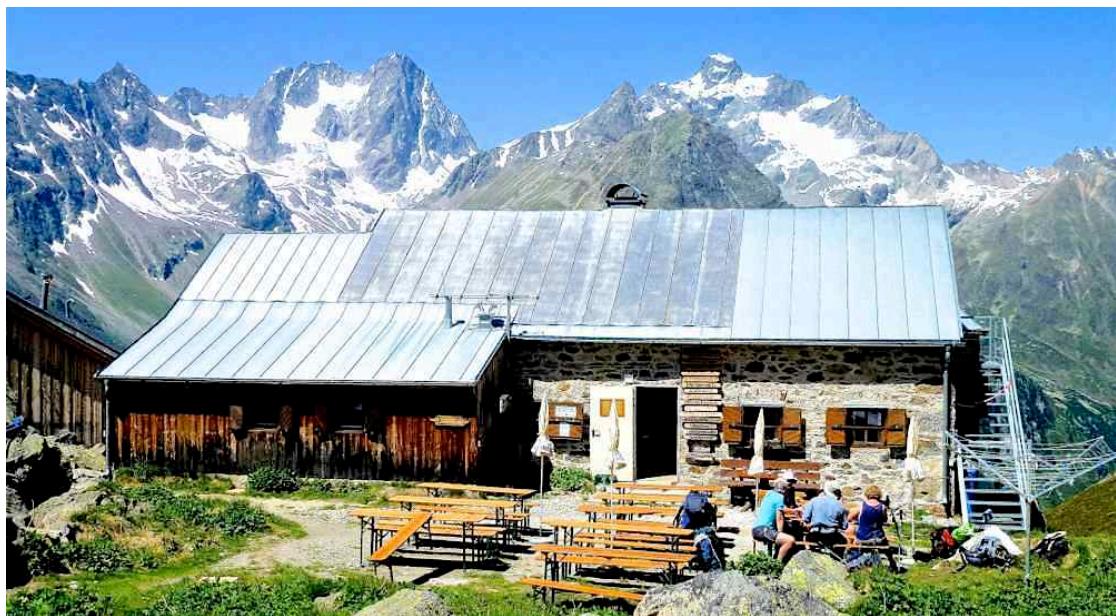


TIROL HUT-TO-HUT TOUR, ÖTZTAL ALPS - July 2013

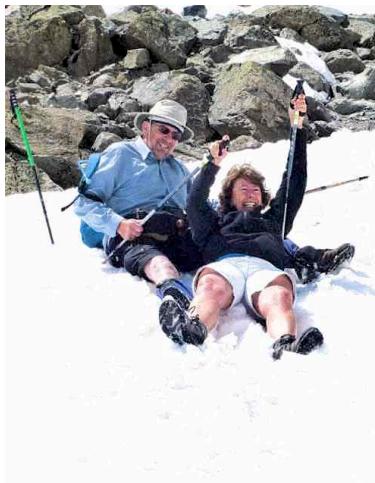
Allan and Lesley Witton, John and Judith Willson, Tim Pattison, Paul Shufflebottom, Ian Thorpe



Team photo at a leg stop on the ascent of Kreuzspitz



Afternoon tea outside the Rüsselsheimer hut with Waze Spitz and Verpeil Spitz



Fun in the snow on Hohe Geige



Crossing the snow arête en route to Saykogel



On the summit of Urkundkogel

OUTLINE ITINERARY AND WALKING ROUTE SUMMARY

The first 5½ - day section of the route, north of the Weißkamm, was a loop at the head of Pitztal, followed by a challenging crossing of the Geigenkamm to Huben in the Ötztal, with an attempt at Hohe Geige on the way. The second 5½ - day section, south of the Weißkamm, was a circuit from Vent, heading south up Niedertal and returning via Rofental, with ascents of five 3000 m peaks on five consecutive days.

		15 days	2 + 2 half-days travel	1 free day	10 + 2 half-days walking							
				Height m	Distance km	Ascent m	Descent m	Time in hours		Actual	Guide	Naismith
July												
M 8	Air/rail	Manchester > Munich > Innsbruck	Hotel									
T 9	Rail Bus Trek	Innsbruck to Imst-Pitztal Mittelberg Taschachhaus	DAV (125)	1740 2432		8.0 750 60	2-45	2-30	2-50			
W10•	Trek Excursion	Riffelseehütte Circuit of Riffelsee Day's total	DAV (50)	2289		8.0 3.5 11.5	380 60 440	520 60 580	3-15 45 4-00	3-00	---	
T 11•	Trek via	Plangeross Cottbuser Höhenweg	Hotel	1612 2420		6.5 280	960	3-30	---	1-45		
F 12•	Trek Excursion	Rüsselsheimer Hütte Weißenmaurachsee Day's total	DAV (47)	2323 2540		3.0 2.0 5.0	730 220 950	20 220 240	2-00 50 2-50	2-00 ---	2-40	
S 13•	Excursion	Hohe Geige (west ridge) from Rüsselsheimer Hütte	(10,204 ft)	3110		4.5 790	790	5-15	---	2-15		
S 14•	Trek via and	Huben Auf Gahwinden Rötkarl Joch Breitlehnjöchl	Hotel	1180 2649 2710 2639		13.5 700	1840	6-45	---	3-50		
M 15	Free Day	Huben	Hotel									
T 16•	Bus Trek Excursion	Vent Martin Busch Hütte Similaun Hütte Day's total	DAV (121)	1895 2501 (9905 ft)		8 9.5 17.5	660 520 1180	50 520 570	2-10 2-30 4-40	2-30	5-30	
W 17•	Excursion	Kreuzspitz from Martin Busch Hütte	(11,342 ft)	3457		7.0	960	960	4-10	---	3-00	
T 18•	Trek via	Gasthof Schöne Aussicht Saykogel	Priv. (62) (11,024 ft)	2842 3360		11.5 1280	940	7-00	5-00	4-30		
F 19•	Excursion Trek	Im Hintern Eis Hochjoch-Hospiz Day's total	(10,729 ft) DAV (86)	3270 2412		3 6.5 9.5	440 160 600	440 590 1030	2-05 2-10 4-15	---	2-00	3-00
S 20•	Trek Excursion	Breslauer Hütte Urkundkolm Day's total	DAV (201) (10,302 ft)	2844 3140		10.5 1.5 12.0	580 300 880	150 300 450	3-30 1-15 4-45	4-00	3-50	
S 21	Trek via Bus/Rail	Vent Wildes Mannle (+ chairlift) Ötztal Bahnhof > Innsbruck	(9918 ft) Hotel	1895 3023		4.0 290	780	2-30	---	1-15		
M 22	Rail/air	Munich > Manchester							Naismith daily average		3h-10	

Grand Totals:	Distance	Ascent	Descent	Time
(All 12 days walking)	111 km 69 miles	9100 m 29,900 ft	9200 m 30,200 ft	53 hours
Daily averages: (All 12 days walking)	9.2 km 5.8 miles	760 m 2490 ft	770 m 2520 ft	4h-20
Daily averages: (10 full days walking •)	9.9 km 6.2 miles	810 m 2640 ft	840 m 2740 ft	4h-45

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

An Excursion is a return walk without full packs.

Kreuzspitz Summits are in bold, 3000 m points are shaded blue.

DAV/Priv. Deutschen Alpenverein (German Alpine Club)/Private hut, with number of places.

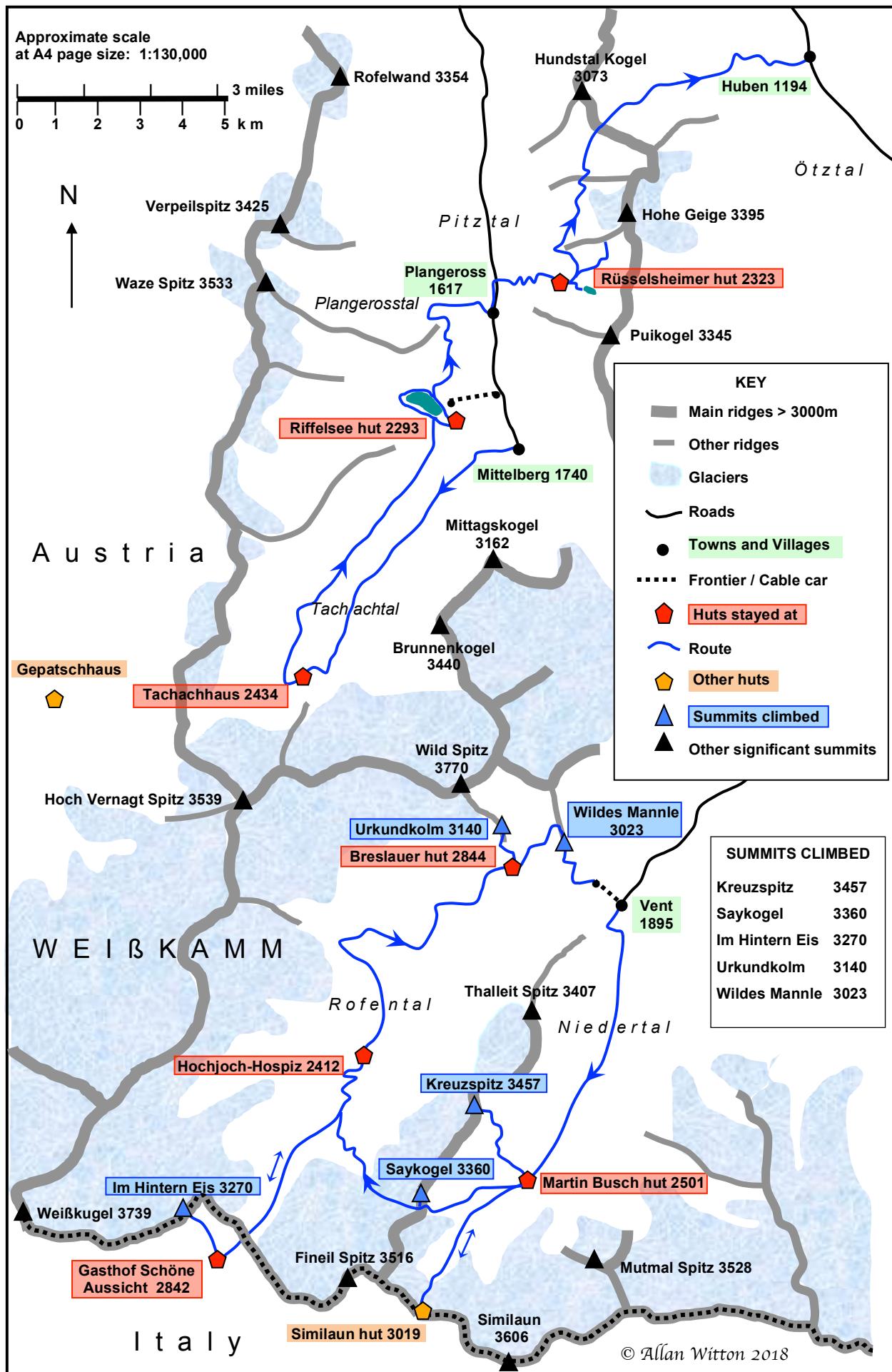
Walking Times (excluding stops)

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

Guide: Times according to Austrian Alpine Club 'Hut book' or other guide.

