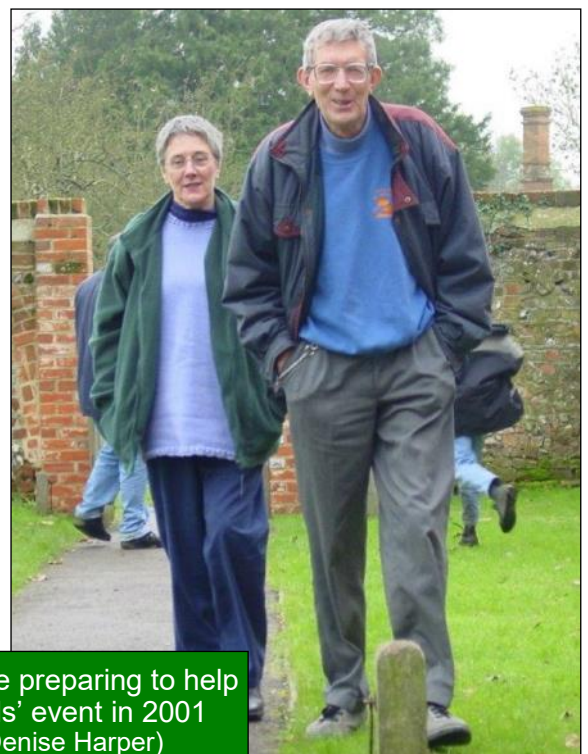
In January 1957 Reg married Anne Parker, who he had met at work. The family flourished and they had 4 children – Ian, Sue, Nick and Simon. There were then, rather neatly, 4 grandchildren – Stuart, Michael, Tim and Oliver.

Hometown

Born in Dover, the family moved to Margate when Reg was 4, and then about 3 years later the family moved to Eltham in South London where his parents had the job of Steward and Stewardess at the Working Men's Club in Eltham where the family settled.

How did you start orienteering

It all started in 1983 when Colin Pool – a work colleague of daughter Sue – persuaded her to come and try orienteering. Sue's enthusiasm for this new sport quickly led to Anne, and then Reg, coming along and getting hooked.



Reg and Anne preparing to help at a Schools' event in 2001
(Photo Denise Harper)

Clubs

Reg was a one club man, joining what is now BKO when it was Reading Orienteering Club, probably in 1984.

Best achievement/success

Completing any course! This would particularly apply to major events.

The satisfaction of competing in the JK for first time at Longleat in 1989 and completing the course and coming to the finish down to the main house – magnificent feeling!

Most enjoyed event

This was the Swansea 2x2 an annual event run by SBOC, Reg and Anne would make a team and enjoy the scenery, challenge of completing the course and friendship offered by fellow orienteers. A relatively small event, probably partly the reason Reg enjoyed this event so much.



Post-event excitement for the children - and for Reg!
(Photo: Denise Harper)

Worst event/most embarrassing orienteering event

Reg was not one to be embarrassed, he'd happily share his experiences - good and bad.

An event at Plymlinon, sometime in the late 1990s, stands out as the worst event attended. An area of bleak open hillside in the middle of the Welsh Cambrian Mountains. On the day of this event, it was cold and misty. Reg and Anne persevered for a couple of controls and then headed back to the warmth of the cottage with a nice hot cup of coffee.

Favourite area

The New Forest

International Experience

After Reg's retirement, Reg and Anne travelled to Europe many times to enjoy orienteering. This included trips to France, Belgium and Germany. The event would be the focus of the trip, but would often then involve many happy weeks exploring the area, or areas on route to and from the event.

What have you put back into the sport

Reg served on the BKO Committee for many years, at various times he fulfilled the role of Chairman and Secretary. He organised events of all sizes, this led on to the Saturday Series which started as a way to allow the schools to participate in low key orienteering events and also encouraged newcomers of all ages to the sport.

What training do you do

Nothing specifically, sometimes a bit of running, but generally keeping active and fit.

