

DOLOMITES HUT-TO-HUT TOUR – ALTA VIA 2

8th – 21st July 2008

Allan and Lesley Witton, John and Judith Willson, Roger Hand



Approaching Rifugio Mulaz for our 10th and final night in the mountains



Judith and Roger on the via ferrata in Val Setus



On the Sella plateau

OUTLINE ITINERARY AND WALKING ROUTE SUMMARY

For the most part our route followed the standard Alta Via 2 from its start above Bressanone, with a half free day and hotel stop in San Cristina. We planned to finish at Passo Rolle for convenient transport back to Milan, which allowed us an extra day in our schedule to include the variant through the Odle group via Rifugio Firenze rather than the more direct route between the Genova and Puez huts. We also include two excellent summit ascents, Piz Boè and Monte Mulaz.

		14 days	2 + 2 half days travel	½ free day	9 + 3 half days walking				Time	
July				Height m	Distance km	Ascent m	Descent m		Actual	Guide Naismith
T 8	Air/bus	Manchester > Milan	Hotel							
W 9	Train	Bressanone								
	Cable car	Valcroce		2040						
	Trek	Rifugio Plose	CAI (60)	2446	2	410	----	1-10	1-00	1-05
T 10	Trek •	Rifugio Genova	CAI (80)	2297	13	530	680	4-40	4-00	3-30
F 11	Trek •	Rifugio Firenze	CAI (99)	2037	13	810	1070	4-40	4-30	4-00
S 12	Trek •	Rifugio Puez	CAI (90)	2457	8	610	190	3-30	3-00	2-40
S 13	Trek	Passo Gardena		2120	7	260	600	2-15	2-30	1-50
	Bus	San Cristina - free half-day	Hotel							
M 14	Bus	Passo Gardena		2120						
	Trek	Rifugio Pisciadu	CAI (80)	2585	3	500	40	2-10	2-15	1-30
T 15	Trek •	Rifugio Boe	CAI (70)	2873						
	Excursion	Piz Boe	(10,342 ft)	3152	6	740	450	3-20	4-00	2-30
W 16	Trek •	Rifugio Contrin	Priv. (130)	2016	17	880	1160	5-00	5-00	4-50
T 17	Trek •	Rifugio Fuchiade	Priv. (18)	1972	9	700	740	3-30	3-15	3-00
F 18	Trek •	Rifugio Passo di Valles	Priv. (40)	2031	11	430	370	3-00	3-00	2-50
S 19	Trek •	Rifugio Mulaz	CAI (70)	2571						
	Excursion	Monte Mulaz		2906	11	1090	550	4-20	4-45	3-00
S 20	Trek	Passo Rolle		1955	8	310	930	2-40	2-30	2-10
	Taxi/Bus	Bolzano								
	Train	Milan	Hotel		Naismith daily average (all 12 days)					2h-50
M 21	Bus/air	Milan > Malpensa > Manchester								

	Distance		Ascent		Descent		Time
Grand Totals:	108	km	7270	m	6780	m	40 hours
(All 12 days walking)	68	miles	23,900	ft	22,200	ft	
Daily averages:	9.0	km	610	m	570	m	3h-20
(All 12 days walking)	5.6	miles	2000	ft	1850	ft	
Daily averages:	11.0	km	720	m	650	m	4h-00
(8 full days walking •)	6.9	miles	2380	ft	2140	ft	

A Trek is a linear walk from one place to the next with full packs

An Excursion is a return walk without full packs

Piz Boe Summits are in bold, 3000 m points are shaded blue

CAI/Priv Italian Alpine Club/Private hut (with number of places)

Walking Times (excluding stops)