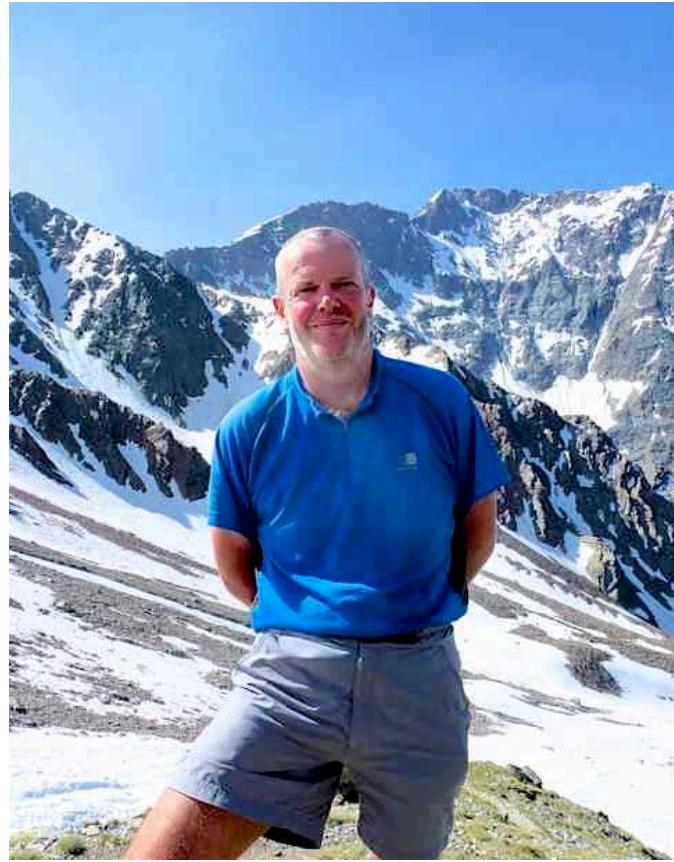
Naismith: According to Naismith's Rule: 12 minutes/km and 10 metres/minute for ascent.

SKETCH MAP





On the summit of Kreuzspitz, 3457 m (11,342 ft)



On the south west ridge of Hohe Geiger (~3000 m)



At the glacial lake Weißenmaurachsee (2550 m)



On the frontier at the Similaun hut (3019 m) with a view into Italy

Roger Hand was booked to be a member of the party, but had to withdraw due to family reasons.

With no walkers' route crossing the Weißkamm, the trek had to be in two quite distinct parts, both of which had to be modified from the initial intended routes. The first part of our intended route was to follow the MGS 1977 Foreign Trek route from the Gepatschhaus (which has bus access) to Huben, but booking difficulties at the Taschachhaus meant that we had to start in Pitztal, which had the advantage of an easier start for the first few days and avoided the long first day crossing of Ölgruben Joch. The second half of our route was a variation of the second part of Jonathan Hurdle's Tour 4, but again booking difficulties at the Martin Busch hut meant that we did it clockwise rather than the preferred anticlockwise.

With so many summits climbed, and so much time spent on snowfields and rocky ridges, it isn't surprising that our average walking time was 37% longer than Naismith's.

Monday 8th

Air
Rail

Manchester - Munich
Innsbruck

Hotel

An afternoon arrival at Munich allowed us to travel to Innsbruck for our en-route stop.



Arriving at the Pension Stoi in Innsbruck



Our traditional first evening meal of pizzas



Tuesday 9th	Rail	Imst-Pitztal		
	Bus	Mittelberg	1740	
	Trek	Taschachthaus	2432	

A short train journey to Imst-Pitztal and a slick change to a postbus up Pitztal got us to Mittelberg for elevenses at the Berghof Steinbock before setting off on the long track which ascends gradually up Taschachthal.



At the bus terminus at Mittelberg, ready for the off





The track up Taschachtal with the hut above the lateral moraine ahead



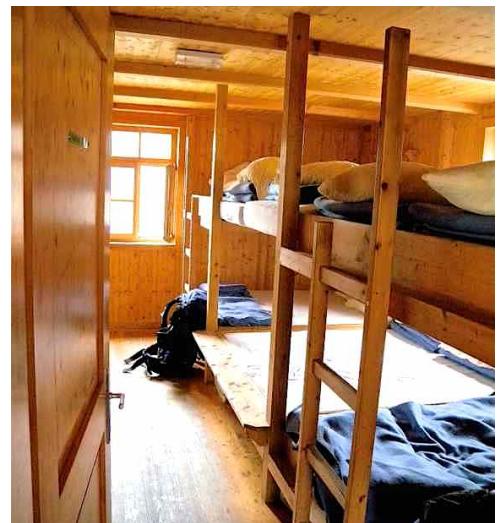
Southern Butterwort (*Pinguicula leptoceras*)



The track ends at the goods lift to the hut from where the path climbs steeply up and over the old lateral moraine and up to the hut.



The lower part of the Taschach glacier, with the Wild Spitz just out of view



Summary	Distance	8.0 km	Ascent	750 m	Descent	60 m	Walking Time	2h-45	Total time	3h-40
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Total time is the time between the start and the end of the day's walking

Wednesday 10th

**Trek
Excursion**

**Riffelseehütte
Circuit of Riffelsee**

2289

A brief descent to cross the Sexegerten stream then a short, easy ascent brought us to the Fuldaer Höhenweg, a marvellous balcony path high on the north flank of Taschachtal, with easy walking and spectacular views across the valley to Wildspitz. The path took us right to Riffelsee, with the hut in a spectacular position just above it.



On the Fuldaer Höhenweg with the summit of Wild Spitz just visible, and the hut right of centre



View back to the head of Taschachtal with the track we walked up the previous day in the valley bottom
The Taschach hut is just above centre image and the Fuldaer Höhenweg is high on the right flank



Riffelsee comes into view, with the Riffelsee hut on the far right



Riffelsee, and the pointed summit of See Kogel (3358) from just before we reached the hut

We arrived at Riffelsee at noon, 4 hours after setting off, and had lunch on the grassy banks overlooking the lake before checking into the hut. At various times during the afternoon most of us took the easy amble along the level path round Riffelsee, with fine views.



View over Riffelsee and Pitztal to Hohe Geiger and Puikogel



Wood sculpture in the form of a leaping fish



Summary	Distance	11.5 km	Ascent	440 m	Descent	580 m	Walking Time	4h-00	Total time	7h-00
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Thursday 11th

Trek
via

Plangeross
Cottbuser Höhenweg

Hotel

1612
2420

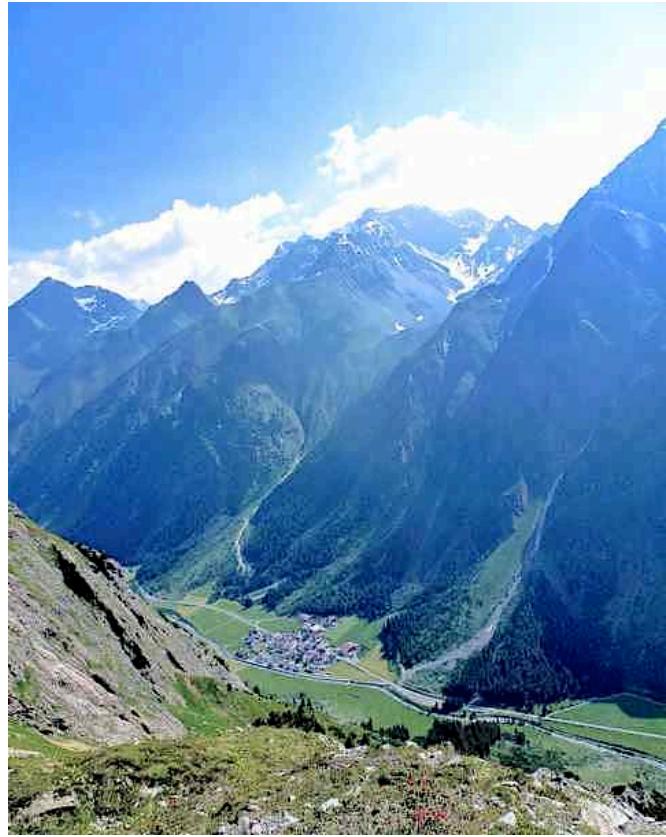
Paul took the direct route down the valley to Mandarfen and Plangeross while the rest of us followed the Cottbuser Höhenweg high above Pitztal. This involves numerous via ferrata, ascents and descents, including a sustained peg-and-cable ascent of about 80 m.



Our first leg-stop with a view back to Riffelsee with Brunnenkogel far left, Wildspitz just visible on the far skyline, and Wormtaler Kogel on the right



Mittagskogel and Brunnenkogel and the top station of the cable car up from Mandarfen



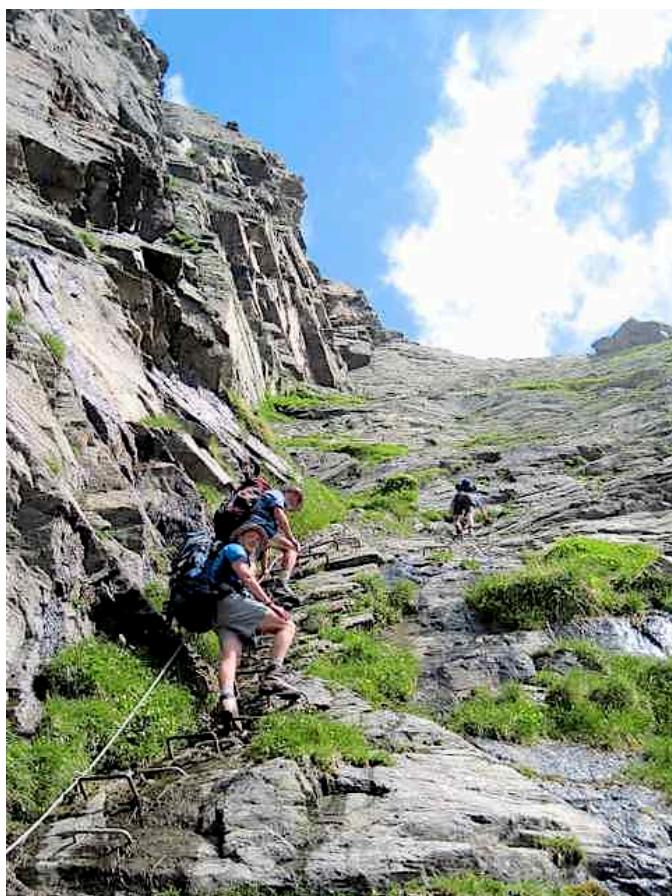
View down Pitztal with Plangeross far below and Hohe Geiger towering above



A view of almost the whole of the peg-and-cable ascent which zig-zags up the face with grassy patches to the rocky shoulder
The three walkers ahead of us on the route (level with Lesley's elbow) are almost too small to make out
From our position there was a tricky assisted descent before the main climb



The tricky descent to cross a narrow gully before the main ascent



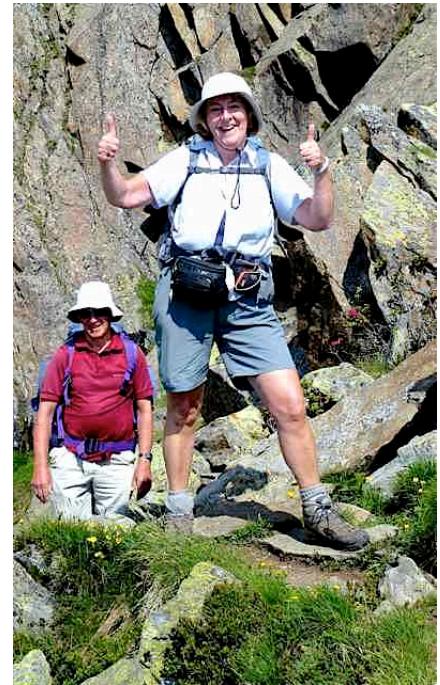
Just after starting the main climb ...