What is the best/worst thing about orienteering

The best things about orienteering would be the challenge and the often beautiful surroundings.

The worst would undoubtedly be rain! Reg was particularly short sighted, and so visibility could become challenging during events when rain was relentless – wet, steamed up glasses do not enhance the orienteering experience!

Employment

Reg did his National Service in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. He was stationed in Singapore and worked on RADAR maintenance. There were riots while Reg was there and he describes his involvement, "We acted as the blocking line on one of the roads, we

were issued with rifles and live bullets and told to load rifles!! In my haste due to excitement or fear, I dropped a couple on the floor which was not very soldierly”.

After National Service Reg joined the MOD, which more specifically became the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment. Whilst working he completed his degree studies. He stayed with AWRE until his retirement at age 60. Most notably Reg took part in the Atomic bomb trials both in Australia (the Buffalo trials) and then later in the Pacific Islands (the Grapple trials).

Other activities/interests

Growing up Reg was an avid supporter of Charlton Athletic Football Club, in those days up to 70,000 people jammed into The Valley. When the older Parker children decided that they were going to start going to watch Reading play at Elm Park (a short walk from the family home), Reg and Anne decided that they should also go along to make sure the children were safe. This renewed a passion for live football and they both became keen supporters. 40 years on, Reg and Anne still had season tickets and would attend all the home games.

Reg was a keen reader throughout his life he shared this love with his family. He read widely, but we think his favourite may have been the Flashman series by George MacDonald Fraser. Even when he could no longer read more than a paragraph of a book, he still took pleasure in browsing the shelves at the Oxfam bookshop and selecting books to read.

Reg was a keen walker and he and Anne were for many years members of the Ramblers Association. Locally they were footpath wardens, checking and maintaining the footpaths. Further afield they completed several long distance walks with the West Highland Way possibly being the favourite.

Reg was a lover of traditional jazz, Sidney Bechet being one of his favourites – in the early 50's Reg hitch-hiked to Paris and saw him play live. There was a club in Woolwich called “The Hot Club of London” that he used to go to with his friend Don, this used to attract all the big names of the time, in particular he remembered Acker Bilk who they both thought was “useless”.

After retirement Reg volunteered in several capacities. As well as the orienteering events he worked at the local Oxfam bookshop and he assisted with an Engineering club and Orienteering club at a local school.

What have you done that no-one else has likely to have done

Reg worked for the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment, so his work was covered by the official secrets act and he couldn't talk about what he did. However, there was an occasion on which he could share with pride that he had been mentioned in the same article as Okumura of NTT and Young of Bell Labs with regards to research into the transmission of radio waves in different environments. William Rae Young and Yoshihisa Okumura were both pioneers of mobile radio, and came up with some of the first concepts for mobile phone technology. If you read their Wikipedia pages, you can understand why he might have found it special to have been mentioned in their company.

How many people worked on timing devices for atom bombs and emergency alarms for old people?

Reginald Edward Parker – A lovely, special man.

Many thanks to those who have helped in writing this obituary. I found it very difficult to start with, how to present the memory of a man who has lived 89 years? A man who on the surface led a simple and straightforward life in many ways, but who also, in his quiet way, had a very full life with many achievements, someone who continued to give back to society until he no longer could.
Sue



ALTER EGO

Martin Wilson

I was born with two talents: I could run.... and I could sing. And what do you do with them? You don't need either to get through life. Well, I've done plenty of running, but not a lot of singing. I learnt to play acoustic guitar to a reasonable level while in my teens (as most boys did in those days) and enjoyed playing and singing good popular songs at home, and occasionally to friends while sailing – evenings below deck tended to be boozy! But I never wanted to play in a band or a pub, or be in a choir, and usage dipped while my wife was around. It was only after Ann passed away that I began playing again, learning more songs.