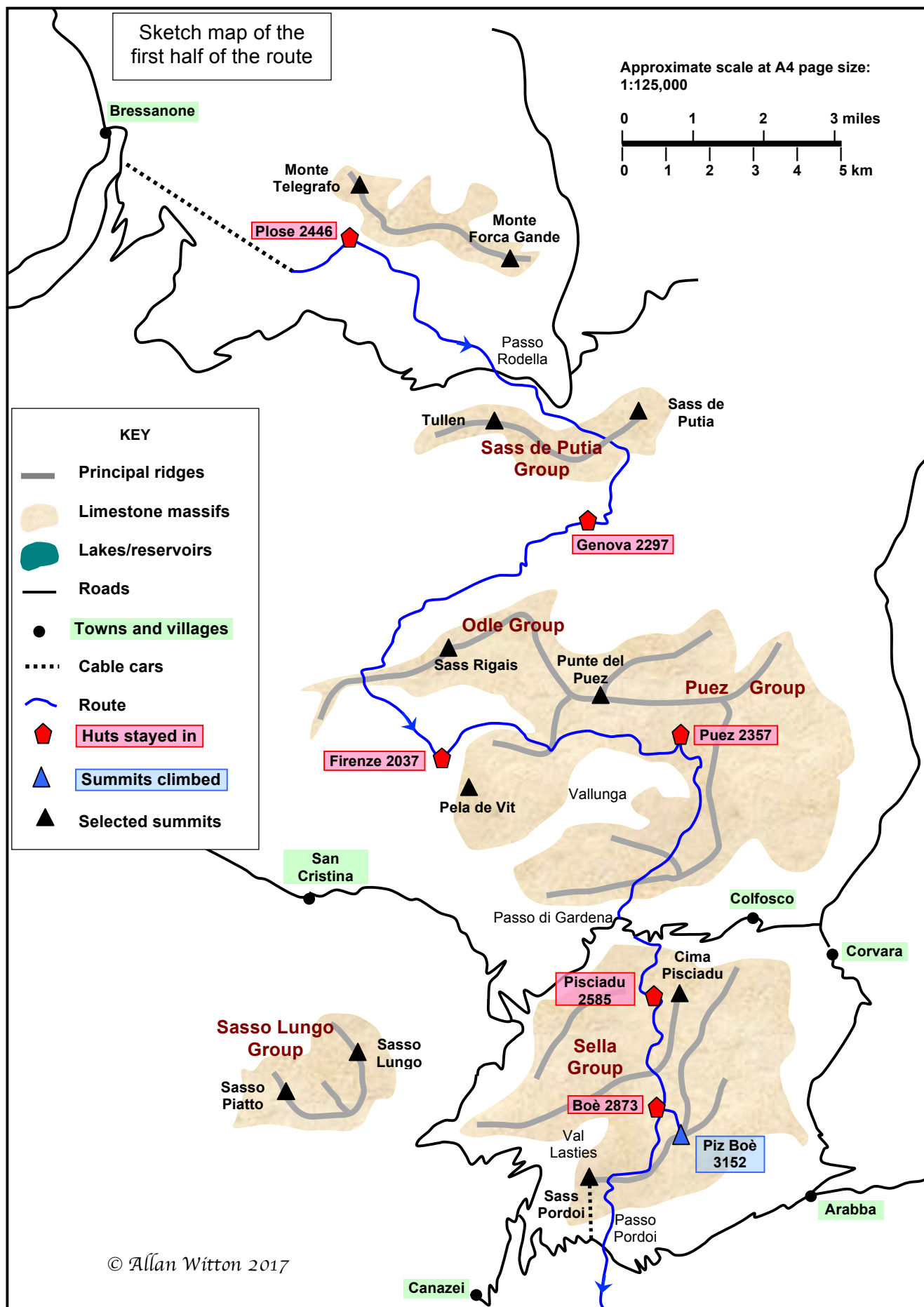
Actual: For the slowest of our group; lead times were often considerably shorter, especially on big climbs.

Guide: Times according to guidebook *Treks in the Dolomites* by Collins and Price (Cicerone).

Naismith: According to Naismith's Rule: 12 minutes/km and 10 metres/minute for ascent.

With few big climbs and mostly short days, our walking times were just 18% longer than Naismith's.

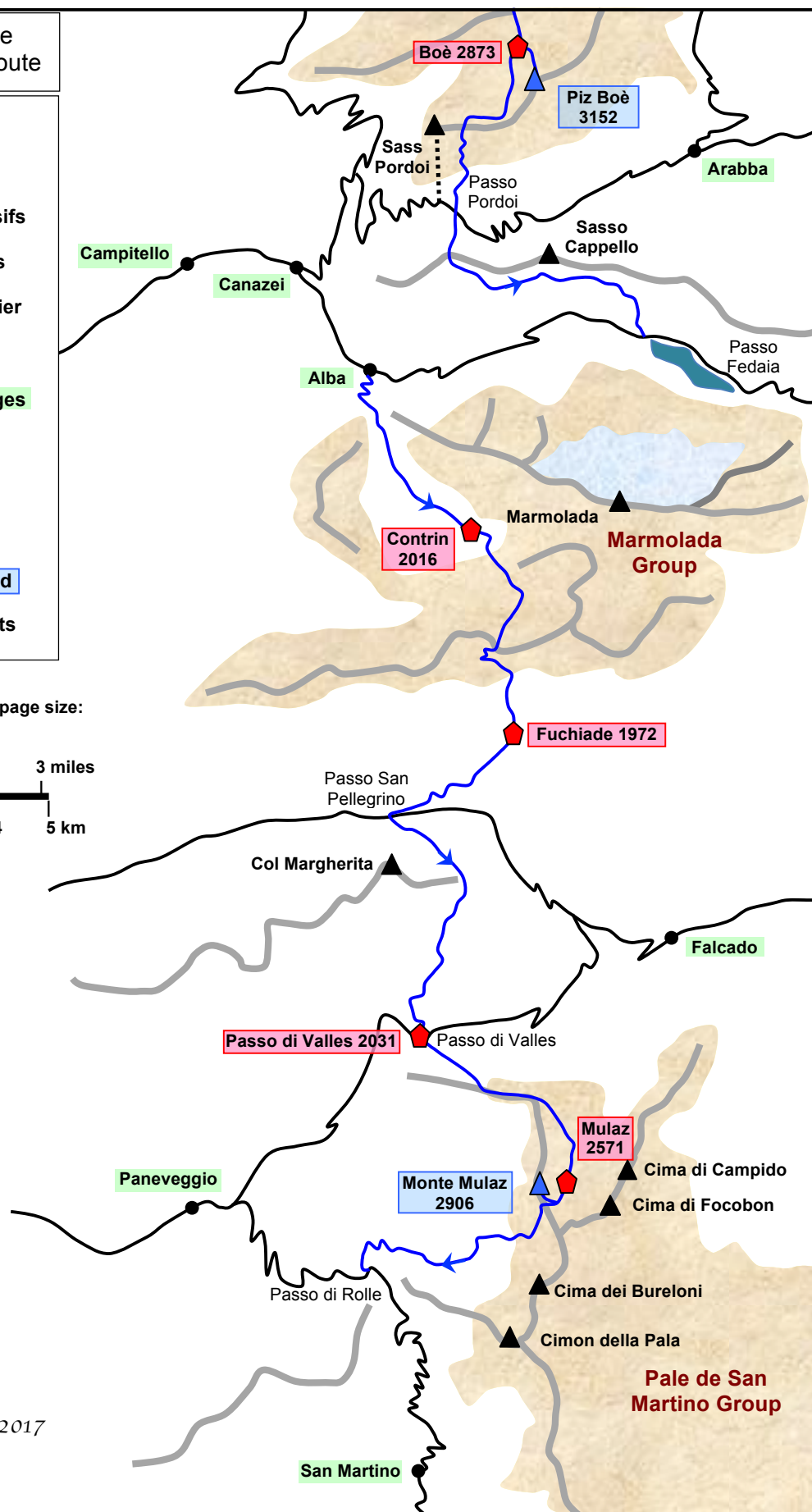
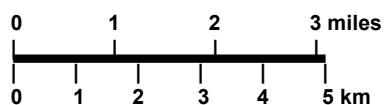
SKETCH MAPS OF THE ROUTE