... and towards the end



The final move



Delight at having completed our longest ever via ferrata

An easy path then led us round a grassy shoulder into the hanging valley of Plangerosstal. The main path heads up the valley, high on its southern flank to the Kaunergrat hut below Waze Spitz, but just after turning into the valley we spotted a 'marmot path' (not marked on the map) which led steeply but easily down for lunch and a siesta in an idyllic spot by the stream.



Rounding the shoulder into Plangerosstal with Waze Spitz (3533) and Verpeil Spitz (3425) at the head of the valley



A beautiful lunch spot with Hohe Geiger (left) and Pukogel (right) seen across Pitztal
Our following day's route zig-zags up by the stream to the Rüsselheimer hut which is by the lowest snow patch



Refreshments at the Plangeross Alm,
the cowherd's summer residence

We then plunged steeply down into Pitztal and our hotel in Plangeross where we arrived in plenty of time for afternoon tea and a stroll round the village before dinner.



Plangeross and our luxurious Hotel Bergland ...

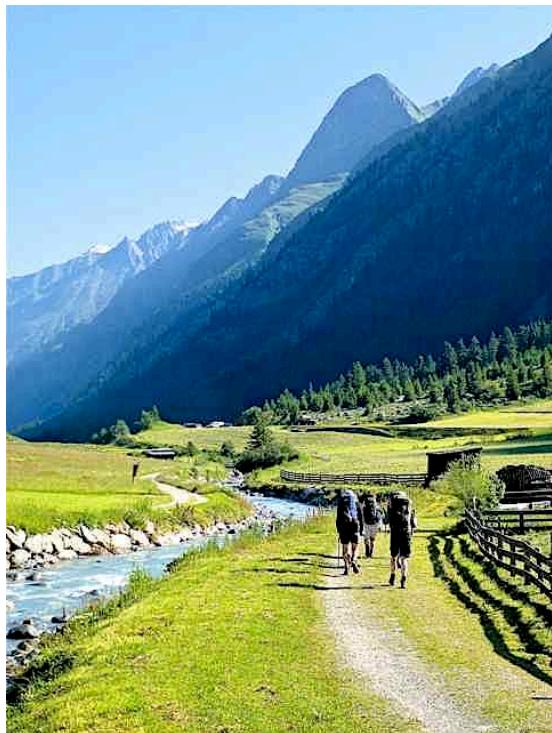


... with afternoon tea in china cups for a change

Summary	Distance	6.5 km	Ascent	280 m	Descent	960 m	Walking Time	3h-30	Total time	6h-00
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Friday 12th	Trek Excursion	Rüsselsheimer Hütte Weißmaurachsee	2323 2540
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A short walk along the valley track took us to the hut path which rises steeply in tight zig-zags alongside the Kitzlesbach stream directly to the hut, where we arrived after a walking time of 2-50 for lunch.



The riverside track



View back over Plangeross to the Mittagskogel – Brunnenkogel ridge



Our first leg-stop, by then high above Pitztal, with most of the previous day's route visible on the opposite flank



Lunch at the hut



Marvellous view over to hut to Waze Spitz and Verpeil Spitz

After a long break in the stunning surroundings of the hut we made the short excursion up to the glacial lake of Weißmaurachsee.



Weißenmaurachsee with the col of Weißenmaurach on the skyline



Creeping Avens (*Geum reptans*) at 8300 ft



Several of us had the speciality of the house, steinbockgoulash, made from locally shot steinbock!



At 8.30 the sun set behind the Verpeil Spitz – Rofele Wand ridge ...



... so we were soon tucked up in our cosy dormitory

Summary	Distance	5.0 km	Ascent	950 m	Descent	240 m	Walking Time	2h-50	Total time	7h-00
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In 1977 an MGS Trek party climbed Hohe Geige from a camp by the hut. (*Good excursion, mostly on rock, easy scrambling, some stonefall risk. Steep snow slope to summit, 3h-30 up, 3 hours down*). Davies states 'A most rewarding mountain, but not at all difficult and a rope is not essential' and describes the route via the south west ridge. However, our attempt at the summit had to be curtailed because of difficult and slow scrambling on the south west approach ridge. Although we didn't make the summit, it was an enjoyable and spectacular high mountain day out.

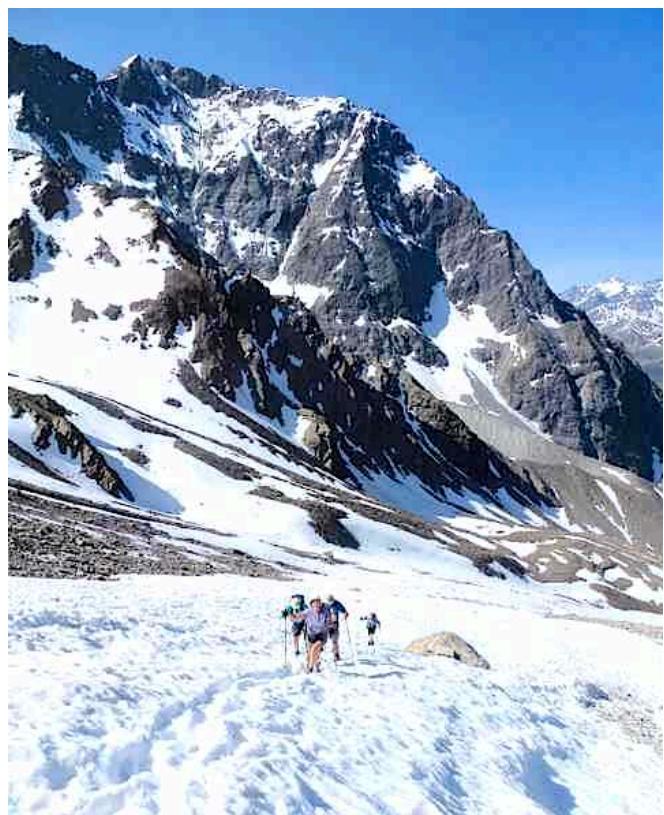
We took the path east from the hut, got onto the snow filling the southern combe at about 2600 m and curved round to get onto the south west ridge.



In the sub-zero morning air the snow was hard and icy on the lower part of the snowfield



Later the snow was a bit softer and steps easier to kick

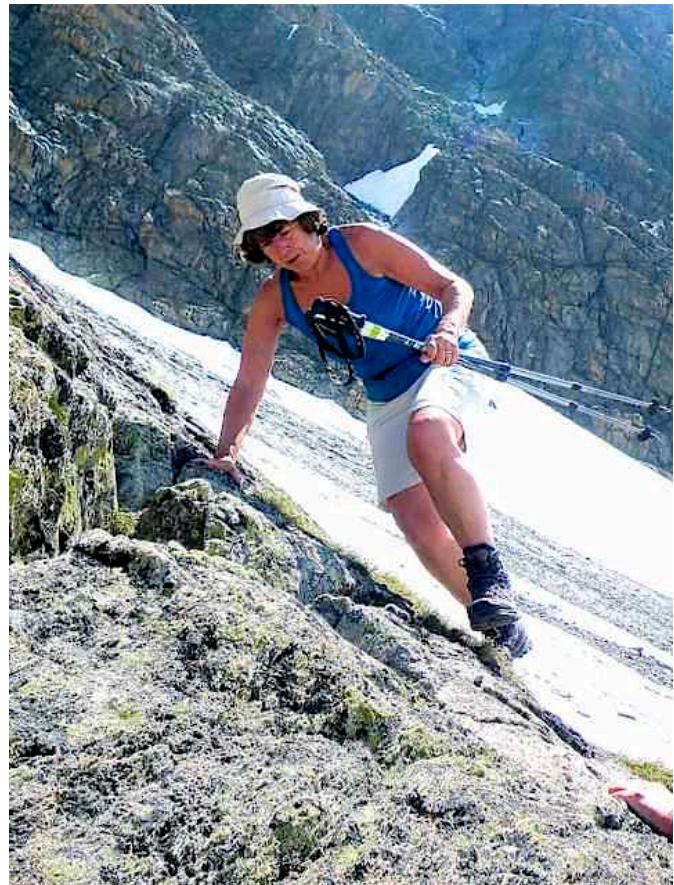


Puikogel (3345)



Off the snow and on the path at the start of the ridge climb

The steep path up the lower part of the ridge was straightforward, but as we got higher the scrambling became more difficult and our progress was slow. Given the fact that we had to return by the same route, and scrambling down is always harder, we decided that we didn't have time to make the summit, and stopped at a height of about 3100 m, just short of the junction with the west ridge. Perhaps the west ridge route from Auf Gahwinden is easier.



Slow and difficult scrambling as we climbed the ridge



View south-west from our highest point on the ridge: Puikogel on the left with Wild Spitz far beyond it and Weißmaurachsee below, Waze Spitz on the right, Riffelsee in the centre and Plangeross 1500 m below in Pitztal



It was great fun descending the now-soft snow, even when we fell over!

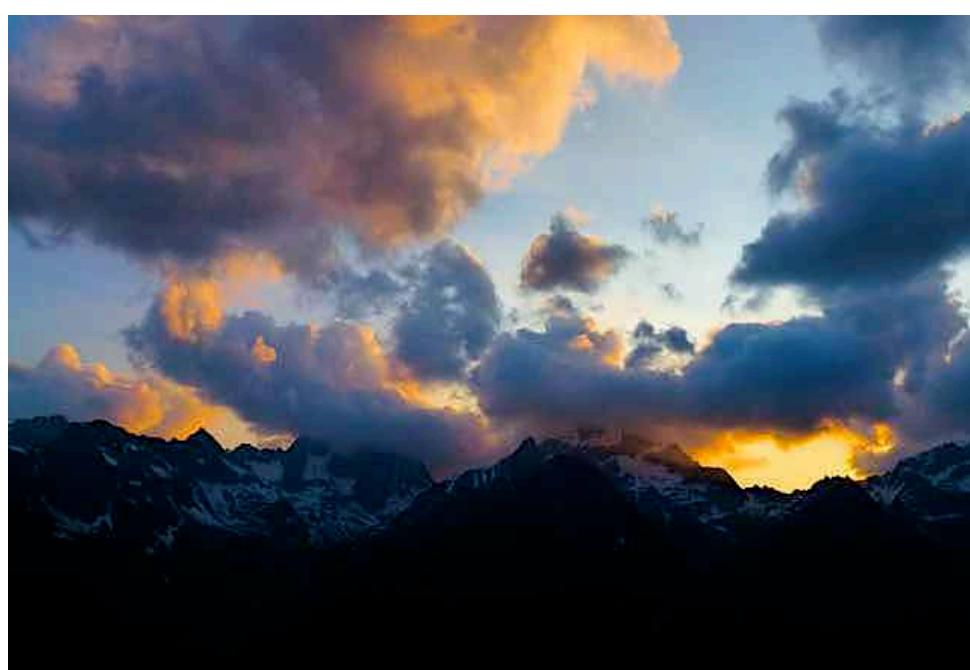


Easy descent down the lower snowfield with the tower of Ampfer Kogel on the right