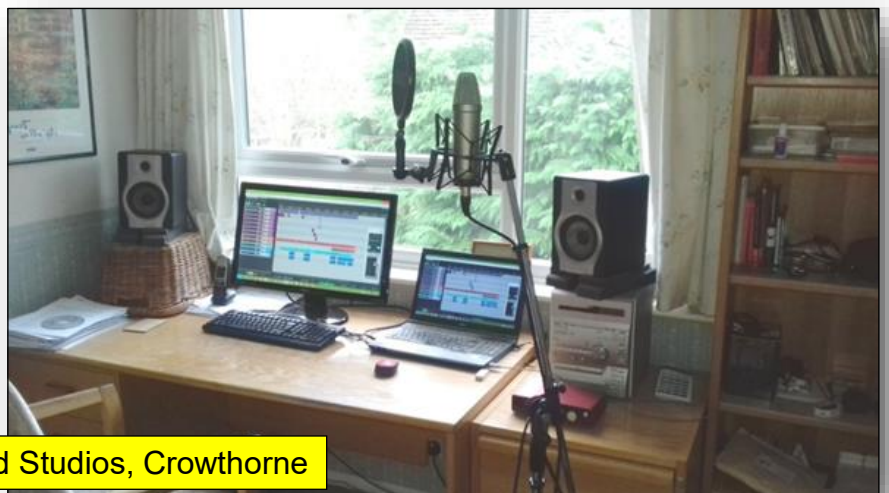
When I retired from work, I felt I should push myself to use my music skills more. I'd always had a yen to go busking on the London Underground, where the player is not trying to attract a static audience, but just to provide a pleasant musical sound as they pass. Researching this, it was clear it was not 'turn up and play', but highly regulated. You had to make written application, you would get called to an audition, and if selected would be assigned to a specific location 'pitch', for which you would then book a time slot. Oh yes... you also had to go through a CRB check and they would pass your name to the Inland Revenue. So no busking millionaire for me!

I submitted an application in February one year, and despite two follow-up mails asking what was happening, heard nothing for six months. Then out of the blue came an invitation to attend an audition, offering three dates in September. Sod's Law now kicked in. In the interim months, I'd booked to go trekking in Nepal for seven weeks in Sept/Oct to do Everest Base Camp and the Annapurna Circuit. I asked if there were more audition dates coming up, but it was clear there would be no more for years, not months. So, choose Nepal, or the Elephant and Castle? Inevitably I chose the easier option....and my busking career was still-born. As someone famously said: *"Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans"*.

For the next few years I continued to hack around with the acoustic in the kitchen. Nice sounds, but heading nowhere. Then while visiting a friend of mine Don Marshall, an excellent blues guitarist, he told me he'd started recording music, and liked the production aspects of mixing tracks. He showed me how the basics worked. I realised that this would give me the chance to broaden my musical skills, as I could add more solo guitar work, use my 30-year old (yes!) electric piano, and stretch my vocal skills with double-tracking and adding harmonies.

To ensure I did this properly, I decided to develop an alter ego. I would record one or more albums using my two Christian names as my *nom de musique*, creating proper CDs with artwork and playlist but no pictures of the artist. So I set to work in 2014. Modern technology means you don't need much to make recordings: an audio interface to your laptop, a good vocals microphone and a software package that records the digital signals track by track. More sounds can be recorded directly from piano or keyboards, which can also provide basic drum and bass rhythm section. I actually recorded most of the first album in my kitchen, which has good acoustics! I've since settled on using the upstairs study room.

I can only summarise the recording process briefly here. Each sound has to be recorded as a separate track: acoustic, piano, lead vocal, harmony vocals, handclaps, rhythms, etc, etc. Each track then has to be edited for individual sound texture and volume. Next all the tracks in a song have to be 'mixed' together for position (left and right across stereo spectrum), relative volume, and overall 'balance and ambience' of the total song. This takes absolutely ages. Then all 20 songs on the album have to be 'mastered' to be balanced across each other for



Abbey Road Studios, Crowthorne

consistency and variety. This takes another eon of time to get right. But it was a good feeling when the complete album finally sounded good on the car stereo.

You can fool some of the people
some of the time....