Sketch map of the second half of the route

- KEY**
- Principal ridges
 - Limestone massifs
 - Lakes/reservoirs
 - Marmolada glacier
 - Roads
 - Towns and villages
 - Cable cars
 - Route
 - Huts stayed in
 - Summits climbed
 - Selected summits

Approximate scale at A4 page size:
1:125,000



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VIEWS FROM THE SUMMIT OF PIZ BOÈ



The Marmolada, the green Sasso Capello ridge, and the road snaking up to Passo Pordoi



View down Val Lasties to Sasso Lungo (right), Cima Antermoia (left) and the distant Adamello Alps

Tuesday 8th

**Flight
Bus**

**Manchester to Milan Malpensa
Transfer to Milan Central**



The Alps from the air



Pizzas (the first of many) at La Porta Rossa

Wednesday 9th	Train Cable car Trek	Bressanone Valcroce Rifugio Plose	2040 2446
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It was a short walk from the railway station to the cable car, then an hour's walk from the top station up the broad, grassy ridge to the Plose hut.



At Bressanone station



At the top of the cable car: after a minute's silence
for those unable to be with us ...



.... we're ready to go!



Drinks on the patio of the Plose hut



Summary

Distance	2 km
Ascent	410 m
Descent	---- m
Walking time	1h-10
Total time	1h-10

(Total times are the times
between the start and the end
of a day's walking.)

The Alta Via 2 starts from the Plose hut with a gentle walk down grassy pastures to the minor road pass of Passo Rodella. From there it ascends initially through forest followed by a steep rocky climb to Forcella de Putia, and our first day ended with an easy walk down to the Genova hut.



Setting off from the Plose hut, with the Odle Group (that we would cross the following day) on the skyline



Arriving at Forcella de Putia, with the Plose hut on the green ridge in the far distance



On Forcella de Putia, with the summits of the Puez group behind



Arriving at the Genova hut



.... for coffee and cake



.... and a comfy, spacious bunk room for the night

Summary	Distance	13 km	Ascent	530 m	Descent	680 m	Walking time	4h-40	Total time:	7h-40
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After a short descent down a track from the hut, the AV2 variant via the Firenze hut follows an undulating traverse along the Adolf Munkel Weg, along the tree line beneath the scree and towering Odle peaks.



Our standard muesli and teewasser for breakfast

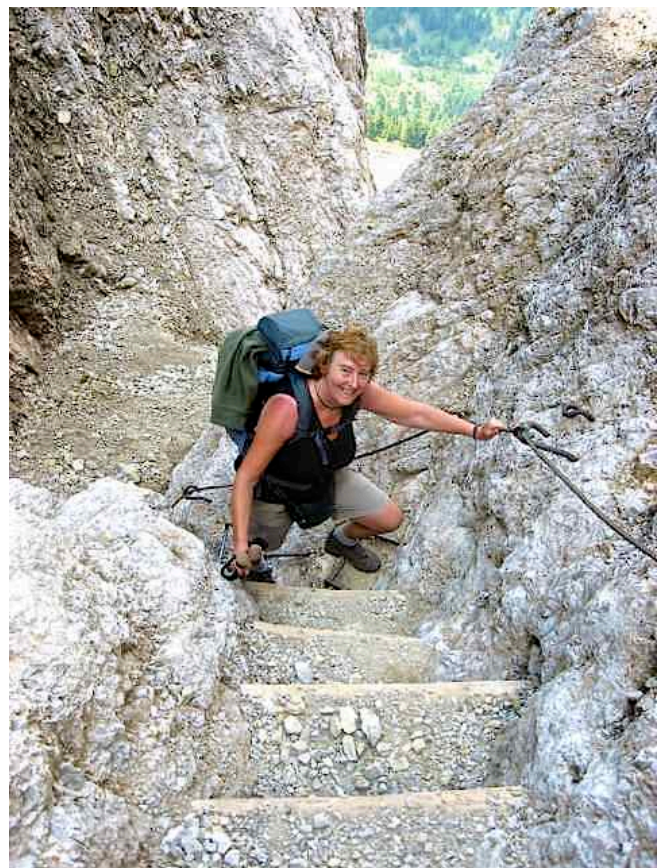


On the Adolf Munkel Weg

The path then climbs over the scree and below massive rock walls towards the ladder and cable aided scramble up the gully leading to Forcella Pana.