Dwarf Snowbell (*Soldanella pusilla*)



Another tasty and filling dinner of steinbockgoulash or mixed dumplings

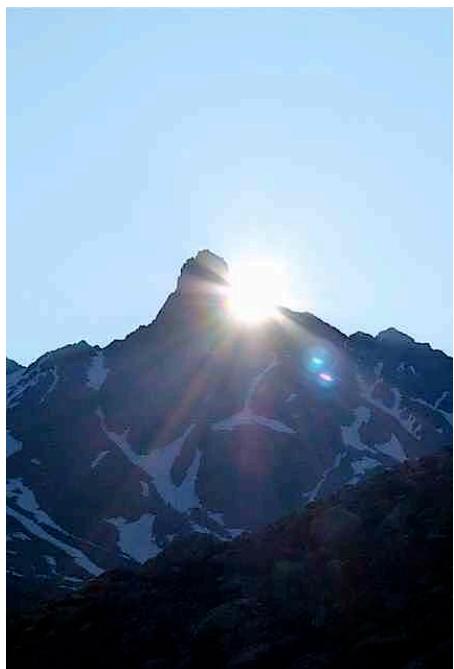


Summary

Distance	4.5 km
Ascent	790 m
Descent	790 m
Walking time	5h-15
Total time	7h-30

Sunday 14th	Trek	Huben	Hotel	1180
	via	Auf Gahwinden		2649
	and	Rötkarl Joch		2710
		Breitlehnjöchl		2639

It was to be a long and challenging day, crossing Hohe Geiger's west ridge and two cols to go over Geigenkamm from Pitztal into Ötztal. It was a glorious day but the ice and snow conditions made descending the Auf Gahwinden and Rötkarl Joch quite tricky.



Sunrise over Ampfer Kogel



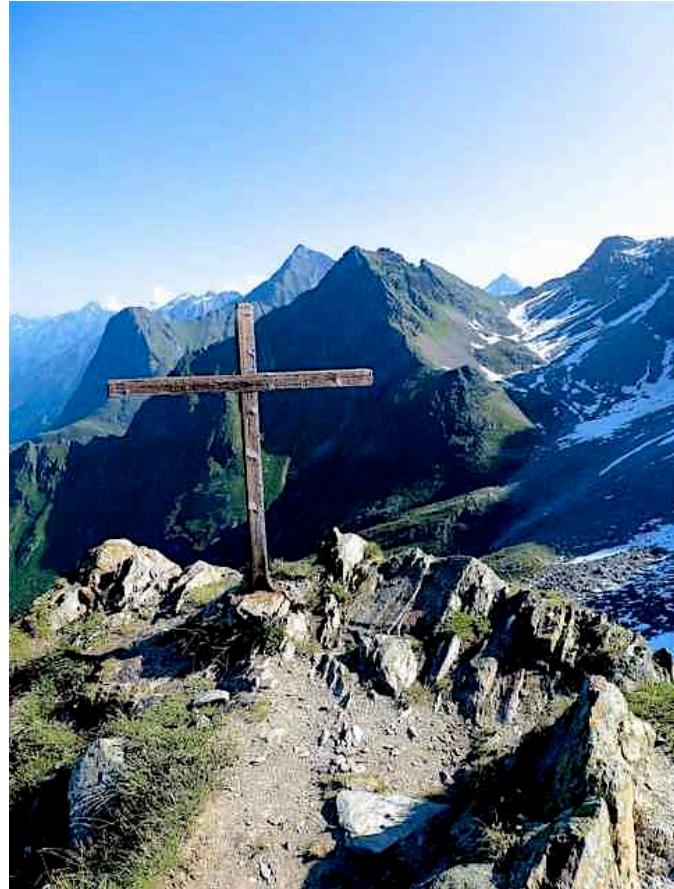
View over the hut and Pitztal again



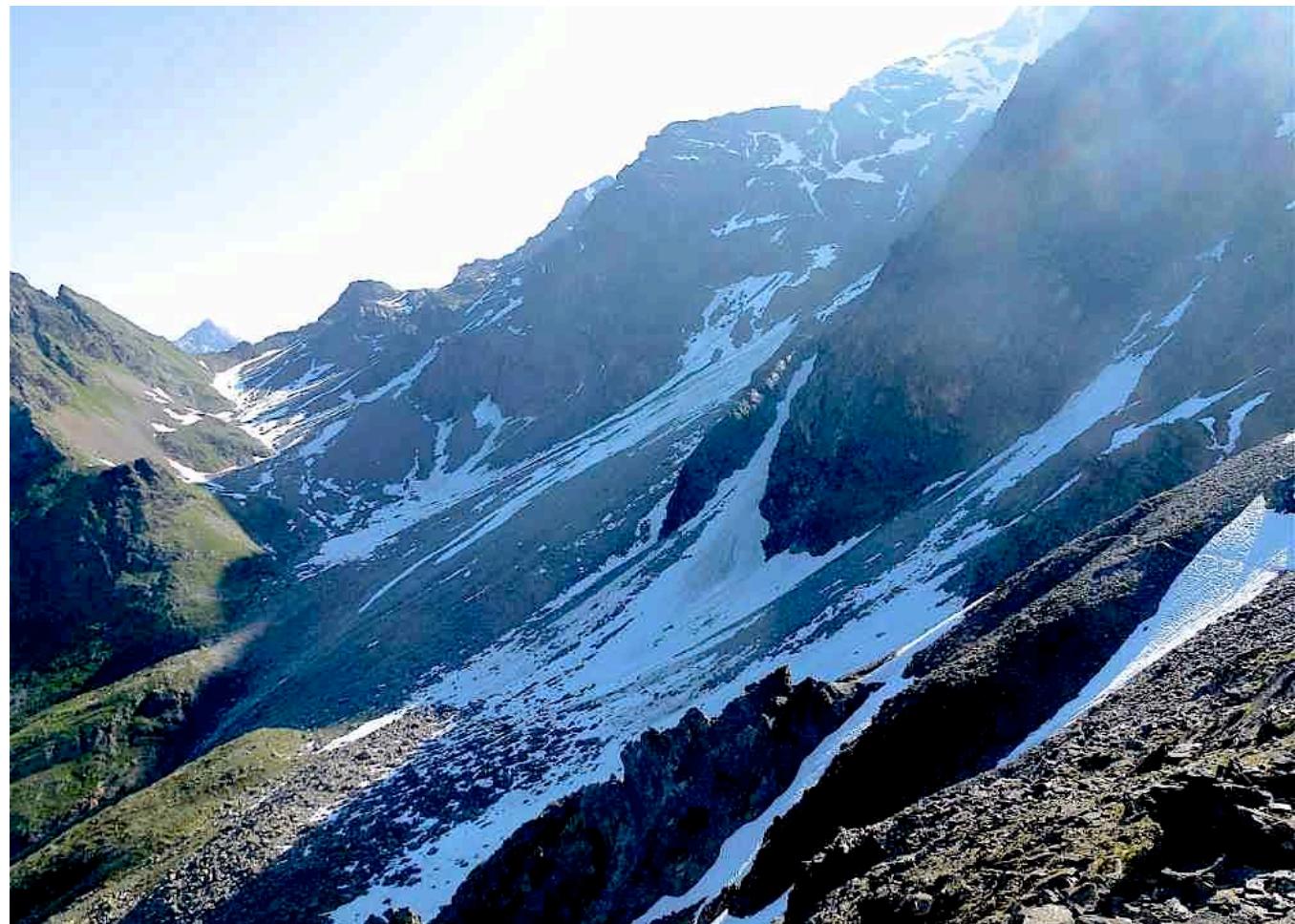
On Auf Gahwinden, not a summit but just a shoulder on the long west ridge of Hohe Geige
Waze Spitz, Verpeil Spitz and Rofele Wand are on the skyline



View south over the hut to Puikogel and distant Wild Spitz ...



... and north to Rötkarl Joch



Our route to Rötkarl Joch (far left) was across the snow beds and scree of Rotenkar, and began with a tricky crossing of the steep and icy snow chute on the far right of the image

Given the near-vertical drop below, crossing the snow via the hard-packed, icy boot prints was considerably more intimidating than it looks. Paul decided it wasn't for him and returned to Pitztal to get the bus round to Huben.



Easier, softer snow and scree as we headed across Rotenkar and up to Rötkarl Joch



Dwarf Snowbell



View back to Auf Gahwinden and Wild Spitz

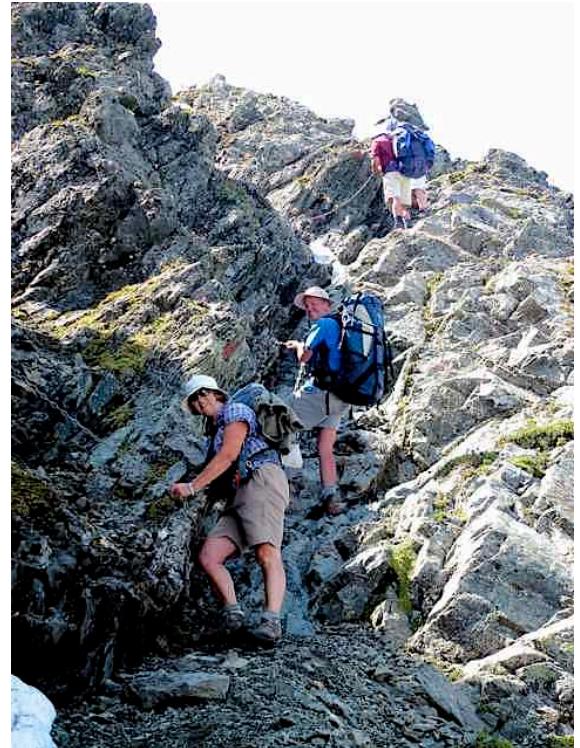


Next season's Steinbock stew!



View ahead from Rötkarl Joch to grassy Breitlehnjöchl on the right, with Hundstal Kogel (3073) above

The descent off Rötkarl Joch was a sustained section of serious scrambling. The only other occasion when we have done such an extended, challenging scramble was the ascent of Val Setus in the Sella Group in the Dolomites in 2008. Although we did that ascent in a blizzard, this was more difficult because we did it in descent. The first soft and easy snow slope was followed by a steep, rocky groove with a chain handrail.



Then the 'path' and handrail disappeared under a bank of steep snow, necessitating some improvised security using walking poles.

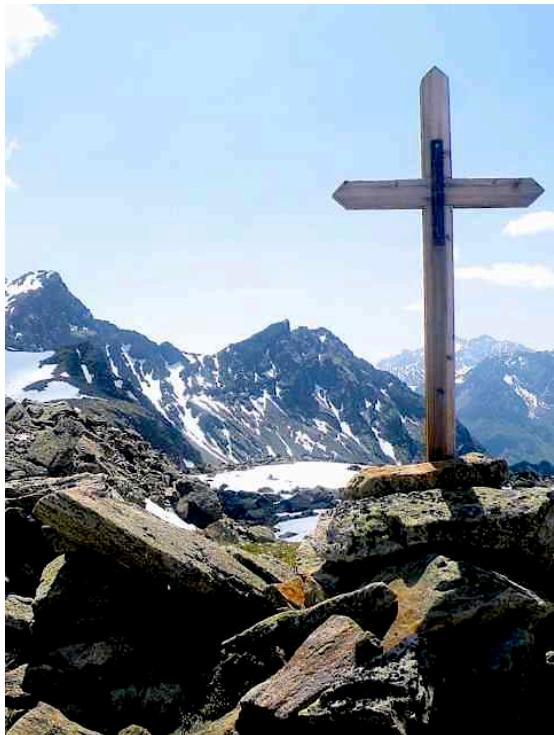


The remaining descent down rocky ribs and snow slopes was not quite so tricky, and we were very glad to get to the bottom safely for the easy walk up to Breitlehnjöchl.