Recording work has been good to do during the winter months, nice retirement projects: challenging and interesting to develop, can be done in small chunks, and take a long time to complete! Some winters I'd be planning major O events, so had a gap year. Album 1 completed in 2013, 2015 planned Glen Strathfarrar for Highland 15, Album 2 completed in 2016, Album 3 completed in 2017, 2018 planned SHIs near Burnley. Each album was around 20 songs, a huge effort.

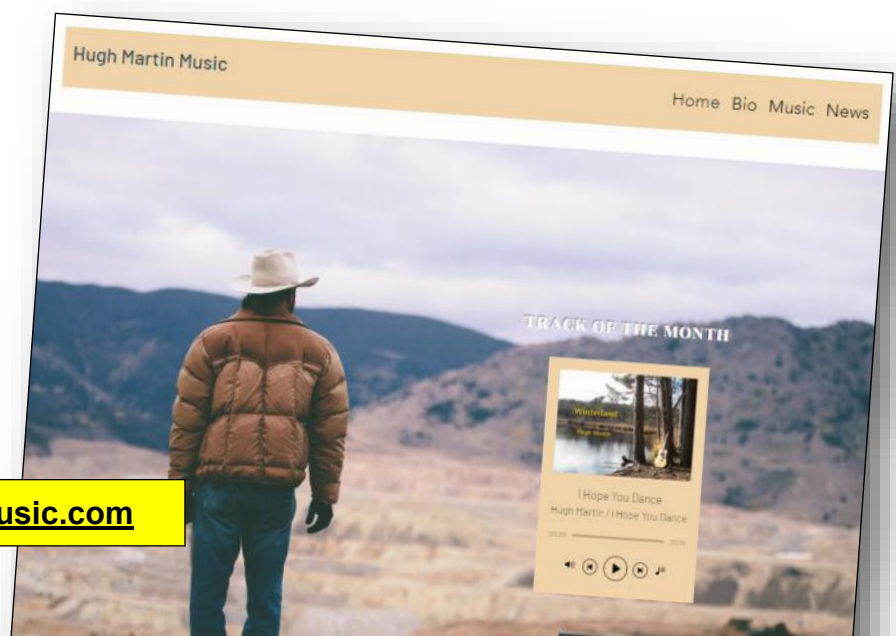


Around end 2018, I felt I could take on one more album in 2019, but was running out of material that I could play, unsure what more I could do. I decided to record a set of Beatles songs. I was a teenager when they were the real thing, so grew up with much of their music; I'd learnt how to play acoustic or piano on many of their compositions. For some tracks I bought backing tracks for the range of sounds they used, but did acoustic, vocals, harmonies, and piano where I could. This album ended up as a *magnum opus* of 35 songs, a triple album of early and late tracks covering their full career. I was only able to complete it in summer 2020 after lockdown started, the extra time available during that period was very useful. The last song I recorded was Let It Be, an appropriate epilogue for my music career!

Finally, I now have over 100 songs I have recorded, not all released on albums. They say that everybody likes the music from the years when they were age 15 to 25. Probably true. For me it was the 60's and 70's, a lot of my recordings are from that time, it was an exceptional period. But great songs are ageless. Some more traditional tunes and Scottish songs also resonate with me and bring variety. With each album having around 80 minutes of music, I (sad man...) get great pleasure from listening to the albums on long car journeys to O events, in the UK or abroad. No ads, no trailers for radio programmes, no interruptions, just good music. Led Zepp it ain't, but strong melodies and meaningful lyrics keep me tuned in. And the singer's not bad either.

I do have an *alter ego* website (www.hughmartinmusic.com) which contains the artwork and playlist of each album. It also contains three sample songs from each album (six from the Beatles album) which can be listened to with headphones. Readers are invited to visit the site and hear how the albums have turned out (don't worry: I won't know you've visited!). If anyone would subsequently like a CD of any album, let me know and I'll send it to you, for your own use only. I've only issued them to family and friends so far, including a few BKO members. Anyone who listens to any CD of mine more than once, that's a hit with me! I hope you'll enjoy the sample tracks. I've now spent most of Lockdown 3 re-mixing and editing Albums 1 and 2, adding in all the learnings from the later projects. When will it all ever end?!

www.hughmartinmusic.com



Alan Phillips

Each feature found was worth 1 point. Double points were offered for anyone who dressed in full Father/Mother Christmas or Elf costume whilst visiting the features.