Martagon or Turk's-cap lily (*Lilium martagon*)



The interesting scramble up the gully to Forcella Pana, with the aid of a dubious ladder, steps, steel pegs and cables



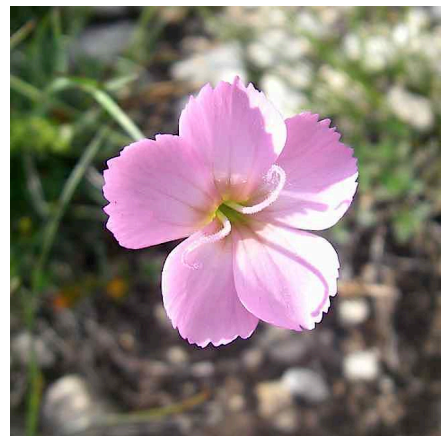
South of Forcella Pana it was a gentle descent through the flower-filled meadows of Cisles Alp to the Firenze hut.



A rare Rhaetian Poppy
(*Papaver rhaticum*)



Edelweiss
(*Leontopodium alpinum*)



Wood Pink
(*Dianthus sylvestris*)



Approaching the Firenze hut with
Forcella de Pizza and
Pela de Vit on the skyline

Summary

Distance	13 km
Ascent	810 m
Descent	1070 m
Walking time	4h-40
Total time	7h-30

It was a cloudy/bright day for the easy walk up the Forces de Siëles valley followed by a steep ascent to its forcella, where we re-joined the main AV2. There follows an exciting assisted scramble along a narrow, rocky ridge leading to the grassy Puez Alp overlooking the Vallunga canyon, then an easy level walk to the Puez hut.

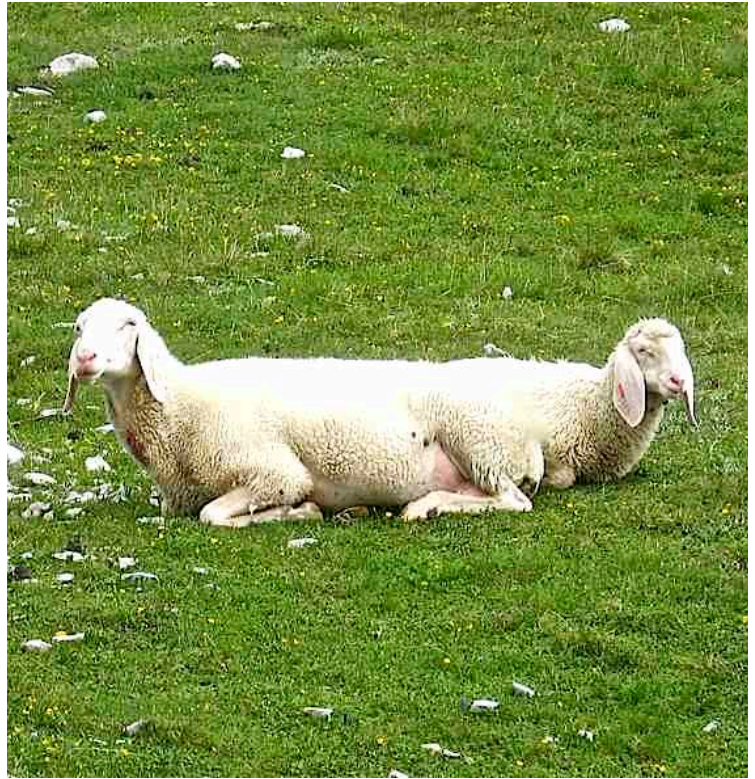


Approaching Forcella Forces de Siëles,
with the Odle peaks in cloud



The beginning of the rocky ridge 'walk'
above Forcella Forces de Siëles





Famous Dolomitic double-headed sheep!



On the grassy Puez Alp beside the Vallunga canyon, with the misty Sella group in the distance



Not too near the edge, Roger!



Arriving at the Puez hut



Seven bunks in a broom cupboard!

Summary	Distance	8 km	Ascent	610 m	Descent	190 m	Walking time	3h-30	Total time	5h-00
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It was a windy and cool day for the short and easy walk along Puez Alp, round the head of Vallunga, over the two minor cols of Crespeina and Cir, and down to Passo Gardena for the bus down to San Cristina for a free half day.



All wrapped up warm and ready to go, with sunhat handy just in case!



Above the head of Vallunga, with Forcella Forces de Sièles on the right hand skyline



En route between Passo Crespeina and Passo Cir



On Passo Cir



Lunch in San Cristina



Well, we are in Italy!

Summary	Distance:	7 km	Ascent	260 m	Descent	600 m	Walking time:	2h-15	Total time:	3h-00
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Monday 14th

**Bus
Trek**

**Passo Gardena
Rifugio Pisciadu**

**2120
2585**

We took a bus back up to Passo Gardena, where it was a wet and dreary day. We spent 2 hours in a café waiting for the weather to clear before setting off for the ascent into the Sella group up the via ferrata in Val Setus.