Our descent route from Rötkarl Joch

The 1450 m (4760 ft) descent from the broad Breitlehnjöchl was long but enjoyable, with easy snowfields at first, then a good path down Breitlehn Tal before zig-zags led steeply down through woods to Huben.



Rötkarl Joch from Breitlehnjöchl



Starting on the descent down Breitlehn Tal



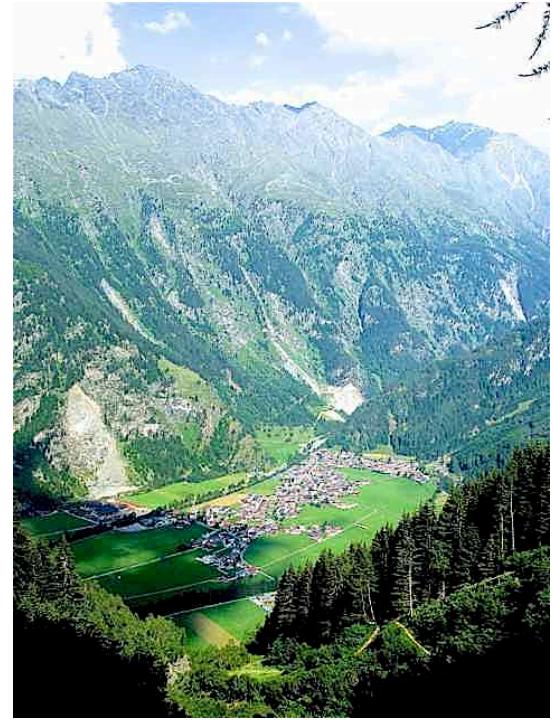
Mind the 200 volt electric fence!



No problem!



View of Längenfeld in Ötztal with Schrankogel in the Stubai alps above



Huben



What better way to round off such an exciting day than Schnitzel and chips!

Summary	Distance	13.5 km	Ascent	700 m	Descent	1840 m	Walking Time	6h-45	Total time	10h-00
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Huben is a quiet village so Lesley and I ambled the 3 miles to Längenfeld for a look round and a swim.



Our hotel in Huben, the Alpenblick



Timber farm building on stilts



Längenfeld church



An enjoyable afternoon in the excellent outdoor pool at Längenfeld



Tuesday 16th	Bus	Vent	1895
	Trek	Martin Busch Hütte	2501
	Excursion	Similaun Hütte	3019

We left the picturesque alpine village of Vent at 10.00 to follow the track which rises gradually up Niedertal all the way to the Martin Busch hut. The signpost time was 2h-30, but we did it in a walking time of 2h-10.

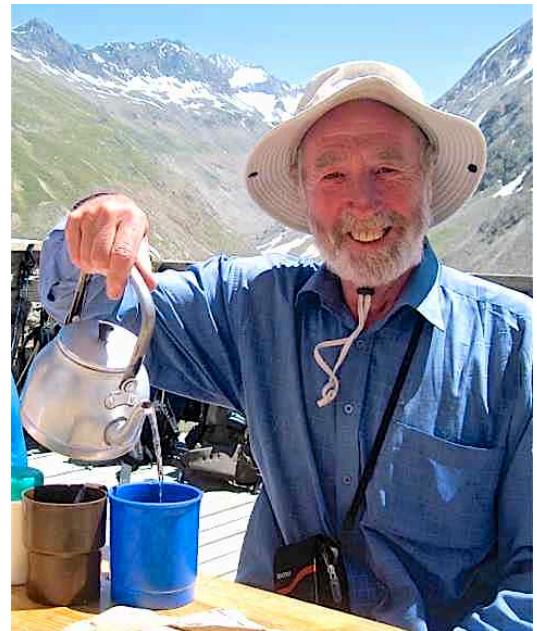




The track up Niedertal with Similaun (3606) at the head of the valley



Arriving at the hut, with Mutmal Spitz (3528) high above



Lunch at the hut

After lunch most of us made the long but straightforward excursion to the Similaun hut on the Italian frontier.



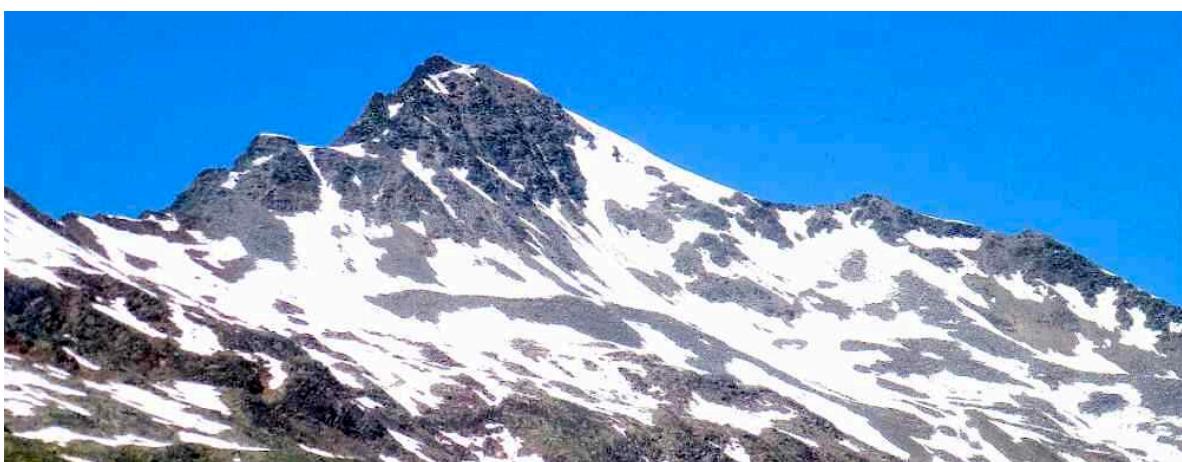
The excursionists set off for the Similaun hut, situated on Niederjoch, the low point in the skyline



View back to the hut and Mutmal Spitz



The final easy snow ascent to the hut, with the following day's objective, Kreuzspitz, the peak on the right



Our route to Kreuzspitz gains the right ridge at the shallow col and goes up the skyline snow slope to the summit



The Similaun hut with a view over the Niederjoch glacier



Italian coffee and cake, with a view down into Italy



We were just over an hour from where Ötzi was found



The start of the long and easy walk back down what was formerly a glacier but is now just snow beds ...



... for spaghetti Bolognese!

Summary	Distance	17.5 km	Ascent	1180 m	Descent	570 m	Walking Time	4h-40	Total time	8h-00
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In 2004 I did a solo day ascent of Kreuzspitz from Vent, wearing trainers to jog up and down the track between Vent and the hut. That ascent was 1560 m, so our climb of less than 1000 m would be quite straightforward.

There is a good, well-graded path up to about 3200 m, followed by easy, soft snow beds and blocky scree leading up to the shallow unnamed col on the east ridge at about 3320 m.

8 a.m. and ready to go



On the good path high above the hut, with Mutmal Spitz



The second leg-stop with a spectacular view of the Mutmal Spitz – Similaun ridge



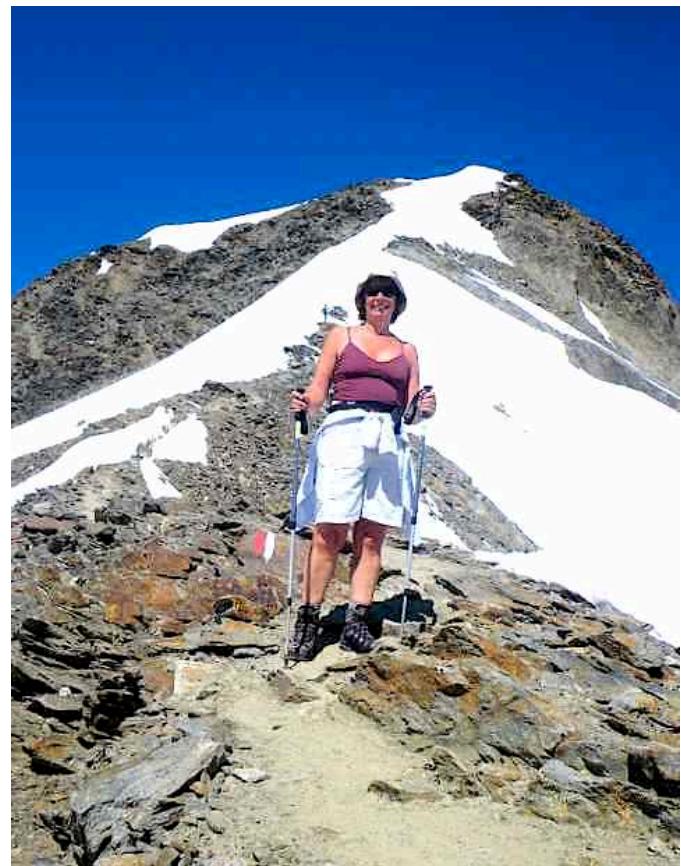
A fine spot for a team photo



The climb up snow and scree begins



Paul had decided to wait below the snowline, and John, Judith and Ian were happy with the col as their objective. From the col the route went up a well-trodden groove in a steep but broad snow arête. Without packs it took the remaining three of us just 20 minutes to get to the summit, but it but was surprisingly hot and strenuous work kicking steps in the soft snow.



On the col with the snow arête above



Setting off up the arête ...

... and nearing the top



On the summit, 3457 m (11,342 ft)





About to start the 15 minute descent to the col
Note the orange butterfly directly above Lesley



Off the snow, and easy walking back down to the hut

Summary	Distance	7.0 km	Ascent	960 m	Descent	960 m	Walking Time	4h-10	Total time	6h-00
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Thursday 18th

Trek
via

Gasthof Schöne Aussicht
Saykogel

2842
3360

It was scheduled to be a long day (the guide book walking time is 5 hours), crossing the main ridge between Niedertal and Rofental via the summit of Saykogel, descending into Rofental followed by a 400 m ascent up the valley to the Schöne Aussicht hut just over the border pass of Hochjoch in Italy. Paul and Ian decided to return to Vent and to rejoin us later in Rofental.



Ready for the off, with our first objective, Saykogel, the summit directly above Lesley



Easy walking on a good path to start with, heading for the ascent route up the left hand lateral ridge in front of the glacier
The peak on the left with the glacier is Fineil Spitz (3516) that we would see from the Rofental side



Soft snow patches and easy scrambling to get on the lateral ridge



View back down to the hut by the confluence of the two streams on the right, and to Kreuzspitz on the left



"Does my bum look big making this move?"



The snow arête with 'pudding basin' steps leading to the summit



The final scramble up the shattered summit rocks



Not quite on the summit of Saykogel ...



... because the summit had fallen onto the glacier far below!



Going down the edge of the Hochjoch glacier into Rofental



Now on a good path down to cross the stream and turn back up Rofental





On the left is Kreuzspitz we did yesterday, and on the right Saykogel we'd just climbed over



Careful Grandad!