Given local terrain, some features were certainly hard to find. You might think that there would be few 'caves' locally but two valid submissions were received. Another challenge was 'firm

15

ground in marsh' - some ingenuity was needed to grab a point for this one.

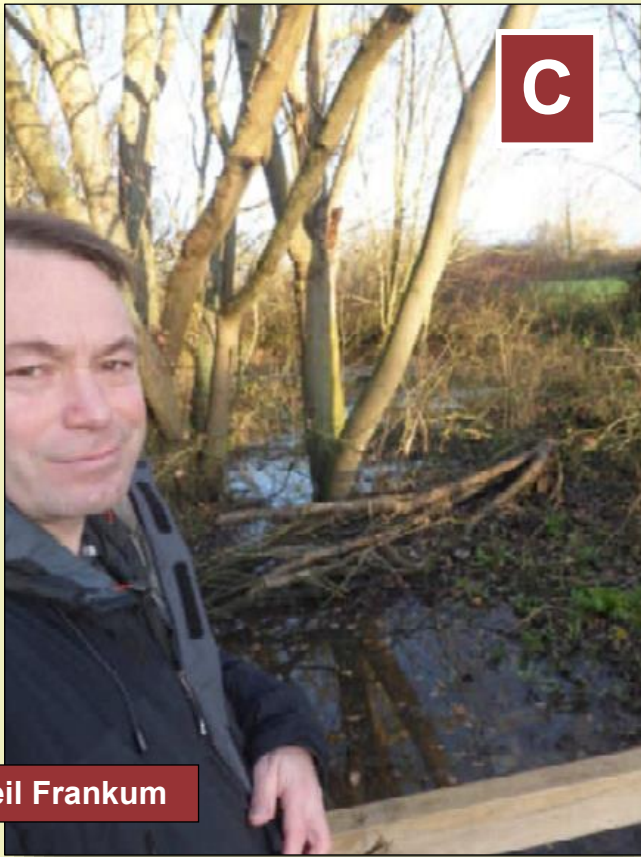
I am pleased to announce that the competition winners were the following:

- For the largest number of control description photos: **The Goldings**.
- For the 'the most ingenious, humorous or unusual (or any combination of these!)': **The Briggs** - for the image shown on the back cover!

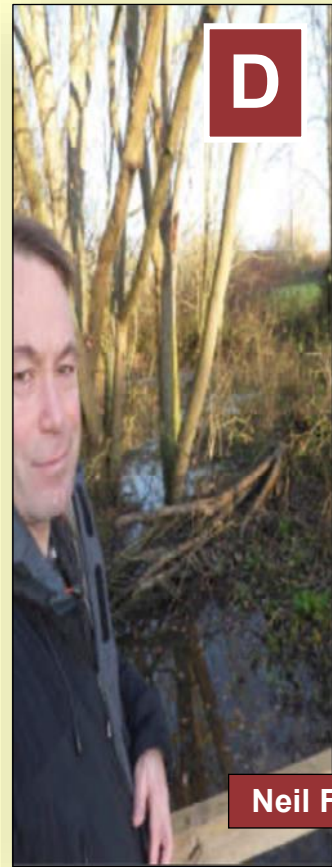
Congratulations to them but our thanks to all participants who appear to have enjoyed the opportunity to do something a bit silly at the end of a difficult year and to share it with us.