At 10.30 the rain eased,
and we decided it was time to brave it!



As we approached the start of the via ferrata
up Val Setus the rain began to turn to snow.



I might need some more energy for this next stage.



Lesley on an early part of the via ferrata



I haven't had this much fun in a long time!



Allan asks 'Can you see the top yet John?'



We made it out of the top of the gully, with the tough 'guys' still wearing shorts!



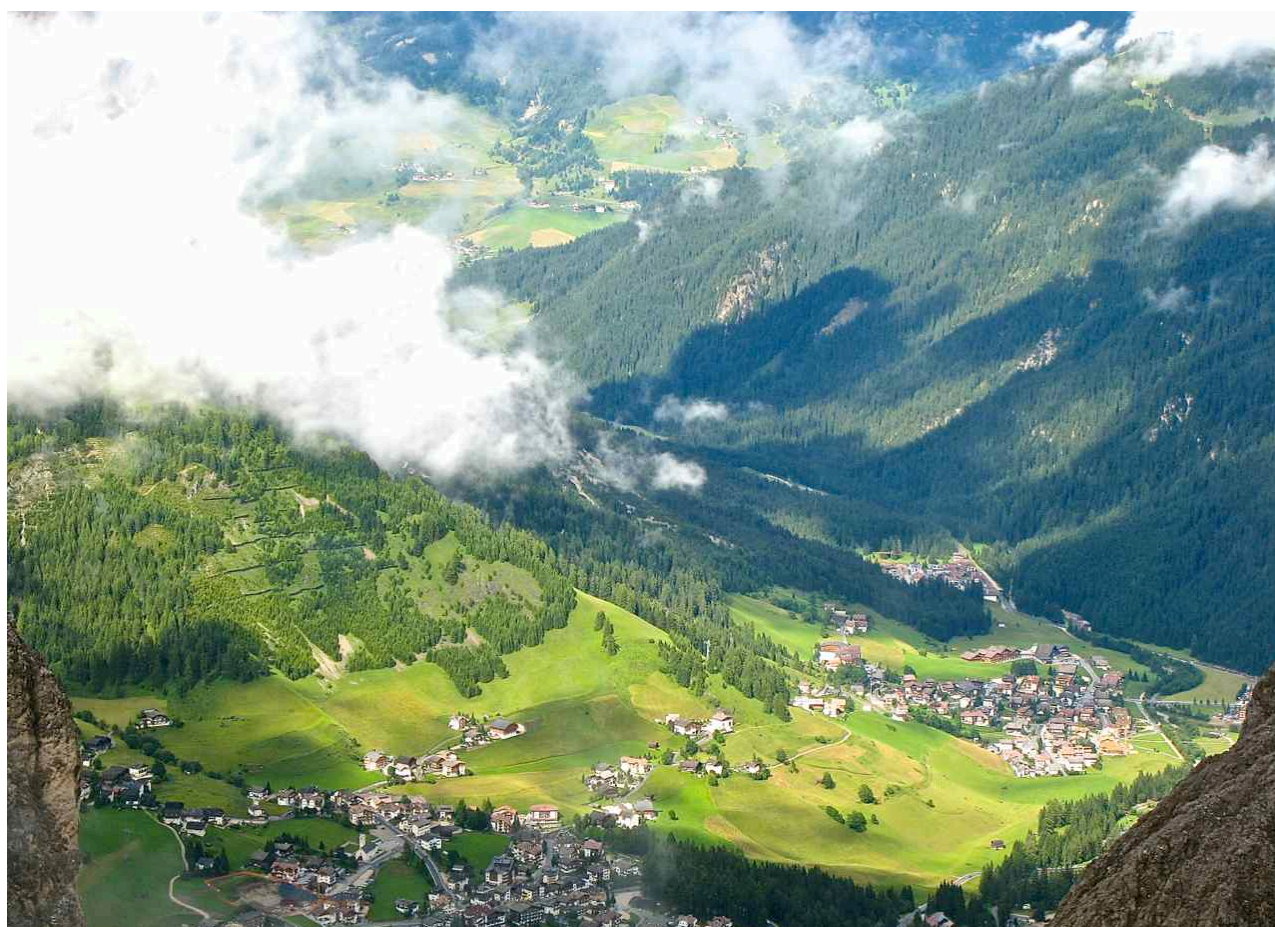
A 'path' we will long remember



At 1 o'clock the hut appeared out of the cloud.



The Pisciadu hut and Cima Pisciadu as the weather began to clear by 3.30 in the afternoon



By 5.00 the storm had almost passed giving a clear view down to Colfosco.

Summary	Distance:	3 km	Ascent	500 m	Descent	40 m	Walking time	2h-10	Total time	2h-30
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Tuesday 15th	Trek Excursion	Rifugio Boè Piz Boè	2873 3152
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It was a cold, clear morning at the start of a fabulous high mountain day. We traversed the high Sella plateau to the Boè hut for lunch, and then made the excursion to Piz Boè, at 3152 m (10,342 ft) the highest point of our route, and it was all done in glorious weather and with marvellous views.