We had a shower of rain for our final approach to the Schöne Aussicht hut

In spite of its drab exterior cladding, inside it is a traditional old hut made of creaky old timbers. With its primary use being in the ski season it is connected to mains electricity and has top class facilities with hot water, central heating and a modern washroom with a row of free hot showers with views out over the mountains.



Our spacious loft dormitory even had duvets



Summary	Distance	11.5 km	Ascent	1280 m	Descent	940 m	Walking Time	7h-00	Total time	9h-30
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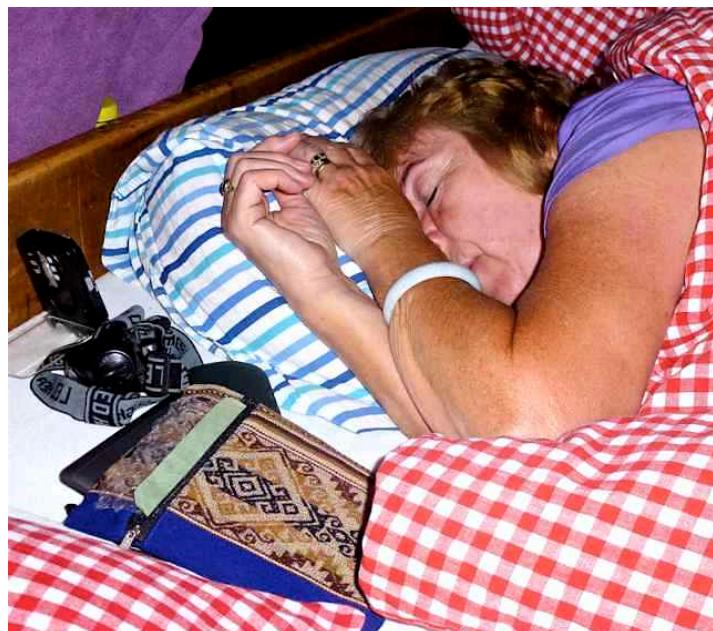
Friday 19th

Excursion
Trek

Im Hintern Eis
Hochjoch-Hospiz

3270
2412

It was our first cloudy morning as we made the easy excursion to Im Hintern Eis on the frontier above the hut.



7:20 – rise and shine!



Our reflections in the stainless steel ski room walls with the barrel-shaped sauna (not in use) alongside



A stony path above the hut, with some snow patches, took us easily to the summit
The main peak in the view back over the head of Rofental is Fineil Spitz (3516), and Saykogel is the peak on the far left



There was billowing cloud round the summit, but we caught some glimpses of Weißkugel, at 3739 m the second highest peak in the Ötztal, and the Hintereis glacier far below

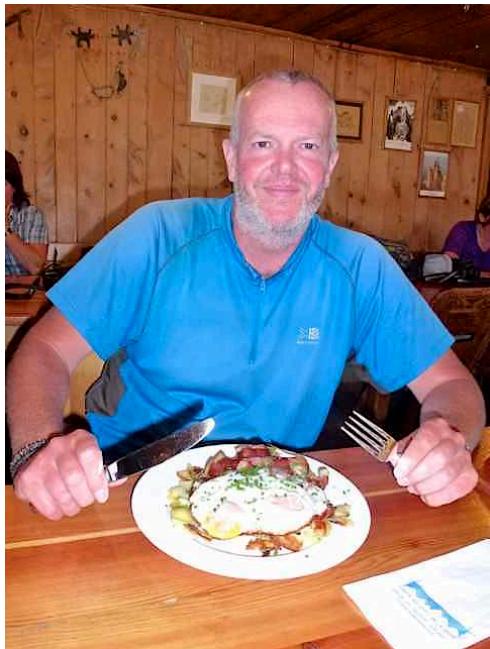


View in the opposite direction with Saykogel above my left shoulder



Descending a snowfield in cloud

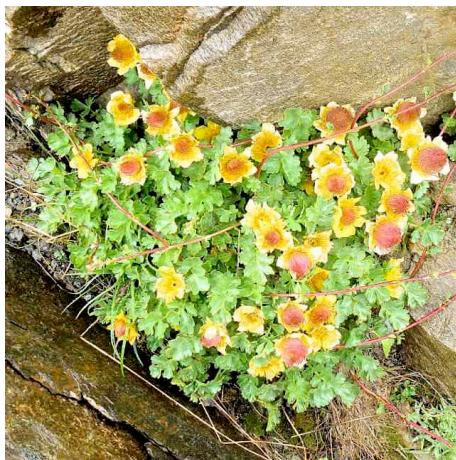
After an unusually hearty lunch at the hut we took the path back down Rofental towards the Hochjoch-Hospiz, easy going with just the rickety bridge and some short cable sections to break our stride. We had some rain for the first hour's descent, then it turned into another beautiful afternoon.



Our usual lunch is tube cheese on biscuits and a muesli bar!



Mossy Saxifrage (*Saxifraga bryoides*)



Creeping Avens (*Geum reptans*)



Five Spot Burnet Moth (*Zygaena trifolii*)



The Hochjoch-Hospiz comes into view on the far hillside ...



... with a big drop in between to cross the outflow stream of the Hintereis glacier





Evening sun on Weißkugel and its glaciers

Summary	Distance	9.5 km	Ascent	600 m	Descent	1030 m	Walking Time	4h-15	Total time	7h-00
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Saturday 20th	Trek Excursion	Breslauer Hütte Urkundkolm	2844 3140
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A short ascent from the hut brought us to the marvellous balcony path, high on the north flanks of Rofental, which goes all the way to the Breslauer hut, with spectacular views of the peaks to the south. About half way we were reunited with Paul and Ian, who had stayed the night at the Breslauer hut and walked out to meet us.





The start of the balcony path with Weißkugel and the Hintereis glacier



Telescopic view of the fallen summit of Saykogel





Leg stop with a view up to the Vernagt hut and Hochvernagt Spitz (3539) on the skyline



Reunited with Paul and Ian, with the rocky Hintergrasl Spitz (3270) and glaciated Hochvernagt Spitz on the skyline



View over an un-named tarn to the Kreuzspitz – Saykogel – Finiel Spitz ridge



Vent in the distance with Großer Ramolkogel (3550) above



The south-west face of Wildspitz

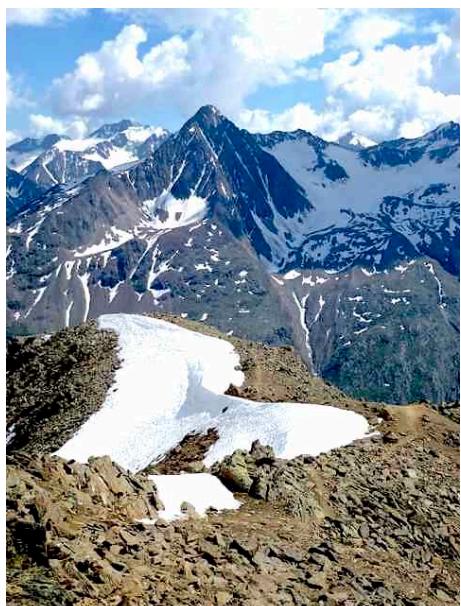


Arriving at the Breslauer hut at the end of the most enjoyable balcony route from the Hochjoch-Hospiz



After a reviving mug of tea some of us made the short excursion up to Urkundkolm, a minor summit on the ridge leading from the hut up to Wild Spitz.

The peaks on the skyline are: conical Thalleit Spitz (3408), Kreuzspitz above the glacier and the distant Finiel Spitz

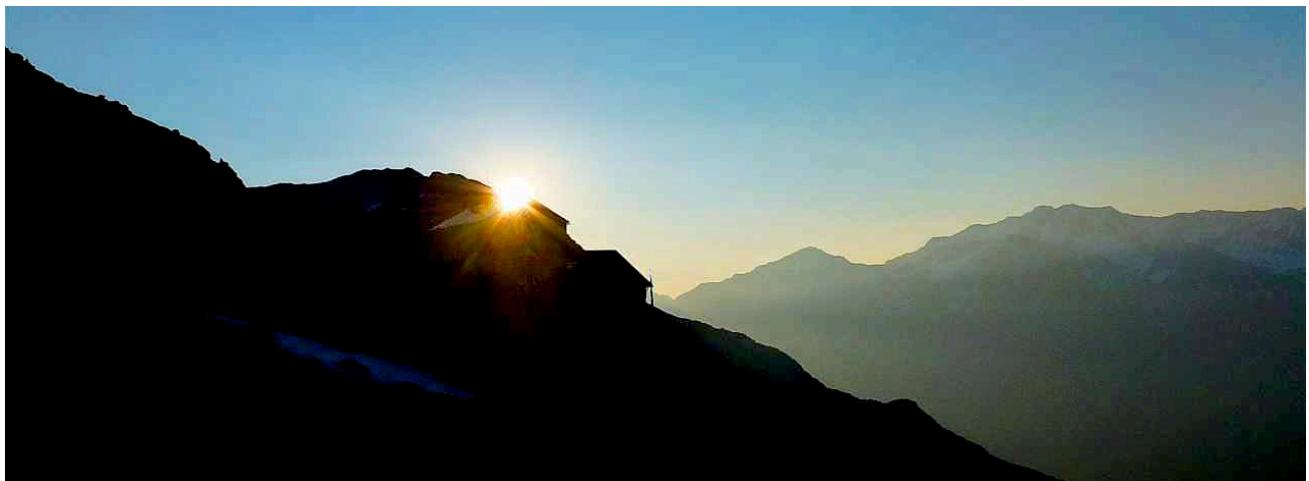


Our 9th and final dinner at a hut

Summary	Distance	12.0 km	Ascent	880 m	Descent	450 m	Walking Time	4h-45	Total time	7h-30
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Sunday 21st	Trek via Bus Rail	Vent Wildes Mannle (+ chairlift) Ötztal Bahnhof Innsbruck	1895 3023 Hotel
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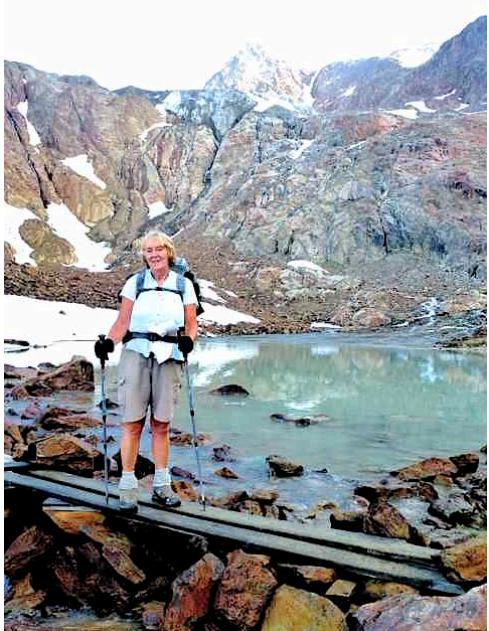
Climbers in our dormitory getting up noisily at 5.30 for the ascent of Wild Spitz woke us up, but there was compensation in that I was outside to catch the sun rising over the hut at 6.20. Paul and Ian decided to walk directly down to Vent, while the rest of us followed the path north-east to then climb over Wildes Mannle, another minor peak on a ridge coming down from Wild Spitz, before descending to Vent.