Can you '**Guess the Features**' in the photos, A to N - below and on the next few pages, and on the front and back covers? *Answers at the bottom of Page 21*





Neil Frankum



Neil Frankum

The Goldings



The Goldings



G

The Briggs



The Briggs

H



I

David Jukes



J

Jane Courtier



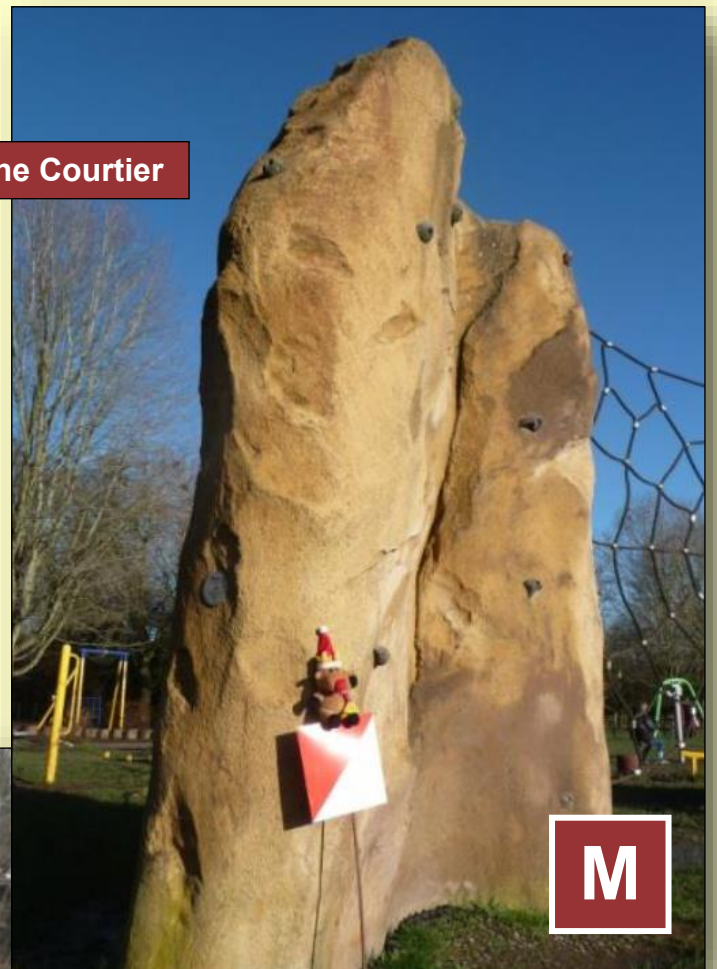
The Briggs

L



K

Jane Courtier



Jane Courtier

M



N

Jane Courtier

And a few more!



Can you find caves locally? Not a problem for the **Goldings** who snapped the Hell-Fire Caves in West Wycombe. Closer to home, on the University of Reading Whiteknights campus, **David Jukes** found something marked with the cave symbol on an o-map - no disputing that one!

There was also no disputing Neil Frankum's cave - though we suspect that this is probably a holiday photograph rather than a Christmas 2020 one.





Two more difficult ones are 'boulder cluster' and 'boulder field'. Surprisingly these can both be found on the University campus.

Above is a boulder cluster although David points out that the map symbol shows a 'boulder field' but this has been ruled incorrect by **Katy Stubbs** (who knows about these things - see the article in the July 2013 Newsletter!).

On the right David is next to the mapped 'boulder field', some sarsen stones transported to the campus from Wiltshire in about 1817 by the Marquess of Blandford, who owned the, then, parkland estate.



In the absence of a photograph of a real boulder field, several entrants tried to convince the judges that a few small pebbles, photographed quite close, constituted a 'boulder field'. Worth a try, but the judges were able to distinguish pebbles from boulders!

Answers to 'Guess the Features'

A: Marsh	I: Spur
B: Terrace	J: Firm Ground in Marsh
C: Marsh	K: Broken Ground
D: Narrow Marsh	L: Spring
E: Saddle	M: Rock Pillar
F: Small Erosion Gully	N: Platform
G: Earth Bank	Front cover: Pond
H: Special Item	Back cover: Special Item



**Does this image sum up
the Year 2020?**
(Photo: The Briggs)