8.30 and ready to go, on a clear, crisp morning with fresh snow still dusting the peaks



Retrospective view of Lago Pisciadu, the Pisciadu hut and the Puez peaks beyond



First leg stop in Val di Tita



Piz Boè comes into view



View down Val de Mesdi to Colfosco



The very busy Piz Boè hut



Frozen waterfall at the rock band on the route to Piz Boè



Retrospective view of the Boè hut from the rock band



On the summit of Piz Boè with the Marmolada beyond



The canyon of Val Lasties, Sasso Lungo and the distant Adamello Alps from the summit of Piz Boè



Hot chocolate at Rifugio Capanna Fassa on the summit of Piz Boè

Summary	Distance:	6 km	Ascent	740 m	Descent	450 m	Walking time	3h-20	Total time	8h-00
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Wednesday 16th	Trek	Lago di Fedaia	2053
	Bus	Alba	1490
	Trek	Rifugio Contrin	2016

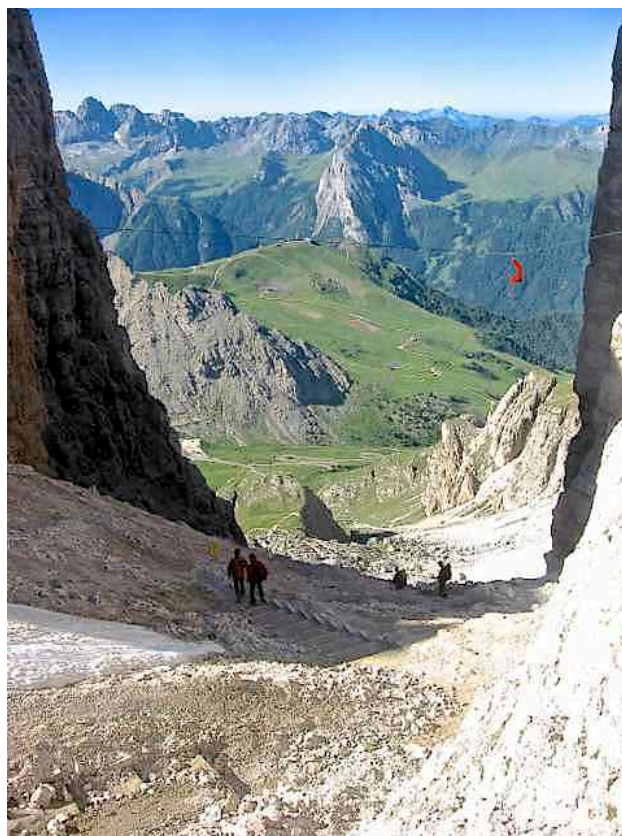
It was to be our longest day, but a varied and spectacular one. On another brilliantly clear morning we continued the high level traverse to the southern end of the Sella massif and went steeply down scree from Forcella Pordoi to the major road pass of Passo Pordoi. This descent has been much improved in recent years with steps to replace the worst of the loose scree.



An early start across hard-packed icy snow above the Boè hut



The balcony route across snow beds leading to the top of Forcella Pordoi



The steep scree slope leading 600 m down from Forcella Pordoi to Passo Pordoi



Friendly and inquisitive baby marmots right by the path



Potentilla nitida



The whole southern flank of the Sella Group: the cable car station on Sass Pordoi on the left, the scree chute and path coming down from Forcella Pordoi, Piz Boè the highest point on the skyline, and Passo Pordoi below

From Passo Pordoi we followed the balcony path (the Viel del Pan, a former smuggler's route) along the green Sasso del Cappello ridge before descending to the road at Lago di Fedaia.



The start of the Viel del Pan with the Marmolada in the background



The balcony route to Lago di Fedaia, with the Marmolada glacier on the right and the Civetta in the distance

After a short bus ride down to Alba it was an easy walk along the track up picturesque Val Contrin to the hut.



The easy walk up Val Contrin, with the following day's col, Passo delle Cirelle, the low point on the skyline



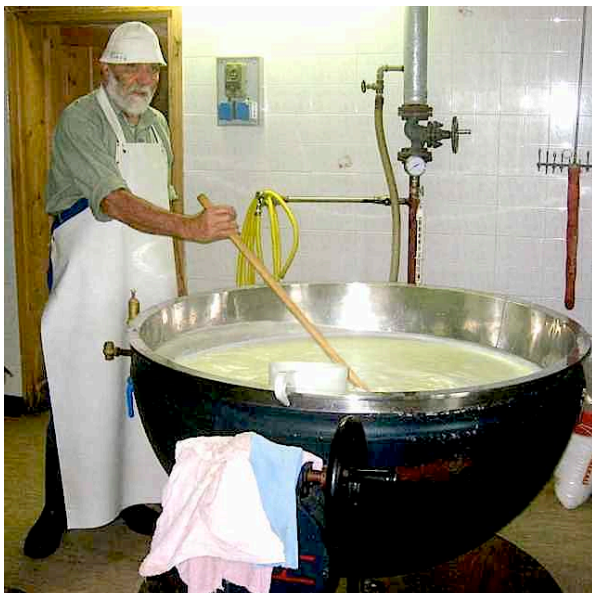
Rifugio Contrin, with the south wall of the Marmolada above

Summary	Distance: 17 km	Ascent 880 m	Descent 1160 m	Walking time 5h-00	Total time 9h-00
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After an interesting visit to Malga Contrin, a farm just above the hut where we bought cheese for lunch, the low cloud and poor visibility for much of the day matched the mood of the sombre and desolate slopes on either side of Passo della Cirelle with widespread remains from the First World War.



