



Press Release

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For immediate release

Literary competition reveals a passion for mountains

An annual competition to find the best of Scottish mountain writing has once more shown the depth of talent to be found among those who love mountains.

In Mountaineering Scotland's 2016 Mountain Writing Competition, eight top class stories and poems were picked out by judges, with winners spread across the country from east to west. This year was also a first, in having one of the winning poems written in both Gaelic and English.

Mountain bothies featured strongly in the prose entries, with three out of the four prize winners taking very different approaches to the same subject. First prize winner Vera Fletcher, from Stirling, told a disturbing tale of a bothy visit which ended with a definite chill up the spine. Chill of a different nature was expressed in Brendan Hughes' 'In the Cold Locker', about a legendarily cold few days in some of the Cairngorms' once notoriously Spartan bothies. Brendan lives in Glasgow, and his tale won him second prize.

Third prize was shared between John Coughlan, from Elderslie, with his touching tale of a bothy vagrant in 'The Bothy King', and a mountain rescue tale with a twist – 'The Last Call-Out' – from Alan Laing, from Balbeggie in Perthshire.

Poetry was once again well represented in the competition, with the judges unable to separate two poems for first place: 'The Coffin Road', by Roderick Manson from Blairgowrie, and 'Why You Go Hill Walking', by Ellie Danak from Edinburgh.

Second prize in poetry went to Catriona Malan, from Helensburgh, with 'Death of a Climber', and third went to the dual language 'Moladh/A Praise', by Kate Langhorne from Glasgow.

Praising the quality of all the winning entries, the judges remarked: "It brings home just how important the Scottish hills are to people – there was incredible depth of feeling."

The first prize in the prose category is a cheque for £150 and tickets for the 2016 Edinburgh Mountain Film Festival, with the top poem winning £100 and tickets for the festival.

The competition is open to anyone as long as there is some relevance to mountains and mountaineering, and regularly attracts entries from all over Britain. Judging is blind, with neither names nor addresses known to the judges while they make their decisions.

The independent panel of judges read through over 50 entries, fairly evenly split between prose and poetry.

The winning entries will be published in the February edition of the Mountaineering Scotland membership magazine, Scottish Mountaineer, and can be seen now [on the website](http://www.mountaineering.scot/members/members-benefits/scottish-mountaineer-magazine/mountain-writing-competition/2016-results) at <http://www.mountaineering.scot/members/members-benefits/scottish-mountaineer-magazine/mountain-writing-competition/2016-results>

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About Mountaineering Scotland:

- Mountaineering Scotland is the only recognised representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers and ski-tourers who live in Scotland or who enjoy Scotland's mountains.
- Mountaineering Scotland provides training and information to mountain users to promote safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.
- The MCoS is a membership organisation with over 13,000 members representing hill walkers, climbers and mountaineers, funded through a combination of membership subscriptions, non-governmental grants and investment from sportscotland, which supports public initiatives and services in mountain safety, mountain training and the development and promotion of mountaineering activities.
- Mountaineering Scotland also acts for 75,000 members of the BMC or British Mountaineering Council on matters related to Landscape and Access in Scotland.
- Mountaineering Scotland landscape and access work is supported financially by the Scottish Mountaineering Trust and the BMC
- Mountaineering Scotland has launched the ClimbScotland initiative to encourage young people to participate in climbing and support their progression. It offers a dedicated website and a development team, which will introduce young people to climbing at schools, climbing walls and via youth organisations with a range of activities and events, while developing kids clubs and providing specialist support to parents, volunteers and teachers.
- Mountaineering Scotland is the national governing body for sports climbing. It offers pathways to climbing coaching, organises and promotes a range of regional and national climbing competitions, and manages the Scottish climbing and bouldering teams. It contributes to the management of the GB teams with the ultimate aim of seeing a Scottish athlete achieve a podium position in the Olympic Games.

- Mountaineering Scotland is the new name for the Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCoS), which acts to represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering.
- Mountaineering Council of Scotland remains the registered company name.
- The MCoS is a not for profit company limited by guarantee and incorporated in Scotland. Company number SC322717.
- Mountaineering Scotland, The Granary, West Mill Street, Perth PH1 5QP