When we left at 8.00 low cloud was billowing around the peaks. On the skyline Thalleit Spitz, Kreuzspitz, and Finiel Spitz again



The old sign indicates that the route to Wildes Mannle goes over the Rofenkar glacier ...



... but the glacier has receded so far that the snout is only just visible above the path

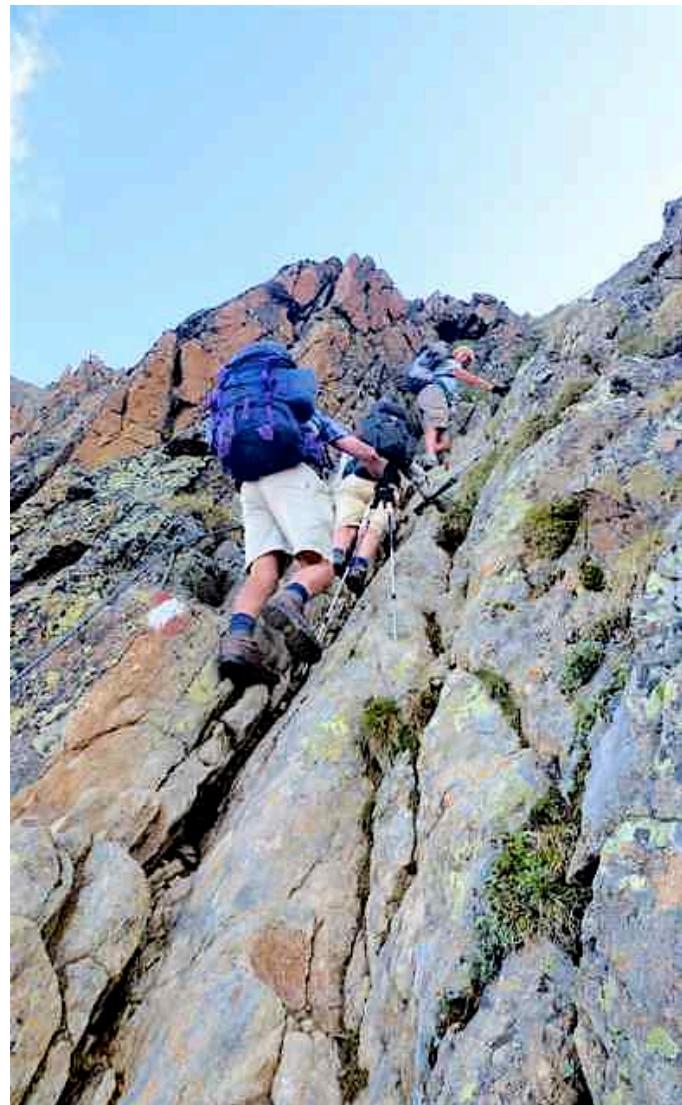


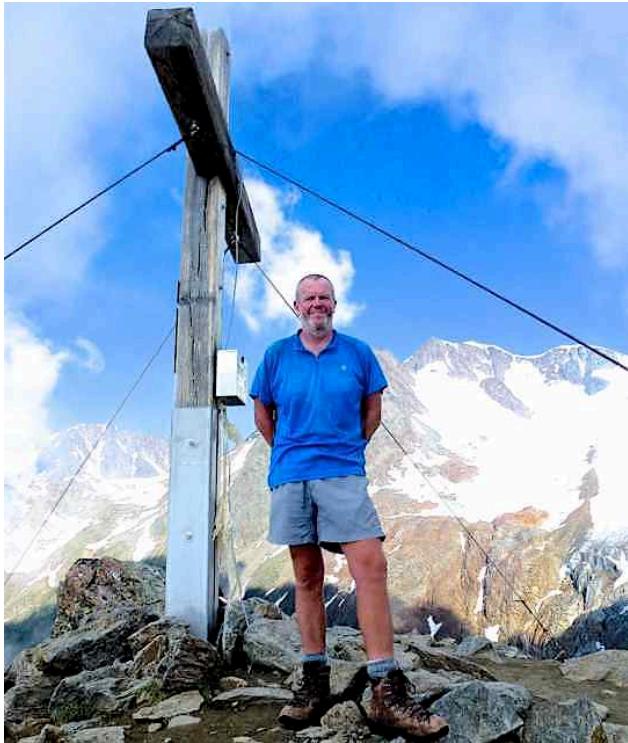
The snout of the Rofenkar glacier brilliant in the morning sun, with the south-east face of Wild Spitz above

Although modest in height, Wildes Mannle was an enjoyable peak to include, with really good scrambles up onto the ridge and then down off the end, with a great view of Wild Spitz from the summit.



With a deep groove with footholds and a cable handrail, the scramble up onto the ridge was nowhere near as difficult as it appears





On the summit with Wild Spitz above



The beginning of the scramble off the end of the ridge with Vent far below





Once off the rocky ridge we thought we could probably walk down the easy track to Vent in time to catch the scheduled bus, but as this would be a bit of a rush we opted for the chair lift for the last 460 m of descent.





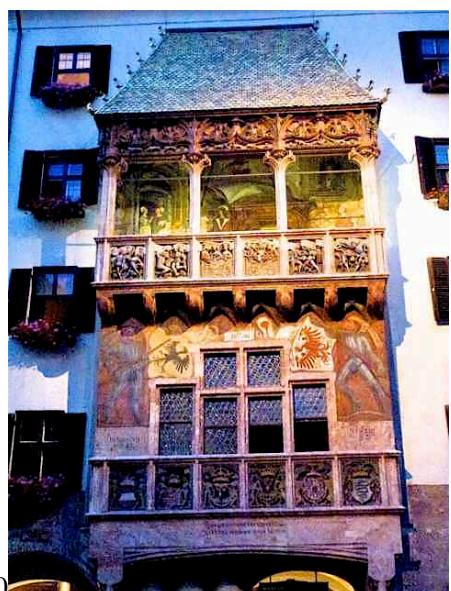
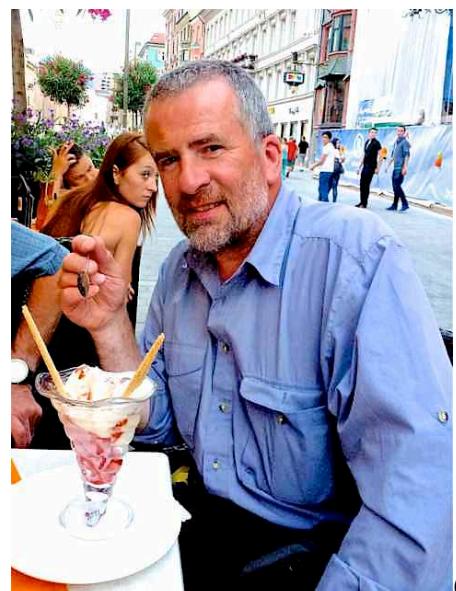
To celebrate the successful conclusion of our Trek, the Mayor of Vent organised a parade with marching bands!



They think it's all over it is now, until next year!

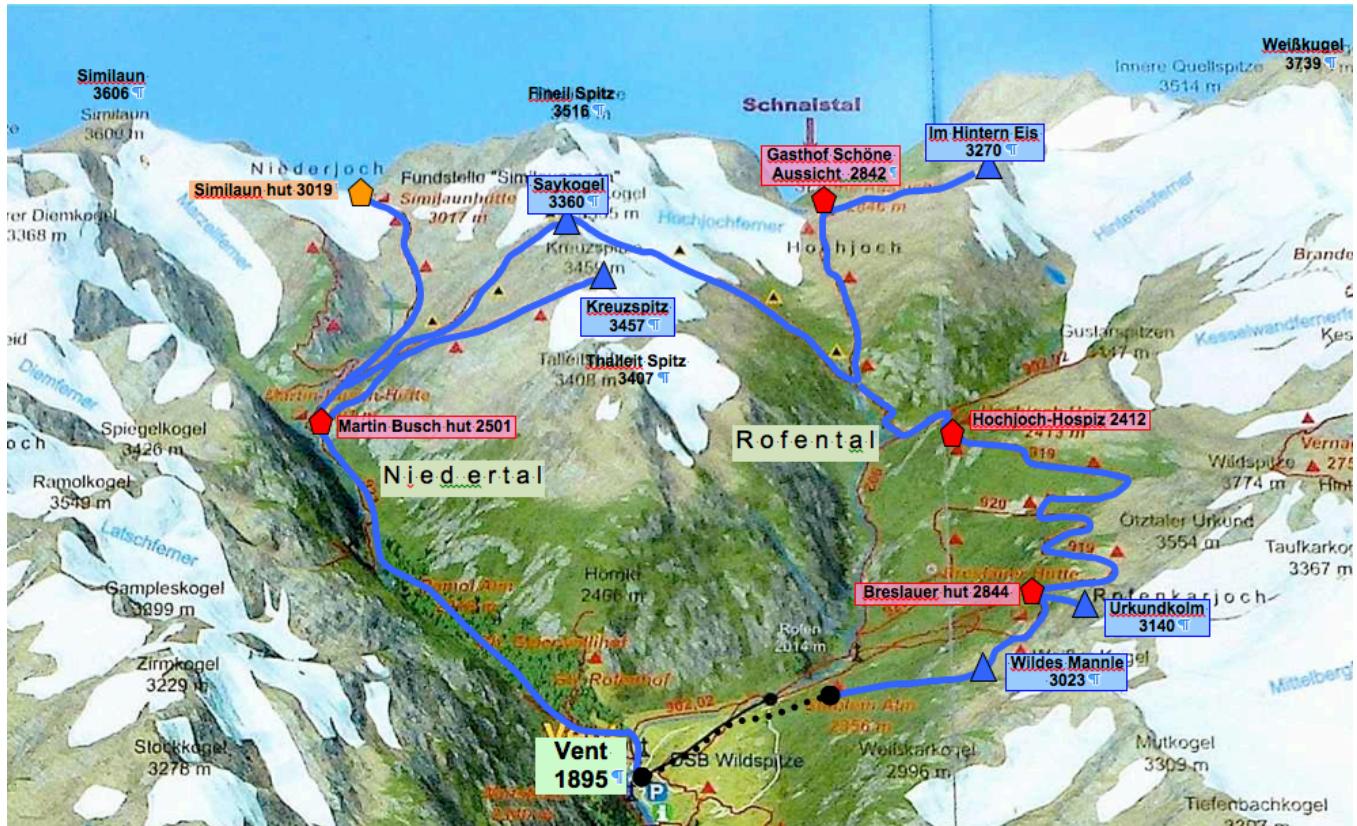
Summary	Distance	4.0 km	Ascent	290 m	Descent	780 m	Walking Time	2h-30	Total time	3h-00
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A bus down Ötztal to Ötztal Bahnhof and a short train ride got us to Innsbruck by 4 o'clock. An early dinner left us time to walk round the old city as the sun set.