Malga Contrin





The cloud lifted momentarily to give a view of the desolate slopes leading to Passo della Cirelle.



A rare Rhaetian Poppy
(*Papaver rhaeticum*)



Remains of a First World War hut below the pass,
with old boot leather and rusting food cans





An ibex with a radio collar



Orange or Tiger Lily (*Lilium bulbiferum*)



Rifugio Fuchiade is an up-market guest-house with luxurious bedrooms and award winning food.



The interior was like a museum and art gallery with a display of rural artefacts and accordions.



The chances are John will win again.

Summary

Distance	9 km
Ascent	700 m
Descent	740 m
Walking time	3h-30
Total time	4h-30

It was our least interesting day as we followed the track down to Passo di San Pellegrino, walked up through forest, along a ski piste over the shoulder of the dull mountain Col Margherita, and finally down another track to Passo di Valles, and all done in grey, cloudy and drizzly conditions.



What - no muesli and teewasser today?



Handiwork of the local wood-carver at Fienili di Fuchiade



The only waterfall we saw



Rifugio Passo di Valles



Fox, venison, mouflon, badger and chamois weren't on the menu!



A beautiful sunset promised a fine day in the morning

Summary	Distance	11 km	Ascent	430 m	Descent:	370 m	Walking time:	3h-00	Total time	5h-00
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Saturday 19th	Trek Excursion	Rifugio Mulaz Monte Mulaz	2571 2906
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It was another superb high mountain day, made more dramatic by cloud billowing round the towering peaks. After a stiff climb to Forcella Venegia there were two easy cols followed by some cable-assisted climbs to reach the Mulaz hut. From there John, Roger and I did the enjoyable excursion to Monte Mulaz.



Clear morning skies to the west of the hut ...



... and billowing cloud to the east



Our first objective was up the grassy flanks to Forcella Venegia, with our final objective of the day the rocky dome of Monte Mulaz rising beyond it.



On Forcella Venegia, with Cima dei Bureloni, Cima della Vezzana and Cimon della Pala towering above Val Venegia



On Passo di Venegiotta.



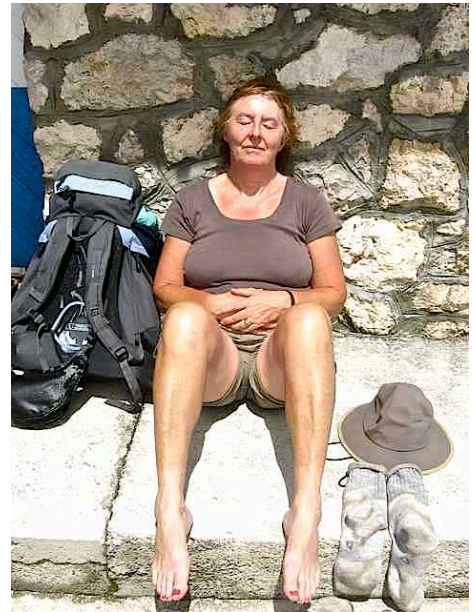
Two of several rock bands with fixed cables on the climb to the Mulaz hut



Cima di Campido and cloud-wreathed Cima del Focobon



The Mulaz hut comes into view



A good day's lead, Lesley!



A refreshing mug of tea ...



... but Roger's got a fly in his!



The only time we didn't have bunk beds, but were given mattresses on the loft floor instead

The waymarked route up Monte Mulaz turns off the main AV2 path just above the hut, and is a really interesting and enjoyable scramble. Billowing cloud produced dramatic views which would be even more spectacular in clear weather.



The pensioners on Monte Mulaz



The Cima dei Bureloni – Cimon della Pala ridge from Monte Mulaz



Cimon della Pala (in cloud) and the following day's route through Val Venegia to Passo Rolle



Sadly our last hut dinner for this year



It looked like there might be a temperature inversion in the morning.

Summary	Distance: 11 km	Ascent: 1090 m	Descent: 550 m	Walking time: 4h-20	Total time: 8h-00
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Sunday 20th	Trek Taxi/Bus Train	Passo Rolle Bolzano Milan	1955
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There *was* a temperature inversion, making it a spectacular dawn. After an early breakfast, our favourite muesli and teewasser again, we made the short climb to Passo del Mulaz then the steep descent into Val Venegia, from where we followed tracks and green paths to Passo Rolle and the end of the walking.



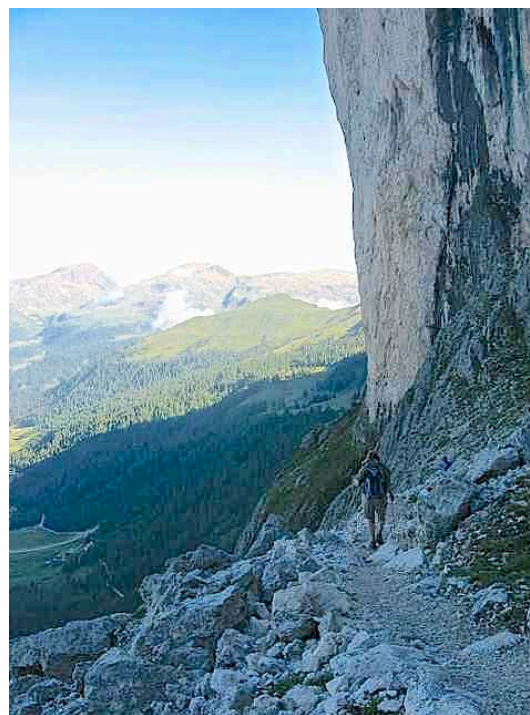
At 6.45 a.m. and 2571 m (8,435 ft) it was our earliest and highest breakfast ...



... with a superb view over cloud-filled Val di Focobon.



The short walk to Passo del Mulaz



The start of the steep descent into Val Venegia

Summary	Distance: 8 km	Ascent 310 m	Descent 930 m	Walking time: 2h-40	Total time: 4h-00
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None of us had realised that as it was a Sunday local buses might not run over Passo Rolle, which turned out to be the case. So we enquired at a hotel on the pass and the owner rang for a minibus-taxi from Predazzo which collected us and dropped us at the bus station there just in time to catch a bus to Bolzano and then a train back to Milan.

Monday 21st

**Free morning
Bus
Flight**

**Milan
Malpensa
Manchester**

With a 7 p.m. flight departure we had a free morning in Milan, so we bought hop-on, hop-off bus tickets to enable us to take in most of the main sights, before making the afternoon transfer to Malpensa.



The Vittorio Emanuele II arcade



The Cathedral



Sforzesco castle



Mont Blanc from the air

MAPS

	Scale	Sheet	
Kompass Wanderkarte	1:50,000	56	Brixen/Bressanone
	1:50,000	59	Gruppo del Sella/ Gruppo della Marmolada
	1:50,000	76	Pale di San Martino

These three sheets cover the whole of our route. The cartography of the Kompass 1:50,000 series is rather crude and limited, but the huts and paths are clearly marked, and they were quite adequate as we were following the AV2 which was well signposted and waymarked the whole way.

In other areas of the Dolomites we have found the Tabacco 1:25,000 series most useful as the maps are more detailed and have excellent topography.

GUIDES

Treks in the Dolomites - Alte Vie 1 and 2	Martin Collins and Gillian Price	Cicerone	2002 (2nd Edition)
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We found this illustrated, well laid out, and informative guide really useful, both at the planning stage and when walking the route.

TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

Organisational details such as transport links, cable cars and details of the huts are not included as they are readily available online, and the above guide contains that sort of information.

I produced the first illustrated version of a 2008 log in the autumn of that year as single A4 pages in Word using full size images, and then printed and bound it. The total size for all 34 pages was 280 MB.

This version, with the addition of digital sketch maps, a detailed route summary, some extra images, and a list of 3000 m points was produced in 2017 on an Apple iMac using Word for Mac 2011, with iPhoto and Preview for editing the images. Most of the images were taken by Lesley and me, but thanks to John and Roger for theirs that I have used. The images are low resolution versions which still display fairly well at A4 page size. The average size of the 144 images used is about 70 kB, giving a total file size of about 10 MB, about the size of 3 original images. Thanks to Dave Shaw who identified the flowers I didn't know.

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Version 2



OLD TREKKERS' TREKS 3000 m POINTS

I first had the idea of producing a list of the 3000 m points that the OTT have reached in 2011 while we were on the summit of Petzek (3283 m). I couldn't remember the last two digits of Hohe Riffler's height (3231) and hence which of them was higher, making it the second highest peak we had reached by 2011. I have since produced versions for the earlier logs 2007 - 2010.

All are summits except where marked § for high points on a ridge.

Feet	Metres	Height	Year	High Point	Ascentionists	Whole party ascent		
11,000	3350							
	3340							
	3330	3333	2006	Schaufel Spitz (10,936 ft)	Allan, John			
10,900	3320							
	3310							
	3300							
10,800	3290							
	3280							
	3270							
10,700	3260							
	3250							
	3240							
10,600	3230	3231	2007	Hohe Riffler	Allan, John, Tim			
	3220							
	3210							
10,500	3200							
	3190							
	3180							
10,400	3170							
	3160							
	3150	3152	2008	Piz Boè (10,342 ft)	Allan, John, Roger, Lesley, Judith			
10,300	3140							
	3130	3134	2007	Schönbichlerhorn	Allan, John, Tim, Nigel, Lesley, Judith			
	3120							
10,200	3110							
	3100							
	3090							
10,100	3080							
	3070							
	3060							
10,000	3050	§ 3050	2006	Gamsspitzl (S)	Allan, John, Paul, Lesley, Judith	10,000 ft		
	3040							
	3030							
9,900	3020							
	3010	3006	2006	Rinnen Spitz	Allan, John, Mark, Judith, Julie			
	3000							
				3000 m points	Party members	Total party		
2006	Tirol – Stubai Alps			(3)	Allan & Lesley, John & Judith, Mark & Julie, Paul7			
2007	Tirol – Zillertal Alps			(2)	Allan & Lesley, John & Judith, Tim, Nigel6			
2008	Dolomites – Alta Via 2			(1)	Allan & Lesley, John & Judith, Roger5			
Total Treks		Allan & Lesley: 3	John & Judith: 3	Tim: 1	Roger: 1	Paul: 1	Nigel: 1	Mark & Julie: 1