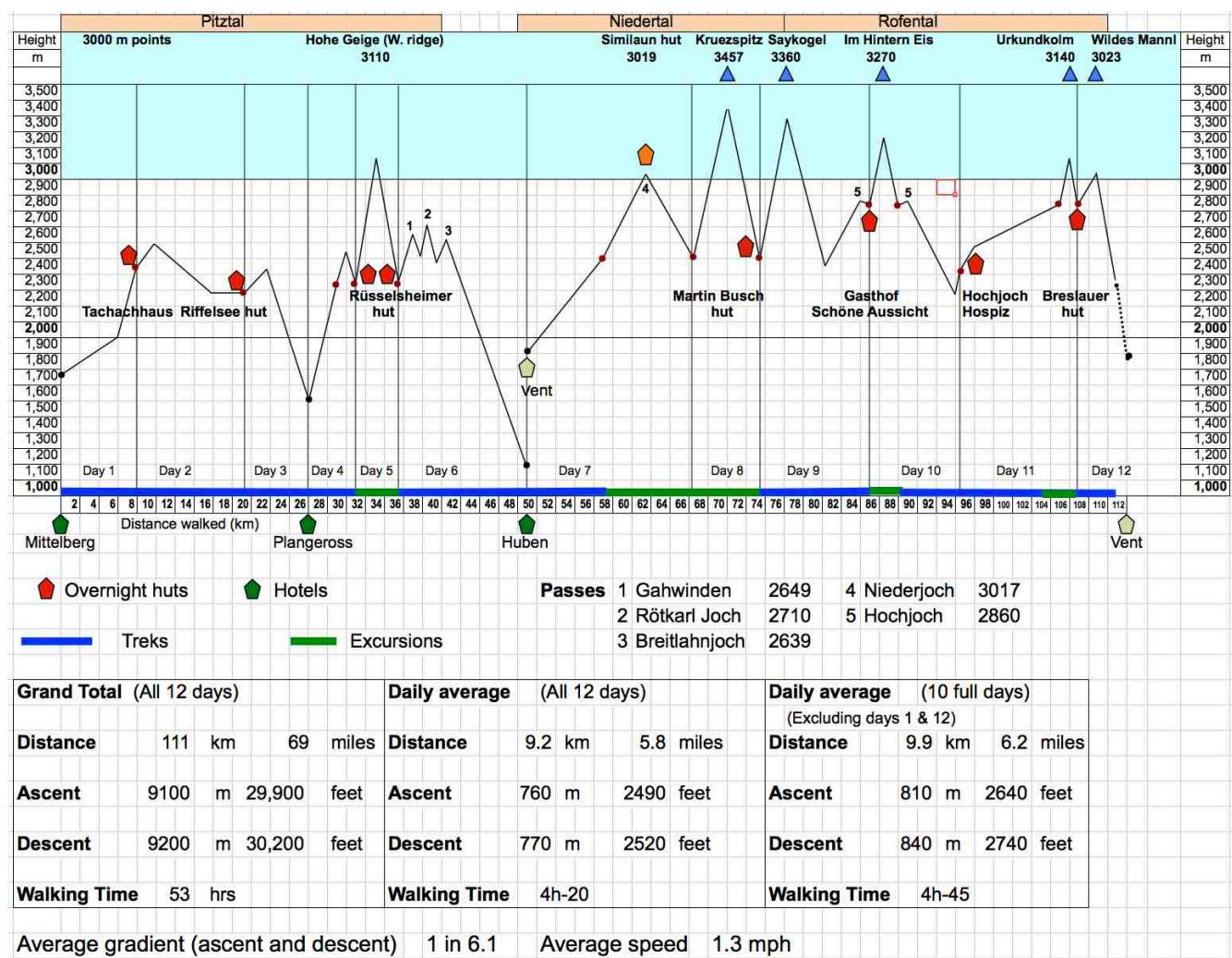


The following day there was time to explore Innsbruck a little more before we took the 10:40 train which got us to Munich airport in plenty of time for our afternoon flight back to Manchester.

Photo of a 'Wainwright' sketch on a display board in Vent which I couldn't resist annotating with our route.



ROUTE PROFILE AND SUMMARY



MAPS

	Scale	Sheet	
Kompass	1:50,000	43	Ötztaler Alpen

This covers the whole Ötztal Alps and gives a good overall view of the area, though it doesn't have a great deal of topographical detail. It was fine for general planning and adequate for following the route. It does give a good indication of which paths are more difficult and locations of the main via ferrata .

Alpenvereinskarte	1:25,000	30/1	Gurgl	30/2	Weißenkugel	30/5	Geigenkamm
Maps in the excellent Alpenvereinskarte series have clear and accurate topographical detail and are ideal for precise navigation. Sheet 30/5 covers the whole of the first section of our route and 30/2 covers the second half except for the track from Vent to the Martin Busch hut and the walk over Wildes Mannl, which are on sheet 30/1.							

Spellings of some places and features differ from map to map e.g. Waze Spitz / Watzespitz, Riffel See / Riffelsee. I have adopted the spellings from the AV maps.

GUIDES

This list includes guides I have referred to over the years of organising Treks in Austria from 1985 to this year.

Walking in Austria

Kev Reynolds **Cicerone** **2009**

This is a comprehensive and detailed guide to day-walks and multi-day tours in 10 of Austria's main mountain groups. In the section on the Ötztal, Route 15 (3 days) goes from the Gepatschhaus to Sölden via the Taschachhaus, Riffel See the Braunschweiger hut. From Vent only day walks are given.

Walking in The Alps

Kev Reynolds **Cicerone** **2005 (2nd Edition)**

This marvellous book is a comprehensive and inspirational guide to all the main mountain areas of the Alps. It is a must-read for anyone interested in the Alps and alpine walking. Each section has a summary of several multi-day tours with brief outline details and sketch maps.

Die Alpenvereinshütten Band 1 Ostalpen

OAV

This is the Austrian Alpine Club 'Green Hut Book' which gives full details of the huts (including contact details), together with times for hut-to-hut walks and for ascents to nearby peaks (though no route details). It is updated periodically and is essential reading for planning any hut-to-hut tour in Austria.

The following two guides are very old; I've had them since organising MGS camping Treks in Austria in the 1980s.

Walking Austria's Alps Hut-to-Hut

Jonathan Hurdle **Cordee** **1988**

This gives accounts of 11 hut tours, two of which cover most of our route.

Tour 3 is an ambitious 3/4-day trip from the Gepatschhaus to Sölden via the Braunschweiger hut. Tour 4 is a 7/8-day trip in the southern Ötztal, from Obergurgl via the Martin Busch, Similaun and Schöne Aussicht huts to Vent.

Mountain Walking in Austria

Cecil Davies **Cicerone** **1986**

This gives accounts of day walks and short hut tours in 18 of Austria's mountain groups. It includes some walks in Pitztal, but nothing of use to us in the southern Ötztal.

I also noted the route of the 1977 MGS camping Trek led by Chris Little, though the Trek Log is not very detailed: Gepatschhaus > Taschachhaus > Riffelsee > Rüsselsheimer hut > Hohe Geige > Huben.

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.

Unlike for the 2006 to 2010 OTTs, I didn't get round to producing Logs for the 2011 to 2013 Treks at the time. All I did was word-process a diary and do the route analysis, made from measurements from the map and details recorded in my notebook. It wasn't until 2018 that I produced this version with images, a digital sketch map, a detailed route summary, a route profile and a list of 3000 m points added to the diary. I used an Apple iMac and 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, Tim, Paul and Ian for the ones of theirs which I have included. To keep the overall file size down, all the images are low resolution but of sufficient quality to display fairly well at A4 page size. The average size of the 242 images used is about 60 kB, giving a file size of 16.5 MB, about the size of 5 original images. Thanks to Dave Shaw who identified the flowers I didn't know.

OLD TREKKERS' TREKS 3000 m POINTS

It was in 2011 that I first had the idea of producing this list of the 3000 m points that the OTT have reached. We were on the summit of Petzek, and I couldn't remember if that summit or Hohe Riffler was higher and hence the second highest peak we had reached at that time. I have updated the list each year since.

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

Feet	Metres	Height	Year	High Point		Ascensionists	Whole party ascent
	3450	3457	2013	Kreuzspitz	(11,342 ft)	Allan, Tim, Lesley (John, Judith, Ian: E ridge 3320 m ♀ Paul ~ 3200 m #)	
11,300	3440						
	3430						
	3420						
11,200	3410						
	3400						
	3390						
11,100	3380						
	3370						
	3360	3360	2013	Saykogel	(11,024 ft)	Allan, John, Tim, Lesley, Judith	
11,000	3350						11,000 ft
	3340	3337	2012	Becca della Traversière		Allan, John, Tim, Roger, Lesley, Judith	
	3330	3333	2006	Schaufel Spitz		Allan, John	◊
10,900	3320						
	3310						
	3300 • 3300		2012	Col Lauson		Allan, John, Tim, Roger, Lesley, Judith	
10,800	3290						
	3280	3283	2011	Petzeck		Allan, John, Tim, Roger, Lesley	
	3270	3270	2013	Im Hintern Eis (10,729 ft)		Allan, John, Tim, Lesley, Judith	
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 Boë		Allan, John, Roger, Lesley, Judith	
	3144	2009		Le Taillon		Allan, John, Tim, Roger, Lesley, Judith	
10,300	3140	3140	2013	Urkundkolm (10,302 ft)		Allan, John, Tim, Lesley	
	3130	3134	2007	Schönbichlerhorn		Allan, John, Tim, Nigel, Lesley, Judith	
	3120	3121	2011	Böses Weibl		Allan, John, Tim, Roger, Lesley, Judith	
10,200	3110 §	3110	2013	Hohe Geige (W) (10,204 ft)		Allan, John, Tim, Ian, Lesley, Judith (Paul ~ 3000 m)	
	3100	3101	2012	Torre Ponton		Allan, John, Tim, Roger, Lesley	
	3090 §	3100	2012	Punta Leynir (W)		Allan, John, Tim, Roger, Lesley, Judith	
10,100	3080						
	3070						
	3060						
10,000	3050 §	3050	2006	Gamsspitzl (S)		Allan, John, Paul, Lesley, Judith	10,000 ft
	3040						
	3030	3032	2009	Petit Vignemale		Allan, John, Paul, Tim, Roger, Nigel, Lesley, Judith	
9,900	3020	3023	2013	Wildes Mannle (9918 ft)		Allan, John, Tim, Lesley, Judith	
	• 3019	2013		Similaun Hütte (9905 ft)		Allan, John, Tim, Ian, Judith	
	3010	3006	2006	Rinnen Spitz		Allan, John, Mark, Judith, Julie	
	3000	3005	2009	Grand Fache		Allan, John, Tim, Roger, Lesley, Judith	

		3000 m points	Party members	Total party
2006	Tirol - Stubai Alps	(3)	Allan & Lesley, John & Judith, Mark & Julie, Paul	7
2007	Tirol - Zillertal Alps	(2)	Allan & Lesley, John & Judith, Tim, Nigel	6
2008	Dolomites - Alta Via 2	(1)	Allan & Lesley, John & Judith, Roger	5
2009	Pyrenees	(3)	Allan & Lesley, John & Judith, Paul, Tim, Roger, Nigel & Jane	9
2010	Vorarlberg - Rätikon/Silvretta Alps		Allan & Lesley, John & Judith, Paul, Tim, Roger, Ian & Elizabeth	9
2011	Hohe Tauern: Glockner/Schober Alps	(2)	Allan & Lesley, John & Judith, Paul, Tim, Roger	7
2012	Gran Paradiso	(4)	Allan & Lesley, John & Judith, Tim, Roger	6
2013	Tirol - Ötztal Alps	(7)	Allan & Lesley, John & Judith, Tim, Paul, Ian	7

No 3000 m point reached that year.

Total Treks A&L: 8 J&J: 8 Tim: 6 Roger: 5 Paul: 5 Ian: 2 Nigel: 2
Elizabeth: 1 Mark & Julie: 1 Jane: 1